

Choir News – 2019

Requiescant in pace



Eileen Kelly
1949-2019

Grey Macartney
1936-2019

It is with great sadness that we record the loss of two members of our Choir, Eileen Kelly and Grey Macartney, whose funerals took place on Friday 22 November 2019. We thank God for their contributions to the Choir and for their friendship. Our thoughts go out to their families and friends, and Eileen and Grey are in our prayers.

Grey Macartney 1936-2019

The following tribute appeared in the Autumn 2019 Newsletter of the Schola Gregoriana, and is reproduced here with their kind permission

Grey - a personal appreciation

Grey joined the Schola shortly after its foundation in 1975 and he began by attending one of Mary Berry's early weekends in a Cambridge college chapel. Grey was a member of the long-standing Gregorian Association in the Anglican Church and it seems he took a great interest in the Schola from the very beginning. I joined at much the same time as Grey, but didn't attend any events until Mary came to Leicester late in 1976, after which I managed to get to some events as time permitted in the following years. I get the impression that Grey went to almost whatever was on offer for Associates, and I must have met him whenever I was able to go.

Grey's training as a solicitor came to the fore when it was decided that the Schola would apply to become a Registered Charity. He had a hand in drafting our original Deed of Trust in 1983, and its subsequent amendments in 1984 and 1997. He gave advice to Mary on the drawing up of her Will. By 1997 Grey was a trustee, a position which he continued to hold until he had to step down on reaching his 80th birthday in 2016. For a number of years he was Chairman of the trustees, for a long time he has been Membership Secretary, collecting subscriptions and claiming tax refunds through the Gift Aid scheme, and in recent years he has been the acting Secretary of the Charity, handling our annual declarations to the Charity Commission. Latterly he organised the visit to the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, in 2016, then the highly successful weekend at St Stephen's House, Oxford, in 2017, and finally the excellent weekend at the Birmingham Oratory in August.

I became a trustee in 2004 and so met Grey more frequently than most Associates, but our closest association has been in recent years after the removal of Mary's library to the Birmingham Oratory. The library had had to be removed with very little notice, with the innumerable boxes simply being deposited in the room at the Oratory. Grey volunteered, with me, to sort out the books and papers, and see that they were catalogued and filed so as to be accessible to students. Grey was always the leading light in this work. We arranged to spend two days every other month on the task, and have done so for the last couple of years. The books have, largely, been sorted, but we were not able to complete the major sort-out of forty years' worth of papers.

I have learned more about Grey in the last few years than I had in all the time before. He lived at the same address in Ealing for over forty years, and he had ready access to a family cottage on the Isle of Mull which he visited frequently, and many times left it at the disposal of Mary and various Associates. He was as at home on a small Scottish isle, as he was in Ealing, a few minutes away from the busy metropolitan Broadway. He was a confirmed cyclist and frequently took his bike away with him on the train. In recent years he has attended the chant days in Askrigg, taking himself and bike to a small station on the Settle and Carlisle line, catching a connecting bus with room for cycles to the nearest town, and cycling from there. One year, when preparing to proffer his bus pass to the driver, the driver said he needn't bother as he'd seen the pass the previous year! Being resident from time to time in Mull entitled him to a Scottish bus pass, which includes internal coaches, and so he had freedom of their network too, with the coach as an alternative to the train from Glasgow to Oban en route for Mull.

Grey's mother was Russian and so he was fluent in the language, ringing a friend in Moscow each week and having an hour's conversation with her in Russian. He had relatives in France whom he visited frequently and was very fluent in French too.

The Gregorian Association fell upon hard times. In the 19th century and up to the inter-war years it could fill large cathedrals where it held events. But membership and interest dwindled but with Grey, characteristically, being on its committee and, I think, largely instrumental in its efficient winding-up, and the transfer of its remaining assets to the Schola. Its records are in our library.

For many years Grey was a key figure in the running of Christ the Saviour church on Ealing Broadway, singing in the choir or serving at the altar. Latterly he joined the chant choir at Ealing Abbey, making many new friends there, and being instrumental in requesting Philip Duffy to run special chant days for the choir.

