

Terence Atkins
Celebrating 48 Years as
Organist and Choirmaster of
St John the Baptist Church
Chipping Barnet



This book is a small collection of tributes from a few of the many people whose lives you have been a part of for the past 48 years or more!

It contains tributes from former vicars, choristers, adult choir members, choir parents and other people that you have worked with (stretching beyond this institution too!).

Alan says this will complement the 160 page(!) folder that he gave you which contains all the statistics about attendance and performances that you would ever want to know so I think that you can count that as his contribution.



Adrian Esdaile

I was Rector of Chipping Barnet with Arkley for 21 years, 1980-2001 and Terence Atkins was the Director of Music throughout that period. He and I worked closely together without ever having difficulties, as is so often the case between the clergy and the organist when it is strained, if not positively hostile. The faithful week by week presentation of excellent music throughout that period was a huge delight to me. For example, not many Churches have choral evensong every week and, maybe, two anthems each Sunday.

During this period, he sustained a boy's treble section, a matter that became harder and harder as time went by as competing activities grew more prominent. The Cathedral trips were a great feature almost every year and were much appreciated by the Cathedrals as well as by the choir. There was a great deal of work in preparation for those visits. The standard of the singing in the Choir improved greatly as a result of the daily practice and services. Each year there was a concert performance of a major work, accompanied by Alan Parish and with soloists who were often ex-members of the Choir.

Other people may not have noticed, but for me there were a number of special moments in each year - one was his accompanying of the hymn '*Were you there when they crucified my Lord*' on Good Friday afternoon - another was his quiet playing of Messiaen on Easter morning before the 8 am Communion Service. I could mention dozens of others.

Anyone who dedicates such huge commitment for so many years deserves a special accolade and gratitude.

Hall Speers

It was an immense privilege to work with Terence and I looked forward to our monthly planning meeting which sometimes took place at the Rectory and sometimes at a local restaurant. Terence was always the perfect gentleman and expected things to be done properly. When putting the butter on the table for lunch I remember Terence remarking, "A gentleman uses a butter knife even when there are no visitors.". More importantly Terence's attention to detail and politeness made a for a very happy working relationship and excellence in liturgical worship. Terence never said no to my suggestions but sometimes suggested reasons why they might not work or suggested alternatives. This was enormously helpful when, for example, I suggested the annual concert performance of Faure's requiem be replaced by a liturgical performance for the All Souls' Requiem which proved extremely popular. Terence's playing Bach and Vierne remains a very happy memory. So, for the gentleman, the organist, as well as the choirmaster Terence, I have, like so many others, so much to be grateful for.



John Spurgeon

Terence's awful puns were matched only by his tenacity. I first came across him when the late John Huntley suggested to Terence that I may be able to dep for him one evensong (John and I once sang together with Westminster Abbey Special Choir). What was one appearance turned out to be a stay of over 20 years, largely because he "expected" me to turn up again...and again...and again! This was no bad tactic as it overcame perhaps unfounded reticence on the part of younger singers. Nevertheless, he was naughty with it and asked me regularly ("no" was not an option) to take him, with a selection of boys, to their respective homes - whether in East Barnet, Whetstone or Mill Hill - even though I still had a 25mile journey back home!

Almost a Mr Chips character in some ways, so many activities ended up lolling over furniture in Terence's house eating and drinking tea. My favourite was cheese on toast! After a few of these invites to tea were given me, I felt it proper that I should make a donation of Earl Grey teabags next time, as an appreciation. The reaction of Terence seemed to be a cross between "What is this?" and "How dare you!". Of course, this was simply his generous nature.

His dedication to the running of the choir went far beyond any contract, if indeed one existed in the first place. With countless folders to attend to, the music and annotated psalters was all done by hand.

Finally, Terence could seem rather laid back, such as when he looked up languidly from the piano during practices with a broad grin on his face; yet when rehearsing for real just before a major concert he would draw his lines strictly and woe betide any boy who stepped over them. This had immediate effect and the concert always went well.

Bob and Judy Burstow

Terence – memories from a non-musician ‘choir mum’

- The skill and patience to induct youngsters into the discipline and fun of singing together – however long it took.
- Being a reliable, constant presence in both rehearsal and performance in services. The faithfulness of a true volunteer.
- For the opportunities to perform in some wonderful cathedrals on the annual choir trips.

Terence – from a press-ganged former ‘choir dad’

- Showing the skills of a seasoned fisherman needed to successfully attract an inexperienced adult to sing tenor ‘just for a few weeks’ while the then sole tenor choirman was away on business. (In the event the ‘few’ weeks turned out to be around 240!)
- For the lightness of touch – finding humour in many potentially ‘boring but necessary’ aspects of choir work.



Colin Burstow

48 years of service, what an incredible achievement! Being in the choir with you as my choirmaster was such a formative part of my musical education. At a young age I was introduced to choral music and its beauty, I was given fantastic performance opportunities at large scale events at St Albans Abbey and at Cathedrals around the country. With your support I was able to gain both my Deans Chorister and Bishops Chorister awards; along with the many trips bowling and to theme parks, I will take the memories of my time in the choir with me as long as I live. I am still involved in music and music education professionally and it is in no small part thanks to you that I have been able to flourish in my career. Thank you so much for your dedication and giving music to the congregation of St John's and sharing your love and passion for choral music with the choir.

Enjoy the next stage of your life, I hope it is filled with happiness and health.

Michael Burstow

Dear Terence,

Thank you very much for all your musical expertise while I was in the choir and for the numerous times you accompanied me. I have very fond memories of my time as a chorister and singing on the back row. The musical training I received at St John The Baptist was a formative part of my music education and has served me brilliantly ever since. It has also instilled in me a love of choral music and an appreciation for ridiculous jokes! Thank you again!



James Coy & family

Tezza

Since 1997 you've been a household name in the Coy household- enriching our lives note by note.

I must thank you wholeheartedly for all the musical leadership you've provided to me: aside from the choir, accompanying at music tests for secondary school entrance, (one of which you happened to be long-time friends with the examiner- maybe that's why I was offered a scholarship - or maybe I wasn't - can't remember now!), choir trips, cornet exams, Earl grey and cake at your house after practising, musical and personal references. You've always been there to listen [to all my wrong notes !!] and help me get better at what I do- music and beyond.

With your partner in crime, Mr Alan Parish, I have loved all the choir trips. I even recall the roast dinners on Easter Sundays in Frinton-on-sea (Harwich for the continent, Frinton for the ...). Tez- you're one in a million.

James

It really all started when I was a chaperoning parent on the summer choir tour to Edinburgh in the late 90s. The train journey seemed long and I spent an apprehensive time with little knowledge of what to expect. The resulting impact was traumatic, emotional, and exhausting, but resulted in a very rewarding and fulfilling week. After learning the ropes and expectations of the choir, I began to get to know Terence along with his fellow musical gentlemen.

I soon realised how committed and dedicated Terence was to his passion for music and his natural ability to inspire and encourage youngsters in the choir. In unison I gradually got to know the genuineness of Terence. I was certainly relieved once I returned home! This cemented the start of a continuing friendship with Terence.

Amanda

Apart from the singing there would be occasional outings. I remember one where I helped take some of the boys to an airfield where they had a short flight maybe 20 minutes in a small twin-engine plane. On another occasion the choirboys went bowling and James returned home with a bowling pin that he had been given. They are quite heavy - I haven't had to use it on James (yet)!

