



# Edington Music Festival Association Newsletter

Summer 2004

## *From the Editor*

WELCOME to the summer edition of the newsletter. Jonathan Arnold completed his work as the first editor of the newsletter with the Winter 2004 edition. The Association is very grateful for his help throughout this time and I am happy to build on his foundation.

Following a suggestion from a member of the Association we have the second profile of one of our Festival directors. There is also an enthusiastic contribution from one of the choristers of the Nave Choir at last year's Festival. This item originally appeared in the Durham Cathedral Choir Association Newsletter, and we are grateful to the editor of that publication and to David Quinn and his parents for allowing us to use it.

There is news of the CD recorded by the Schola Cantorum in the Priory immediately following last year's Festival. We are grateful to all those involved in this project. Please reward their efforts by purchasing and enjoying the CD. Julian Thomas, the new Festival Director, introduces the theme of this year's Festival.

I wish all those who have the opportunity of participating in the Festival a great week of music and liturgy.

May I ask all taxpayers who have not completed a gift aid form to consider the benefit of doing so, as the Association would receive an additional 28% on your membership subscription from the Inland Revenue, thus enabling us to give even greater support to the Festival.

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## *Annual General Meeting of the Edington Music Festival Association*

THE AGM will be held in the Priory on Monday, 23 August 2004 starting at 2.30pm. Please let the secretary, Joy Cooke know of any matters which you feel should be discussed at least seven days in advance of the meeting. Contact details can be found at the bottom of the Editor's Letter. The draft agenda is as follows:

*Prayers; Apologies; Minutes of the previous AGM;  
Matters Arising; Chairman's Report; Treasurer's  
Report; Election of Officers; Any Other Business;  
Date of Next Meeting*

## *Edington Festival 2004—The Theme*

HAVING GROWN UP with the Festival first as a chorister and more recently in the Schola, one of the things which has struck me is the way that such a disparate group of individuals comes together to be a corporate body for the Festival week. As Maurice Bird wrote (in Issue 6 of the EMFA newsletter): 'The really important point underlying the whole Festival is that those involved quickly become part of a real Christian community.'

It was this idea of community and corporate being which I have taken as the theme for this year's Festival. Obviously there are a good many monastic models from which to choose, but I feel that one of the most suitable to modern life is the Rule of St Benedict. In it he gives guidance on a whole range of subjects, from spiritual matters to the practical arrangements for looking after the monastery buildings. The daily themes I have chosen are merely a selection of such topics: the ministry of Welcome; the need for Humility; Faith and Prayerfulness; Gifts and Talents; Obedience and Penitence; Zeal and Love; and Divine Majesty. They are all themes which, it seems to me, underlie much of Benedict's thoughts and I hope they will challenge us all to think about our role in the community.

Once again this year I am delighted that we have been able to commission a new work: *Sancte Pater Benedicte* to tie in with the St Benedict theme. It has been composed by Elena Vorotko, a senior student at the Royal Academy of Music, and will be sung as the Introit on the Wednesday broadcast by the Consort. Alongside this, and a number of other new pieces, there will be the usual mix of familiar and less well-known works: Kenneth Leighton's Second service (Magnificat and Nunc dimittis) to celebrate the 75th anniversary of his birth, William Byrd's *Infelix ego*, William Harris's *Faire is the heaven* and Francisco Guerrero's *Surge propera anima mea* to name but a few. Of particular note will be the setting of the evening canticles for Magdalen College, Oxford, by Herbert Howells (all too rarely performed) and on the Friday evening there will be a solemn Requiem Mass with movements from the Mozart Requiem. Needless to say, the Schola will form the backbone of the Festival with their

atmospheric performances of the plainsong which would have been so familiar to Benedictine monks.

As many of you know there have been a number of changes in personnel this year, with amongst others, the Revd. Dr. Graham Southgate having started as Vicar shortly after the last Festival, and myself having taken over from Peter Barley as Festival Director. I end where I began though in stating that the Festival is all about the corporate body, both Festival participants and congregation alike, and I look forward to seeing you all in August to be part of that community.

