

THE SECRETARY'S NEWSLETTER:

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From the Secretary:

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The Hymn Society Website: www.hymnsocietygbi.org.uk

3 Day Carmarthen Conference; July 18th -21st 2017

There's still time to book! Cost: £260.00. As you will see from the programme, this is excellent value! Forms available on the Society website or from the Secretary. Full details are now as follows:

There will be 7 lectures covering a wide range of themes:

Wyn James: *William Williams of Pantycelyn and the evolution of the Welsh Hymn*

Anne Harrison: "Go forth and tell!" *The Jubilate Group from Youth Praise to ResoundWorship*

Gordon Giles and Huw Williams: *Introducing the Revised English Hymnal*

Paul Inwood: *New light on the life and hymns of James Quinn*

Janet Wootton, Martin Leckebusch, Alan Gaunt: *Hymns and the 500th Anniversary of The Reformation in 1517*

David Thompson: *The Life, Hymns and Hymn Tunes of Erik Routley (1917 - 1982)*

Rhidian Griffiths: *Folk roots of Welsh hymn-tunes*

In addition there will be some 30 minute Sectionals including: 'Hymns and healing, a new hymn collection' by Andrew Pratt and Jan Berry; 'Looking for a Voice, a hymnological Autobiography by Caryl Micklem and Alison Micklem' presented by Alison Micklem; 'You Can't Keep a Good Song down' presented by Ruthie Thomas.

Short Metre: Any member of the Society attending Conference who would like to be considered for a Short Metre (maximum 10 minutes) should please contact the Secretary as soon as possible.

An outing visiting William Williams of Pantycelyn's home is included. Also, a **Festival of Hymns** in Christ Church, Carmarthen presented by Rhidian Griffiths with organist, Huw Williams - and much more!

We welcome new members who recently joined the Society:

Very Revd Christopher Butt (Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain)

Revd Dr Ross Hutchison (London)

We regret having to report the deaths of members:

Revd Michael P. Chappell (Scarborough, North Yorkshire)

Mr Michael H. Jones (Weston Favell, Northampton)

Mr Bernard A. Sharp (Sevenoaks, Kent)

Michael Jones died following a short and unexpected illness on Sunday, 5th March. He was born on a Sunday and died on a Sunday; a thought he would have enjoyed. He and Anne have been very regular with us at Conferences, including last year's St Andrews Conference, and we will miss him greatly. As part of his introduction to the Order of Worship celebrating his life, he said this: 'You will find four hymns in the service and I hope you will join in singing them to the tunes I have chosen. Each in its way expresses much of what has been the cornerstone of my life. As you await the commencement of the Service I encourage you to read their words and think about what they say.' The hymns were: *Jesus lives! thy terrors now can, O death, no more appal us; Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost, taught by thee, we covet most; There's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea; Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices.*

We have also heard of the death of Bishop Michael Perham who died on Easter Monday following a short illness. Although not a member of the Society, Bishop Michael possessed a great affinity for hymns and their sensitive use in worship. Those attending our 2014 Cirencester Conference will recall his lecture: *Chorister to Bishop: sixty years of singing in Worship.*

We welcome New Joint Members via HSUSC:

E. Wray Bryant (Ohio, USA)

Julian Delf (Ontario, CANADA)

Martin H. Dunlap Jnr (Kansas, USA)

Revd Tadashi Inoue (Tokyo, JAPAN)

Linda T. Lovins (Florida, USA)

Sal McDougall (Lincoln, UK)

Lydie Helene Masse (Maryland, USA)

Charles Seifert (Pennsylvania, USA)

Ai Shibata (Tokyo, JAPAN)

Michael Silhavy (Illinois, USA)

For the technologically savvy

Members are encouraged to 'follow' us on Twitter at: @hymnsoc. Also, if you are a subscriber, on our very active Facebook page.

