



Newsletter

Past Patron: Dr I G Dicker

November 2012

From The Director

I write this having just finished singing a very busy period of concerts and services. We were privileged to sing at the service at Balmain dedicating the organ after its refurbishment. A setting of Psalm 150 had been written by Dr Graeme Rawson and we sang its world premiere. The following day, we were at St John's Church, Dee Why for the annual Faure Requiem. These two events were hot on the heels of concerts at St Ives Uniting Church, Roseville Music Club and Arcadia Music Club. There is more on these performances later in the newsletter.



After that, we have a couple of weekends off before the Christmas rush. We have also looked at an anthem composed by our own David Shergold, who has held the tenor department together while Ron is away. Working on contemporary Australian compositions has been a feature of TCS for years now.



Christmas is a time when church music is heard more frequently on television and radio – from about October onwards nowadays! Whilst much of this is commercially arranged and bears little or no relation to any liturgical context, the Christmas story and the music associated with it are still played/sung and have the power to move people. Think of the effect of *Silent Night* on the Western Front in 1914 as seen in the 2005 film *Joyeaux Noel*.

This is the last newsletter of 2012 and it has been a fascinating, interesting, exciting, frustrating, thrilling, moving, motivating and rewarding (in various percentages!) year for me as Director. It has certainly been a steep learning curve. I have learnt from the choir, I hope the choir has learnt from me as well. We have had some choristers move on and welcomed some new faces and voices. Whilst we still need more singers and like all groups need more money, TCS is in a healthy shape for 2013 and beyond.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Jim Abraham
DIRECTOR

From the Chair

Greetings all

We may not have gone overseas this year, but we have not been sitting twiddling our thumbs!! We have been extremely busy over the last couple of months, to the extent that we were doing two events a week. Many of these services have been written up for your interest and I thank all those people from various places who contributed. There are also lots of photos!

We have sung at two weddings recently and have now officially been called angels! We look forward to being able to sing for other weddings next year. We have also enjoyed giving concerts at several very different places recently, with many people hearing our traditional church repertoire for the first time.

We sang for the re-dedication of the organ at Balmain a week ago, as you will see further in. We could not resist taking a photo of the choir in 2012 to contrast it with the one of Dave Lewis when he sang there as a boy in 1948. How the years fly by!

After singing Faure Requiem for the fifth year at St John's Dee Why the next day, we can now relax for awhile and start practicing carols – great fun!

We have thrilled to have been able to welcome several new members to the choir and also welcomed back others who sing with us periodically, and who obviously enjoyed it, as we enjoyed having them back.

Dave Lewis in a past life – 1948 as a choir boy at Balmain.

Finally, I need to record the retirement of our highly valued choir member, librarian and committee member, Kent Bowyer. We will be more than sorry to see him go and wish him and Gwen every good wish for the future.

Hopefully we will see some of you at one of our Christmas events and so wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas Season.

Jan Kneeshaw - Editor



DO YOU LIKE SINGING IN CHOIRS?



Do you like Cathedral Style Music?

Would you like to join or do you know anyone who would be interested in joining TCS?

For further details contact Jan Kneeshaw on
9144 4915 Mobile 0411 785 117
Membership Secretary Mary Carter
on 0408 424 319
Or the Director, Mr Jim Abraham on
0405 817 276

Choral Scholarships

Expressions of interest are also invited for the position of Choral Scholar for 2013

The Cathedral Singers

PO Box 569 GORDON 2072
Email: tcs@cathedralsingers.org.au
www.cathedralsingers.org.au

Vale Dr Ian Dicker



Dr Ian Gordon Dicker (1929-2012) was the first Patron of The Cathedral Singers. The announcement of his acceptance of the Choir's invitation to take on this role was made by Mr Philip Heath, Master of Ceremonies at the 'Farewell' Concert on 18 June, 2008; not long before the Choir departed on their first English tour. Dr Dicker and his companion Geoff Waddick quickly became part of the TCS family. Ian had a long association with music and the church, and had played the organ and sung in choirs as well as being on the staff at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He was a logical choice as Patron, and his constant support of the group both in thought, his presence, and financially is appreciated and remembered.

Ian had a wealth of stories about being involved in Sydney church music as a young man. He and the rector's dog played Mass at St Anne's Strathfield; and Ian was delighted when former TCS Organ Scholar Stacey Yang took up the appointment as Organist of this church. Ian and Geoff accompanied TCS on the 2008 UK tour, and it was a great joy to have their smiling faces with us. Ian beamed when the choir sang well, and his comments and Geoff's ready and hearty laugh were welcome at the end of an evensong of difficult music, or afterwards over a restorative.