JULIAN THOMAS  
*Festival Director*

## *Edington Festival 2003— A Chorister's View*

HUGH AND I were asked to represent Durham Cathedral at the Edington Music Festival from the 17th to 24th August 2003. Edington, a small village in Wiltshire, has hosted a festival of music in its 14th century Priory Church for one week in August every year since 1956, so we were delighted to accept. This year's Festival theme was the Psalms.

Our parents took us down to Edington. Everyone was asked to arrive at the Church Hall by 2.30pm. It was there that we were told where we were staying. The local residents provide accommodation for the Festival. Hugh and I were staying at the Manor House with Mr and Mrs Edwards.

At 4.00pm our parents left, and we were fitted with robes. These were red cassocks with a white surplice and a white cravat. We had supper, then rehearsals, and finally sang *Compline* at 9.15pm. Our hosts came and collected us from the Priory after the service.

We were singing in the Nave Choir, which was all men and boys, but there was also a consort of mixed voices. The Nave Choir had 16 trebles, 5 altos, 4 tenors and 5 basses. The trebles came from Durham, Westminster Abbey, Southwark, Wells, St Paul's, Westminster Cathedral, Salisbury and Dublin.

There were lots of activities arranged for us of an afternoon. We were taken to the swimming baths, the cinema to see *Pirates of the Caribbean*, to an air museum where we sat in Concorde's cockpit and to the Longleat

Safari Park (which has the largest maze in the UK). We played cricket one afternoon and on the Saturday night after Evensong there was a bonfire and firework display.

On the Wednesday we did a Choral Evensong in the afternoon instead of the Solemn Evensong at 8.00pm. This was broadcast live on BBC radio 3. At Thursday's Solemn Eucharist I was asked to read from the Gospel of Saint Luke and finally, at our final service on the Sunday, I was asked to sing the solo in the Berkley Missa Brevis.

Hugh and I thought the Festival was great and, if asked, we would gladly go again.

DAVID QUINN

*Head Chorister at Durham Cathedral*

### *Festival Website*

WE WISH TO DEVELOP a Festival website and would be grateful if anyone able to create and/or maintain a website would contact the editor.

### *Profile of Jeremy Summerly— Director of the Consort*

JEREMY SUMMERLY is Head of Academic Studies at the Royal Academy of Music, a freelance writer/presenter for BBC Radios 3 & 4, and founder-conductor of Oxford Camerata.

Jeremy started his musical life as a chorister at Lichfield Cathedral where he sang, played the violin and piano, and began to compose. At Winchester College he added conducting and playing the viol to his musical portfolio and from Winchester he gained a choral scholarship to New College, Oxford. It was in 1980—while he was in his first year at New College—that Jeremy was approached by the senior organ scholar (Geoffrey Webber) who asked if Jeremy might like to join the Edington Consort which would involve playing the violin, viola, treble viol, and bass viol, as well as singing. After that baptism by fire, Jeremy then sang bass in the Nave choir for the next two years.

After leaving Oxford, Jeremy headed to London where he took up a graduate traineeship with the BBC as a Studio Manager. This meant learning how to be a radio balance engineer—a childhood ambition, which proved to be even more exciting than he could ever have imagined. Geoffrey Webber asked Jeremy if he would re-form the Edington Consort the following summer (1983).

Jeremy's work as a sound technician took him to Bush House for 18 months (where he worked in the World Service and all the foreign-language services) and thereafter to Broadcasting House where he worked for Radios 1–4 and where his specialty became live news broadcasting. On 22 May 1984 Jeremy conducted the first concert of his

newly-formed vocal ensemble Oxford Camerata. Then, as now, membership of Oxford Camerata and the Edington Consort has always been similar—try comparing the names in an Edington Companion with an Oxford Camerata CD made in the same year.

