

THE PORCH

SEPTEMBER 2025

£1

ST EDWARD'S CHURCH
DRINGHOUSES, YORK

Who's Who in St. Edward's

Vicar:

Reverend Canon Richard Carew
The Vicarage, Tadcaster Rd,
Dringhouses,
YORK YO24 1QG

Email: : vicar@stedsdringhouses.org Tel: 07776683254



Assistant Curate: Reverend Angela Morrison

Email: curate@stedsdringhouses.org Tel: 07776 686129

Parish Secretary: Wendy Hewitt

parishoffice@stedsdringhouses.org

Office Hours: Monday 1.00pm - 4.00pm. Tuesday - Friday
9.00am - 4.00pm
(closed for lunch 1.30-2.00pm) Tel: 01904 709111



Parish Assistant: Louise Walton

parishoffice@stedsdringhouses.org

Office Hours: Monday 1.00pm - 4.00pm. Tuesday - Friday 9.00am -
4.00pm
(closed for lunch 1.30-2.00pm) Tel: 01904 709111

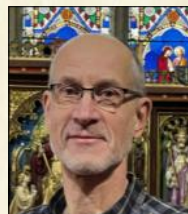


Children's Worker: Sally Gatus

Email: children@stedsdringhouses.org Tel: 07436 405586

Caretaker: Mike Hewitt

Email: caretaker@stedsdringhouses.org



Contact The Porch on porch@stedsdringhouses.org
for any submissions or questions.

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Music to my ears

I know that when you are a teenager, you are supposed to find your parents embarrassing. When my teenage daughter once complained "O dad, you are so embarrassing!" I replied, "Yes I know. But don't worry I will grow out of it in three or four years..."

With my dad, the thing that made me cringe was his singing in Church. The trouble was that he really liked singing, and would sing loudly, but he couldn't carry a tune in a bucket! When I used to complain and ask him to keep it a bit quieter, he would quote Psalm 100 at me which starts "Make a joyful noise to the Lord"; apparently as it said a "joyful noise", tuning didn't matter and therefore he had license to sing as loudly as he liked.



Music is a universal experience. From the raucous singing of the football crowd, to the careful harmonies of the monastery, to the traditional songs of indigenous communities the world over, music has a unique ability to move us and help us make connections. For example, at a funeral we may think that we are coping well, but then the minute a hymn starts we find ourselves sobbing and unable to form the words. Music speaks to our souls.

Here at St Edward's, music plays a hugely important part in our worshipping life. We are very fortunate to have a number of really gifted musicians who give of their time and their talents in our choir and our music groups, not least our retiring Director of Music, Angela Anelay. Angela has been involved with the musical life of St Edward's for more than 25 years, and has given out a huge amount in the service of God and His Church here at St Edward's during that time.

Knowing that different types of music will engage and inspire different people, one of Angela's great gifts has been her ability to use music from across the spectrum to help us engage with God and with each other.

Some church musicians have the title "Worship leader", but as someone pointed out to me a better title would be "Lead Worshipper", someone who in their own music and worship is able to draw others into the presence of God. Angela is someone whose faith is at least in part expressed in her music, and we have been truly blessed by her willingness to allow her music and her worship to be part of our corporate experience here at St Edward's, and we wish her every blessing as she steps back from this role.

Like every other Church community, we do have our favourite hymns and songs, and two stand out, both of which have actually been sung at significant funerals during my time here. They are Bless the Lord O my soul (10,000 reasons) and Thine be the glory. Two very different types of music from two very different eras, and yet both invite us to acknowledge the presence of God in the best of times and the worst of times, and to trust that there is nothing that we experience that lies outside the power of God to make a difference.

At its best, this is what music can do; to enable us to acknowledge where we are, but equally to inspire us to look up and to look outwards towards God and towards others. It also invites us to be part of a community that is genuinely seeking after God and to make a difference in the world, that really is music to my ears.

Richard

At the end of August, we said 'farewell' to Angela Anelay who has served as St Edward's Music Director and organist. Here she reflects on a quarter of a century of music making!

25 Years of Music at St Edward's Church

I well remember our first few months at St Edward's back in 1996. We had two boys aged 5 and 3 and I was expecting our daughter. We were made to feel most welcome, being immediately taken through to the hall for coffee after the service, and meeting people there who are still very good friends of ours.



The boys settled into the Sunday School very quickly (thankyou Dorothy and Janice), and after plenty of involvement at our last church, it was very nice to be part of the congregation for a change, and enjoy the worship whilst not doing jobs!

Music is very much an integral part of our services, and the worshipping life at St Edward's Church. We have many skilled musicians, both singers and instrumentalists, and we aim for excellence in our playing and singing, and try to be the best we can be. But we are not performing! In performance, the focus is on the musicians. In worship, the focus is on God.

We try to use our musical gifts to point to God and not to ourselves.

25 years ago, Martin Dales was the Organist and Choir Director. I would deputise for services as needed, along with David Simpson and Stephen Hartley. When Martin left, John Clenaghan took his place for a couple of years, and then in 2007, after holding the fort for a year, I became Music Director, with Bridget Burgess becoming the Assistant Choir Director.

