

Heritage Masterworks Chorale

July 2015



WELCOME...

...to the Heritage Masterworks Chorale second newsletter.

If you saw Issue No 1, we hope that you enjoyed it and that this issue will be just as exciting. If not, take a look at the feast of musicality in this issue.

In this issue we will feature one of the composers from our repertoire, review events in which we have performed and not forgetting our featured choir member.

Also, if you have any comments or ideas for items you would like to see in the newsletter, we would love to hear from you. Tell us about your choir experiences. Email us at hmchorale@outlook.com.

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Choir Events



On 21st March 2015 at Holy Trinity Church, Meanwood, Leeds, the choir was joined by singers from as far as North Yorkshire and Birmingham at the 'Bring and Sing' Faure's Requiem.

The day started at 10.00am with singers getting to know one another over tea, coffee and some delicious cakes provided by the ladies of the church.

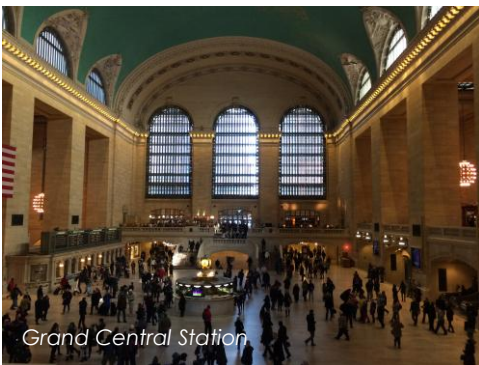
There were approximately 35 singers and space was at a premium so the seating of singers proved a challenge. However, Alan, or Smiffy as most of the choir refers to him, sorted it with his usual ease and finesse, leaving plenty of time to rehearse.

Mr Knight, our trusty Musical Director, led the rehearsal and it was not long before there was a wonderfully, harmonious sound emanating around the church.

The day culminated in a well-attended performance after approximately 4 hours of practice. Everyone that attended had a great time.

New York, New York

February 2015 (Part 2)

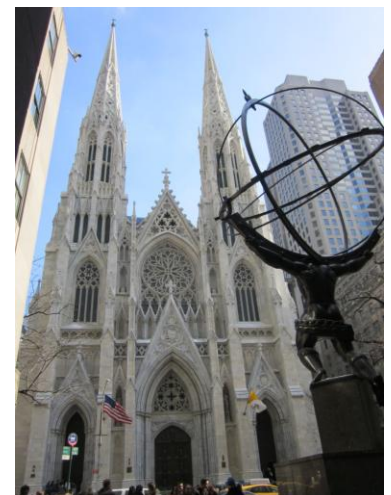


As mentioned in the first issue members, along with those from the sister choir – The Heritage Singers, visited New York for a five nights in February.

The first full day was a free day to take in the sights of New York. Places visited included Ellis Island, with the Statue of Liberty, The Rockefeller Building, The Empire State Building, walking in a very cold and snowy Central Park and shopping at Macy's and many of the other well-known stores.

After the, not quite so relaxing, free day, the choir rehearsed at a studio on Eighth Avenue followed by the first concert at St Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue. The cathedral was a very busy place with visitors wandering around and many others taking a seat to listen to a varied repertoire including William Croft's Burial Sentences. You can listen to the recording here, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubKkzOPINs4&feature=youtu.be>.

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Upcoming event

A Choral Journey – Saturday 12th September 2015

We are absolutely delighted to announce a new concert date here in our home city, and in the beautifully restored St Marks Woodhouse Church, this concert will feature music by Randall Thompson and Craig Courtney representing America (a series of photos from the choirs tour to America earlier this year will be displayed) - also a range of new repertoire from our 2015/6 concert plans and some music from



our Belgium tour. Get the date in your diaries.

The music will be by a Kaleidoscope of composers, some new to us and some that have only been heard on our touring events - we very much look forward to seeing you. To book tickets go to <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/masterworks-30-a-choral-journey-tickets-16398094141> or click on the image above.

St Marks is Leeds' only remaining 'Waterloo' church – that is, the only remaining one of three churches built in Leeds as a result of the 1818 Church Building Act, during which parliament provided one million pounds for churches to be built in expanding urban areas following the Battle of Waterloo and subsequently the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Leeds was growing owing to the industrial revolution and more churches were required to accommodate the increasing population. St Mark's was consecrated on 13th January 1826. The church was initially a preaching box with galleries but was restored and refurbished in 1873 to make the altar the focal point during worship following the Oxford Movement.



