



# CHURCH MUSIC SOCIETY

*Registered Charity No. 1200306*

President: The Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Archbishop of Birmingham

## NEWSLETTER January 2026

### **From the Chairman, Prof. Patrick Russill:**

It is a pleasure to introduce to you the new twice-yearly Newsletter from the Church Music Society. As the Society enters a new chapter (as you can read below) we are endeavouring to improve our communications with members, especially through a regular emailed Newsletter. This first issue will, we hope, give some idea of the variety of content: reports on Society activities, such as the AGM; developments, such as our exciting new publishing relationship with the Royal School of Church Music; publication plans both of hard-copy titles and free material on our website; and news from and about members. We are particularly glad to hear and share membership news: appointments, achievements, significant anniversaries, research reports and the like. Please use the contact details at the end of the Newsletter to let us know about these. My fellow trustees and I, together with the officers of the Society, thank you for your continuing support and interest in the Society's work and send you our best wishes for this new year.

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## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025**

This year's AGM was held again in St Wilfrid's Hall at the London Oratory, by kind permission of the Oratory Fathers, on Saturday 4th October. The event, marked by good attendance and a warm, convivial atmosphere, was particularly distinguished by a talk given by Vice-President and former Chairman, Ian Curror, in memory of our long-serving and beloved Secretary from 1991 to 2023, Dr Simon Lindley, who died in February.

In a presentation that was both touching and amusing, Ian drew on his long friendship with Simon, which started as fellow students at the Royal College of Music in the 1960s, and continued with their collaborations when Ian was Director of Music at the Royal Hospital Chelsea and Simon was Director of Music at Leeds Parish Church and their work together for the Church Music Society. Simon's generosity, energy and lovable idiosyncrasies were vividly and affectionately recalled, while his musical brilliance was illustrated by audio examples of both his organ-playing and his compositions. Ian's talk was received with prolonged appreciative applause, and the Chairman proposed a vote of thanks which was unanimously endorsed. The text of

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*Pictured above: CMS Vice-Presidents Dr Alan Thurlow and Richard Lyne with Ruth Woolfson, Ian Curror and Patrick Russill*

the talk will be made available permanently on the Society's website on the 'Lectures and Papers' page. It was a particular pleasure to welcome as guests, Simon's sister Ruth Woolfson (a former soprano in the Choir of the London Oratory) and her husband Michael.

The day also marked the end of 20 years service as a trustee, and 5 years as Treasurer, of Dr Peter Horton, whose editions of composers such as Walford Davies, H. C. Stewart, and especially S. S. Wesley, of whom Peter is one of our leading scholars, will happily continue to grace the Society's catalogue. The Society is indebted to him.



CMS Vice-President and former Chairman, Ian Curror

Tea, masterminded by Vicky Hight and Sue Scattergood - to whom warm thanks are due - followed, and the day concluded with evening Mass in the Oratory Church, sung by the superb Schola Cantorum of the London Oratory School under their director, Charles Cole, with music including movements from Victoria's *Missa Ave maris stella* and Robert Parsons' *Ave Maria*.



Dr Peter Horton (centre) with Patrick Russill (L) and Dr Geoffrey Webber (R)

## **NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH THE RSCM**

At the AGM, the Chairman announced that the Society will be moving its publishers from Oxford University Press to the Royal School of Church Music. At the time of writing it is hoped this will happen during February. As a consequence, our relationship with OUP, which started in 1995, will end, as will the discount arrangement through Banks Music Publications. We offer sincere thanks to both companies for their support during the last 30 years.

The new relationship with the RSCM will offer various benefits, including in areas such as marketing, design, publishing costs, availability through the RSCM's online shop, and sensible co-ordination of complementary publishing policies, in which the Society's editorial independence and character is guaranteed. Members' 25% discount will then be available online through the RSCM's Shop with a voucher code; details will be posted on our website in due course.

## **PUBLICATIONS NEWS**

### **Our General Editor, Dr Geoffrey Webber writes:**

Plans are well underway for the first batch of titles in our forthcoming publishing partnership with the RSCM, and further new publications will appear during the course of 2026.