Along with her love and passion, Bridget also brought with her, years of choral experience and skill which we have all benefitted from enormously. Our Friday Choir Practices have been inspiring and enjoyable, and we all look out for each other and support one another as we are able. It is a very caring and welcoming group, and we often leave our Friday evening practices, feeling more joyful and uplifted. Bridget stepped down at the end of 2021, and shortly afterwards, Mel Burr took over her role, bringing much enthusiasm and joy.



Very soon after Bridget and I started, we encouraged singers from the congregation and the community to join the "Extended Choir" for the Carol Services. This proved to be very popular, and also enabled us to sing some more adventurous repertoire. We have discovered some beautiful and moving new Carols. Over the years we have been able to welcome over 150 singers to the Extended Choir of all ages from 6 to over 90.

Back in early 1999, I was asked if I could get some instrumentalists together to help lead the worship in the Family Services. I thought this might be something we did for a few occasional services, but it very quickly became a thriving and committed group of mainly children and teenagers, with some core adult players. For a few years, we had over 50 instrumentalists and singers: a full brass section of trumpets (8 at one point!), trombones, French horn and tuba; 11 clarinets, flutes, oboe, bassoon; violins, viola and cello, keyboard, plus acoustic guitars. We also had some very enthusiastic young players, who would start off playing percussion in the band until they were able to play an instrument.



Today we have a much smaller group of instrumentalists, but they are very loyal and dedicated and very supportive of each other. We would dearly love to welcome more players, but there have been some interesting changes in the last 25 years. In schools, free instrumental lessons and instrument hire have become a thing of the past.

Over the last 10-15 years, the "arts" subjects in the curriculum, have been generally undervalued and underfunded, particularly in secondary schools. And because of rising house prices, there are now fewer young families who are able to afford to buy houses in the parish.

We do really hope and pray that there may be a reversal of these trends.

How did the pandemic and lockdown affect the worshipping life of the church?

Obviously, the church had to close its doors for quite a long period, and even when we were allowed to worship together in church again, there were many restrictions. We had to very quickly learn new and creative ways of worshipping.

Services went online. I would record a few hymns and songs from home each week, and send these to Richard our vicar. He would lead the services from his study including the music I'd sent, or sometimes playing his guitar live.



Less than a month into lockdown we started having weekly "Choir Practices" via zoom.

Mike Hay, (my organ deputy and choir member) did some very clever techy things (which were beyond me), to allow us to "meet" together. Clearly, we couldn't sing together and hear each other because of the sound delays, so at a given point we would all have to mute the sound. This was invariably rather comical as we all fumbled for the right button!

I would play and sing from home and Mike would post the words of the hymns and songs on the screens so that we could all "sing along". We would also go "round the room" and ask how people were, or ask people to say something that they were very thankful for, or a highlight of the week. It was very well attended. Many of the extended choir singers joined us too, and I am very grateful that Mike was able to facilitate this so we could stay together and look after each other. It was also a first, in that people often brought glasses of wine to the practices!

Ruthi Gibbons was our curate at the time, and when Christmas was approaching, she suggested that we had a "Drive in" Carol Service as it wasn't possible to have this service in church.

York College was persuaded to allow us to use their car park. We had a small, distanced choir, recorded music, and people drove into the car park and wound down windows and joined in the singing of the Carols. Very creative!

What a strange time it was, but fantastic that we all pulled together to enable worship to continue in innovative ways, and to find different ways of supporting each other in spite of the restrictions.

For me, one of the most joyful evenings of our year, is the Annual Carol Singing outside Ged Bell's shop on Middlethorpe Grove. Lee Bell, family and friends host the event, and make delicious soup and sweet treats for all the people who come. We bring some brass and woodwind members of the band to play the Carols and give a lead, and it is an amazing community gathering, often attended by over 150 people.

Over the years, we have done similar Christmas collaborations with Dringhouses Primary School; sung Carols at Tesco and outside Café no.12, and more recently at Wilberforce House.



These days the benefits to our health and wellbeing of singing and music making are well documented. Back in the Old Testament there are many, many references encouraging people to "make music to the Lord", and in Ephesians 5 v.19, Paul urges us "to speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord."

And that is the heart of what we hope for in our worship.

If you would like to be part of the next 5/10/ 25 years of music at St Edward's, don't be shy. Have a chat with any of us. It is a commitment, but it also brings much joy and blessing.

As I step down from my Music Director role at the end of August, I am looking forward to being part of the congregation again and having more weekend flexibility to see family who live away from York now; and being able to sit with my husband Charles again! I am very confident that a warm welcome awaits our new Music Director, and I'm looking forward to this next exciting chapter of our worshipping life at St Edward's.

