

Newsclaf

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Upcoming Events

RSCM NSW Annual Dinner on the Feast of St Nicholas

6 December 2021 QVB Tea Room after Evensong in St Andrew's Cathedral. Full details and link for booking tickets on p. 2

Come & Sing Stainer's Crucifixion

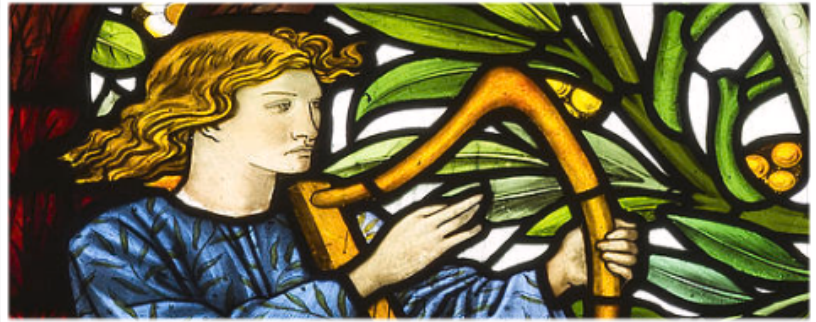
Saturday 2 April 2022
St Andrew's Cathedral

Senior School Choirs Festival

17 October 2022

Junior School Choirs Festival

18 October 2022



From the Editor

Apologies for the long wait since our last edition! I was nearly ready to publish mid-year when much of NSW was plunged into lockdown again and most church music activities ground to a halt. Planned events were postponed or cancelled rendering the newsletter content largely redundant.

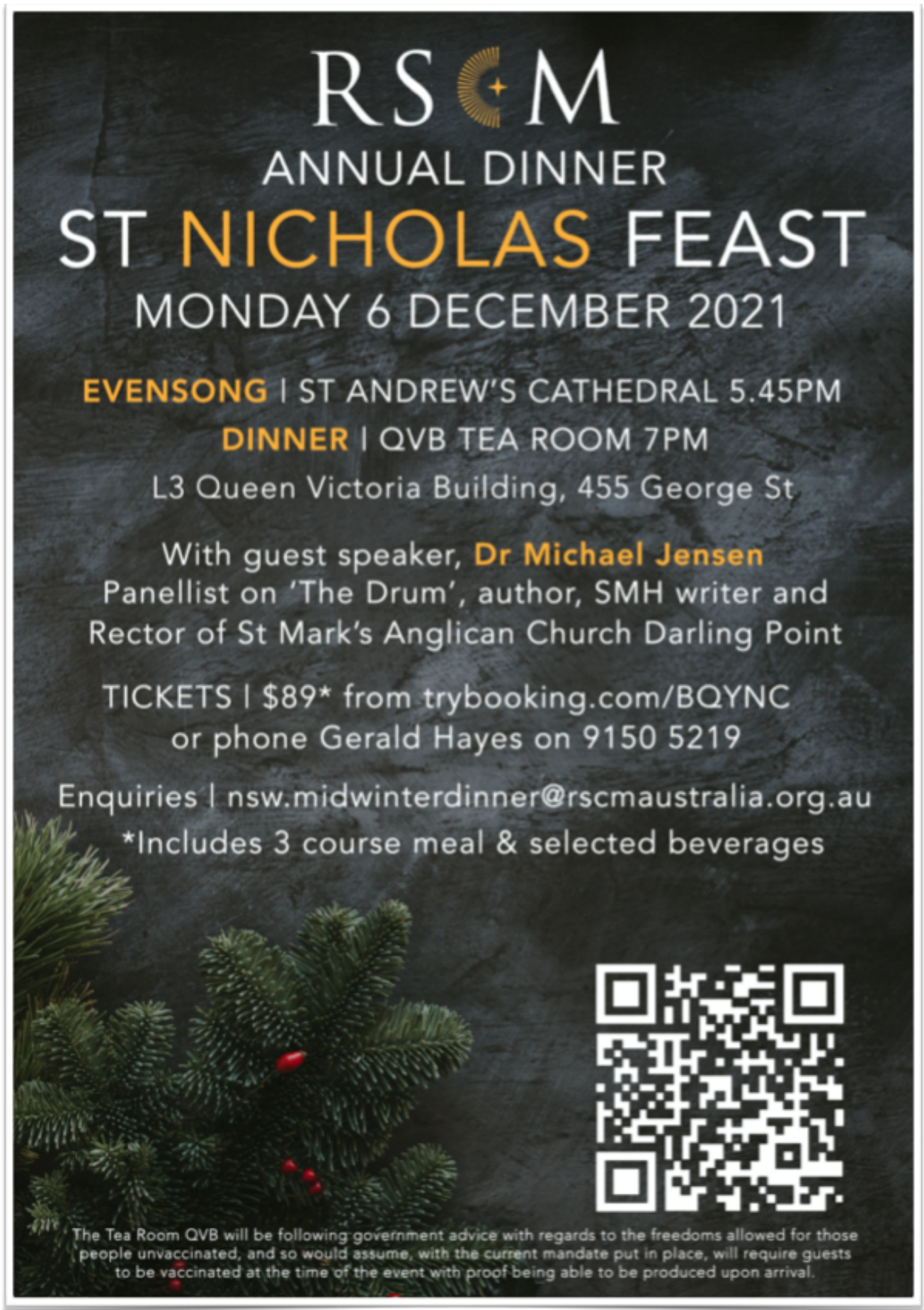
As we emerge from restrictions, and live services and music resume, this newsletter comes to you with the best wishes of your Committee for your Advent and Christmas music making.