We would all like to thank you Terence for your commitment to the choir and everyone who passes through. With James being in the choir for over 10 years, he developed a sense of loyalty, commitment, and a breadth of musical knowledge and experience from your encouragement and education. The support you provided to Emma in her musical journey must not be forgotten too - we thank you for all the extended guidance.

Mick

Love and best wishes,
James (Jazz), Michael & Amanda and growing family

Ian Simms, Alex Simms & Lisa Forsyth

Christmas cards

Shortly before Christmas in 2010, I joined the gentlemen of the choir at Terence's house for his low-key annual sherry and mince pie party. My son, Alex, and I had joined the choir earlier that year and we were now enjoying the challenges and rewards of choir life at St John the Baptist, Barnet.

Looking around as I walked through to the living room, I was struck by the quantity of Christmas cards that bedecked the shelves, pictures and covered every surface. Most were seasonal pictures featuring choirs robed in red and white singing happily in the freezing snow. Over the years I came to meet many of these well-wishers. Some were accomplished musicians whom Terence had encouraged and mentored along their journey to become music, choral or organ scholars, at Oxbridge and other prestigious music colleges. Others were from previous choir members who had enjoyed the fellowship of the choir as they made life-long friendships. Cards were also from parents who had supported the many social events and Cathedral residencies.

For me, the choir that evolved under Terence's stewardship was more than a truly outstanding place of musical excellence, it was a men and boys ministry, a place of fellowship that prepared many for their lives ahead. Thank you.

Andrew Pearce

I was a member of Barnet Church Choir (c.1984-1989) along with my younger brother Matthew Pearce. It became a normal routine to rehearse on Tuesdays and Fridays, with Terence directing us from the piano as we learned new and sometimes difficult music.

Wedding services were fun on Saturdays, paid promptly in brown envelopes according to seniority, while Sunday services showed off the high standard we'd achieved under his leadership that week.

Looking back, it was a big commitment, but our families supported us throughout. To sing in his choir, was an enriching experience for youngsters as we learned musicianship, discipline, harmony and a varied repertoire with such attention to detail. He trained us so well, that we performed to audiences at Ely, Rochester and Southwell Cathedrals during the summer! These were great times.

I have to especially thank Terence for his dedication and encouragement in coaching me for the solo that commences Once in Royal David's City and later for the daunting Dean and Bishops Chorister awards which I was able to attain under his generous mentorship.

Dear Terence - thank you for all the music and for being such a great musical influence on my life - we all have wonderful memories of those days!

Very best wishes,

Andrew Pearce

(Leiden, Netherlands)

Robert Stebbings

I recall being part of Barnet Parish Church choir with great fondness. It was a big part of my childhood in the 1980s, singing at two services every Sunday with practice every Tuesday and Friday without fail for many years. Regular weddings on Saturdays were eagerly anticipated with the pocket money that accompanied them!

Being part of the boys' choir, proudly progressing to Head Chorister, included cathedral tours every summer which were definitely a highlight. However, my proudest moment was singing at a concert at the Royal Albert Hall and in fact I still have the programme from that event to this day.

There was great camaraderie with everyone connected to the choir, led by Terence and organist Alan Parish.

I wish Terence a happy and well-deserved retirement after many, many years of exemplary service.



Adrian Coveney

- Terence is probably the most musically expressive conductor I've had in any of the various ensembles I've been in (including the ones I played violin in). He managed to get a huge dynamic range out of us.
- I remember frequently begging Terence for us to do Jackson in G for evensong. (It was my favourite, but we only did it a few times during my stint.)
- The cosiness of working around the piano during the soprano sessions at choir practice.
- One of the scariest things I've ever done was the solo for Once in Royal David's City. Terence gave me the starting notes on his little pitch pipes and then off I went. The sense of relief when the rest of the choir came in! Very glad he gave me that opportunity though.
- I'd often rush back to the organ loft after processing out, to page turn for Terence's voluntaries. I may even have ducked out before the procession a few times.
- Terence was great when it came time to arrange the music for my dad's funeral. I couldn't remember any names, but I vividly remember being on the phone to Terence and humming a little bit of each and Terence knowing exactly what pieces I meant!



Michael & Ajayi Family

Hello Terence,

It has truly been a pleasure to know you for all of these years. If memory serves me correctly, my family started attending St John the Baptist CofE in 2007. The choir boys at that time were playing football just in front of the church and I asked to play with them and whispers rumoured that there was a kid who was really good at football. By the next Sunday, Terence came outside and either my mum asked Rev. Hall Spears for me to join the choir or Terence called me while I was playing football and asked "how would you like to join the choir?" Either way I remember Terence asking me to sing 3 notes at different pitches. I am positive I didn't sing those three notes well but Terence said "you're in!" This brought the biggest smile on my face, but at the time I didn't really know what that meant but looking back now I am so happy with how that played out because I have so many memories with you Terence.

Truly it has been an amazing journey with God and music at the centre of our union. I want to specifically say thank you for your unwavering dedication in advising me through all phases of my life - my adolescent years, teenage years and young adult years. You've been instrumental in my decision-making in ways you would not understand and for that I am truly grateful. Additionally, thank you for your tireless dedication to the choir for those decades where you poured your time, energy, and love into creating something truly extraordinary. It was no small task but you handled it gracefully and always orchestrated beautiful music. An early memory was the Fauré Requiem we performed, must've been around 2010-2012 which really made me want to devote myself further into choral music for St John the Baptist. Your kindness and wisdom have extended far beyond the choir. Thank you for the support and encouragement you have given my family, especially my mum during her illnesses throughout the years. Your words always seemed divinely timed, bringing comfort and hope exactly when they were most needed. If I were to list all the wonderful things you have done and continue to do, I would fill pages upon pages with gratitude and thank yous.

Some memorable moments stand out vividly, like during one of our choir trips when we were asked to share what we liked the most. When it came to my turn, I said sternly, "Hi, I'm Michael, and I love girls!" The room went into a laughing frenzy with Rob Allen, Alistair Badger and Phillip Jordan leading the laughter, and it's a memory I'll always treasure. Moments like these highlight

the joy and brotherhood you cultivated within the choir, creating a space where we could all be ourselves and share in laughter and friendship.

I'll never forget the moment I was made Deputy Head Chorister—a decision that surprised and honoured me, especially with John Nelson, Sam Brooke, and Daniel Jack in the running as well. There was something about this decision which ignited a leadership mindset in me. If I remember correctly, I think I was in third place for attending the most consecutive Sundays and rehearsals, with Tom Gagen in first place. I can't recall who was second, but it's a detail that brings a smile to my face even now.

One particular incident comes to mind from those days: as John Nelson and I were leaving church one Tuesday evening, someone suddenly ran up to us and snatched John's hat right off his head before running off! We rushed back into church to report the incident to you. It's a funny memory in hindsight, but it also reminds me of how you were always the person we turned to, no matter how big or small the issue.

Lastly, I would just like to say, though you are not currently active in St John the Baptist as choirmaster, your work lives on and your legacy which you have cemented throughout your 48 years tenure continues. You have done a phenomenal job with keeping all the boys in line and ready for adulthood. Truly thank you for all of your hard work and God bless you!