Angela Anelay

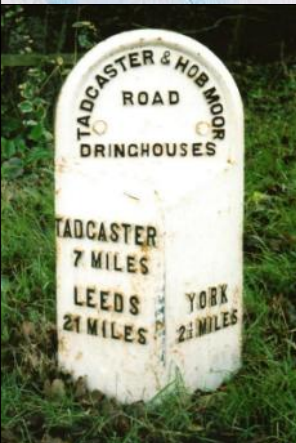
Dringhouses Memories

Dringhouses Memories is an informal community group which meets in a relaxed atmosphere in the Community Hall from time to time. In past meetings we have looked at the lost houses and shops in our area, and more recently we heard about law and order (or lack of it!) where we could share some of our own experiences.



Our next get-together is planned for Friday, 19th September, between 10.30 and 11.30am, where we will be thinking about the things we currently appreciate in our community, based on the 'Treasures of Dringhouses' chosen by members of the local history group over a decade ago. It will be interesting to see if we still feel the same!

To give some idea of the original project, people were simply asked to supply a picture of (and reason for) their choice of something they really appreciated in Dringhouses. There was a range of 'treasures', including buildings, trees and wildlife, personalities, and quite a few surprises. When we meet in September we will see around fifty images chosen throughout the year in 2012. Suggestions for 2025 will be very welcome, especially if a photo could also be provided, with reasons for choices made - however intriguing.



The Atrium café will be open during the morning and it's fine to bring in your coffee and cake if desired - it's an informal, comfortable atmosphere where you can come and go as you wish.

Watch out for more details in St Edward's Weekly Notices nearer the time.

Dorothy Reed

Music to my Ears

When I saw the title for this month's Porch magazine, I knew I had to write something! Music has played such a vital part in my life.

In the beginning....

My grandfather played the violin and met my grandmother, a pianist, whilst playing for silent movies. The romance blossomed through the power of the music they played!

I guess that means that music is in my genes.

I was brought up surrounded by music. My father played the piano and my mother was always singing around the house. In fact, I learnt to sing in tune before I could talk!

Music taught me to listen. This was just as well since I suffered from deafness in my left ear. Being deaf as a child meant that I missed a lot of school in my early years due to hospital operations and visits. As well as being a slow developer, therefore, I had the regular experience of being and feeling 'left out.'

When I had the opportunity to start learning the flute at the age of 11, I took to it like a duck to water. Here, at last, was something that I could excel at!

Playing my flute was a real joy to me. Music helped me to develop my self-confidence and to express myself through those turbulent teenage years. It also helped me to make more friends as I sang in the school choir and played my flute in the Edinburgh Schools' Orchestra.



However, although I did not realise it at the time, learning to listen well from a young age has been a vital life skill. Listening not only helped me to cope with my hearing loss but it also helped me to listen and be there for others.

When I found out about Music Therapy at the age of 16, it was obvious to me what career path I should follow.

From then onwards I was determined to follow my goal and start training to become a Music Therapist when I left school. This involved doing a Music degree followed by a Postgraduate Diploma in Music Therapy which I undertook at the Guildhall in London. During my training I felt drawn to work with children so I also decided to get a teaching qualification to enable me work in special schools. I had a passion to use music to help other children in the way music had helped me.

In my early 20s I started work at Fieldhead Hospital School in Wakefield. This was the start of 20 years of work in various special schools around West Yorkshire, mainly specialising in the education of children with profound and multiple learning difficulties and later, with children with autism. Time and time again I witnessed the power of music.

Music is so direct. It bypasses the need for words. It is also easy to participate in making music in some way, however disabled you happen to be. Music touches the heart and the emotions and so can affect the whole of a person. That is why music is so vital in worship too. Music also helps people to interact with others, often requiring them to listen to each other and take turns. It gets straight to the point, and as I often say, it seems to 'get in sideways', bypassing the mind and going direct to the heart of things.

It is hardly surprising that it is through music that I met my husband, Martin! We both joined what is now called the Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir in Wakefield, brought together by the joy of singing.

Later in life, after my ordination, when I worked as a hospital chaplain, music continued to be an important part of my work. As well as playing my flute in services held in the hospital chapel, I often found myself singing to patients by their bedsides. This was especially poignant if they had a favourite hymn that gave them strength at a difficult time in their lives or if they were past the stage of using words. As a chaplaincy team we also played and sang carols round the wards on Christmas Eve when most people who were well enough had gone home to be with their families.

Music brings many blessings. Where would we be without the beauty of music in our world, in sickness or in health?

Rachel Bailes

This month we say 'adieu' and 'well done' to three of our young people as they head off to University.

So Long, Farewell, Auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye....

Tom:

I am going to Durham University where I will be studying engineering. I am excited to join the climbing society and try the more hands-on aspects of engineering. Sadly, the climbing centre is a lot further away from my accommodation than my lecture theatres! Leaving St Ed's I am going to miss going to youth group and all the people there.



Katherine:

I am going to Warwick University where I will be studying biochemistry. I am looking forward to meeting new people and to joining lots of societies at the university. The facilities will be very different to our school labs and so it will be interesting to be working with some cutting edge technology. I have really enjoyed being part of the youth group, despite sometimes being the only girl there, and will look forward to catching up with everyone in the holidays.

