

Board of Trustees Annual Summary Report: 2018

Content and Purpose

This report summarises the work of the Board of Trustees of the German Choir of London (the Choir) including changes to the Board and key achievements. It serves to inform all associate members of the choir of the work going on 'behind the scenes' to create transparency and a sense of ownership. The summary is based on the minutes kept at all Trustee meetings. Any associate member can request to view the meeting minutes (written in English) by emailing any Trustee at any time. Associate members are also permitted to attend the Board meetings upon request. This is the 4th summary report.

Period covered

January - December 2018

Author

Melanie Allmendinger

Content

1. List of events in the reporting period
2. Changes to the Board of Trustees in the reporting period
3. Summary of Trustee work in the reporting period
4. Summary of the Annual General Meeting of Associate Members
5. Financial summary
6. Acknowledgements
7. Upcoming concerts and events currently programmed for 2019

1. Events in the reporting period

Main choral events:

24 February 2018

Wells Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" - Evensong with Wells Cathedral Choir

18 March 2018

Christuskirche London, Soloensemble singing Scarlatti Stabat Mater in service

27 May 2018

Wakefield Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" – Evensong

27 May 2018

Bradford Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" Concert with Bradford Cathedral Consort

28 May 2018

York Minster: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" – Evensong

21 July 2018

Highgate Cemetery: Brahms Requiem & Gough's "Armistice", in aid of Médecins Sans Frontières

4 August 2018

Menin Gate, Ypres: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" - Last post ceremony

5 August 2018

Brussels Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" – Concert

13 September 2018

St James Paddington: Duruflé's Requiem, Brahms' Warum ist das Licht, Schütz's Verleih uns Frieden

21 September 2018

Canterbury Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" - Evensong with Canterbury Cathedral Choir

23 September 2018

Christuskirche Knightsbridge – singing in service

6 October 2019

Winchester Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" Brahms' Warum ist das Licht gegeben, Schütz's Verleih uns Frieden, Gough's Armistice

13 October 2018

Coventry Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" - Evensong

5 November 2018

St Paul's Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" - Evensong

17 November 2018

Lichfield Cathedral: "Blessed are the Peacemakers" - Evensong

18 November 2018

Liverpool Cathedral: Blessed are the Peacemakers" Duruflé's Requiem with Liverpool Cathedral Choir

2 December 2018

St. Marien, London - Mass

6 December 2018

Christmas concert for small ensemble at German Chamber of Commerce London

8 December 2018

German YMCA Christmas Bazaar

12 December 2018

Christmas Carols at Liverpool Street Station fundraising for Charity St Mungo's

14 December 2018

Christmas Carols at London Bridge Station fundraising for Charity St Mungo's

21 December 2018

Christmas Carols at Waterloo Station fundraising for Charity St Mungo's

Training sessions for Choir Members:

The Musical Director offered training sessions between January to November 2018 on topics such as singing techniques, sight reading and rhythm. This training was offered to members free of charge and was well received.

Trustee Meetings:

- 22 February 2018
- 17 May 2018
- 17 September 2018
- 2 December 2018

Annual choir member meeting (full meeting during which the Trustees gave an update and section leaders were elected):

- 11th of December 2018

2. Changes to the Board of Trustees in the reporting period

Current Board of Trustees and areas of responsibilities:

- **Melanie Allmendinger:** new members
- **Thomas Hegel:** finance and legal; Chair of the Board of Trustees
- **Victoria Pelka:** marketing and online presence
- **Christian Anders:** events coordinator including trips abroad
- **Sarah Marzi:** social secretary and social media

3. Summary of Trustee work in the reporting period

Marketing:

- Video documentation of our Blessed are the peacemakers tour by Steve Haskett who filmed several of our concerts and touring background material and produced short videos for our YouTube channel, especially featuring our Brahms Requiem concert and our tour to Ypres and Brussels
- We produced several posters for our concerts as well as flyers and posters to advertise for new members to join
- The marketing team conducted a lot of social media advertising on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Two of our Facebook posts about the Blessed are the Peacemakers tour reached 1100 people each! And our most successful post in 2018: a photo gallery about our Belgium trip was clicked 493 times!

Concert and event organisation:

- Please see separate document for details of our Blessed are the Peacemakers tour.
- Main challenges were the organisation of all choir trips to different cities and especially the tour abroad to Belgium where we had the honour of singing at the Last Post in Ypres and at Brussels Cathedral.
- Another big project was the planning of the open air concert at Highgate Cemetery of the Brahms Requiem concert. This was a concert with a big orchestra and soloists, as well as speeches by the German Ambassador and a member of Médecins Sans Frontières. It was a charity concert and we raised an incredible 4,930£ for Médecins Sans Frontières.