We hope that the exciting plans we are making for 2022 will be able to go forward - more details in our first edition for 2022. In the meantime, please join us on 6 December, the Feast of St Nicholas, to celebrate being able to meet together and sing again. We will have Evensong at St Andrew's Cathedral and then dinner at the Queen Victoria Building Tea Room. With an after dinner address from Dr Michael Jensen, it promises to be a delightful evening. Bookings close very soon so don't miss out! See page 2 for full details.

Pamela Summers

Pamela Summers is Newsclaf Editor, Branch committee member and a chorister at St Swithun's Anglican Church Pymble





RSCM
ANNUAL DINNER
ST NICHOLAS FEAST
MONDAY 6 DECEMBER 2021

EVENSONG | ST ANDREW'S CATHEDRAL 5.45PM
DINNER | QVB TEA ROOM 7PM
L3 Queen Victoria Building, 455 George St

With guest speaker, **Dr Michael Jensen**
Panellist on 'The Drum', author, SMH writer and
Rector of St Mark's Anglican Church Darling Point

TICKETS | \$89* from trybooking.com/BQYNC
or phone Gerald Hayes on 9150 5219

Enquiries | nsw.midwinterdinner@rscmaustralia.org.au
*Includes 3 course meal & selected beverages

The Tea Room QVB will be following government advice with regards to the freedoms allowed for those people unvaccinated, and so would assume, with the current mandate put in place, will require guests to be vaccinated at the time of the event with proof being able to be produced upon arrival.

<https://trybooking.com/BQYNC>

Mineral water, juice and soft drink included.

BYO not permitted but wine and beer will be available to purchase.

Denominational Report



Uniting Church in Australia

Here's another local note to journalise these times.

A couple of years ago, I shared in *Newsclaf* about how we adapted a verse of *All over the world* to our context. At an International Dinner in our church hall within a heritage-listed pocket of Croydon, we had folk from many cultures represented. It was a celebration of the world coming together in one place:

*Right here in this place the Spirit is moving,
Right here in this place - in this hall on Croydon's estate -
Right here in this place, we can see a revelation
That the people of God's world can combine and inter-relate.*

Our evening congregation recently hosted their famous Soirée – a coming together of everybody with local acts of every sort. This time, of course, it couldn't be in a hall: it was a Zoom event. It was time to "Write here in this place" again – with a virtual choir.

The beauty of a virtual choir is the open invitation. Everyone is welcome to contribute. Our three related congregations were all invited into the mix.

This time, the celebration of locality was in multiplicity. We sang these words for verse 2:

*Right here in each place, the Spirit is moving,
Right here in each place - don't need Google Maps to locate -
Right here in each place, we reclaim the affirmation
That the people of God's world can combine and inter-relate!*

I was heartened to see our congregation exploring how we can better connect our disconnected – the people who in fact can't inter-relate much because of digital literacy challenges.

David Powell

David Powell is a member of the Uniting Church in Australia Church Music Committee and UCA Representative on the RSCM Branch Committee since 2011



Getting to know Naomi Spencer, our South Coast area representative

Naomi writes -

Some earliest life memories are of attending church, St Giles at Greenwich, where my two sisters and I were loved and included.

