

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

MESSIAH

**An Oratorio by
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL**



JANET OLLIER – Soprano

SUSAN MARRS – Mezzo Soprano

STEPHEN NEWLOVE – Tenor

JAMIE HALL – Bass

THE 18TH CENTURY CONCERT ORCHESTRA

JOHN NAYLOR - Conductor

ST MARY'S CHURCH, NANTWICH

Saturday February 3rd, 2007

Nantwich Choral Society

Sopranos

Anne Barnard
Janice Brown
Jo Butchart
Joyce Clegg
Glenda Colemere
Gail Corfield
Rita Davies
Ann Ferguson
Frances Hughes
Rosemary Jones
Bronwyn Kelly
Helen Kerr
Erika Letts
Sheila Luke
Sue Munks

Maire Pedder
Rachel Pentecost
Caroline Robb
Amanda Taylor
Eileen Stuttard
Jane Whiteman
Kathleen Wilks
Sue Briscoe
Christine English
Joyce Foster
Cynthia Gorton
Karen Grimwood

Gillian Handforth
Grace Johnston
Toni Mathie
Elizabeth McCrone
Steph Percy
Eileen Robertson
Barbara Shone
Sally Sissons

Altos

Jean Atkin
Jocelyn Cooper
Diane Disbury
Fiona Field
Frances Hutchison
Anne Nicol
Margaret Smith
Gillian Wakely
Diane Wheatley

Sharon Arnold
Shirley Burton
Judith Dooley
Angela Greaves
Joy Guest
Vanessa Macallen
Anne McKay
Brenda Midley
Janet Miller
Brenda Morris

Jean Nurse
Gwyneth Rollins
Joan Shaddick
Heather Welch
Margaret Whitehurst

Tenors

Suzanne Edwards
Wal Kaye
Mike Moores
Nick Smith
Philip Trinder
Joe Watson

Basses

Graham Wilks
Christopher Findlay
David Foster
David Jones
Martin Jones
Ron Kelley
Jock Knight
Jonathan Layfield
Adrian Percy
Ray Potts
Bob Pugh
Laird Ryan
Simon Stubington
David Walker

The Society was founded in 1972 and there are still founder members singing with the choir. Each concert season typically comprises four major performances with a number of smaller events, including an NCS-hosted choral singing day also in the calendar.

The Society's normal concert venue is the parish church of St Mary's at Nantwich, often referred to as "The Cathedral of South Cheshire". In recent years the choir has also performed at Chester Cathedral, Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, Ellesmere College, Crewe Hall and most recently at St Boniface, Bunbury.

The Society performs a wide range of choral works ranging from Baroque masterpieces to world premieres of contemporary composers and sings either a *capella* (unaccompanied) or with an instrumental accompaniment ranging from piano or organ to brass consort or full orchestra. Plans for this season include Bernstein's 'Chichester Psalms', Vaughan Williams Five Mystical Songs, Fauré Requiem and performances of Karl Jenkins' 'The Armed Man' in Macon and Nantwich as part of the twinning anniversary celebrations.

We rehearse at Malbank School, Welsh Row, Nantwich, on Wednesday evenings between September and June, with breaks at Christmas and Easter. If you can sing and read music (no matter how rusty your skills) come along on a Wednesday evening at 7:30 - 9:30; new singers will always find a very friendly welcome and membership of the Society is free of charge in the first term of joining!

Nantwich Choral Society is supported by The Harding Trust, Making Music (Supporting & Championing Voluntary Music) and gratefully acknowledges support by Barclays Bank plc and Bentley Motors Ltd. The Society is a registered charity - No 5165472.

MESSIAH

Handel may have passed quite close to Nantwich on his way to give the first performance of Messiah in Dublin on April 13th, 1742. It is certainly possible, because he travelled from London to Chester (by which road remains unknown) where he was delayed by bad weather on the crossing route. Anxious to make good use of the time available, he prevailed upon the cathedral organist to arrange a 'sing through' of his new work with some members of the cathedral choir who, quite reasonably, he expected to be proficient readers of music. He was very put out by one of them who, when the singer gave a very poor account of the music placed before him, told a dismayed Handel that he could sing at sight 'but not at first sight!'

We know that Handel wrote Messiah in an amazingly short burst of inspiration between Saturday August 22nd, 1741 and Saturday September 12th 1741 in preparation for the series of concerts he was to give in Dublin, borrowing very little from previous compositions. He was uncertain what musical resources he would have at his disposal when he arrived, so he designed the work for very sparing orchestration – only continuo, strings and brief appearances by trumpets and kettledrums.

