



Friends' Newsletter

April 2002

From the Chairman

Miranda Seaman

Welcome to the third edition of the Friends' Newsletter. For the first time, some of you will receive this newsletter by e-mail only, although hard copies will still be sent by post to those who prefer to receive it this way. We hope that you all enjoy receiving the newsletter and that you find it useful in keeping up to date both with ULCC's singing engagements and also with news of individual members and Friends. To this end, we are always delighted to hear from you, and if any of you have news or articles that you would like to contribute to the next edition, or indeed any feedback as to what you would like the newsletter to contain, please contact our Friends' Secretary, Liz Watkins (liz.watkins@intermain.org.uk; 01737 553615).

Our programme for Spring and Summer 2002 is not only extremely busy but also very varied, with some visits planned to places ULCC has not previously visited. We return to York for the Low Sunday weekend, deputising while the Minster Choir takes its post-Easter break. On 12th April we sing Choral Evensong at Canterbury Cathedral for the first time, for the Primates' Conference (or Marsupials' Conference for those who watch 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire?'!). During June we return to Paris and to Stock, Essex, and in August we spend a week at St Davids, Wales. Obviously some of these places are rather far flung but, as ever, we are always delighted to see Friends at any of our services and concerts.

As you will be aware from our last newsletter, this year sees the 10th anniversary of ULCC's founding, and perhaps the highlight of the year will be our 10th anniversary celebrations, taking place on 18th May 2002. Fittingly these celebrations commence with Choral Evensong at Christ the King, Gordon Square, London at 5pm, followed by a drinks reception and then dinner at The Tavistock Hotel. You are all most welcome to join us for any part of these celebrations. A letter was sent to all of you in early March giving details; if you have not received a letter and would like one, please contact myself or Anthea Corser as soon as possible. According to Bryan, the service promises to be a musical feast!

Finally, a big thank you to Liz for all her hard work, not only in co-ordinating and editing our newsletter but also in administering and overseeing the Friends' Scheme. As many of you know, the Friends of ULCC scheme was only launched on 1st January 2001; the committee was delighted to hear from Liz that so many of you had renewed your Friends' subscriptions this year. We thank you for all your support, which is certainly not taken for granted and which is essential to ensure the choir's continued existence.

The View from the Podium

Bryan Almond, Director of Music

I am frequently asked by clergymen and laymen why the choir of the University of London Church is still in existence considering the church itself closed some ten years ago. They are often surprised to hear that the choir is very much alive and well, having assumed, not surprisingly, that the choir ended its long tradition with the closure of the University Church. Having directed the choir for some five years now, I have become accustomed to explaining that dedicated members of the choir who sang at Christ the King simply would not let the choir die and remain committed choir members to this day. Uppermost in their minds is the fellowship and ministry which the choir at Christ the King offered them during their student years and a desire to see this available to present-day students.

Over the years of my association with the choir, I have come to appreciate how much the continuing work of the choir means to many. Not just those who remember the choir at Christ the King, but those who share with us a passion and infectious enthusiasm for church music. The fact that I was not able to share in the experience of life at Christ the King, having studied outside London, no longer seems important.

Following the closure of the University Church, it would have been all too easy to let the musical tradition fade away into history. The current flourishing choir is a testament to those who refused to let the choir fold in those early days. Their dedication has ensured that ULCC survives to celebrate its 10th anniversary this year, something which few members back in 1992 might have thought possible. With this in mind, we are also celebrating the long tradition of University church music at Christ the King and St George's, Bloomsbury. Many students and choir members have passed through the choir over the years and we look forward to meeting as many of them as possible at our Festal Evensong at Christ the King on 18th May. Please do put us in touch with former choir members, we will be very pleased to hear from them.

Dwelling on the closure of Christ the King can also lead one to ask, what keeps the choir going? I believe the answer lies in a mixture of enthusiastic music making, commitment, dedication, friendship, enjoyment, achieving high standards, working hard, having fun, taking pride in performance and above all, making our music acceptable to God. Choirs exist for a tremendous variety of reasons ranging from the weekly worship of the small parish choir to the concert performances of a large choral society. Within this framework, ULCC is unique. Its whole *raison d'être* changed in 1992 transforming into a mixed graduate/undergraduate choir without a base whilst developing a mission to sing wherever it was needed. I don't know of any other choir having survived such a crisis and it is quite right that we take pride in this fact.

But as we approach our 10th anniversary celebrations on 18th May our focus must be on the future. The long-term existence of the choir is by no means secure and I for one will be dedicating time to ensure that we develop links to further our work. Due to the commitment of my predecessors and the dedication of current members, the reputation and standing of the choir is as high as it has always been and long may it continue.

Those of us who are privileged to share in the work of ULCC experience a bond which many over the years have shared as part of the choir at Christ the King. It is time to celebrate this year and I very much hope you will join us for Festal Evensong at 5pm on 18th May at Christ the King.

