

Welcome to all of you – new members and old – to the second half of our 2011/2012 Season: we trust you will find it every bit as enjoyable and rewarding as the previous “term”. Please make a note of the following key events and dates your new 2012 calendars and diaries.

We are very pleased once again to welcome more new members to our group as of January: thank you for your interest, and don't hesitate to ask any of us if there's anything you want to clarify, or questions you may have.

Annual Dinner:

A reminder for those who have booked: the dinner is at the *Hotel du Vin*, at 7.30 for 8.00p.m. on Wednesday 18th January.

Treasurer:

Michael Selway reminds you that if you pay your subscription in 2 halves then the January 2012 portion is now due, and urges you to make your payment to [Elena Gente](#) [soprano] as soon as possible.

Website Gallery:

The website now carries photographs of some of the Christmas events in which small groups of Members sang, outside the formal calendar.

- Carol-singing for the special customer evening at the *Jack Wills* store in the Pantiles
- Carol singing in *Royal Victoria Place* in support of the TWGGS fund-raising for their *Ghana Education Project*: over £600 was raised at this event.
- Carols on Christmas Eve at the *Hotel du Vin* – which is one of our valued official Sponsors during the current season.
- In addition to these events, traditional carols for residents of *Rosset Holt* and *Halliwell* care homes, were kindly organised by Helen MacNab and lead by Derek Watmough, to both of whom many thanks. As usual, the evening started with a visit to our President, Roy Douglas, to convey our heartfelt good wishes in song!

March 11th Concert - *Carmina Burana*:

Rehearsals begin on January 9th for Orff's *Carmina Burana*, under the baton of our new guest conductor – Adrian Pitts. Adrian was previously Head of Music at *Tonbridge Grammar School* and more recently was promoted to Deputy Head. He is also Musical Director of our neighbours – the *Paddock Wood Choral Society*. We're delighted to welcome him among us, and look forward to experiencing another fresh approach to making music, in what is proving a very fertile year for us. Adrian will also be training students from the School to form the *Ragazzi* choir called for in the score, and they will sing with us at the Concert. The concert will take place at 3.00pm in the Assembly Hall on **Sunday, 11th March**: there will be a rehearsal every Monday evening up to that date, plus a Friday evening rehearsal on the 9th March.

We are delighted that the programme will also include a performance of *Saint-Saëns' Carnival of the Animals* - affording our outstanding accompanist Anthony Zerpa-Falcon and his wife Jong-Gyung Park an opportunity to show us what they can really do without us.

Negotiations are under way to secure the loan of 2 superb *Phoenix Concert Pianos* for this event, from *Hurstwood Farm Piano Studios*, near Borough Green. Few people realise that in recent years, some of the most remarkable acoustic advances in piano technology have been conceived in this unit a few miles from Tonbridge. Patented inventions from Hurstwood have been licensed around the world – including to

Steingraeber, who manufactured under licence the pianos we hope to use for this concert. In addition to their advanced technical specification, these 2 *Phoenix Pianos* are finished in exquisite unstained Santos Rosewood – a wood now almost extinct in the wild. A treat indeed in store!

May 19th Concert - Verdi's Requiem:

It had been planned that our Wiesbaden partners - the *Bachchor* - would join with us for this concert, but the events of last summer caused them to change their plans. Although these difficulties were quickly resolved, it proved too late for a further change of plan, so the Wiesbaden contribution has been replaced by our joining forces with the *Mayfield Festival Choir*.

The Musical Director of the *MTC* is Graham Caldbeck, and Members will not have forgotten his inspiring direction of the Rutter *Requiem Mass* last June. We're delighted to confirm that it has been agreed that the *MFC* will be joining forces with us for the Verdi *Requiem* – under the baton of Graham. We thank Graham for arranging this, which will make the concert bigger and better, and hopefully the enhanced publicity opportunity will improve our box office takings.

Feedback

After their guest engagements in 2011, we invited both Malcolm Riley and Roland Miller to give us their honest feedback on the strengths and opportunities for improvement of the choir over the last 2 concerts. A more detailed report will be made available, but the key lessons that came out of this are:

- More attention to articulation and diction
- Heads out of copies!
- Listening to other voice parts while singing
- A brighter, more resonant, better projected sound required.

The Committee will deliberate over these reports, and seek ways of improving the quality and standard of the choir: but of course the remedy is basically in the hands of all our Members individually.

Co-option of New Officers:

Members will be aware from previous announcements that 3 Officer's posts will fall vacant at the end of the current season:

- Treasurer
- Concert Secretary
- Publicity Manager

We are delighted to announce that we have received offers to step up as replacements for each of these posts as follows:

- Treasurer *Elena Gente*
- Concert Secretary *Barbara Maw*
- Publicity Manager *Natalie Beresford*

The co-option of these names will be submitted to the next Committee for formal ratification – and of course to the full membership for formal election at the next AGM.

We would like to express our thanks to these volunteers for their willingness to serve.

We should also like to recognise our indebtedness to Michael Selway, Jane Reed, and Gareth Looker for their huge and unstinting services to us all over the years in which they held office.