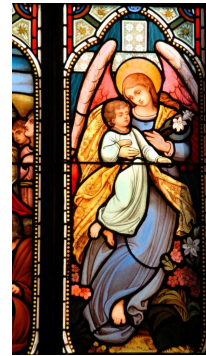




Royal School of Church Music (ACT Branch)



February 2010

Welcome back to a new year. Hopefully everyone has had change to relax after the busyness of Christmastide. This newsletter contains some updates about dates and plans for this year including the **AGM** (see below). Please try and attend if you can (or at least send your apologies). If anyone would like to contribute to the next newsletter please feel free to e-mail in a submission to _____ – it is always interesting to see what other people have been up to.

NOTICE OF AGM

The 2010 RSCM (ACT branch) AGM will be held on the **14th March 2010 at 2.30pm** at All Saints' Church, Corner of Bonney and Cowper Streets, Ainslie.

If you are interested in nominating for a position on the Council, please feel free to volunteer. If you would like details on what this involves, contact Gemma on or 0413852911.

Choristers wanted for Junior Choir

The Director of Music, *Julia Golding* is developing a Junior Choir at St Pauls Manuka to commence as soon as possible. If you, as a parent or grandparent, have a talented musical cherub in your family please let Julia know.



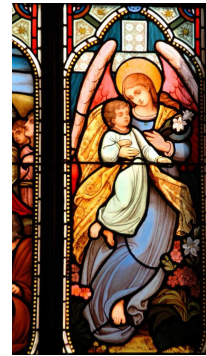
Julia is always pleased to talk to parents and grandparents about what is involved. Interested parents are invited to contact Julia as soon as possible. She can be reached by calling 0423 431 883 or emailing her on _____

Since 2005, Julia has also conducted various Junior Choirs in Sydney including the St Mary's Junior Choir, Australian Girls Choir and the Burgundian Consort (resident at UNSW).

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Message from the Chair Working with Limited Resources

Members who receive RSCM publication Sunday by Sunday will have noticed that the December 2009 edition devoted considerable space to the situation currently faced by many church musicians - working with limited resources.

Unfortunately the circumstances in which Christian people are working these days are much different from times past. Matthew Buchanan in The Sydney Morning Herald of 5-6 December 2009 claimed that only 7% of Australians currently attend church regularly. This dictates a much reduced resource base from which to recruit people and equipment for the provision of music.

Sunday by Sunday provides some suggestions as to how scarce resources can be used more effectively. These include proficiency in use of a cantor, perhaps working with a small singing group, choosing resources within capabilities, adopting different methods of psalm singing, preferring unison singing utilising hymns set to well known folk tunes and exploring "easy-to-play" accompaniments for keyboard or guitar when organs are not available. Needless to say, a competent rendition of music in an uncomplicated format is likely to be more helpful than an uncertain effort trying to present something which may be virtuous but not practical.

Despite difficulties, there is scope for much encouragement. Church musicians are still privileged to assist worshippers to express their faith in music, and the new circumstances with the possible need for reprioritisation can give impetus to the music being increasingly "congregation oriented" and hence more universally beneficial.

Bill Fraser

Didn't make the RSCM 2010 Summer School?

It's ok, because you can read a day-by-day account of the 8 fantastic days written in diary form. Visit the RSCM (ACT) website at www.rscm-act.org and read it on the forum.

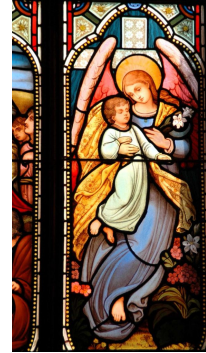
You can even add your own comments and suggestions.

Vale:

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Margaret McPherson (Bathurst) – long term member of the NSW Branch
David Fraser (ACT) – long term member of the ACT Branch

The RSCM (ACT) committee express their sympathy to the families of our late members.

2011 RSCM National Summer School

"Bathurst - A foretaste of heaven in twenty-eleven"

The 56th Annual RSCM Summer School will be held from 4 - 11 January at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, NSW.

