



CHAPEL ROYAL
HAMPTON COURT PALACE
EAST MOLESEY
KT8 9AU

INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHAPEL CHOIR

OUR MUSICAL HERITAGE

England's cathedrals and collegiate chapels have long boasted fine choirs singing glorious music, many of them enjoying international reputations through television and radio broadcasts, recordings, webcasts and tours. For two centuries - from the Baptism of Edward VI at Hampton Court in 1537, the historic royal palace there and its chapel have been part of this proud musical heritage. The Chapel Royal is a body of priests and singers who serve the spiritual needs of the Sovereign. It has been called "the cradle of English church music", for its great musicians of the past set an example in style of composition and performance that was copied by cathedrals, churches and chapels throughout the land. They include Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, and Thomas Morley - sworn and admitted a Gentleman in the Vestry at Hampton Court; Henry Purcell, and also Pelham Humfrey and John Blow, both of whom, incidentally, lived in Hampton. The Chapel Royal used to travel with the court as it resided at various royal palaces including Hampton Court, though now, it is permanently based at St James's Palace, and attends the Sovereign at the distribution of the Royal Maundy, on Remembrance Sunday in Whitehall, and on other occasions as commanded. Further information about Hampton Court Palace can be found on the Internet at www.hrp.org.uk

THE HAMPTON COURT CHOIR

Hampton Court is said to be the greatest palace in Britain. It was originally owned by Thomas Wolsey and acquired by Henry VIII. It ceased to be a royal residence in 1737, but a permanent choir was eventually established in 1868. Today, the Hampton Court choir comprises men and boys, together with a Director of Music, an Organist and an Organ Scholar. Unlike their counterparts in most cathedrals who board at a nearby choir school and sing more or less daily, the Hampton Court choristers rehearse twice a week, and sing at the two choral services held on Sundays and other Holy Days. They are drawn from a variety of day schools in the area, thereby enabling local children to enjoy the benefits of singing a cathedral repertoire in a Chapel once served by the some of the greatest composers of our national musical heritage. It re-affirms its link annually with the historic Chapel Royal when it combines with the choir of the Chapels Royal, St James's Palace to sing evensong - and to play a football match! Notable former choristers include musicologist Professor Thurston Dart; the actor David Hemmings; the baritone Robert Hayward; the composer Antony Pitts; and conductors Nicholas Jenkins and Timothy Burke.

IS YOUR SON AGED 7 - 10? HE COULD BE A CHORISTER!

Every year, places are available for boys to become choristers in the choir of the Chapel Royal at Hampton Court. Singing in a choir such as this would provide him with one of the most superb foundations for music, and would complement his education and capacity for learning. The work requires - and develops - musical memory, aural alertness and reading skills, all based on the voice.

DUTIES AND BENEFITS

In addition to singing two services on Sunday (11am and 3.30pm), choristers practise twice a week after school, on Tuesdays and Fridays (5 till 6.10pm). They receive a weekly personal allowance, and parents receive a Choral Foundation award to assist with their son's musical tuition on one instrument.

In September 2009, the choir sang at the wedding at Hampton Court of Lord Frederick Windsor, son of TRH Prince and Princess Michael of Kent, to Miss Sophie Winkleman, and in 2010, the choristers sang carols in the Queen's Christmas Broadcast. In 2012, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year, the choir sang to Her Majesty during the Wild London event in Richmond Park, and the choristers sang at a charity concert at the Royal Festival Hall. The choristers - together with the Gentlemen - return to the South Bank in November 2013. In September 2013, the choir sang with three other royal choirs in the Windsor Festival's *Coronation Celebration* in the presence of HRH The Earl of Wessex. A similar concert took place in September 2016. In December 2013, the choristers participated in the filming of the opening sequence of ITV's *Text Santa* campaign. The palace celebrated its 500th anniversary in 2015, and the choir was involved in events to mark it. These included a documentary broadcast on BBC2 in January 2015, and a live appearance of the choristers on BBC1's *The One Show* in February 2015. The Director of Music at Hampton Court, Carl Jackson, is happy to provide further information about the choir. He may be contacted by e-mail: music@chapelroyal.org

CHORISTER AUDITION

Prospective choristers will be asked to sing:

1. A song or hymn of their own choice.
2. Major scales, ascending and descending, to various vowel sounds.

They will also be given simple ear tests, e.g. singing a short musical phrase played twice; singing the lower of two notes and the middle of three notes, played simultaneously; listening to, and then clapping, a simple rhythm.

They will also be given something to read aloud.

Instrumentalists are invited to bring one piece to play.

On arrival at the Palace, tell the warder at the gate that you are bringing your son for an audition, and ask if you may park in Works Yard. Drive up the main drive to the West Front Main Entrance and turn left, then right, into the road running along the left hand side of the Palace, Tennis Court Lane, protected by a barrier which is manned by a custody warder.

If allowed, park in Works Yard (through a pair of green double doors on the LH side of Tennis Court Lane - between the two cycle racks). Please avoid obstructing any doorways in Works Yard. Identify yourself to the warder in Reception who will notify the Chapel of your arrival. You should then proceed to the library. Walk past the Chapel entrance *and* the door marked 'Vestry', and turn left into Fountain Court. The library is through the third black railings on the left, behind the door marked "Chapel Royal - Music Room".

CHORAL SCHOLARSHIP

There is a Choral Scholarship, awarded annually by the Governors of Hampton School for entry at 11+, tenable at the Chapel Royal and the School. Scholarships may carry a remission of up to 25%. The value of a Scholarship is not dependent on parental income. Scholarships may be supplemented by means-tested Bursaries.

Information about the scholarship and the examination requirements is available from the Admissions Manager, Hampton School, Hanworth Road, HAMPTON TW12 3HD Tel: (020) 8979 9273; E-mail: admissions@hamptonschool.org.uk