

# THREE SPIRES SINGERS

NEWSLETTER TO SPONSORS, PATRONS, FRIENDS,  
ORCHESTRA MEMBERS AND SINGERS

January 2009



## Music Making in March

The pieces of music which challenge me most and which I find most moving are often large-scale works that take the listener on a journey through a particular subject. Elgar's *The Music Makers*, which we will perform at the Cathedral on Saturday 28 March, is one of those pieces. It is a relatively late work, first performed in 1912. This may not seem particularly late as Elgar did not die until 1934 but World War I and then his wife's death in 1920 left him with little desire to compose. By 1912, Elgar had written most of his famous works including the *Enigma Variations*, the violin concerto and both symphonies.

Having eventually achieved his first major success with the *Enigma Variations* in 1899 (at the age of 42 and much later than he would have liked), Elgar had a real connection with the sentiments of Arthur O'Shaughnessey's poem, the text of which reflects on the 'Artist' being under-appreciated (and rejected, to an extent) by society. The Artist 'wandering by lone sea-breakers, and sitting by desolate streams' is treated with sincere empathy in Elgar's music, which is peppered with quotes from earlier works. Perhaps the most significant quote is from *Nimrod* which, in the score of the *Enigma Variations*, is dedicated to his friend August Jaegar who died in 1909. Jaegar was a music publisher who championed Elgar's music long before it was fashionable as well as providing sagely council on musical and non-musical matters. To the 'Jaegar' music Elgar sets O'Shaughnessey's lines referring to the nature of inspiration 'But on one man's soul it hath broken, A light that doth not depart'.

The concert is a particularly ambitious one, involving a vast Romantic orchestra of over fifty players (compared with fewer than twenty for *Messiah* and similar Baroque works). Over 100 members of Three Spires Singers will be joined for the Elgar by the distinguished British mezzo-soprano Yvonne Howard and for Vaughan Williams' *Flos Campi* by one of Cornwall's most gifted musicians, viola player Tim Boulton. Please join us all and support this very special evening.

**Christopher Gray**

### Auditions

We intend to hold the three-yearly auditions for all choir members on **Saturday 9 May 2009** so please try you hardest to keep this day free. Auditions for sopranos and tenors will take place in the morning, for altos and basses in the afternoon. Would members who know that they cannot attend for auditions on this day, or have difficulties with either the morning or the afternoon please let me know as soon as possible by email on [kate.dalziel@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kate.dalziel@tiscali.co.uk) or Tel: 01872 863968

### Future concerts and events

#### 28 March 2009

I was Glad	Parry
Blest Pair of Sirens	
Flos Campi	Vaughan Williams
Viola Soloist Tim Boulton	
The Music Makers	Elgar

#### 13 June 2009

English Romantic Part Songs at  
St Mary's Church, Penzance

## Come & Sing

As many of you will know, we had a very successful Come & Sing Day with Paul Spicer, despite him being poorly with a very bad throat. The Chairman and I had a fairly exciting New Year, learning on New Year's Eve that our planned location of Truro School had to be changed due to unforeseen circumstances. Luckily for us, Richard Lander, Estates Steward for Truro Methodist Church, was able to work magic and we are very grateful indeed for a fine venue with excellent facilities at very short notice!!!

We had about 150 attendees despite colds, flu and bad weather and a wonderful spread at teatime, which was deeply appreciated by all and sundry. A huge thanks to all the many organisers, contributors and helpers - we raised substantial funds to be put towards our next concert

We plan another similar event in mid-January 2010 – if anyone has ideas as to what to sing, please let Priscilla Reeve or myself have your suggestions.

**Bellanne Lethbridge**

## Treasurer

Attendance at our first concert of the season in October 2008 was at about the anticipated level of nearly 370. As a result of carefully controlling the costs, the deficit for the concert was smaller than anticipated at just over £4,000, having incurred costs of approximately £10,500.

At the time of writing, income and expenses have not been calculated in full for the *Messiah* concert in December but it was extremely well-attended, with over 700 in the audience. Initial figures suggest a relatively small deficit of about £600. In the past, performances of *Messiah* have enabled us to make a surplus - this deficit reflects the increasing costs of putting on orchestral concerts in the Cathedral.

In the present economic climate, we are extremely grateful for the ongoing support of our sponsors, Mr and Mrs Maberly and also wish to express our thanks to the businesses who have supported us in the past year.

**Sheelagh Jenkins**

## Chairman

A wonderful *Messiah* - especially for those of us jaded souls who have done it rather often - and it was much appreciated by the audience. We almost broke even. For those who wonder why this is so difficult, hiring the cathedral costs well over £2,600 in the winter - heating pushes up the price. You may not be surprised by our seeming obsession with fund-raising when you think about our costs.

