

NEWBURY CHORAL SOCIETY



**The Corn Exchange Newbury
Saturday December 17 1994 7:45 pm**

Robert Barsby received his musical training at the Royal Academy of Music where his principal studies were piano, organ and singing. After graduating from the Royal Academy he became a Lay Clerk in Southwell Minster and began his teaching career. He taught for several years at St. Johns College, Johannesburg, South Africa and also at Felsted School, Essex before taking up his present appointment in 1978 as Director of Music at Pangbourne College. At both Felsted and Pangbourne Robert Barsby has been the Conductor of their large and flourishing choral societies. His school choirs have been on many prestigious tours at home and abroad and they have established an enviable reputation. Robert Barsby conducted the Newbury Choral Society for the first time in 1992 and is now the Society's Principal Conductor.

Janet Coxwell works with many of the country's leading baroque and Early Music ensembles which include the Tallis Scholars, the Gabrieli Consort, the Academy of Ancient Music and the English Consort. The bell-like quality of her voice has won her great acclaim in recordings of Jephtha, the Monteverdi Vespers and Bach's St John Passion. Janet is well known to Newbury audiences both as a soloist and as Director of the Cecilia Consort.

Jonathan Finney began studying singing in 1989, and has already established a career in both opera and oratorio. His operatic roles include Marcello (La Boheme), Mr Swallow (Peter Grimes) and Donner in Das Rheingold. He has sung with well known opera companies which include the Camberwell Pocket Opera, Opera East, WLO, Palace Opera, Bel Canto Opera and Opera Picolla. His oratorio performances have included the Brahms Requiem, Carmina Burana, and the Faure Requiem. Jonathan made his debut at St John's Smith Square last year in a performance of Schumann's Dichterliebe. At present he studies with Norman Bailey and Paul Hamburger.

West Gallery Carols. Newbury Choral Society has collaborated with Traditional Arts Projects and the West Berkshire Music Centre to include West Gallery Carols in its programme of Christmas Music. The carols and Christmas pieces being performed tonight come from the singing tradition known as West Gallery Music. It was the music of rural parish churches, developed by ordinary people in the absence of trained musicians, spread by itinerant singing teachers and printed and manuscript copies, and featuring a strong rhythmic style, robust and unusual harmonies, and a fondness for simple counterpoint. The singing was usually led by a group of singers and musicians from the West Gallery of the church. It flourished from the early eighteenth century until it was suppressed by the Church authorities from around 1820 onwards. The music was kept alive by carol singing traditions in many places, surviving in some places to the present day. The singers and musicians in these performances have worked from transcriptions of the original manuscripts, fleshing out the bare notes to interpret the spirit of the music.

OLD FOSTER, composed around 1860 by John Foster, is still a popular carol tune in parts of Yorkshire. Here we sing verses from Psalm 47, for which it was written.

BLOW YE THE TRUMPET is a from a manuscript dated 1832 by John Bailey of Ringmer. It is a short anthem, used by the carol singers, and the two parts have been expanded for this performance.

WITH RAPTURES ABOUNDING comes from a carol book which belonged to the grandfather of the poet and novelist Thomas Hardy.

THE SONG OF THE ANGELS AT THE NATIVITY is a setting of familiar words by the Dorset composer William Knapp, published around 1730.

AN ANTHEM FOR CHRISTMAS DAY comes from James Bridcut's manuscript, from Marsh Baldon, dated 1814. The Christmas service was a favourite opportunity for West Gallery choirs to show off their most complex music.

HARRY ADAMS' CAROL appears in several Dorset manuscripts as a setting of Psalm 88, but the bass part and the seasonal words sung here are found together in Hardy's grandfather's book.

NEWBURY CHORAL SOCIETY

Affiliated to the



Established 1884

Conductor: Robert Barsby

Janet Coxwell: Soprano

Jonathan Finney: Baritone

The London Concertante
(Leader: Catherine Martin)

West Berkshire Music Centre

A CELEBRATION of CHRISTMAS

Benjamin Britten:

A Ceremony of Carols

Procession: Hodie Christus natus est	Chorus
Wolcum Yole!	Chorus
There is no Rose	Chorus
That Yonge Childe	Soprano
Balulalow	Soprano
As Dew in Aprille	Chorus
This Little Babe	Chorus
Interlude: Harp	
In Freezing Winter Night	Soprano and Chorus
Spring Carol	Soprano and Chorus
Deo Gratias	Chorus
Recession: Hodie Christus natus est	Chorus

Gerald Finzi:

In Terra Pax

A Frosty Christmas Eve	Baritone
And there were in the same country	Chorus
Fear not: For behold I bring you tidings	Soprano
And suddenly there was with the angels	Chorus
But to me heard afar it was starry music	Baritone
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men	Chorus

