

The Choral Chronicle

WORCESTER
FESTIVAL
CHORAL
SOCIETY

Summer 2011

150 years of great music making

1861 - 2011

Chairman

Mark Elliston

Hello to all WFCS members! It's hard to believe that almost four months have gone by since we performed the curtain-raiser for our anniversary year, the magnificent *Belshazzar's Feast*. I hope you enjoyed singing it (and the accompanying *Songs of the Fleet*) and from an artistic point of view I think we really excelled ourselves that night.

Adrian Lucas. It is with great regret that I inform you (if you haven't heard already) that our Musical Director will be leaving us at the end of the forthcoming season. Adrian is stepping down as Master of the Cathedral Choristers at the end of December but I'm glad to say will be staying with us for the duration of the season, so making the St John Passion in March 2012 his last concert directing us. Adrian has decided to set up his own music production company and we wish him every success. Adrian has been with us since 1997 and over that time has made a remarkable contribution to our artistic achievements and he will be very much missed. Let's now make this an exceptional 'finale' year for Adrian before he leaves us!

150th Annivserary Concert and Gala Dinner. The autumn term will see the climax of our anniversary celebrations as we perform Elgar's choral masterpiece, *The Dream of Gerontius* on November 19th. We welcome back Mezzo-Soprano Catherine King and she will be accompanied by Adrian Thompson (Tenor), Darren Jeffries (Bass) and the Chameleon Arts Orchestra. We very much hope this will be a spectacular concert as befitting a choral society which can claim Elgar as one of its founding members.

Our Gala Dinner is a Black Tie event and will be held on Friday, October 21st in the historic Assembly Room at the Guildhall, Worcester. This really will be a most prestigious event as we shall be welcoming, amongst other honorary guests, WFCS previous conductors Sir David Willcocks, Christopher Robinson and Donald Hunt, together with our present conductor Adrian Lucas, as our guests that night. Your invitation is enclosed with this letter and I urge you to respond, with your cheque, as soon as possible as, unfortunately, there is a restriction of numbers in the Guildhall for a sit-down meal. Hopefully we will be able to take all who apply but, in the event of an over-subscription, your cheque will not be banked unless a ticket is issued to you. Finally, we will be holding a raffle after the dinner and we are looking for some really nice prizes to win, so please let me know if you (or with your friends) can donate anything really special for the occasion.

Coffee Morning and Plant Sale. I would like to say a very big thank-you to Sue White and her team of helpers for putting on a very successful day at the Guildhall on May 7th - we raised over £550 despite it being a rainy day. Likewise the **Quiz Night & Supper** in March where £650 was raised, these events have been great social get-togethers for chorus members outside of the cathedral.

Summer Concert 2012 – A Celebration of Worcestershire Music. WFCS have been invited to join forces with the Elgar Chorale to sing Elgar's *The Kingdom* in Worcester Cathedral on Saturday, June 2nd 2012, being the final concert in a series of concerts in the county celebrating Worcestershire music. Under the baton of conductor Donald Hunt, this concert is being staged to co-incide not only with Elgar's birth date but also the Queen's Diamond Jubilee that starts that weekend. We hope that as many members as possible will volunteer to sing in this concert which I understand will require 4 rehearsals of which 3 would be compulsory. More details to follow at a later date, but please mark this down in your diary now!

Weekly Raffle. Louise Remedios has regrettably had to stand down from running the weekly raffle, so please could I have a volunteer(s) to take over from her. The raffle raises over £700 per season

Message from the Treasurer**David Norledge**

Hello everyone! For this coming season I'm sure you'll be pleased to hear that, unlike our energy companies, I've been able to hold the subscriptions at their current level of £100. There is a caveat though. Last season, the Society lost more than £4,000, due in large part to the nature of the programme we staged. This season orchestral costs should be lower which ought to bring us back to balance. However, without increased ticket sales, we can't be sure of this and so I'm not going to make any apologies for urging you to start thinking **now** about how you as individuals are going to ensure more bottoms on the Cathedral pews in 2011-12. I'm afraid Chorus ticket sales for Belshazzar were disappointing (only 33% of total sales compared to 46% in November 2010) and all the more so considering that 40 of the 151 sold were actually shifted by only six individuals. With a programme encompassing Gerontius, Messiah and the Bach St John Passion, there's really no excuse not to get friends and family interested in coming. By doing so you will also help to ensure that subscriptions rise as little as possible in coming years. Anyway here endeth the lesson and on a more positive note, we have a great Anniversary season of music to enjoy, so it'll be great to welcome you all back in September."

Marketing Manager needs some help!**Patrick Aydon**

Although I am happy to continue to produce the programmes and associated publicity material for WFCS (at least until 2013/14 when I may be travelling abroad!) I am struggling to do that AND sell and co-ordinate Advertising for the Programme, which as we all know helps cover costs of production, enabling the Society to hopefully keep some profit from Programme sales.

