

THE FRIENDS OF THE MUSIC

Newsletter



Number 22, Autumn 2015



Picture: HARRY LOMAX

Time to sing Goodbye!

Well, when you've got to go, go out with a bang! Maybe the fireworks at Stratford's River Festival weren't strictly for Sam and Solomon (*above*), but it was a fitting way to say farewell after what had been another memorable *River Serenade* that they, along with other talented young singers and musicians from Holy Trinity, had provided on a perfect summer's evening beside the Avon. Sam is now off to begin a degree course at Worcester College, Oxford, while Solomon, one of our church's first choral scholars, is heading for Portsmouth Cathedral to continue his musical education as a choral scholar there.



Picture: JOHN BURGESS

Sam sang the Sinatra classic his way— and it even brought applause from the other side of the river See *centre pages*

Jane Writes...

I would like to thank everyone for supporting *The Friends of the Music* in its endeavour to follow the original aims of the organisation when it was set up more than 30 years ago. The continuing success of our weekly Soundbites recitals and concerts such as the Alcester Male Voice Choir, River Serenade and the Croft School concert, have raised funds to enable us to support the music of Holy Trinity Church and, in particular, the organ and choral scholarship scheme.

It is important that our young musicians and singers are given the opportunity to develop their talents and confidence whilst contributing to Holy Trinity's music. Our Director of Music, Benedict Wilson, has been key to guiding these young

Turn to Page 3

Crowds flock in for our



River Serenade July 4, 2015

Buoyed by the success of the first *River Serenade* concert in July 2014, the Friends asked Sam and the Music Group to stage a similar fundraiser this year. It helped that the sun shone, the strawberries were succulent and the Pimm's just about perfect. But rightly, on a memorable night that Holy Trinity's talented young people went down by the river to play, it was their music – sung mostly a cappella— that made it so special. Spirituals *Down by the River* and *Deep River* set the mood followed by the much loved standards *Lullaby of Birdland*, *Autumn Leaves* and *Danny Boy*. The ensemble whistled through the Beatles' *Blackbird* and rocked to Bonnie Tyler's *Holding out for a Hero*. The evening culminating in an innovative and rousing performance of *Land of Hope and Glory*, the voices singing not only the words but mimicking all the instruments as well. A sincere Friends' thank you to: **Sam Bridges, Victoria Lougher, Claire Fisher, Alice Harvey, Hannah Hawley, Solomon Hayes, Ed Mulryne, James Fellows, Ben Dennes, Kate Matthews and Joe Woodman**. Another enchanted evening!



Pictures: JOHN BURGESS and HARRY LOMAX



super sounds of summer



Alcester Male Voice Choir May 16

Alcester Male Voice Choir has an enviable reputation for the quality of its singing and varied repertoire both of which appeal to audiences of all ages and musical tastes. So the Friends were delighted to welcome the choir to Holy Trinity and were rewarded by packed pews and an enthusiastic audience who clearly enjoyed the music because the applause was long and loud and donations to our funds at the retiring collection, extremely generous. The committee's decision to make the concert free and also to advertise it in the *Stratford Herald*, certainly paid off.

The programme featured songs from *West Side Story*, *Pirates of Penzance* and Wagner's *Lohengrin* along with stirring marches *Onward Christian Soldiers* and *Men of Harlech*. There were vocal solos from talented young singers William Monks and Matt Harris and Stephen Dodsworth gave us a brilliant instrumental interlude on the organ. The choir's accompanist, Elliott Rooney, sang and played one of his own compositions to much acclaim and in the penultimate rendition of *Singing in the Rain* we were treated to a skilful tap dance routine by two charming young ladies, Evie Lowe and Emily Tullett. The Friends are indebted to founder-conductor Judith Land, Elliott Rooney and everyone who worked so hard to create a wonderful evening.

JANE TAYLOR



Soundbites continues to go from strength to strength with audiences regularly hitting the eighty plus mark, including many tourists who say the recital adds so much to their visit. Windwood Chancel Choir from the USA and the magnificent **Pittsburgh Youth Orchestra and Choir** (pictured above) were just two of many high calibre performances that we've enjoyed.

Jane Writes

Continued from Page 1

people in their music tuition before they embark on the next stage of their chosen paths. It was a joy to hear these scholars at Lincoln Cathedral in July when Holy Trinity's Choir took part in services, supported by families, members of The Friends, and many from the congregation (see next page).

In addition to thanking you as members of The Friends, I would like to take the opportunity to also thank those who kindly offer help at concerts and recitals in support of the committee. Best wishes,

Jane



Picture: JOHN BURGESS

The Choir



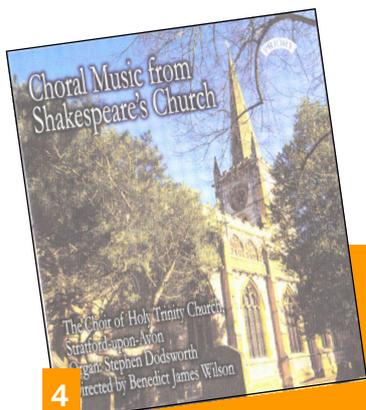
ANNE BLAIR on the Choir and Friends' enjoyable visit to Lincoln

There is so much to see and do in Lincoln, our only "complaint" was that we needed longer. The city is full of bookshops, boutiques and idiosyncratic places in which to eat. These, and the castle with its exhibition of one of the remaining copies of the Magna Carta, along with the Cathedral and it's wonderful Wren library holding exquisite 13th Century illuminated manuscripts, kept us happily occupied all day.

Choral evensong was superb, and we were so proud as our choir more than rose to the occasion of singing in that lovely building. Much of the melodies and text that Cranmer used in his Book of Common Prayer would have been as familiar to Saint Hugh, the rebuilder of the cathedral in the 12th Century, and to Bishop Remigius, who founded it in 1072, as it is to us, and it rang across the ages.

We were delighted there was music by Benedict, and the anthem written by Solomon Hayes for the Shakespeare Service, bringing us to the present day. It was good to spend time with like-minded friends, enjoying ourselves and supporting the wonderful music

of our church which we can send with confidence to amazing places like Lincoln Cathedral. It was no surprise to hear that the three services they sang on Sunday simply excelled expectations. Our thanks must go to the people who made this experience possible. We look forward to the next occasion.



From the Treasurer

The bank accounts currently show a healthy balance, but we need to be aware of commitments to our organ and choral scholars. In addition, funds have been agreed to provide equipment to give the organist a better view of the doors and congregation and so assist in the timing of music during services.

The **Soundbites** recital series continues to provide a good steady income with costs being kept to a minimum. We have also held three very successful evening events during the year.

The Gift Aid has been reclaimed, including that promised at Soundbites. Comprehensive accounts and figures will be prepared for the Annual General Meeting of the Friends to be held early next year. *Jane Armitage*

Your committee:

Jane Hornby (Chair), Jane Armitage (Treasurer), Sarah Cushing (Secretary), Mark Brooks, Lisa Brooks, Philip Cheshire, Patrick Pilton, Sam Bridges, Ronnie Mulryne, Benedict Wilson, Roger Taylor, Tania Fisher, Solomon Hayes, Stephen Dodsworth

Don't miss out. The Choir's brilliant new CD is on sale now from the Church Shop or at The Friends' weekly Soundbites recital