



50th Anniversary Concert

PROGRAMME

OPENING PRAYER

Canon Neil Heavisides, Precentor

Gloucester Cathedral Old Choristers

Directed by *Nicholas O'Neill*

Blessed City, Heavenly Salem (*Urbs Beata*)

Mode ii

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Organ: Nicholas O'Neill

Fantasia for Double Organ

Orlando Gibbons

Gloucester Cathedral Old Choristers

Ave Maria

Franz Biebl

Ye Love Me

Thomas Tallis

Prayer

Douglas Mason

Tenor: Peter Wilman, Piano: Adrian Partington

Bright is the Ring of Words

from Songs of Travel

Ralph Vaughan Williams

In Flanders

Ivor Gurney

Baritone: Philip Webb, Piano: Adrian Partington

On Painswick Beacon *and* Cotswold Choice

from The Beacon

John Sanders

GCOCA 50th Anniversary Concert report

A resounding success! One of those occasions when the last notes had faded away that there was, what can only be described as, a ‘feel good’ factor. The programme contents (see above) covered a wide range – from the ‘Urbs Beata mode ii’ – performed and choreographed in a way that can only be achieved in a building such as Gloucester Cathedral – the Old Choristers (twelve in number) divided into three groups, and starting from the north and south transepts and the west end of the nave. This set the standard for the rest of the programme. The Old Choristers were (see photograph below from left to right) Nicholas O’Neill who directed the group, with Elvin Young, Stephen Power, Peter Wilman, Nic Sims, Trevor Heywood, Andrew Stratford, Dickon Kelly, Philip Webb, David Morris, Matthew Cann and Andrew Douglas who had undertaken to organise the Old Choristers group and also liaised with Adrian Partington, the Director of Music regarding the programme content. Adrian also accompanied both Peter Wilman and Philip Webb. It was interesting to note that, of those twelve Old Choristers, nine were from a decade – the 1980s, under John Sanders – where a considerable number had subsequently followed music as a profession.

The inclusion of works by local musicians – Vaughan Williams, Ivor Gurney and John Sanders together with two by those choristers of the 1980s – ‘Prayer’ by Douglas Mason, and the tribute to Paul Torrington (tragically killed in a road accident) ‘Sleep, sleep’ by Andrew Stratford, underlined the contribution of those choristers who received their formative musical training at Gloucester.

The programme went from the sublime into the light-hearted with piano duets, especially the arrangement of the ‘Muppets’ theme, and the lovely setting of ‘A Nightingale sang in Berkeley Square’.

Then! After the interval – the present Cathedral Choir under the direction of Adrian Partington, and organist, Ashley Grote, performed

Neil Cox' 'Keep me as the apple of an eye', a 'Te Deum' by Haydn, and then the composition that won the John Sanders Memorial Prize for Young Musicians – 'I sing of a maiden' by Graham Ross. It was a delight to have Janet Sanders with us, as Philip Webb had sung two of John's works in the first half, and then the performance of this work by Graham Ross.

It was time to join forces – Cathedral Choir plus Old Choristers. 'Zadok' – one of those perennial crowd pleasers, then Andrew Stratford's tribute to Paul Torrington 'Sleep, sleep', and what could be a better work to complete the concert than Parry's 'I was Glad' in its full version.

This was truly a memorable concert to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Gloucester Cathedral Old Choristers' Association.



