

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I first met Henry a little over 42 years ago, when I was a boy of ten preparing for my new school – Truro School, the educational establishment which stood, as the then School Song put it, ‘high on the hill with the city below’. I think it was in March or April 1970 that I had an unexpected phone call from a man called Mr Doughty, who had heard from somewhere or other that I was interested in music, and who wanted to hear me sing and play the piano to find out if I was any good. He arranged to pick me up at a given time by the Museum in River Street, and from there I was whisked away to what seemed to me to be an enormous house in Carvoza Road, containing all manner of strange early instruments, and in which I was required to sight sing some fiendishly difficult treble solos, and then to give my world premiere performance on the virginals. And so began an association that would last through the rest of my school career, as I sang in Henry’s school choirs, sometimes as a soloist until my voice changed, learnt the recorder (fairly badly), studied music with him to ‘A’ level standard, and above all enjoyed seven years of organ tuition culminating in a couple of years as the School’s Organ Scholar. I can honestly say that beyond my immediate family Henry had more influence on me during my teenage years than almost any other person, and helped to nurture in me a deep love of music in general and Church music in particular that has been one of the constant passions of my life. I know that I join a whole generation of former students who would want to say the same.

But let’s start at the beginning as we tell the story of this life devoted to music and to the Church. Henry was born on 4th September 1927 in Lewisham. He attended Royston House School followed by Catford Central School. His early involvement with music and the church started when he became a chorister at Lewisham Parish Church, and had piano lessons with the organist, whose nickname apparently was ‘pimple’. (Throughout his life Henry enjoyed giving people nicknames.) His lunchtime piano practices were supervised by his mother, whilst she was doing her knitting.

At the start of the war he was evacuated to Ashford in Kent, and then in 1940 his family moved to Woking. Henry shared the house with his parents and sister, as well as an aunt who had been bombed out of her house in London, and also a harmonium, which he had in his bedroom. He became a chorister at Christ Church, Woking. Here he had organ lessons from a Margaret Walker, grandmother of Margaret Sellwood, well known to us in this cathedral.

In 1944, aged 17, Henry gained a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, although this scholarship was put on ice whilst the war and national service intervened. He was appointed Organist and Choirmaster at Saint Mary of Bethany, Woking, a Simeon Trust evangelical church with a kindly vicar who banned the word Altar – it had to be called the Holy Table. But he also did a bit of moonlighting, playing High Mass at Woodham on Sundays for 2s/6d.

In 1946, Henry was conscripted into the RAF. After his initial training, there followed an overseas posting to Bulawayo in what was then Rhodesia, where he was befriended by the Cathedral Organist there and played from time to time in the Cathedral.

In 1947, after Demob, he returned to St Mary of Bethany and began his course at the Royal Academy of Music, earning some extra money playing the organ at Brookwood Cemetery.

After graduation, Henry began his first significant jobs, as Director of Music at Marylebone Grammar School, and as Organist and Choirmaster at St Marys, Harrow on the Hill. It was during this period that he was began to organise school and choir outings and camps of which so many people have fond memories, and about which Henry used to reminisce for decades after. These trips formed the basis for organising the later Truro School Choir trips to the Isles of Scilly.

It was during this period that the usual clarinet teacher at Marylebone Grammar School was off sick, and into the breach stepped a young woman called Francesca. The rest is very happy history. Henry and Francesca were married at Harrow on the Hill in 1959 on April 1st, All Fools Day, and in honour of that day and in keeping with Henry's usual sense of humour, decided to have their honeymoon on the Isles of Scilly. (Henry's joke, not mine!) The association with Scilly was to last for the rest of Henry's life, with annual family holidays to St Martins at Easter, during which you will not be surprised to learn that Henry fitted in playing the organ for the Choral Society services and concerts on Good Friday. And we celebrate that long and happy marriage today, as we have already heard from Paul, and as we hold Anna, Paul, Gregory and Mariana in our love and prayers, together with Henry and Francesca's seven grandchildren, and all those who will miss Henry the most.

