



Newsletter - Summer 2022

Notes from the Chair



I do hope you have all enjoyed a wonderful summer. It has certainly been a hot one - at times very hot! The extended heat and dryness has played havoc with a couple of the church organs I regularly play resulting in *whimpering*. This is when air leaks from dried out and shrunken soundboards getting to places it shouldn't leading to quiet, tuneless whistles. Hopefully none of your voices have suffered the same way, but organ builders always suggest leaving buckets of water in the organ chambers in such conditions - so if you have suffered, do ensure that you are properly hydrated!

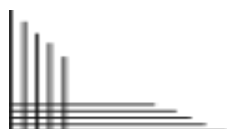
It seems like a very long time since we were last together and I, for one, am certainly looking forward to choral society rehearsals restarting again and us getting to grips with the music for our next concert in November.

You have already heard that Andrew is taking a sabbatical this term and so we will be led by the capable, experienced and totally unflappable (that is meant as a comment on his calm demeanour rather than any reference to his conducting technique) Michael. He has already injected some of his own choice of music into both the November and December concerts and I know we are in for a very enjoyable term of music-making. It shows the variety of our repertoire that we go from the jazz-inspired Mass in Blue in June's concert to the Gregorian chant-inspired Durufle Requiem for November. It is this range of music which, for me, makes Royston Choral Society such a great place to sing.

Our first rehearsal is on Tuesday 6th September beginning at 7.45pm. We will be rehearsing again at Bassingbourn Village College. We gave you a brief update earlier in the summer about the delays to the reopening of St John's in Royston. Further on in this newsletter there is an update on the situation there. We continue to monitor the situation closely although no firm decision has been made yet about the venue for the November and December concerts. The committee will be discussing this early on in the term and it is still our intention to return to rehearsing and performing at St John's as soon as it makes sense.

The week after our first rehearsal, on 13th September is advertised as usual as an Open Rehearsal. Unfortunately the facilities at Bassingbourn don't really allow us to lay on refreshments as we have in the past. However, do please look out for potential new members that day - not only in the hall but also perhaps in the car-park or grounds where they may be struggling to find how to get in - and make them welcome.

Be aware that because our November concert is a little earlier than usual we are keeping open the option of not having a break in rehearsals during half term and so holding a rehearsal on October 25th. We will confirm this in early October when we have a better idea of how quickly we are mastering the notes.



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Charity number 1090459

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The start of a new season also of course means we will shortly be holding our AGM and electing a new committee. As always, even when existing committee members are happy to carry on, we welcome new members - either to one of the formal positions or as a 'without portfolio' member. If you think this might be for you do feel free to speak to any of the committee to learn more about what is involved. The AGM itself will be held during the rehearsal on September 27th. Anyone wanting to stand for election should complete and return the nomination form which can be downloaded from:

<https://www.roystonchoralsoc.org.uk/sites/default/files/RCS%20Committee%20Nomination%20Form.pdf>

For those of you perhaps not familiar with some or all of the works for our next concert I give below links to recordings of the various pieces. They are not in all cases my favourite recordings (and I am also not sure how they compare with Michael's interpretations). However, I list these because they are available to listen to (free) on both YouTube and Spotify and are well regarded:

Durufle Requiem

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uulw1HkSzHg&t=35s&ab_channel=basscadet

<https://open.spotify.com/album/3YhxmyRi1jFDABPTyarstK>

Blatchly For the Fallen

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPtV4Oc_jHY&ab_channel=1finch2finch

<https://open.spotify.com/album/1YZnji9ohosfjsk8uGUMCe?highlight=spotify:track:5fcXqIHES6KXtWRweJQKyY>

Durufle Ubi Caritas

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6J3CL0Y2TE&ab_channel=JohnRutter%26TheCambri

<https://open.spotify.com/track/04hSzUDdf9MHUvVVO41ohy?si=086c2aba5b114782>

Parry Songs of Farewell (we will only be doing the first 3 or 4 of these)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GW8M5KOVsF0&ab_channel=HochrheinMusikfestival

<https://open.spotify.com/album/5U09crMp3cVi8Y2ckS9G3d>

Faure Cantique de Jean Racine

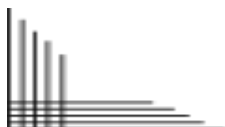
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0XtDunWik4&ab_channel=ChoirOfWinchesterCathedral-Topic

<https://open.spotify.com/track/3zrsiMxSbm9lYs70vrcYjD?si=4e9b5c49277b4970>

I look forward to seeing you all again next week.

