

KENDAL SOUTH CHOIR

Newsletter 12 – November 2015

Ian's Report

"Our concert on 10 October at St Thomas's (postponed from April) was built around Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*. In spite of some rather frantic last-minute preparation the choir acquitted itself with considerable distinction, with only the occasional lapse of vocal stamina, and according to the Westmorland Gazette even the conductor was 'on form'! Good contrasts of dynamic and colour were achieved, complemented by some fine, if at times variable, contributions from the soloists. Ian Pattinson accompanied on the organ, using his considerable skill in adapting the complex orchestral textures to his instrument.

"The second part, a varied and contrasting selection of some of the conductor's favourites, began with two fine English anthems, which produced some excellent singing, particularly from the gentlemen. Vaughan Williams's *Toward the Unknown Region* gave the choir an opportunity to reprise the work and as before rose magnificently to the occasion.

"The concert was rounded off with a burst of Opera. Chris Steele gave magnificent performances of arias by Verdi and Giordano. The choir was joined by the three soloists for the deeply felt 'Prayer' from Rossini's *Moses in Egypt*, and finally Emily Robinson shone (as did the whole choir) in the Easter Hymn from Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

"The concert was received with great enthusiasm by a modest but well satisfied audience.

"We are now in the throes of preparing for our February concert, a programme not without its challenges, and it is very dispiriting for a conductor to turn up week by week to be faced with half a choir. This is a problem which needs addressing if satisfactory progress is to be maintained."

Ian T, November 2015

The Committee would like to underline Ian's comments about rehearsal attendance. The Choir's Constitution requires 75 per cent attendance at rehearsals, and so far it has not

been necessary to reinforce this. Many of us have unavoidable personal and family commitments, but we would plead with all of you to try to get to as many rehearsals as possible – not just for the good of the individual, but for each other.

If you are unable to attend a rehearsal for any reason, let your Section Rep (see below) know.

New Director of Music

As you are aware, Ian will be retiring after the May concert, so we are looking for a new Director of Music. The Committee is making a few enquiries, but if you have any good ideas, please let us know!

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 concerts will be on:

- Saturday 20th February 2016 (Stainer: *Crucifixion*; Leighton: *Crucifixus Pro Nobis* (parts 3 and 4); Vaughan-Williams: *Five Mystical Songs*; and excerpts from Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. The soloists will be Alex Banfield (tenor) and Jolyon Dodgson (baritone).
- Saturday 7th May 2016 (Haydn: *Creation*) – soloists Laurie Ashworth (soprano), Richard Pollock (tenor) and Ian Caddy (baritone).

We seem to have a good number of very fine altos, but new members would be very welcome in all the other sections. If you know of anyone who might be interested please have a word with them and ask them to consider joining us.

Cumbria Festival Chorus Events

The next two Come & Sing events are:

- Haydn *Maria Theresa Mass* on New Year's Eve in St Thomas's Church, Kendal
- Haydn *Creation Mass* on Easter Sunday, 27th March, in Ulverston Parish Church

Cumbria Festival Chorus is the new name for Cumbria Choral Initiative, and the new website is www.cumbriafestivalchorus.uk.

You can find other local music events on the Bay Anti-clash List (which is available to download from www.bayanticlashlist.com).

Kendal Parish Church Christmas Tree Festival

Once again we will be decorating a tree for the Sunbeams charity at the Parish Church's Christmas Tree Festival in December.

Please let Lara Clahane know if you are able to help to decorate our tree.

Money Matters

Mendelssohn etc Concert

Despite a disappointingly small audience of 85 the loss of £799 is within budget.

It has been said before, but is still well worth repeating, that we need to do more to publicise our concerts by getting more posters displayed, and must sell more tickets. Some members do really well but not all, so please try harder. We have been very fortunate with our grant applications recently, but it must be wondered if our supporters will be quite so keen if we only reach a small audience.

Social events

These are good fun as well as being good fund raisers, so please support them. A note about the next party is elsewhere in this newsletter.

Gift Aid

Not all of our subscription is eligible for gift aid. For those of you who need to complete a self assessment tax return the amount to be included as gift aid for the 2015/6 tax year is £74. It is the same amount for the tax year 2014/5 just ended.

Easy Fundraising

This is a very easy way for all you online shoppers to get more income for the choir. We shall probably get well over £50 this year from this source, but it is quite likely it could be considerably more if online shoppers remembered to log in first to www.easyfundraising.org.uk, select Kendal South Choir as the charity to support, and then proceed to shop. The supplier then makes a donation to the choir at no cost to you. You can also encourage your friends and relations to do this as well. If you need more details, please ask Stewart who has an information sheet.

Book (and anything else) Stall

This hasn't done particularly well recently, partly due to the tight access into the church. The corner opposite the door has seemed to work well when available, so look for it there each week.

Please also think about bringing other items too – perhaps make some smaller pots of jam when you do your season's batches, or a cake or some fruit. It would be good if you could price up your own items, and be prepared to take them home if they aren't sold by the end of the evening.

Coffee Morning

Our next Coffee Morning will be on Friday 11th December in the Town Hall, from 9am. Please sign up to help on the day and/or to make cakes or bring raffle prizes.

New Year Social 2016

Our Social will be on Saturday 27th February 2016 in the Kirkland Hall, from 7.30-9.30pm, with a choice of tasty main courses prepared by Duncan Hamer, and a selection of puddings. As usual, the evening will start with an informal quiz. More details later.

Section Reps:

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