

CHORUS

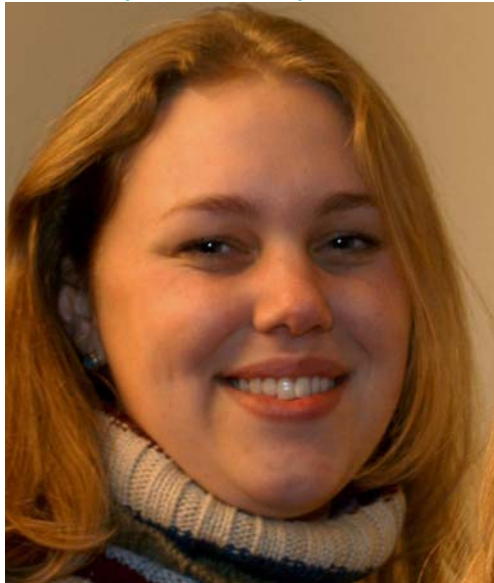
The Winchester Community Choir *newsletter*

Issue 3, June 2008

Welcome to Chorus

Here is the 3rd edition of your newsletter. We hope you find it interesting, informative and fun.

Goodbye to Freya



As you will all know by now, we must very sadly say goodbye to our lovely Freya at the end of the summer term. We are hoping she will be with us for our choir summer party on 15th July, so we can give her our personal thanks then.

Freya has been co-conductor with Sarah since the choir began in 2005. She makes us work very hard: on challenging music like 'The Silver Swan' and African songs with glorious (and very un-Winchester!) rhythms, and she makes the sopranos, at least, sing very high! And the harder we work, the more fun it is! We're going to miss her so much.

In fact, the choir wouldn't have got off the ground without her, as at the moment of its inception Sarah was unable to commit to leading us full time. Happily for the choir,

though, that has now changed and Sarah will be with us each week. However, we will have a higher proportion of guest conductors and Freya has promised to be one of those. So we look forward to singing with her again.

A huge thank you to Freya, then, for all she has taught us. And grateful thanks to Sarah for agreeing to literally (well, almost) pick up the baton!

Preview..

Summer Singing

It's full steam ahead to our "Songs for the Summer Solstice" concert on June 21st at the United Church at 7.30pm. Singing with us will be the Winchester Young Voices choir. Led by conductor Nick Sims, the choir of 9-13 year olds are quite experienced performers having sung at Broadlands, Grange Park Opera and on the SS Oriana! If you haven't got tickets for friends and relatives please make the most of the last few 'buying days' (contact the Theatre Royal box office) and if there are any songs you need to brush up on, please visit the WCC website. Don't forget that there will be a special "Chariots" rehearsal on July 22nd so have another listen to the CD. If any new members don't have a CD please see ask one of the Committee at rehearsal.

Photography

Please note, we will be having fresh photos taken of the choir before our summer concert on 21st June. You all know what to wear (if anyone is unsure it's on the website and in the folder at

the back of the church each week), so please look your gorgeous best - as you always do. Thanks! Please also be aware that the time the photographer, Joe Low, has to get his shots is very limited, so we need to be helpful. Joe will be arriving at United at 6.45pm to set up. At that moment we will have finished our rehearsal downstairs and be having a run-through upstairs of KYIP with the Young Voices. We will then have approx 20 mins for our photographs and Joe will also photograph the first 10 mins of our concert (without flash).

Communion in the Cathedral

The choir has been asked by the Bishop of Winchester's wife to sing in the cathedral at 11.00 am on July 14th at a Mother's Union Festival service, which will be attended by visiting Bishops from Burundi and Burma. It is a great compliment for the choir to be asked to sing but of course not everyone will be free to take part. It is possible that the Bishop's wives might perform a dance and that would be fun to see.

ChoirFest

Don't forget, if you're thinking of going to ChoirFest this year you will need to get on with booking. Early bird bookings close on 21st June (after that it's an extra £5). For more info go to www.communityvox.org.uk



For Now..

Cyberspace assistance

With our repertoire ever expanding, we cannot rehearse each song as many times as we might like to. That is where our wonderful website comes in. www.winchestercommunitychoir.co.uk Technical wizard Wenda is in charge of it and Sarah has been busily singing all the parts for many of our songs. Do please try and visit the website as often as possible, as practising against another part in the songs will really help to imprint the melody in your memory.

