



## Music Director

The Choir has just started rehearsals for the new academic year and it's great to be immersing ourselves straight away in Mozart's *C Minor Mass*. The Mass is incomplete, missing the Agnus Dei and most of the Credo. Several scholars have made editions of the work and it is the Robbins Landon version which we will perform on Saturday 16 October. This edition simply fills in the necessary gaps in the orchestration for the mostly complete movements but it does not try to reconstruct movements which Mozart never wrote.

The work famously showcases two soprano soloists and we have two of the very best you are likely to hear coming to sing for us: Rebecca Bottone and Rachel Nicholls. They will be joined by two of Cornwall's most distinguished soloists, Nicholas Hawker and John Hobbs, singing the tenor and bass solos.

In the first half you can hear Haydn's terrifying, almost crazed anthem *Insanae et vanae curae* as a curtain raiser followed by Beethoven's 'Emperor' piano concerto with Paul Comeau at the piano. You won't find many concerts with as many good tunes as this one!

We have our biennial performance of Handel's *Messiah* on Saturday 11 December and I hope that we will attract our usual full house for what is always a thrilling occasion.

On Saturday 2 April we will perform Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*. We have pulled out all the stops for this performance, with a huge orchestra of around 55 players as well as top soloists including James Oxley (tenor) and Darren Jeffery (bass). With the Choir's numbers now up to around 110 singers, I feel we have the resources to do justice to this monumental and beloved work.

When Priscilla and I were exploring possible new and interesting performing venues for the choir, one of the options was the Mylor Theatre at Truro College. We went up to have a look and it turned out to be absolutely perfect for what we had in mind. They have an excellent concert hall with exactly the right facilities, including staging and pianos, for our summer concert. I think it will prove to be a comfortable place for both choir and audience and I do hope you will consider joining us for a performance of the Brahms *Requiem* in its original version for two pianos, soloists and choir.

## Thanks to our Treasurer, Sheelagh Jenkins

Three Spires owes Sheelagh a huge thank you for her dedicated hard work as Treasurer for the last six years. I know that Priscilla and myself as Chairmen over this period have relied on her to guide the choir's finances through easy and difficult times. She took over from Ben Cartlidge, well-known to many of our long-term singers - a hard act to follow, particularly for his accuracy in predicting the financial outcome of proposed concerts. Sheelagh took this all on and, even more important, made the figures clear and understandable for those of us who find these things very difficult to decipher! Having lost a sizeable public grant from Camborne College five years ago, she took us through choppy waters and the introduction of a new subscription system has enabled us to be in the more secure place that we are today. It is the job of Musical Directors and Chairmen to have the vision but a good Treasurer holds the reins – and that was certainly true of Sheelagh.

Caroline Johnson

## Patrons & Friends

You will, by now have received a mailing from Bellanne Lethbridge, so this will only be a short piece from me.

I just wanted to write a tribute to two of our founder member Friends. Firstly, Richard Nettley, who several of our Friends will remember. He sadly passed away, aged 83 years, in Helston Community Hospital in July after a long illness. His funeral was at Penmount Crematorium and was attended by members of IMS and St Endellion, with which he was heavily involved. Elizabeth Machell represented Three Spires Singers. He asked for music by Beethoven, Elgar and Wagner- his favourite composers. He was a regular attender at our concerts and used to 'phone me the following morning, when I was cooking the Sunday lunch, and enthuse about the music. If he did not 'phone me, I would know that he had not enjoyed the concert!

Secondly, Peggy Crosley, aged 90 years, has decided with regret to resign as a member of the Friends, as she finds it impossible to travel from St Teath for our concerts. She was a tower of strength in the early days and would valiantly sell tickets for us during the afternoon rehearsal in the Cathedral, then attend the concert and travel back to St Teath afterwards. Thank you, Peggy, for all your support and help. We will miss you.

**Anne Drew**  
**Patrons and Friends Secretary**

## Matters Financial

Firstly I would like to thank Peter Coomber for reviewing and reporting on the accounts for us.

The overall position is that we have had a very good year financially and are in a strong position to move forward into 2010/11.

**Receipts** for the year total £42,408 up from £40,317 last year. Highlighting the main differences between 2010 and 2009:

- membership subscriptions have risen again because the choir has many new members;
- ticket income is lower because although there were four concerts in each year, in 2010 we had two in the Cathedral and two in other locations, whereas in 2009 we had three concerts in the Cathedral including *Messiah*, which always attracts a very large audience. Concerts in the Cathedral generate higher ticket revenues. In addition, we did not receive any income from the St. Endellion concert this summer, as we sang as guests;
- we have been delighted to welcome three new sponsors in 2010 and I can also announce that a further new sponsor has joined us this August, after the year end;

**Payments** for the year totalled £32,339, down from £42,334 last year because this year there were only two concerts with orchestra, whereas there were three in 2009, including *The Music Makers* which required a very large orchestra. The other main expenditure in 2009 was the redesign of our website.

Cash funds to carry forward to 2010/11 are £27,989, which remains a strong financial position.