Ian was a boy at Sydney Grammar School, and this must have had a profound influence on him as not only did he take up teaching professionally, but he donated the Mander organ, installed in 2004, in Big School, the oldest surviving schoolroom in Australia. This instrument is in memory of Ian's parents. His mother's death when Ian was eleven years old profoundly affected him, and may have contributed to his wanting to help guide other young people in his role as a schoolmaster.

After education and training at the University of Sydney, and additionally later postgraduate study at the University of Colorado, Ian taught at Normanhurst High School before lecturing at Sydney Teachers' College, later part of the University of Sydney. Finally, Ian was Head of General Studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and many musicians remember him trying to pass on a sense of drama to musicians thrust onto the operatic stage.

In more recent years others will remember Ian's passion for antiques and those fortunate enough to have been entertained at his home, as was TCS, will remember the beautiful acquisitions he surrounded himself with, including the wonderful Steinway grand piano.

We hope that Geoff will remain part of the TCS family, the choir Ian always proudly remembered as 'his Choir'. Ian was kind, gracious and generous, but above all a gentleman. It is with respect and fondness we remember Dr Ian Dicker, The Cathedral Singers Patron 2008-2012.

DR BRETT MCKERN
Past Director, TCS.



KENT BOWYER – Chorister Extraordinaire.



At Ely Deanery with John, Hazel Gwen

It is with considerable regret that I have to announce the retirement of our hardworking and highly valued librarian, webmaster, photographer, and especially bass – Kent Bowyer. He has been an asset to the choir and we will miss him greatly.



At Westminster Cathedral Library

He has been with TCS for many years, has made a very significant contribution to the development of the choir, been on the committee for most of that time and given valuable advice when major decisions needed to be made.

We are very sorry to lose him and wish him and Gwen well in the years ahead and thank him again for his tireless work for TCS in so many ways.

One of Kent's favourite words is "commitment" and he certainly lived that out. He did a huge amount for the choir on a weekly basis for years and took part in all activities, including the Choir "drinkies" session, of course! He and Gwen were also prominent in all activities in the UK last year.

Here are some examples!



Waldorf will miss Statler



At Ely Cathedral



In Dr Mary (now Dame) Archer and her husband Lord Jeffery Archer's London penthouse at the annual Guild of Church Musician's President's recruitment evening – showing the Thames – with Robyn, Bob and Lynn



Punting on the Cam with Gwen
WE WILL MISS HIM! ED.



One of the formidable engineers at Prickwillow Drainage Museum



The Cathedral Singers

Major events and venues for 2012

| Month | Day | Date | Time | Event | Venue |
|----------|----------|------|---------|---|----------------------------------|
| NOVEMBER | Sunday | 25 | 10.00am | Eucharist (Christ the King) | St John's, Dee Why |
| DECEMBER | Sunday | 2 | 7.00pm | Advent Carol Service | St Alban's, Leura |
| | Sunday | 9 | 6.00pm | Lessons and Carols | St John's Birchgrove, Balmain |
| | Friday | 14 | 7.30pm | Lessons and Carols | St Peter's, Cremorne |
| | Saturday | 15 | | Carols at the Solomon Islands Consulate. | "The Oaks", Oakhurst |
| | Sunday | 23 | 7.30pm | Lessons and Carols | St John's, Gordon |
| | Monday | 24 | 11.00pm | Midnight Mass | St John's Birchgrove, Balmain |

This list is current now, but still subject to change.



TCS at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Randwick – June 2012

TCS is available to sing at weddings. Contact us if you are interested.

Two recent weddings at St John's Gordon:

Comments from satisfied customers!

"What can we say? The ceremony was SO beautiful and meaningful and made so by your amazing contribution. It was such a privilege to have your beautiful singing which made the ceremony a moving and spiritual occasion."



"The music was magnificent and the Church just sounded like it was filled with angels."

JANET LONG - A RECENT TCS MEMBER AND ALTO.

I started coming to St John's at Gordon about twelve months ago after a dear friend shared how nurturing to her spirit the services, music and community were here. I had spent the last ten years drifting further and further from my faith, and deeper and deeper into scepticism. I started attending the 9.30 services and felt my faith renewed. After about 6 months I joined the parish choir. At the first rehearsal I sat next to a pleasant lady called Jan Kneeshaw... I auditioned for the TCS the next week. I saw TCS as a way of expressing my faith and of helping to create environments in which people could find peace and encouragement.