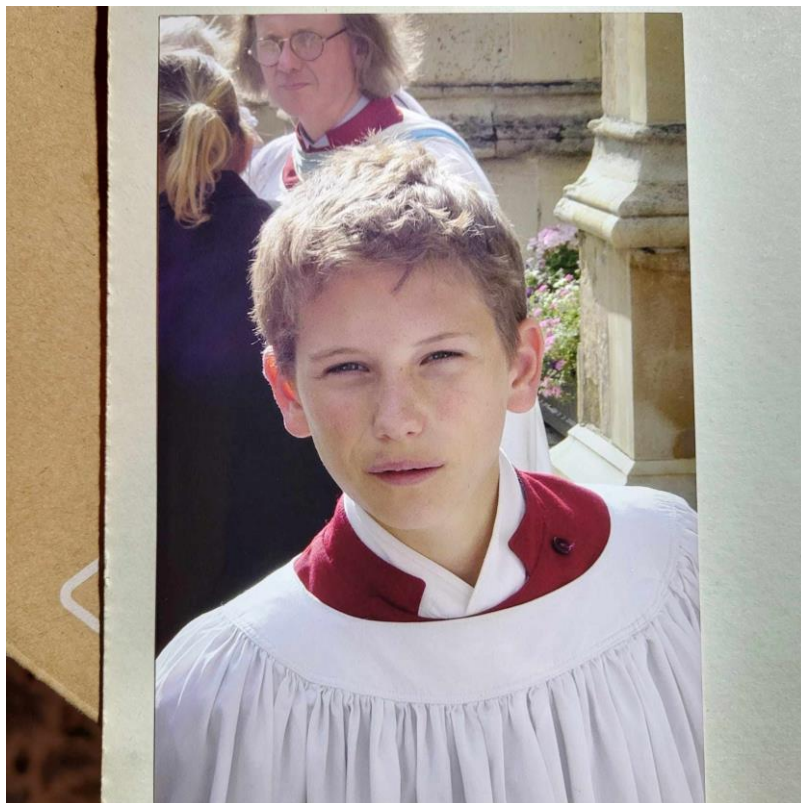
Andrew Wallace

I look back on my time as a choirboy with nothing but fondness: St John's was undoubtedly a thoroughly enjoyable and wholesome part of my childhood. I got married last year and serenaded my wife with a song. The gift of singing is something I would have never have learnt without you and an asset I will enjoy for the rest of my life. Moreover, the principals of dedication and perseverance we honed as choirboys have undoubtedly played an important part in who I am today.

As I've gotten older, I've learnt that sharing one's talents and passion is arguably the most touching gift one can bestow on another. Your propensity for dedicating your time to this cause is rare, truly admirable and something I will remain eternally grateful for.

Although I'm based in East Africa and cannot be present at your farewell event, my thoughts are with you on this special occasion.

Again, my sincerest thanks for everything you did for me.





Alex Hall

Gustav Mahler said that *“If a composer could say what he had to say in words, he would not bother trying to say it in music.”* I wish I were capable of writing something musical and worthy that adequately pays tribute to Terence Atkins, for his care, support, teaching, inspiration, and musical mentorship to me over so many years... However, words will have to do.

I joined the choir at St John the Baptist’s Church as a shy nine-year-old chorister who was somewhat overwhelmed by the rehearsals for Brahms’ German Requiem which were then in full swing. Over the course of nearly 10 years, I simply absorbed the music at the church, and it became part of who I am – the rehearsals, the services, the concerts, the cathedral trips, old music, new music, and more. But Terence’s impact was not just about singing in the choir: he introduced me to recordings, took me to concerts and recitals, encouraged me to compose, taught me to play the organ musically, and inspired me to take the first steps on a road to being a conductor, accompanist, and composer myself.

There are far too many memories for me to list fully here, but milestones for me were accompanying the choir on a cathedral organ for the first time at Chester; giving my first organ recital at Barnet; accompanying a full cathedral evensong for the first time in Durham; Vierne’s Messe Solennelle; Rossini’s Petite Messe Solennelle; and performances of my own works and arrangements, including a two-piano version of Finzi’s Eclogue.

Terence gave me the keys to this musical world, and I’ve never looked back, but I would not be who I am and – more importantly – the musician that I am, were it not for his guidance and dedication. Thank you, Terence, from the bottom of my heart. As with all the best teachers, your influence has been (and continues to be) truly transformational.

Ashley Wagner

Dear Terence

It is hard to know where to start!

I was sitting next to Sebastian Skelly in an orchestra rehearsal and he said that an organist was accompanying him for his grade 8 trumpet. Anyway, I sit here 16 years later as a professional musician and cathedral organist (Beecham would say 'how did they fit them both in the same grave?'). I can say with almost complete certainty that this wouldn't be the case if I hadn't met you.

I started having lessons, joined the choir and I suppose things slowly (and sometimes quickly) snowballed from there. It's quite hard to segment things as it has all been part and parcel of the same overall thing. Teaching yes but perhaps mentoring is a better word. I enjoyed our organ lessons (more so when I actually started doing some practice) but I got just as much out of turning pages, going to several concerts (organ and otherwise), singing and then later playing and conducting the choral repertoire, the residential cathedral trips and just sitting round at yours on a Friday with a load of mates talking about all sorts, eating crumpets and Tunnocks caramel wafers and sometimes listening to music. Laughing a lot too.

All of this was a great introduction to the repertoire. I still remember a particularly fine rendition you gave of the Bach St Anne Fugue, the Vierne 3 Final and of course the Bossi Etude Symphonique. Watching someone play for a service for the first time (in this case then Alan at his 40th anniversary), watching Alex Hall play the Franck 3rd chorale and being terrified page-turning for Tim Harper are also all things that I will remember. We all loved coming across things like the Vierne and Widor masses for the first time. It was the Vierne-fest on that Sunday morning at Norwich Cathedral (with Nick Miller playing the first movement of Vierne 3 after the service) which lit something within me and my life has sort of gone from there really. I'm still going and I'm still curious about music. I'm still looking forward to learning lots of new things, organ, choral and other stuff too. They say that music is a lifetime's pursuit. I hope that is the case.

Since that Sunday at Norwich Cathedral you have been such a brilliant person in my life. You organised and then drove me to my first recital, I believe this was the occasion where your number plates were stolen. You've page-turned

for me on multiple occasions. You've been there when it has gone relatively well and when it hasn't and always been on the end of the phone for all matters musical and life generally. I remember you saying that one thing that you liked about me as a pupil was that I didn't always do what I was told. I suppose not much has changed.

When I got my current job at Birmingham Cathedral I 'temporarily' (a few weeks turning into the best part of a year and a half) went to live with Richard and Ivor, another thing that would not have been possible without you. This opened up a new chapter in my life, a new sphere of friendship, fellowship and support, which continues to this day!

You've had a profound effect on my life for which I'm so grateful. I'm thankful for your continuing support and friendship. I sort of feel a bit like however much I write I would be short-changing you. Anyway, this will have to do as a short tribute.

You are retiring from this role, in which you have done so much for so many people, which has been a significant part of your life and work. You are not retiring from music. I wish you all the very best in this new chapter and I hope that you're able to fill it with music (practical, listening, reading, etc.) and all the other stuff that you enjoy!