The majority of the arias have an obbligato accompaniment by a single instrumental part with continuo. The chorus, though planned to be relatively few in number, is given a much more prominent role than in most of Handel's previous compositions. All this was designed for economy of cost, especially since the first performance was presented to raise funds for Dublin's Charitable Music Society.

Charles Jennens, Handel's regular librettist, selected the words from the Authorised Version of the Bible and from the Book of Common Prayer. This combination of familiar Old Testament and New Testament texts illustrates the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies of Messiah in the Gospel story. The work is divided into three parts:

Part One: Prophecies of Christ's coming, the Annunciation and the Nativity.

Part Two: Christ's sacrifice, his Suffering, Resurrection and Ascension, the Evangelism of the Apostles and a glorious view of the Kingdom of God.

Part Three: Christ's redemption and the immortality of the Christian soul.

In order to accommodate as large an audience as possible, the Dublin Charitable Society's Stewards asked 'Ladies not to come with hoops' and Gentlemen 'to come without their swords'. On the day there were 700 people in the room, £400 was raised, and the Dublin Journal wrote: "Words are wanting to express the exquisite delight afforded to the admiring crowded Audience. The Sublime, the Grand and the Tender, adapted to the most elevated, majestick and moving Words, conspired to transport the ravish'd Heart and Ear."

But when Handel returned and gave the first London performance as part of his Lenten Oratorio season at Covent Garden Theatre in 1743, the reaction was underwhelming. Some critics piously questioned the suitability of a playhouse for the performance of sacred texts, and most patrons preferred Handel's 'Samson' which was 'received with uncommon applause' whilst Messiah 'was but indifferently relish'd.'

Handel was born in Halle (Germany) in February 1685, and after youthful appointments as organist at the local cathedral and harpsichord player / violin player at the local opera house, he went to Italy in 1706 where he wrote numerous operas and cantatas in the Italian style.

He returned to Germany, but between 1710 and 1716 he commuted regularly to London where Italian opera had become very popular. He eventually settled in England in the service of the Duke of Chandos who, like many rich noblemen, maintained his own small musical establishment. In 1719 he became Music Director of The Royal Academy, formed by a group of noblemen to put on regular Italian opera performances.

This proved a musically successful but financially insecure venture, and so in 1729 he started seasonal programmes on his own account. During the 1730s he built up a flourishing and profitable reputation for seasons of Italian operas and English oratorios and odes at Covent Garden.

Thus Handel was essentially a man of the theatre, especially Italian opera, although he was also undoubtedly a man with a religious background. Biblical subjects (with which his audience would have been very familiar) proved a rich source for the libretti of very many of his compositions. After composing *Messiah* for Dublin he seems to have concentrated principally on oratorios to be performed in the theatre, but he did revive *Messiah* in 1745 and again in 1749.

Handel, by then 45 and more affluent, had become an establishment figure, and in 1750 began the English tradition of performing *Messiah* in support of good causes, in this case for the Foundling Hospital where he was a governor. All of a sudden *Messiah* 'was received with universal applause', its public reputation in England was transformed and it has enjoyed a uniquely unbroken history of performance ever since.

When King George II attended a performance he stood up at the beginning of the Hallelujah chorus, but nobody really knows why. The reasons may have been lofty, they may have been prosaic. However, the audience followed protocol and also stood, a tradition was begun, and most audiences have stood for this great chorus ever since!

In the 18th century Mozart famously produced a version with more lush orchestration; in the 19th century it became customary to give performances with staggeringly large resources (up to 2,500 performers). Every choral society included *Messiah* in its repertoire, and it is tempting to speculate that the sentiments attached to performances at this time were as much socially worthy ('improving') as they were musical.

In the first part of the 20th century conductors including Thomas Beecham and Malcolm Sargent gave performances which today

would be regarded as hopelessly romantic, but they were nevertheless very persuasive interpretations. In the latter part of the 20th century it became, and still is, more customary to perform baroque music with resources more closely aligned to those originally intended. Tonight's performance uses forces (including period instruments) almost exactly the same as in the first performance. Musical lines are clearer, and the drama of the performance comes from the impact of the text and music, not merely from sheer force of numbers.