Miscellaneous:

- The Soloensemble upped their game this year, contributing majorly to the concert in St James Paddington and they will again sing half a concert next year, contributing to the heightened quality of our choir performances.
- Technical rehearsals (Technikproben) continued this year.

- We appreciated the contribution of our temporary assistant conductor Jack who helped us learn Brahms Requiem.
- The Trustees implemented the new GDPR rules especially in terms of member data according to the EU's updated data protection laws.

4. Summary of the Annual General Meeting

At the Christmas meeting (General Meeting of Associate Members) on the 11th December 2018, the choir approved the work of the Trustees, elected (new) section leaders for 2019, and discussed a number of ideas relating to rehearsals and the running of the choir. Minutes of this meeting are available. All points were discussed by the Board and the Musical Director and have been implemented as far as possible.

- Trustees presented a review of all choral, marketing and other activities of 2018
- thanked choir members who volunteer their time for the choir
- updated the choir on plans for 2019
- gave a report about the financial health of the choir
- (re)elected section leaders
2018 the section leaders were:
 - **Sopranos - Nathalie Nötzold**
 - **Altos - Elisabeth Minkner** (was replaced on 11/12/18 by **Marianne Rencken**)
 - **Tenors - Eckart Marchand**
 - **Basses- Michael Erras** (was replaced on 11/12/18 by **Jeremias Reich**)
- Approval of trustees board by members and updates:
All trustees (Melanie Allmendinger, Thomas Hegel, Victoria Pelka, Christian Anders and Sarah Marzi) were approved
 - **Victoria Pelka** will step back from her Trustee position after 3 years.
Susanne Thiele was elected by the Board of remaining Trustees to take over Victoria's role, after receiving and reviewing her application. This will come into effect from the 1st Jan 2019.
 - **Sarah Marzi** will step back from her Trustee position in March 2019. We will be looking for a replacement for her soon and encourage choir members to apply.
- discussion points and feedback from members
 - The desire for a choir weekend trip was expressed. Barbara explained that we used to do a yearly trip to France but due to Ryanair changing its flight patterns, our usual destination is no longer easily accessible. She has also found that, over the years, the numbers of people attending these weekends dropped, so the musical progress that can be achieved through these is low. Alternatively, people suggested that we could have whole day rehearsals/ singing events which include food, section-specific rehearsals, voice building exercises, etc. Barbara has left it to the choir to organise this and show that there is enough demand to warrant the expense.
 - Suggestion to rehearse once a month in separate voices for the last half hour of our rehearsals. Barbara noted that there is not enough time in the normal rehearsals for this with our multiple concerts planned for next year. But there is the option to hire Barbara for your voice section specifically and arrange a special rehearsal paid for by the choir. Or, as some voices have done, to meet amongst yourself in your voice to go over issues together. Section leaders are encouraged to organise these.

- Wish to have earlier notice of concert dates. Mostly, the choir is informed in good time of concert dates but especially for 2019, concert organisation is proving difficult.
- Wish for Barbara to send emails earlier ahead of rehearsals. And to point out areas which need to be rehearsed more by each voice.
- Barbara asked members to please come early to rehearsals so that you can join into the warm up which includes some technique reminders.
- Barbara asked members to please come to the technical rehearsals if you know you struggle with aspects of your vocal performance. Otherwise the quality of the choir will vary too much between people.

5. Financial summary

Please see separate document for details.

- **Income** this year was approx. £26.000, of which £9100 associate membership fees (at the end of 2018 we had 54 paying, registered choir members) and £9,500 donations from our major sponsors (German YMCA and St Paul's Trust)
- **Expenses** this year was approx. £36.000, of which £10,700 for travel expenses and £15.700 for Musical Director remuneration.
- **The Trustees decided to increase the associate membership fees** from £15 (£8 discount for students and singers without regular income) per month to £20 (£10) per month. This is mainly due to allowing the Musical Director's remuneration catalogue, which had been unchanged for the past 6 years, to increase from January 2019 (e.g. increase of rehearsal fee from £100 to £120). Also, given that next year will be a "normal" year again where we don't have additional funding sources like in 2018, our financial forecasts show that we would struggle to finance the planned concerts, rehearsals, technical rehearsals, etc. if associate membership fees remained stagnant. To illustrate this, we have forecasted expenses of roughly £13,000 for the Musical Director fees in 2019, whereas membership fees would yield roughly £8,800 if fees were kept unchanged and £11,700 with the suggested increase. Therefore it is likely that despite the increase in associate membership fees we will need to dig into the savings (see below) to finance the concerts as these tend to be loss-making. It the first time in the Choir's 10-year history that associate membership fees are being increased, also reflecting our development with more ambitious repertoire, prestigious performance venues, and a wider offer to associate members (e.g. technical rehearsals, vocal ensembles, etc.).
- We expect to have £29,000 **savings** roughly at the end of the year. We expect that some of these savings will be used to finance concerts next year. The Trustees also like to keep a sound level of savings as we never know how membership numbers develop over the year - especially during Brexit year.
- Solo ensemble rehearsals and technical rehearsals will continue to be financed by the whole choir as these contribute to the quality of the choir as a whole. During the AGM meeting, members welcomed this/did not object to this.