Lots of love and best wishes

Ashley







Fergus Jack

Terence was a leading figure in most of my younger life. Ever since I was reluctantly dragged along to St John's by my parents (after a dubious recommendation from the Jordans) I was drawn to the warmth of the choir. Sure, Peter Yarde Martin and Andrew Wallace used to use me as cannon fodder during the notorious 'room wars' of the various choir trips, but it was all forgotten at any choir practice when I found a joy for singing and for the community that Terence had worked so hard to foster. At practices and services Terence would challenge us, make us work but also make us laugh and his commitment was unwavering. The amount of service he has given to the choir at St John's and the community of Barnet is truly mind-blowing and I'm sure the amount of people who want to offer thanks on the 5th January will be a testament to this. Thanks for all your hard work making me an average singer and an even average-er bloke, Tez.



Daniel Jack

It's sad to see Terence taking a step back from the choir after so many years of conducting, organising, and (sometimes) putting up with the hassle of the choir! Over the years, Terence has dedicated so much of his time to the choir and St. John's, not only to the sound of the choir itself but also to the people within. Terence has had such a positive impact on so many lives, inspiring many musicians to pursue careers in choral music. From when I first stepped into the church as a quiet young boy aged seven, Terence has always been a part of my life into adulthood. I owe a great deal of my love for music as a whole to Terence, and I will miss his sense of humour that he brought to our rehearsals. Thank you for everything over the years Tezza, sad to see you go!

With love, from Dan

Thomas Jordan

Congratulations Terence on a career that has brought such a wealth of ministry, education and joy to thousands.

I can't easily describe the depth of my thanks for all the hours, guidance and education that you gave me - beyond just my Choirmaster - in helping me to achieve, have confidence and discover my own love and connection with choral music.

All the best into your retirement.

Douglas Badger

Terence,

You've given so many of us the gift of music, and the joy of being part of a great choir. I remember my experiences and journey from junior chorister to joining the men's voices with great fondness. Throughout the year I still listen to the music we sang, from Faure's Requiem to Stainer's Crucifixion. Thank you for the dedication, the teaching, and all the jokes.

All the best Tezza,
Douglas

Alistair Badger

Dear Terence,

Thank you for being the beating heart of such a precious part of the musical world, a part that I had the greatest fortune of being a member of. It is with great pride that I devoted over a decade of my life to the choir, it was a rock for me through both good and through bad. I couldn't be more grateful for the impact the choir has had on my life.

Thank you for your time, generosity and your humour, both as a teacher and as a friend.

To new adventures,
Alistair

Lesley and Malcolm Badger

Over the years we've known you Terence, you have become much more to us than just the talented choirmaster we first met. As a family we have grown to regard you as a very dear friend, who will always be more than welcome to pop in for a cuppa and a slice of cake.

Thank you so much Terence for your kindness, care, understanding and support you have shown to every single youngster who has been lucky enough to sing in the choir at St John the Baptist.

We all wish you health and happiness for the future. Just let us know when you would like to next pop round and we will put the kettle on.

Alex Carruthers-Hierro

Terence,

It's hard to put into words the gratitude and respect I have for what you have done for me personally, and for so many others in the Barnet community. You really have touched the lives of so many boys and made us into the men we are today.

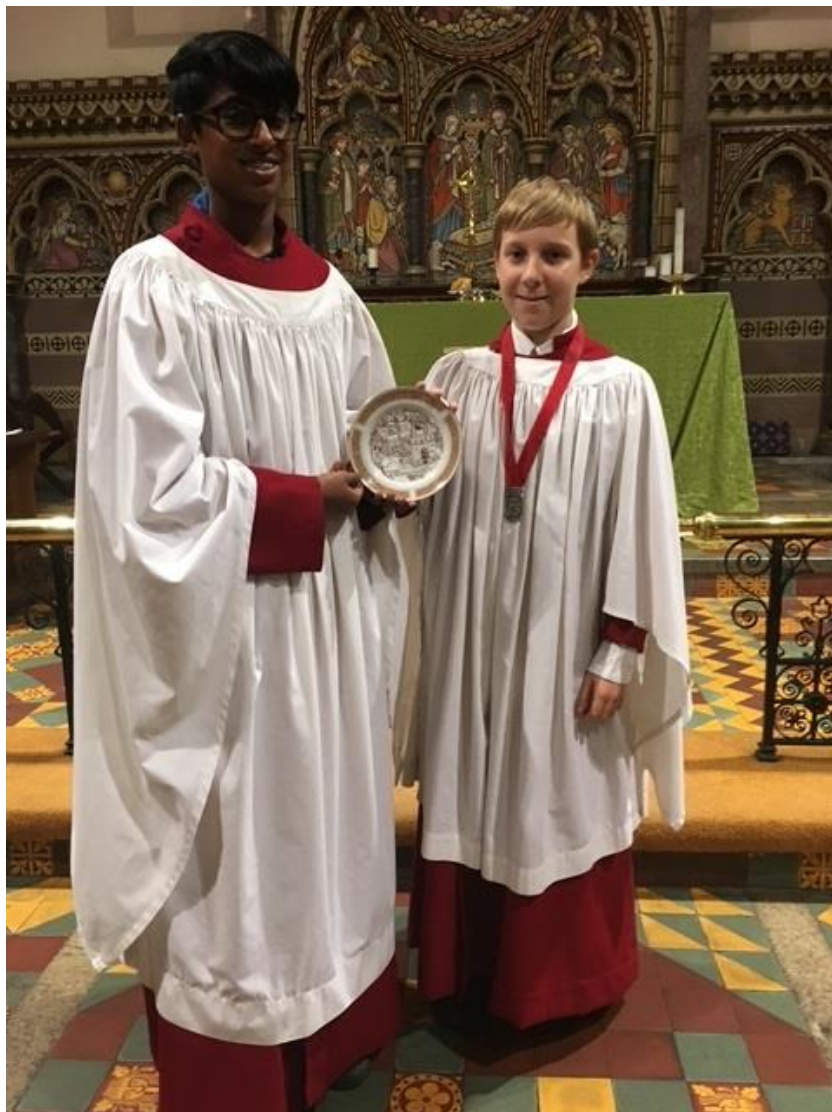
To this day I have fond memories of all the choir trips we went on, and the sense of community that you brought to the choir. I will never forget some of the hilarious comments at practices... Thank you for helping me discover my love for choral music and how to appreciate its beauty, I am forever grateful.

What speaks loudest to me, nonetheless, is that whenever I have been asked why I remained in the choir all these years - even through the socially active teenage years, is because I was loyal to you and the choir and I can only attribute that to your influence.

David Hay

Thank you for everything you have done for me and the choir as a whole. My musical journey is really only just starting as I prepare for university, but you were the one that truly propelled it. There have been so many fantastic memories that I won't go into them all, although one that instantly springs to mind is being made Head Chorister by you around five years ago. To this day, that is one of (if not) my proudest achievements and I can't thank you enough for the trust and faith you put in me to lead this fabulous choir. Long may our choir continue to excel in light of your exemplary leadership, inspiration and musicianship.

Wishing you all the best for the future.



