



Newsletter

Spring
2008

No.29

Conductor's Notes

Hello again, Tyndalers! I hope you have all had an enjoyable winter break, and are all eager to get to grips with an exciting season of singing together. It seems a long time ago that we put on Elgar's 'King Olaf' with such success. You can read Elgar Society plaudits elsewhere, but from my point of view it was a wonderful evening - a dream come true. Thank you all who took part in it, for your dedication in learning it, and your artistry in performing it. Our carol evening at Amberley was a smaller-scale affair - actually, if I may be honest, rather smaller than I really wanted - but much appreciated by the audience/congregation. As we have come to expect, Christopher Boodle did us proud.

Of course, I do know what some of you have been doing over the winter break; you have been supporting the Society's great venture in providing new or new-in-heart singers with the musical

skills to get the best out of singing in a choir: our Absolute Beginners Class. I have quite deliberately only been there from time to time to offer support like other members, but I have been impressed by the numbers and the spirit alike. Our thanks must go to Julia for setting it up, and to Bethan Diaz for her patient work week by week. It would be fantastic to welcome all that enthusiasm into our Society, but whether participants stay or not, the course will have given them something valuable to take through life.

Now we look ahead to the coming year. We stay on the byroads of great choral music in the autumn with Mendelssohn's 'St. Paul'. Written ten years before 'Elijah', it is Mendelssohn's great homage to Bach and Handel - there are even chorales at the end of each section just like the Bach cantatas and Passions, together with fugues as sturdy as Handel's. If there is not

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Tyndale Choral Society

quite the same dramatic thrust as 'Elijah', there are some wonderfully lyrical moments. Many of you will already know 'How lovely are the messengers' as an anthem.

In the Spring, we are going to take on what I believe to be one of the greatest choral works of the twentieth century: Kodály's 'Psalmus Hungaricus'. It is a setting for tenor solo and chorus of a Hungarian translation of Psalm 55 (with a brief introduction and conclusion). You will no doubt be pleased to know that we will perform it in English! It is not easy, but well worth the work we will need to put in. I am delighted to have secured the services of James Atherton in the very demanding tenor solo part. To complete the first half, I have chosen a much more modest Kodály piece, his setting (in English!) of Arthur O'Shaughnessy's 'The Music Makers'. It was written for my old college's 700th birthday, and I am proud to have sung in its premiere. I hope you will like it.

To complete the Spring Concert, we shall revisit some opera choruses. I know you did some with Michael not so long ago, but I have tried to suggest different ones, including the magnificent 'Easter Hymn' from 'Cavalleria Rusticana'. That will get the crowds in!

All the very best for an exciting and fulfilling 2008.

Ian Harrold

CONCERT INFORMATION

Summer Concert

Saturday 5th July at 7.30pm in St Mary's Wotton-under-Edge

Psalmus Hungaricus and Ode for Music (Music Makers) by Kodály, and Opera Choruses

Concert rehearsals in St Mary's will be on Monday 30th June at 7.30pm. and on the afternoon of the concert, 5th July, at 2.30pm.

Winter Concert

Saturday 15th November at 7.30pm St James' Parish Church Dursley with the Emerald Ensemble

Mendelssohn 'St Paul'

Concert rehearsals in Dursley Parish Church will be on Monday 10th November at 7.30pm. and on the afternoon of the concert, 15th November, at 2.30pm.

Dress:

Ladies: Long black skirt or black evening trousers and white blouse (summer) and long-sleeved black blouse and black jackets if desired (winter).

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

AGM: to be arranged.

From the Chairman

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our new season after what seems a long, dark and wet winter. We have a varied programme ahead of us which, I am sure, all of us will enjoy immensely.

Our last season was very successful, due to the hard work of everyone concerned, especially your committee. *King Olaf* was an undoubted highlight, which was very well received by our regular audience and members of the Elgar Society, which had given us a substantial contribution towards orchestral costs. Their comments were also extremely favourable and coming from such knowledgeable sources was heart warming. We have a high standard to maintain and John Hicks, through his management of the website, has enabled our name to spread further abroad. Our rehearsals will therefore be the more challenging and, I trust, more satisfying.

Our season will involve, as usual, a concert in July, workshop in September, main orchestral concert in November and hopefully a carol concert. Please keep the dates free in your diary so that we have maximum number of singers present.

