



June 2010

Immanuel's GROUND

Warwick's West Gallery Quire NEWSLETTER

Wootton Wawen Music Festival

Tuesday 15th June, 2010, at 7.30 pm

Immanuel's Ground will present a Concert entitled "The Georgian Village Quire" as part of the Wootton Wawen Music Festival, where its 1,500 residents have to find £130,000 to save their crumbling ancient church, many parts of it, including the central tower, dating back to Saxon times. The concert will depict Quire and Village life in the pre-Victorian era.

Proceeds from our performance and the programmes of other choirs, bands and instrumentalists, will contribute to the costs of restoring this ancient church's flaking external stonework, for which the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage have already promised £48,000 to help preserve what is Warwickshire's oldest church.



Other concerts during the week-long Festival include the Alcester Male Voice Choir, the Major Brass Quintet augmented by Bourton Trombones Choir, and recitals by Solihull organist Peter Irving, and Russian pianist Varvara Valentinovna. The Hook Norton Brass Band will also perform, as will the Amici choral group from Coventry Cathedral.

The international duo James Barralet ('cello) and Alasdair Beatson (piano) appear together on Saturday night, June 19, and the nine concerts conclude with a Sunday evening performance by the internationally acclaimed Armonico Consort.

Tickets at £10 for all concerts are available via John Lawton on 01564 793585. As part of other fundraising, Wootton Grange, which has featured in the National Gardens Scheme, is opening to visitors on Tuesday, June 15, and on June 27 the village is hosting The Big Bring-Your-Own Picnic, laying on a pig roast and cream teas to welcome families from surrounding areas.

We hope that our Concert may attract you to support both us and the Church!

You have received this occasional Newsletter from Immanuel's Ground in order to keep you abreast of the Quire's activities, and because you have given us your email address for contact purposes. If, however, you now no longer wish to be kept informed in this way, please email the Quire's Webmaster at shelwin8@tiscali.co.uk, and your address will be removed from our list.



THE OLD AND CRUSTY RABBLE AT BUCKINGHAM

In September 2007, members of the quire had visited the wonderful church of All Saints, Hillesden, as part of an annual psalmody tour of churches in the Oxfordshire Diocese. We had a small but appreciative audience for our 45 minutes of music making, and were delighted to be asked to return for a full concert in July 2009. The larger, but equally appreciative audience on that occasion included members of the adjoining parish of Padbury, some of whom issued an invitation for us to participate in Padbury's 800th anniversary celebrations at the beginning of September 2009.

From the Padbury event came the request from Buckingham Rotary Club for a fund-raising concert at the Parish Church in May 2010, and so it was that despite local publicity describing us in terms Thomas Hardy might have thought appropriate, an even larger and extremely appreciative audience came to enjoy our musical offering of a slice or two of Buckingham's history, including the Great Fire of 1725, drunkenness and debauchery, and with timely reference to the General Election, held two days earlier, the result of which was still to be determined, the scandal of the pocket boroughs. Great fun for the quire, and with £500 raised for Rotary's chosen charity, we don't think this will be the last link in the chain we seem to be forging in this part of the country. Watch this space!

A 'GROUND' BREAKING EVENT FOR IGQ

'Cometh the hour, cometh the quire', seems an appropriate allusion to the thirteen days' notice Immanuel's Ground got for what proved to be one of their most innovative 'gigs'. On 23 March, we were asked to participate in an educational video, 'All History is Here', to be filmed on 6 April at St Peter's Church, Wolfhamcote, Warwickshire. The video was a local history project, to be shown in some 36 Warwickshire and East Northants primary schools. Were we interested? Could we provide some off-camera and filmed music appropriate for three of the periods the video would cover? Could we do it in costume? A rapid canvass of the quire by e-mail got a positive answer to questions one and three, so on the basis that two out of three isn't bad, we said 'yes' within 24 hours of the original request. Dealing with question two within the timescale and the quire's repertoire would take a little longer, but getting the script and the director's sound requirements very swiftly thereafter enabled us to come up with something that worked very well on the day.

It was a privilege to perform in St Peter's, now under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust after many years of neglect and threat of demolition in the 1950's. Without electricity or water supply, rebuilt on an earlier site in the 14th century, it has a magnificent contemporary rood screen in the north chapel, a 15th century clerestory and the Queen Anne coat of arms, 1702, high above the chancel arch, miraculously survived vandalism and fire in the 1970's. Looking back on the thirteen days between our initial contact and the actual event we are still a little amazed at how we did it. The première of the video is planned for mid-July, and a link to it will be put on the Churches Conservation Trust's website. Possibly the first time an educational video has been made using one of the Trust's churches, we hope it will increase interest in the work of this laudable organisation, and perhaps encourage others to do likewise.

