

PRESS RELEASE

Wentworth Church Music Festival 2013

The historic village of Wentworth is a tranquil rural oasis in South Yorkshire and is the focal centre of the Wentworth Estates which belong to the Fitzwilliam family. The impressive large church was built by the children of the 5th Earl Fitzwilliam in memory of their parents and its splendid acoustics provide an ideal setting for our music festival. We hope that all our music loving friends will join us in celebrating 15 years of our annual festival. This year is also special because we have almost raised the funds necessary to achieve the basic £40,000 costs for the restoration and maintenance of the magnificent Father Willis organ and our target may well be reached this year: this is the first time that major work has been undertaken since the consecration of the church in 1877. However, work will have to continue around the organ and additional costs are being incurred in restoring the fabric of the building in the area of the organ, such as the gable end.

Wentworth Church was erected in memory of Charles William, 6th Earl Fitzwilliam, KG (1786 – 1857) and his wife, by their children. It was designed by J.L. Pearson, a protagonist in the 19th Century revival of Gothic Architecture, who also designed Truro Cathedral. It was consecrated on 31st July 1877, when the old church, Late Norman, ceased to be used for regular worship. It measures in excess of 120 feet in length and has a prominent spire rising to 200 feet. The acoustics of the church are highly acclaimed by professional artists who have performed and regularly record in the church.

The original festival in 1999 was organised as part of the Millennium celebrations. It was so successful that the series of concerts have now become an annual event. The 2013 festival consists of several events over the period from Wednesday 25th September to Sunday 29th September. All events are being held in Holy Trinity Church, Church Drive, Wentworth, South Yorkshire.

Wednesday 25th September at 7.00 p.m.

The Thurnscoe Harmonic Male Voice Choir

The choir started in 1924 and is quickly approaching its 90th Anniversary. It remains one of the premier male voice choirs in the country. Over the last ten years their reputation has gone from strength to strength: over the years the choir has won over 100 awards in major competitions, including a second place in the International Eisteddford. At this year's annual Wentworth Festival, a festival that the choir has been very privileged to be invited to and attend since its inception, the choir start a full year of celebrations to mark this very special occasion. The members are very enthusiastic about making this year one to remember and a prelude to our centenary.

Thanks to Tony Jermy the musical director and Irene Hill the accompanist, the choir is renewing and revitalising its repertoire, from old pot boilers to new pop chart songs, while ensuring that the "Thurnscoe Sound" remains as compelling as it ever did. *Please note this concert starts at 7.00 pm*

Thursday 26th September at 7.30 pm

The Rockingham Brass Band

The Rockingham Band has a long history dating back to 1850, when it founded as a local colliery band. After the pit closed in the 1970s it gained a new sponsor and a new group of musicians, and went from strength to strength. It won National championships alongside other awards in 1982, and the Pontins Championship in 1987, and performed in the Albert Hall. Following a lean period it was fully reformed in Hoyland in 2003 and has now regained high standard and a considerable reputation and is now under the very capable direction of Rob Straw, and having built up an enviable list of current engagements. The Band recently played at Milton Hall, Peterborough on the occasion of a large event to celebrate the marriage of the son and daughter-in-law of Sir Philip Naylor-Leyland.

This is the band's second visit to Wentworth and we are delighted to be able to welcome them back by popular demand after a very well received concert in 2011.

Friday, 27th September at 7.30 p.m.

The Emperor String Quartet

The Emperor String Quartet was formed in 1992 and continues to enjoy a varied and successful international career with their original membership intact. In 1995 they were the first British winners of the Evian/Bordeaux competition, having won the Menuhin Prize in London the previous year. They have been BBC artists since 1993 and have made a number of highly acclaimed CD recordings

The Quartet's repertoire ranges from Haydn to contemporary composers such as James Macmillan and Harrison Birtwistle and they have premiered numerous works by talented composers of their generation. They have performed at all of the major UK Festivals and at a number abroad, from the Prague Spring to New York City's "Mostly Mozart" Festival. They have toured throughout Europe, Scandinavia and North America and have made concert tours for the British Council in Ecuador and Nigeria. The Wentworth programme will include Haydn quartet Op 76/1 in G, Britten Quartet no. 3, and the Quartet by Ravel

The Quartet will additionally be giving a workshop in Wentworth School during the afternoon for the benefit of pupils and teachers.

Saturday, 28th September at 1.00 pm

Darius Battiwalla - Organ Recital

2010 saw the restoration of the magnificent Father Willis organ in Wentworth Church. This concert continues the celebration of the completion of this wonderful instrument.

Darius Battiwalla began his musical training in London. He moved North when he was appointed Organ Scholar to Leeds University in 1984, where he studied organ with Graham Barber and piano with Martin Roscoe. After graduating with first-class

honours, he studied at the Royal Northern College of Music where he gained performance diplomas in organ and piano accompaniment.

During his time at the RNCM, Darius was awarded the prize for best lieder accompanist by Brigitte Fassbender, and was the only student to be awarded concerto appearances on both organ and piano. He has since been working as a freelance pianist and organist and is musical director of the Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus. He has played with the Hallé, BBC Philharmonic, the Orchestra of Opera North and the Northern Sinfonia. He plays in chamber groups with members of the BBC Philharmonic, Opera North and the Goldberg Ensemble, with whom he has appeared in the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival.

Photo on <http://www.dariusbattiwalla.com/>

Saturday 28th September at 7.30 p.m.

Renaissance Voices

This Early Music Chamber Choir was formed in 1989 in Buxton to perform English and Italian Madrigals, French Chansons, Tudor Anthems, Latin motets, masses and psalm settings, mostly performed *a cappella*. Concerts have included a viol consort, cornett and sackbutt ensemble, and a baroque ensemble of recorders, harpsichord and bass viol. The choir has performed major baroque choral works with orchestra, including Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus* and Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* using period instruments.

Concert venues cover the North of England and beyond, including Derby Cathedral, Lincoln Cathedral, Selby Abbey, Fountains Abbey, Pershore Abbey, Tewkesbury Abbey and St Pancras Church, London as well as churches in Derbyshire and South Yorkshire

The acoustic in Wentworth Church is particularly suited to voice and music played on acoustic instruments. These concerts will showcase this aspect of our wonderful Church at its best.

Photo on http://www.rvchamberchoir.homecall.co.uk/index_files/Page354.htm

Sunday 29th September at 6 pm

Children and Young People's Concert

Promoted by Gareth Green on behalf of his daughter Megan who will be climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in 2014 and for whom all proceeds from this concert will be donated.

After spells at St. Pauls and Canterbury, he became Assistant Organist at Wakefield Cathedral and was then Director of Music at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield. Gareth enjoys a distinguished career as concert pianist, organist, accompanist, broadcaster and experienced level teacher. He is a senior adjudicator for the Associated Board and leads delegations abroad.

This concert will be given by pupils and friends of Gareth who will present a lively and varied programme.

Ticket Prices

	Normal	Concession
Concert Series Ticket for all concerts	£28	£24
Thurnscoe Harmonic Male Voice Choir	£7	£6
Rockingham Band	£7	£6
Emperor String Quartet	£12	£10
Darius Battiwalalla Organ Recital	£7	£6
Renaissance Voices Singers	£7	£6
Children and Young People's Concert	£7	£6

Light refreshments will be served in the interval and will be included in the cost of the ticket.

Contact: Wentworth Church Music Festival Box Office, Lynwood, Hooper, Rotherham, S62 7SA 01709 527713 mrrdt@hotmail.com