Huw

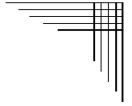
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Notes from the Treasurer



Subscriptions

Thank you to those of you who have already paid your subs online. If you don't do online banking, I will take cheques or cash when we go back to rehearsals. If it's cash, please put it in an envelope with your name on it, so I don't have to scratch my head afterwards trying to remember who gave me it!

Just to remind you, the rates are £150 for the year, or £60 for this term.

Music

Thank you, too, to those of you who have asked to buy music. I have received it now and will have it at the first rehearsal. If you haven't ordered copies to buy and would like to, please let me know asap – there's still time before our first rehearsal.

Library copies will be available for everyone who would rather borrow copies.

Just to remind you, Durufle's Requiem is £27.99; Parry Songs of farewell £9.25 and Durufle Ubi Caritas £4.25.

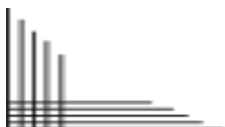
100 Club

I'm sure Julie would like me to remind you that she is always open to hearing from potential new members of the 100 club! For £20 per year, you will be entered into a monthly draw (September to June) for prizes of £25 and £10 each time. This is a useful fund-raiser for the choir.

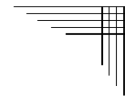
I think Julie plans to contact all the existing members directly about renewing their subscriptions.

Caroline

treasurer@roystonchoralsoc.org.uk



Fine music, made locally



Latest update on restoration work at St John's Church, Royston

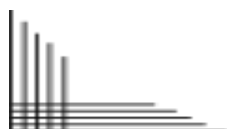


On Monday 4th July, at the Building Progress meeting with the builders, loss adjuster, engineers etc., representatives of St. John's Royston received the latest project updates.

Despite much recent progress, outstanding items such as the west door design and manufacture (with knock-on delays to being able to design and construct the sloped paving outside that leads to the door), the kitchen roof, the kitchen and toilets interior fit out, companion-way ladder issues, extra instructions to address drainage problems and the vestry dampness, finalising the installation and commissioning of the bells, the lighting and the clock, mean that the builders are requesting an extension until 30th September 2022.

We should also bear in mind that after the builders have completed their project, time will be needed to install and "voice" the organ etc. It is therefore with great sadness that the church has confirmed that the reopening festivities planned for mid-October will need to be postponed.

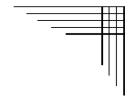
As more is learnt, a new plan for re-starting worship and other activities in the Church Building and a revised schedule for the Festival of Re-opening will be forthcoming. Dates will be published as soon as possible.



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Notes from the Part Reps



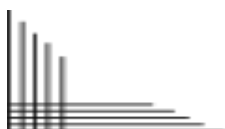
RCS Alto Part Rep – Sue Pegram (partrep.alto@roystonchoralsoc.org.uk) writes:

Wow, hasn't it been great to be back singing "properly" again! We can cautiously say we are almost back to normal, although obviously we have had some singers who have had to drop out of some rehearsals or concerts during the season because of illness.

But what a lovely programme we have had with Messiah Part One and Haydn Little Organ Mass, then the wonderful Mozart Requiem and, to crown it all, the fabulous Will Todd Mass in Blue with Jazz Soprano and Trio who gave us added confidence to perform a great concert.