Caroline Hay

Terence, thank you for all the support and encouragement that you have given David over the years. He has always been interested in music and you have encouraged and helped him develop his skills and interests. As a parent I have been amazed at what he has been able to achieve and is still achieving. His time in the choir has given him a fantastic musical foundation which will be a great asset when he goes to university and in his blossoming interest in composition. I remember his Pie Jesu which Fr Sam described as “spellbinding” and said it was the best he had ever heard it sung – all down to your excellent training. Thank you for the opportunities you have provided for David and the support you have given to all the boys. Many times after Tuesday choir practice you have stayed on to help a boy prepare for exams and auditions and a significant number have gone on to gain music scholarships with your assistance. It has been very enjoyable working with you on events – the madness of the annual pancake party and the beauty of the Request a Carol coffee mornings. I have especially enjoyed listening to the annual performances of Stainer’s Crucifixion and the Faure Requiem and also the Nine Lessons and Carols. I remember how you kept the choir going during the Covid-19 lockdowns and somehow managed to produce the excellent Nine Lessons and Carols in 2020 with the choir all spaced exactly 2 metres apart and just parents and participants able to watch live. Thank you for everything you have done for the choir and best wishes for the future.



Zachary Gunzi

Terence is one of the most kind, generous and encouraging mentors I've ever had. In my time as a chorister at St. John the Baptist he consistently supported me and challenged me in ways that not only helped develop my appreciation for choral music and my skills as a singer, but also taught me how to be part of a team and helping lead the boys' choir occasionally as deputy head chorister.

I will be forever grateful to him for also helping me with other projects I was a part of that involved me singing, such as practising with me for my audition for the London English Song Festival in 2019 - which, thanks to him, gave me the opportunity to perform in the Royal Festival Hall which is an experience I will cherish for the rest of my life. He even came to see me which was lovely.

Most of all though, Terence also had a remarkable ability to make each and every person he talked to feel special and valued. He would always ask me about how I was doing and how things were going beyond the choir and paying such close attention which made me feel that he was always on my side and really cared about me, also taking time to be warm and welcoming to my family who would sometimes come to a service or rehearsal. Thank you so much, Terence, for your dedication and service to the choir and the parish.

Wishing you all the best and lots of love from my family and me, and hoping we can keep in touch in the future



Sanu de Lima

I came to sing at St. John the Baptist in the main part to have the chance of singing in a choir with my talented nephew, Zachary, and we were both given such a warm and enthusiastic welcome by Terence. The choir was a lot larger at that time with two full ranks of boy trebles and even fuller back rows. So, the numbers made it feel like joining a choir family of new friends, but they also demonstrated to me that Terence had worked hard and well to build a really successful choir over many years and indeed generations, and that he had made it a place where people wanted to be. Indeed, following Zachary's moving to Spain, I wanted to continue contributing to the musical life of SJB and this legacy Terence built.



Of many great and fond memories I have of Terence's time directing the choir, I especially recall: our Nine Lessons and Carols services - always a feat of careful programming and rehearsal stamina, and then the satisfaction of having pulled it off with all the various highlights of solos or new repertoire; the superb choir tours I joined to Ely and Chichester Cathedrals - and our choir and organists matching the privilege of singing in those august choir stalls with the high quality of our music-making; and then simply our Friday rehearsals which at the end of a hard working week would unfailingly pick me up because of Terence's enthusiasm, sensational playing and pun-laden good humour.

Perhaps my best reflection though on Terence's time - also thinking about my nephew in this context, is how it's always been inspiring for me to be part of a singing and music environment where under Terence's guidance and advice people's talents and goals have been so wonderfully encouraged and supported. That has been evident in the admirable progress of our brilliant choral and organ scholar choir alumni, but will also continue to show itself in the indelible effects of a rounded musical education which Terence has helped provide to generations of young people in Chipping Barnet. The priceless gift of Terence's long service - the sharing and teaching of musical appreciation, discipline and worship to the highest of standards and to generations of the young people who have come through SJB - is something that should continue to give us faith and hope in the future. Thank you, Terence!

With enduring gratitude and friendship,

Sanu

Sam Marde

It is easy, especially in an age dominated by mass-media, to judge a man's efforts according to the degree of their recognition—or, worse still, 'marketability'. For every practitioner in his field lucky enough to have attained some measure of fame, another will continue to work, steadily, in relative anonymity. It is through these unsung heroes, often no less skilled than their more glamorous counterparts, that so much of what directly touches us is maintained: the local doctor, lawyer, chef, and plumber each have the ability to improve our lives in ways that internet and television personalities—however abstractly inspiring—cannot.

I first met Terence Atkins roughly a decade ago in the company of a mutual friend, Nicholas Markwell. In common with most professionals of a certain calibre, his expression was frank and direct, but mixed with a kindness and gentility which one does not always associate with musicians—let alone conductors or choirmasters! One had the impression of speaking to a benevolent authority with a deep love of music, who perhaps left rather more unsaid than said, and might appear and disappear upon his velocipede with all the sudden mystery of a djinn from his lamp.

I was very soon invited—I suppose on the strength of Mr. Markwell's recommendation—to augment the choir at St. John's, Chipping Barnet, as an occasional auxiliary. Though I was (at least) then a rather potent and unsubtle alto, Mr. Atkins nevertheless saw a diamond in the rough, and so provided me with much of my formative experience as a choirman. Of course, I was hardly alone in this, and indeed only the latest in a long line of gentlemen and boys who had served during his tenure.

Typically for choirs, I seem to remember that each of my comrades was something of a character, in his own way (I being no exception); but our official proceedings were always suffused with a certain steady dignity which was quite remarkable insofar as it appeared to exist organically and without any person's direct intervention. I reflect now that I will probably never have another opportunity of singing in a traditional English parish choir which operated so matter-of-factly, and with such little to prove. Music was that choir's business, and providing it for the steady run of Services in the worship of Almighty God which has existed in this land for almost five centuries; yet its ethos was one which might perhaps have been discerned in the choral foundations of even earlier ages. It was, in a word, timeless.

The cathedral visits in which I took part were always a highlight of my year, and as intense an experience singing-wise as I have had to this day. They were excellent training, and the camaraderie over each week was very fine. A party would generally form by the second day for conducting post-dinner forays into the nearest inhabited settlement, of which I was always an enthusiastic member. Though Mr. Atkins was often too busy organizing the remainder of the week to join us until the Friday or Saturday, these trips mirrored the conviviality of the numerous evenings on which I and others were invited to tea 'chez Terence' following some event on home turf.

Nevertheless, the real reward of these visits was being part of those transcendental moments when the choir of suburban St. John's made the cathedral stalls ring no less beautifully than the more exalted assembly which usually occupied them. These were the local doctor's moments consulting on national television, the lawyer's before the Law Lords, the chef's catering for diplomats, the plumber's adjusting the most exalted pipes; and Mr. Atkins not only rose to each occasion, but carried us with him. It is not something I believe any of us will ever forget.

Terence Atkins's retirement as Organist and Choirmaster of St. John's will inevitably be a great loss for music making at Barnet Church, and I for one will be sorry no more to sing under his direction in that old familiar chancel: it was time which could invariably not better have been spent. While Mr. Atkins already leaves a quiet yet inexorable legacy of music making at and around St. John's and elsewhere, I hope I join with choristers and choirmen past and present in saying, "very best wishes, and on to the next thing!"

Elliot Clark

It took me a while to get to know Terence on account of my first e-mail, in which I requested organ lessons, finding its way into his junk box (or so he tells me!) Not to be deterred so easily, I managed to arrange a meeting through Mrs Lovatt. He agreed to take me on as a student and 'suggested' I come along to choir rehearsals, which I did, somewhat sceptically at first. But he and the rest of the choir community were so welcoming that I began to thoroughly enjoy the sessions. They were a great help to my musical development, and Terence was always willing to assist in any way that he could with my A-Level studies.

