



January 2012

Thanks to Peter and Oliver



We have had a hectic term with the visit of the Backnang choir, the Remembrance evensong and the December concert (all major undertakings) and I would like to say a huge thank you to Peter for his hard work, his enthusiasm and his confidence in us! Thanks also to Oli for working hard with us and for taking over when needed. It all paid off and it was a very successful term.

Review of our December 2011 Concert by Michael Gray

Here is a link to the review <http://michaelgray.blogspot.com/2011/12/christmas-with-mozart.html> but if you haven't managed to open that – here is the text of the review:-

Shaffer's envious Salieri was amazed - "It seemed to me I was hearing the voice of God," he says in "Amadeus".

I was reminded of those words as Katherine Fuge's pure soprano floated over the woodwind in the sublime Et Incarnatus Est from Mozart's Great C minor Mass. From her first appearance in the Christe, it was clear that hers was a voice at one with the composer's genius, a lambent, pure tone soaring to the ceiling – a memorable moment.

This was a magnificent performance, from the dramatic Kyrie to the complex counterpoint of the Benedictus. The other soprano, just as impressive as Katherine, was Julie Cooper, outstanding in the ornate Laudamus Te. The Singers, under the inspirational direction of Peter Nardone, were on exceptionally good form throughout, producing a powerful, expressive sound, in the majestic ending of the Gloria, for example. The accompaniment was provided by the Suffolk-based Prometheus Orchestra, led by Pam Munks. Excellent, authentic-sounding tone, with splendid brass for the Sanctus. They were given a solo spot, too, an energetic Adagio and Fugue. And the evening began with Julie Cooper bringing a refreshing warm, open tone to Mozart's familiar Exsultate, Jubilate.

One of the best concerts I've heard this year, and a much appreciated Christmas gift from the Chelmsford Singers.

Ticket sales and finances

Ticket sales raised over £2840 – and we made about £75 from the refreshments. The last Saturday before Christmas and the week after the performance of Messiah in the cathedral was not an easy evening to find an audience – but you did well – **thank you all!** However, due to the very high cost of the concert, we did not break even. I hope that you agree with the committee that it is such a wonderful experience to sing with “top notch” musicians that it is well worth the expense and that we just have to continue to fund raise in order to keep our standards high.

Thanks to choir members who work hard to make the concert run smoothly



Many thanks to all of you who helped in some way to make the evening so successful.

Thanks to those who put up the staging (Tony Tuckwell, Karen Brown, Ray Cooper, Dick Hickman, Brian Greatrex and me) it only took 40mins! Thanks to those who brought mince pies and to those who worked so hard serving the interval drinks and to those who washed up (special thanks to Dick and Drea Hickman!) and to those who cleared up the cathedral. Thank you to Steph Valentine for organising the ticket sales and to Peter Kendal for managing the finances so well! Thanks to Jean Cooper for quietly ensuring that we all have music and that it is all returned as soon as possible (a lot of work!). Thanks to Eileen Judd and to Jean Brown who sadly couldn't sing in the concert but came to help and to listen!

Thanks to our wonderful unpaid (non singing!) support team

Most of you are well aware of our support team but for those who are not here is some information about some of them:-

Tony Harrington – designs the posters and tickets and puts the programme together. (This is not an easy job as the info arrives in dribs and drabs and he has to pull it all together at the last minute.) I am sure you agree with me that it is always brilliant and that the posters, this time, were particularly inspired.

Wally Rook – compiles the programme notes and proof reads the programme.

Allan Day, Ray Cooper, Peter Robb who do front of house. Thanks especially to Ray who also came to help put the staging up on the Friday before the concert!

Graham Coleman, Peter and Sue Cross who organised the interval refreshments.

Thank you very much to all of them.

Many thanks also to others including the cathedral vergers, Brian Greatrex and his team for their assistance.

Visitors from Backnang

We were delight to welcome the Kantorei der Stiftskirche to Essex in November following our visit to Backnang in June. It was a great experience to sing with them in Maldon and to hear them sing in the cathedral. The messages that I have received since indicate that they had a wonderful time. I know that those of you who generously hosted some of our guests established some very good relationships – it will be interesting to see how these develop in the future. I received a wonderful Christmas card from Hajo (Christmas gnomes!) with a lovely message expressing (once again) his thanks for everything we did to make the tour so special.

Particular thanks to Steph for her generosity in letting us use the barge, to Juliet for co-ordinating transport and for publicity and for getting 4 visitors to BBC Essex for 7am on the Sunday morning! Thanks also to Karen for organising the lunch at the Chapter House and also to everyone who contributed to the weekend – cooking, serving food, clearing up. Thanks to Prue and to Debbie for leading really interesting tours for the visitors. Thank you also to Stephen Tilton for conducting in Maldon and to Oli for accompanying – not an easy job!

Remembrance Evensong

The Evensong, when we sang Palestrina's Stabat Mater and Parry's Blest Pair of Sirens was very moving. The poems were very appropriate and beautifully read by Kathy Shiels, Peter Kendal and Peter Nardone.