The concert income adjusted for debtors was £38,217 and expenditure adjusted for creditors was £32,068, resulting in an adjusted surplus of £6,149. This gives a £14,442 core surplus, less total concert deficits of £8,293.

Almost without exception, concerts lose money. It is the surplus from so called 'core' activities (subscriptions, sponsors, fundraising etc) that enable us to perform the programmes we do. Five years ago we changed from a fixed members' subscription to a minimum subscription and the generosity of members in paying more than the minimum subscription has improved the finances of the choir considerably. In fact, I estimate that over 80 per cent of the choir pay more than the minimum amount, which brings in additional subscriptions of about £3,000.

**Subscriptions for 2010/11**

It was agreed at a previous AGM that the minimum subscription should rise in line with inflation each year. There was no increase last year, in view of the low inflation rate and the economic climate. It has been decided this year to raise the minimum subscription by £1 to £90pa. The minimum monthly amount for a standing order remains at £8. As always, we encourage anyone who feels able to pay more than the minimum to do so.

**Sheelagh Jenkins**

## **Chairman**

We welcomed many **new singers** over the last year and there are new ones again at the beginning of the choir year. Please introduce yourselves to your neighbouring singers in the intervals. We have very good choir discipline and chattering during rehearsal work is guaranteed to irritate our much-loved Director. I hope you will all enjoy the works we will be learning and performing.

Chris has continued to work on developing the quality of the choir sound and technique and our introduction of voice training sessions and Alexander Technique in-house and in workshops was successful and will continue. This time two years ago I wrote "our first two rehearsals with him have been stimulating and for some people a little daunting. I know we will all learn and improve in technique as well as developing further musicianship in the weeks and years to come."

I challenge anyone to tell me this has not happened for them. More training is planned in the workshop based on Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* on 5 March, in preparation for the concert on 2 April.

I am looking forward to hearing and seeing Paul Comeau and his son Benjamin performing (in place of an orchestra, just as it was written originally) the Brahms *Requiem*, with us as backing. The Comeau family is such an asset to Three Spires and it shares its talents with other organisations as well. Camilla is tirelessly designing and producing posters, programmes, the new choir mugs and the recipe book now nearly finished. Paul as usual is on the keyboard accompanying us for rehearsals and concerts as well as performing works such as the Emperor Concerto. There really isn't a way of thanking them adequately but their immense value is appreciated by me and everyone who knows their work.

David Smith appealed last term to members of the choir and its Patrons and Friends for sponsorship. We are very grateful to three business people from the choir and its Friends who became donors.

We have a new Treasurer, Simon Price, who has long been a member of the bass section. His wife Penny served a long time as Membership Secretary and is going to be invaluable when assisting him. Sarah Scott has been shadowing Lynne Fleming for the last year and takes over as full committee member on the retirement of former Librarian Lynne.

At the AGM we presented Peter Coomber with a bottle of Bordeaux produced by a Cornishman and a gift card for a CD. He has been our Examiner of Accounts for the last 21 years and at the age of 91 has decided to take a rest, although he will still sing in the bass line. He was a tremendous help in the setting up of the choir when it became independent from the Three Spires Festival. He put together the Constitution and has been a well-used and respected advisor to the committee and Treasurers over the years.

In this newsletter I've put a list of the people who give their time and talents to make Three Spires Singers the success it is. If you would like to help, we would be delighted - please see me. With warm thanks to all - enjoy the season!

**Priscilla Reeve  
Chairman**

## Poster Distribution

We expect to have posters available by the next rehearsal. With the concert only a few weeks away, early action is necessary to get them out.

Truro Cathedral do a mail shot to 3,000 known to be interested in our kind of music. We pay a share of that cost and it seems likely that a majority of our audiences are from that list. Accordingly, we are only getting 1,000 small posters and 500 A4s for our own distribution.

A list of those who kindly undertook to distribute posters in certain areas for previous concerts appears below. In addition, many others covered their own local area. Please let me know if you are no longer able to take this on.

We now have a number of new members, some of whom may live in places not previously covered. I would be grateful to hear from anyone who can take on Penzance, which was previously covered by the late Eileen Goddard, or elsewhere.

### Posters by e-mail

It is planned to send all those members who have provided their email addresses a poster. You can then very easily forward this together with your own message to as many of your friends you think may be persuaded to buy tickets.

### Members' Cars:

An A5 poster carefully sited in a rear side window should not impair vision, is noticeable because not competing with other things - such as on a busy notice board and, most importantly, is mobile. I know this is not universally popular but please think about it.

