

06/10/2008 Choir Notices

Rehearsal 9 of 13 (15/16, 25, 26, 14, 35, 33)

Linda Corcoran Workshop

Members have been asking for vocal training sessions, so I asked some time back if members were interested in a vocal workshop in October (albeit on a Saturday) and the response was positive. As explained, it was not possible to arrange it for a Saturday, and the only option was a Thursday. I fully appreciate that our week-nights are precious/busy, but the show of hands last week was in truth disappointing.

As proved at the Perrin workshop, the inexperienced can learn a lot, and for the old hands who have perhaps grown a little complacent, well, it does one good to blow off the cobwebs occasionally.

Linda is very accomplished, a great personality, and a hugely talented and successful singer and conductor. An evening's workshop with her should be beneficial to everyone, experienced singers and newbies alike.

So, please sign up on the list (which will be in the coffee room) if you are interested. The committee wishes this event to be budget neutral, so be prepared to pay a couple of quid for your coffee and biscuit.

Staging – an update

(The committee intends making a final decision on this in the half hour before this week's rehearsal, but this is the background.)

With increased numbers to seat, and worries about the safety of the DMVC staging we usually borrow (very gratefully indeed), and with a few hard earned quid in the coffers, the cttee has been forced to bite the bullet and consider the options.

The problem

At St James', we have one or two rows in front of the altar rails. In the area behind the altar rail, we usually have two chair rows on the flat and use the first two rows of the DMVC staging. (We don't stand on the third row due to absence of safety rails.) That's four rows in total. We now need to seat six rows in this area, including the bit on the raised choir stall area, and therefore need four rows of raised staging.

Array Options

Option 1: low-rise tiers of 200mm (8") upon which we place benches. Regulations regarding seatway allowance and our limited space mean that we can't have chairs throughout – we can't provide the statutory legroom. With 8" tiers, we would still have to beware of the singers' height and bouffant hairdos. And that's just the men.

Option 2: high-rise tiers of 450mm (18"), where we stand on one tier and sit on the one behind – exactly like we do on the DMVC staging. Bring your own cushion. All singers on the tiers would be seen and heard clearly. And fewer chairs to find.

Sourcing and funding

Hiring: costs £500 including delivery for Sat-Mon hire. This has been discounted as an option.

Borrowing staging from schools/other choirs: no practicable option found.

Joint Ownership: Cotswold Chorus have said they have no funds available. DMVC has funds, but doesn't know where it will be singing in future. St James' has no need for staging, nor space for storage. We are on our own.

Sole Ownership: would give us a solution for the next 20 years or so, with just storage and transportation to solve. We would be at the mercy of no other organisation for sourcing our staging. We could also hire it out to other organisations.

Grants: difficult to justify asking for funds when we have the money available. Grants also take an age to apply for. Our problem is pressing. After all, we only knew at the end of July what our numbers would be.

Storage

A long-term solution, in Dursley, is required. ALL members are urged to give this some SERIOUS thought to find a solution pronto. We have to house two trolleys, 2 metres by 1 metre, stacked about 4 feet high (to mix my Imperial and metric). Renishaw and Kingshill House have already said no can do.

Transportation

By short wheelbase van (hired - £70) or by borrowed van or trailer. Again, ALL to give this some thought.

Quotes

We have quotes from four suppliers, ranging from £5500 to £7700. These prices already include a hard-won 20% discount. The worst quote was £11000 plus!! These include all safety railings and trolleys, etc. Guess which one we are considering. All these systems are robust and comply with loading/safety regs.

This has been a stinking amount of work for the committee – measuring, drawing sketches, finding hirers/suppliers, haggling. Now it is YOUR TURN to do some work – to find the storage and transportation we need.

Over to you, dear hearts. Network as if your lives depended upon it.

Don't let us down.