Suggestions Folder

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the Suggestions folder which is there on the font each week for your comments. The Committee does keep up with these, discussing at meetings the issues raised and writing replies where appropriate. Of course, a large group of people being what it is, some suggestions are cancelled out by others, but we do our best to be responsive to your ideas. Keep them coming!

Review..

The MayFest

First of all, thanks to everyone who sang at the MayFest. For those who didn't, you missed quite an experience! Sad to report, part of that experience was a morning rehearsal at United in which we got everything we could do wrong, including 4 disastrous attempts to sing Silver Swan that must have reduced Freya and Sarah to complete despair.

However, they very bravely allowed us to go ahead with the planned repertoire and the performance at St Lawrence's, we felt, did redeem us.

We sang to an enthusiastic audience, who pressed into the church and stood at the back. In the end, people were being turned away!
Well done, all.

Sarah's birthday

At the end of the MayFest concert, we presented Sarah with gifts for her 60th birthday, an important date that actually clashed with our performance. She also sang at the MayFest's 'One Big Party' in the evening, which made it a hard-working day. We are delighted to report, though, that her birthday weekend wasn't all nose-to-the-grindstone. She and Steve threw a party and ceilidh of their own the following day, near their home in St Mary Bourne.

Happy birthday, Sarah!



These were the flowers we gave her, together with a necklace and champagne.

Winchester Passion

Although it seems so long ago now, we must just mention The Winchester Passion. To be part of such a huge, unique event was both exciting and moving. Remember the freezing conditions that evening (and the freezing rehearsals!). Those choir members who took part, and those who also sang in the Passion Chorale, did the WCC proud and if you haven't

already seen the six of us on the cathedral "balcony" singing "Keep you in peace", with the rest of the choir below, have a look at <http://www.youtube.com/watch> and type in Winchester Passion.

Bridgwater Fair

It is always interesting and fun to have a guest choir leader take one of our rehearsals and we were thrilled that Paul Sartin came to lead us on March 25th. Multi-talented Paul who, with his band, Bellowhead, has just won Best Live Act in the BBC Radio 2 Folk awards, has found time to write a special arrangement of the song "Bridgwater Fair" for the WCC. The fair of the title has been held in Somerset in September since its charter in 1249 and folk-song scholar Cecil Sharp collected the song in the early 1900s. We will, no doubt, be returning to Bridgwater Fair and learning to sing it beautifully.

Sandra conducts!

From: Sandra Thibault

Having stood in for Sarah when she was away and taken her Petersfield and Andover choirs, I can tell everyone it is **much harder work than you might imagine!** And as we've heard Sarah lament many times - people don't watch the conductor or listen to each other! The feedback from one of the choirs is that they enjoyed it but I have to do more of that "hand-moving-up-and-down" thing!

Challenge your comfort zone

We all like to sit in "our" seat each week at choir rehearsal don't we? Have a chat with our friends and feel comfortable? But in fact, it will help to develop your own voice, and the sound of the choir as a whole, if you change places from time to time.

Sarah tells us that she likes to hear the different dynamics this produces, so please give it a go! In addition, it helps any new members get to know more of us if we move about a bit.

This newsletter is edited for Winchester Community Choir by Miranda Johnson and Catherine Hahn. If you have photographs we can use in the next issue please email them to mirandajohnson@btinternet.com. Suggestions for stories should not be emailed direct. Please discuss beforehand with Catherine or Miranda at the next Choir session.

Any more for any more?

Are there any more men who would like to have a tie in a glorious blue/green shade for choir performances? If so, please ask Jan Gapper to bring one into rehearsal for you. They are £3 each - as cheap as chips!

Choir chat corner

This little section is for choir member's news. First of all, many congratulations to Angela and George Mewandia on the birth of Simbule Chimwala George, who arrived on Sunday May 18th, only hours after Angela sang at the MayFest. Maybe it was the singing that hastened his appearance? Our second choir baby - just one more and we will have an extremely young voices trio!



Some of us gathered in Itchen Abbas on February 2nd to celebrate Wenda's 50th birthday. We had a whale of a time, dancing the night away to the strains of Freya's fiddle at the ceilidh thrown by Wenda, and her husband David, who were also celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary.