You may have heard all about our adventures with the Come & Sing Day. As a fund-raising event it repaid Bellanne's massive effort to organise it all.

*The Music Makers* is growing on me. I wasn't sure when I listened to my CD at first. Now I am looking forward to the concert very much, not least because there will be one of the biggest orchestras we've ever had. Please tell your friends and colleagues to come and support us.

I am glad to see new faces nearly every week and we warmly welcome those who join us permanently – I fully agree with Chris’s aim to augment both our numbers and the quality of the sound.

Have a good term!

**Priscilla Reeve**

### **Patrons & Friends**

Following a very successful and enjoyable *Messiah* in December, we are now rehearsing for our concert on 28 March 2009. Tickets are selling well, so it would be advisable to book your seats from me soon in order to secure frontline seats. I will be sending you posters in due course, so please circulate them as widely as possible.

There are still quite a few subscriptions overdue. Please would you send them to me as soon as possible so that we can claim Gift Aid before the end of the financial year. Thank you for all your invaluable support.

**Anne Drew**

### **Sponsorship**

You may have noticed that the programme for the *Messiah* concert contained a few more advertisements than usual. Having recently lost some of our valued corporate sponsors, we decided to try to increase revenue from advertising, with some success. While we continue actively to seek new sponsors (suggestions and contacts welcome, as always, please!) we have to recognise that these are not the best of times for persuading businesses to part with their cash. Advertising in our concert programmes is a lower-cost alternative to full sponsorship and we have recently put together a one-page flier drawing attention to the attractive terms that we can offer, especially to businesses prepared to commit to a year’s-worth of repeat adverts. Advertising in Three Spires Singers concert programmes is, of course, guaranteed to reach a sophisticated and discerning readership! If you have any connections with a business that might be interested, do contact myself, Paul Parsons or Camilla Comeau and we can let you have copies of the flier.

Internet activity through the Everyclick search engine and the Buy.At webshop continues to attract a modest trickle of funds. By the time you read this Newsletter, I should have again contacted everyone whose e-mail address I have with an electronic update. If you haven’t received this, I may have either the wrong address or no address for you - please update me by e-mail to [d.g.smith@talktalk.net](mailto:d.g.smith@talktalk.net).

**David Smith**

### **Rehearsal and Concert Dates**

<b>February</b>	2, 9, 23
<b>March</b>	2, 9, 16, 23, 28 (concert), 30
<b>April</b>	20, 27
<b>May</b>	11, 18
<b>June</b>	1, 8, 13 (concert)
<b>September</b>	7, 13, 20, 27

The **Three Spires Webshop** continues to offer good value for money to internet shoppers, with the added bonus of knowing that **a commission on every sale goes to Three Spires Singers**. And, naturally, there are lots of discounts around at the moment.

If you are new, either to the Three Spires or to my e-mailing list, please try going to [www.buy.at/threespiressingers](http://www.buy.at/threespiressingers), where you will find that more than 150 shops, insurance companies, travel agents and others offer their goods and services over the internet, giving a commission to us on every transaction, at no additional cost to you.

Just a few updates that you might find useful:

I'd always bought a lot of my books and CDs from **Amazon** until I realised recently that **Waterstones** offer a much better rate of commission - 5 per cent, compared with only 1 per cent from Amazon - and everything you buy is free of postage. Give it a try - their prices seem pretty competitive to me.

**Norwich Union** is offering (for a limited period) free contents insurance to new customers buying buildings insurance (as long as you have three years of no-claims on your previous policy). They give an amazing **£70 commission** for every new policy - just one of those would improve our earnings by several hundred per cent! (Other insurance companies also offer similarly substantial fixed-sum commissions, so please do consider going via Buy.at next time you need insurance for your house, your car or your pet.)

**Webtogs** are offering 60 per cent discounts on Berghaus, Helly Hansen and Merrell outdoor clothing, footwear, backpacks and so on, and **10 per cent** of every sale comes to the Three Spires.

**David Smith**

*Greater Love*  
*A Concert on the Eve of St Valentine's Day*

Friday 13 February 2009  
Truro Cathedral

An evening of sublime choral music with readings on the theme of love by  
BBC Radio Cornwall's Daphne Skinnard and Tim Hubbard.

Truro Cathedral Choir  
Directed by Christopher Gray  
Organ: Luke Bond

Tickets prices £10 (Students £5, Under 18s Free) available from the Hall for Cornwall box office 01872 262466 or online at [www.hallforcornwall.co.uk](http://www.hallforcornwall.co.uk)