



Chelmsford Singers' Newsletter Autumn 2017



WELCOME BACK

We hope that you have all enjoyed the summer break and that you are now looking forward to another term of music making with the Singers. We had a fantastic term of singing before we went off on our holidays and below are the messages and reviews linked to our memorable concert in July.

A MESSAGE FROM JAMES DAVY

“Please accept my grateful thanks for a terrific event on Saturday. It was a huge pleasure to be at the centre of a great day's work (after a year's preparation), and to work with such an extremely talented group of musicians, on the stage, in front, at the East end, and all around. The feedback has been relentlessly enthusiastic and it will certainly be remembered for a very long time to come. There are too many great moments to list individually, but I hope that the opportunity to work together again comes soon.

After a pretty tortuous week making final arrangements, it was a joy to have such a straightforward afternoon rehearsal and evening run with such a magnificent performance; comments from the audience concur that it was both thrilling and moving in turns - many thanks indeed for your part in making it so. I'm very grateful to all those who worked so hard to prepare the Cathedral, staging, lighting, refreshments in the afternoon and evening, arranged music hire and delivery, those who supervised choristers, prepared and delivered a wonderful reception after, and who made it a wonderful occasion and a fitting one to mark a significant milestone for the choir.”

MICHAEL GRAY'S REVIEW –

A glorious celebration for the Singers' ninetieth, with a programme of three dramatic show-stoppers. Borodin provided the bold opener, with the Polovtsian Dances – a first for the Singers, we think. No actual dancing, but a welcome opportunity to enjoy the choral writing, often omitted in concert performance. The men have the macho posturing, leaving the lovely tune to the women's voices.

Britten's St Nicolas was the centre-piece, the popular cantata giving all the vocal forces a chance to shine, under the hortatory baton of Musical Director James Davy. Only the audience, perhaps, failed to rise to the challenge of the congregational hymns. A splendid Nicolas from tenor Paul Smy – a spine-tingling moment when the boy [sung by chorister Nicholas Harding-Smith] becomes the man, and a touching final movement in which the choir's Nunc Dimittis is blended with the saint's acceptance of death. The Cathedral boys were present at the ordination, and the girls made excellent contributions in the storm and in the episode of the Pickled Boys. The accompaniment, with lovely string sounds in the Nicolas from Prison movement, was by the Chelmsford Sinfonietta, led by Robert Atchison.

This memorable evening ended with Orff's cod-medieval Carmina Burana, in the 1956 version for percussion and two pianos [Robert Elms and Helen Crayford, both brilliant] which lets the choir take centre stage. Despite the composer's intentions, and all the show-off effects, there is less drama here than in the Britten, but this was a hugely enjoyable performance – the Singers gave us sublime simplicity in the Springtime, and rustic energy On the Green.

Three superb soloists: Smy again as the unfortunate roasting swan, a sublime In Trutina and a spectacularly abandoned Dulcissime from Elizabeth Roberts, singing from memory, and baritone Colin Baldy, bearing the brunt of the solos. In the Tavern – a men-only zone – he gave us a crisply articulated confession, and a bibulous abbot. Later, in the Court of Love, after a marvellously risqué number from the men of the Cathedral Choir, he led the Cathedral Boys from east to west – the abbot and his acolytes, maybe – in Totus Floreo.

And through the open North Door, unbidden birdsong from the churchyard paid tribute to the music, and to the Singers as they enter their tenth decade.

THANK YOU

We could not possibly put on our concerts without the support provided by many people, not only on the day but also in the months leading up to the event. Our thanks go:-

- To everyone who helped with the concert and the reception - to those who sold tickets, who sold programmes, those who cleared away afterwards; to our front of house team.
- To Tony Harrington for his work on our posters and tickets;
- To Chris for his work as our rehearsal accompanist and for his super contributions in the concert.
- To Prudence and Robert Jones for the delicious Fairtrade cake
- To Heather Knott for icing and decorating the cake



REHEARSAL SCHEDULE (SEPT – DECEMBER 2017)