Interior with galleries

The area was home to wealthy factory owners in the early nineteenth century but their large houses were demolished in the late 1800s to make way for streets of terraced houses for workers. It was the residents of these streets for whom St Mark's, with its associated church hall, Sunday school, day school, soup kitchen, church institute and almshouses, would be a spiritual home and centre of activity until the urban development of the 1960s, during which time the building stood largely in isolation before new housing was built.

In 1985 the parish was joined with St Augustine, Wrangthorn, with St Mark's being declared redundant in 2001. After a period of neglect, the building was bought by Gateway church in 2006. Following the sourcing of funds, a programme of restoration and internal refurbishment commenced in 2011. Gateway church held its first meeting in the church on 2nd March 2014. In the hands of Gateway church, St Mark's is now home to a vibrant Evangelical congregation and the building lives once



After closure

more as a living and breathing centre for worship and other events in the heart of Woodhouse.

By Matthew Lazenby



Refurbished interior

Featured Composer



Josef Rheinberger is one of the composers whose music is used in the repertoire of the choir. Here is a brief history of his life.

Born 17th March 1839 in Vaduz, Lichtenstein, Rheinberger was a keen musician from an early age, being organist at Vaduz Parish Church at the age of seven, performing his first composition when he was eight, and, just two years later, studying under Philip M. Schmutzer in Feldkirch, Vorarlberg.

Finally in 1851, he entered Munich Conservatorium, with permission from his father who had not wanted him to pursue a musical career.

After graduating, he became professor of piano and composition at the Conservatorium, which was, unfortunately, suspended so Rheinberger took up the position of répétiteur at Court Theatre until 1867. Here he was responsible for the premiere performance of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* in 1865. His own opera, *Die Sieben Raben* (The Seven Ravens) op. 20, was performed at the theatre in 1869.

Franziska "Fanny" von Haffnaass, a poetess and ex-pupil of Rheinberger, eight years his senior, was the love of his life. They married in 1867 but had no children. She wrote texts to accompany his vocal works and he put music to her poems. As she spoke many languages, she handled his correspondence. They were together until her death in 1892 after being ill for some time.

He was a well-known teacher and taught many students, including some Americans such as George Whitefield Chadwick, Bruno Klein and Henry Holden Huss along with the German composer, Humperdinck.

Brahms, Mendelsohn, Schuman, Schubert and Bach were composers that influenced his style of work. He dedicated two of his works, *Two Piano Recitals* op. 45 and the *Missa in G* op. 187, to Brahms.

His other works include 18 masses and 4 requiems, 2 *stabat maters*, as well as 36 motets. The Heritage Masterworks Chorale perform his *Abenleid* which is set to the text from Luke's gospel:

Bleib' bei uns, denn es will Abend werden,
und der Tag hat sich geneiget.

Remain with us, for it will be evening
And the day has drawn to a close

If you would like to listen to the song go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqzRWGhgGuI> where you can find it being performed by UniversitätsChor München. Alternatively, book tickets for the choir event on 12th September 2015.

Rheinberger died in Munich in 1901. Sadly, his grave was destroyed during The Second World War. There is a memorial to him Vaduz where his remains were transferred in 1950.

Featured Choir Member



I was entered to sing at a music festival when I was 6 years old and had no idea why, other than it seemed to me that everyone in my family sang! We had often given family concerts in chapels near Truro in Cornwall and it just seemed to me that singing was what we all did! Little did I know that the music festival was only a warm up for an audition to become a choral scholar at Truro Cathedral, where I spent 7 happy years learning how to sing the finest church music under the tutelage of Organist and Choir Master, John Winter and his deputy Henry Doughty. I was very privileged and had the joy of singing over 2500 Cathedral services and many more rehearsals. I sang at the Queen's visit for the Cathedral Jubilee celebrations and her majesty asked me if I had cut short my holiday especially to sing at the occasion. We did choir tours and perhaps one of the most unusual ones was a trip to the Isles of Scilly where after one concert we met Harold Wilson (ex Prime Minister at the time). Musical highlights were: singing the part of Ham in Benjamin's Britten's Noyes Flood in a big Cathedral production with Orchestra and professional singers. Benjamin Luxon was Noye and a few of us had to act and sing on top of a mighty Ark in the Naive. The annual rendition of the Miserere and the big anthems like "I was Glad" by Parry reverberated around the building as did the Father Willis organ. The Nine Lessons and Carols service came from Truro originally and that was perhaps the best moment of the year. One major honour was to sing the "Once in Royal" first verse to a full building. You could hear a pin drop! I equally enjoyed the daily routine and singing psalms really well. I still have recordings from that time and notably Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols". If anyone wants to know just how lucky I was, there is a great video on You Tube which tells you about a day in the life of a Truro Cathedral Chorister -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eb8Sge8F6Y&index=5&list=PLJM46sn_zkH1Vwu8bNZf8bShy-9xCchw