Some particularly notable examples of Terence's generosity include inviting me on various trips. We went to Liverpool Cathedral with Alan Parish and Ben Markovic to hear David Briggs. At the Royal Albert Hall we've heard Mendelssohn's Elijah and the Busoni Piano Concerto, and last summer he and I attended the Edington Music Festival.

Terence, for two years, you endured my fumblings at the keyboard with the grace of a saint. Your guidance extended beyond the manuals and pedals, turning what could have been mere lessons into something much more. And your unwavering willingness to rehearse violin pieces with me - a lesser soul might have balked - stands as a testament to your kindness and tolerance for more than occasional dissonance.

Over the past fifty years, your tenure at the organ bench has not only provided accompaniment to countless hymns but has, in fact, served as the steady heartbeat of the church itself. You've not just played music; you've animated it, given it life, and, with great patience, shared its secrets with those of us fortunate enough to have been your students.

Beyond the music, there has been friendship. Whether in conversation or in quiet reflection, your company has always been a source of warmth and wisdom, laced with just the right amount of irreverence to keep things interesting. As you step away from the organ loft (though I suspect never too far), know that your impact resonates far beyond the walls of the church. It lingers in the hearts and ears of those you've taught, guided, and entertained.

With admiration, gratitude, and the hope of many more conversations and glasses of Baileys,
Elliot

The Pankhurst family

Dear Terence,

Thank you for all your guidance in music. I really enjoyed singing Faure's Requiem and Stainer's Crucifixion every year. You have helped me develop my love for music and you gave me the best foundation to build on.

All the very best,

Rowan

Abi and I would like to say that thanks to you, Terence, we have been so lucky to have had the privilege of listening to many rehearsals and performances over the years. We have accompanied the choir on 3 choir trips at Bury St Edmunds twice and Chichester and have fond memories of great days out at Great Yarmouth (with fish and chip supper), the Isle of Wight and Felixstowe. Much fun was had all round.

Sandra and Abi

David Lindsay

Thank you so much, Terence, for giving me the opportunity to sing in the choir at St John's between 2004 and 2007, while Anne was ministering there as curate. To be singing in a really good all-male choir and enjoying such a remarkably wide repertoire of excellent church music, was something I had not enjoyed since my boyhood experience as a treble, then alto, in my home church in the north-east. I treasure the memory and always shall. Thank you once again, and I wish you a very happy - and appropriately musical! - retirement.

Anne Marsden Thomas

Terence Atkins has always been one of the nicest and most generous people in the organ world and deserves many congratulations for his 48 years of hard work at Barnet.

Matthew Mayes

Dear Terence,

I was nine years old when I first heard St John's choir sing. My dad took me along to a Sunday evensong in 2011 and convinced me to join the choir soon afterwards. I started coming to Tuesday rehearsals, then Fridays, and before long I had sung Zadok the Priest at my first evensong - it was a good anthem to start with! I did not know then quite what I had started – or that it would occupy me for the next decade of my life.

You and Alan both made me feel so welcome in the choir. I quickly fell into the rhythm of two practices and an evensong every week (I went to St Gregory's every Sunday morning so missed the morning Eucharist). I learnt through imitating the sound of other boys and following their fingers along the music to stay in the right place. I soon found out you had a sense of humour – which I learnt to both tolerate and love.

I have more memories than I can mention, and it has been difficult to choose what to include here. I remember the fun of choir socials: of choir bowling; of pancake parties (I could never keep up – I don't think I ever ate more than five); and of the Christmas fundraiser, Request-a-Carol (laughing afterwards when Sam's parents kept asking for 'The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy'). I remember the many concerts, especially Stainer's Crucifixion.

My first choir tour was to Norwich. We spent the day off walking across the mud flats and spotting seals. I found it emotional to be away from family to begin with: the year after, I remember you passing me tissues during an evensong in Rochester when I started crying, after my family turned up as a surprise. Lots of other moments stick out: searching for gemstones on the beach; taking the hovercraft to the Isle of Wight; and giving out joke awards at the talent show. The singing was an incredible experience, especially singing the Vienne Mass at a Sunday morning Eucharist after a long week's work. When I look back now, the tours mix into a happy blur.

I want to thank you for supporting my interest in composition. I remember when you matched a set of words to a hymn that I composed, and the time I altered 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring' beyond recognition in an arrangement which I sent you. I remember sending you a psalm chant replete with parallel 5ths, and asking for feedback on a Romantic-style violin piece which also broke

lots of other harmony rules (who cares about rules anyway?). But – if I remember right – I did get a higher score than you in ABRSM Grade 5 Music Theory. Ha!

I remember sitting in the choir vestry after a service, telling you I couldn't sing treble much longer and would have to switch to bass (skipping alto and tenor on the way down). I would guess that it felt like more of an end for you at that point than it did for me. For me, that moment came later – when Eliot, Rowan, Zak, David, Alan and I shared a goodbye meal with you in Toby Pub & Carvery around Christmastime in my second year at university. Even so, I feel I am still leaving gradually. I had a shock this Christmas upon realising that I hadn't sung at Nine Lessons and Carols.

My time in the choir helped build up my confidence both as a musician and in general. I learned to sightread, and had I not joined, I would not have gone on to sing in a chapel choir in Cambridge for three years. I am so thankful to you for this. More than this, I treasure the community I found at St John's, which you built and sustained for so long. My time in the choir will always have a special place in my heart.



David Martin-Smith

Well Tee what a time you've had! 48 years! Now that is dedication in the extreme. So many have gone on to do great things following your instruction, guidance and patience. I am so pleased and truly honoured that I was lucky enough to have sung for you. You are an inspiration, a great choir trainer but also such great fun. BPCC was a very important part of my life and an inspiration for many years after my involvement as a chorister and in the back rows.

I often say that the art of messing about is knowing when to stop. I'm not sure I ever did as I said, but you were gracious enough to humour me. I am so sorry I can't be with you for your farewell. I would like to say a heartfelt thank you for giving me so many happy memories during my early days as a youthful tenor and also more latterly as a fading one.

Memories I will treasure! I'll try to pop in to see you Tee for Tea and relive some very happy times! With much love. Here's to a long and healthy retirement!

DMS

Penelope Martin-Smith

Dear Terence,

For many years you have appreciated and valued the history of our family at Barnet Parish Church, especially the long service of our grandfather, Arthur. And here you are having beaten his record as organist! Although he did start there as a chorister at the age of about 7, which means that you and he covered over a century of service between you.

David and I have often remarked on the enormous amount of energy and dedication you have put into keeping the high standard of the church choir. It has been a great pleasure for us to join you on so many occasions to share in making music during the last couple of decades and I know David was especially happy to keep contact whenever he could, having formerly been a treble and tenor in the choir. And during your first years there you had a lively back row of so many ex-trebles, many of whom have remained friends: David, Neil, Alastair, Hugo, the Hollands, Mick and of course some celebrities: Roddy

and Clive.

I am unlikely to make it on the 5th January to your farewell event at church, but I hope to see you soon for a good natter, and if you have any time to help me with researching the early 20th century at Barnet I would be hugely grateful.

