

Start of Season Newsletter - August 2013

To all of our Members, friends and supporters

CALENDAR of KEY DATES: Season 2013 - 2014

- **Weekly Rehearsal Schedule:**
 - Starting on September 9th 2013, rehearsals will be held every Monday evening in St John's Church Hall, Amherst Road, Tunbridge Wells.
 - Please remember to bring a soft-leaded pencil and eraser to rehearsals, to annotate your scores with the directions of the Musical Director!
 - Normal Monday rehearsal times are from 7:30 to 9:30pm [with a 10 minute break mid-way].
 - **HOWEVER, our first rehearsal of the Season will start at 7.00pm**, since it will be combined with our Annual General Meeting [see following paragraph for details]
- **Monday September 9th: 7.00pm in St John's Church Hall**
 - **AGM** followed by short first rehearsal: please note that we will start the AGM at 7.00pm, so please try to arrive no later than 6.45pm to allow time to be issued with scores, for which there will be a £2 charge per copy [£4 in all]
Diana Blower [our Librarian] and Felicity, who is kindly assisting, would be grateful if you could come along with the correct change on the night.
For those who would like to purchase their own scores, please note that we shall be using the NOVELLO edition of the Faure *Requiem* and the SALABERT edition of the Poulenc *Gloria*.
 - **Officerships:**
 - Guy Huntrods has indicated his intention to resign from his post as Vice-Chairman at the AGM, and we are very happy to let you know that Michael Selway has agreed to allow his name to be put forward at the AGM as Guy's successor.
 - All of the other Officers have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election at the AGM
 - **Committee Members:**
 - There are no Committee Members due to retire by rotation this year, but if there are members who are interested in serving, or who wish to nominate others who could serve, please would they submit nominations to the General Secretary [Trevor Hurrell – contact details on the web-site] by the end of August.
- **Sunday November 10th at 3.00pm in the Assembly Hall Theatre:**
 - Autumn Concert, with pre-Concert talk by Rebecca
 - Programme:
 - **Felix Mendelssohn** - *Violin Concerto in E Minor* - with **Chloë Hanslip** as guest violinist
 - **Francis Poulenc** – *Gloria*
 - **Gabriel Fauré** - *Requiem*
- **Saturday December 14th at 6.30pm: St Mary's Church Goudhurst**
 - Traditional Christmas Concert.
- **Tuesday December 24th at Hotel du Vin:**
 - Usual carol-singing in the foyer of the *Hotel du Vin* - one of our Sponsors: we will be looking for a small number of volunteers to take part
- **Saturday May 10th in the Assembly Hall Theatre:**
 - "An Evening at the Opera"

Message from our Chairman

I look forward to seeing you all again on the 9th September for another season of good music. Please encourage any of your friends or relations to come with you, particularly if they are a tenor or bass. You will learn at the A.G.M. that our past season was successful, but drained our money reserves considerably.

So there is a very real need for Members not only to support others in special fund-raising activities, but also to make their own individual efforts to help raise funds, using all of your creative imagination! Some Members have already arranged for Coffee mornings, Tea parties, a Quiz Night, special rafflesetc etc. I hope we can rely on the initiative and enthusiasm of other members to come up with and organise further ideas. Such events need not await the start of the Season in September, and could be arranged over the remainder of the summer. And of course the more we can involve "non-Members" in our fund-raising activities, the better the results are likely to be!

The reason that we want to build up our reserves is the exceptional investment that we will be making to promote and produce our November 10th Concert, for which we have engaged Chloë Hanslip as our guest Violin soloist. If the concert is successful, and we sell lots of tickets, then we will hopefully recover our costs. May I urge everyone to mark November 10th in their diaries NOW, and to do their part by selling as many tickets as they can to support the Society?

Tickets are already on sale at the Assembly Hall for November 10th, but Members are asked to buy tickets through the Society if possible, to avoid incurring the commission charged by the Assembly Hall Theatre Box Office.

Finally, I would also like to appeal to all Members to suggest the names of people and organisations they know who might be willing to support the Society by advertising in our Concert programmes, or by becoming Sponsors or Patrons. Your Committee Members are doing their best in this respect but it is vital that all Members try to do their part.

Message from our Musical Director Rebecca Miller



Dear Choristers,

First may I extend to everyone hearty congratulations on your hard work and accomplishments this year, and offer again my sincere appreciation for all the people who work so hard to keep the Society running behind the scenes. What a year it has been! I hope you have enjoyed the journey we have taken together – through the emotional rollercoaster of the Elgar concert, to the hard work of the German in Beethoven 9, through some unwelcome snowstorms, to the uplifting joy of performing Haydn's Creation. Not only did I feel the concerts were great successes, but the rehearsals, which to me are the heart of what we do, and are even more important and fulfilling, have grown to be a centre of hard-work, humour, and true camaraderie.

The upcoming year is an ambitious one and one in which we are breaking new ground. We are proud to welcome the amazing violinist Chloë Hanslip to perform with the society. Now this may have seemed an unusual move to some to include a violin soloist in a choral concert, but the motivation was based upon an acknowledgement that there is a loyal orchestral audience in Tunbridge Wells, whom we would love to be tasting the joy of choral music as well. But ultimately music is music – and in a world where classical music is having to fight harder and harder for appreciation, we as musicians and people need to work to break down boundaries and pigeon-holes in general, but particularly in music, and instead focus on the principles of high quality art that serves to lift humanity.