Keeping in touch by email - updating email addresses

We are building up an emailing file as a further means of communication, however, emails are notoriously liable to being changed, wrongly transcribed or malfunctioning! If you have either not let us have your email address or have not received anything from us recently and would like to be kept up-to-date with news and events, please email your request to Jenny Canham at canham3847@gmail.com We promise not to pester you with emails!

Subscriptions Reminder

Subscription renewals were due on 1st January. If you are unsure of the status of yours, please get in touch with our Treasurer, Revd Canon Michael Garland, 63 Church Street, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 8AT. Phone: 01242 253402 Email: michaelgarland368@btinternet.com

Report on The Hymn Society London Day: Saturday 11th February 2017 - Executive President Ian Sharp

There were snowflakes in the air, but this did not deter 55 people from the London region and beyond, mostly Hymn Society members, from participating in our London Hymn Day. The first venue was The Royal College of Music in South Kensington, just behind the Albert Hall. We met in the Library, which is housed in the basement. After refreshments and a welcome, there was a short Act of Worship led by Claire Wilson, with 'Through all the changing scenes of life' setting the scene for the day's deliberations. Listening to the words of Frances Ridley Havergal we were reminded of the charge given to all of us in 'the Ministry of Song'. This led on to the main part of the morning's activities, and, indeed the reason why we were in the RCM; Peter Horton, Deputy Librarian of the RCM, and a Hymn Society member, introduced us to the hymn treasures in the RCM archives. Peter, a life-long church musician, spoke with great knowledge of the three main archive collections currently housed in the library. He showed us many valuable and indeed unique books and manuscripts; a sixteenth-century psalter, Samuel Sebastian Wesley's personal copy of *The European Psalmist*, and the original pencil manuscript of Herbert Howells' tune, MICHAEL, to name but three. Our participants then had an opportunity to examine these and many other items, and also to explore the books and music on the open shelves in this comprehensive and beautifully ordered library.

After a sandwich lunch, Gordon Giles led a workshop on hymns for occasional offices; baptisms, weddings and funerals. Gordon, as the author of the HS Short Guides on these subjects, spoke about the practical issues facing all of us who lead worship today. There are many challenges, not least because most of those who attend these services do not have a shared experience of hymn singing. But, as the general discussion brought out, there are many opportunities.

We then had a change of venue, across the road, for the Festival of Hymns in Holy Trinity Church. Our organist was Timothy Roe and the commentator was Christopher Idle, who had selected 11 hymns to illustrate the three occasional offices. Starting with Paul Sayer's 'Baptized in water for our Lord', we moved through Michael Seward's creation hymn, 'God, in whose image we are made', to Brian Wren's 'Let hope and sorrow now unite'. Chris gave a powerful and illuminating commentary on all the hymns. We were sent on our journey with words written by Chris for a family wedding; 'Welcome to the journey starting here today', to that rousing tune, CAMBERWELL. A fitting ending to our day!

We are most grateful to all who contributed to the individual sessions, to Terence Atkins who did much of the organising, and to the authorities in the RCM and Holy Trinity Church. Let's hope that we are now establishing a tradition of Regional Hymn Days; occasions when members and friends can join together to explore the riches of hymnody. For, as Andrew Pratt reminds us, 'We are a pilgrim people, forever moving on'.

Delight and Dismay with "Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah" (from our member, John Hardiman)

Members of our Male Voice Choir gathered recently for the funeral of one of our former Bass section members. He knew his hymns and had chosen "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah..." a choir, as well as a general, favourite. Imagine the surprise when on the service sheet were printed all five verses; a delight for hymn enthusiasts and our Welsh lads, but confusion for the organist who played the usual three from the book when the vicar called for two more verses. It was the first time I had sung all five. Wonderful!

Arising from that, one of our members had just returned from the funeral of a former mining colleague in North Wales. His wife had asked him about hymns when the time came and he said, "Oh, Bread of Heaven. We sang it in the pit. Wonderful!". At the funeral the Minister announced "At the request of the deceased we will sing 'Bread of Heaven, on Thee we feed.'"