

KENDAL SOUTH CHOIR

Newsletter 10 – January 2015

Ian's report

"After all the praise descending on us for the Messiah it is quite a difficult task to give a subjective view from a conductor's angle; I can but agree with our reviewer/correspondents that the performance of the choir reached a quite extraordinary standard – a fitting climax to the weeks of careful preparation and my exploration of a wide range of dynamics and colours.

"To pick out a few memorable moments: 'For unto us...' for its initial lightness, superb runs (even from the basses!) and the fine sonority of 'Wonderful, Counsellor...', matched by the superb playing of the Ensemble, which was quite splendid during the whole evening; 'Surely...' for its intensity and spine-chilling suspensions; 'He trusted in God...' for its naked savagery and a fantastic top C from (most of) the sopranos; 'Hallelujah' for its sheer enthusiasm and brightness; 'Since by man...' – hushed and perfectly in tune! My one reservation concerns the Amen Chorus, the beginning of which dug in its heels and refused to budge! However the energy didn't flag and the pregnant pause before the final utterance was quite electric.

"The soloists – crowned by an exquisite performance by soprano Laurie Ashworth of truly international standard – comprised a fine and perfectly matched team, each one entering whole-heartedly into the drama of the work.

"There were a few minor imperfections which could have been ironed out with further orchestral rehearsal (e.g. a clash of editions in the duet, not discovered till too late, which almost caused a false start to the following chorus!), but none of sufficient significance to mar the performance as a whole.

"Hearty congratulations to all."

Moira Greenhalgh's review for the Gazette and a very complimentary letter to the Gazette from a member of the audience are reproduced on the "Reviews" page of our website.

Concerts

A list of diary dates appears on the notice board at rehearsals, but the main points are as follows:

Our own concerts

Our next concert will be on **Saturday 25th April** at St Thomas's Church, Kendal, with soloists Emily Robinson and Fiona Weakley (sopranos) and Christopher Steele (tenor). We will sing Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* and *Toward the Unknown Region* by Vaughan Williams, together with anthems by Bairstow and Wesley and opera choruses, and there will be items from the soloists.

Please take good care of your borrowed scores. Some are from our own collection and should be in good condition and some come from Carlisle music library or outside the county and arrive in a variety of conditions. Ideally, please rub out any old markings as soon as possible and make your own annotations in light pencil. (We will be charged for damaged or lost scores).

A small voluntary donation to cover hire costs would be appreciated.

All borrowed music must be returned at the end of the concert and put into the boxes provided.

Future concerts are planned for the following dates:

Saturday 14th November 2015

Saturday 23rd January 2016

Saturday 7th May 2016

Please make rehearsals your priority for Tuesday evenings and attend as many as you possibly can.

If you are unable to attend for any reason, let your Section Rep (see below) know, or, if you know in advance, mark the register with an "A" for that date.

Mary Wakefield Festival 2015

Adjudicated Classes 16th-19th March

We intend to enter a group to defend our 2013 title! Some classes have been combined for 2015 so the "Madrigal" class no longer exists, so we will be entering the "Group of Singers" class which requires our own choice of two contrasting songs, with or without accompaniment. We have chosen "The Silver Swan" by Orlando Gibbons and "Quick! We have but a second" by C V Stanford.

Volunteers to sing in this group, which will hopefully number not more than 20, should be willing and able to:

- sing in the class on Monday evening, 16th March
- rehearse most weeks for around 20 minutes after our main rehearsal
- learn the pieces by heart so that we don't need to use copies!

Jean Robinson will be asking for volunteers at the first and second rehearsals with a view to starting to practise the pieces on 20th January.

Choral Celebration Saturday 21st March

This will take place at Stricklandgate Methodist Church, with morning and afternoon sessions. The day will be led by Justin Doyle, a leading young choral conductor, who will give warm-up sessions throughout the day, as well as constructive feedback. We will be singing at this event, and Ian will choose four pieces totalling not more than 20 minutes. Please would you let your Section Rep know if you are unable to sing on that day.

Choral Weekend 11th-12th July

- A Come & Sing day on Saturday 11th July, morning and afternoon, led by Hilary Davies, a natural voice practitioner and workshop and community choir leader. No specific work has been chosen for this, but it will have a community singing theme and so it will be quite different from previous years' Come & Sing events. It will however be suitable for singers of all kinds, including ourselves
- A recital by the Herdwyck Consort on Saturday evening in St Anne's Church, Ings
- The Festival Chorus will sing Dvorak's Stabat Mater on Sunday 12th July in Kendal Parish Church, to be conducted by Ian Jones – application forms are available at rehearsals

More details about all of these are on the Festival website, www.mwwf.org.uk

Cumbria Choral Initiative Events

The next two Come & Sing events are:

- Haydn *Heiligmesse* on Sunday 5th April (Easter Sunday) at Ulverston Parish Church
- Haydn *Nelson Mass* on Saturday 24th October in Cartmel Priory

www.cumbriachoralinitiative.org

New Members are always welcome in the tenor and bass sections. If you know of anyone who might be interested please have a word with them and ask them to consider joining us.

Money Matters

Subscriptions

A reminder to those members paying by instalments that the balance of subscription is now due.

Coffee Morning

A profit of £136.80 was made – a bit down on

previous occasions because it was on a Friday which we find is now a bit unusual. People will still come on a Friday if they know about it so for another Friday event we will advertise it.

The next coffee morning is on Saturday 18th April.

Messiah

This was a great success musically but not quite so good financially. All accounts are not yet in but the indications are that there will be a loss of about £1700. This is some £600 more than expected because the audience of 182, although good, was not as big as we had hoped for such a popular work.

A couple of members appear to have sold a ticket but have not yet accounted for it. If that is the case, would they please pay the money to Stewart as soon as possible.

Easy Fundraising

Please do not forget when you shop online to do it through Easy Fundraising, so securing a donation from the supplier to the choir at no cost whatsoever to you. We continue to get some donations each quarter but it could be much more if everyone remembered to use the service. It is very easy. If you are unsure how to do it just ask the Treasurer for an instruction sheet.

Book (and anything else) Stall

Please bring books that are cluttering up your shelves and we will sell them for 50p each, so raising funds for the Choir – last year we raised £150. Other acceptable items are jams, scones, fruit, etc., but please price up your own items.

'Odd One Out' Quiz

There is still time to sell our quiz sheet, as the closing date is not until mid-February. Take ten or more to sell to your friends and family, take some with you to other meetings, leave some at your local Post Office – the

possibilities are almost endless! Money should be returned to Jean Robinson.

Social Matters

New Year Social

Our Social will be on Saturday 24th January in the Kirkland Hall, from 7.30-9.30pm, with a choice of main courses cooked by Duncan Hamer, and puddings provided by choir members – volunteers, please! (expenses will be covered). The evening will start with an informal quiz. The cost will be £8 each, to include a first glass of wine or soft drink.

Section Reps:

Soprano: Jean Robinson (01539 725955)
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Tenor: David Thomas (015242 74223)
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Bass: Arthur Robinson (01539 725955)
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<http://www.kendalsouthchoir.org.uk>