

Waltham Singers newsletter

Issue No 47
January 2012

From the Chair...

A Happy New Year to you all. I hope you have had a enjoyable Christmas break.

The Mencap Carol Concert seems a long while ago now. After the double cancellation of the Macmillan Concert, first snow and then branch re-organisations, it was good to have a new focus for the end of the autumn term and an opportunity to perform the programme we prepared last year. The carol concert can always be a little difficult: the short rehearsal accompanied by background noise, the different seating arrangements and the apparent hurried pace of the performance with little time to regroup between items and lots of short pieces to sing. Yet for me this was all subordinate to the visible joy and success with which the Mencap members delivered their readings and the strength of support for the organisation evidenced by the large and appreciative audience who had responded at relatively short notice to be there.

Our concert this term is on Saturday, 24th March titled "Love Sacred and Profane". The first half comprises a number of shorter pieces by a variety of composers, all taking their text from the Song of Solomon. The second half is Orff's Carmina Burana, in the version with two pianos and percussion providing the accompaniment. It will be our first concert in King Edward VI School Hall, as a church venue would be inappropriate and we need the space to accommodate the range of percussion instruments. For those who do not know the hall, raked seating provides the audience with an excellent view of the performers and the audience capacity of 450 provides a good target for us to fill.

As well as the concert, we have the Quiz Night on Saturday, 4th February at 7.30 pm in the Hulton Hall at Great Waltham. If you haven't yet organised or joined a team, then it is time to do so. These evenings are always great fun and also very successful in raising funds for the choir, so do please support it if you can. Mike Wall will be pleased to reserve a table for you.

Plans continue to be made for a tour to Venice from Friday 24th to Tuesday 28th May 2013 and I shall circulate further details just as soon as we have firmed up the options available to us.

I am very grateful to those who sent in their suggestions of works that we might perform in future seasons. If you would like to add your proposals, but forgot to do so before Christmas, I shall be keeping the list open for a few more weeks. The committee will be considering your ideas when we meet on 11th January. There is already plenty to talk about with over 70 separate works receiving at least one recommendation. We shall publish a full listing once all the suggestions are in.

So, I look forward to seeing you all again at rehearsal on Thursday, 5th January.

Best wishes

Gerald Malton

Changes to an advertised Chelmsford WEA One Day School

28th January, Keene Hall, Galleywood

Originally "Music through the Ages" with Quintus Benziger, this will now be a celebration of the bicentenary of Charles Dickens' birth, concentrating on *Edwin Drood*, conducted by Peter Strickland. For more details please speak to Mike Wall.

Dates for your Diary

Spring Term 2012

Thursday 5 January	8.00 pm	St Cedd's School	First rehearsal of term
Saturday 4 February	7.30 pm	Hulton Hall, Gt Waltham	Quiz night
Sunday 18 March	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Gt Waltham Church	Pre-concert rehearsal
Thursday 22 March	8.00 pm	St Cedd's School	Last rehearsal of term
Saturday 24 March	1.00 – 4.00 pm	KEGS	Rehearsal
Saturday 24 March	7.30 pm	KEGS	Concert (Carmina Burana)
Thursdays 29 March, 5 & 12 April		No rehearsals	Easter Holiday

Summer Term 2012

Thursday 19 April	8.00 pm	St Cedd's School	First rehearsal of term
Sunday 10 June	2.00 – 4.00 pm	Gt Waltham Church	Pre-concert rehearsal
Saturday 16 June	1.00 – 4.00 pm	Gt Waltham Church	Rehearsal
Saturday 16 June	7.30 pm	Gt Waltham Church	Summer Concert
Thursday 21 June	8.00 pm	St Cedd's School	Annual Review Meeting
Sunday 1 July	12.30 pm	Foxtons, Little Waltham	Barbecue

VIEW FROM MY ACCUSTOMED PLACE ON THE CATHEDRAL STAGING

Many of you will have sung from Poulenc scores showing a photograph of our hero wearing a big smile and sporting a very short haircut. He had the appearance of a man looking forward to his first pastis after chain smoking his way through a packet of 20 Gitanes following a five year stretch in the Bastille. Surely the only place one can acquire a haircut like that is in the nick (not that I have any first hand knowledge of such matters, you understand). Perhaps his next thoughts were he should give thanks for his deliverance, best done by composing a Gloria and a Stabat Mater. Such musings are entirely scurrilous, of course, and understate the substance of the works, but whatever the background, I hope you will agree that he knew how to write choral music. At times I was baffled as to where the next note was coming from during rehearsals, but it mostly seemed to turn out all right on the night.

I was a bit concerned that the ranks of choir and orchestra would outnumber the audience, but my concern proved to be groundless. It says a lot for the citizens of Chelmsford that they turned out in such numbers to listen to a concert of works by Stravinsky, Ravel and Debussy in addition to Poulenc. It also says a lot for any musical organisation that has the bravery and the vision to put on such a concert. Which such organisation in the Chelmsford area would dare do such a thing? Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you The Waltham Singers.

While on the subject of musical scores (I was in the first sentence), I should like to apologise to whoever went through mine rubbing out the markings. One of my scores was so old that all the pages had turned brown, not just the edges. As a result my four eyes could not read the words and I had to write them in large capital letters. Ah, the perils of one's declining years.

Foureyes

50:50 Club

The sixtieth draw of the 50:50 Club was held on the last rehearsal of term. As we have three draws a year that shows we have been running for 20 years now, and in that time your 50:50 subs have made a valuable contribution to The Waltham Singers concert fund. The winners this time were:

£50: Keith Kerr (Friend)

£25: Marion Garrett and Denise Law (Sopranos)

£20: Linda Neilson (Soprano)

£15: David Lloyd (Tenor)

All choir members and Friends can have up to five numbers in the draw. Each number costs £12 for a year (three draws), and remember, half of that goes straight to The Waltham Singers to help fund our programme. To make sure you've got all the numbers you want complete one of the forms, which are available by the notice board every Thursday night, and pass it to Mike Wall.

Quiz Night

Don't forget that Saturday 4th February is the date for our Annual Quiz Night, to be held in the Hulton Hall in Great Waltham starting at 7.30 pm.

Teams of 8, £10 per person, which includes a ploughman's style supper, and there will be a bar selling wine, beer and soft drinks.

If you would like to enter a team please book your table with Mike Wall now.

Committee meetings:

11th January, 22 February, 18 April and 23 May 2012.
If there are any matters you would like to be considered by the committee, please advise Gerald Malton or Jemma Parker in advance of these dates.