Pallister, a Church of England (Anglican) home for girls removed from their families, adjoined our home. As well as attending weekly choir and Girls Friendly Society (GFS) activities with some of the girls, we joined in May Day and other events there. My mother regularly invited single people to dinner/ activities with our family, one of whom was the Manager of Pallister.

When about 7 years old, I progressed to the church choir. This involved practice one afternoon a week and being robed for the morning service. When I was ten years old, we moved a few kilometres and were involved with St Aidan's at Longueville.

This happy experience meant the journey of slotting into school choirs in primary school, high school at SCEGGS Darlinghurst and North Sydney Girls High School, and then joining the singing team when I moved to a new church.

I'm grateful for being raised in a Christian family where I had ongoing opportunities to receive and give. Saturdays were filled with community service activities. Sundays were exclusively church and family recreation. My husband and three adult children shared the same 'vein'.

Growing up in North Shore Sydney exposed us to Jewish refugee neighbours and classmates. I love having a Biblical/Jewish name. My grandmother included us in repentance for the suffering of our Jewish neighbours. She passed on a lifelong passion of praying for Israel.

Our family also enjoyed hosting aboriginal children during the Christmas school holidays.

Through a commitment to 'doing and being our best' at my current church, St Stephen's at Bomaderry, my eyes opened to ongoing singing training. Despite church practice of contemporary music with a band, I have attended RSCM summer schools since 2004/5. I have also attended Hillsong Conference church music and leadership stream training since the early 2000s.



Whenever I travel, locally, interstate and overseas, I seek to engage with church musicians and encourage their interest and involvement with RSCM, hence my committee engagement which I see as encouraging membership and promoting training opportunities.

Left: Naomi attending a Korean Presbyterian service in Luther's Church in Wittenberg, Germany in 2017



Since I have been on the Branch committee as Southern/south coast representative, the committee has run three workshops in Goulburn and Berry. Planning is underway for another in Nowra.

Thank you RSCM colleagues and members for your service and passion for taking joy in Christian faith and practice. It's a talented and delightful group of people with which to collaborate.

Left: Naomi at the RSCM Summer School in Auckland in January 2018

Chorister shares joy of singing over 40 years of service



The joyous voices of St Mark's Choristers are greatly enjoyed and appreciated by St Mark's congregation and visitors. Not only do Choir members value their shared love of all things musical, but strong friendships, and examples of mentorship and servanthood are easy to see.

Take Helen Hoffman as an example. Helen recently retired from the St Mark's Choir after 40 years of incredible service. Michael Jensen shared: "Helen's example of dedicated and humble service of God and his people has been a model to us all. Her wonderful singing voice and musical knowledge have been put to good use in serving Jesus and his kingdom and she has drawn us to glorify God Sunday by Sunday."

Here's Helen's story, with reflections shared both by Helen and also by Rachel Wilson, a fellow chorister, who Helen has both mentored and been friends with for many years.

At right: Long serving St Mark's Choir chorister, Helen Hoffman.



Helen Hoffman – Reflections on 40 years of service in the St Mark's Choir

How did it start?

In 1980, Barry Bowen, Musical Director at St Mark's, was building the church choir: he rang my singing teacher, seeking decent sopranos who could sight read music and she suggested I go along for some handy working experience. Another chorister recruited was bass singer, clarinettist-bassoonist, Keith Game (later our much-valued vergger and campanologist!). I was already singing regularly as a chorister (in Hebrew, of course) at Temple Emmanuel, Ocean Street, at their Erev Shabat, Shabat, and High Holy Days services (13 years in that role). So, it became Friday evenings, Saturday mornings at Temple, then weddings on Saturday afternoons plus Sunday choral Morning Prayer at 11:10am at St Mark's. Singing with me then at Temple and St Mark's was another existing chorister, Phoebe Ferguson. Jim Whild was a long-term Rector then. Once a month, the choir sang one of the many glorious Evensong services. The morning services alternated between Morning Prayer and Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer. In this way, the choir built up quite a wonderful and extensive repertoire of different services and anthems across the liturgical year, supplemented by various choral events, concerts, and Christmas carolling around and about (opening the Christmas "do" at the Art Gallery of NSW was a regular gig). In those days, the choir supported an additional band of loyal trebles, all very musical young lads from Cranbrook and/or Scots who often played various other instruments, a few of whom carried on into full-blown musical careers.