Rehearsal schedule (Jan – March 2012)

10 th Jan – Oliver*
17 th Jan – Oliver*
24 th Jan
31 st Jan
7 th Feb
14 th Feb – half term no rehearsal
21 st Feb
28 th Feb
6 th March
Concert in Chelmsford Cathedral Sat 10 th March rehearsal 2-5pm (to be confirmed)
13 th March (to be confirmed please keep this date free)



*Peter N is away until 24th Jan but he has collected his scores from Jean and will send his “markings” to Oli (and to me for circulation) so that we are all working from the same “hymn sheet”. We only have 8 rehearsals this term as our concert is early (due to the Passion Play in the cathedral later in March) so each one is important!

Chelmsford Singers' Programme (2011 - 2014)

10 th March 2012	23 rd June 2012	11 th November 2012	15 th Dec 2012
<i>Vesperae solemnes de confessore - Mozart</i> <i>Missa in Angustiis (Nelson Mass) – Haydn</i> We will be joined by the Cathedral Men	<i>England's Glory – works by Elgar, Stanford, Finzi, Parry</i>	<i>Requiem - Duruflé</i>	<i>Candlelight Christmas Spectacular</i> <i>Works by Rutter, Chilcott, Bach, Rütli</i> <i>With brass ensemble</i>
16 th March 2013	15 th June 2013	10 th November 2013	21 st Dec 2013
<i>Jephtha - Handel</i>	<i>Tragic overture – Brahms</i> <i>Requiem - Brahms</i>	<i>Requiem - Ledger</i>	<i>Christmas in Venice</i> <i>Works by Monteverdi, Gabrielli, Schutz,</i>
March 2014*	June 2014*	Nov 2014*	Dec 2014*
<i>The Creation - Haydn</i>	<i>Mass in B Minor - Bach</i>	<i>Requiem - Fauré</i>	<i>Messiah - Handel</i>

If you do not need any of this music– please let librarian Jean Cooper know (jean_cooper1@hotmail.com)

*If you want to order your own music – speak to Dick J, Dick H or Jane at Daces 01245 352133
2014 is the Cathedral Centenary year and we will be joined by the Cathedral Choir Men for all concerts .

Friends of Chelmsford Singers

We now have 28 “Friends” which is wonderful. All the original Friends renewed their membership this year. Thank you to Val Hoines who is the Friends’ secretary and to those of you who have convinced your friends and families that it is a “bargain” to be a Friend. If people come to all three concerts, membership only costs them about £13 as they have a reduction of £12 off the price of tickets. With the current addition of Gift Aid, this is certainly a great help to our finances.

Rehearsal CDs

Colchester Classics is offering a Chandos recording of Haydn’s Nelson Mass etc 4550202 £9.25sale price (£11.25 standard price) www.colchesterclassics.co.uk or let me know if you would like me to order one for you.
For rehearsal CDs see link (<http://www.saffronchoralprompt.co.uk>) in CS website www.chelmsfordsingers.org.uk

Plans for the future

Some members of the committee have had discussions with members of the cathedral staff who are involved in the appointment of the new director of music and we have offered to assist in whatever way we can.
The new DOM is not expected to be in post until September 2012. We are intending to appoint a “caretaker” director for the choir for the summer term. Oliver will be too busy with cathedral issues to take on this responsibility.
We will obviously be discussing this at our next committee meeting and will be pleased to have your views.

Carol Singing

The intrepid group who sang carols at the 2Brewers raised over £50 for Chelmsford Mencap and had a good evening!
Many Singers retire to the 2Brewers after rehearsals for a quick drink – everyone is most welcome to join us!

Choir fundraising

We have been so busy since September that we have not been able to organise any fundraising activities. This will have to change! We will be planning some exciting activities at our next committee meeting (Jan 16th)
If you have ideas for future fund raising – please let me know asap!

Other dates for your diaries

Sat 18th Feb – Sing Haydn - rehearse and perform Nelson Mass with Adrian Lucas at St Paul’s Church Knightsbridge
www.rco.org.uk or events@rco.org.uk

Sat 25th Feb – Come and Sing Elijah 1.30pm in Chelmsford Cathedral with Peter Nardone
contact details Angela Palotai on 01245 294498 or music@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk



Committee members

Peter Nardone – Musical Director
Peter Kendal – Treasurer
Martin Burchett – Secretary
Stephanie Valentine – Membership Sec
Val Hoines – Friends' Sec

Jean Cooper – Librarian
Karen Brown – Ladies’ rep 01621828747
Royston van Tromp – Men’s rep 01245261448
Alison Widgery - Chairman

Our next committee meeting is on Monday 16th Jan – if you have anything you would like us to consider at that meeting – please contact me or any of the committee.

On a personal note – I would like to thank you all for the generous presentation you made to me at the last rehearsal! I was completely amazed and quite embarrassed but delighted to receive a £110 voucher for Aldeburgh concerts. There was absolutely no need for this as I do no more for the choir than many others - but thank you - I really appreciate the kind thoughts (and the voucher!)

Best wishes for a very Happy New Year
From

Alison

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