Date	Notes	Date	Notes
5 th Sept		4th Nov	CONCERT CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL
12 th Sept		7 th Nov	
19 th Sept		12th Nov	REMEMBRANCE EVENSONG - CATHEDRAL
26 th Sept		14 th Nov	AGM AT 9.OOPM
3 rd Oct		21 st Nov	
10 th Oct		28 th Nov	BRING AND BUY
17 th Oct		5 th Dec	
24 th Oct	NO REHEARSAL – HALF TERM WEEK	12 th Dec	
31 st Oct		16th Dec	CONCERT

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event	Venue
16th September	Quiz Night	Langford & Ulting Village Hall, Maldon Road Langford Essex CM9 4SS 7 for 7.30
24 th October	HALF TERM WEEK NO REHEARSAL	
4 th November	Concert: Duruflé Requiem Bernstein Chichester Psalms Darke A Song of David	Chelmsford Cathedral 7.30 pm Rehearsal timing to be advsed
12 th November	Remembrance Evensong	Chelmsford Cathedral 5.15 pm Rehearsal timing to be advised
14 th November	Singers' AGM	Cathedral School 9 pm
28 th November	Bring & Buy Sale	Cathedral School during rehearsal
16 th December	Concert: Various pieces from the Novello Book of Carols plus audience participation	To Be Announced, but likely to be either St. Michael's Church, Galleywood or St. Andrew's Church, Melbourne 7.30 Rehearsal timing to be advised
9 th January 2018	NEW TERM COMMENCES	Cathedral School – VARIOUS PIECES FOR CONCERT ON 17 TH MARCH 7.30 – 9.30
13 th February	HALF TERM WEEK NO REHEARSAL	
17 th March	Concert	St. Luke's Church, Tiptree 7.30 pm Rehearsal time to be advised
3 rd & 10 th April	EASTER BREAK NO REHEARSAL	
29 th May	HALF TERM WEEK NO REHEARSAL	
30 th June	Concert: Going French! French Songs & Choruses	St. John's Church, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford 7.30 pm Rehearsal time to be advised



to Steph Valentine, Richard Till, Milla Toner, Marion Snow and Lindsay Leitch who leave us, some for pastures new and some for new ventures. We wish them well and look forward to invites to go and sing in their new surroundings, although we might have to save up for the trip to New Zealand!



And welcome to the Committee to Sandy Norris (soprano) who will be looking after our social/fundraising needs with her sub –committee, and to Julie Weight (alto) who will be picking up on our publicity and PR role. There are still some gaps that it would be great to fill on the committee – linked to Ladies Rep, and either Chair or Treasurer. The treasurer role is one that needs to be covered, and in the interim Sue Lowden is holding this. It is likely that she will revert to treasurer at the AGM, leaving the Chair vacant. If you think that you would be interested in any of these roles, do please talk to Sue or to Martin Burchett.

FUNDRAISING:



Chelmsford Singers is now registered with easyfundraising.

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online - from your weekly shop to your annual holiday - you could be collecting free donations for Chelmsford Singers?

There are over 3,000 shops and sites on board ready to make a donation, including Amazon, John Lewis, Aviva, thetrainline and Sainsbury's – it doesn't cost you a penny extra!

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3...

1. Head to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/chelmsfordsingers/> and join for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping.
3. After you've checked out, that retailer will make a donation to your good cause for no extra cost whatsoever!

There are no catches or hidden charges and Chelmsford Singers will be really grateful for your donations.

Small handout cards are available at rehearsals, but any Friend or person visiting our website reading his newsletter can find out more either by going to the easyfundraising site, or by contacting Sue Lowden – 07876686611, sue.lowden@btopenworld.com

Many thanks to those who have already signed up for this. Every little bit really will help.

WEBSITE

A reminder that you can keep up to date with choir activities on our website:

www.chelmsfordsingers.co.uk . Thank you to Janet Carden for keeping the site up to date.

The FB page is www.facebook.com/chelmsfordsingers and the Twitter account (managed by James) is @chelmsingers

We now have an info@chelmsfordsingers.co.uk that automatically forwards to Sue Lowden and a friends@chelmsfordsingers.co.uk that forwards to Kathy Shiels.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact any of the committee members.