This concert was in the lovely church in my village with its superb views of the surrounding countryside. I was pleasantly surprised at the many locals who attended and really enjoyed the performance, some of whom I never thought would have enjoyed that genre of music! Some of our altos loved the Mass in Blue so much that they attended rehearsals, even though they were unable to sing in the concert. This was truly an opportunity for all of us to step out of our "comfort zone" and do something completely different – and we rose to the occasion!

Can't wait for the next season to begin!



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RCS Tenor Part Rep - Chris Lee (partrep.tenor@roystonchoralsoc.org.uk) wonders how well we know our small (but valuable tenor section) and poses some quiz questions to us all (answers are at the end of the newsletter):

Would the tenors lie to you?

1. Jason Sanderson owes his love of classical music to water boards **True / False**
2. Chris Lee's parents first met while singing with the Welsh Choral Union **T/F**
3. Neither of David Witty's two adult sons have sung in a choir **T/F**
4. Alan Bateman has sung professionally on cruise ships **T/F**
5. James Browne's work colleague is a former Prime Minister **T/F**
6. Ian Sanders has performed as a John Major lookalike **T/F**
7. James Boyle once sang *Bring Him Home* with Alfie Boe at a charity event **T/F**
8. Nick Keep used to play trombone, trumpet, and has 'dabbled' with the french horn **T/F**

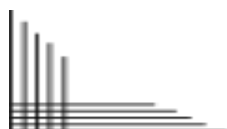


RCS Bass Part Rep - Anthony Pigg (partrep.bass@roystonchoralsoc.org.uk) writes:

Royston Choral Society resumed its activities in September 2021 following a long break caused by the restrictions due to the COVID pandemic. The Bass section returned with renewed enthusiasm and was delighted to find that we were starting with Handel's Messiah, who could not enjoy singing such a splendid work. During the spring term we thoroughly enjoyed working on the glorious Mozart Requiem and in the summer term approached Will Todd's mass in Blue with some trepidation, not just because of the rather challenging sections but mainly because of its jazz style which was unfamiliar to some of us. However after a good term's work and excellent guidance we learnt a great deal, our choral skills had progressed and we found that we started to enjoy the work!

There has been an average of 12 bass singers at each rehearsal, we have welcomed one or two new members during the year but have said goodbye to a long standing member who is moving away from the area.

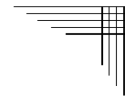
Having missed the choir during the summer we are keen to get back to regular rehearsing and working on this term's repertoire.



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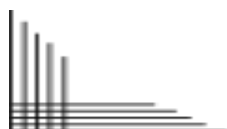
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Key Dates for 2022-23 season



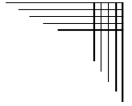
Tuesday 6th September 7.45pm	First rehearsal of year. Bassingbourn Village College.
Tuesday 13th September 7.45pm	Open Rehearsal
Saturday 12th November	Concert - Durufle, Parry etc. Afternoon rehearsal.
Saturday 10th December	Christmas Concert. Afternoon rehearsal.
Tuesday 10th January 7.45pm	Rehearsals resume
Tuesday 17th January 7.45pm	Open rehearsal
Saturday 25th March	Concert - Haydn Creation. Afternoon rehearsal.
Tuesday 18th April 7.45pm	Rehearsals resume
Tuesday 25th April 7.45pm	Open rehearsal
Saturday 17th June	Summer Concert. Afternoon rehearsal.



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Answers to the 'would the tenors lie to you' questions:

1. True <https://www.roystonchoralsoc.org.uk/content/musical-notes-jason-sanderson>
2. False <https://enterpriseessentials.wordpress.com/2019/04/20/my-love-affair-with-singing>
3. True <https://www.roystonchoralsoc.org.uk?content/inheritance-tracks-david-whitty>
4. False
5. True <https://institute.global/contributors/james-browne>
6. True <https://www.roystonchoralsoc.org.uk/content/ian-sanders-desert-island-discs>
7. False <https://www.roystonchoralsoc.org.uk/content/desert-island-discs-james-boyle>
8. False <https://www.roystonchoralsoc.org.uk/content/if-music-be-food-loveann-and-nick-keep>

