

LUCIAN NETHSINGHA

Lucian came to St Michael's as Organist and Choirmaster straight from King's College, Cambridge where he had worked for his degree in music. In the chapel at King's the music was directed by the legendary Boris Ord, whose work had a significant influence on Lucian. Watkins Shaw, in his tribute to Lucian when he left St Michael's to be Organist and Master of the Choristers at Exeter Cathedral, wrote that he quickly won the loyalty of the choir, and praised the quality of his organ playing. As the writer of his obituary in the *Church Times* put it - *he enhanced an already fine reputation*.

As a student myself at Cambridge, I heard Lucian return to play recitals at King's, and listened to broadcasts of Evensong on the radio from St Michael's. He regularly broadcast organ recitals from the College – perhaps it is largely forgotten that he was an extremely fine organist. Later still, a friend introduced me to the excellent LP that Lucian and his choir recorded for the ARGO label ... *Sing Joyfully*.

In due course I applied for the post at St Michael's and met Lucian for the first time. He could not have been more supportive of me in my first position in charge. The phone line between St Michael's and Exeter was busy in my early days as he patiently answered my questions about this and that aspect of the choir's life and work. I was extraordinarily fortunate to take over a choir that was so well run and trained. This situation, of course, can be a daunting one ... maintaining that level of excellence is a challenge as, if not sustained, the downward slope is all too obvious. Lucian went on to do similarly great work at Exeter, but that's a story for another day. Here, at St Michael's, his name will be treasured by countless boys who worked with him and the lay clerks who sang in his choir. St Michael's was blessed to have had a share in this lovely man's talents, and we are all the better for knowing him.

Roger Judd (Master of the Music, 1973-85)