Janet Long with Bp Hurford and Guild Chair Madeleine Rowles (member of TCS).

I have greatly enjoyed singing every week and working hard for services and concerts. The last time I sang regularly in a choir was 1978 and I don't play an instrument so it has been a steep learning curve.

On a roll with the singing I heard about the Preliminary Certificate in Church Music from the Guild of Church Musicians with interest and decided to have a go. The requirements seemed reasonable: an essay on some aspect of church music that you were interested in and some sight reading and discussion of the music after the examiner watched the choir in action.

I was fascinated by the commonly held belief that singing was good for you, the more so because I felt it had indeed "done me good" so I started my essay by looking at this. I found studies have shown community singing can empirically increase one's sense of wellbeing. The benefits of deep, controlled breathing, the social, co-operative interaction of a choir, and even the concentration required to read the notes, watch one's diction, pitch and dynamics are all thought to contribute. Someone even showed that stress hormones decrease and may boost immune function when we sing. I then found some material on the place of singing in the church, how the music fitted into the service of Holy Communion and that led to me compiling a very brief history of church music. An eclectic essay indeed but one I found fascinating.

Outside of choir ... I live in Hornsby and have a husband, a mixed family of married children and step children and one step grand-daughter. I am a nurse but have had two career changes: once into plant ecology and now into health services research. I am in my third year of a PhD at the University of NSW using network science to understand (and hopefully work out how to improve) clinical networks.

JANET LONG

Alto



While the two Janets achieved the Archbishop's Preliminary Certificate in Church Music,

David Shergold needs to be congratulated for having been awarded his ACertCM - THE ARCHBISHOPS' CERTIFICATE IN CHURCH MUSIC:

“ Successful candidates may wear the academic hood and append the letters ACertCM to their name.”

- which David is now able to do with pride! Jan -Ed.



THE CATHEDRAL SINGERS AT ST IVES UNITING CHURCH

On the afternoon of Sunday, 16th September, a capacity audience listened, enthralled, to the most sublime recital of sacred music by The Cathedral Singers, directed from the organ by Jim Abraham.

The program included works from the major periods of music, from the early Italian Pitoni, to Bach and Haydn, to excerpts from the Mass in G by the 18 year old Franz Schubert, to the English composers Attwood, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, Stanford, Elgar and John Ireland, to the Franco-Belgian César Franck, through to two exquisitely sensitive performances of the music of John Rutter, during which, incidentally, quite a number of audience members were moved to tears, then onto the delightful Howard Goodall setting of Psalm 23, familiar to all “Vicar of Dibley” followers! And not to forget the beautiful “Faithful Shepherd, Feed me” by the contemporary Australian composer, Colin Brumby. And to top off this wonderfully generous program, we were treated to a selection of organ solos from Jim Abraham – unusual and beautiful works by Lefebure-Wely, S.S. Wesley, D. Bourgois and G. Thomas.

I understand that the Cathedral Singers were very happy with the acoustics and during the concert the audience seemed to hold its collective breath! No-one wanted the music to end, but when this did happen, the Singers’ final gift was an unforgettable a capella arrangement by Andrew Carter of ‘The Teddy Bears’ Picnic’ – what a surprise, and what a great finale!

We hope this will be just the first of many visits by this wonderful group of musicians.
Thank you so much

ROSEMARY OSBORNE
St Ives Uniting Church Member.



ARCADIA MUSICAL RECITALS 2012 SERIES

Concerts in the Chapel of St Benedict's Monastery 121 Arcadia Road, Arcadia.

We have been subscribing to the Arcadia Musical Recitals for the past ten years, and have enjoyed quite a variety of musical presentations over that time.

On Sunday 28th October, we attended what was the third in the Arcadia Musical Recitals 2012 series, to listen to The Cathedral Singers perform a varied programme of liturgical and lay music in the Chapel of the St Benedict's Monastery at Arcadia.



We were particularly looking forward to a vocal concert in the newly renovated chapel, given the improved acoustics. The Cathedral Singers, with their magnificent uplifting voices, certainly demonstrated the great benefit afforded by the huge improvement to the venue.

The choir was accompanied by their director, Mr Jim Abraham, on the chapel organ, who managed to work around the many idiosyncrasies of this historic instrument.