Elliot:



I am going to the University of Sheffield to study History and Politics. This was a recent switch from History and Philosophy but as my interests have shifted and I have given more thought to my course, History and Politics seems to be the right fit and I am looking forward to studying it. Having been at St Ed's my whole life, not going to church here multiple times a week will be a big change and I will miss both the Sunday services and Youth Group on Wednesdays, however I will be coming back for holidays, and family services

(at mum's request).



PROGRAMME 2025/2026

2025

- Sept 25th Communion Service: Social afternoon, Raffle & Refreshments
- Oct 30th Chocolate & Co (chosen charity for 2025/2026)
- Nov 27th The Work of Prison Fellowship
- Dec 11th An Afternoon of Carols

2026

- Jan 29th Communion Service followed by Fitness to Music
- Feb 26th The Life of a Councillor
- Mar 26th Living Well Community
- April 30th The Adventure Started Here!
- May 28th Brunswick Nursery
- June 25th Mayan Civilisation & Culture Today
- July 16th A.G.M & afternoon tea.

Meetings are on Thursdays & start at 2.00pm with a short service followed by the above programme.

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SEPTEMBER 2025 SERVICES & EVENTS

Monday-Thursday	Church open during daytime 9.30am-3.00pm (Friday 12.30-3.00pm)
Monday-Thursday	Café open 9.30am-12.00 & 1.30pm-4.00pm
Friday	Café open 9.30am-12.00
Mondays	Garden Gang (during the season) 2.00pm-4.00pm
Wednesdays	Youth Group 7.00pm-8.30pm
Wednesdays	Wednesday Afternoon Small Group 2.30pm-4.00pm (alternate)
Fridays	Little Teds 10.30am-12.00pm (term time only)
Fridays (see below for practice dates)	6.30-7.30pm Choir practice in Church

Any enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings etc to 01904 709111 or

parishoffice@stedsdringhouses.org

Timings are correct at time of going to press.

Monday	10.00-12.00	Needlecraft Group
	7.00-8.00pm	My Yoga Journey
Tuesday	10.00-11.00am	Exercise for Fitness & Health
	11.10 –12.10	Mindful Yoga
	12.30-4.00pm	U3A Bridge
	6.15-7.15pm	Beaver Scouts (in term time) see back page for Wednesday evening session
Wednesday	7.45-9.45pm	Line Dancing
	9.30am-12noon	Probus (fortnightly)
	10.00-11.00 am	Aerobics
	12.15-3.30pm	Art Group
1st Thursday	6.15-8.15pm	Perfecting Pilates (2 x 1 hour classes)
	11.30am-12.30pm	Yorkshire Club
	2.00-3.00pm	Contact
3rd Thursday	7.30-9.30pm	Local History Group
Thursday	11.00-12.00	Exercise for Fitness & Health
	12.15-3.45pm	Thursday Bridge Group
Friday	9.30-12.00	Living Well Health Community (2nd & 4th in month)
	12.00-2.00 dates)	Lunches in the Community Hall (see poster for
	6.15-7.15pm	Beavers Scouts (in term-time)

Monday 1st September

10.00-12.00 noon

Oddfellows Coffee Morning in the Cafe

Tuesday 2nd September

10.00-11.00am

Exercise for Fitness & Health

Wednesday 3rd September

12.00 noon

Praying in Company

7.00-8.30pm

Youth Group

Thursday 4th September

10.00am Holy Communion

Colossians 1: 9-14: Luke 5: 1-11

11.00-12.00 noon

Exercise for Fitness & Health

2.00-3.00pm

Contact

Friday 5th September

10.30-12.00 noon

Little Ted's

Saturday 6th September

2.00pm

Wedding

Sunday 7th September - 12th Sunday after Trinity

8.30am BCP Holy Communion

Philemon 1-21: Luke 14: 25-33

10.00am All Age Service

Readings as above

6.30pm Holy Communion with Prayers for Healing

Readings as above

Monday 8th September

10.00-12.00 noon

Needlecraft

Tuesday 9th September

10.00-11.00am

Exercise for Fitness & Health

Wednesday 10th September

12.00 noon

Praying in Company

1.00pm

Wedding

7.00-8.30pm

Youth Group

Thursday 11th September

10.00am Holy Communion

Colossians 3: 12-17: Luke 6: 27-38

11.00-12.00 noon

Exercise for Fitness & Health

Friday 12th September

10.30-12.00 noon

Little Ted's

12.00-2.00pm

Lunches

Saturday 13th September

10.00-12.00 noon

Railway Group

Sunday 14th September 13th Sunday after Trinity

8.30am Holy Communion

10.00am Holy Communion

Monday 15th September

10.00-12.00 noon

Needlecraft

Tuesday 16th September

10.00-11.00am

Exercise for Fitness & Health

Wednesday 17th September

12.00 noon

Praying in Company

2.00-4.00pm

Wednesday Afternoon Small Group

7.00-8.30pm

Youth Group

Thursday 18th September

10.00am Holy Communion

1 Timothy 4: 12-end: Luke 7: 36-end

11.00-12.00 noon

Exercise for Fitness & Health

7.30pm

Local History Group

Friday 19th September

10.30am

Dringhouses Memories 'Treasures of Dringhouses'

