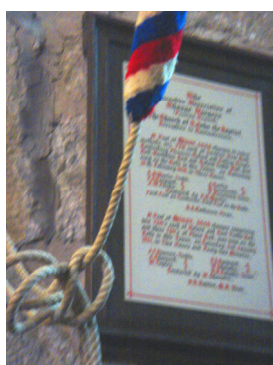


BROUGHTON CHOIR

SAINT JOHN BAPTIST PARISH CHURCH

Broughton Choirboys in the 1940's

How different being a Choirboy in the 1940's was from 2008 ... and yet some things never change ...



Every Sunday we gathered in the small vestry on the North side of the Church above the Coke-fired Boiler Room. There were maybe up to 16 boys all arriving with their parents on foot; nobody had a car in those days.

During the War years the Organist and Choirmaster, Mr Willie Redmayne, had recruited a handful of ladies to sing in the choir to swell the numbers, and there were only a few men until the younger members came back after the War.

Mr Redmayne was a gentle person and this was reflected in the way the music was presented. There were no carpets in either the nave or the chancel so the sound was very different from today and we were taught to sing in a style which we were later told was "Bel-Canto".

The Sunday Services were similar to those of today, but with Mattins and Evensong every Sunday. In those days before the Service started, the people in the congregation sat in absolute silence as there were no bells; they were not rung until Sunday 11th May 1945, the first Sunday after peace had been declared.

We wore black cassocks with stiff white collars, but as the Choir grew, new robes had to be ordered and a change was made to red cassocks and ruffs. A much improved kit!



Some of us in later years were able to attend RSCM courses at various venues around the country, and to sing at Special Festival Services in a number of different Cathedrals. We also had an unbelievable Football Team - wearing *proper* Football Boots!
Happy Days!

Mr David Piercy
Boy Treble 1945-1951