In 1987, while Jeremy was still working as a full-time Studio Manager at the BBC, he enrolled as an Masters student in Historical Musicology at King's College, London and began to sing bass in the choir of St Margaret's, Westminster. In 1989 he landed a short-term contract as a lecturer at the Royal Academy of Music and in 1990 he was appointed conductor of Schola Cantorum of Oxford (a three-year appointment which lasted six years). In 1991 he was made a professor at the Royal Academy of Music and at the same time he began working as a freelance presenter for Radio 3. In 1996 he was appointed Head of Academic Studies at the Academy and became a regular presenter of Radio 3's weekly programme *Choir Works*. As a BBC Radio 3 writer and presenter Jeremy has made programmes in locations all around the UK as well as in Belgium, France, Holland, Iceland, Israel, and the USA and since January 2003 he has also been a regular contributor to BBC Radio 4's daily arts programme *Front Row*.

Over the last dozen years Jeremy has conducted forty CDs and many of these CDs have been inspired by music which Jeremy first conducted at Edington: a particular favourite is *Renaissance Masterpieces* on the Naxos label (8.550843) which is entirely made up of music which the Edington Consort broadcast on Radio 3's Choral Evensong between the mid-'80s and the early-'90s. Jeremy has given concert tours throughout Europe and the United States as well as in Japan, Indonesia, Hong Kong, South Africa, and Botswana. He has conducted at the BBC Proms and at the Aldeburgh Festival, and from January 1999 until June 2002 he was Director of Music at Christ Church, Chelsea where Fr John Streeting was associate vicar at the time.

Jeremy has now been performing at the Edington Festival for well over half of his life: 2004 will be his 24th festival—if you think he's missed one out, then you should remember that he wasn't able to come to Edington in 2002 because he contrived to break his shoulder immediately after conducting Mass at Westminster Cathedral on the Feast of the Assumption!). Looking ahead to next year, 2005 will be a really big anniversary for Jeremy: he will have performed at exactly half (25 of the 50) of the Edington Festivals, and moreover he will have conducted the Consort for exactly half of his life (his 22nd season at the age of 44). Given the importance of the 50th Festival he

will try particularly hard not to break any bones (especially during the cricket match, since you may remember that in 1998 he managed to break his foot while fielding at slip). Jeremy owes an enormous debt of gratitude to everyone involved in the Edington Festival over the last quarter of a century. He would particularly like to thank his long-suffering host family the Southernns (and Antonia in particular) who have been a source of enormous support and—most importantly—great fun.

### *Schola Cantorum CD*

THE RECORDING is a plainsong service of Matins and Compline with music for St Bernard of Clairvaux and St Bartholomew. A miscellany of chant and two pieces for chamber organ are also included.

From 7 August the CD will be available by post from the Treasurer, Justin Lowe, 192a Bravington Road, West Kilburn, London, W9 3AP. Price £10 plus £1 p&p or can be purchased at the Festival.

### *Edington Parish News*

CONGRATULATIONS to Tom and Vicki of the The Lamb Inn at Edington on the birth of a son, Benjamin Mason Faulkner on Sunday, 14 March.

It is with sadness that we report the death of the artist Alan Andrews. His pictures of West Wiltshire's industrial heritage and of the buildings and landscape of Edington were widely acclaimed. Edington was Alan's home for 36 years and he will be greatly missed.

Ronald Page Loten was the village sub-postmaster for eight years until the post office was closed more than ten years ago. Ron died on 31 March 2004 aged 76.

Just in case Michael Jones did not have enough to do in his busy life around the village he has now been elected as Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for this year.

Efforts are in hand to form a Barber Shop Singing Group. John Bennett, who will be known to many of our Association members due to his involvement in the Edington Festival week, is one of those showing interest. We wish them well in their efforts.

*We're trying a new format for this newsletter and would welcome feedback.*

*We would also be pleased to receive items for future issues.*