



Edington Music Festival Association Newsletter

Spring 2006

From the Editor

AS SOME OF YOU WILL KNOW Joy and Michael Cooke (EMFA Secretary and Administrator) have moved from West Wales to Yeovil in Somerset. A move from a four-bedroom large house to a two-bedroom apartment was an interesting experience to say the least! Please note their new address is: *Michael and Joy Cooke, Apt 16, Wyndham Court, Newton Road, Yeovil, Somerset BA21 4HB. Telephone 01935 477411. Email address as before: joycooke@aol.com*

We apologise for the lateness of this edition of the newsletter.

Message from the Festival Director

YOU MAY BE INTERESTED to know that the documentary, which was filmed by the BBC during last year's festival, is now scheduled to be broadcast on **BBC2** on **Wednesday 5th April, at 7.30pm.**

News Update

ANDREW CARWOOD would like to thank all those who have expressed their support and concern over the past year during his time of ill health. He is delighted to report that having had operations in October 2005 and February and March 2006 he is now officially back to full health and looking forward to continuing his busy international career with renewed vigour. Your cards, letters and prayers have been much appreciated.

Website

WE ARE PLEASED to announce that the Edington Festival website is up and running at www.edingtonfestival.org

Edington Parish News

MANY will remember Peter Hullah who, as Bishop of Ramsbury, had been a guest preacher at the festival. He has retired from that position to return to academia as Principal of Northampton Academy, one of the new City academies.

The Musical Supper held during Festival week was a great success thanks to a great deal of hard work by volunteers from the parish. A profit of approximately £1,800 towards Church Funds was anticipated.

Annual Report 2005

AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL Meeting in August 2005, thirty-five members attended and heard the following Annual Report delivered.

The Festival Association was continuing its work in support of the Edington Festival and in the past year had been involved with the following projects:

- I *The Schola Cantorum CD. This disc, made in 2003 had been a success due to the good will of those involved—both musicians and technicians. The disc had made a profit very quickly and a 2nd pressing is now being considered.*
- II *The Association had funded the 2005 Festival commission by Judith Bingham.*
- III *Funding had also been given to the production of the Festival Companion booklet. Thanks were extended to Nick Flower for all his work involved in producing this excellent booklet.*
- IV *A trial Order of Service booklet was being used at the 2005 Festival with a view to a more permanent printed version when all parties were satisfied with the content.*

Two other points needed to be noted:

- I *The Gift Aid envelope scheme was put into operation at the 2005 Festival and it was appearing very popular. As all income received under the Gift Aid scheme is regarded as income to the Association, this would create some financial implications for the Festival. This area would receive prompt consideration by the Association Executive Committee.*
- II *John Harper (the 3rd Festival Director) had been invited to become our new President of the Association and verbal acceptance had been received.*

Future plans

All requests for future funding are to come from the Edington Festival Committee but the Association was preparing to consider an application for funding towards the cost of a website, which it is hoped will be online during 2006.

The date of the next Annual General Meeting will be Monday, 21st August 2006.

Gift Aid Scheme

THE ASSOCIATION has charitable status, which means we are able to increase our income by 28% on the payments of each member of the Association who is able to sign up to the gift aid scheme. Last year, for the first time, the Association provided gift aid envelopes at each service except for the Eucharist service on the final Sunday when traditionally the collection is given to the Parish. The envelopes were well used and there was an increase in the total collections.

Festival Director's Introduction to the 2006 Festival

FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS of last year's 50th festival, we are already well under way planning the 2006 festival, which begins on Sunday 20th August. This year we will be exploring St John's Gospel as our theme, with Jesus' 'I am' teachings (... the Good Shepherd, the Bread of Life, etc.) forming the daily focus for worship. I do hope you will be able to join us for all or some of the week.

2005 Festival

THE 50TH EDINGTON FESTIVAL of Music within the Liturgy contained many memorable highlights. The theme was 'Discipleship and the Kingdom of God' and built on the previous year's experience of the 'Rule of St Benedict'. Attendance figures were increased for most services during the week, and this was especially noticeable at Matins.

The 500th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Tallis was celebrated throughout the week but especially on Saturday, when many past participants of the Festival returned to provide a glorious rendition of *Spem in alium* under the direction of Jeremy Summerly. This was an evening in the Priory that will long be remembered by all those present. The Thursday Sequence gave recognition to the centenary of the birth of Sir Michael Tippett with a moving performance by the Consort of the Negro spirituals from *A Child of Our Time*.

The Association funded the commission of a set of Evening Canticles by Judith

Bingham. These were first heard at Evensong on Tuesday and then sung for the BBC broadcast on Wednesday. They required a great deal of hard work from the Nave Choir.

Among the clergy team, David Belcher returned for the week, and Neil Heavisides preached at the Friday evening Solemn Eucharist and presided at the Saturday morning Eucharist. A welcome new face among the team was a representative from the Church in Wales, Canon Jonathan Lean from St Davids Cathedral. Canon Bruce Ruddock, Precentor of Peterborough Cathedral was the preacher at the Tuesday Eucharist. As usual there were new faces among the choirs, and Nick Flower—a well-known face missing from the Schola—was to be found in the Consort. Once again John Barnard and Paul Wigmore provided the Festival with a very singable new hymn. All in all a 50th Festival to be remembered.

