

CHORUS

The Winchester Community Choir *newsletter*

Issue 5, April 2009

Welcome to the 5th edition of Chorus, designed to keep you up to date with all choir news and activities.

Glad you could join us

First of all, a huge welcome to all new choir members. We hope you enjoy both the singing and social aspects of WCC. There are a lot of good things planned for the coming year so please read on. But first,

A look back....

We hope you agree that our Christmas '08 concert went really well and was perhaps our most successful yet? Audience feedback was really positive, both for the choir's performance and in praise of Belshazzar's Feast. We will certainly be asking the 2 Pauls to be our guests again another time but for the 2009 Christmas concert we are delighted that John Kirkpatrick will be joining us on stage. He is the composer of Chariots and a wonderful entertainer and musician. Some of you may have seen him on the recent Victorian Farm TV programme.

Money Raised for Charity

Congratulations to all for your hard work selling tickets for our Christmas concert. In total (from ticket sales and the retiring collection) we raised a brilliant £1280. At our practice session on 24th February, this was presented in 2 cheques, each for £640, to our chosen charities, CLIC Sargent, and Key Changes Music Therapy.



An Extraordinary Evening

For those of you who took part in Professor June Boyce-Tillman's "Space for Peace" chants in Winchester Cathedral in January, it was surely a memorable event and one that is very hard to describe. We will all have our own personal feelings about it so perhaps the best way to sum up this unique choral venture is to quote June Boyce-Tillman's email to all the participating choirs. "This is a heartfelt thank you to all of you for the part you played in making Space for Peace such a remarkable event. It was a great risk but thanks to your commitment and preparation it produced the most amazing result."



photo courtesy of Parveneh Farid

A busy year ahead.....

AGM

Our AGM will be held at 8pm on Tuesday 19th May. This is a normal choir night, so we will hope to complete the business quickly and then have a good sing! Those who are currently on the committee

have indicated a willingness to stay on (if members are happy with that - you will have a chance to vote) but if you are interested in standing for the committee, do let us know. We have the room (and work!) for another committee member, if you'd like to join us.

Mayfest

As hinted above, we have an exciting and eclectic programme of singing events planned for 2009. Our first gig will be at the Winchester MayFest, which is always a fun occasion. Our concert will be at the United Church on Friday May 15th at 7.30pm. Craig, Morgan, Robson (CMR) and the Askew Sisters will be appearing with us so we are sure to have a full house!

More May Singing

As decided at our choir session on 31st March, we are registering to 'Sing for Water' on Saturday 30th May in the grounds of Salisbury Cathedral. Everyone is welcome, although please don't feel pressured to come if you can't. It will involve joining up with many other choirs from the region, singing a short programme of rounds and songs, already polished for the Mayfest, and singing one song with all the other choirs. Anyone who would like to do this will need to come to the extra rehearsal that Sarah will be putting on during the summer half term (Tues 26th May). Please make a note in your diaries!

Voice Development Session

The voice development session that Sarah was going to hold on Tues 26th May (see above) has now been postponed, in part because some people who would like to do it are away

during half term, and also so this slot can be used to rehearse for our 'Sing for Water' performance on Sat 30th May. Sarah will reschedule the Voice Development Workshop for the autumn term. Watch this space.

Melodious June

June will be a very tuneful month with a coach trip to Stanchester, in Somerset, on Saturday 13th June to sing with the choir there. We plan to learn some of their songs, teach them some of ours and in the evening perform together. This trip is being funded by the WCC so it is free to members. We only ask that you bring your lovely voices! Then on Saturday 20th June, Sarah will be leading a "Summer Solstice Sing", a workshop for Midsummer, here in Winchester. Details soon.



And on to October

After the summer holidays, we are planning a celidh at the hall in Itchen Abbas - where some of you came for Wenda's party. A chance to dance the night away on October 17th - yet another WCC date for your diaries.

Co-Conducting

As most of you will know, Sandra Thibault (from the alto section) has very kindly agreed to take on the job of conducting us when our wonderful Sarah is unavailable - thank you Sandra! And on the subject of conducting, don't forget

to let Sarah know if you'd like to take part in the forthcoming conducting workshop that she's leading this term on Tues 21st July. Places are strictly limited, so book early, as they say (there's a bad joke here about lightning conductors, but far be it from me.)

Choir Attendance

With the Choir's waiting list so high (79 and rising), the committee has been discussing choir attendance and has come to the conclusion that, for the good of all, we need to review this. Most people are brilliant at turning up for rehearsals and this really helps our overall performance levels, but we do need to ask for a commitment to attending as often as you can. We believe it is reasonable to ask people to turn up at least 75% of the time and will be proposing this change at the AGM. It would also be fairer and allow people on the waiting list to join a little faster! Obviously, though, in exceptional circumstances such as long-term absence due to illness etc., please talk to a member of the committee.

We don't want your money!

It seems some people just can't stop giving us cash as quite a few of you have still not adjusted your direct debit payments to WCC and are over paying every month for your choir membership. Once again, the new (reduced) amounts are: £9 for non-concessions, £7.50 for concessions. We even have regular standing orders from people who have left the choir!! All these "contributions", together with the money generated by the Winter Sing workshop amounted to £414.50p and this sum was donated to the Mayor's Charities in January.

Choir colours

For our newest members, here is what we mean by "Choir colours". The dress code for WCC gives members a range of choice, while aiming to make the Choir look more cohesive. Choir colours now fall into 2 categories: **black**, and sea colours - i.e. anything from **sea blue**, through **aquamarine**, **turquoise** and **jade** to **sea green**. The code guidelines are as follows: Bottom half: **BLACK** (trousers, skirts, dresses). Top half: **Black** or sea colours. If black is used for the TOP half, members might like to add a touch of sea colour, in the form of a scarf, tie, cravat, jewellery. But this is not obligatory; black on its own is fine too. All colours and black should be **PLAIN**, not patterned please. Glossy or shiny fabrics look fab under lights so go for the gleam! Lastly, while we are not a formal choir, we do like to look **SMART**, out of respect for our audiences. Here we are looking resplendent in choir colours!



Choir Chat Corner

Thanks to Rosie MacMullen for her suggested caption to our picture, as displayed in the last Chorus. If you remember, unknowingly, we sang our summer concert under a banner, which

read, "Be still and know that I am God!" Rosie would like to see us singing under the following banner:

HEAVENLY VOICES

Thanks, Rosie, we agree, with the sentiment if not always with the result!!

This newsletter is edited for Winchester Community Choir by Catherine Hahn and Miranda Johnson.

If you have photographs we can use in the next issue please email them to:

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Suggestions for stories should not be emailed direct. Please discuss beforehand with Catherine or Miranda