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Fantasia on Christmas Carols

This is the truth sent from above	Baritone and Chorus
Come all ye worthy gentlemen	Chorus
On Christmas night all Christians sing	Baritone and Chorus
God bless the ruler of this house	Baritone and Chorus

Interval : 20 minutes

GOD REST YE MERRY GENTLEMEN for audience and choir

1. God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy.
2. From God our heav'nly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name:
O tidings . . .
3. The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding,
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway
This blessed babe to find:
O tidings . . .
4. But when to Bethlehem they came,
Whereat this infant lay,
They found him in the manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling,
Unto the Lord did pray:
O tidings . . .
5. Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface:
O tidings . . .

West Gallery Carols

Old Foster . . . Ye people all with one accord.
With Raptures Abounding
Blow Ye the Trumpet

GOOD KING WENCESLAS for audience and choir

1. Good King Wenceslas looked out
All On the Feast of Stephen,
When the snow lay round about,
Deep, and crisp, and even:
Brightly shone the moon that night,
Though the frost was cruel,
When a poor man came in sight,
Gath'ring winter fuel.
2. "Hither, page, and stand by me,
King If thou know'st it, telling,
Yonder peasant, who is he?
Where and what his dwelling?"
Page "Sire, he lives a good league hence,
Underneath the mountain,
Right against the forest fence,
By Saint Agnes' fountain."
3. "Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,
King Bring me pine logs hither:
Thou and I will see him dine,
When we bear them thither."
All Page and monarch, forth they went,
Forth they went together;
Through the rude wind's wild lament
And the bitter weather.
4. "Sire, the night is darker now,
Page And the wind blows stronger;
Falls my heart, I know not how;
I can go no longer."
King "Mark my footsteps, good my page;
Tread thou in them boldly:
Thou shalt find the winter's rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly."
5. In his master's steps he trod,
All Where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the Saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor,
Shall yourselves find blessing.

West Gallery Carols

Harry Adams Carol . . . Glad Tidings of great joy I'll bring.
 The Song of the Angels at the Nativity
 Anthem for Christmas Day . . . Arise, shine for thy light is come.

AWAY IN A MANGER for audience and choir

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed
 The little Lord Jesus lays down his sweet head.
 The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 The little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay
 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
 But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
 I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
 And stay by my side until morning is nigh.
 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
 Close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
 Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
 And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

Carols for Choir

Jingle Bells J. Pierpont, arr. David Blackwell

The little road to Bethlehem Michael Head

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL for audience and choir

1. O come, all ye faithful,
 Joyful and triumphant,
 O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
 Come and behold him,
 Born the King of Angels;
 O come let us adore him,
 O come let us adore him,
 O come let us adore him,
 Christ the Lord.
2. God of God,
 Light of Light,
 Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
 Very God,
 Begotten, not created:
 O come let us adore him..
3. See how the shepherds,
 Summoned to his cradle,
 Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
 We too will thither
 Bend our joyful footsteps:
 O come let us adore him..
4. Sing, choirs of angels,
 Sing in exultation,
 Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
 Glory to God,
 In the highest:
 O come let us adore him..

Carols for Choir

Go tell it on the mountain arr. John Rutter

We wish you a Merry Christmas arr. Goff Richards

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING for audience and choir

1. Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled:
Joyful all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies,
With th'angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem.
Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King.
2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come
Offspring of a virgin's womb:
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
Hail th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King.
3. Hail! the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the newborn King.

Newbury Choral Society acknowledges support from
Newbury District Council
Berkshire County Council
Southern Arts
Traditional Arts Projects

**FORTHCOMING CONCERTS
at the Corn Exchange**

March 25th 1995

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: SEA SYMPHONY
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: FIVE MYSTICAL SONGS

Catherine Sams Mezzo Soprano
John Noble Baritone
West Forest Sinfonia

June 24th 1995

DAVID FANSHAWE: AFRICAN SANCTUS
Eileen Pinkarschewsky Soprano
The Wessex Percussion Ensemble

DO YOU ENJOY SINGING? THEN WHY NOT JOIN US?

Membership of Newbury Choral Society is open to all who enjoy choral singing, can read music, and can promise a regular commitment. Young singers are particularly welcome. The Choral Society meets regularly on Monday evenings at 7.30 pm at the United Reformed Church Hall, Cromwell Place, Newbury (opposite Marks and Spencer). If you are interested in joining the Choral Society and would like more information, telephone the Secretary on Newbury 40542. Rehearsals for the next concert begin on Monday January 9 1995 at 7.30 pm.