



CHORAL NOTES – Spring 2011

From the New Front of House Manager

Having freelanced as Front of House Manager on a couple of occasions in the recent past, I recently accepted Peter's kind invitation to take on the job on a more formal basis. He cunningly left out the part about penning a few lines for Choral Notes as well, so here I am wondering what to say. Actually that's quite a good place to start as my surname is Say and if that sounds at all familiar, my wife Stephanie is a long standing, if not exactly tall standing, member of the Alto line. (My name is Martin by the way).

I hope you will be reassured that despite my being a novice in front of house matters, I can at least sympathise with all that you go through in putting on a concert having been a singer myself. I can only hope that as in singing, practice will make perfect and my efforts will become as polished as yours.

I may on occasion have to ask for volunteers from among your partners, family members or friends who come along to support you, to assist at the start with a bit of programme selling or ticket checking. With the Committee's help I hope to put in place a more permanent solution, but for now and as back-up cover, willing volunteers are always appreciated.

We thank Martin for taking on this important role at our concerts and look forward to working regularly with him.

Beethoven's Choral Fantasia

My copy of the Novello edition of the piano score of Beethoven's Choral Fantasia bears the date 1973 on the inside cover in my handwriting. The Choral Society performed the work that year in the Swinburne Hall. The chorus only sings at the end of the Fantasia after a long piano and orchestral introduction and the score begins a mere eleven bars before the chorus comes in. I remember feeling nervous as to whether I would recognize when the chorus was due to make its entry. However, the sopranos and altos come in one bar before the tenors and basses; so I just relied on the ladies.

But my most vivid memory of the occasion was nothing to do with the music at all. It was at the afternoon rehearsal. Double-doors open onto the stage from the corridor which ran along by the Swinburne Hall. The solo pianist was sitting at the piano with his back to these doors. Unfortunately, people going to and fro kept leaving the doors open letting a chilly draft in. Eventually, the pianist got fed up with the cold on his back and, at a lull in the rehearsal, he rose from the piano-stool and turned towards the doors. Dramatically, he bent almost double and, raising both arms in front of his face, he struggled slowly across the stage as though fighting a howling blizzard in Antarctica. He shut the doors and returned to his place. Nobody left them open after that.

Gordon Kuphal

Continued.....

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2011

Sat. March 12th	Cherubini, Beethoven and Haydn concert.
Wed. April 13th	Last practice before Easter break.
Wed. May 11th	Practice resumes for summer concert.
Sat. June 25th	Summer Serenade in St. Botolphs Church: 'a capella' singing of works by Byrd/Britten/Debussy/SaintSaens + Cello and Piano pieces.
Wed. June 29 th	BBQ at Jill's on Mersea Island
14 th - 18 th July	Rouen Concert Tour (see below).
Wed. September 7th	Start of autumn term.
Wed. September 21 st	Annual General Meeting followed by regular rehearsal.
Sat. November 19th	Concert in St. Botolph's: Vaughan-Williams and Bullard.
Sunday December 11 th	Wassail Concert in the Moot Hall.

Choir tour to Rouen

There are now only four months to go before the trip to Rouen and the plans are moving ahead. Departure is on Thursday 14th July, leaving Colchester about 6.00 a.m., and returning on Monday 18th July, arriving back in the evening. There will be just over forty in the party, of whom about thirty are singers. If you are quick, there is still room for a few more to come along.

Arrangements are being made for two musical performances. Unfortunately, we will probably not be able to accompany mass in Rouen Cathedral, as it is currently undergoing re-furbishment. We are expecting to make one or two visits by coach - possibly to Caen and Bayeux (famous of course for the tapestry), Giverny (to see Monet's garden), or to Honfleur, a charming small port. If you have a preference about these, please let me know.

If you are going on the trip and have not already done so, would you see me immediately to confirm your name on your passport and your accommodation arrangements at the hotel. Also, the sooner I have information from you about your holiday insurance the better. Finally, would you please note that, owing to the break in rehearsals for Easter, we shall need your final cheque of £300 by Wednesday 6th April (not as stated in the recent bulletin 13th April).

Gordon Kuphal

Wassail Concert this December

We have a three week rehearsal period this year, which may allow us to be a little more ambitious with the programme. There may also be some sponsorship, but we are still looking for a school choir. If you have contacts with a school (a larger Primary or Secondary) which might want to sing with us in the Moot Hall, please let me know.

Peter Douch

Loss of a good Friend

We are sad to report that Moray Graham, a Friend of the Society who both enjoyed our music and worked hard on our behalf to recruit Corporate Patrons, has recently passed away. He will be missed.

Chairman: Peter Douch Secretary: Pauline Heselden: Tel: 01206 570952
Treasurer: Sue Connolly Musical director: Ian Ray
Committee members: Gordon Kuphal, Lindsay Wilson, Nigel Humphreys, Catherine Crocker