

2016 October

**BEXHILL CHORAL SOCIETY**

Since the May meeting we have been rehearsing for our concert on 8th October, Haydn's Creation.

We held the concert on 8th October and everything went very well, with praise from our audience members, and a review from Brian Hick (Lark Reviews) which was excellent, praising the 'quality and enthusiasm' of the choir.

In June our Director of Music, Ken Roberts, did a lecture-recital called, 'Love, hopeless love' on the theme of the loves of various classical composers; Ken very generously donated the evening as a fund raiser for the choir, and it was both a sell-out and an entertaining evening. Some of the choir also sang in a Festival Choir for the last night of the Bexhill Proms' concert which concluded Bexhill's Festival of Music. This was held at the De La Warr Pavilion and was a sell-out.

On the admin side we have revised and updated our constitution, and also created a new Members' Handbook for members to read (or not!).

We are holding a "Have a Hallelujah Morning!" workshop on 5th November from 10-1 - this is a fun 'taster' morning for people who may not have sung much if any classical music and want to give it a try. We hope we may recruit a few additional members as well, as we are performing Messiah next spring at the De La Warr Pavilion. We are also having a fund-raising quiz evening on November 11th, then our Christmas Concert on December 10th.

A few of our members are joining Hastings Philharmonic choir for Beethoven's 9th and a new piece by Philip O'Meara on November 12th.

**Future dates**

5 Nov 2016	"Have a Hallelujah Morning!" workshop 10am - 1pm	Christchurch Methodist, Bexhill
10 Dec 2016	Carols and Christmas music for choir and audience including Britten's 'A Ceremony of Carols'	St. Augustines Church, Bexhill
6 May 2017	Handel 'Messiah'	De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill
7 Oct 2017	Vivaldi 'Magnificat' - Montiverdi 'Beatus Vir' - Purcell Anthems, and selection from 'Dido and Aeneas'	
	Albinoni Double oboe concert (orchestra)	St. Augustine's church, Bexhill
9 Dec 2017	Christmas concert	St. Augustines's church, Bexhill

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**DOWNLAND SINGERS**

Our Summer Concert in June – “Thank you for the Music” at Trinity Church was well supported and the choir enjoyed presenting a varied programme of light music. The ladies of the choir showed off their baking talents by providing a selection of cakes for the Interval refreshments.

We also sang again in June for the Afternoon Tea held by the Friends of the Eastbourne Hospitals at East Dean Village Hall.

Our Autumn session began with two workshops - aimed at new singers - to introduce them to the skills required when following a musical score. These were both well attended and received.

Work is now underway on our Christmas repertoire in readiness for the Gala Concert at Trinity in December and other regular carol singing opportunities.

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**EASTBOURNE CHORAL SOCIETY**

nd knowledgeable speaker and we are delighted that he is returning to Eastbourne for us. ECS hosted a Sing and Discover Day last Spring for Messiah with John and Richard and it proved hugely successful. Please do make a note of the date. Details will be on our website in due course.

Now we are rehearsing Bach Christmas Oratorio for a concert on 3rd December which will mark the beginning of what is seemingly going to be a very busy Christmas season. Ding Dong Merrily everyone!!

Finally, on beWe gave a concert in July where we sang Poulenc Gloria and Puccini Messa di Gloria. This performance was much enjoyed by choir and audience although we were slightly disappointed at the number of people who came to listen., approx 150. We find it more difficult to attract an audience in the summer, probably because there is a lot going on in the town. Next summer we are planning a more "light hearted" concert in the hope that it may attract some holiday makers.

In September we held a very successful workshop day on Mendelssohn's Elijah. Despite the fact that quite a few of ECS holiday in September we had 85 singers – some of whom were ECS members and some "visitors" from other choirs. The day concluded with an informal performance with professional soloists. A great day singing helped along by plenty of tea and cake!!

Advanced notice – we are holding a Sing and Discover Day for Haydn The Seasons on 30th September 2017 led by John Hancorn with guest speaker Richard Wigmore. Richard is an entertaining ahalf of ECS a huge thank you to Jenny, Roger and Michael for their continuing work for the EADCA.

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#### HAILSHAM CHORAL

##### Activities since May 2016

11 June 2016 - Concert in St Nicolas' Church, Pevensey

Haydn, St Nicholas Mass

"The True Saint Nicolas", a new work by Ruth Kenward and Martin Neill in which we were joined by children from Pevensey & Westham C of E Primary School.

