



January &  
February  
2011

# Immanuel's GROUND

## Warwick's West Gallery Quire NEWSLETTER

### Christmas isn't over yet!

Our final Christmas Concert had to be postponed because 'unseasonal' winter weather prevented many of us reaching Warwick, let alone those who had purchased tickets and wanted to attend. So, **Christmas has been put on hold in Warwick**, and **you are invited** to step even further back in time by some 200 years (and six weeks!) to join us at **Northgate Methodist Church** on **Sunday 6th February at 7.00 pm**, to our concert entitled "**Going the Rounds**". For those who come regularly to our Concerts, you will find we have expanded our repertoire to include a **Mummers' Play**, which is based on fragments of other such plays to be found in the South Midlands. If you have tickets for the cancelled concert, you will get in free of charge, otherwise a small entrance charge of £5 will be requested from you at the door. Refreshments will be served in the Interval. Any profits from the evening will go to Northgate Church's *Way Forward Fund*.

### Business First

The Quire is meeting at the Bowls Club at Byfield on Saturday 29th January, firstly to transact the business of the AGM and then spend the rest of the day in singing and playing new music. This year we concentrate on a number of Glees written in the late eighteenth century, including Benjamin Cooke's 'Epitaph on a Dormouse'.

### Folk Festivals

Several members of the Quire went to **Sidmouth Folk Week** in 2010, taking part in various dance and song workshops, including both the West Gallery and Shapenote workshops held in the Methodist Church. Led by **Babylon Lane**, two members of which are the Musical Directors of **Immanuel's Ground**, the Shapenote workshops started with over 65 attendees at 9.30 am on Monday morning, numbers keeping above 50 throughout the week, and with a special workshop led by **Tim Eriksen**, previously front-man for Cordelia's Dad. He was responsible for the authenticity of the shapenote singing in the Oscar-winning 2004 Civil War-era movie "**Cold Mountain**" and his work on the film included contributing the vocals for actor Brendan Gleeson, and teaching **Nicole Kidman**, Elvis Costello and Sting to sing the music.

Our repertoire contains an increasing number of exciting Sacred Harp and Shapenote pieces which are sung unaccompanied, mainly from New England, and in particular by William Billings, of Boston.



Tim Eriksen



Nicole Kidman

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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](mailto:shelwin8@tiscali.co.uk), and your address will be removed from our list.



**Warwick Folk Festival** 2010 went with a swing. **Immanuel's Ground** had been asked by the Warwick Folk Festival Committee to arrange an open practice as a pre-Festival event, as well as running the usual workshops for the Festival itself. The Wednesday evening prior to the Festival was set aside for just this purpose, and we were pleased to welcome a number of visitors - some on holiday in the area and some prior to the Festival itself.

We had a happy time introducing several people to west gallery music for the first time, some singing and some just to listen. Look out for further open rehearsals, or, if you would like to join us for an evening to see what it's all about, please make contact with our Secretary, Ian Meddoms, on Warwick (01926) 492945.

Both the Shapenote and our West Gallery workshops, held in the Unitarian Chapel in the High Street in Warwick, were full almost to capacity, with several people making return visits again this year. A spin-off to this is that we are now arranging a **Workshop near Haverfordwest in South Wales on Saturday 19th February. Open to all - Details on the IG website, or telephone no. on front page.**



Country Choristers  
(John Goldar 1773)

### A DAY'S SINGING IN OXFORD

Saturday 4th September saw a large number of the Quire joining the **Oxford Occasionals** in a walking tour of Oxford, visiting the University Church, and the Chapels of Exeter, The Queen's, New, and Merton Colleges. Totalling nearly 65 participants, each part well represented and accompanied by instrumentalists, the furthest of whom came from Cornwall, we sang a variety of music from the west gallery period, but especially including William Jackson's Nunc Dimittis in Eb and two settings of 'Never Weatherbeaten Sail', known variously as the 'Black Hymn', and the 'Joys of Heaven', both so fitting for the settings.

Gary Sherman has recorded many of the pieces that were sung, and these — which capture the magic of the day — can be found on the Web at :

[http://www.archive.org/details/OxfordOccasionals-](http://www.archive.org/details/OxfordOccasionals-WestGalleryQuireSeptember2010)

[WestGalleryQuireSeptember2010](http://www.archive.org/details/OxfordOccasionals-WestGalleryQuireSeptember2010) **Many thanks to Gary for brilliant recordings**

\*\*\*\*\* **Highly recommended!!** \*\*\*\*\*



University Church of St Mary the Virgin



The Band of Immanuel's Ground and friends in The Queen's College Chapel

\*\* Contact details for Gary Sherman available from Editor

### Another Date for your Diaries:

**Mid-Shires' Quires' Day — Saturday 30th April 2011** at Byfield. Come, Sing and Play pieces coming mainly from the music of the Midlands west gallery composers.