When gentle, beloved Jim Whild retired, services were moved to suit parishioner demographics. The 11:10am service shifted to 8am, morphing into Holy Communion; Evensong slipped over the horizon (people at sport or preparing for the working week). The Family service moved slightly to 10am. Rector Vic Roberts caringly steered us through the next ten or so adaptive years. With Vic's arrival came a new Musical Director, William Clark - House Master and Director of Music at Scots. He ran a disciplined ship, the choir thrived, and our repertoire bloomed anew. In 2002, just as Vic was due to retire, I commenced as Church secretary-administrator, not long before intellectually provocative, erudite Boak Jobbins became our new Rector. I carried out administration work until late 2011, also warbling away as a St Mark's soprano. Following another interregnum, we were graced with our current Rector, warm, energetic, dynamic, approachable Michael Jensen! So, four Rectors later and many curates, Honorary and Assistant Ministers, not to forget a complete installation of the magnificent current Letourneau organ (gratis, the late Lady Nancy Fairfax as a memorial to her late husband, Sir Vincent Fairfax), the choir pops out the other end like Doctor Who in his Tardis. Time passes - we age and crumble; arthritic disability weakens lungs, so I must bow out of choral praise, though there's a familiar library of music retained.

What do I enjoy about being in St Mark's Choir?

Though recognised as a singer since earliest childhood I wasn't interested in centre-stage; rather, I'm uplifted by communal musicianship - magical moments of musical perfection - making music does it for me. An opportunity to blend with others to reignite musical giants - Bach, Handel, Byrd, Purcell, and the moderns - too many to mention, is my *raison d'être*. Always, it's more fitting to honour this gift in the best way possible - giving praise and thanks to God. It completes the circle: a gift given in turn gives praise to the giver. Being able to reproduce Biblical tracts and psalms in the framework of musical genius is the optimal use of my 'instrument'. Of course, I'll miss being part of

St Mark's Choir but, however decrepit, I'll always be a singer because harmonies, and the perfection of a musical idea, swirl endlessly in my head.

Anecdotes

I remember, Harvest Festivals, a few thousand weddings (some very grand, some astonishing!), hundreds of funerals, some stunning Carol services and excellent concerts to raise funds for choral music. Various former choristers have become well known professional musicians. I've known some stellar people in 40 years with the St Mark's Choir - it's been a bit of a wrench to bid farewell. If Bill's caught flat-footed (that's a pun, Bill) - I'll prop up if I can, but it's time for young talents to find the thrill of making music for the praise of God in His holy place.

Giving Service

Joining a church choir over time is a growth experience. We progressively gain musical insight, finesse, sensitivity, appreciation of musicians and composers, and discover how mutual cooperation radically improves performance; so we learn to give and support each other and the congregation, support the ministry, and above all, give our best efforts as our offering to praise God. Music is a universal, non-lingual language, well understood by any culture as we adjust and react to sound. Done well, we can draw the church together, lift spirits, bring out poignancy, declaim triumphantly, draw people into contemplation, engender due and righteous fear of God our Father (the first commandment). It is, therefore, deliciously pleasurable when you give your best and it works for all those present and is, hopefully, pleasing to God: if you're helping the congregation as well, it's absolutely joyously fulfilling.

I've prepped rosters for scripture readers for the 8am service, and for the after-service nibbles while people chat outside - we call these the After8s. Once a month, I also used to supply the nibbles until arthritis really made things too difficult. Any of these extra little duties bring me a real feeling of pleasure being of service. Doing little things for the St Mark's family gives a kickback of pleasure. In fact, anything one can do to ease a situation for others delivers a warm rush of pleasure to our hearts and lifts our soul. I can't recommend highly enough the happiness I receive in serving our congregation in any capacity. It satisfies a basic human need to nurture; helping others injects us with a burst of joy; it conforms to the second commandment (to love others) - and we all benefit, the giver and the receiver. It's a no-brainer.

Rachel Wilson - Reflections on the service of Helen Hoffman to the Choir of St Mark's - "Then Sings My Soul"

Just over 27 years ago, as a timid but enthusiastic 12-year-old, I turned up one Friday evening to audition for the St Mark's Choir. All I had wanted to do, for as long as I could remember, was to sing. Despite having very limited experience, and I'm sure not singing the beautiful hymn "*Praise My Soul the King of Heaven*" that well, Bill Clark (the Director of Music at St Mark's both then and to this present day) told me I was in. Less than five minutes later I was sitting in rehearsal next to the woman who would come to be my choir mum, mentor and dear friend.

