

## THE FARRANT SINGERS

The Farrant Singers is the longest-established chamber choir in Salisbury, with close links to the medieval city, the surrounding Wiltshire villages and the Cathedral, where the choir occasionally sings the services in place of the Cathedral Choir. The group was founded in 1958 by the composer Richard Lloyd (then Assistant Organist of Salisbury Cathedral), initially to give performances of church music in the diocese. Conductors since then have included Mark Deller, Richard Shephard, Colin Howard and Daniel Cook. Andrew Mackay took up the baton as the current conductor in December 2011.

The group currently comprises around 38 singers and its repertoire includes a wide range of sacred and secular music, spanning many periods and styles. Recent programmes have included music by Victoria, Morales, Bach, Purcell, Brahms, Britten, MacMillan and Gabriel Jackson. The choir gives two or three concerts in Salisbury annually and others around the region, as well as performing at weddings and celebrations.

The choir took part in the world premiere of Bob Chilcott's *Salisbury Vespers* in 2009, has broadcast live on BBC Radio 4 in 'Sunday Worship', and has worked with the John Armitage Memorial Trust to present new and recent works for choir, brass and organ. It has also toured to France, Germany and Italy, and makes occasional visits to sing services at cathedrals around the UK.

The Farrant Singers celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2008 with the commissioning of *The Farrant Singers Collection*, seven pieces by composers associated with the choir: Barry Ferguson, David Halls, Sam Hanson, Philip Lawson, Richard Lloyd, Howard Moody and Richard Shephard. The *Collection* has been recorded, and is available on CD along with other favourites from the choir's repertoire. Three tracks were broadcast on Classic FM in September 2009, as part of a programme showcasing recordings by members of the Making Music organisation.

### THE CONDUCTOR

Andrew Mackay took up the baton in December 2011. Andy is well known to many concert-goers in Salisbury as founder and Director of the Sarum Consort and its associated group, the Sarum Consort Singers.

While much of his professional career has been devoted to teaching, he has a wealth of experience as a singer and conductor, beginning as a student at Trinity College and King's College, Cambridge. He has been conductor of Goring Chamber Choir and Romsey Singers, and has many operatic and orchestral conducting credits, as well as being a former lay clerk at Salisbury Cathedral.

He currently teaches at Godolphin School, and lives in Harnham with his wife and two daughters.