10.30-12.00 noon

Little Teds

Sunday 21st September 14th Sunday after Trinity

8.30am Holy Communion

10.00am Holy Communion

Monday 22nd September

10.00-12.00 noon

Needlecraft

12.30-1.30pm

'Clutter to Calm' part of 50 YOPA Festival

Tuesday 23rd September

10.00-11.00am

Exercise for Fitness & Health

Wednesday 24th September

12.00 noon

Praying in Company

7.00-8.30pm

Youth Group

Thursday 25th September

10.00am Holy Communion

Haggai 1: 1-8: Luke 9: 7-9

11.00-12.00 noon

Exercise for Fitness & Health

2.00pm

Women's Fellowship

Friday 26th September

10.30-12.00 noon

Little Ted's

12.00-2.00pm

Lunches

Sunday 28th September 15th Sunday after Trinity

8.30am Holy Communion

I Timothy 6: 6-19: Luke 16: 19-end

10.00am Holy Communion

Readings as above

3.00pm Baptisms

Monday 29th September

10.00-12.00 noon

Needlecraft

Tuesday 30th September

10.00-11.00am

Exercise for Fitness & Health

From the Registers

Weddings

Jordan Lee Spencer & Naomi Leanne Beattie 2nd August 2025

Baptisms

Harvey Jobling 29th June 2025

Daisy Juliet Marshall 29th June 2025

Max Hay 27th July 2025

Alfie Hay 27th July 2025

Noah Bradley Embleton 27th July 2025

Funerals

June Abbott 30th June 2025

Jennifer Wood 1st July 2025

Valerie Littlefair 30th July 2025

The Promise Page

What perhaps has not been music to our ears, is that in August we said 'farewell' to two key people. Angela Anelay has retired from being our Music Director after some 25 years - but, we also said 'farewell' to our Youth & Children Coordinator, Helen Cross who will be joining the team at the charity, Acts 435 (<https://www.acts435.org.uk>). Neither are leaving the church as such, but both are stepping back from their roles.

Helen has faithfully written for The Porch each month, keeping us up-to-date with our young people's activities and often writing thoughtfully about matters of faith and the particular challenges our young people face in the modern world.

We interviewed Helen for the magazine, back in October 2020 when she had been in post for one month.



Of course, this was not entirely a 'normal' start as the country had been in and out of lockdown since March 2020. However, Helen showed her true powers of creativity, as she found ways for us to celebrate Christmas outside, masked and socially separated, but still with Jesus at the heart of the story. She proved to be an absolute whizz with a computer, and pretty much blew her first one up with her creative video output! Her use of the 'green screen' led to us all being whisked around the world, as we all firmly stayed in our homes.

Post Covid, Helen started to run the youth group every Wednesday evening and decided to keep going during the holidays as, surely, that is exactly when young people need connections and outlets for their energy? Little Teds also returned, and the numbers have grown to the point where we now need quite a few helpers!

For those of us who know Helen, we accept that she is in fact a Time Lord and exists in a parallel universe somewhere in a Tardis. She remains to this day one of the best purchaser of gifts that we know - so if you don't know what to buy your nearest and dearest - give her a call.



As Richard has said on a number of occasions, for Acts 435 Helen is very much their gain and our loss. However, we have already secured an interview with Helen for The Porch later this year in order for her to tell us about her new role.

In the meantime, our Children's Worker, Sally Gatus, will be stepping into the breach. I do hope Helen mentioned to her the need for a Porch article each month....

From the Porch Team - thank you very much, Helen, we are grateful for your support over the years

And so, we leave you with just a few things Helen has said to us in the Porch over the last 5 years....

October 2021: So, what should we do with all we have been given? Pay it forward! It should be our natural response to God's generous love.

April 2022: Life may never be the same again. For some of us that is really quite exciting, whilst for others that is really quite worrying. Just know that God will be there with you every step of the way and with every decision you make.

June 2023: Our children and young people represent, as the cherry blossoms and the dandelions do, abundant life and hope for the future. We are very fortunate at St Ed's to have some truly remarkable individuals in our under 18s.

November 2024: I wonder what Jesus might have said were his favourite memories of his time on Earth. Perhaps the wedding in Cana? Or perhaps his conversation with Nicodemus? Or maybe seeing Thomas believe he had resurrected? In this season where we remember and give thanks, I hope we are able to reflect on those memories that bring us joy.

March 2025: As time marches forward this year, I challenge us all (myself included) to take some of that time to pause deliberately, to breathe it in, to spend it with God and to be mindful just of that moment we are in.

The Porch Team



Cerddoriaeth I Fy Nghlustiau

St Edward's Church community spaces are hired by a wide range of groups, and one such group is The Occasion Choir who meet to rehearse on Thursdays at 7.15pm for two hours. Their Music Director is Yvonne Robert, and she kindly agreed to an interview with The Porch Magazine.



