

APCM Music Report for the Windmill United Benefice

April 2022 – March 2023

Choirs

The Windmill Benefice Choir has continued to support the joint services held in the Benefice, including Palm Sunday, Ascension Day, Lammastide, Advent Sunday, Candlemas and Ash Wednesday.

In July the choir sang a special Choral Evensong at Burstow celebrating the 25th anniversary of Charles' ordination. Burstow church was packed and it was a wonderful joyful service.

Also in July the choir enjoyed a relaxed time at a Garden Party kindly hosted by David and Rosemary Spruce

In September, the choir sang Choral Evensong on the eve before our late Queen's funeral

The Advent carol service was held at Outwood. The choir sang anthems by Palestrina, Purcell and Nazareth.

The Burstow and Smallfield Christmas carol service is always well attended. The choir, formed specially for the service, sang particularly well this year, with several lovely anthems put together and rehearsed by Roger Hind.

Outwood and Horne church choirs sang their own carol services the following week, which were well received.

The choir did some carol singing at Dog and Duck in the week before Christmas. It was very cold singing outside but everyone enjoyed the occasion. The choir was joined by the Windmill Songmen and Bletchingley Community Choir. Together 2 hours of singing was provided.

Candlemas this year was at Burstow, when we were delighted to sing again a Nunc Dimittis by Roger Hind, with the composer at the organ.

The Ash Wednesday evening service was at Horne, with the full Benefice choir. As it was almost a year since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the choir sang *A Ukrainian Prayer* by John Rutter. This is a difficult piece which the choir had been working on for about 9 months. It felt powerful to sing as we remembered all those suffering.

Anyone interested in joining the choir, should speak to Ginette at Horne, to Roger at Burstow or Nick at Outwood. Some experience would be helpful, but support will be given for whatever you need. Rehearsals are at Horne on Thursdays, but the choir splits to sing in the three churches on Sundays.

Junior Choir

We were delighted to welcome Scarlett Berry to the junior choir in June 2022. Scarlett sings regularly at Burstow.

Bryony Frost was formally admitted to the choir of Outwood in October 2022, when she promised to do her very best to help lead the worship of all in church. Well done Bryony!

RSCM Awards

No-one took exams this year, but a Choral Evensong with presentation of RSCM Awards was held at Southwark Anglican cathedral in October 2022 which included our choristers who took exams in 2021. Preparations have begun for exams later this summer

The Windmill Songmen

The Windmill Songmen is a group of men who get together to sing secular songs and shanties. The past year has been busy. The men sang a few songs at the St George's Day lunch in The Bell Outwood on 25 April. The pub was full and the diners joined in with the singing.

In June 2022, the Songmen took part in events celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The men, joined by Bletchingley Community Choir, led the singing of the special song written for the ceremony of the lighting of the Beacons on Thursday evening, at the beacon on Outwood Common. This was attended by many people. On Sunday 5 June, the Songmen sang songs spanning the last 70 years at the celebrations in Smallfield and then later on in Outwood.

In September 2022, the Songmen sang shanties at CAMEO and then at the Outwood Show.

In November, the men performed some songs from the first and second world war eras at WOW in Smallfield.

In December, the men performed some Christmas songs at the Dog and Duck, Outwood, joining with the Church choir and Bletchingley Community choir at the end of the evening to sing some carols together.

Men are always welcome to join the group, whatever level of experience they have. Anyone interested in coming along should speak to Ginette or Peter (ginettenye@gmail.com or 07714403624)

Horne Church Band

Horne church band usually plays for a Sunday service on the first Sunday of each month. At Easter, the group led the hymns on Outwood common at the early morning service. During the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend, the morning service on June 5th, which was also Pentecost, was held outside in Horne. The band led the music for this service. We are grateful to Steve Robinson for providing and managing the sound equipment needed to make this possible.

The group also played for the Crib service on the Sunday before Christmas.

There are 9 members of the group – 2 singers, flute, trumpet, violin, guitar, bass, keyboard and percussion. We are delighted to welcome Andrew Goudie as a singer this year.

Music at Café Church

Café church launched on Good Friday 2022 and has now completed a full year. With Liz Copeland singing, Steve and Gill Robinson usually accompany two songs each month. I am grateful to them for their commitment to this important part of the Benefice.

Handbells

The Handbell team has continued to flourish and make progress, with Charles' guidance at regular practices. It was lovely to hear the team play at Charles' celebration party in July 2022.

The team played at the Christmas carol service in Smallfield and was very well received by the large congregation. Practices continued and in March 2023 the team performed at CAMEO.

If you are interested in trying handbell ringing or joining the team, please contact Charles Sargent (charles.sargent@priest.com).

Organs

The organs at Burstow and Outwood have both suffered cypher problems this winter. I hope that with warmer and drier weather, both will be more reliable for the next few months. Before the Advent carol service at Outwood, Nick Case-Green spent several hours trying to get the organ into a workable state, but sadly this was not possible and the lovely organ did not feature in the service.

Before Candlemas at Burstow, Roger Hind spent many hours trying to solve the cypher problems on the organ. With the addition of 24 hour heating, the organ was useable for the service, to our great delight. We are very grateful to Roger for the time he put into this but also for his great skills in managing to make the organ sound wonderful whilst avoiding any stops or keys which may have caused problems. It has not always been possible for the organ to function well enough and the congregation at Burstow should be commended for embracing unaccompanied singing with such enthusiasm. The organ should be more reliable through the warmer months.

Stella Try has retired from her role playing for services at Outwood twice a month, after about 15 years. We are very grateful to her for her beautifully paced playing which gave such great support to the choir and congregation.

In her place, we welcome James Wells, who will be accompanying services at Outwood, hopefully mostly on the organ. Thank you for taking on this important role James.

Petty Cash

Last year, the balance in our petty cash was about £80. It is currently £166.24

In the past year, this fund has bought a set of anthems for the Advent carol service (Listen by Nazareth), some copies of Give us the wings of faith by E Bullock, a full set of Day by Day by Martin How, of The Lord bless you and keep you by John Rutter and of The mountains shall bring forth peace by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange. After our performance of A Ukrainian Prayer by John Rutter, the fund sent £30 to DEC, as requested by the composer.

Thank you to all the choristers who donate their fees from wedding and funeral services to this fund, which enables us to build a varied and comprehensive library of music.

Thanks

I would like to record my gratitude to Tony Rich, who has now left the benefice. It has been a great pleasure to work with him both as a priest and in his role in the Songmen over the last 5 years, since I arrived. He was always so supportive, thoughtful and easy to work with. I will miss him but wish him much happiness in his new home.

I would also like to thank Roger Hind, the organist at Burstow, for his great support. It is a pleasure to work with him when we are all at Burstow. The interesting and creative pieces he gives his choir to sing on Sundays both challenges the choristers and keeps their interest.

I am also grateful to Emma and James at Outwood for their support of the choir and their willingness to accompany occasional anthems at short notice. This enables the choir to bring a wider range of music to the church, engaging the congregation and challenging the choristers.

As always, I am indebted to my husband Peter, the organist at Horne, for all he does to support my work and the role of music in our churches. His contribution to our musical worship is greatly appreciated.

I would like to thank Nicholas for another wonderful and varied year and for all the support and encouragement he continues to give me and all the musicians in the Benefice. I am grateful too to Charles for his enthusiasm for music in our services. I look forward to the coming year, when we will get to know Steve better and enjoy working with him too. We are so fortunate that the role of music in our services is understood, welcomed and encouraged by our Rector and his clergy team. Thank you all!

Ginette Nye

Director of Music in the Windmill United Benefice

30 March 2023