At this moment, the ABC sight reading course has got off to a tremendous start with more than 30 participants, several of whom have already said that they would like to sing with us this season. We hope that they will be made welcome and that members of the different voice sections will take them under their wings to increase their self confidence. We have all been strangers at some point and have

Friends of Tyndale Choral Society

The Friends subscription for 2008 is £25 single or £45 for a couple. The Friends package includes an invitation to attend the summer and winter concerts as our guests, including free programmes and free interval drinks, invitations to other Tyndale events including the AGM, and copies of our newsletters.

We are also offering the Friends package in the form of a TCS Guest Gift Voucher, which members may wish to give to friends and family. TCS Guest Gift vouchers are available from the Treasurer at £25 each.

Please contact Kate Reeves, Friends Secretary, if you know of anyone who may be interested in becoming a Friend of TCS in 2008; regular attendees at our concerts may like to take advantage of our Friends package which represents good value and support for the Society.

enjoyed the help of established members in the past and it is now our turn to take up the baton.

We are also establishing firmer links with other local societies so that mutual support and awareness may increase.

John Ewer

From your Secretary

ABC – the story so far

As I write, the *Absolute Beginners Class* of 2008 has just had its fifth of ten lessons. Tutor Bethan Diaz has given us our first taste of intervals, and we are getting to grips with diminished this and augmented that, tones and semitones, and we are now working on extracts from the summer concert programme.

In our wildest dreams, Catherine Bennett and I originally hoped for 20 students, but were delighted to accommodate a very dedicated group of 35; we have the ‘Gazette’ to thank for their very generous full-page article which generated a deal of enquiries. Various Tyndalers are dropping in, as and when they can, to support the students, make friends, encourage, and give the odd bit of guidance when the brows start to furrow.

At the time of writing, as many as 25 of the students may be joining us in rehearsals. It is very important that, when we start rehearsals on 31 March, we ‘buddy-up’ with any ABC graduates; they will need support when they first join. I have some names of Tyndalers who are willing to be a choral buddy, but may need more. Please also make an extra effort to chat to new faces and make them feel welcome.

We of course hope that some of the ABC graduates will become long-term members as a result of this project, but that is not the only yardstick by which we will measure its success. If we have introduced people to the joys of singing, and they go on to sing Barbershop, with

community choirs, or with other choral societies, then we have fulfilled the Society’s stated object: “to educate the public in the art and science of music and in particular of choral music”.

And I think we can give ourselves a well-deserved pat on the back.

A New Collaboration

Some of you were surprised, and not in a good way, by the cost of the *King Olaf* orchestra. Elgar didn’t compose with our budgets in mind, and the large orchestra we required, assembled by Diggory Seacome, cost £4,635. Diggory has provided our orchestra for many years, and the quality of musicianship has always been excellent. Tyndale pays up to 50% more for its orchestra than some other local choral societies; and this has been a deliberate and wise choice. You always pay for quality.

Mendelssohn’s *St Paul* is also scored for a sizeable orchestra. Ian very kindly offered to work on the score to allow us to sing with a reduced orchestra, to save on costs. We are very fortunate indeed to have a Musical Director who is willing (and able) to undertake such a huge amount of work for us at no additional charge. However, we still need 24 musicians. We therefore looked to see what our options were, and sought quotations; an exercise not carried out in the past, but a prudent one, given that this is our largest item of expenditure.

How are orchestra musicians paid? There is the basic Musicians Union rate, adjusted for standard of player and type of performance/rehearsal requirements, to which one adds portage (to compensate for shifting timpani, double bass and other awkward beasts around the countryside), and mileage; then there is commission or an administrative charge. It soon adds up.

Although there was not a huge difference in the quotes received, your committee has opted this year to engage the Emerald Ensemble, Bristol's professional chamber orchestra. The EE was formed in 1994 by Roger Huckle, and is a musicians' collective, bringing together the best of the region's performers. Renowned for its accessible, passionate, versatile and virtuosic performances, the group performs regularly with international artists and soloists, including Julian Lloyd-Webber, Emma Kirkby, James Bowman (our President), and principal players of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. The EE performs on its own, and has worked with the Bristol Choral Society, the City of Bristol Choir, Bristol Cathedral Chamber Choir, the Phoenix Choir, and Tewkesbury Abbey's Schola Cantorum, in venues such as Colston Hall, Bristol Cathedral, and St George's Bristol, where your secretary has heard them play everything from Argentinian tango to the Brandenburg Concertos.