Yvonne, tell me a bit about your background in music?

I grew up in North Wales in a Welsh-speaking family and from a very early age found my singing voice. I learnt to play the piano and the harp and knew that I wanted a career in music. My parents were in choirs, and my mother taught me to count time whilst singing a hymn. I studied in Liverpool and then at the Royal College of Music in London and qualified as a performer, but decided I really needed a 'backup plan' and so trained as a teacher. I taught at Wetherby High School, which I loved, but it doesn't leave much time to pursue a singing career.

I was at an event at the Methodist Central Hall in Scarborough with George Thomas, who had been the Speaker in the House of Commons, and he advised me to get in touch with Dame Isobel Baillie who was a celebrated soprano. She lived over in Manchester and when I met her, she told me I needed to give up teaching to pursue my singing career. I was under her tutelage for 8 years and it was an enormous privilege.

So, what is your involvement with The Occasion Choir and why the name?

Well, we are often called The Occasional Choir by mistake, but we simply came up with the name because we sing at occasions! We are now 33 years old, and I have been involved since its inception.

Tell me about your concerts.

We try to tell a story, rather than just sing a series of unconnected pieces. So, we link the music with readings and poems and at our last concert were fortunate to have Geoff Druett, a former TV presenter, as our Guest Reader. Our musical repertoire includes Handel, Vaughan Williams, Elgar, Gilbert and Sullivan and other such classics. In terms of our concerts, much of our focus is to raise funds for local and national charities. In fact, we have raised just under £70,000 in our musical lifetime.

How can someone join the choir - is there an audition?

We don't audition. We really see ourselves as a 'family' choir where people are drawn together for the love of music and the love of singing. Like many, we have suffered a dip in numbers post Covid, and so we would love to encourage new blood and new voices to join us.

We have a wonderful accompanist in Robert Smeaton and, whilst we take our music seriously, we also have fun. We welcome allcomers, but Tenors and Altos would be especially welcome! Please, simply turn up on a Thursday evening and you will be made hugely welcome. The Parish Office at St Edward's has a record of all our rehearsals, so if you wish to check first, please contact Wendy on 01904 709111.

What is coming next?

Our next concert is at St James the Deacon, and it is entitled *Address to Britain* as this year is 80 years since VE Day. It is on **Saturday 8th November at 7.00pm**. Please come!

Many thanks to you Yvonne - and Porch readers, please pass on the message!

Interviewer: Helen Wren

PS: You have probably guessed - but the title is Welsh for 'Music to my Ears'...

Supporting the Children's Society

The Children's Society, a charity affiliated to the Church of England, was founded in the late nineteenth century by Edward Rudolf, a Sunday school teacher, establishing children's homes as an alternative to the large workhouses and orphanages of the time. Right up to 1946, it used the strapline *Providing Homes for Waifs and Strays!*



The society insisted children should not become long-term residents in their homes but fostered or adopted. By the late 1960s The Children's Society had become one of the largest adoption agencies in the country.

By the early 70s, there was more emphasis on preventative work designed to support children and young people within their own families and communities.

Today, the society's work includes preventing child sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation such as county lines, substance abuse and runaways. There is support for those living in poverty, young carers, and those with mental ill health. It runs a number of campaigns to improve children's well-being.

Each year, the Society produces a report in partnership with the University of York, called The Good Childhood Report. The data is then used by the Office for National Statistics.

Sadly, like various other organisations, the Children's Society has admitted to historic abuse, both in its children's homes and by facilitating the migration of 3700 children to Australia, Canada and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

Nevertheless, I believe the work it does today is vital, so I am taking over from Liz Powderley as St Edward's representative. The charity derives most of its income from individual supporters or from church events such as Christingle services. Until the pandemic, we also had a number of boxholders in our congregation, who donated spare coinage. With the widespread use of contactless cards now, many of us hardly use coins. However, for those remaining box holders, I will count the money in October as usual and accept any one-off donations. I also have direct debit forms, should you wish to give a regular donation to this worthy cause.

Finally, if you receive your magazine before **Saturday 30 August**, you are warmly invited to call in to our garage party anytime between 3 and 7pm, with donations to the Society.

explore

Libraries and Archives



Hello from Dringhouses Library!

Summer may be officially over, but there's still lots of fun to be had at the library.

The **Summer Reading Challenge** ends **Saturday 13 September**. We have had a great Summer Reading Challenge so far this year with lots of excellent reading going on! There is still some time to get your reading done and complete the challenge, just pop in and see Lucy and the volunteer team to get your last stickers...and maybe your school will win the Challenge Cup this year (I'm looking at you, Dringhouses, topple Acomb Primary from their multi-year winning streak!)

How well do you know Yorkshire?! Join Quizmaster Roger Poyser on **Friday 26 September 4-5.30pm** for a **Yorkshire quiz!** Challenge yourself on your Yorkshire castles, dales and personalities, and be in with a chance of winning a copy of 'Discovering Dringhouses II', which has a chapter featuring your very own Dringhouses Library. £5 entry, hot drink and 'fat rascal' cake included, tickets available from the desk.