Handel died in 1759, nine days after conducting his last performance of *Messiah*, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. He is regarded, with his contemporary J.S. Bach, as the greatest of all the many Baroque musicians and composers: certainly he is one of the greatest of all the English composers. In *Messiah* he left us a legacy which has truly stood the test of time.

Jennens quoted Virgil in the introduction to his libretto – *Majora canamus* (let us sing of Greater Things.) *Messiah* was considered in Handel's day a 'Grand Musical Entertainment' and since then it has properly gained a unique place in musical performance. Even in a cynical and more secular age it has the power to move and inspire. The words are still well known by most of us, Handel's music is at once familiar and fresh and the work has a curious propensity to engage performers and audience alike in a corporate musical experience quite unlike any other.

Handel himself said of the audience at one performance: "I should be sorry if I only entertained them; I wished to make them better." In this performance tonight, may we all find a glimpse of some of the 'Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge' to which Jennens so appositely also referred.

John Naylor

THE TEXT OF MESSIAH

MAJORA CANAMUS

(Virgil, Eclogue IV)

And without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifested in the Flesh, justified by the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory. In whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.

(1 Timothy iii, 16; Colossians ii, 3)

(These words, selected by Jennens, the librettist, formed a preface to the wordbook of the first performance of Messiah in April 1742 in Dublin)

PART ONE

1. Symphony

2. Tenor recitative: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. *Isaiah 40:1-3*

3. Tenor aria: Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low: the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. *Isaiah 40:4*

4. Chorus: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. *Isaiah 40:5*

5. Bass recitative: Thus saith the Lord of hosts; yet once, a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come. *Haggai 2:6-7*

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. *Malachi 3:1*

6. Contralto aria: But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. *Malachi 3:2*

7. Chorus: And He shall purify the sons of Levi that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. *Malachi 3:3*

8. Contralto recitative: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel. *Isaiah 7:14*

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, "God with us". *Matthew 1:23*

9. Contralto aria and Chorus: O thou, that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou, that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! *Isaiah 40:9*

Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. *Isaiah 60:1*

10. Bass Recitative: For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. *Isaiah 60:2-3*

11. Bass Aria: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. *Isaiah 9:2*

12. Chorus: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. *Isaiah 9:6*

13. Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)

14. Soprano Recitative: There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. *Luke 2:8-9*

15. Soprano recitative: And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. *Luke 2:10-11*

16. Soprano recitative: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying: *Luke 2:13*

17. Chorus: Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, goodwill toward men! *Luke 2:14*

18. Soprano aria: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is the righteous Saviour and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. *Zechariah 9:9-10*

19. Contralto recitative: Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. *Isaiah 35:5-36*

20. Contralto aria: He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young. *Isaiah 40:11*

Soprano aria: Come unto Him, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him; for He is meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. *Matthew 11:28-29*

21. Chorus: His yoke is easy, His burthen is light. *Matthew 11:30*

PART TWO

22. Chorus: Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. *John 1:29*

23. Contralto aria: He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. *Isaiah 53:3*

He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: He hid not His face from shame and spitting. *Isaiah 50:6*

24. Chorus: Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. *Isaiah 53:4-5*

25. Chorus: And with His stripes we are healed. *Isaiah 53:5*

26. Chorus: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. *Isaiah 53:6*

27. Tenor recitative: All they that see Him laugh Him to scorn: they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying, *Psalms 22:7*

28. Chorus: He trusted in God that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, if He delight in Him. *Psalms 22:8*

29. Tenor recitative: Thy rebuke hath broken His heart; He is full of heaviness: He looked for some to have pity on Him, but there was no man; neither found He any to comfort Him. *Psalms 69:20*

30. Tenor Aria: Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto His sorrow. *Lamentations 1:12*

31. Tenor recitative: He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of Thy people was He stricken. *Isaiah 53:8*

32. Tenor aria: But Thou didst not leave His soul in hell; nor didst Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. *Psalms 16:10*

33. Chorus: Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in! Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in! Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory. *Psalms 24:7-10*

34. Tenor recitative: Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee? *Hebrews 1:5*

35. Chorus: Let all the angels of God worship Him. *Hebrews 1:6*

38. Soprano Aria: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! *Romans 10:15*

40. Bass Aria: Why do the nations so furiously rage together, why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed. *Psalms 2:1-2*

41. Chorus: Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us. *Psalms 2:3*

42. Tenor recitative: He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn: the Lord shall have them in derision. *Psalms 2:4*