### List of distributors from previous concerts:

Eileen Smith	Truro
Elizabeth Machell &	St Ives &
Stephen Clutterbuck	Flushing & Mylor
Phillip Hills	Fowey
Sarah Jewell	Hayle
Georgina Brown	Falmouth & Penryn
Richard Lander	St Just, Portloe, St Mawes
Jean Farmer	Portscatho & Probus
John Loughnan	Mawnan Smith
Phillip Feather	Feock & Trelissick
Mary Humphreys &	Redruth
Penny Davies	
Claire Harries	St Agnes, Mount Hawke & Perranporth
Kevin Lawton	Wadebridge
Jenny Jelbert	Newquay
Anna Retallack	Constantine & Port Navas
Elizabeth Burroughs	St Austell & Carthew

### Places currently not covered:

Penzance  
Helston  
Camborne  
Padstow  
Plymouth

**John Loughnan**  
**01326 250935**

## Naxos Music Library

I wonder if members are generally aware of the Naxos Music Library, which allows you to listen online to virtually the whole catalogue of the Naxos record label (allegedly 41,500 discs and nearly 600,000 tracks!), which is mostly classical music. This is a subscription service but is available free to library members in Cornwall. You can't save the music but so long as you don't mind being somewhere near your computer, you can keep coming back to it.

To get to the login page, go to [www.cornwall.gov.uk/library](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/library) and click on the button for Music Library (Naxos).

There are several recordings of the Mozart on there - happy listening!

**Alison Gunderson**

## Volunteers

We couldn't exist if we did not have help and assistance from those people below. Our thanks go to all who give much time, energy and expertise to make the choir such an excellent and efficient organisation.

**The committee:** Priscilla Reeve Chairman; Bellanne Lethbridge Secretary; Simon Price Treasurer; Anne Drew Patrons & Friends Secretary; Kate Dalziel Membership Secretary; Lora Wicks Sponsorship & Fundraising; Sarah Scott Librarian; Camilla Comeau Publicity & Design; Paul Comeau Accompanist; Stephen Clutterbuck Historian; Dee Gordon-Jackson Orchestra Manager; Sally Hind Minutes Secretary

Margaret Pritchard: newsletter editor and compiler

Sally Hind: minutes secretary and Come & Sing emailing

Stuart Skeplorn: arranges layout of rehearsal room, choir seating plans etc

David Smith and team: concert management - audience seating plans, liaison with HfC, front of house, programme sellers and steward recruitment

Julia Smith with Catriona Macdonald: Box Office ticket sales and team

Anne Drew: Patrons & Friends communications and ticket sales, with June Martin

John Loughnan: Poster and leaflet distribution with Yvette Smith and team

Diane Earnshaw and Liz Grant: assist the Librarian

Lis Skeplorn and Pat Lander: hospitality, entertainment, fundraising events with team

Rosemary Stephens and team: Come & Sing food and entertaining

Jean Farmer, Alison Mold, Mo Whitaker, Liz Grant, Jo Davison: general help

Victoria and Andrew de Labat: weekly raffle

Jenny Kwee group emailing

Jessica and Rachel Smith: stewarding and programme sales

This list is bound to be out of date the moment I write it and equally sure to lack some important members of our volunteer teams.

Please let me know as soon as possible who I have left out and I will make amends

**Priscilla Reeve**

## Ticket sales to Friends, Patrons & choir

By way of explanation for new members, and indeed for everyone, here's how sales of tickets for our concerts works.

Ticket sales to the general public are handled by the Hall for Cornwall (HfC). They generally go on sale at about the time the HfC's current quarterly events brochure – What's On – is published. Tickets can be booked through the HfC in person, by 'phone, or online.

Patrons & Friends of the Three Spires, in return for the support they give us with their annual subscriptions, have advance booking rights. For (usually) a couple of weeks before general booking opens, they have priority booking for the very best seats, which regularly sell out at this stage – our Patrons & Friends are very loyal!

At the beginning of the general booking period, the choir asks the HfC to hold back a good number of the better seats and these are the ones that are offered at the first few rehearsals each term. Anne Drew is in charge of this service (and indeed of ticket sales to Patrons & Friends), often with the help of June Martin. ***Choir members are encouraged to book seats for their friends and families through this service.***

There are significant advantages to booking your tickets this way:

- You avoid the £1 booking fee that the HfC charges.
- The choir avoids the HfC's 10per cent commission on every ticket sold by them.
- You get access to a good selection of the better seats.

As we can't keep a large number of seats reserved indefinitely, we can only offer our booking service for a limited number of weeks, after which all remaining seats go back on sale through the HfC. So, choir members, ***please support your choir by booking seats at rehearsals, as early each term as you can!***

David Smith

### Rehearsal and Concert Dates 2010/11

September	20, 27
October	4, 11, 16 Concert, 18
November	1, 8, 22, 29
December	6, 11 Concert
January	10, 17, 24, 31
February	7, 14, 28
March	5 Workshop, 7, 13, 20, 27
April	2 Concert
May	9, 16, 23
June	6, 11 Concert

### Future concerts and events

16 October 10	Haydn	<i>Insanae et Vanae</i>	<i>Cura</i>	
				Mozart Mass in C Minor
				Beethoven Piano Concerto No 4
				Soloist: Paul Comeau
				Truro Cathedral
11 December 10		Handel	<i>Messiah</i>	Truro Cathedral
5 March 2011	Elgar	<i>Dream of Gerontius</i>	Workshop	Nick Hawker
				Truro School - TBC
2 April 2011		Elgar	<i>Dream of Gerontius</i>	Truro Cathedral
11 June 2011		Summer Concert		Mylor Theatre, Truro College