Keeping in Touch

There are links to some of us via the website, but also feel free to make contact directly as follows:

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News of ULCC Friends Old and New

Anthea Corser

We celebrated the first anniversary of the launch of the Friends of ULCC scheme this Christmastide whilst singing the weekend services in our now almost annual slot at St Albans. A party was held at the Treasurer's residence and TIM and JULIA BLINKO laid on a sumptuous Sunday lunch for us (ably abetted by Julia's mother – thank you). Unfortunately several of our friends were bitten by the winter 'lurgi' and were sadly unable to make it, as was yours truly, but I was put to work page-turning for CHRIS NICKOL in the organ loft and had a good vantage point to spy on the choir! Chris would always welcome any Friends attending services to visit him in the organ loft, especially if they are willing to turn pages. He is also giving quite a few organ recitals around the country this summer; for further details e-mail him on christopher.nickol@ntlworld.co.uk

Our children's section is potentially growing with the birth of JOSHUA to SALLY and BILL MARTIN-BROWN, THOMAS to JAMES and HENRIETTA HILLMAN and, most recently, PETER to MATTHEW and ELAINE BURROWS; but where are all the girls?

We are all looking forward to the wedding of VICTORIA MOVLEY and DAVID FOSTER on 20th April and hope they have a wonderful day. Congratulations go to DUNCAN PARRY on his recent engagement; he is a lay clerk at Canterbury Cathedral.

Other former members of the choir involved in cathedral music include ROGER MULLIS, who is regularly to be heard singing at St Albans, and MEIRION WYNN JONES, who is assistant organist at Birmingham Oratory (where his fiancée is organist!).

SIMON OVER is soon to leave St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey, where he has been Director of Music for the last ten years. He is becoming Principal Conductor and Music Director of a new orchestra, Southbank Sinfonia, which is worth looking out for if its recent first performance is anything to go by.

If you want to see other talents of some of our members then try Harrow Light Opera's production of *Fiddler on the Roof* later this month (see advert below); CATHERINE MINNS is singing in the chorus and IAN MACGREGOR is the production's Musical Director.

Your Treasurer and I made a recent pilgrimage to Rome. For me it brought back wonderful memories of the choir's trip there in 1992, organised by OLIVIA ODDI and her parents MARY and ELIO. We visited the English Church where a friend of many of 'our friends', Jonathan Boardman, is Priest in Charge; he made us very welcome and he and the congregation send their blessings.

We are all very much looking forward to the 10th anniversary celebrations on 18th May to which all members and friends are especially invited. If by any chance you have not received details of this event then please contact me, either by e-mail as below or on 01727 832800.

It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of Father Trevor Richardson, former Vicar of Holy Cross, Cromer Street. He welcomed many of us into his congregation when Christ the King closed in 1992 and the choir sang for him on many occasions.

If you have any news that you would like to share with ULCC friends (especially any slanderous blurb) then please send it to rich-anth@eclipse.co.uk

HARROW LIGHT OPERA COMPANY

presents

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

**Tuesday 23rd – Saturday 27th April at the Watersmeet Theatre,
Rickmansworth**

(7.45pm evenings, 2.30pm Saturday matinée)

For tickets please call the Box Office on 01923 771542

New Friends of ULCC

Liz Watkins, Friends' Secretary

A warm welcome to those of you who have become Friends of ULCC since the last edition of the newsletter was published: SIMON REDMOND, ANETTE MÅNSSON, HEATHER BREWER, DONNA BURROWS, JANE and CHRISTOPHER MOVLEY, GEORGE RUSSELL and YVONNE CRAIG. We're also most grateful to those of you who renewed your subscriptions at the beginning of this year.

In response to feedback from several of our Friends, the Friends' Newsletter will be available in electronic format as well as hard copy from now on. Those of you who have e-mail should have received a message from me about this; please let me know if it didn't reach you. Many thanks to those of you who sent comments or suggestions about the possibility of producing the newsletter in electronic format.

Please don't hesitate to e-mail me or give me a ring if you have any ideas for the content of future newsletters; it's always a pleasure to hear from you and we'd love to have articles written by some of our Friends in future editions.

Forthcoming Events

For up-to-the minute details of rehearsal and service times see the ULCC website at

<http://www.ulcc.org.uk> or ask to be put on the regular e-mail database.

For those of you without internet access, Peter or Bryan will be happy to answer any questions (you'll find their phone numbers under **Keeping in Touch**).

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Friday 5th–Sunday 7th April	York Minster tour
Friday 12th April	Evensong, Canterbury Cathedral
Saturday 20th April	Wedding, St Mary the Virgin, Bourne Street: Dr David Foster and Miss Victoria Movley
Wednesday 24th April	Requiem for Father Trevor Richardson, Holy Cross, Cromer Street
Sunday 5th May	Eucharist, Southwark Cathedral
Saturday 18th May	ULCC 10th anniversary celebrations: Festal Evensong at Christ the King followed by drinks reception and dinner
Sunday 16th June	Concert, St Sulpice, Paris
Saturday 22nd June	Concert, All Saints', Stock
Sunday 23rd June	Evensong, All Saints', Stock
Saturday 13th July	Concert, Pavenham, Bedfordshire
Monday 26th August–Sunday 1st September	St Davids Cathedral summer tour

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Monday 18th–Sunday 24th August	Wells Cathedral summer tour
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