6. Acknowledgements

Aside from the Trustees, several associate members have provided key inputs into the development of the choir which we wish to acknowledge:

- **Stephanie Kirschke:** prepares the attendance register and keeps oversight of attendance
- **Uta Bergner-Sington:** responsible for ordering the music for the choir
- **Christian Daur:** responsible for creating midids and keeping our online music archive up-to-date
- **Christoph Gräfe:** designed our Poster for the Blessed are the Peacemakers tour
- **Nathalie Nötzold:** regularly posts Instagram messages about the choir; she also writes and designs the newsletter that goes out to our followers.
- **Laura Wehl:** technical support for the choir website

7. Concerts and events currently programmed for the future

- 26 January 2019 – small group take part in Humperdinck's Hänsel und Gretel concert performance
- 27 January 2019 - singing in service at Christuskirche Knightsbridge for Holocaust remembrance day
- 23 March 2019 – Europe Concert at St. Columba's Church - songs from each European country
- 28 June 2019 - Charity Concert in support of the Lullaby Trust at St. Mary at Hill - Stabat Mater
- 17 August 2019 - informal Picnic Concert in Victoria Park
- 19-22 September 2019 - Choir weekend for smaller group with two concerts in Las Canals, France
- 19 October 2019 – 10 year anniversary concert at Round Chapel, Hackney – Carmina Burana
- 1 December 2019 - Advent mass in St. Marien
- 5 December 2019 - Christmas Carols in the Deutsche Handelskammer (only Solo Ensemble)
- 7 December 2019 - Christmas Carols in the German YMCA
- 9 December 2019 - Christmas Carols in the German Embassy for Solo Ensemble
- 13 December 2019 - Concert in St Lawrence Jewry Church, Guildhall Yard- Christmas Oratorio
- 15 December 2019 – Concert in St Giles' Cripplegate – Christmas Oratorio
- 16 December 2019 – Evensong in St. Paul's Cathedral
- 17 December 2019 – Charity Carol in Paddington Station
- 18 December 2019 – Charity Carol in Victoria Station
- 19 December 2019 – Charity Carol in Brixton Station
- 7 January 2020 - AGM
- 18 July 2020 – Choir tour to Rome, we are singing in the Vatican!

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
(REGISTERED WITH
CHARITY COMMISSION NO: 1162894)

Accounts

31 December 2018

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
Receipt and Expenditure account
for the year ended 31 December 2018

	2018 £	2017 £
Receipts		
Member subscriptions	9,124	9,316
General donations	913	-
Grant income	9,500	27,725
Concert ticket sales	5,524	6,115
CD sales	232	1,801
Interest income	38	12
Other income	746	-
	<u>26,077</u>	<u>44,969</u>
Payments		
Conductor fees & rehearsals	15,799	9,800
Venue Hire	233	1,558
CD recording costs	-	2,505
Travel, subsistence and accommodation	10,704	-
Instrumentalists	550	5,053
Solo singers	650	1,550
Marketing, events & other expenses	2,964	5,244
Donations	4,638	-
Accountancy fees	870	660
	<u>36,408</u>	<u>26,370</u>
Expenses		
Total expenses	<u>36,408</u>	<u>26,370</u>
Surplus of receipts over expenditure	<u>(10,331)</u>	<u>18,599</u>
Unrestricted Fund:		
At 1 January 2018	<u>39,634</u>	<u>21,035</u>
Surplus of receipts over expenditure	<u>(10,331)</u>	<u>18,599</u>
At 31 December 2018	<u>29,303</u>	<u>39,634</u>

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2018

	Notes	2018 £	2017 £
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand		29,303	39,634
Net current assets		<u>29,303</u>	<u>39,634</u>
Net assets		<u>29,303</u>	<u>39,634</u>
UNRESTRICTED FUND:			
Fund Balance	2	29,303	39,634
Total funds		<u>29,303</u>	<u>39,634</u>

Signed by two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature:

Print Name:

Date

T. Hegel
T. Hegel
13/8/2019

Signature:

Print Name:

Date

Melanie Allmendinger
Melanie Allmendinger
13/8/2019

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2018

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The Accounts are drawn up on a cash basis.

