

MUSIC AT

ST JOHN'S
a community project

Music at St John's



FULL SCORE

January 2019

Vale Symphonic Wind Band Concert



Toes were tapping, bodies swaying and words being mouthed at the return to St John's of the Vale Symphonic Wind Band on Saturday evening 24th November 2018.

This impressive and talented band gave us a splendid concert which included well-known pieces MacArthur Park (Jimmy Webb), highlights from West Side Story (Leonard Bernstein) and The King and I (Richard Rogers) and a selection of songs popular at the time of the First World War. The enigmatic Nimrod (Sir Edward Elgar) and the Dam Busters march (Eric Coates) left us all humming.

We were also treated to The Watermill (Ronald Binge) where one could almost hear in the music the water passing over the mill wheel, and a suite by Gustav Holst which was an early example of a piece written exclusively for the wind band.

In Flanders Field (Rob Wiffin) and At the Close of the Day (Trevor Sharpe) were moving pieces on a remembrance theme, while The Banks of the Green Willow, based on two English folk songs is an intriguing piece by George Butterworth, who was himself killed in the First World War.

The selection of music was expertly chosen to suit and complement the Band's style of creating a cheerful and enthusiastic wind band sound, which was perfectly enhanced by the acoustics in St John's Church and was a real joy to listen to. The informative and light-hearted introductions by the conductor, David Richards, added to our enjoyment, as did the refreshments, both red and white, and socialising during the interval.

This well attended concert provided much enjoyment to the audience, prompting not only praise but many enquiries of when the Band might return!



Dacorum Music School in partnership with St John's: 2017-18

Dacorum Music School is delighted to have such a close partnership with St John's Church and *Music at St John's*. Their generosity in allowing us to hold our Music Making days here give a huge number of children the chance to experience the special environment of the church, develop their music skills, and enjoy playing as part of a group.

During the year, primary school children come together for a day to make music with their particular instrument family. The first one of the academic year was the Recorder Day in November 2017. This saw nearly 50 young players devoting a day to learning new pieces, and enjoying playing as part of an ensemble.

For the String Day in March 2018, we had over 60 musicians playing all the instruments of the string family, even the Harp! They enjoyed working on pieces around the theme of folk songs from around the world. In June, woodwind, brass and percussion players from all over the area joined forces to play together. They worked on quite a variety of pieces, and included singing and improvisation in their arrangements. Each day was expertly led by dedicated staff from the music school.

The KS1 singing festival is now in its fifth year, and is run by Camille Maalawy to complement the Unisong day for KS2 children. We had approximately 200 children attend across the day, with Boxmoor, Gade Valley and South Hill in the morning, and then Great Gaddesden, Pixies Hill, Micklem and Nash Mills in the afternoon. The children had been sent three songs to practise prior to the day, we learnt a couple of other songs in just over an hour, and each school also brought a song of their own too. The children then performed all the pieces in a short concert to parents. We were delighted to have the Hemel Hempstead School Male Voice Choir as our special guests. They sang two songs that they were preparing for the school summer concert, and it was wonderful to have such inspiring role models to encourage the children. Again we were able to use St. John's Church, and everyone agreed just what a special venue it is to sing in.





Annual 10k Run & 4k Walk

The idea for this annual event was conceived when John Garner ran 2012 miles in 2012, raising over £3,000 for our charity. John completed the final leg of his run from St Alban's Cathedral to St John's Church on 31st December that year. A few runners accompanied John on that final leg and it was felt then that it would be a good idea to make this New Year's Eve attraction an annual event.

The runners and walkers have gathered in St John's Church each New Year's Eve since 2013 ready for the 'Off' at mid-day. The walkers leave the church first followed by the runners 30 minutes later. The route, which is mainly 'off-road' encompasses Boxmoor, Bourne End, Potten End, Warners End and back through Boxmoor to St John's Church. Although this event is not a race, we do employ 'marshals' to guide the athletes along the route.

When the athletes return to St John's they are welcomed with light refreshments and drinks.

Taking part in this social event is a very good way to rid yourself of the surplus weight you may have attracted over the Christmas period and to prepare for the New Year ahead.