As a young girl, Helen was the perfect mix of straight talking stalwart, and compassionate encourager. Her knowledge of church music was something I stood in awe of. All Bill Clark had to say was "Hymn 217" and Helen would immediately respond with "To Hyfrydol or Blaenwern", knowing the words to "*Love Divine all loves excelling*" better than most of us know our own names. While she would open

her hymn book each week, I am convinced that she has never had cause to actually look at either words or notes. She imparted much of this knowledge to me, and to the other young people in the choir, yet there was something more profound, more significant in what she gave us.

I still remember the first time Bill asked me to sing a solo in the choir concert. I was terrified, and my nerves were getting the better of me, until Helen reminded me what I was singing for. This was not a concert where I was to be the star, the limelight firmly on me. Rather, I was the light shining towards the one who made all the stars, the true light. It was Helen who, with her combination of intellect, compassion and understanding, reminded me of that most important lesson, drawn from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, to *"let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven"* (Mathew 5:16).

And this lesson had weight, because Helen not only believed it, but lived it, every day. Serving our church community for 40 years, in the choir, on morning tea and reading rosters (and organising them) and as parish secretary. Helen has always been there, whether for a quiet chat or some much needed encouragement or support. When she sang *"Brother, sister, let me serve you, let me be as Christ to you"* (Hymn 650) they were never empty words. It is no wonder that so many of us in the choir, and the wider 8am parish, count her as one of our dearest friends. She is one of the best examples I know of someone who lives Christ's command to love her neighbour.

And this love for others is exceeded by only one thing: the love Helen has for God. In almost 30 years of singing with Helen, I have only ever seen her sing with complete joy and absolute devotion to God. She raises her voice to praise the God whom she has trusted throughout her life, and so others might have a glimpse of the *"Measureless might, ineffable love"*, the joy on her face truly reflecting one who *"with true adoration shall sing all their days"* (Hymn 133).

Helen's legacy at St Mark's is of a sublime voice raised in worship, of compassionate care and connection with others, of a heart set on understanding God's love and showing it forth to others. She has *"sung the wondrous story of the Christ who died for me"* (Hymn 233) for us for 40 years. What a blessing she is to us all!

Congratulations to **Sr Deirdre Browne IBVM** who was recognised with a Medal in the General Division (OAM) in the Queen's Birthday 2021

Honours. Sr Deirdre received the honour for service to the community as a religious sister, and through music, education and the liturgical arts.

At right: Sr Deirdre Browne IBVM OAM with Josie Ryan, Roman Catholic representative on the RSCM NSW Committee

Congratulations also to **Rev Dr Roger Chilton OAM** on his retirement. Roger, and his wife, Sue, were farewelled in June this year after 25 years' of faithful service at St Swithun's Anglican Church Pymble. Roger is continuing in his role of Anglican Church



representative on the RSCM NSW Committee.

Welcome to **Will Amer** who has accepted the position of Central West area representative on the RSCM NSW Committee. We will invite Will to introduce himself in a future issue of Newsclaf.

In Memoriam

RIP Ray Holland BA, MA, LTCL, LMus

The former Chairman of NSW RSCM during the 1970s and 80s, Ray Holland passed away on Wednesday 27th October in hospital in Adelaide.

Ray will be remembered by many as a distinguished church musician. He was Director of Music at St Mark's South Hurstville from 1954 to 1980. From there he went to All Saints' Woollahra and in 1997 he moved to Adelaide and took up the position of organist at St John the Evangelist, Halifax St.

He was also a Board Member of the Organ Historical Trust of Australia and a consultant for the installation and/or restoration of many organs including the Hill organ of St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney and also St Matthew's, Albury.

Ray attended Sydney Grammar School and topped the State in Music, with first class honours, in the Leaving Certificate in 1949. He went on to be a teacher at Sydney Grammar School from 1954 to 1988 and Science Master from 1967. He also assisted the Music Department of the School during his time there.

The memorial service for the late Ray Holland will be held at St. John's Anglican Church, 379 Halifax St, Adelaide on Friday November 26, 2021 at 2.00pm.