Grey was determined and persistent in his work for the chant, courteous to all, and never showed signs of irritation no matter how tempting it must have been to do so. His funeral took place before a large congregation at Christ the Saviour church on Friday 22 November, happily the feast of St Cecilia. A coincidence? Or maybe St Cecilia herself had a hidden hand in the choice of date. A group of Associates formed a schola, singing most of the Requiem Mass chants, and it was generally agreed Grey would have approved. After the funeral there was a convivial meeting of friends old and new, thanks in large measure to the parish priest, Fr Richard Collins, and his excellent helpers. Grey will be sorely missed by a large number of people in a variety of spheres and our world will be the worse without him. *Requiem æternam dona ei, Domine: et lux perpetua luceat ei.*

Bernard Marriott

Gregorian Chant Workshop: 12-13 October 2019

We were delighted to welcome back Philip Duffy, Associate Director, Schola Gregoriana, who led us for a weekend workshop on Gregorian chant on 12-13 October 2019, our fourth weekend workshop since 2015. We were very pleased that some non-members were able to join us, helping to make it a richer and more fulfilling experience. We particularly appreciated the way in which Philip took a personal interest in all attending, members and non-members alike.

The main focus of the Workshop was to help us prepare to sing the Mass for the 28th Sunday per Annum: the Propers and Kyriale II. As a Choir, we had already rehearsed these chants, but we looked to Philip to help us finesse our singing, particularly in enhancing the volume of our singing and singing legato. With the inimitable combination of his own esoteric brand of good humour and insistence on the highest standards, he did so admirably!

The Mass included some particularly beautiful chants. Among them were the Introit, *Si iniquitates*, imploring the Lord for forgiveness, and the Gradual, *Ecce quam bonum*, with its delicious imagery of the ointment running down Aaron's beard as an analogy for unity, something that Philip certainly enabled us to accomplish as a Choir. The haunting melody of the Offertory *Recordare mei* reflected the fervent plea by Esther to the Lord to give her the right words to convince King Ahasuerus to spare her people. Reflecting and bringing out the words of the sacred text is such an important attribute of Gregorian chant and Philip helped us to achieve this.

As well as preparing us for the Mass, Philip led us in some exploration of the chants for the Feast of St Edward the Confessor, which would have been celebrated on 13 October had it not been superseded by the Sunday liturgy. He was disappointed that the Mass setting for the day was merely the standard one for a Confessor not a Bishop, without any special chants for St Edward. Nevertheless, it included some beautiful chants which we sang unseen. However, Philip had managed to find an early 16th century sequence from the Sarum Use for the Birth of One Confessor, *Adest nobis dies alma*, which we sang, as well as a vernacular version of a Sarum chant for All Saints.

By common consent, it was a most inspiring and enjoyable workshop. Philip Duffy has given us a great deal to chew over and has helped to boost our growing self-confidence as a Choir.

Patrick Martin

(See photos on the Photo Gallery page.)

Choir members after singing at the Mass for 6th Sunday of the Year (21 July 2019)



Valerie's Birthday Lunch – Monday 8 July 2019



Choir visit to Quarr & St Cecilia's Abbeys, Isle of Wight: 21-23 June 2019



The Choir made its now annual visit to the Isle of Wight on a warm, late June weekend. We stayed at Quarr Abbey, where we enjoyed the hospitality of the monks and in particular the repartee of the Guestmaster, Fr Nicholas. Once again, we were very privileged to have tuition on chant from Abbot Xavier, with his patience, good humour and tolerance, but insistence on high standards. On Saturday 22 June, we spent the day at St Cecilia's Abbey, where we had the benefit of tuition from Sr Bernadette, the Choirmistress, with her unparalleled knowledge of chant. Taking a break for lunch, once again we visited the nearby delightful Duck Restaurant for a convivial and delicious meal.

Above all, both Abbot Xavier and Sr Bernadette demonstrated their love of chant by showing us how it should be sung beautifully, in the service of the Lord. We also had the benefit of hearing the monks since the Offices and attending the sublimely beautiful Mass for the Feast of SS John Fisher and Thomas More at St Cecilia's Abbey. On Sunday, we were privileged to be invited to join the monks of Quarr Abbey in singing at their Pontifical Mass for Corpus Christi. We were particularly delighted to be able to sing the lovely Corpus Christi Sequence, Lauda Sion, in full, alternating with the monks.

We are most grateful to Suzanne (who sadly could not be with us), Grey and Paul in making the necessary domestic arrangements, and as ever to our Director, Fr Peter, who accompanied us having made the necessary arrangements with Abbot Xavier and Sr Bernadette.

Patrick Martin

(More photos below)



Pentecost 2019

Photograph of Choir members after singing at the 12:00 Noon Mass for the Solemnity of Pentecost, Sunday 9 June 2019



EPIPHANY CELEBRATION 2019

Carols and Chant at Chestnut Lodge Care Home



Alleluia Cf. Mt 2: 2

A L-le-lu-ia. V. Vi-di-

mus stellam e- ius in O-ri-én-

te, et vó-ni-mus cum munú-

ri-bus ad-o-rá-re Dó-mi-num.

We have seen his star in the East, and we have come with our gifts, to worship the Lord.

Celebration Tea at the Benedictine Institute

