

Oxford Walk & Talk "Spires and Choirs"

Duration: approx 45 mins

Updated November 2012 by Noel & Pauline Martin

Oxford colleges with choirs include Lincoln, Queen's, New College, St John's, Exeter, Magdalen, Corpus Christi and Christ Church (unique, in that the college chapel is also the cathedral church of Oxford). Some chapels offer services to which the public are welcome. Oxford also offers several excellent music venues including the Holywell Music Room and the Jacqueline du Pré Music Building at St Hilda's College.

The walk

- 1. From Bonn Square, walk across Queen Street and downhill along St Ebbe's Street; turn left and walk along Pembroke Street. Between numbers 12 and 11 Pembroke Street turn right into the narrow passageway between the buildings. This leads into Pembroke Square. 'Beef Lane' is marked by a nameplate but is closed to the public. To your left as you enter Pembroke Square is **St Aldate's Church**. Walk with the church on your left to St Aldate's cross with care. Ahead, beneath 'Tom Tower' is a gateway to **Christ Church**. Here via Tom Quad (rather than through the Visitors' Gate lower down St Aldate's at Christ Church meadows), is the access to **the Cathedral** which has its own choir and choir school (service times are on display, beside Tom Gate).
- 2. Walk uphill along St Aldate's to the Town Hall, where turn right into Blue Boar Street, continuing along Bear Lane to its end. Bear right to walk across Oriel Square, past the rear of Christ Church on your right, to Merton Street. Pass the entrance to Corpus Christus (where choral evensongs are held on special occasions) and just beyond is access to Merton College Chapel (and at one time a parish church, which is why it has a door on to the street though this is no longer used). The noticeboard on the chapel door gives details of services and visiting times when members of the public are welcome to visit the chapel.
- Turn left and walk along Magpie Lane to its end at High Street. Ahead of you, across High Street, observe the spire of the University Church of St Mary the Virgin. Choral evensong is held here on Sundays.

(Out of sight to your right is the **tower of Magdalen College**, several hundred metres away beyond Longwall Street. It is at the top of the









- tower on May Morning, that choristers from Magdalen College School sing the traditional Hymnus Eucharisticus, with great revelry taking place below. **Magdalen College** has a fine chapel.)
- 4. Cross High Street with care; turn left and walk along High Street passing the University Church to your right, then turn immediately right and walk through St. Mary's Passage into Radcliffe Square. Note the impressive spires and ornamentations of **All Souls College** across the Square, to your right and, behind you, an alternative view of the spire of St Mary's. Continue ahead and turn left into Brasenose Lane. Walk ahead to its end at Turl Street.
- 5. Turn right from Brasenose Lane into Turl Street. On your right, the gateway to **Exeter College** gives access to its fine chapel. Concerts, often featuring Baroque music, are held here. Ahead of you across Broad Street, beyond fine gates is the chapel of **Trinity College**.
- 6. Do not walk to the end of Turl Street; instead turn left and walk along Ship Street to Cornmarket. On your right at the approach to Cornmarket is the church of **St Michael at the Northgate**. Evensong is held at 6pm on alternate Sundays. Look back along Ship Street and you will see the spire of **Exeter College Chapel**.
- Cross Cornmarket and walk along St Michael's Street to its end; ahead as you walk is the tower of the Wesley Memorial Church, in New Inn Hall Street.

Here the walk ends. Bonn Square is a few yards to your left along New Inn Hall Street. If you find any anomalies in this route, please email info@oxstreets.org.uk

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