Singer and scholar Sally Dunkley continues to provide for us fine editions of 16th-century English works, and follows up the 'Great English Responds' series with the motet *Salva nos, Domine* by Thomas Lupo. Lupo belonged to a family of Italian musicians who moved to London in the early 16th century. Members may recognise the title as being the Nunc dimittis antiphon at Compline, though it is unclear what liturgical use, if any, Lupo may have originally had in mind. At some point this year, the Society hopes to make available a new resource on our website for those planning music for the ever-popular service of Compline, devised by Publications Sub-Committee member, Dr Henry Parkes.

This year marks the centenary of the death of Charles Wood in 1926. We will be providing several new editions of his sacred works, both in hard copy and online, in the 'Music Downloads' section of our website. Furthermore, working in tandem with a project to perform all of Wood's surviving church music in the composer's principal



Charles Wood

places of work in Armagh, Cambridge and London, it is hoped that the new editions will feature in BBC broadcasts during the year. An article concerning the project will appear in the Spring edition of the *Cathedral Music* magazine, and further details will also appear on our own website. One of the hard-copy editions is a 'new' setting of *Evening Canticles in A flat* for SATB and organ. The music survives in the form of a neat manuscript copy which is partly incomplete, and some sketches, in the library of Wood's principal Cambridge college, Gonville & Caius. Ian Copley noted in his book *The music of Charles Wood – a critical study* (Thames Publishing, 1978) that 'a reconstruction of the work should be perfectly feasible', and this has now been

accomplished. The work is composed in Wood's mature style, but another work also to be released soon is his early anthem *O Lord, rebuke me not*, composed not long before he began his time at Cambridge as a student at the brand-new Selwyn College in the late 1880s. It is a rich and powerful work, composed in eight parts, for general penitential use. A third piece by Wood which we hope to add later in the year is his Latin *Nunc dimittis in A minor* written for Westminster Cathedral, a companion to his setting in B flat which we already publish, to be edited by Jeremy Dibble.



Armagh Cathedral, where Charles Wood was a chorister

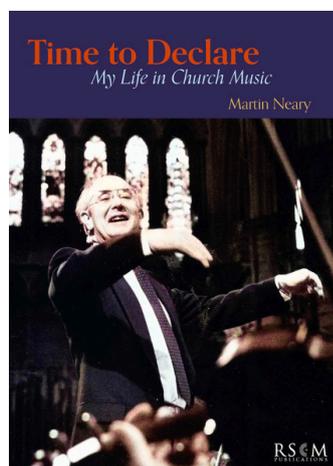


Philip Moore

Also related to the Wood centenary we will be issuing a new anthem by CMS Vice-President Philip Moore, based on a Wood hymn tune to the words 'It were my soul's desire', which Moore has turned into a hymn-anthem in the manner much enjoyed by Wood himself, as in his *Ascension Hymn* that we published last year. Already recorded by the Charles Wood Singers under David Hill, the Gramophone's reviewer noted its "rhapsodic organ part, reminiscent of Howells but none the worse for it".

## DR MARTIN NEARY (1940-2025)

The Society was saddened by the death of our Vice-President, Martin Neary, in September. While battling illness with great fortitude and grace in his last few years, Martin was able to complete his autobiography, *Time to Declare – My Life in Church Music*, (RSCM Publications) and to see it through the press. It provides first-hand insight into developments in church music from the 1950s onwards, as well as being an open and good-humoured account of Martin's extraordinarily productive and influential life as a church musician of wide interests and skills, and as a devoted family man. It chronicles his involvement in Royal occasions, from the christening of our present King in 1947 and the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, through to the funeral of Princess Diana in 1997. His early training in the Chapel Royal and later at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge led on to early celebrity as one of the most gifted young organists of the day and as Director of Music at St Margaret's Westminster. As Organist and Master of the Choristers at Winchester Cathedral and then at Westminster Abbey he proved to be a caring and understanding educator of his choristers and mentor for his younger colleagues – he was a master of the patient work, day-in and day-out, that crucially underpins and sustains the Opus Dei in the English tradition of daily choral worship. He was one of the most consistent and effective champions of major contemporary composers, encouraging them to write both for the liturgy and the church community, the most distinguished being Jonathan Harvey and John Tavener, with both of whom he forged close personal and artistic relationships. He also pursued a long-standing interest in period instrument performance, particularly in concerts at the Abbey marking the tercentenary of his great Abbey predecessor, Henry Purcell. At the same time, he was a passionate follower of cricket: his love for the game adds well-judged leaven to the musical tale, and provides a neatly apposite title for this highly recommendable and eminently readable memoir.