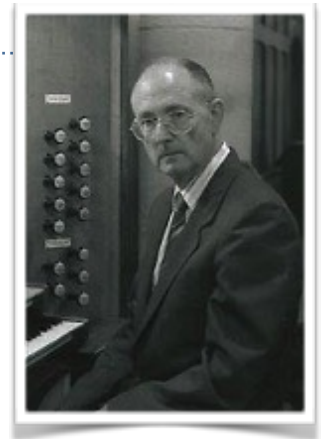
During his time at St Mark's South Hurstville, Ray was also a Parish Councillor, Synod Representative and Diocesan Nominator. Acquisition of the organ was initiated by Ray and was built in 1960 by E. F. Walcker & Cie., of Ludwigsburg, Germany. It is of great historical significance, being the first modern mechanical action organ of two manuals to be installed in Australia.

He was much respected and loved by those who knew him and here are a couple of reflections from two former St Mark's South Hurstville choir members.

James Moore started school at Hurstville South Infants in 1937 with Ray Holland and they were in Hurstville OC class together in 1943 and 1944. He says :

Until Ray Holland arrived, St. Mark's choir used to have a run through after service on Sunday nights of the hymns and psalm for the following Sunday night.

Ray was a talented musician and with his arrival in 1954 we began to sing anthems and congregational settings of the Eucharist were introduced. The choir affiliated with the Royal School of Church Music and psalms were given more meaning by being sung for the first time to speech rhythm. Ray introduced a boys' choir which sang at the second service on Sunday mornings and the



main choir sang at both morning communion and evening prayer. An excellent standard was achieved and during this period St. Mark's choir won the church music section of the City of Sydney Eisteddfod. The choir was also invited to sing at services at St. Andrew's Cathedral during the January holidays of the cathedral choir.

Carolyn Little joined the choir in 1966 and she recounts the following :

I still remember the first time I sang *Ascendit Deus* by Peter Phillips in the choir at St Marks' South, Hurstville. The choir director and organist was a small, unassuming man, Ray Holland, whom I first met in the Sydney University Graduate Choir. This man was a passionate and committed musician who lived and breathed the English choral tradition. This soaring five-part motet from the seventeenth century along with so many others performed over the roughly twenty years remain part of the fabric of my being. I remember recording for 'In Quires and Places' on the ABC, the privilege of singing the Tallis forty-part motet *Spem in alium*, the annual Christmas Lessons and Carols, the Easter services and so much more. But Ray was more than a musician. He had the tastes of an epicure, and through the sumptuous choir suppers we all shared, we learned about food and wine, and formed lifelong friendships. Ray was a close friend for many years, becoming godfather to my two sons. Ray and I were both head Science teachers, and while on maternity leave, I undertook some exam marking for him. I have many memories. It was a sad day when Ray felt he had achieved all he could at St Marks', although we could respect his need to move on to fresh fields.

Others may like to pay tribute and submit their memories of this important, but humble man, for the next edition of 'Newsclaf' .

RIP Graham Anderson

Graham Anderson sadly passed away on 31 October 2021 at the age of 92.

From 1965 to 2001, Graham and his wife Enid were, together, custodians of the choir and the music at St John's Gordon. When they retired, they moved to near Newcastle and became part of the congregation at Christ Church Cathedral. Enid predeceased Graham.

Graham was RSCM NSW Branch Secretary for some of the time when Ray Holland was Chairperson. He was made a life member of the Branch.

A service of thanksgiving for his life will be held at St Johns' Gordon on Tuesday 23rd November at 11.00am.





MUSIC @ ST PAUL'S

St Paul's Choir

LOVE TO SING?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SING THE MUSICAL TREASURES OF THE CHURCH?

The St Paul's Choir has been providing quality choral music for nearly 150 years in the beautiful Edmund Blacket church of St Paul's Burwood.

The choir's repertoire spans over 1000 years from Gregorian chant through to the music of the 20th and 21st centuries.

If you are interested in singing the musical treasures of the Church, there are currently some vacancies in the Choir. Some choral experience and sight-reading ability is preferred.

For more information, or to find out how you can support the music at St Paul's, please contact the Director of Music, David Russell (music@stpaulsburwood.org.au)



ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH Burwood

CHRISTMAS @ ST PAUL'S 2021

Sunday 19 December – Carol Service

5:00pm service of readings, lessons and carols

Friday 24 December – Christmas Eve

9:30pm Choral Eucharist

Saturday 25 December – Christmas Day

9:00am Choral Eucharist

Saturday 26 December – St Stephen

8:00am Said Eucharist

9:30am Choral Eucharist

The Choir of St Paul's Burwood

info@stpaulsburwood.org.au

St Paul's Anglican Church, Burwood
205-207 Burwood Road, Burwood

(02) 9747 4327

From St Mark's Anglican Church Darling Point

Organ Recital a real treat

Members of the St Mark's community and friends turned out in force on a cold, rainy afternoon in June to attend an organ recital. We were rewarded with an hour of superb music performed by our gifted organ scholar, Nico Tjoelker, who has since departed for Yale to pursue his Master of Music in Organ Performance.



