



# Edington Music Festival Association Newsletter

Summer 2012

## *The Edington Music Festival 2012* *'For everything there is a season'*

FESTIVAL WEEK at Edington is a chance to take a step back from the routine and relentlessness of our busy lives and to reflect on things that we perhaps forget all too easily during the rest of the year. It offers a chance to listen to a juxtaposition of music and words that even the normal pattern of the Church year does not allow. It is this rare opportunity that forms the inspiration for this year's Festival—'For everything there is a season'.

The Festival will take us through the seasons of the Church year, on a kind of pilgrimage from Advent to the Ascension, before concluding on the final Sunday with a celebration of Pentecost and the sending of the Holy Spirit among us as we return to our own lives and homes for another year.

The different seasons of the Church year each have their own particular character which are expressed in a wealth of music, and in celebrating them all in the same week we can look forward to a rich and varied diet of repertoire at the heart of our worship—something that has become synonymous with the Edington Festival.

On Monday we begin with the watching and waiting of Advent—*Keep awake*—before moving to a celebration on Tuesday of *God with us*, drawing on the themes of Christmas and the Epiphany. On Wednesday we move into the season of Lent—*Take up your Cross*. We are pleased that Wednesday's Evensong will once again be broadcast by the BBC, and will feature setting of the Nunc Dimittis composed in 2011 for the BBC Singers by the Director of our Nave Choir, Matthew Martin. Thanks to a generous sponsor we have also been able to commission a new introit for the service from young composer and former choral scholar of King's College, Cambridge, Edmund Rex. His piece takes its inspiration from a prayer under a Crucifix in the 15th Century St Albans Abbey—*Beneath the Cross*. Thursday's theme—*Behold the Lamb of God*—focuses on the events of Holy Week and Passiontide. The Consort will sing Poulenc's haunting *Motets pour un temps de pénitence* and Allegri's *Miserere* at the sequence of music and readings which this year is based around the fourteen Stations of the Cross.

As we move towards the end of the week we celebrate the joy of the resurrection with Eastertide music by William Byrd, John Taverner (16th century) and John Tavener (20th century). On Saturday, we are privileged to welcome the Right Reverend Michael Perham, Bishop of Gloucester, as our visiting preacher to explore the Feast of the Ascension with us. At the final Evensong of the Festival, our choirs will combine to perform the thrilling Ascensiontide anthem *Viri Galilei* by contemporary composer Patrick Gowers. At the closing Eucharist on Sunday, we look forward to hearing *The mystery of Christ*, composed by Festival participant and local resident Chris Totney and winning entry in the 2011 King James Bible composition competition.

It will be a particular joy this year to welcome to Edington on behalf of the Music Festival the Revd Mark Jones who succeeds Graham Southgate as Vicar. Mark is currently Curate of St Mary's Church, Old Basing and Lychnit in the Diocese of Winchester, and will be installed as Vicar of Edington on Thursday 12th July. We ask your prayers for him, his wife Kathy and daughter Sophie as they prepare to move.

I look forward to seeing you in Edington in August for what I hope will be another uplifting Festival week.

ASHLEY GROTE  
*Festival Director*

## *30 years of The Consort: 1983–2012*

*An interview with Eloise Irving*

THE CONSORT was formed in 1983. Jeremy Summerly, then as now, was its director, although he had to miss one year through indisposition, Paul Brough taking the reins in his stead. So in 2012 we celebrate 30 years of this superb choir which has given so much pleasure through its wonderful performances of sacred music both familiar and unfamiliar.

Having interviewed Jeremy for the Winter 2008 newsletter, it seemed appropriate to ask one of his singers to offer some insights, and I captured a spare moment with Eloise Irving in August 2011. (It is Eloise who has read most beautifully at many recent Festivals.)

Eloise has been coming to Edington since 2004, and her professional work often means she is only able to stay for a few days. Why

does she bother to come for such a short time? 'It's the atmosphere of being here, with so many people singing such wonderful music and coming to a village where you see so many welcoming people every year. It's a whole world of friends and music and companionship—a fabulous place, very special.'

I wondered how Eloise had first been invited to Edington. 'I was at St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, singing for David Trendell—I was coming in to dep.—and Jeremy turned up. He listened to me, got me to do Oxford Camerata stuff, and then he invited me to Edington. Edington is a great training ground, and certainly from my point of view it was marvellous to be introduced to lots of music I did not know. And the thing that makes Edington so special is performing music within the liturgy—it's not a concert.'

I mentioned Jeremy's conducting style, commenting that he didn't seem to do very much, but what he did do seemed important. 'He offers you the space and freedom to give your own interpretation, and it's a matter of looking and observing what people are doing. In the end you are being driven by someone who is absolutely on top of the music, which is great.'

Eloise—I probably should have known this, but didn't—is an actress as well as a singer, and is often away on tour. One year our Festival clashed with one of these tours, meaning that Eloise could not come—except that she had Mondays off. So she arrived on the Sunday for Compline, stayed through Monday (reading a lesson at evensong!) and then disappeared. 'It is so difficult to have to leave Edington like that, and for the rest of the week I followed the Festival through the Companion, imagining I was there.'

We continued chatting in like vein for a long time. It is so rewarding for all of us involved in the Festival to know that the Edington experience draws forth such positive reactions.

As for the Consort, they regularly thrill us with their wonderful performances—it is no surprise that the Thursday Sequence has become one of the best attended services of the week—and we look forward to much more in the future.