A Retrospective by Paul Rose PART I

THE CLERGY ... and of course this must begin with the fount of inspiration. RALPH DUDLEY, son of a doctor at Caxton Gibbet in Cambridgeshire, spent some of the early part of his ministry in Sri Lanka—what was then Ceylon. He worked I think with Archibald Graham Campbell, a Bishop who ended his time as an Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Peterborough but was sadly killed in a car accident. Ralph became incumbent of West Wrattling in the Diocese of Ely where he met David Calcutt, then a Choral Scholar at King's Cambridge. A gentle, friendly, obviously country parson, so seen by many of us, Ralph moved to Edington as Vicar in the early fifties. In those heady days he was just that—Edington without Bratton or anywhere else. Ralph reigned from the old vicarage at the top of the hill by the main road, with his mother and sister. He soon knew everyone around him, with pipe and pint, mostly in the George, which became for many years the social centre of the festival he now founded with David in the mid fifties—and a wry gentle smile, which said so much.

Ralph steered the festival with a great reverence for what I would call the 'Chichester-English-Catholic' way of doing things—as seen in Chichester Cathedral in the days of Arthur Duncan Jones and Canon Brown Wilkinson. Plenty of colour, and good (heavy) vestments, some of which have survived to the present day (hot summer days continue to remind us) and an interest in precious things come to mind. I recall a particularly difficult ciborium with a lid on a hinge, which appeared for use on the final Sunday. Ralph, almost meekly in the background, was at Edington from 1954 to 1981. Along with David Calcutt the festival was his; his last years were spent in retirement in a nearby village.

You will forgive me if I do not mention all those Clergy who have contributed either by a short appearance of perhaps one year, or by coming as the special preacher. Homilies were first introduced shortly after the Choral Eucharists began, at first in the chancel in the early sixties. In those early days the preacher of the homily was charged with doing so every day, Monday to Sunday—and that was quite a feat, though a privilege; but for many years now the Clergy take it in turn to occupy the pulpit, and usually get one sermon each during the week.

First then to consider briefly the three incumbents who succeeded Ralph Dudley from 1982 onwards. MAURICE BIRD, now the venerable age of 86 was another gentle Cleric who made a few changes as we all do. He introduced some much lighter linen vestments, which he had I believe obtained through a late Anglo Catholic Congress. We were wont to call them raspberry ripple; they still I believe exist but we have reverted to the much more colourful and intricate old vestments. Maurice had to live in a temporary house found for him in Erlestoke. He and his wife still appear at the festival from Wakefield today—once Edington is in your bones I suspect it must be there for ever.

Indeed Maurice's successor NEIL HEAVISIDES shares like him a connection with Southwark in which three of us have served, but Neil is also a local boy from that part of Wiltshire where Edington lies. Neil was at Edington as a server and went from there via Cambridge to be an ordinand. After serving in the North East and at Southwark Cathedral Neil came to be Vicar of Edington, and to a new house in Edington, at an earlier age than his predecessors. His serious face was easily lightened by a smile and a good guffaw. He invited many of us to continue, listened perhaps to what we had to say, and then proceeded to do his own thing. It was different but he was much appreciated, and before very long disappeared to be Precentor at Gloucester Cathedral from whence he often appears usually once during the festival week. He has been associated with the festival one way or another since 1972.

After an interregnum from 1993 until 1995 DAVID BELCHER came from the Midlands, occupied the Vicarage at Bratton and had the onerous task of welding two very different parishes together, demanding a lot of thought and no doubt patience. Another very different person as well, but he eventually obviously felt some affection for the place—in 2003 he returned to the Midlands but showed clear delight at being invited to return for the festival in 2005, when he also took part.

David also introduced the ministry of women. My own wife Judith Rose was privileged to play a part and preach in 1994

and 1999 and celebrate in 1996, since when Carolyn Hammond and Jean Hall have taken part. During David's time the annual fireworks sometimes took place in the field behind Bratton Vicarage, where his hospitality was much enjoyed.

Among those who came just once Geoffrey Beaumont deserves a mention. Famous for popularising hymn tunes, he was an unstiffmaking influence in 1967 when, as since, his particular kind of popular tune and his somewhat critical influence were different from what has become the Edington tradition. During the sixties Nicholas Hinton also introduced a number of boys from a quite different background other than the Choir Schools. These boys came from the North, and later a whole contingent came from the Birmingham area at a time when John Harper was involved at the Roman Cathedral there.

PAUL ROSE
Peterborough, October 2005

In the next issue of this newsletter, Paul will turn to those who have regularly helped among the Clergy in the first fifty years.

Compact disc offer

AS PROMISED in the previous newsletter, we are pleased to be able to offer a further Hyperion CD to Association members at the special price of £12.

Children of our time was recorded by Schola Cantorum of Oxford under the direction of Jeremy Summerly back in 1995 and was intended as a birthday tribute to Sir Michael Tippett, the choir's then Patron. Circumstances changed, however, and the disc never saw the light of day. Finally, however, it is being released (April 2006) and is a veritable gem.

At the heart of the programme are the five Negro spirituals from *A Child of Our Time* (performed by the Consort during last year's Festival). These are complemented by recordings of the winning entries in an international composition competition organized by the choir in 1995 and other works written for it around the same time. Several of the composers have been associated with Edington over the years (Francis Pott, Ruth Byrchmore, Antony Pitts), while the soloists include Michael McCarthy, Rebecca Outram and Deborah Mackay.

If you would like a copy of this exciting new recording, please send a cheque for £12 (per CD) payable to *Edington Music Festival Association* to the Honorary Treasurer: Justin Lowe, 192a Bravington Road, London W9 3AP. Provided that the treasurer is not abroad maintaining oil industry mainframes, discs will be despatched by return.