We hope that opting for a well-known orchestra, which can fill venues in its own right, and which has its own identity and reputation, will encourage new audience members to Tyndale. We look

forward very much to working with the Emerald Ensemble.

Tyndale's Grand Tour

In February I attended Cirencester CS's workshop on Faure's Requiem and Canticque de Jean Racine. I know, I know; we did it last September, but I was in the kitchen all afternoon and missed the fun stuff back then, so off I went to Cirencester. I sat next to a lovely lady from Malmesbury, who was positively fizzing with enthusiasm about a Duruflé workshop she had joined the previous week, led by Nigel Perrin. "Oh," said I, "we've got Nigel next September..." She's coming.

I have heard nothing but Very Good Things about Mr Perrin; his manner, his knowledge, his teaching ability, his musicality, and the lady from Malmesbury says he can sing all parts...

Nigel is taking us on a Grand Tour of European Sacred Music, introducing us to the various styles of singing through France, Italy, Germany, Russia... I'm sure it's not to be missed.

I give you fair warning; places are limited, and a balanced choir is to be achieved. I will not be able to reserve any places, and can only accept registration forms with payment. As a special concession, Tyndale members who apply and pay before 5th May can enjoy a £3 discount. If you wish to join in the fun, I suggest you don't delay.

For further information, see the website or the printed workshop flyers. See you there!

Oh, and the Cirencester workshop was great fun; we had a vocal technique session which got sopranos singing sweetly and altos singing top Bflat.. I think it was the hip-gyrating and fly-zipping that did the trick... or perhaps the women's all-in wrestling... I guess you had to be there.

Julia O'Connor-Beach

The Society Website

As use of the TCS website continues to grow, this is just a reminder that it offers up to date information about our concerts, rehearsals and other events together with an archive of concert programmes, newsletters, and other memorabilia.

Please support the TCS on-line shop - every little helps - by the end of 2007 its contribution to our funds had exceeded £400 - it really does generate something for nothing! Remember you have access to Amazon, the Music Room, M&S and John Lewis through the web-site and the Society gets a commission on every sale and it costs you nothing extra.

John Hicks

Summer Sing

In August 2003, during the TCS 'closed' season, about twenty members got together and formed a chamber choir. The original concept was: just for fun, just for a month, no concert. This year, for a change, the Summer Sing is being themed with our September workshop: Exploring European Sacred Music. We will use the same music, European Sacred Music edited by John Rutter, doing groundwork on some pieces in preparation for the workshop and learning others just for our own pleasure.

We will meet on Mondays at 19:30 from July 28 to August 18 (with a possible extra session on the Bank Holiday, August 25) in St Martin's Church, North Nibley. A contribution of £1 per person per evening will be required, to include coffee and tea, with proceeds going to the church. Further information is available on the TCS website together with an on-line reservation facility and a link to a special section of the TCS shop for you to order your music.

The Summer Sing is open to members, friends and other interested singers; please reserve your place as soon as possible so that voices can be balanced and the programme finalised to match our resources.

John Hicks

Committee members for 2008:

John Ewer	Chairman
Lorna Lane	Treasurer
Julia O'Connor-Beach	Secretary
Lisa Randell	Concert Secretary
Wendy Thomas	Publicity and Printing
Kate Reeves	Friends Secretary
John Hicks	Website Manager
Doreen Manning	Librarian
Audrey Sewell	MM Secretary
Vacancy	Fundraising Coordinator

Other positions:

Ian Harrold	Conductor
Anne Shipton	Concert Manager

Fund-raising Secretary:

There is a vacancy for this position on the Committee, although Jill Brown and Liz Barnes have offered to co-ordinate the cake stall. This is an important function and we would like someone to take up the reins officially.

A Social Event:

We have again been offered a date at a private cinema - June 21st. The choice of film is up to us! This is not a fund raising event, and is open to all. Cost per head £5, to include choc-ice. Bring your own picnic and drinks. If you are interested, see Julia.

Diary Dates and Other Matters

Committee Meetings:

The meetings for this season are planned for Wednesday 2nd April, 16th July and Wednesday 10th September. If there are any matters which you would like to be raised, please see members of the committee in good time.