2 Unrestricted Fund:

	2018
	£
At 1 January 2018	39,634
Excess of receipts over expenditure for the year	(10,331)
At 31 December 2018	<u>29,303</u>



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON

On accounts for the year
ended

31 December 2018

Charity no
(if any)

1162894

Set out on pages

1-3

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity German Choir of London for the year ended 31 December 2018.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Independent
examiner's statement

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date: 24/07/2019

Name:

Ilyas Pathan

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

CIMA

Address:

Unit 7, 3-5 Little Somerset Street, London, England, E1 8AH

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

None

Deutscher Chor London

Report of the Blessed are the Peacemakers Cathedral Tour 2018

Wells, 24 February 2018:



The start of the choir's extraordinary tour of cathedrals in the UK and abroad this year was an evensong at Wells Cathedral, which we sang jointly with the Choristers of Wells Cathedral on 24th February.



This would also be the first time the choir publicly performed a piece of Orlando Gough's cycle of music commemorating the centenary of the end of World War 1: the piece *Facing Home*, based on a famous quote from J.G. Gheuens's novel *De Mis Kenden*, is an attempt to capture the feelings of those soldiers who were lucky enough to return home at the end of war.



Despite the distance, the bus ride to Wells was relatively bearable thanks to an engaging presentation by choir member Dr Eckart Marchand about the history and architecture of Wells Cathedral, and the fact that going via the A303 comes with excellent views of Stonehenge!

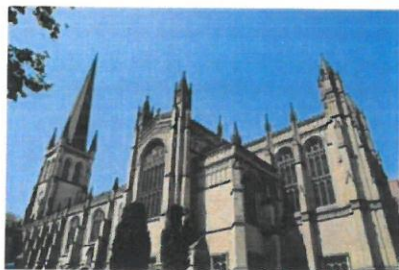


After a short stroll around the medieval centre of Wells we were warmly received by Cathedral staff and the Cathedral Choir. Directed by Matthew Owens, Master of the Choristers of Wells Cathedral, we went on to perform key parts of Evensong jointly with the Choristers of Wells Cathedral, including the psalm, Orlando Gough's *Facing Home*, and the hymn. After the Evensong, Mr Owens invited us on a short but insightful tour of the Cathedral that ended in the exceptional Chapter House, and was also an opportunity to get to know members of the Wells choir. The Evensong in Wells was certainly a great start into a truly extraordinary year for the choir.

Carl Heinemann



Wakefield, 27 May 2018:



On 27 May we were honoured to be able to sing both in Wakefield Cathedral and in Bradford Cathedral. Both performances were part of our "Blessed are the Peacemakers" tour. We left Knightsbridge in the early morning by bus with everybody excited about the upcoming concerts.



In preparation for the visit to the cathedrals some of our choir members gave short presentations about both cathedrals, as well as the background of some of the peacemakers we honoured in the services and concerts, as well as a lecture about poems by WWI poets. We reached Wakefield in the afternoon, where we performed as part of the cathedral's Evensong and sang in addition "Ich setze auf die Liebe", a piece from Orlando Gough's "Armistice" series.

Julia Ewert



Bradford, 27 May 2018:

Directly after the Evensong we headed to Bradford Cathedral where we performed in a concert together with Bradford Cathedral Consort.



This concert was very special in composition and atmosphere due to the presence of several peacemakers (the Bradford Peace Museum, local peace initiatives, local history groups



and others) who shared their views on the significance of peace nowadays, the history of peacemakers in Bradford, and the history of German immigration into Bradford.

We were welcomed by the Bishop of Leeds, Nick Baines as well as the Dean of Bradford, Jerry Lepine. We sang pieces by Schütz, Scarlatti, Wolf, Mahler, Mendelssohn, Dyson, Brahms and all pieces of the "Armistice" series by Orlando Gough.

With its special atmosphere and the different speeches, this concert left a deep impression on us.



After the concert to everyone's delight, we were treated to a traditional Bradford Curry before continuing our journey to York

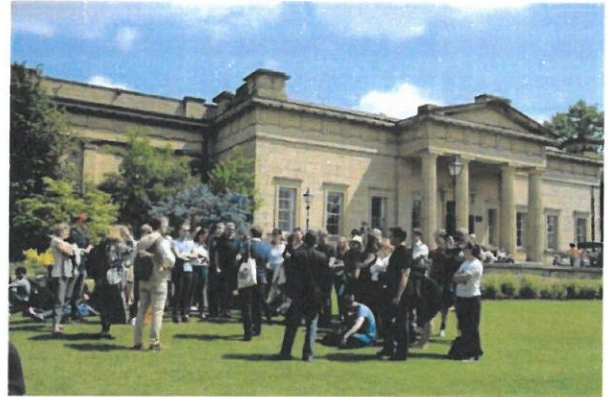
Julia Ewert



York, 28 May 2018:



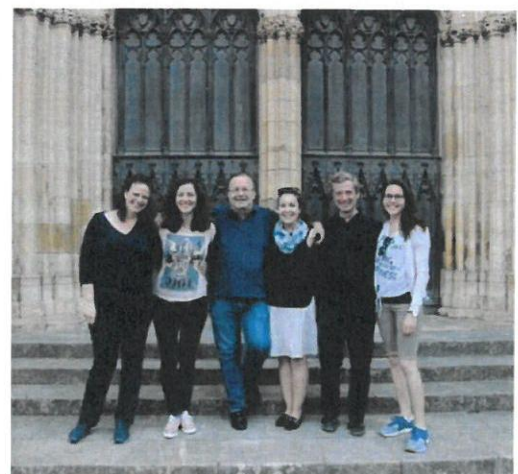
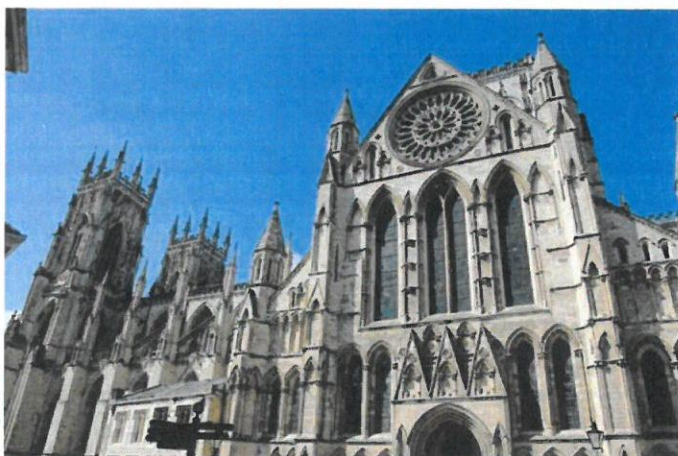
After breakfast, the day in York started with a guided cathedral and city tour. We learnt a lot about the long history of the Minster (and all the churches that stood on this site before the Minster was built) and its magnificent windows.



After the Minster, we walked across the town centre and learnt how Romans, Vikings, and Anglo-Saxons have shaped the city over the centuries.

After a lunch just next to the famous York Shambles, we met again in the Minster to rehearse for Evensong. To sing Evensong in York Minster later in the afternoon was then a great experience for everyone. Sadly, given the long journey back to London, we had to jump into the coach directly after the service heading back towards Knightsbridge.

David Schröder



Canterbury, 21 September 2018:



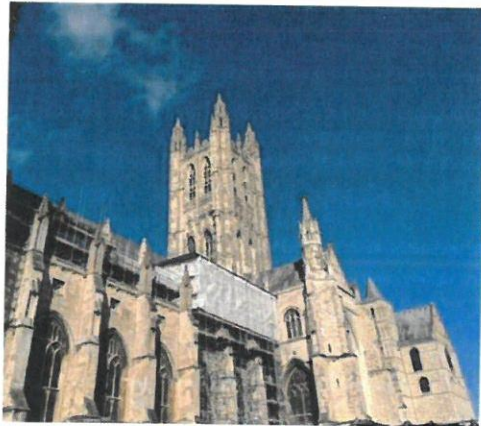
An absolute highlight of our tour was the Evensong in Canterbury.

Not only is Canterbury Cathedral one of the most beautiful cathedrals in the UK, but also the mother church of the Anglican community and the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury.



A welcome tour by the precentor of the Cathedral Max Kramer through the cathedral and its grounds made us appreciate this wonderful Cathedral, its history and its importance for the UK.

'Under an equal sky' was an exhibition commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War which comprised glass ampoures in the cathedral, which matched our tour.



It was very special for us that we sang the Canticles in D by George Dyson and "Ich setze auf die Liebe" by Orland Gough together with the Canterbury Cathedral Choir, Dyson being conducted by the Canterbury Cathedral Music Director Dr David Flood, and „Ich setze auf die Liebe“ bei Barbara Höfling. This was in the spirit of our cathedral tour to bring people together, to remember together and to bring us closer by singing together.

After Evensong we were invited into the Grand Chapter House for tea and cake and the interest in our project and in our choir by members from Canterbury cathedral was enormous. We ended the evening together in the local pub.

The warm welcome and appreciation for our project from the mother of all churches was truly amazing.

Amadea Heitmann



Winchester, 6 October 2018



We left Knightsbridge promptly at 9am, the ride on our coach was smooth and comfortable. A short presentation on the cathedral and the history of Winchester, as usual delivered by one of our fellow singers while en route, prepared us for the day ahead.