But as you are all aware, this concert poses a great financial challenge to the society, and I commend the Committee for their boldness and bravery in launching into uncharted territory. We simply must all make it our duty to make it a financial success by filling the hall.

Musically, we have some new territory to explore - the Poulenc and the Faure will see us delve in to the world of the French Romantics – one that we have not explored together, but one that is fundamentally different than either the German or English traditions we have experienced together so far. In the Spring, we have planned *An Evening of Opera* – a celebration of the greatest choruses and arias from the repertoire, and we hope that by choosing a Saturday night for this concert that we will attract some first-time-choral-attendees, and we also hope that Tunbridge Wells will see it as an excuse to dust off their best dress, get dolled up, and enjoy the variety that the opera world has to offer. There will be two smaller concerts as well – our ever-popular Christmas concert, as well as a small concert in March, the details of which are still being finalised.

In the year ahead, I set us a challenge – build our membership, build our audience, and build our reputation. I hope that in the coming years we will become renowned as a versatile choral society that represents a cross-section of the population, and with representations from the most varied generations and walks of life, and the ability to sing with confidence in many styles, genres, and languages. In addition, I challenge us to have more discipline – both on stage in performance, and in rehearsal. More on this topic at the AGM....

I must take this opportunity to emphasize the need for all members to help achieve these goals – we need you to help in whatever way you can, and not to leave it to other members of the society to do so. As a choir, we work together in our singing to achieve something larger than any of us could achieve on our own. Everyone pays their membership dues, but many people go out of their way to do much more than that through volunteer work or extra contributions. I want you to be immensely proud of the society that you have chosen and that you yourselves own. So please, take ownership – tend the garden, make repairs speedily and thoroughly, update when necessary, experiment occasionally with daring colours, and take care of the society with the discipline and care that you show your own home. You have warmly welcomed me into this home, and though I may move a few pieces of furniture throughout the years, it is through you as members that it will endure, and ultimately, the legacy is yours.

Best wishes,
Rebecca

A note from our Publicity Officer:

It will become clear as the season progresses that we are, as always, dependent on you, the members, to spread the word about our activities - choral and otherwise. An easy way to help with this is to plug into a virtual network. *Facebook* and *Twitter* may be alien to some of you, and if that is the case, then it is likely to be so for most of your friends also, however, I am sure that you have some "plugged in" friends and family members. To those who have *Facebook* and / or *Twitter* accounts, please "like" or "follow" us. On both *Twitter* and *Facebook* we are @RTWChoralSoc. The more friends who "like" us, the wider the word can spread. I plan to be carrying out some competitions via *Facebook* and *Twitter* this year to both boost followers and gain new audience members. This can only work if we have enough people taking notice of what is being said on these pages.

So again, please ask any friends or family to "Like" us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/RTWChoralSoc) or "Follow" us on Twitter (@RTWChoralSoc).

FUND-RAISING EVENING: Quiz and Fish and Chips Supper: October 26th 2013.

A **GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ** has been arranged for Saturday 26th October 2013, in St John's Church Hall, Amherst Road, Tunbridge Wells - from 6.30pm until about 10.00pm.

There will be a half-time break for a Fish-and-Chip supper [with vegetarian option] at about 8.15pm, and soft drinks and wine will be available throughout the evening.

The Quiz-Masters [**Brian and Christine Perryman**] are well-experienced, offering us the prospect of a most enjoyable evening. Although there may be the occasional music-related question, this is definitely NOT a musical quiz but a General Knowledge quiz and will be light-hearted fun, and not too difficult!

It will be a special fund-raising event, and tickets will be priced at £5 per head – with an additional charge [at cost] for the meal, which will be supplied by the *Downtown Fish Bar* – who did us so proud in April 2010.

There will also be a special “Mega-Raffle” for the same evening, for which ticket prices will be more expensive than at rehearsal nights – and for which the prizes to be won will be more enviable too!

Ideally teams will consist of groups of 6 participants per table – made up of groups of friends and/or family. But individuals or smaller groups will also be most welcome, and can be made up with others into teams on the night. We suggest participants may wish to think-up a suitably resounding name for their team!

We want to welcome non-Members of the Society every bit as warmly as Members, and hope to see as many people as possible.

Final menu details and booking forms will be circulated a little nearer the time – but please mark it in your calendars as soon as possible.

Meanwhile any queries can be addressed to either:

- **Guy Huntrods – Vice-Chairman:** guyhuntrods@live.co.uk
- **Trevor Hurrell – General Secretary:** hurrellt@gmail.com

Miscellaneous Notices to Members

All Members are kindly asked to keep Olivia Seaman [our Registrar] and their Line Representative up-to-date with any changes to their contact details [postal address/ e-address /telephone numbers]. We will of course continue to send important information by post to those Members who prefer not to us e-mail, but in the interests of saving costs of printing and postage, we would like to use e-mail wherever possible to contact Members.

This is also a suitable moment to remind Members that our website <http://www.rtwcs.org.uk> is continually updated – and is the best easily-accessed source of information or news about any aspect of the Society’s affairs.