Subscriptions:

All subscriptions should be in by 5th May. The rate is £49 for full members and £24.50 for full-time students. Please note that there will be no separate music hire charge this year. The rate will increase to £50 and £25, respectively, for late payers. If you pay tax and wish to Gift Aid your subscriptions so that the Society can reclaim the tax paid - a free bonus to the funds - this is very simple and Treasurer, Lorna Lane (alto) will be only too happy to provide forms.

Sales Stall:

As ever, the stall will be in operation during the season. It does make a significant 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.

Fund Raising:

Calling all cake bakers: the Dursley cake stall will be held on Saturday, 21st June from 9.00am.

Teas will be on sale at the Town Hall in Wotton-under-Edge on Sunday, 18th May from 2.00pm.

Amberley Carol Concert

Concert: Thursday 11 December, 7.30.

Rehearsals dates to be advised.

Annual General Meeting: Date to be arranged.

TREASURER:

Lorna has been the Society's Treasurer for several years but has given the committee notice that she will be giving up at the end of this season. We will therefore need someone to take on this very important rôle. It would be particularly helpful if someone would become involved during at least the second half of the season to shadow the rôle and be aware of what is involved. Needless to say, the accounts and financial situation are in very good order.

Please feel free to talk to Lorna if you would like more information or to discuss what is involved.

STOP PRESS!

Tyndalers' favourite post-rehearsal watering-hole, the "Old Spot Inn", is officially Camra's Pub of the Year! We offer our heartiest congratulations to landlord Steve Herbert, who has very generously been a regular advertiser in our concert programmes.

TYNDALE CHORAL SOCIETY – DIARY OF EVENTS 2008

Key: DMC Dursley Methodist Church

BH Bank Holiday

Month	Day/Date	Time	Venue	Activity	Notes
March	Mon 31	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
April	Wed 02	7.30pm	North Nibley	Committee meeting	
	Mon 07	7.30pm	DMC	Open Rehearsal	Taster Evening
	Mon 14	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 21	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 28	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
May	Mon 05	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal (BH)	
	Mon 12	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Sun 18	2.00pm	Wotton Town Hall Teas		Fund Raising
	Mon 19	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 26	B H		NO REHEARSAL	
June	Mon 02	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 09	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 16	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Sat 21	9.00am	Dursley	Cake Stall	Fund Raising
	Mon 23	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 30	7.30pm	St Mary's Wotton	Rehearsal	Arrive early, please
July	Sat 05	2.30pm	St Mary's Wotton	Rehearsal	Arrive early, please
	Sat 05	7.30pm	St Mary's Wotton	Performance	Arrive 7.10pm, please
	Mon 07	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 14	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Wed 16	7.30pm	Gloucester	Committee meeting	
	Mon 21	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
END OF TERM					
	Mon 28	7.30pm	North Nibley	Start of Summer Sing (4 weeks)	
Aug	SUMMER BREAK				
Sept	Mon 01	7.30pm	DMC	Open Rehearsal	Taster Evening
	Mon 08	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Wed 10	7.30pm	Dursley	Committee meeting	
	Mon 15	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 22	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Sat 27	10.00am	St Mary's, WuE	Workshop	Nigel Perrin
	Mon 29	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
Oct	Mon 06	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 13	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 20	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 27	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
Nov	Mon 03	7.30pm	DMC	Rehearsal	
	Mon 10	7.30pm	St James' Dursley	Rehearsal	Arrive early, please
	Sat 15	2.30pm	St James' Dursley	Rehearsal	Arrive early, please
	Sat 15	7.30pm	St James' Dursley	Performance	Arrive 7.10pm, please
Dec	Tue 9	7.30pm	Amberley	Rehearsal	
	Thu 11	6.30pm	Amberley	Concert Rehearsal	
	Thu 11	7.30pm	Amberley	Carol Concert	

The Autumn 2007, Concert
Scenes from the Saga of King Olaf by Sir Edward Elgar

Comments taken from Ian's AGM report:

I have many happy memories of the performance: the grand peroration of the conversion scene, the ladies (amazingly!) setting the scene for Sigrid, the disciplined singing in the sea battle, but perhaps greatest of all, the authority and beauty with which we delivered "As torrents in summer", even without the high fives when we finished it in tune! Altogether, a concert of which we should be proud.

