



Tyndale Choral Society

Newsletter

No. 20

Autumn
2003

Conductor's offering

These are the last in the series of notes for the Autumn Newsletter which I shall be writing. I am very grateful to Dick Skinner for his skill and patience in the compiling of these and also the information cards for members of the Society. Dick has been responsible too for compiling the concert programmes and has organised their printing. It is a fervent hope from both of us that members of the Society will one day contribute their own material to these Newsletters. Why not write your impressions of the previous concert?

I have scores of happy memories of the times I have worked with the Tyndale Choral Society and the encouragement I received from Mollie Neale also. I still half expect her to be sitting in her usual seat at our concerts. I hope you will continue to make music together under the musical direction of Ian Harrold and I hope you will let me know when you are performing.

I will remember my first season with you. Owing to the speed of the previous conductor's move to Norway, the music for the two concerts had already been chosen and I can remember taking my Dover full score of the *Requiem* by Verdi on holiday and studying it in the sunny garden of the mobile home we had rented in the South of France. Elizabeth was about 12 and Stephen was 10. (Dover have increased the number of scores they publish and this year I have *Creation* by Haydn.). Dick Skinner was Chairman and Anne Shipton was Secretary. That concert was memorable and will always be in my thoughts when I hear the Verdi. I still have a very fine performance on cassette which I bought at the time.

Last summer's concert at Wotton was a trip down memory lane for Tina and myself as *Salad Days* was performed by our church opera group with Tina as Jane and myself as Musical Director. The Tyndale performance brought back

happy memories of that early performance. I also remember a touring company performing it at the Everyman Theatre some ten years ago. Ian Harrold was not in that performance but when we later performed *Free As Air* by the same authors he had a part. The group I am writing about also included Richard Bacon who has sung twice for us.

I was so pleased with the way that the chorus entered into the spirit of our performance at Wotton and we had some really individual interpretations by our own line-up of soloists which demonstrates the wealth of talent we have. Frankie Telford wrote and performed the narration to help us keep up with the plot. The audience were quick to show their enjoyment.

The Brahms Love Song Waltzes were sung with style and sensitivity. Eighteen movements all in waltz time but demanding so many different moods and styles. The Five Mystical Songs sung so effectively by Philip Webb and I see from my collection of programmes that he was the bass soloist in the North Nibley Concert in my second full season in 1989. The choir sang this really well and the consonants were just where I am sure Vaughan-Williams wanted them.

Jillian Whitehead

It is sad to record the death from cancer of Jillian Whitehead. Jillian should have been our soloist in our opera concert which included excerpts from *Merrie England* in 2000, but the onset of throat cancer caused her to withdraw. I was so delighted when she was able to be our soloist in the Summer Concert in July 2001 and she sang the solos in our performance of John Rutter's *Magnificat* as well as solos by John Ireland, Thomas Arne and Sir Edward Elgar. She was really on form and sang beautifully.

Sadly, the cancer returned last year and although she fought it courageously, it was too much for her to cope with. She died in July this year after a few days in the Sue Ryder Home in Leckhampton and I went to the funeral at Standish Parish Church, which was packed with friends, most of them singers, who had come to remember her. The singing was superb and drowned out the sound of the organ. It was a very moving occasion.

Chairman's Message

Welcome back to the second half of our season. I am looking forward to the November concert very much and I hope that you are too.

The concert is a big undertaking and will require full commitment from you all.

Please attend as many rehearsals as you can and don't forget to let Michael, Angela or myself know if you are unable to attend for any reason.

It would be good if we could recruit some more members for this concert as the orchestra is quite large and a few more singers, particularly tenors or basses would be excellent!

Please support the bring and buy stall and buy a cup of coffee in the interval. This is an important source of income for the society and it means that we can keep the subscription at a reasonable rate.

This will be our last concert with Michael as our conductor and I am sure we are going to make it a memorable one.

Anne Shipton

Making Music South West visitor report

The atmosphere throughout was light-hearted and relaxed, especially in the second half, which seemed right for a summer concert and very much in tradition for this society.

I had not heard the Love Song Waltzes before but they gave the choir the opportunity of matching the male voices against the female in alternate sections. The choir obviously enjoyed singing them and that enjoyment was conveyed to the audience.