Our Tuesday morning **Parents Place get-together for new and expectant parents** has been so successful we now have graduates...

So we have started **Thursday Toddler Time, 10-11am**. Join us with your **2-4 year olds** for a **parent-led session** with lots of toys and books for little ones, then why not stay for our **11am storytime**? All welcome, free.



And for those with babies of **0-2 years**, **Parents Place** runs every **Tuesday from**

11am-12.00pm. Meet other parents and parents to be, chat, have a cuppa, let the babies have a wriggle, and share the amazing, demanding experience of parenthood! All welcome, free.

Our **Children's Craft Club** runs every **Thursday 3.30-4.30pm**, with fun, messy crafts each week. Free, no booking required.

Our **Children's Lego Club** meets every **Tuesday 3.30pm to 4.30pm** for building challenges and creative fun with Lego every week. Free and no booking required.

Under 5s Storytime is on every **Thursday and Saturday, 11am to 11.30am**, with songs, rhymes, and stories for children under 5 and their carers. Free and no booking required.

Our friendly **Knit and Natter** group meets **every Tuesday, 10am to 12pm**, for coffee, chat, knitting, crocheting, and fun. Free and no booking required.

WATCH THIS SPACE:

Our **My Library Exhibition** evening promises to be a creative delight!

Lucy

MUSIC TO MY EARS

Do you know what's music to my ears? It's music! Next question?

As it's the church magazine I'll try to strike the right note with a couple of Bible references that are music to my ears. They're self-explanatory: '*...a bruised reed he will not break...*' (Isaiah 42:3, Matthew 12.20) and also from Isaiah; (40:31): '*...but they that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength; they shall mount up on wings like eagles...*'. I should add Psalm 150 (Stanford setting) sung as a recessional in many places of worship including York Minster, growing fainter as the choir moves from the nave. So poignant. Music to my ears...and heart.

Music *is* music to my ears even though I'm not a musician! I wouldn't even say I have a 'musical ear'. I always end up with concussion when I try playing it. However, I do enjoy music and my CD player 'gets some wellie!' Then there's Radio 3, for which I always dress up in dinner jacket, ostentatiously wielding a pair of opera glasses on a posh ebony stick. Even so, the picture quality on the wireless is hopeless. The screen is ridiculously small. Even the old ploy of screwed-up eyes to achieve a clearer image doesn't work.

I have a special interest in 'the Mighty Handful', or, if you're an Enid Blyton fan, 'The Famous Five', a sort of musical fellowship based in St Petersburg; Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky, Cui, Borodin, Balakirev and their students and followers such as Glazunov. They prospered during the second half of the 19th Century to the early 20th C. Out of respect, I've visited their graves just outside St Petersburg. Unlike most composers these Russians often had 'day jobs'. Rimsky-Korsakov was a Naval officer, Cui was a military engineer (and not a word for attracting a baby's attention!), Mussorgsky was a Guards officer as well as 'a disaster waiting to happen', sad to relate, Borodin was a doctor and professor of chemistry with only Balakirev, ironically the least well-known, a professional musician. These exerted considerable influence on the 20th century Russian composers who followed. So Russian music *is* music to my ears. Just to demonstrate though it's not easy, as I tap this out, I'm performing a Cossack dance routine. Trouble is I keep tripping up over my sleeves. If you could see it, it would bring tears to your eyes - it does mine.

Neither am I averse to the great British composers, especially Vaughan Williams, Elgar, Walton, Arnold, Holst *et al.* It was reported that after the successful premiere of the Planet Suite, Holst became known as 'the heavenly Holst'!

Pressing on, a few of the hymns from my Sunday School years are music to my ears and are scheduled to put in an appearance at my funeral. They were sung at St Oswald's Church Sunday school, Fulford in the dim and distant 1940s. Then they disappeared from my awareness, yet returned decades later. Welcome back, you're music to my ears...and soul. Perhaps they never left. The seed sown then



was dormant, not dead! Sunday school teachers take heart. They included 'God be in my head', 'Lift up your hearts', 'I heard the voice of Jesus say' and 'New every morning'.

Once upon a time I wasn't averse to pop music but that died with Buddy Holly, which is going back a bit! That was when I was at grammar school which may explain my interest in the 'grammarphone'! See what I did then? My introduction to 'proper' music happened at school, thanks to our music master Mr Mayes, nickname 'Lu-lu', with a little help from Messrs Borodin, Britten and Prokofiev.

Another 'happy hunting ground' for music to my ears is film scores, offering vast choice. However, amidst all the competition, is the score from the western 'The Big Country', by Jerome Moross, the finest of all film music *in my opinion*. Music to my ears! And brain!

Movie music reminds me of a close encounter with York's very own music maestro, John Barry. Around 1990 a Yorkshire Air Museum colleague and I persuaded JB to compose free of charge a piece of music for the Museum to be entitled 'The Halifax March'. The Central Band of the Royal Air Force agreed to play and record it. However, for convoluted reasons and circumstances, it never happened. If it had that would have been...guess what... music to my ears. Pity.