43. Air: Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. *Psalms 2:9*

44. Chorus: Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, Hallelujah! *Revelation 19:6* The Kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever, Hallelujah! *Revelation 11:15* King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and He shall reign for ever and ever, Hallelujah! *Revelation 19:16*

PART THREE

45. Soprano aria: I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. *Job 19:25-26* For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. *1 Corinthians 15:20*

46. Chorus: Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. *1 Corinthians 15:21-22*

47. Bass recitative: Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. *1 Corinthians 15:51-52*

48. Bass aria: The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. *1 Corinthians 15:52-53*

49. Contralto recitative: Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory. *1 Corinthians 15:54*

50 and 51. Alto and Tenor duet,: O death, where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law. *1 Corinthians 15:55-56.*

53. Chorus: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honour, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. *Revelation 5:12-14*

54. Chorus: Amen

JOHN NAYLOR

John Naylor, conductor, singer and organist, combines extensive performance experience in world-class choirs with a lifelong passionate interest in choral music and its performance. Following a successful business career he now devotes most of his activities to choral conducting and choir development.

His original training was as a choral scholar at St John's College, Cambridge with the great Dr George Guest after keyboard studies with Conrad Eden at Durham Cathedral where he was a chorister, a music scholarship at Rossall School and singing studies with Wilfrid Brown and Lyndon van der Pump from The Royal College of Music.

He subsequently became a professional member of the Chapel Royal Choir of St Peter ad Vincula at H.M. Tower of London and worked with John Eliot Gardiner, Louis Halsey, Neville Mariner and Richard Hickox, appearing under their direction at The Proms, The South Bank, The Aldeburgh Festival and in numerous broadcasts and recordings. He has sung in the cathedral choirs of Christ Church Oxford, Carlisle and Chester.

John has been Director of The Lydian Singers since 1980 with whom he has performed in most of the cathedrals in Great Britain, often returning several times by invitation. He is also Musical Director of the renowned Newport & District Male Voice Choir. In 2006 he conducted these choirs on tours to Castile and Slovenia.

He was appointed Music Director of Nantwich Choral Society in September 2005 for whom he has conducted highly acclaimed performances of Mendelssohn's *'Elijah'*, Bach's *'St John Passion'* (in Chester Cathedral), and Monteverdi's *'Vespers 1610'*.

JANET OLLIER

Janet has been singing since she started singing lessons at the age of nine followed by early studies at The Royal Northern College of Music. She has sung in church choirs, Cheshire Girls' Choir, Cheshire Youth Choir, (where she met her husband), Enfield Choral society, The London Oriana Choir, the Collegiate Singers and, since 1989, with the Lydian Singers.

In all of these she has undertaken solo work and has been the guest soloist with local choirs and given concerts for many charitable causes, including several performances of *Messiah* as the

soprano soloist. She made a notable contribution to the NCS performance of Bach's *'St John Passion'* as the soprano soloist in April 2006. She combines a busy professional and family life with extensive music making.

SUSAN MARRS

Susan graduated from Trinity College of Music, London in 1993, after winning The Ricordi Opera Prize and The Trinity College Singing Department Prize. Her oratorio repertoire includes performances of Elgar's *'The Dream of Gerontius'* (at Ypres Cathedral, Belgium), *'The Kingdom'* and *'The Apostles'*, Verdi's *'Requiem'*, Dvorak's *'Stabat Mater'*, Mozart's *'Requiem'* and *'C Minor Mass'*, Bach's *'Mass in B Minor'* and *'St. Matthew Passion'*, Handel's *'Messiah'* and *'Dixit Dominus'*, Haydn's *'Nelson Mass'* and *'Paukenmesse'*, the Vivaldi *'Gloria'*, Rossini's *'Petite Messe Solennelle'* and *'Stabat Mater'* and Prokofiev's *'Alexander Nevsky'*. Opera roles have included *'Cherubino'* in Mozart's *'Marriage of Figaro'* for British Youth Opera and *'Mrs Noye'* in Britten's *'Noye's Fludde'* at The Royal Albert Hall.

Susan has enjoyed twelve years as a member of the Extra Chorus at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and recent performances have included Wagner's *'Parsifal'*, Verdi's *'Simon Boccanegra'*, Britten's *'Peter Grimes'* and Mussorgsky's *'Boris Godunov'*. Susan has also sung for English National Opera in their production of *'The Pearlfishers'*.