Salad Days, as a concert version, though dated, was well presented as a full period piece, complete with clear narrator and strong leads from Tina Power and Philip Webb. It also gave individual members of the choir a change for solo singing.

Excellent accompaniment on piano and Christopher Boodle's organ solos on the historic organ originally played by Handel in St. Martin's in the Fields.

An enjoyable summer concert. Thank you Tyndale Choral Society

Diary Dates and Other Matters**New Members**

Please encourage potential new members to come along to rehearsals at the start of the season, in particular, and make sure you introduce them to the Secretary, Angela Sinton, so that she can welcome them and take their details.

Sales Stall: The stall continues to make an important contribution to the funds, so bring along books, plants and other produce, records, tapes and anything else that is saleable, and in any case visit the stall and buy.

Subscriptions: Please pay early in the season. If by chance you have not yet paid, the rate was £37 if paid before 19th May, otherwise £38 (see card) and £18.50 (or £19.00 after 19th May) for full-time students. If you yourself pay tax, you can Gift Aid your subscriptions very simply so that the Society can reclaim the tax paid - a free bonus to the funds! The Treasurer, Kate Reeves (alto) will be happy to provide details.

Fund Raising:

We did very little fundraising last year as our main event had to be cancelled because of lack of support by other groups. Events for this year, include a Jumble Sale at Cam Memorial Hall on 4th October. We are also having a fundraising Christmas concert at Amberley Church on Thursday, December 11th with a rehearsal on

Tuesday 9th December at 7.30pm in the church.

Saturday 22nd November - help will be needed to erect staging and to dismantle it after the concert so please contact the Concert Manager (John Ewer) and Assistant (Jacqueline Hill) with offers of assistance - *they can't do it all on their own.*

CONCERT INFORMATION**AUTUMN CONCERT**

Saturday 22nd November at 7.30pm
St James' Parish Church Dursley
with the Tyndale Chamber Orchestra

Haydn's Creation

*Soloists: Jane Sheriff - soprano
Stephen Davis - tenor
Robert Clarke - bass*

Concert rehearsals will be on the two Mondays before the concert:
10th and 17th November in Dursley Parish Church at 7.30pm. The rehearsal on the **afternoon** of 22nd November will be at 2.30pm.

Dress:

Ladies: Long black skirt and long-sleeved black blouse.

Men: DJ or dark suit, white shirt and black bow tie.

AGM: Tuesday 25th November
Dursley Town Hall at 7.30pm.

Soloists for the Creation

Tuesday 25th November -
Annual General Meeting in the Town Hall,
Dursley at 7.30pm.

Jane Sherriff (soprano) comes from Winchester and studied music at Nottingham University. She is currently studying with Jessica Cash. She specialises in Renaissance and Baroque music but confesses that her favourite works are *Messiah*, *Creation* and Mozart's *Mass in C Minor* as well as masses by Haydn. She has a very wide repertoire and has many performances of 20th Century composers to her credit including one by a British composer called Bolcom entitled '*Lime jello marshmallow cottage cheese surprise*'. British composers feature a lot in her repertoire list including John Rutter and Vaughan - Williams.

Stephen Davis (tenor) graduated with distinction from the Birmingham Conservatoire. and studied with Jessica Cash, Pamela Cook and Ian

Partridge.

He has sung with many leading choirs including Ex Cathedra, Britten Singers, Northern Voices, London Voices, The Academy of Ancient Music and The Schütz Choir.

Stephen also works as a choral conductor, a vocal coach to schools and choral societies and as an adjudicator.

He has sung with us before, most recently last November taking the leading role in Britten's *St Nicholas* and Finzi's *Dies Natalis*. We look forward to welcoming him back again.

Robert Clarke (bass) sang with us last in 1989 in the Mozart *Requiem* and Beethoven's *Mass in C*. At that time he was living in Leicester and had made numerous appearances in solo roles with choral and operatic societies, including the title role in Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*. He performed regularly in the Midlands

Critique of the
Summer Concert in Dursley Parish Church
on 5th July 2003
'A Musical Treat'

On what had been a very overcast day, it was good to have the clouds musically blown away in the form of Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical songs* from the Tyndale Choral Society's opening offering in their summer concert at St Mary the Virgin, Wotton-under-Edge.

The choir's first entry was firm and secure under the direction of Michael Power. As the piece progressed, there was some equally impressive atmospheric singing during the wordless passages.