At left: Dr William Clark OAM, Rev Dr Michael Jensen and Nico Tjoelker

The program was beautifully constructed, providing stylistic contrast between classical and contemporary pieces and a careful balance of light and shade.

The recital opened with the force and complexity of Bach's "*St Anne*" *Prelude*, providing a stark contrast with Twist's *Organ Music for Quiet Moments* composition which followed later. Nico's love of jazz shone through in his rendition of Fagiani's *Veni Creator*

Spiritus, while his double-peddalling in Bruhn's *Praeludium in G Major* was awe inspiring: as one member of the audience commented, his feet moved as though he were dancing on the pedals!

This recital enabled us to thank Nico for his wonderful contribution to music at St Mark's, to recognise his extraordinary talent, and to wish him well for the future. It also gave us the opportunity to reflect on how blessed we are to have a wonderful organ and enthusiastic supporters of the organ scholarship fund.

Perdita Morgan



From the Australian Catholic University Centre for Liturgy

Reprinted from the Centre for Liturgy Newsletter, Issue 11, July 2021, by kind permission

What's this composer think he's doing?

In the 1970s I was putting together a varied collection of my liturgical music for publication. I asked some of my Jesuit colleagues for suggestions about the title I should give the collection. Of these the one that I decided upon was 'Songs of Prayer'. A few people were puzzled. "Don't you mean 'Songs of Praise'?" they said, thinking that I had made a slip. Songs of Prayer, I believe, well describes what I do as a composer for the Church at prayer. Yes, much of what we sing during our liturgies is about the praise of God, but equally as much could be described in other terms that complement 'praise'.

When it sings, what is it that the assembly is doing when it asks forgiveness, when it intercedes, when it blesses, when it calls to remembrance, when it gives thanks, and so on? All these sung actions could be fairly described as 'prayer'. As a composer, therefore, what I seek to do when I write for the liturgy is to be keenly aware of what type or genre of prayer I am working with as I set a particular liturgical text to music. Is it an act of penitence, an intercession, a blessing, a form of anamnesis, an act of thanksgiving? Or some other liturgical genre?

At the time of the Second Vatican Council and its Constitution on the Liturgy a number of liturgical genres were mentioned: acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs (SC #30). More recently other forms have been identified, among them litanies and the various ostinato forms popularised by the experience of supplying music for the large multi-lingual groups at Taizé. There has been a growing awareness among both composers and the assemblies for whom they write to try and match ritual behaviour with musical forms and patterns that respect the ritual characteristics proper to the various liturgical units. At the same time there has been a movement away from the panacea of singing a hymn



Attribution: Grey Photography (Phong Lam)

whenever singing was needed towards finding a form where the rite, the text, and the music are all congruent and not jostling in some awkward assortment.

Getting this recipe of rite, text, and music correctly integrated is not only the job of the composer, it is also the responsibility of those whose role it is to bring the liturgy alive for a given community. What is true of any recipe in a kitchen – that the result will only be as good as the cook using it – is also true of the liturgical forms, spoken, sung or embodied; they will only be effective to the extent that the liturgical 'agents' communicating these forms know what they are on about.

Clearly, the matters caught in this 'spotlight' need to be examined in greater depth and illuminated in broader detail than is possible here. But to return to the composer's task. One aspect of it that often goes unremarked is that the composer of liturgical music is charged with the responsibility of finding a voice that the worshipping assembly can recognise as its own. Finding a common voice for singing in worship is particularly challenging. A given community may have a well-defined set of understandings of the Church, a common language, broadly equivalent educational backgrounds, a balanced

mixture of gender and generational representation, and so on. Most communities today, however, could not be said to share such a base of commonality. Nevertheless, both sorts of communities, the well-defined and the more variegated in composition, are called to worship at the one table. Composing for such a church at prayer is by no means an evident matter. It can only be attempted if there is sensitivity both to those gathered for worship and to the liturgical functions the whole assembly is called to fulfil. To that extent, therefore, can our sung worship be said to be both praise and prayer.