Sending much love,

Peps x



Anita, Marc, Sebastian and Christian Hammond

Dear Terence,

Our many and treasured memories of St John the Baptist choir will always remain with us. We so enjoyed the evensongs, concerts and choir trips. The boys had such an excellent choral music foundation with you. We are so blessed with your kindness, patience and encouragement.

Our love and thanks to you.

Peter Yarde Martin

I am profoundly grateful for my time singing with the choir at St. John the Baptist's. It exposed me to a depth and ambition of music-making that was beyond anything I had yet experienced, lit a fuse that rocketed my own playing and composition to new levels of enthusiasm, and provided a sense of spiritual inspiration in my walk of faith too.

It is hard to imagine any of that without Terence's encouragement and steady direction. He was able to draw everyone together regardless of age, ability or experience into a collective act of music-making – always a challenge! As a teacher, he gave me space to find my own musical identity and explore repertoire while patiently nudging me towards discipline in practising. He was incredibly generous with his time in nurturing my musical education, taking me to concerts and second-hand music shops, while also introducing me to Earl Grey tea and Radio 4. Both 'stuck', although I admit that I have yet to become an avid listener to the Archers.

Terence, thank you for the generosity with which you have shared your gifts. I am very grateful to have benefitted from them, and to have made a lifelong friend in the process. Bless you and all you have done – and for nurturing a venerable and bountiful crop of singers, musicians, organists and scholars over the course of half a century!



Ben Markovic

I distinctly remember playing my first note on the organ at BPC with Terence. It was the bottom C ped bombe, and I was immediately transfixed. Terence was such a support directly over the 18 months that followed, and even after moving away to Worcester and Queens'. I have no doubt that I wouldn't be where I am now without his unending support and kindness.



Roderick Williams

The influence Terence had on my early development as a musician was pivotal. Looking back, I now understand that he was my first real contact with a practising professional musician and the standards that he expected from and instilled in me were significant contributors to my first steps in a musical career. He taught me the organ to grade 5 (and although I was never going to be an organist, the general musicianship skills involved in playing that instrument were broadening to say the least!) and he coached me in my Oxford choral scholarship audition. He involved me as a soloist (such as in my first experience of the Bach St John Passion alongside far more mature professional singers) and he supported me in my first ever leading role on stage, that of the Defendant in Gilbert and Sullivan's Trial by Jury.

My fondest memory of Terence was a particular gathering at his house after a choir practice when several choir members had collected for our habitual rehearsal debrief. While we chatted away about everything and nothing, Terence surreptitiously put on a recording: the Adagietto from Mahler's 5th Symphony. Gradually the conversation dried up as we all began tuning in to this extraordinary piece of music. When it was over, we asked Terence all about it and he explained its context. Then we asked him to play it over again. It bewitched us totally. I can't have been alone in making a seismic musical discovery that day.

I owe Terence a great deal and it gives me great pleasure to have the opportunity to acknowledge this and to thank him.

Roddy Williams

Jean Beattie

I want to include the Cocks boys who were all in the choir at St Peter's, Maney, Sutton Coldfield, the same time as our boys.

Memories are strikingly similar of a choirmaster who was a disciplinarian but fair and patient. An excellent teacher who instilled self-discipline and a love of music that has lasted a lifetime (these boys are now in their 60's).

On a different level Terence, we the parents along with our families will never forget your magnificent portrayal and rendition of Rule Britannia done in superb style and splendid falsetto voice!

The Cocks and Beattie families wish you a long and very happy retirement.



Jonathan Gregory

Humour never far away

Instinctive communication with his boys

Love of good hymns, their construction and melody and harmony and appropriateness of season.

Valuing of good anthems and settings and a tradition flowing through his time as organ scholar at St George's Windsor.

Devotion to his job as organist and choirmaster

Meticulous record of organ voluntaries playedover 60 years

Interested in the well-being and the progress and development and career paths of his boys, prioritising family relationships.

Open to new and contemporary compositions ; encouragement of choristers' compositions.

For Church leaders and priests : always reliable

Enjoys accompanying exam candidates on piano

Jackie Peacock

It has been my joy and privilege to cater on a few choir trips over the years. I fondly remember Chichester and the luxury of the swimming pool in the garden. We played water volleyball which was so much fun, but those knitted orange swimming trunks will go with me to my grave.

Tony Long

Terence. We've known each other for a good number of years. During this time I've marvelled at your great wit and sense of humour. I've particularly enjoyed your visits to the parish office and a chance to catch-up with the local gossip! I wish you well in your retirement, although I suspect you will not retire completely from your active love of music and playing the church organ. Please do drop into the office whenever you're passing. We would love to see you and keep in touch.

With my warmest regards

Tony Long.

Averill Lovatt

Almost ten years ago a pilgrimage to the Holy Land was organised for members of the congregation of St. John the Baptist Church in Barnet and other local churches. I think it is fair to say that most of the 15 of us knew some of our fellow travellers quite well, but did not know everyone, other than perhaps by sight or by name, or by the role they played in the life of our church. That certainly was me! I knew Terence was in charge of the choir and played the organ for services and I occasionally spoke to him to say how much I had enjoyed a particular hymn or piece of music he had played earlier.

Over the course of the ten days at mealtimes, I found myself often sitting near Terence, and it was during this time that I experienced something of Terence's sense of humour and his corny jokes! On our travels, Carol Pellowe and I shared a room and, for some reason, Terence called us "the prickly pair". I hope it wasn't connected with our temperaments, rather more to do with the cactus plants we had seen in the countryside-the prickly pear. All these years later we still chuckle as we remember the thought!

Enjoy your retirement, Terence, and please don't ever lose the twinkle in your eye and your infectious chuckle!

With fond memories,
Averill and Carol
The Prickly Pair

Roger Carter

I've not actually worked musically with Terence that much over the years, but we had, on a couple of occasions, played an organ duet whilst on EDOA visits to various churches.

When I was much younger, I used to play organ duets quite often with a couple of other colleagues and always found it an enjoyable and interesting experience. I was therefore delighted when Terence accepted my suggestion that we should join forces to play a programme of duets for the EDOA's AGM recital last February. I think I can safely say that we both had plenty of light-hearted moments in our rehearsals for this!

Playing duets on the organ is not without its challenges. The keyboard compass is much smaller than a piano's, so there is rather less available space for the two players to sit alongside each other. However, being both of comparatively modest stature, we were able to cope. Keeping four feet out of each others' way, particularly when both performers are playing quick pedal passages, is also another challenge!

So I thank Terence very much for his good humour in joining me in this project as we provided a varied programme of music, drawn from several centuries, which was well received by both EDOA members and other people from the Welwyn area who formed the remainder of the audience.



Jonathan Marten

It was 59 years ago in September 1966 that I first met Terence in London at the Royal College of Music. If I remember correctly, he had already been a student for a year and among the organ student fraternity he was regarded with great respect as he was the organ scholar of St George's Chapel, Windsor, one of very few such opportunities in those days, but one of many these days.

Terence and I quickly became part of a group of five firm organist friends (and occasionally one or two others would join us). We would attend the Royal Festival Hall Wednesday, 5.55pm, organ recitals, attend RCM and other concerts and visit Room 99 for refreshment.

