

Peter Smith was born in Edmonton in 1944 and educated at the Latymer Grammar School and at Durham University, where he gained an honours music degree under the legendary Professor Arthur Hutchings. He then taught in schools for thirty-three years, of which the last twenty-eight were spent as Director of Music at Bishop Stopford's School, Enfield, where he established a strong choral tradition and installed a two-manual pipe organ in the school hall. He was Organist and Choirmaster at Edmonton Parish Church from 1967 to 1978, moving to a similar post at St Mary's, Cheshunt in 1979, and gaining, in course of time, the Fellowship (1970) and Choir-training (1983) Diplomas of the RCO. There was also a wonderful opportunity to study Bach and French repertoire with Peter Hurford in St Albans during the academic year 1975-6.

Peter worked extensively for the RSCM between 1972 and 1990, finally directing prestigious choral courses at Lincoln Cathedral from 1986 to 1990, and broadcasting three times for the BBC as organist or director. Since early retirement from schoolteaching in 2000, Peter has pursued new projects including solo and choral singing, organ improvisation, overseeing the complete restoration of the fine Hill organ at Cheshunt, and conducting a research project into the choral music of Charles Villiers Stanford (MMus, Dunelm 2009).

In January 2013, after leaving his post at Cheshunt, Peter undertook a position as temporary organist/choirmaster at St John's, Friern Barnet, and is now fulfilling a similar task at Ware Parish Church, as well as playing, directing and singing in other venues on a freelance basis. Hobbies include walking, travel, reading, visiting museums, art galleries, churches and country houses, and attending concerts, operas and recitals. Peter has also been known to watch snooker on the telly, together with repeats (on 'Dave') of 'Have I got news for you', 'QI' and 'Mock the Week'.