Entrance fees are £10 for runners and £5 for walkers. All money raised goes towards the work of our charity *Music at St John's*; we look forward to welcoming you next time.



The new organ

We were delighted that the outstanding debt on the new organ of St John's was paid off during the summer of 2018. This enables *Music at St John's* to focus its fundraising resources wholly on its wider charitable objectives.

A celebratory series of recitals was organized to commemorate this achievement, given by James O'Donnell (Organist of Westminster Abbey), Keith Beniston, Linden Innes-Hopkins and Nicholas King (Directors of Music at St. John's since the installation of the new instrument).

Director of Music at St John's



We have been pleased to welcome Keith Beniston, who took up appointment as Director of Music at St John's in January 2018 following the departure of Linden Innes-Hopkins to a new post at Welwyn in February 2017. Keith has an impressive pedigree from previous work at Westminster Central Hall, and was most recently Organist at St. Paul, Chipperfield.

Trustees of *Music at St John's*

Sheena Wilson has stepped down as a Trustee, as has Camille Maalawy following her move to Kingston-upon-Hull. We thank them both for their contributions to our work during their tenure.

In their place we have been pleased to welcome Clara Willmott-Basset, who works with Dacorum Music School.

Peter Garner stood down as Chairman of *Music at St John's* at the Annual General Meeting of October 2018. In thanking him for his leadership over many years, we are pleased to say that he remains as a Trustee. Paul Davies has succeeded him as Chairman, and Richard Lyne has replaced Paul as Secretary.



Membership of *Music at St. John's*

Membership of the “Friends” of *Music at St. John's* is open to all, with around fifty members currently contributing regularly to our charity and having discounts available to them when making advanced bookings for our events. For details please contact Paul Davies on 07802 442908.

Music Bursaries

One of the original charitable objectives of *Music at St John's* when it was set up in 2005 was to encourage the musical development of youngsters in the area.

This was initially addressed by providing regular events such as UniSound, UniSong and the annual WOOFYT visit, all of which have been recorded in previous issues of Full Score.

In 2013, a bequest of £1,000 was received from the estate of the late Joyce Ralphs, a life-long supporter of music in the parish and a relief organist at Boxmoor and Hammerfield. This bequest was set aside for the benefit of young organists in the parish, and an award was made in 2014.

It has since been merged with additional funds to establish one-off bursaries for youngsters with associations in the Dacorum Borough Council area (residence, school or church attendance) who can demonstrate positive musical progress and require financial assistance, for instance in attending holiday courses.

The revised scheme was launched in 2016, and fifteen awards have since been made, to a total of £1,812 including the original organ bursary award.

Details of how to apply for bursaries can be found in a separate leaflet which is readily available at the church, at Dacorum Music School and at other schools around the parish.





Percentage Club

Music at St John's runs a fun raffle style draw every month offering modest cash prizes, with the profits from this "Percentage Club" helping to fund the activities of the charity during the last few years. Those who wish to support us in this way can purchase numbers in the draws and we would welcome additional support.

If you would like further information about this, or would like to buy some numbers, please pick up the separate leaflet from the church or contact Mark Harbour on 01442 230339.

Summary of Forthcoming Events

Saturday 16th March at 7.30pm – Piano recital by Alexander Adrokov.

Friday 10th to Sunday 12th May – Music Festival, including xxx.

Fridays 17th May to 19th July at 12.30pm – Summer series of lunchtime concerts.

Patrons and Contact Details

The following are our valued Patrons. We are most grateful for their support:

Pam Rhodes (BBC Songs of Praise)

The Right Reverend Dr Alan Smith (Bishop of St. Albans)

Zoë Martlew (BBC Maestro)

Malcolm Archer (former Director of Music at St. Paul's Cathedral)

The Venerable Jonathan Smith (Archdeacon of St. Albans)

Reverend Laura Jørgensen (former Curate of Boxmoor)

Reverend James Reveley (former Vicar of Boxmoor).

If you wish to contact us and no other contact name is specified, please get in touch with Paul Davies on 07802 442098..





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Richard Lyne, Michael Macey, Job Rombout and Clara Willmott-Basset.

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