JOHN BARNARD

## Edington Music Festival Association

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Edington Music Festival Association will be held in Edington Priory Church on Monday, 20 August 2012 commencing at 15.00 hrs.

### AGENDA

1. Prayers
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting
4. Matters Arising
5. Chairman's Report
6. Treasurer's Report  
*Financial Report  
& Adoption of Accounts*
7. Election of Officers
8. Organ Appeal
9. Plans for 2012/2013
10. Any other business
11. Date of next AGM

Any member wishing to place an item on the Agenda is asked to submit this in writing by letter or email to the Administrator by Monday 6 August.

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## The pub at Edington

FOR YEARS we knew it as *The Lamb*, but when it re-opened last year it had been renamed *The Paulet Arms*. Well, it's now become *The Three Daggers*. The good news is: it's in its usual place, it still serves food and drink, and it's still a pub!

## An interview with Paul Rose

GIVE OR TAKE A YEAR, Paul Rose has been coming to Edington for 50 years now; and this seemed the moment to talk with him about the Festival and what it has meant to him.

Paul first came to Edington when he was a vicar in Torquay. He was celebrating Mass one day in 1962 when David Calcutt appeared, wanting to invite Paul to the Festival. 'How on earth he came to dig me out I am not quite sure, except that he and I had been members of a choir in Cambridge.' So he already knew you, I suggested. 'Remotely. He must have thought that this chap was worth bamboozling.' So Paul and the then Chaplain of King's College, Cambridge came to form a clergy team with Ralph Dudley who up to then had been on his own.

'The Festival had initially been evensongs, and in 1962 they decided they wanted to have a Eucharist. For some years there were three priests. In those days there was just the

Nave Choir and a small plainsong group.' I commented that there was no plainsong group in 1971 when I first came, so that must have bitten the dust somewhere along the way.

I mentioned a book of Paul's Edington homilies on the *Te Deum* that I had bought some years ago. 'In 1964 it was decided we should have homilies, and the homilies were to be no longer than four minutes and you preached the whole week. I did that in 1964 and 1967. After a time it became more sensible that we should have a different preacher each day.'

Those homilies were much briefer than the sermons we have nowadays, I added. 'Deliberately and quite rightly,' said Paul without the slightest hesitation. 'They have become lengthy sermons now.'

I mentioned that Graham Southgate had been drawing in lots of local clergy to be part of the team. 'That's a good thing, although I do feel the ideal is that we should be a college of clergy who meet and pray and worship together.'

With 50 years of participation behind him, I wanted to know what Edington had meant to Paul. A great deal, especially now that I have long been retired, although I go to Peterborough Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and Southwark Cathedral from time to time. To come down here to the worship, the atmosphere and the quite excellent singing, which seems to get better every year, is very special. Early on you had to be invited. These days it seems to happen automatically.' So you just appear, I joked. You have to be un-invited now!

It was a joy to reminisce with Paul about so many aspects of the Festival and particularly its early years. If he is grateful to the Festival for what it has offered him in his spiritual life, we can only respond by thanking him for what he has offered us in return, not least through his consistently fine preaching. We look forward to much more!

JOHN BARNARD

## Musical Dinner & Auction in aid of The Edington Organ Project

PARALLELS BETWEEN THE PALACE of Westminster and Edington Priory Church might normally be hard to draw, but on 19th April the two came together in the form of a Musical Dinner and Auction in aid of the organ project.

Such functions are only possible by invitation from a Member of one of the Houses of Parliament, and ours was hosted by Dr Andrew Murrison, MP for South West Wiltshire. It was held in the Strangers' Dining Room, with a Menu interspersed with musical interludes by the Festival Singers.

If the food was well up to the standard of the sometime 'Lamb' (served as the main course), the music itself might not find a place in the Priory itself, but was entirely suited to an evening of fun and good company.

Ashley Grote acted as Master of Ceremonies, offering himself as Lot no 7, organist for any upcoming wedding or christening, while James Bowman demonstrated his considerable skill as an entertaining auctioneer, encouraging competition for the 10 unlikely offerings, all charitably donated. Combined with a raffle of more modest prizes the occasion raised £3536 towards the Organ Appeal.

RICHARD MALINS

## A Londoner in Edington ...

A CITY-DWELLER like me does not often find himself driving down single-track roads. Edington's Greater Lane is one such, and during last year's Festival I was not far from the top of it when a van approached from the other direction. I backed up, but after having gone some way was not at all sure where the next passing point might be. At this stage I looked round to discover that the van had disappeared. Clearly the driver had backed up too, so I engaged first gear and headed back up the road. And yes, we met again at the exact point where we had first encountered each other ...

JOHN BARNARD

## Compact disc offer

IN CASE anyone was unaware of where Andrew Carwood had disappeared to, we've found him! His role as Director of Music at St Paul's Cathedral in London finds him leading the choir's first commercial recording in over a decade.

Joined by the St Paul's Mozart Orchestra and a quartet of renowned soloists, this long-standing source of Edington trebles gives sparkling performances of a selection of Mozart's sacred music. Commissioned to be sung during the Salzburg liturgy, all these compositions are suffused with Mozart's typically unerring sense of dramatic pacing and a sensuous, operatic treatment of solo lines, as well as crisp and energetic choral writing.

Discs are £12 each. If you would like to order, please send a cheque payable to Edington Music Festival Association to the Editor of this newsletter: John Barnard, 34 Queens Walk, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 1XS.