William Congreve, not William Concave the lens grinder, but the poet, dramatist, satirist and politician, in common with so many other great Yorkshiremen, e.g. his twentieth Century equivalent J B Priestley, had wise words to say ; 'Music has charms to soothe the savage breast', sometimes wrongly rendered '...the savage beast', though it fits as well. This saying has stuck, standing the test of time. A century earlier Shakespeare was at it as 'Twelfth Night opened...' 'If music be the food of love, play on'. There's so much music, to fit all shapes, sizes, ages and tastes! Hope my favourites can be heard in heaven. I'll be disappointed if not. I could get bored with harps. Not clear on the theology here.

Then there's jazz; also music to my ears. In that genre I have a niche favourite but that'll have to wait for another time. In the same area, I had an acquaintance who in 1944 once sang with the Glenn Miller American Band of the AEF with Major Miller wielding the baton. Cool.

There's plenty of music in the Bible though interestingly 'song' and 'sing' are far commoner in Holy Writ than the actual word 'music'. Just saying! It seems only appropriate to close on a musical note. Here's one; 🎵, and another; 🎶 'Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth, sing the glory of his name...' (Psalm 66 vv 1 & 2). All together now!

Derek Reed

For chances to learn....

FOGADD

Friends of Grahamstown and District Development

Following a recent visit to Grahamstown, Cai Mallett reports on one of our connection partners, Friends of Grahamantown and District Development, and sets the scene for reports of future FOGADD projects.

In June, Simon and I travelled to Africa. It involved some work for both of us but included a good holiday period.

Towards the end of our trip, we arrived in Grahamstown (now renamed Makhandla). Our timing coincided with the National Arts Festival (South Africa's equivalent of the Edinburgh Festival) and we made our way to the Cathedral for the Festival Eucharist. As the processional hymn was introduced with the St Denio tune (..think Immortal Invisible..) we stood up to sing these words:

*In great expectation we've come to explore
Sublime inspiration locating once more
A world so enchanting, in world racked by fear.
Enthralling, unsettling, we find our Lord's here.*

*With drama and music, with painting and song,
This world of sheer magic to all should belong.
When these gifts we're given with others we share
On earth as in heaven, God's love we declare.*

*Though history reminds us of past marked by pain,
Can we put behind us such hurts as remain?
Great Teacher and Father teach us to extend
To sisters, to brothers, the meaning of Friend.*

*When playwrights take pleasure with plots to confuse,
Seek out simple treasure, where hid by their Muse.
Produce for descendants, a stage where they'll find
A future resplendent, for all humankind*

*For each new rendition, for chances to learn
From poet, musician, from each in their turn,
For insight, for laughter, for blessings outpoured,
For life ever after, we thank you O Lord.*

(Words Professor Pat Terry)

This set me thinking. We were here to see projects in modern day Makhanda, but there were those in the congregation who would have been educated and brought up under Apartheid (1948-1994). Some in the congregation, the same age as our children, would have been educated in mixed race classes. Most will have faced the challenges of fast paced change and trying to find reconciliation with the past.

Over the next few days, we saw various shows to challenge and develop our own thinking. One was about justice over violence in a world of discrimination against immigrants. Another was a symphony of characters and storylines, that led to different interpretations amongst the audience, but an agreement that the acting was superb. A university troupe presented sketches highlighting death of children in dangerous school pit latrines, discrimination against immigrants and the brewing atmosphere that leads to violent protests. We saw comedy about marriage, drama with a feminist angle, a production about hidden disabilities (AIDs) rudely uncovered, dance and much more.

We each see arts from the context of our own experience, but that hymn told me to broaden my perspective. It was a lesson in itself which changed the way I thought over those next few days.

Each of these performances enabled us to see the different buildings of Makhanda. The City Hall struck us as remarkably badly maintained. The school hall where we send scholars who are taught in Afrikaans, was a good facility. The one where we send English speaking scholars was surrounded by honours boards, on which we saw the names of at least one of our scholars. The Settlers Monument which we hadn't explored before, was a huge facility for the Arts with panoramic views of the city. From there we could see the University, the city centre, and in the distance the townships sprawling for miles.



Finally, this was a chance to speak to performers and members of the audiences - to waiters and stall holders- and friends of Simon's colleagues who had lived and worked in Makhanda all their lives. Breakfast tended to be at a local café where each morning different performers seemed to convene. We learned which shows to go to, talked to them about audience levels and the festival itself. At lunchtime we frequented

the stalls on the "Village Green" where the Rotary Club was selling Kudu burgers, raising funds for new toilets in schools. Other stalls covered a whole variety of foods. In the evening, we went to the "Pothole and Donkey" on the High Street (that has both in abundance) or met fellow travellers and poets in the Albany Club and learned what had brought them to Makhanda or kept them there.

All this forms the backdrop for the projects we support in Makhanda - more of these in a later article.

Cai Mallett - Trustee - Friends of Grahamstown and District Development



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