

# Arts

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# Choristers unite for The Creation

**T**HE spiritual voices of some of the region's top choristers have re-united around Kendal Parish Church in the past few months with the huge and highly successful Cumbria Choral Initiative's Mass Solemnity event and Kendal South Choir's moving performance of Bach's *St John Passion*.

The next 'battle' on the choral calendar is also at the church and sees Stavely and Burnside choral societies join forces to stage Haydn's *The Creation* on Saturday, May 13 (7.30pm).

Also on parade is the Lakeland Ensemble with well-known Cumbrian organist and composer Adrian Sell, contributing his musical skills.

*The Creation* was re-marked by Stavely for its Millennium special, inviting Burnside to share the spotlight. Taking up the conductor's baton is James Palmer, a much-respected man of music.

Head of music at Kirkcubbin Kendal School, he has directed Stavely Choral Society for the last three seasons, during which time the choir has successfully performed programmes including works by John Tavener, Adrian Sell and Haydn composers Vivaldi and Handel.

Brought up in the West Country, James studied music at Lancaster and Liverpool universities.

He was leader of the Lancaster University symphony and chamber orchestras, conductor of the university vocal band and takes the stage regularly with the Lakeland Sinfonia and the Westmorland Orchestra.

A mixer guy you could not wish to meet, he has a broad range of musical taste covering jazz, hip-hop, world and contemporary music, as well as the more conventional classical repertoire, and really encourages youngsters to widen their musical outlook.

Soloists for May 13 are acclaimed Heverham-based tenor, Jules Cox, past member of BBC Northern Singers and in demand performer Nigel Waugh, baritone, and soprano Anthea Kempton, a student at Manchester's Royal Northern College of Music who has played several operatic roles and made many concert appearances, including a recording of *The Innocents Suite* by George Antheil with the BBC Philharmonic released last October. Anthea also landed the 1998 Cumbria Choral Prize for Fresh Start.

All-in-all another choral feast in the offing.

For the record, Stavely and Burnside go way back, first singing together in 1870 when the Burnside and Stavely Choral Union was formed.

Stavely's first conductor was James Capper, a paper-making musician, church organist and choirmaster.

And the ensemble entered the first Mary Wakefield Festival in 1855.

Mrs A.H. Willink took over as conductor in 1886 with the union branching out into two choirs sometime after the First World War.

Tickets for *The Creation* are £5/£3 students, from Market Place Books, Kendal, on 015394-43782, or from choir members.



ABOVE: Stavely and Burnside choral societies combined choir pictured at rehearsals in Kendal Parish Church.



LEFT: One of the soloists for Haydn's *The Creation*, which is being presented on May 13 at Kendal Parish Church.

(Contributed photos)



**MULTI-TALENTED LEADER:** Musician James Palmer picks up the baton to conduct Stavely and Burnside choral societies' presentation of Haydn's *The Creation*.