



News Release from the Royal School of Church Music

Four score years - and still going strong...
International church music charity celebrates anniversary.

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) has announced plans to celebrate the 80th anniversary of its foundation. These include special services in London, Cardiff, New York, Washington DC, San Francisco, South Africa and New Zealand, and a new initiative in the UK aimed at young people – the RSCM Young Voices Festival 2007.

The RSCM (which now has over 8,500 affiliated churches and individual members in over forty countries) was founded by Sir Sydney Nicholson on the 6th December 1927 when he held the inaugural meeting in the Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster Abbey.

The first special anniversary event, on Easter Monday, 9th April 2007 at 5.00pm, is a Festal Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral, London sung by the three national divisions of the RSCM Cathedral Singers. They will be directed by conductor and former King's Singer, Brian Kay, now a Vice President of the RSCM.

The founder and benefactors of the RSCM will also be remembered at the annual Celebration Day service, which this year takes place in Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff, Wales on 12th May at 3.15pm. It is at this service that RSCM honorary awards are presented, along with certificates and diplomas to students completing the RSCM's Sacred Music Studies course.

Three anniversary services are to be held in the United States where the RSCM is expanding its work. These will take place on Saturday 24th November in Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, on 2nd February 2008 in Washington National Cathedral, and on 17th May in St Thomas's Church, Fifth Avenue, New York. Psallam - a new anniversary service book themed on the psalms is being prepared for these celebrations by RSCM America, and will be published for worldwide circulation by the RSCM Press in June 2007.

In addition, 2007 is also the 60th anniversary of the death of the founder Sir Sydney Nicholson on 30th May 1947. RSCM members and their churches are being invited to remember his life and work with special collections or fund-raising events for the work of the charity in supporting and training church musicians throughout the world. "Nicholson was a remarkable man of prodigious energy and wide-ranging gifts," says Professor John Harper, the RSCM's Director General. "He gave up a

prime church music job as organist of Westminster Abbey to pursue his vision for the improvement of music in all the churches. He gave both his time and much of his own money. Gifts of time and money, especially from our volunteers and members, continue to underpin our important work today."

In the UK, a new festival to encourage singing is being launched. So far there are eight major events planned in eight beautiful venues around the UK as part of the RSCM Young Voices Festival 2007. Boys and girls from school and church choirs are being encouraged to take part, and even organise their own events, using a service called "How can I keep from singing?"

(Separate press releases have been issued about the Young Voices Festival, and are available at <http://www.rscm.com/media>)

The RSCM Millennium Youth Choir (which is regularly heard and seen on radio and television) is to record a CD during their Easter course. It will be produced by the composer John Rutter, and released later in the year. "The Millennium Youth Choir is just one of many initiatives we organise and support around Britain and the world to encourage singing, and especially singing among children," says Professor Harper. "The UK government's recent recognition that singing is essential is very welcome: the RSCM has been chipping away at this work for eight decades. Worldwide we engage with thousands of young people, as well as singers and music leaders of all ages every year."

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Notes for Editors.

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) is an educational charity and 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. For further information about the RSCM, go to the website www.rscm.com

About the RSCM: <http://www.rscm.com/aboutus>
 History <http://www.rscm.com/history>
 Media & Picture Gallery <http://www.rscm.com/media> photographs may be downloaded for publication.

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