This experience gave me a sense that I was "called to sing".

When I left the choir I stopped singing until I was well into my late twenties and then sang in a selection of small choirs/groups and also in St Mary Clement Methodist Church Choir, led by Philip Davey. This Wesleyan church is on the plot of land next door to the Cathedral in Truro. The finest hymn singing ever!!

I sang with the Allen Singers, the Celtic Chorale, The Duchy Opera and started some solo work as a Tenor. My Dad, brothers and me sang as a male voice quartet and I returned to the music festival scene for a while.

When I left Cornwall due to work, I again had a break in singing until I moved to Harrogate where following a short dabble with Harrogate Choral Society, I started singing with a smaller group called Vocalis under the baton of Tim Knight. I really enjoyed my time with this choir and also joined Harrogate Male Voice Choir which was very different but also fun. The arrival of the children into Hillary and my life led to another break in singing but a chance invite from an old "Vocalis" friend led me to sing with Christ Church Choir, Harrogate and again through the same friend back to a choir led by Tim Knight called Masterworks!

I love singing with Masterworks – it has everything – fun, fine music, communion, great singing in amazing venues and with a fantastic group of diverse people! Long may it continue and it seems we are now on a global tour over a period of several years! I missed some early trips on this tour but have been lucky enough to travel within the UK and on the Belgium and New York trips. As soon as I get on the tour bus I am transported to a wonderful place full of friendship and fine singing and I thank the entire Masterworks choir.



This picture of me as head chorister is taken with my Dad and two brothers! The story of all four of us in the choir together was so unusual it got a mention in the Church Times.

The choir is flexible and cares and one of the memory's that will never leave me was when we sang at the Menin Gate for the last post ceremony.



St Bavo's, Ghent was one of my favourite venues – we had as many people listening at the rehearsal as we did for the event!

New York contd...



On Friday, the choir took a train from Grand Central station to Harrison, the venue on this occasion, All Saints Church. As you can see from the photograph, it was a beautiful church, emphasised by the clear, blue sky. The people of the church were extremely welcoming. There was a rehearsal for the concert, followed by a wonderful meal. The choir sang to a packed house with English music from 1550, with works from Purcell, Gibbons, Tomkins through to Goss. Also more up to date composers including David Barton's folk songs, Bairstow and Knight which were all well received. The concert was followed by a small reception.

The following day meant another journey from Grand Central but this time to White Plains', St Joseph of Arimathea Episcopal Church. On arrival at the station, the choir's transfer was on a yellow school bus. It had started to snow and the church was a gem hidden in the trees. Again we were warmly greeted and food was provided. We then had a brief rehearsal and worked out the logistics of seating for service.

The music was again taken from the repertoire ranging from 1550 English composers. Following the service, there was the usual American hospitality, giving choir and congregation a chance to meet and chat.



The final day, Sunday, meant an early start on the Staten Island Ferry. The choir left the hotel at 6.30am in taxis to the ferry terminal. It was a bright but very cold morning.

Members of the church very kindly collected us in their cars to transport us from the ferry and, yet again, there was a breakfast feast awaiting us.

As we were singing with the resident choir, there was a rehearsal to ensure we could all fit in and know where we were to be at any particular time.

The ladies of both choirs sang Tim Knight's 'Come Down, O Love Divine' and the Heritage Masterworks learned the church's responses. Refreshments followed the service, before we had to catch the ferry back to the mainland in order to prepare for our flight back home.

All in all, the tour was a great success and a wonderful experience to cherish.



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