It was in 1963 that the Doughty family moved to Truro, where Henry was to begin his twenty-five years of service to Truro School as Director of Music, as well as Assistant Housemaster at Epworth Boarding House. He ran or helped to run exeat weekends for boarders, and his amazing Choir trips to the Isles of Scilly over a period of 21 years. These gave to those of us privileged to take part in them a great experience, which was an ideal combination of rules and freedom. In latter years Henry was of the opinion that health and safety legislation would have put a stop to

a lot of the freedoms and experiences which we then enjoyed, which included trips into Pipers Hole, (a smugglers tunnel on Tresco), a fairly chaotic water polo match on St Agnes, and on Samson the ritual burial of the then Headmaster Derek Burrell, up to his neck, for the inevitable picture in the School magazine with its caption ‘the Head’. I can also remember a number of staff birthdays that always seemed to fall during our time on Scilly, including two for Mr. Edwards – who seemed to share with the Queen the distinction of having both an official birthday and a real birthday, both calling for a certain amount of celebration on the off islands, and some hilarious journeys returning by boat to St Mary’s. These are indeed memories to treasure, as are the countless evenings of hospitality and fun at Carvoza Road following concerts or carol singing, and featuring mulled wine and lovely home-cooked food.

Certainly Henry’s music teaching was always memorable, whether one was a musician or not. It involved much humour as well as strict discipline, including practices which I think they have stopped recommending these days! For instance, Henry would employ the occasional assistance of a Methodist hymn book (on the head), or a ‘bicycle ride’ (which involved twirling the short hairs on boys’ sideburns) to help keep them focussed and well behaved in class. He also used some stock phrases, such as ‘Only cows and Americans chew gum’!

I can remember the day back in 1971 when Henry was appointed as Assistant Organist here at the Cathedral. He told us all about it at our school choir practice, and how for him it represented the peak of his musical achievement. For someone whose working life had been centred around music and the Church, the chance to serve within a Cathedral environment was an incredible opportunity, and a task to which Henry devoted nearly 20 years of his life, working with John Winter, whose own passing we marked earlier this year, and then with David Briggs. I can vividly remember a conversation that I had with Henry all those years ago, when I asked him why the Cathedral Choir sang Evensong every day, even when there was hardly anybody here. He told me that while he enjoyed the big occasions of the year when the place was full, what he liked most of all was a weekday Evensong on a cold February day with hardly any congregation, because it was then that you knew that you were doing something for God, and not for yourself. And God demanded the very best you could offer. It was an insight that was totally new to me at the time, but which has sustained me over the years and helped me to appreciate what a privilege it is simply to worship God as an act of Christian duty and service. I think that that was at the heart of Henry’s spirituality too in his long and distinguished career in Church music.

And perhaps that was never clearer than during Henry’s retirement, when it was my privilege to get to know him again in a very different role, and during which he kept

his close ties with music and the Church, organising the Diocesan Choral Festival and serving on the committee of the Cornwall Music Festival. We owe him an immense debt of gratitude for so much faithful service to this place, and not least for his sterling work as Choir Librarian, working behind the scenes to keep our music library in order, and to preserve music sheets and hymn books for decades beyond their normal lifespan by his unique restoration techniques using sticky tape, sticky backed plastic and Dymo tape. It is this unseen and unsung act of Christian service, even more than his leadership roles in former years, that best illustrates the profound sense of duty by which Henry lived his life, and for which we have so much cause to celebrate today. As a token of that, he received the Royal Maundy in 1994, the Royal School of Church Music certificate in 2008, and finally the St Piran Cross only last year. These are but tokens of our gratitude for a life of service to music and to the Church, as well as signs of our appreciation for those who carry on that noble tradition, and help us keep our worship and our lives truly 'in tune with heaven'.

May he rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.