The first half of the concert contained pieces by Pitoni, Schubert, Bach, Faure, Franck and S.S. Wesley, which demonstrated the versatility and range of the choir. Each piece was introduced by Jim Abraham's wife, Melissa, who provided an enormous amount of history, interspersed with some quite humorous anecdotes. In addition to what was outlined in the programme, we had two additional items. Melissa, in the first half played trumpet and in the second half played tuba, both accompanied by Jim on the organ. Both pieces were very pleasing to our ears and these displayed her great versatility.

After a short break, the concert resumed with pieces by Ireland, Attword, Stanford, Mozart, Brumby, Rutter, Goodall and Holst, completing the second half of an absolutely outstanding concert.



Jim and Melissa Abraham Photos – Marcel de Maria

We were then treated to an encore with a most unusual content. The Cathedral Singers gave us their rendition of the Teddy Bear's Picnic, which concluded the afternoon's performance on a very happy note.

All in all, a great afternoon's entertainment. The general consensus post performance, was that many of the Arcadia subscribers would certainly enjoy hearing TCS again on a future occasion.

The concert was topped off with refreshments, served in the cloisters, which presented an opportunity to meet the members of the choir over a cup of tea.

HELEN AND ROBERT PLANT:

- Members of The Anglican Church of St. John the Evangelist, Gordon
- Subscribers to the Arcadia Musical Recital Series
- Supporters of The Cathedral Singers



TCS AT ST JOHN'S CHURCH, BALMAIN.

On Sunday 4th November, TCS was privileged to be part of the re-dedication of their historic Organ as part of the Mass. There were various pieces commissioned for the occasion including a setting of Psalm 150 by Graeme Rawson, a friend of Balmain. Although Graeme was unable to be present we were very pleased to be involved. – Ed.

BALMAIN

Something about the organ

St John's Pipe Organ was originally ordered from the company of Griffin & Lego in 1913 and after being built was dedicated in July 1915. We understand it to be one of ten built by that company with only five surviving without significant alteration. St John's Organ essentially survives in its original configuration. It is seen to be unique because it was built at the beginning of the 1st World War by an Australian company at a time when few Organs were constructed because of a shortage of manpower, materials and available funds.

The Organ has been used for Sunday Services and occasional services (Weddings, Funerals etc) over the past 97 years and therefore due to normal 'wear and tear' was in need of restoration work. After professional assessment it was deemed to be worthy of being preserved as "a rare example of indigenous organ building from the early 20th century" (Dr.Kelvin Hastie). We give thanks that through a Heritage Grant from the NSW Government and many generous benefactors this was made possible. The Restoration was undertaken by D A & C M Pitchford and took 10 months to complete. The Organ Consultant who audited the project was Peter Kneeshaw.



It was rededicated at a Solemn Choral Eucharist for the Feast of All Saints' on 4th November 2012 . Thanks is given to all those who have been involved in this work. The Organ will once again provide beautiful music for those who now worship at St John's and for generations to come.

FR JAMES BUTT

Rector

GABRIEL FAURÉ'S REQUIEM AT A MASS FOR ALL SOULS' DAY AT ST JOHN'S DEE WHY.

On Monday 5 November Gabriel Fauré's Requiem was performed at a Mass for All Souls' Day at St John's Anglican Church in Dee Why.

The performance combined The Cathedral Singers with an eighteen piece orchestra drawn largely from students of the NSW Conservatorium of Music, and including harpist Verna Lee-Brown and St John's Director of Music Tim Swales at the organ. The soloists were Tanith Bryce (soprano) and Craig Everingham (baritone). The conductor for the performance was Jim Abraham, director of TCS.

The Mass was celebrated by St John's Rector, Fr Steven Salmon, with more than 200 people in attendance.

Afterwards at a supper in the Parish Centre suitable presentations were made.

This is the fifth year St John's has hosted this Requiem which has been made possible by the generosity of Gregory and Carr, Funeral Directors, and the Music Performance Unit of UNSW.



This was a very beautiful and moving occasion and that was expressed by all as they left the Church. Many in attendance had been with us each year we have hosted this performance.

The Cathedral Singers are regular visitors to St John's and it is always a pleasure to welcome them.

ROBYN COUCH

Rector's Warden at St John's Dee Why.

Sponsor a Scholar

Contact us:

By Mail: **PO Box 569 GORDON NSW 2072**

By email: **tcs@cathedralsingers.org.au**

By phone: **02 9144 4915** Mobile: **0411 785 117**

The Cathedral Singers “mans” the Berries and Bubbly Stall at St John’s.