The first half of the concert concluded with the set of *Love Song Waltzes Opus 52* by Brahms. Here there were some early intonation problems, particularly experienced by the sopranos. However, there were some very good contributions from the tenor section.

After the interval, we were treated to music from *Salad Days* by a former Painswick Player, Julian Slade, superbly narrated with great flair by Frankie Telford. Everyone involved really entered into the true spirit of the piece and it was good to see many of the choir taking on solo roles.

A small point: when balancing the groups collective choral forces, I wonder if the MD has ever tried placing men down the centre of the ensemble to enable greater clarity?

Kelvin Dickinson

An amusing aside provided by
John Palmer:

Lent in Chesterfield
by John Cob

It was Bach's St Matthew Passion
beneath the crooked spire
with four invited singers
and a formidable choir.

In the interval for coffee
we met a choirboy's friend,
who had crossed the Pennines purposely,
this concert to attend.

To sum up his reactions
to the music he had heard
he searched his mental lexicon
to find the aptest word.

It clearly was no easy quest
for adjectives to suit.
we scarcely could believe our ears:
when the one he chose was "cute".

Editorial

As you will of course be aware, the Concert in November will be Michael's last as our conductor. I have to say that I was instrumental in him being invited to join us. He had auditioned for us on an earlier occasion and, when David Knight left at rather short notice, it was felt that Michael would fulfil the position very well if he could come. I am sure that you will agree that we have benefited greatly from his involvement, with his musicianship and the fact that he was, and still is, a singer has surely resulted in an improvement in the quality of our singing. It's certainly been good to have a singer at the front to guide us. It will be sad to see Michael go but after 15 years he will deserve a rest although, having said that, he has become a councillor in Gloucester. In between times, we look forward to working on, and then singing the *Creation* on the 22nd November.

Next year we will be welcoming Ian Harrold as our new conductor. We have had the benefit of having him take a number of practices which means we have some practical knowledge of him already. Nevertheless, I thought it would be useful to ask him to tell us something of his background and musical interests. Here is what he has to say.

Dick Skinner

Ian Harrold M.A., A.R.C.M.

I developed an interest in music while at King Edward's School, Birmingham in the 1950s, largely through a close friendship with the late David Munrow, that pioneer of early music. This continued through university at Merton College, Oxford where I read Physics. Several

of my compositions had their first airing there, including an anthem for the College's 700th anniversary.

On starting work in London (with IBM), I was fortunate in finding and joining the City of London Choir where I found myself, in time, sitting next to a young tenor called Michael Power. Our friendship remained over the years, though I had no idea it would lead to the fulfilment of a life's dream: to sing in a Cathedral Choir.

I later took up the bassoon, and though I managed well enough to be Principal Bassoon with the Hertford Symphony Orchestra for a while, singing has remained my first love as a performer. Composition has always been an important part of my musical life. I am currently working on Opus 137 (Three short Intros) - hardly the prolific quality of Johann Strauss, perhaps, but not too bad for a part-timer! Of those, two orchestral works have been performed at the Royal Festival Hall and the Royal Albert Hall respectively. I wrote the *Jubilate*, with which I hope to begin my tenure with you, for David Briggs, but his illness prevented its taking up by Gloucester.

As you will find out, my musical tastes are wide, from early music to jazz and music theatre. I think this is reflected in my composition, which you may call eclectic or derivative, according to taste! It is, I hope, underpinned by a knowledge of and love of the great choral repertory from Monteverdi, Purcell and Handel to, just about, Britten and Finzi!

I start with you fortunate enough to know many of you by sight, and I look forward to developing that in the years to come.

NOTICE BOARD

Oriana Singers

Conductor David Moss

Christmas Concert
including
Pergolesi Magnificat and Christmas Music

Eric Tyson - organ

on

Saturday 13th December 2003
at 7.30pm
St Martin's Church
North Nibley

Dursley Parish Church **Concert Series**

Saturday **September 27th** 7.30p.m.
Organ Recital by Matthew Redman

Saturday **October 11th** 6.30p.m.
Concert by Dursley Parish Church Choir

Sunday **November 23rd** 6.30p.m.
Evensong in Dursley Parish Church sung by
the Chapel Choir of Wellington School, Somerset

Sunday **November 30th**
6.30p.m. Advent Carols

Sunday **December 21st** 6.30p.m.
Carols by Candlelight