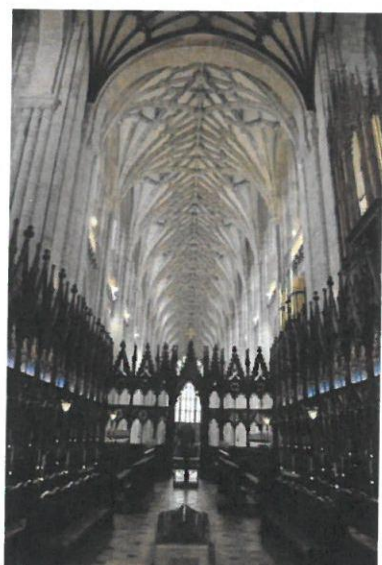
It was a grey and rainy day, but our hearts were lightened up with the joy and prospect of singing in yet another beautiful cathedral: Winchester, and grand it certainly was!



Blessed Are The Peacemakers

Herbert Schütz: Werbelt uns Frieden
Chorale: Gough: Antiphone
Johannes Brahms: Warum ist das Licht gegeben

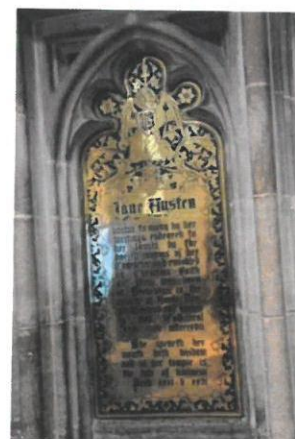
Deutscher Chor
London



Upon arrival some of us braved the miserable weather and went to explore the town's many sites, including the Westgate Museum, the Great Hall and Jane Austen's House (where the author spent the last eight years of her life), while others dodged the rain and warmed up with a cosy cuppa in one of the many cafes.

At 1pm we all met again in front of the main church entrance, where the sounds and smells of a harvest fair filled the air, and we were led to our rehearsal room to prepare for the concert. We had just enough time left to take a look at the beautifully carved High Altar and the stunning Lady Chapel as well as Jane Austen's burial place within the cathedral before we took our place 'on stage'; the beauty being that compared to previous engagements this was a rather informal concert where our singing came to the surprise of many people visiting the cathedral.

We absolutely loved the casual atmosphere and merrily presented our array of songs (Schütz, Brahms and Gough), watching how the nave filled with more and more people drawn to the heavenly music.



To reward ourselves for all the day's hard work, we snuggled up in a nearby pub afterwards and enjoyed a pint or two, before it was back to London at 5pm.

Oh what a fulfilling day we had! Or, to say it with Jane Austen's words:
"It isn't what we say or think that defines us, but what we do."
Thank you Winchester!

Magdalena Lippingwell



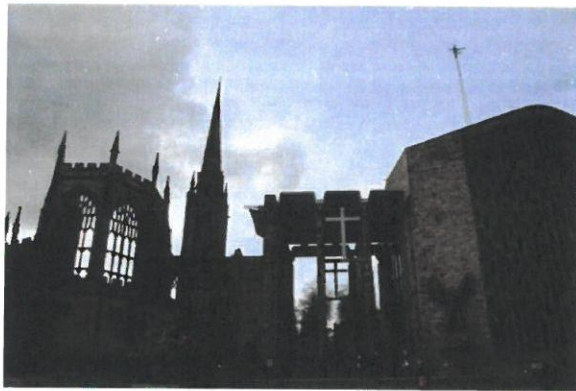
Coventry, 13 October 2018:



On October 13, a crisp autumn Saturday, the German Choir embarked on another daytrip from London to sing in one of England's many cathedrals - this time in Coventry. Taking part in this Evensong was a special occasion for the group, because of Coventry's role in the recent history between the United Kingdom and Germany, and because the Cathedral is one of the few modern ones we visited during our tour.

The first part of the visit was a guided tour of the city's centre.

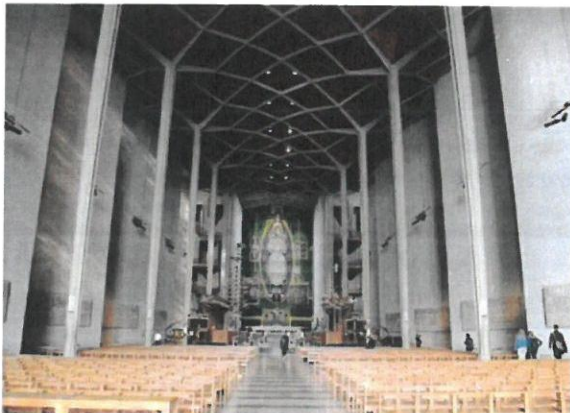
Coventry's St. Michael's Cathedral integrates the area of the original Gothic church with the new building constructed between 1956 and 1962.



The old cathedral was destroyed by air raid in 1940, and its grounds today serve as an outside space of reflexion, visible through the glass front of the new cathedral. Shortly after the destruction, a Charred Cross was erected of two burnt beams at the former location of the altar, and "Father Forgive" written on the wall behind it, making it also a space of remembrance.