In keeping with the TCS tradition of enjoying the odd bottle – or three, the choir once again ran the “Champagne and Strawberries” stall (otherwise known as the “Berries and Bubbly Stall“) at the St John’s Gordon Fete, making an obscene amount of money for so early in the day selling glasses with free bubbly included and having a great time while we did it.

You will note that we are working under the shadow of the TCS banner, this time saying ‘Want a tune-up? Join *The Cathedral Singers*’..... in true Dave Lewis style.



The official SJG photographer, Rob, just happened to take some incriminating photos of the Director and Chair working together to prepare for the onslaught, with Jan’s daughter-in-law – Serena the supporter, selling to Fr Keith and others.



Seriously, though, TCS are really appreciative of the support that we get from St John’s, not only in the fact that we can store our music, rehearse, generally make a nuisance of ourselves there, but also in the support we get from clergy, wardens, musicians and parishioners. It might even be said that we are a mutual admiration society.

We were only too happy to help in the Fete held recently, raising money for their Community Outreach Program among other things.

Here Serena is talking to Leanne Winter, wife of James Winter, our link with the parish, with Bill Killinger in the background - the organiser extraordinaire, who ran the Fete.



Jan Kneeshaw
Also in SJG Choir



VALE – Peter McMillan

Peter McMillan, Emeritus Director of Music at St Paul’s Burwood, OAM, ARSCM, passed away on 11th September, after a year’s battle with cancer.

He was brought up in Strathfield where he sang in the choir at St Anne’s, and studied organ with Faunce Allman (St James King Street), then Mervyn Byers (St Andrew’s Cathedral) and Warwick Mehaffey (St Anne’s). He chose a career in printing, being awarded Apprentice of the Year before joining the family business, but

church music was his passion, and subsequently held “organist/choirmaster” posts in Balmain, Mosman and Waverley.

In 1977 he was appointed to Burwood, and quickly developed the parish choir so that within a few months, ABC radio and television broadcasts were offered. The choir also sang regularly in St Andrew’s Cathedral. The eminent English Organist Arthur Wills, of Ely Cathedral visited Australia and “The choir of St Paul’s Burwood” was invited as Associate Artist for the recital in the concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House.

Peter moved back St Anne’s Strathfield in 1988 and his choir followed. Here, there was another telecast and other special events including a CD recording commissioned by Radio 2MBS (“Fine Music”). After 13 years at Strathfield, Peter and the choir returned to Burwood.

From 1979 his choir gave a Christmas “Lessons and Carols Service in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Ashfield, with its excellent acoustic. The next year, Peter instigated the monthly service of Vespers with included guest choristers.

For some years, Peter served on the Royal School of Church Music Committee and received the award of Associate of the RSCM as well as the Order of Australia Medal for his services to church music.



He also coached young organists who went on to great achievements.

In the 1980s, he held mini summer schools at his holiday home in Tasmania, the second of which was directed by the late Christopher Dearnley (formerly of Salisbury and St Paul’s Cathedrals, UK). He was very generous with this time, talents and financial assistance; his placid nature endeared him to his choristers.

When the Cathedral Singers had to find a new rehearsal “home”, he agreed to share his rehearsal and storage space at Burwood, with the Rector’s blessing!

He will be greatly missed.

PAULINE THOMAS

Alto.

Pauline has sung at St Paul’s Burwood for many years. Various TCS members also sang at the Chapel of the Good Shepherd and many more fondly remember TCS rehearsing at St Paul’s. – Ed.

CD Order/Donation Form



The Cathedral Singers



TCS Sings Evensong



Lo! The Star

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr/Other _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

Enclosed is my cheque/money order for: (✓ Tick appropriate box/s)

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD 3 “Lo! The Star” @ \$20 each _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD 2 “The Cathedral Singers” @ \$20 each _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD 4 “The Cathedral Singers Sing Evensong” @ 20each _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD 2 + CD 4 @ \$30 _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD 2 + CD 4 + CD3 @ \$50 _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> + Postage and handling @ \$5 per CD _____ | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation for our ongoing ministry _____ | \$ _____ |
| Total: | \$ _____ |

Cheques should be made payable to “The Cathedral Singers Inc”

Postal address: The Cathedral Singers PO Box 569 Gordon NSW 2072

Please email us for further details: tcs@cathedralsingers.org.au

or ring Jan Kneeshaw on 9144 4915 or 0411 785 117

More details on our website: www.cathedralsingers.org.au

All donations of \$2.00 and over are tax deductible