I would really welcome help from a Society member or friend with this work. Please contact me for further details of what is involved....at most, a few hours 3 or 4 times a year. Patrick Aydon on Tel: 01886 880188 or enigma14@btinternet.com

Singers Anonymous and see Gabrielle Bullock on stage at The Swan Theatre

Gabrielle Bullock (Alto WFCS) tells us of an interesting reunion of former WFCS members. 'Singers Anonymous' was a madrigal group formed by and from sixth formers at local schools (mainly Kings, Royal Grammar, Alice Ottley and St Mary's Convent) in 1963. Some 48 years after their first performance in the Worcester Festival of 1963, they are meeting up during the Three Choirs 2011 Festival.

A number of the group have distinguished musical careers, including Founder John Pryce-Jones (Conductor at the Welsh National and Scottish Operas and Opera North, Musical Director of Northern Ballet and of the Halifax Choral Society); Stephen Cleobury (Director of Music at Kings College Cambridge and former President of the Royal College of Organists); Nicholas Cleobury (Founder of the Britten Symphonia and International Orchestral, Opera and Choral Conductor); Guy Protheroe (Conductor of the English Chamber Choir and internationally known for his Progressive Rock and orchestral concerts with Rick Wakeman) and Peter Smith (Conductor of the Aldwyn Voices and Founder of the Malvern Music Festival.

Gabrielle is delighted that Dr Christopher Robinson and Dr Harry Brama, who were organist and assistant organist at Worcester in 1963 and who were so influential in the careers of many 'Singers Anonymous' members, are joining the choir for their reunion.

During Festival week, Gabrielle is also performing at the Swan Theatre, Worcester, in a professional production of Peter Sutton's play, 'Elgar and Alice', which explores the relationship between Sir Edward and Lady Elgar. Tuesday 9th, Wed 10th, Thurs 11th at 7.30pm or see Festival brochure for matinee on Thursday.

Dates for your diary, 2011 - 2012

First Rehearsal date of Autumn term: Monday, 5th September
Open Rehearsal date: 12th September AGM: 19th September
WFCS 150th Anniversary Gala Dinner, the Guildhall Worcester: Friday, 21st October
Half Term break : 24th October
Autumn / Gala concert date, *The Dream of Gerontius*: 19th November
December Concert: *Messiah*: 10th December
First Rehearsal date of Spring Term: Monday, January 9th
Half Term break: 21st February
Quiz Night & Supper, Powick Village Hall: Friday, March 9th
Spring Concert, *St John Passion*: 24th March
Summer concert with Elgar Chorale, *The Kingdom*: June 2nd.

Organ Recital, Great Malvern Priory

Geoff Fearnough

WFCS tenor, Ian Ball is giving an organ recital at Great Malvern Priory on Saturday 15 October at 1200 noon.

As this year is the Liszt bicentenary his programme concentrates on his works:

Fantasia & Fugue on *Ad nos, ad salutarem undam*

Am Grabe Richard Wagner

Fantasia & Fugue on BACH.

Retiring Collection. Large screen video projection

Data Protection & Equal Opportunities Policies

Equal Opportunities Policy

The Society is and always has been committed to equal treatment of all its members, regardless of age, race, colour, disability or other protected characteristic. Over the summer we have produced a written policy which clearly outlines the Society's approach. A copy of the policy is available on request. You may approach any member of the Committee to discuss any matter relating to equality and diversity. Your concerns will be dealt with sensitively and kept strictly confidential.

Data Protection Policy

The Society is aware of its legal obligations relating to processing and using members' personal data and has accordingly drafted a policy document (available on request). The Committee will be carrying out regular reviews of the data held on past and current members in order to ensure continued compliance with the law. You can help by responding to the Committee's requests for up-to-date contact details. If you have any concerns about the way in which your data is being used, please speak to Lesley Bellerby in the first instance.

Committee Contacts

Chairman	Mark Elliston (B)	01684 569557	mark@elliston.me.uk
ViceChairman / Marketing	Patrick Aydon (B)	01886 880188	enigma14@btinternet.com
General Secretary	Lesley Bellerby (A)	01562 820409	lbellerby@tiscali.co.uk
Treasurer	David Norledge (T)	07930 982752	dnorledge@moog.com
Membership and Website	Sally Rees (S)	01684 564721	rees.sallyjane@gmail.com
Tickets Secretary	Judy Jenkins (A)	01905 354533	jgjenkins@btinternet.com
Librarian	Joan Willis (A)	01684 594570	joanwillis.courtlea@btopenworld.com
Patrons Secretary	Anne Renshaw (S)	01905 351736	annerenshaw@me.com
Social Secretary	Sue White (A)	07970 597229	susan.white36@btinternet.com