## Time to Declare: My Life in Church Music

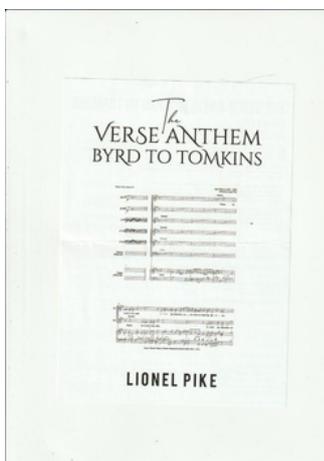
Martin Neary

[Available from the RSCM shop](#)

*Publisher: RSCM Press*  
*ISBN: 978-0854023585*  
*Published: 06/08/2025*

## NEWS FROM MEMBERS:

**Professor Lionel Pike** has just produced what is (amazingly) the first full-scale book on the English 'verse anthem': *The Verse Anthem: Byrd to Tomkins*, published by Austin Macauley Publishers. Prof. Pike traces the development of this most characteristic of English sacred music forms, and vessel of some of the greatest music of the period – some of it still unknown - from its beginnings in the final period of the reign of Elizabeth I to the point where the Commonwealth put an end, temporarily, to English Cathedral Music. This important new book becomes the instant standard study of the topic and is available both in paperback and as an ebook.



## The Verse Anthem: Byrd to Tomkins

Lionel Pike

[Available from Austin Macauley.](#)

*Publisher: Austin Macauley Publishers*

*ISBN: 978-1398414327*

*Published: 23/05/2025*

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We offer congratulations to **Samuel Teague** on gaining his DPhil from the University of Oxford, conferred in July. Dr Teague's thesis - *'That Orpheus of our time': A Reassessment of Henry Cooke (d.1672)* - focused on music in mid-17th century England through the lens of Henry Cooke, most famous for his role as Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal from 1660 to 1672. The thesis fleshes out the woefully inadequate biography of this figure, who has often been credited with the successful revivification of the Chapel following the years of musical dearth, which have (largely incorrectly) characterised the period of civil war and Commonwealth, and assesses the impact of Cooke's tutelage on the careers and output of his premiere pupils (notably Pelham Humfrey and John Blow). Dr Teague has analysed the single surviving corpus of Cooke's autograph works—Birmingham University, MS 5001—and completed a critical edition of all Cooke's extant music. The final portion of the thesis explores his solo songs and contributions to the advent of the English opera, largely through the vehicle of *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656) for which he both composed the music for one of the acts, as well as originating one of the roles.

Dr Teague's plans further research on musical activity during the period of civil war and Commonwealth; he believes that the myth that music was largely oppressed across these years is almost wholly false. In a chapter in *Music and Majesty in English Chapels Royal and Extraordinary Spaces, c.1560–1700* (Liverpool University Press, forthcoming 2026) as part of the *Proceedings of the British Academy* (which he is co-editing) he will begin to explore this topic formally.

Dr Teague is currently the Choir Administrator at The Queen's College, Oxford and a College Tutor in Musicology for several colleges across the University of Oxford. He is Editor of the journal of the National Early Music Association, *Early Music Performance & Research* and next year becomes Chairman of the NEMA – on which appointment further congratulations are due!



CMS member Dr Samuel Teague, pictured at The Queen's College, Oxford in July 2025



Geoffrey Berryman

Following our mail-out regarding email communications, we received a delightful response from **Geoffrey Berryman**, from which it transpired that Mr Berryman is certainly the longest-standing member of the Society, having joined 75 years ago in 1951 (when he was sent by the War Office to Egypt) and became a Life Member in 1954! The Chairman has spoken to Mr Berryman a couple of times on the phone since, and can report that, in his 96th year, he has a liveliness and enthusiasm equal to persons decades younger: a pleasure to talk to him. Ad multos annos Geoffrey!

**The Church Music Society**  
[www.church-music.org.uk](http://www.church-music.org.uk)

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