



## News Release from the Royal School of Church Music

For immediate release.

### **HONORARY MUSIC AWARDS FOR TOP COMPOSERS, ORGANISTS AND A SONGS OF PRAISE PRESENTER.**

**A North of England cathedral organist, a composer, two leading church musicians from Australia and New Zealand, and a presenter of BBC TV's *Songs of Praise*, are among those to receive Honorary Awards from the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM). These awards will be presented at a special service in Salisbury Cathedral on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2009.**

The honorary awards are conferred by the RSCM Council for outstanding contributions to church music, and range from Fellowship (FRSCM) and Associateship (ARSCM) to Honorary Membership (HonRSCM) and Certificate of Special Service. Commenting on the awards, Mark Williams, Chairman of RSCM Council and a member of the Awards Scrutiny Group says, "*In deciding these awards we receive nominations from all over the world and we are delighted to recognise the work of some excellent individuals who exhibit great dedication to the work of the RSCM.*" Lindsay Gray, the Director of the RSCM says, "*I am delighted that once again, the RSCM is able to honour not just musicians of international standing, but particularly those who week-in week-out work away, in many instances quietly and anonymously, to enhance church worship through the music we produce.*"

The names of those receiving awards are as follows (fuller biographical details appear below):

#### **Fellowship (FRSCM) - for achievements of international significance**

Malcolm Archer	Winchester College, Hampshire
Jonathan Bielby	Wakefield Cathedral, Yorkshire
Dr Neil McEwan	Christchurch St Laurence, Sydney, Australia
Professor Noel Tredinnick	Music director, composer, arranger
Professor Philip Wilby	Composer

#### **Associateship (ARSCM) - for achievements of national significance or within the RSCM**

Robin Bell	Administrator Scottish Church Organists' Training Scheme (SCOTS)
Peter de Blois	Director of Music, Auckland Cathedral, New Zealand
Alan Wilson	Music director, composer, arranger

#### **Honorary Membership (HonRSCM) - for significant work not primarily musical or liturgical**

Iain Nisbet	Former Secretary and Acting Chairman, RSCM Guildford Area
Pam Rhodes	Presenter, BBC TV <i>Songs of Praise</i>

### **Certificates of Special Service - for outstanding service to an RSCM branch or area**

These certificates will normally be presented at area or overseas national or overseas branch festival.

Alwyn Clegg	Wakefield
Norman Kershaw	New Zealand
Donald Haigh	Wakefield
Frank Rogers	Somerset
Peter Smith	Oxford
Richard Stephens	West Wales
Tim Storey	London
Neville Holt	Derby ( <i>posthumous award</i> )
Christina Wishnowsky	New Zealand
John Witham	Portsmouth

### **More information about honorands receiving the award of Fellow, Associate and Honorary Membership:**

**Malcolm Archer (FRSCM)** has achieved the highest standards with all the choirs of which he has been Director, including, Bristol, Wells and St Paul's Cathedrals and now at Winchester College. As a composer, Malcolm has a unique gift for composing for parish choirs; many of his popular pieces are published by RSCM Press and are widely used both in the UK and around the world.

**Jonathan Bielby (FRSCM)** has been Director of Music at Wakefield Cathedral since 1970, and is England's longest serving cathedral organist. There is no choir school, so he has worked tirelessly to maintain and enhance the tradition. In 1992 the cathedral became the second in Britain to establish a girls' choir. Jonathan has provided tuition and help for music in parish churches in the area.

**Dr Neil McEwan (FRSCM)** was appointed organist and choirmaster at the age of 17 in his native town of Invercargill, New Zealand. In the early 1960s, he moved to Sydney, Australia and became Assistant Organist and later Director of Music at Christchurch St Laurence where the choir has gained an international reputation. He gives master classes at RSCM Summer Schools, and is also Director of the Sydney Conservatorium choirs.

**Professor Noel Tredinnick (FRSCM)** has been Organist and Director of Music at All Souls, Langham Place, London since 1972, and from 1975 a Professor at Guildhall School of Music. He has made a significant contribution to the development of church music in UK and internationally. He is also a composer and arranger as well as a contributor to RSCM publications. He can work competently across denominations, and is at home both with traditional choral repertoire and worship bands.

**Professor Philip Wilby (FRSCM)** has been Senior Tutor in composition at Leeds University since 1984. Recently he was awarded a doctorate in composition and made professor in 2002. He has given outstanding service by composing challenging, contemporary repertoire and also accessible and singable works for parish and children's choirs. He has contributed extensively to sacred music composition both in the UK and USA.

**Robin Bell (ARSCM)** has been active in Scottish church music for well over 20 years. He set up and now administers the Scottish Church Organist Training Scheme (SCOTS). This includes devising the syllabus, producing newsletters, and administering training days. He has built up a countrywide network of organ advisors; this highly successful scheme has given help and encouragement to organists and choir trainers throughout Scotland.

**Peter de Blois (ARSCM)** is now Director of Music at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Auckland, having been Assistant Organist at three cathedrals in New Zealand, and Director of Music at the

Metropolitan Cathedral in Wellington. His work as a tutor over many years, and latterly as Director at Residential RSCM Schools in New Zealand has been exceptional. He has encouraged and set up many opportunities for young people and has been a tower of strength in the Auckland Branch of the RSCM.

**Alan Wilson (ARSCM)** makes an invaluable contribution to *Sunday by Sunday*, the RSCM's quarterly liturgy planner, bringing a broad knowledge of hymnody and other forms of congregational song. His workload has been increased by a number of recent changes in the hymn books featured in our tables. He also contributes to the BBC's *Daily Service*, as music director, and in his role as composer has written liturgical music for choirs and congregations.

**Iain Nisbet (HonRSCM)** has been a long-serving member of the Guildford Area Committee, latterly as Secretary and subsequently as Acting Area Chairman. He has been described as "punctilious and highly efficient" in all his dealings.

**Pam Rhodes (HonRSCM)** has been a presenter of BBC TV's *Songs of Praise* for over 20 years. She is also an after-dinner speaker, compères musical events around the country, has written thirteen books, and is patron of a number of charities. Her enthusiasm for all varieties of church music is obvious from her work on *Songs of Praise*; the RSCM recognises the popular contribution of the programme to the culture of church music around the world.

ENDS

23 December 2008

### Notes for Editors:

**The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM)** is an educational charity that promotes the best use of music in worship, church life, and the wider community. The RSCM also publishes music and training resources, and organises courses, short workshops and activities. With over 8,500 affiliates, members and friends in over 40 countries it is an international network, supported by over 750 volunteers and small team of staff based throughout the UK. More at [www.rscm.com](http://www.rscm.com)

**Nominations for awards** may be submitted by members of RSCM Council, senior officers, national council or national forum, area or district committee, or overseas branch. Nominations must be received by 1<sup>st</sup> September each year.

**The main awards will be presented at the RSCM's annual Celebration Day which this year takes place in Salisbury Cathedral on May 16<sup>th</sup> 2009.**

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