Sue sings with "London Voices" under the direction of Terry Edwards, and has participated in numerous concerts and recordings in London and Europe of works by Bach, Stravinsky, Pierre Boulez, John Tavener and Sir Michael Tippett, among others, and several works conducted by the late Sir Georg Solti, Sir Simon Rattle, Seiji Ozawa and Richard Hickox. Film score recordings have included *'Star Wars'*, *'Lord of the Rings'*, *'Harry Potter'* and *'The Phantom of the Opera'*. Recently Sue has sung on the recording of *'Ecce cor meum'*, the new choral work by Sir Paul McCartney.

Recent solo appearances have included performances of Verdi's *'Requiem'*, Vaughan William's *'Hodie'*, and Elgar's *'Sea Pictures'* and *'Elijah'* for Nantwich Choral Society in November 2005. Future concerts include performances of Bach's *'B Minor Mass'*, and *'St. Matthew Passion'*, and Elgar's *'The Music Makers'*. Susan is a Fellow of Trinity College, London.

STEPHEN NEWLOVE

Stephen Newlove was born in East Yorkshire and sang as a chorister in Beverley Minster before studying for a music degree at Huddersfield, followed by a Masters in composition at the University of Hull. He studies singing with Nicolas Powell.

As an experienced cathedral singer in the choirs of York Minster and Chester Cathedral, Stephen has broadcast on radio and television and has featured on a number of acclaimed recordings. He is currently a member of the Britten Singers, Canzonetta and Chudleigh's Company.

Recent solo engagements include Monteverdi *Vespers* with the Orchestra of the Golden Age and His Majesty's Sackbuts and Cornetts, arias in Bach *St John Passion* with the English Haydn Orchestra, Evangelist in Bach *St Matthew and John Passions*, and, *Christmas Oratorio*, Handel *Messiah and Saul*, Haydn *Stabat Mater* and *Creation*, Puccini *Messe Di Gloria*, Janacek *Otcenas*, Sir George Dyson *Canterbury Pilgrims*, Britten *St Nicolas Cantata* and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies *Solstice of Light*. Future events include the solos in Bach *Mass in B minor* with Manchester Camerata Orchestra, Dvorak *Stabat Mater*, Haydn *Marie Theresa Mass* and Bach *Cantata 78 - Jesu, der du meine Seele* with Ripon Choral Society. Members of Nantwich Choral Society recall with great pleasure Stephen's superb performance of the notoriously challenging tenor arias in the Society's performance of Bach's *St John Passion* in April 2006.

As well as performing Stephen is Director of Music at Carmel College in St Helens, Merseyside.

JAMIE HALL

Born in South Yorkshire, Jamie read music in Chichester before becoming a Bass Lay Clerk at Chester Cathedral and continuing his studies in Liverpool. Whilst in Chichester, he studied voice with international Bass/Baritone Martin Elliott performing as a soloist in the local region as well as singing as a university choral scholar and as a member of Chichester's Chantry Quire.

Now a member of Winchester Cathedral choir, Jamie combines continuing study in voice with solo and ensemble singing, as well as vocal coaching and choral directing.

Forthcoming engagements include an appearance as bass soloist in Mozart's Requiem at St. Martin-

in-the-fields, London with the London Concertante.

THE 18TH CENTURY CONCERT ORCHESTRA

The Orchestra was founded in September 2001. The players are now firmly established as some of the finest exponents of baroque music in the country. Performing on period instruments (and sometimes in period costume), they have given performances all over the United Kingdom and recently gave a concert tour in Canada to great acclaim.

They have been resident ensemble at the Pacific Road Arts Centre and at Oxford's Holywell Room and have filmed a performance of Messiah for Channel 4 in the Georgian Underworld season. Critics have described their performances as "Baroque at its best" - "real communication" and "a rare musical treat not to be missed". NCS audience members will recall their outstanding contributions to recent performances of Bach's *St John Passion* (April 2006) and Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* (November 2006).

1 st Violins	David Lewis Judith Van Ingen Marsha Skinns
2 nd Violins	Duncan Druce Maria Becker
Violas	Ruth Player Emile de Roubaix
Cellos	Chris Howell Tim Smedley
Double Bass	Andrew Moore
Oboes	Mark Baigent Heather Williams
Trumpets	Adrian Woodward Wendy Jones
Tympani	Matthew Green
Harpsichord	David Francis

Please see www.18thcentury.co.uk for further details.