3 July 2016 - Summer Concert in Civic Community Hall, Hailsham

On the theme of Love and Romance

Future Events

17 September 2016 - Open workshop as part of the Hailsham Festival.

12 November 2016 - Concert in All Saints' Church, Eastbourne

Vaughan Williams' Five Mystical Songs plus a selection of early music and Russian music from the Oxford collection "European Sacred Music".

16 December 2016: Christmas concert

25 March 2017 - Concert in All Saints' Church, Eastbourne

Handel, Dixit Dominus

Vivaldi, Gloria in D

14 April 2017 - Stainer's Crucifixion - Hailsham Parish Church.

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#### HEATHFIELD CHORAL SOCIETY

Our main summer concert was held on 21st May, and included 2 contemporary works: Karl Jenkins 'The Armed Man' and Howard Goodall 'Every Purpose Under the Heaven'.

Both were enthusiastically received by the choir and the audience, although ticket sales were a little lower than expected, perhaps because the Goodall is not yet widely known. It was still a worthwhile event and I anticipate that

this work will in time become more widely known, in the same way that his earlier work 'Eternal Light' is now in the repertoire of many choirs.

The season ended with a whole day rehearsal for Eternal Light and a tea party.

So far this term we have given a concert at East Hoathley Church, which included 'Every Purpose' and extracts of works we have performed over the last few years.

In November we have our trip to New York, and a Christmas Concert on December 10th, including the first Sussex performance of Bob Chilcott's 'Wenceslas'. This is a very 'easy on the ear' work, but with some very clever choral writing. I can recommend it as a very useful addition to a choir's Christmas programming – it needs only piano accompaniment and two soloists.

## 2016 October PELHAM CHOIR

Choral workshop on 8th October at Ripe church (flier attached). Excerpts from Handel's Israel in Egypt. This is in association with the City Chamber Choir, conducted by Stephen Jones. Singers in all parts are very welcome; please send the flyer to your mailing lists.

There is unfortunately a clash of dates with the Hailsham Choral Society, and Brighton Early Music Festival who are both running workshops on the same day. Sometimes clashes just cannot be avoided.

There will not be a Ripe workshop in 2017.

The Villages Music Festival was a great success and was well attended with some outstanding musical events including an opera workshop for children.

We are planning a musical weekend for 9/10 September 2017 which will include chamber music and a film.

## 2016 October PHOENIX CHOIR

Our summer concert in early June was a great success - well-attended and with a very pleasing review. We performed Rutter's Gloria and Bob Chilcott's Little Jazz Mass, and also two instrumental spots - one a composition by our accompanist for piano and violin and the other, pieces for guitar and recorder. After some 'Rhythm of Life' the evening concluded with a taste of the Last Night of the Proms. The concert was well received and thoroughly enjoyed by choir and audience alike and there was a super atmosphere throughout the evening.

The start of the new season is going well and is proving popular with Elijah being a favourite of so many. We've had several new members join including extra tenors and basses who are most welcome and making a good sound.

The membership unanimously supported an increase in subscription this year to £100. We took the decision this summer to have a different subscription fee for each season; a higher rate to reflect the higher costs of our winter concert and with the bigger choir, and a lower rate for our summer concert with its lower costs and smaller choir.

We're trying to have a push on fundraising as concert expenses are so high and we have a well organised sponsorship/advertising team now as well as a team who are organising some in-house fundraising and the odd social event. We have a good number of carolling events booked for this December and are now supporting the Alzheimers Society for the coming year. We also have a new website and a new Friends Secretary who has the bit between his teeth.

All in all our new season has got off to a very positive, productive and enjoyable start.

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SEAFORD CHORAL SOCIETY

We have had no concerts since our last one in May. After the traumas of our last concert, it was mutually agreed by both Committee and MD that we all needed a break to rest and recuperate and that there would therefore be no summer concerts.

We restart rehearsals on 5th September to prepare for our Autumn concert on 26th November, when we shall be singing the following works:

Parry - I was Glad

Handel - Zadok the Priest

Faure - Cantique de Jean Racine

Brahms - How Lovely are Thy Dwellings (Requiem)

Holst - Christmas Day

Vivaldi - Gloria

We shall be pleased to welcome Dame Felicity Lott to sing with us at this concert in celebration of our Centenary and shall be organising a half-day workshop in early October for both present members and visiting singers (details at the meeting).

We have set up a Music Planning Sub-Committee, consisting of myself, our President, our MD, our accompanist and two members, one of whom will be celebrating her 60th year of singing with the Choral Society! The brief will be to work out a programme for the next two-three years which will then be costed and submitted to the Committee for approval.

I wait to see how many of our erstwhile members will return to sing with us!

Updated: May 12, 2020 - 4002