Christopher Willcock, Jesuit priest and composer, has taught sacramental theology and liturgical studies, and has written a large body of music for the liturgy and

the concert hall. He studied pianoforte at the Sydney Conservatorium, composition at the University of Sydney, and did his doctoral work in liturgical studies and sacramental theology at the Institute Catholique de Paris.

Readers' Letters



Dear Editor,

Provoked by the letter dated May 1st published in the May edition of Newsclaf about the minister's dismissal of an organist for his or her non-belief in the doctrine of the virgin birth, I offer these thoughts:

- The minister's dismissal of the organist seems **not** to be a valid reason connected with the organist's capacity or conduct or based on the operational requirements of the church (and not merely the values of the denomination)
- The organist's duty to "lead worship" does not extend to teaching or preaching church doctrine (except that hymns and anthems chosen by the organist may express doctrine). The organist is not a member of the clergy, who might be required or expected to uphold church doctrine – although there are ample indications that many ministers including bishops do not believe all elements of their church's doctrine
- The minister's action appears "harsh, unjust and unreasonable" because the organist's job specification is unlikely to emphasise any requirement to believe in the virgin birth or similar tenets
- The minister's view (even if honestly held, after many years of prayer and reflection) seems personal, and does not reflect the stance of the religious denomination as a whole

This looks and smells like unfair dismissal.

Peter Hamilton - - - - -

Have your say...

We value your comments and views by letter or email on any issue relating to church music or the activities of RSCM NSW. Letters may be edited or shortened for publication. Please send your letters to newsclaf@rscmaustralia.org.au. The copy deadline for the next issue of Newsclaf is **4 February 2022**

A History of St Paul's

written by
Graeme Starr
to mark the
sesquicentenary of
St Paul's Burwood

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faith, hope and love
Graeme Starr

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For further information contact the parish office: (02) 9747 4327 or info@stpaulsburwood.org.au



The Cathedral Singers are back singing again:

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
November	Sunday	28	7.00pm	Advent Carols	St John's Gordon
December	Sunday	12	6.00pm	Lessons & Carols	St John's Balmain
	Saturday	18	5.00pm	Mass & Concert	Holy Spirit North Ryde
	Sunday	19	7.00pm	Lessons & Carols	St John's Gordon
	Sunday	24	6.00pm	Christmas Eve Mass	St John's Birchgrove/Balmain

For the information of RSCM Members

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference Commission for Liturgy has issued the below statement, which is reprinted here for the information of RSCM Australia (NSW Branch) members.

Advice on the use of David Haas' music in the liturgy

In the past year, allegations of sexual assault have been made against the well-known American composer David Haas. Haas's compositions are included in many liturgical music collections, including Catholic Worship Book II (2016), the official collection of liturgical music for use in Australia.

While no criminal charges have been brought, two major music publishers—GIA Publications in Chicago and Oregon Catholic Press (OCP) in Portland—have withdrawn their support for Haas on the basis of the allegations, no longer listing his works in their catalogues. It is anticipated that his compositions will be removed from the revisions of the Catholic Worship Book II and the digitised version when it becomes available.

At the present time, the view of the Bishops Commission for Liturgy and the National Liturgical Music Council is that it would be inappropriate for the compositions of David Haas to be used in the liturgy. This advice has been informed by the duty of care owed to survivors of sexual abuse, who may be put at risk of further harm through hearing or singing Haas' music. Another significant factor is the withdrawal of both of the major American liturgical music publishers who hold the copyrights for Haas' music, with One License—which issues copyright licenses for liturgical music by GIA and OCP in Australia—confirming that the use of copyrighted music for which copyright cannot be reported, or royalties paid, would be illegal, placing parishes at risk of legal action. Choosing not to use his music in Catholic liturgies is a simple way to avoid these legal and moral dilemmas.

Please communicate this advice discreetly to those in your parish who select music for the liturgy, so that they might omit the music of David Haas from the parish repertoire.

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RSCM Choristers' Prayer

*Bless, O Lord, us Thy servants
who minister in Thy temple.
Grant that what we sing with our lips,
we may believe in our hearts,
and what we believe in our hearts,
we may show forth in our lives.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

COVID-19 STATEMENT

RSCM NSW Branch is committed to the principle that all people who participate in church music activities should be able to do so in safety and without compromising their physical or emotional wellbeing.

As well as being our God-given responsibility to those whom he has placed over us, in the interests of our health and safety during this time of COVID-19, your committee urges all members to follow strictly the requirements of the health authorities and also the guidance provided by our church leaders.

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