As students, there were certain lectures where we might find ourselves learning together, such as aural training, History of Music, Choir Training and a lecture (that was always packed out) given by the late Antony Hopkins who was famed for his BBC "Understanding Music" broadcasts. Otherwise, we would generally meet in the canteen. There were the string players, the brass players, the wind players, the pianists (generally quite a quiet group) and then the organists, who for some reason were generally loud and noisy with much humour and banter, as you will all know Terence has never lost his ability to produce humour out of any conversation or situation, often accompanied by much laughter. The noise of the organists was only challenged by the noise of the singers.

Our RCM days were happy, but very different to the life experienced by present day students at the RCM. It was probably soon after we had finished our studies at the RCM that I invited Terence to give an organ recital at Bexhill Parish Church. On meeting him as he exited Bexhill Station, he was confronted by the west end of St Mary Magdalene RC Church, for which, Terence explained, his Great, Great Uncle (I think) had been the architect. Terence of course gave a splendid recital and he then had to rush off by train to be ready to play in the morning.

As happens, we all become involved in our busy musical lives and live far apart and so we lost touch for a while until around 1980 an ex young Bexhill Choir man of mine invited me to his wedding at St John the Baptist, Chipping Barnet. This brought me back in touch with Terence, and as I was going to be there, he invited me to play a hymn in the service. This gave us the chance to catch up on a few years of gossip.

Again we were doing our own musical things for a few years, in the meantime I had moved up to Chingford and through helping out at times in Chingford Parish Church, between my AB travels, I got to know Terence's teacher John Rippin, through whom we both became part of the 6 pianists, 12 hands, two piano group and so we have frequently been in touch and performed in choral and piano concerts together.

It has been a great pleasure, over these past 20 or so years, being fully in touch with Terence again and I have been lucky to work with him on various occasions. I would like to add that in the past few months, I and the musicians at St Mary Magdalene's Church, Enfield, have appreciated Terence's help, playing for services and accompanying the choir.

Terence has been a dedicated Organist, Teacher and Choir Trainer for well over 50 years in which time he has proved his musical prowess in various ways, but particularly in his dedication and commitment for almost 50 years to the Choir and Music of St John the Baptist, Chipping Barnet.

Rosemary Knight

Since Terence became president of EDOA in 2011 we have held our committee meetings at Barnet Parish Church. Why? Because where else would Terence be on a Sunday evening – or morning, or weekday evenings when there is choir practice - but at his church, where he has directed the choir or played the organ for 48 years. What a feat! And what a benefit to following generations, as training boy choristers ensures a supply of tenors and basses to all sorts of choirs in the future. Terence's forbearance in the light of the recent situation has been nothing short of saintly. May you continue to inspire the music making in the churches of North London for as long as you want to, Terence.

Thomas Trotter

When I first came to London after graduating, Terence booked me both as a recitalist and accompanist. So I can say with confidence that he has great taste and discernment! 48 years of service is a wonderful achievement - many congratulations.

Robert Canham and Michael Garland

We are writing on behalf of The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland to offer our warmest good wishes to Terence as you gather this afternoon to give thanks for his 48 years of devoted service as Director of Music at Chipping Barnet Parish Church.

Terence has been a wonderful colleague and friend within The Hymn Society for a considerable length of time. He became a member in 1970/71; he has not missed an Annual Conference in the past 50 years and is an irreplaceable presence. We have made good use of his outstanding musical gifts in our Hymn Festivals and our regular acts of worship. At Conference, he has also contributed to our Short Metre Sessions and regularly oversees our second-hand book stall. With his assiduous eye to detail, Terence has also, over many years, compiled the Indices for all our Hymn Society Bulletins; an extraordinary act of love and devotion.

In short, Terence has been a great blessing to us as we know he has been to you. In a place where the Choral tradition is valued and maintained, we feel sure that the many choristers and musicians who have served alongside him, owe Terence a huge debt of gratitude for his sensitive leadership and the pursuit of excellence in all that has been offered musically and liturgically for the greater glory of God in Chipping Barnet.

We wish Terence every blessing for the future. Long may he continue to enhance the church's worship through the ministry of music.

Revd Robert A. Canham – Hon. Secretary
Revd Canon Michael Garland – Hon. Treasurer

Jeremy Prout

We will always be so grateful to Terence for the gentle kindness and encouragement he has shown to Oscar from when he joined the choir at the tender age of six.

Terence's dedication to musical and choral excellence over so many years remains an inspiration.



Jonathan Rennert

CONGRATULATIONS, TERENCE,
ON YOUR DISTINGUISHED
INCUMBENCY IN BARNET!

"For a thousand years ... are but as yesterday."

YOU ARE A VALUED FRIEND
AND COLLEAGUE,
AND I HOPE THAT YOU WILL
CONTINUE TO REGARD
ST MICHAEL'S AS
A SECOND HOME.



Fr. Chris Ferris

Perhaps the most enduring memory of spending time with you was the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Here I saw your faith, your humour, your personal warmth, and the fact that you are a person of depth shine through.

Being immersed in the choral tradition has always been an important part of my own spirituality, and indeed, it shaped my vocation to the priesthood. It is immense to see in action the enabling of generations of people to worship God, and to experience music steeped in theology, scripture, and the rich traditions of the church; I was grateful for that in Barnet, and your commitment to such a tradition was a gift to me.

It is also worth contemplating the number of boys over the years who have been part of the choir, and whose spirituality and faith have been shaped by it. I was particularly aware that if any boy was facing a difficult time, you were sensitive to this and provided a safe space a few times a week to be able to sing.

As you enter retirement, I hope you can look back with pride on the profound impact you've had on the church community and the lives of so many individuals. Your dedication to maintaining the highest standards of church music nurturing both faith and musical ability in generations of choristers has been truly remarkable.

May this new chapter in your life bring you joy, rest, and the deep satisfaction of knowing that your ministry has touched so many lives and will continue to bear fruit for years to come.

With many blessings,

Chris Ferris
Rector of Langley Marish

Fr. Sam Rossiter-Peters

Terence,

I'm so grateful for the way you have welcomed me to St. John the Baptist. With your great humour, kind spirit and thoughtful encouragement, you have made working with the choir a real joy. Though I'm now in the priest stall, rather than the back pews with the tenor section, I have always been made to feel so included and welcome within the choir community, which has been such a great encouragement. I've also felt so uplifted as I've sung (or warbled?) my way through responses by your gentle teaching and encouraging words. The way we've worked together to use music to enhance and uplift our liturgy has been such a gift. It's a real blessing to work with a choirmaster whose faith is so clearly intertwined with their musical leadership, and who not only accepts but embraces the idea that music and liturgy should complement each other.

Not only on a personal level, but as the serving Priest at St. John the Baptist, I am eternally grateful for the legacy of your ministry as choirmaster and organist. There are sadly fewer and fewer churches which are maintaining the proud tradition of choral and sacred music in the parish, but thanks to you, St. John the Baptist's choral tradition will ever continue to be the heart blood of who we are and what we do. Through your passion and dedication, your commitment to service, our church continues to celebrate a weekly evensong; a feat almost unheard of in so many churches. We continue to hold spectacular choral services during every church season, and our community knows that our church rings with music, in its very walls. For many years to come, successive generations of singers, music lovers, congregations and guests will owe you a debt of gratitude for the way you have defended and safeguarded music at the heart of St. John the Baptist. You put musical education at the core of who we are, and helped congregations to understand that music isn't just for the choir, it's for everyone.

So, for myself, and for the church, thank you Terence. Thank you for all that you have brought, thank you for all that you mean to our community.

Fr. Sam