Dr. John Pickard, Senior Lecturer in Music, University of Bristol and Editor of the Elgar Edition, was there and wrote afterwards:

"congratulations ... on a splendid performance. I had wondered how much rehearsal time you were able to have with the orchestra and, considering you just had one session, the results were really most impressive. One interesting thing was that even though there was only a small string section it rarely felt undernourished. It's quite remarkable isn't it how Elgar's scoring works so superbly whether it's played in a church in Dursley or in the Royal Albert Hall?"

"I really enjoyed the performance. I thought the choir had thoroughly prepared the piece and the balance with the orchestra was fine. The band, though small, was very good – especially the cellos. "I am the god Thor" and "King Olaf's dragons" came over especially well and as they're big sings you should be very pleased with yourselves about those! Congratulations on a most successful event."

The concert was received with much acclamation as shown below:

Maurice Bell (Making Music Area Representative) summarised his comments by saying:

Conductor and choir are to be complimented on taking on this very ambitious work, rarely performed and therefore not necessarily good 'box office', but right for Elgar's anniversary year. That they managed the high cost of large orchestra and soloists AND attracted a large audience must be to their credit, suggesting much hard work in rehearsals and planning. Thank you for a most enjoyable musical experience.

Hywel Davies (for Elgar in Performance Group, The Elgar Society): “Would you please convey my thanks to Ian Harrold and the Tyndale Choral Society for their exciting performance of Elgar’s King Olaf. Even as an ‘Elgarian’ it is not often that one is able to hear a live performance of this work. I was privileged to attend yours; not only was the performance live, it was lively and told the story. I am sure the piece was new to the majority of the chorus and audience and your performance did full justice to this early work of Elgar’s, with its glimpses of themes he used in his later works giving the clue to Elgar’s real genius.”

Mrs B Adams: “King Olaf was first class; we left on a high. I loved the combination of lyrical and drama and the last unaccompanied chorus was a delight.”

Mrs P Lee: “Congratulations to all for tonight’s concert; it was exciting, satisfying, brilliant, and all the more pleasing for being a rarely performed piece. I am already looking forward to next year’s concerts!”

Dorothy, Friend of Sandra Tucker: “thank you very much for a really enjoyable concert on Saturday. Cadences of the harmonies still remembered; fullness of the musicality like a good Rhone(!) Thank you for introducing me to that dimension of Mr. Elgar. The performance on Saturday had a wow factor for me. Thank you.”

Members Contributions

Remember that your contributions are important. We get them only occasionally but would like to see more. If you have something that might be of interest to others, speak to Julia (Secretary) or Dick Skinner (Editor).

A word of thanks to our Friends

We are very grateful to our society Friends for their continuing support; we were particularly pleased to see so many of them in our audiences last year, and look forward to their company again in 2008.

Choir Members

Sopranos

Liz Barnes
Fiona Chandler
Mavis Church
Jenni Culverwell
Glenis Ewer
Anne Glanville
Christine Gourd
Clare Harrison
Marjorie Harrison
Diana Hobbs
Lynette Magnone
Doreen Manning *L*
Marion Miller
Angela Pendlebury
Julie Phillips
Anne Shipton
Valerie Skinner
Joyce Theaker
Lesley Townsend
Sandra Tucker
Ros Wakefield
Vanessa Weaver
Elaine White
Elizabeth Young

Altos

Catherine Bennett
Jill Brown
Jenny Coles
Jacquelin Hill
Estelle James
Sally Lamerton
Lorna Lane *Tr*
Caroline Marshall
Francis Neale
Anne Nuttall
Julia O'Connor-Beach
Sec
Lisa Randell
Indigo Redfern
Kate Reeves
Wendy Richardson
Helen Roberts
Miriam Salman
Wendy Thomas
Alex Tomlinson
Eve Tudgay
Sue Walshaw
Lesley Wrankmore

Tenors

Philip Butcher
Jean Dabinett
John Ewer *Ch*
Peter Harney
Alastair MacLeod
Audrey Sewell
Andrew Young

Basses

Frank Andoh
Brian Bolsher
Mike Chambers
James Corbett
Jonathan Golding
John Hicks *WS*
Brian Kitching
Derek Manning
Brian Neale
John Palmer
Dick Skinner *Ed*
Geoff Whiley

Names in *italics* - committee members:

Ch - Chairman: *Sec* - Secretary: *Tr* - Treasurer: *L* - Librarian
WS - Web Site *Ed* - Editor