After spreading out across the city's restaurants to have lunch, the choir gathered at 3pm at the now already familiar cathedral for a final rehearsal. The program of the Evensong consisted of pieces that the choir performed throughout their "Blessed are the Peacemakers" tour: "Ich setze auf die Liebe" and "Facing Home" of the 5-piece cycle "Armistice" by Gough, Dyson's Magnificat and Nunc Dimitis in D, and the much-beloved Responses by Sumsion. If not the best-visited concert of the German Choir in 2018, in the enormous modern Cathedral with its marvellous stained glass windows it was a very memorable one.

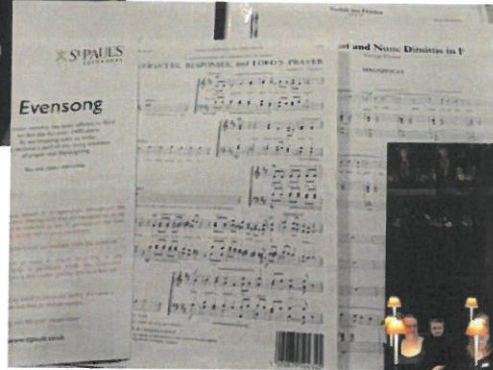
Richard Loeser



St. Paul's Cathedral, 5 November 2018:

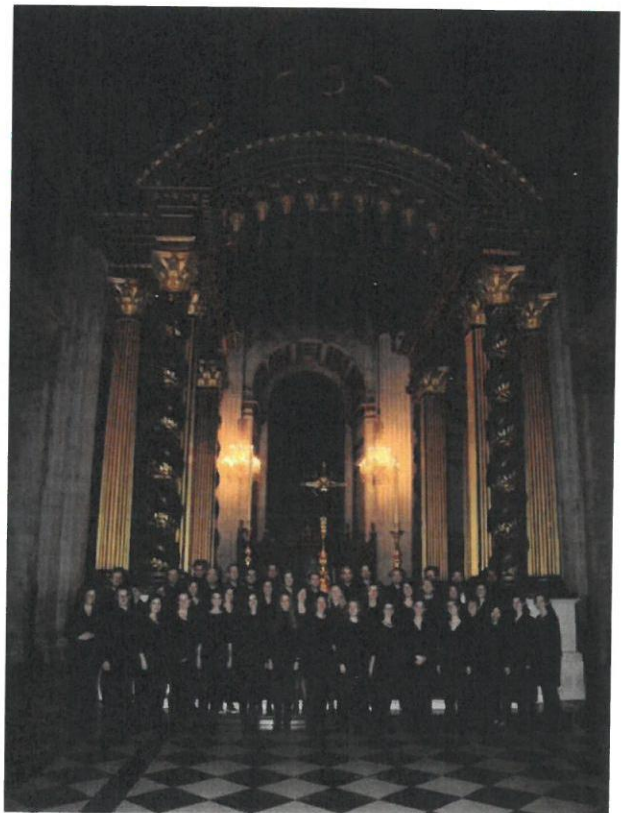
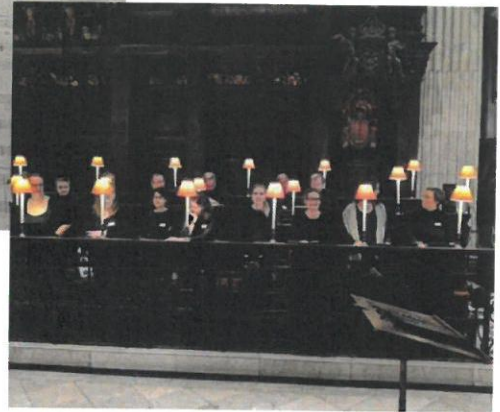


On the 5th of November we had the great pleasure to sing Evensong at St. Paul's Cathedral. This was the third time that we sang at St. Paul's but it was a particularly special occasion because it kicked off the week of remembrance, commemorating the centenary of the end of the First World War, which tied in perfectly with our "Blessed are the Peacemakers" tour.



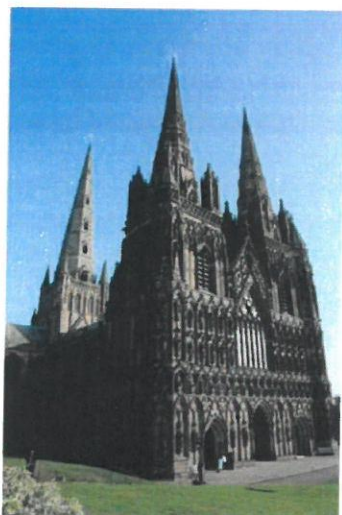
We sang a specifically chosen repertoire including responses by Samsion and "Ich setze auf die Liebe", written for the choir by contemporary composer Orlando Gough to the words of Hanns Dieter Hüsch, a leading figure in the German peace movement. We also sang Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in F by George Dyson for the first and only time. It was a beautiful service and the prayers for peace were particularly heartfelt. We are looking forward to singing at St. Paul's again in 2019.

