

The York Minster Choristers' Association

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The Association was inaugurated on 8th May 1907 as the York Minster Choir Old Boys' Association and held its first reunion AGM and Dinner on 3rd October 1907. Some sixty six Old Choristers attended this first reunion and it was reported in the "Yorkshire Herald" - "The many 'old boys' gathered together found that it was indeed pleasant to renew old friendships and association, and to once again sing together within the grand old Cathedral". In 1910 York Old Boys' Association was a founder member of the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations (FCOCA) and Arthur Hardgrave (York) became its first chairman. York was host to the first Annual Festival of the FCOCA on 6th July 1912 and has hosted subsequent festivals in 1938; 1960; 1977 and 1992.

On 19th January 1997 girls were admitted into the York Minster Choral Foundation, marking a key moment in the development of the Minster's choral tradition. The Association was duly renamed to York Minster Old Choristers' Association and was pleased to welcome its first two female members in the summer of 2007.

In 2005 we embarked upon an important initiative with the foundation of the Francis Jackson Choral Fund. The Francis Jackson Choral Fund is a registered charity (no. 1112876) established by the York Minster Choristers' Association for the sole purpose of raising funds to support the continuance of the great choral tradition at York Minster

In 2010 the Association revised its constitution to reflect a desire expressed between members and the Minster to work more closely with the current choristers and songmen to make a positive contribution to the continuance of that choral tradition. The fundamental change was that Association membership now commences on being "read in" to the choir. The Association is now named the York Minster Choristers' Association. Associate membership of the Association is also available by application to any other person sharing our objectives, as outlined above and detailed in the Association Rules.

Forthcoming events

The 105th Reunion of the Association will be on Saturday 22nd September 2018. Reunion day commences with Eucharist in the Minster at 10am followed by the AGM and annual lunch in the Minster School. After Choral Evensong in the Minster at 17.15, the day's events conclude with a short reception in the Chapter House, leaving those attending free from about 7pm. A social event for the evening of Friday 21st is being planned for the benefit of those able to be in York for the weekend. For more details of our plans for the whole weekend, please do contact the Association via the new Email address below.

Associated Organisations

The Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations (FCOCA) produces the magazine Once a Chorister annually in the spring. This is available online at onceachorister.org. We continue to support FCOCA.

Membership enquiries

If you are a former Chorister or Songman of York, a member of another Cathedral Choristers' Association, are otherwise interested in membership or have any other queries please contact us via: yorkmca@outlook.com

YMCA Officers

President

- The Very Reverend Keith Jones, Dean Emeritus

Vice Presidents

- The Residentiary Canons
- The Master of the Music
- The Headmaster of the Minster School
- Dr Francis Jackson CBE
- Michael Backhouse
- The Reverend Jeremy Fletcher
- John D Cooper

Chairman

- Michael Backhouse

Hon. Treasurer

- Stewart Pearson

Hon. Secretary

- Philip Sowley

Committee members

- David Amende
- Mathew Hallett
- Rev. John Roden
- Stewart Pearson
- Philip Sowley
- Peter Aksamit-Hollingworth

Trustees of The Francis Jackson Choral Fund

- Michael Backhouse
- Stewart Pearson
- Rev John Rode