Director: Matthew Owens - Organist & Master of the Choristers, Wells Cathedral,
UK Organist: Peter Jewkes - Organist, Christ Church St Laurence, Sydney

Youth Choir Director: David Russell - Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta

Chaplain: The Reverend Canon Anne Wentzel - Rector of St John's Mudgee and former
Precentor of St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne

Christmas and Epiphany Music in Europe

I had Christmas in two hemispheres this year!

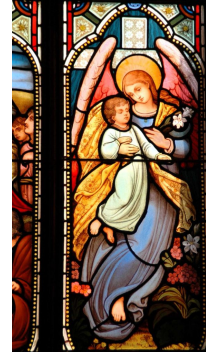
Twelve hours after taking part in Nine Lessons and Carols at St John's, I was on a plane to England, where I was to play for Christmas services at an English village church. (I was visiting my sister near Salisbury, and a nearby church happened to need an organist!).

Following that, I had the opportunity to hear some wonderful Christmas and Epiphany music in Salisbury and Leipzig...

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On the Sunday after Christmas we visited Salisbury Cathedral for Choral Evensong. The regular choir was on recess, but a substitute choir from St Thomas's Church in Salisbury had boy/girl upper voices and they sang very well indeed.

Then on New Year's Eve, we returned to Salisbury Cathedral to see in the New Year at their Watchnight Service. This was a more contemplative affair, without a choir, but with organ music featured during the service. In an example of perfect music programming, the organist played two of Bach's *Orgelbüchlein* preludes for New Year's day. Before midnight, the wistful "Das Alte Jahr Vergangen Ist" ("the old year is passed"). Then, right after the cathedral clock had struck 12, the wonderfully joyful "In Dir Ist Freude". A magic moment!

The name of the organist was not credited on the service sheet. But he or she went on to play a spirited version of the Widor Toccata as a postlude, which certainly showed off the might of the Salisbury organ, as we emerged into the snowy surrounds of the cathedral in the wee hours of New Year's Day.

A couple of weeks later, I was in Leipzig, Germany, where I managed to attend three musical events in less than 24 hours...

On the afternoon of Saturday, January 16, an organ recital at the Nikolaikirche (St Nicholas's church) by the Kantor, Jürgen Wolf. After some pleasant, flutey baroque music, he finished up with a piece by César Franck, (Chorale No. 3 in A-Minor), which really showed off the organ's potential - a big, rich sound with some great pedal reeds.

Later, that same evening, I enjoyed hearing a program of music for baroque trumpets and chamber orchestra at the Thomaskirche (St Thomas's church), where Bach was Kantor from 1723 to 1750. The program included Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2.

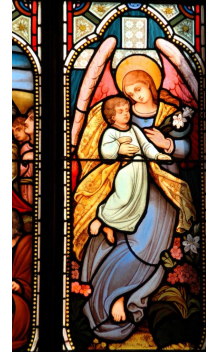
And on the following (Sunday) morning, I went back to the Thomaskirche for the morning service, at which the Thomanerchor (St Thomas's boys' choir) were singing. This choir is the present-day successor to the boys' choir of the Thomasschule (St Thomas's School), which Bach directed in his day.

The present-day choir is superb, as was the music at this service. And the service sheets

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provided all the music for the parts where the congregation sings - so I was able to enjoy singing along with everything, including the German chorales, several of which were introduced by chorale preludes on the organ (rather than just a straight play-through of the tune). It was most interesting to witness the use of the chorale prelude in the original context for which they were written.

The Thomanerchor also sang an introit by Mendelssohn ("Frohloeket, ihr Völker auf Erden") and a motet movement by Bach ("Sei Lob un Preis mit Ehren").

Leipzig citizens possibly take it for granted, but to hear the music of Bach in the very place that he first created it, while sitting just a few feet away from where Bach himself is interred, is really, for me, the most awe-inspiring feeling! It is a very special place.

Nigel Poole