Felix Richter



Lichfield, 17 November 2018:

On a cold November weekend it was finally time to hit the (choir bus) road again, making our way up towards Birmingham for an Evensong at Lichfield Cathedral.



To our surprise, Lichfield is twinned with Limburg an der Lahn, a small city in the heart of Germany, and we felt right at home when we arrived.

Accompanied by blue skies and sunshine, we arrived well in time for a quick lunch in the charming old town city centre.



In true spirit of German planning, we also had enough time to visit the cathedral, which was incredibly interesting and worth it, as only medieval English cathedral with three spires!

The adventurous bunch of us used that opportunity to climb up all the way into the towers and we had the most romantic views just as the sun was setting over the horizon.

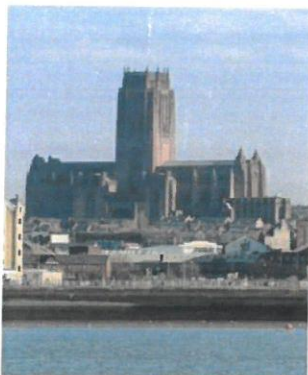
Finally back firmly on the ground, it was time for our warm up and sound check, before we all assembled for Evensong. After a warm welcome by the vicar, we performed beautiful pieces by Gough, Dyson and Sumsion commemorating the peacemakers from 100 years ago.

A lovely day brought us nearly to the end of our 2018 tour, as second to last of our "Blessed are the Peacemakers" tour, which would sadly be completed in Liverpool the next day.

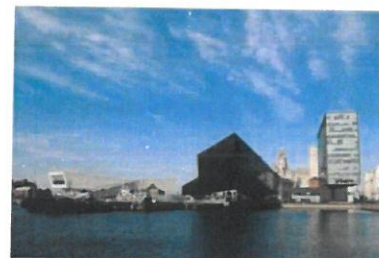
Nathalie Nötzold



Liverpool, 18 November 2018:



Our final performance was on 18 November 2018 in Liverpool Cathedral. Designed by Giles Gilbert Scott and built between 1904 and 1978, it is the largest cathedral and religious building in Britain, and the fifth-largest cathedral in the world.

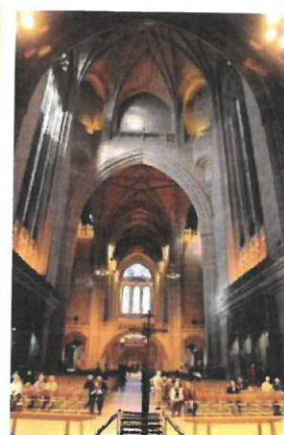
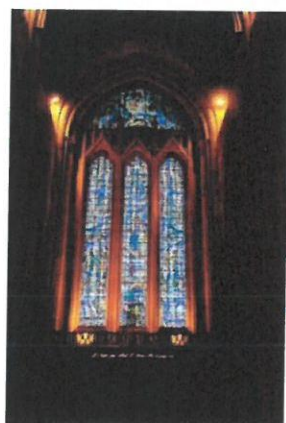


When we entered the cathedral, we were immediately absorbed by the vastness of the building, the beautiful plainness and contemporary art works, for example a pink neon sign reading 'I felt you and I knew you loved me', by British artist Tracey Emin which was installed when Liverpool became European Capital of Culture in 2008.

We were fortunate to be invited to sing at the 'The Eucharist of All Souls' service, jointly with the Great Choir of Liverpool Cathedral, a choir made up of girls and boys choristers and 12 Lay Clerks (professional adult singers) under the direction of Lee Ward. In this special service to remember in love and prayer those who have died, we sang Durufle's requiem, composed in 1947 at the end of World War II. We also got a chance to perform one of our favourite pieces "Verleih uns Frieden" by Schütz one last time.



Durufle's setting of the Requiem is centred on the image of rest and peace and musically heavily influenced by Gregorian chant, the purest form of music. In Durufle's own words "this requiem is not an ethereal work which sings of detachment from human concerns. It reflects, in the unchanging form of Christian prayer, the anguish of man faced with the mystery of his final end." A particular highlight was the "Pie Jesu", beautifully sung by our very own soloist Barbara Hoefling, creating an intimate and peaceful moment of contemplation in the vast space of the cathedral.



For many of us, this service was one of the highlights of our tour. Standing in a two-choir set up on each side of the high altar of the cathedral and mixing with the voices of the cathedral choir, it was another special moment of joint music-making in remembrance of those who have gone.

Still with music in our ears we boarded the bus a last time, and the five hour trip back to London was not long enough to think back over all the experiences and memories we have made during our cathedral tour 2018.

Ulrike Wolff