



# Chelmsford Singers Newsletter December 2009



## Christmas concert December 2009

Many congratulations to everyone for a splendid concert!

The choir was on really good form and the audience was responsive and appeared to enjoy the whole evening. It was excellent to have so many singers performing (unlike last year when we had 20+ who were suffering from some lurgy or other). Thank you all for your hard work and enthusiasm and for being so well prepared. The soloists were excellent and it was a great pleasure to work with them, having such high quality soloists always lifts our own performance a notch or two! The band included some stunning performers especially the trumpets, flute, cor anglais and some beautiful cello playing. Congratulations to Olly on the organ, I think it must be so difficult to play the ensemble passages with soloists and instrumentalists, but he performed brilliantly.

A huge thank you to Peter Nardone who inspired the choir and made sure we were well prepared. His excellent choice of music and soloists contributed to a powerful and spiritually uplifting concert that resonated superbly in the Cathedral.

## Peter Nardone's comments following the performance

*"Congratulations to all who sang their hearts out in our December concert. I was really encouraged by how we managed to stay sounding so fresh and lively throughout a very demanding concert. The Bach had moments where we felt quite exposed and the Haydn turned out to be quite a big sing for us but the sound that went out to our audience was strong, musical and convincing. It was also an encouragement to see the audience numbers up and to feel that there was quite a buzz in the Cathedral. Clearly we were not affected by the close proximity of Handel's Messiah in the following weekend. I'm looking forward to next term and a quite different style from another 'great' composer".*



Chelmsford Singers concert Dec 2009 (Thanks to Prue Jones for the photos)

## Review of the concert in the Chelmsford Weekly News

### **Rousing Performance CHRISTMAS CONCERT 12<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

THIS exuberant evening of sacred music began with the Hallelujah Chorus. Crisply sung, with glorious trumpets, it was the Chelmsford Singers' contribution to the nationwide Sing Hallelujah project. But alas, no chance for the enthusiastic audience to join in a "sing along a" Handel.

The main work was Haydn's Harmoniemesse, a late work, full of the spirited optimism which is Haydn's hallmark.

Peter Nardone drew an impressively rousing performance from the choir – the Qui Tollis and the closing Dona Nobis Pacem just two examples of really fine choral phrasing. The four soloists – all of exceptional quality – blended beautifully in the Agnus Dei and the Et Incarnatus Est.

The same forces shone just as brightly in the Bach Magnificat. Tim Travers-Brown, countertenor, was the soloist in a wonderfully lilting Esurientes, Ruth Gomme's limpid soprano took the first two solos, and Robert Rice's relaxed baritone seemed to fit the acoustic exactly, especially in the Quia Fecit with its lovely cello accompaniment. Oliver Waterer was at the organ, and the choir brought commendable energy to the choruses, particularly perhaps the Fecit Potentiam.

The excellent orchestra was led by Sarah Sew, and the conductor was Peter Nardone, who conducts the whole of the Messiah with the Cathedral Choir and top-flight soloists on the evening of Sunday, December 20. **MICHAEL GRAY**

Audience comments "The Haydn was brilliant. Rhythmical, dynamic and coherent. I'd never heard it before, but will now get the CD". "One of the best concerts I have ever been to". (from a very regular concert goer and musician!) "The concert was uplifting and has really got me in the mood for Christmas".

Thanks to our support team Thank you to Tony Harrington and Wally Rook for all the work they did in getting the excellent programme together and thanks to Ray Cooper, Allan Day and Peter Robb for the brilliant job they did on "the door". Thank you to James Norrey (organ scholar at Chelmsford Cathedral) for his help in organising the band. Thanks to the "team" of helpers including Martin Burchett, Peter Kendal, Anna and Bob Wood and Tony Tuckwell who worked so hard to put the staging up and to all those who turned the chairs after the concert. Thanks to Brian Greatrex and John for their support before, during and after the concert. I am sure that you all agree that paying for a team to put the staging away after the concert is money well spent! Thanks to Janet Gray for her donation of "bottles" for the presentations.

Ticket sales and finances Very many congratulations and thanks to all of you for selling tickets for the concert. We sold 250+ tickets and generated £3,265 which is one of the highest ticket sales (in terms of value) over the last 5 years. This is really encouraging and means that our loss on this concert will be approximately £3,000. Thanks to Steph Valentine for her hard work organising the tickets and collating the sales and thank you to Peter Kendal for his valiant work keeping track of finances and organising the payments for soloists, band etc – not an easy job.

Friends of Chelmsford Singers We are delighted with the way that the new "Friends" scheme has "taken off". Currently we have 19 friends and this has generated £475 (plus Gift Aid) of much needed funding. I hope that they all enjoyed the concert and will continue to support us in the future. Thank you to Val Hoines who has taken on the role of "Friends secretary" and who, together with Karen Brown, did a great job reserving seats and "meeting and greeting" the "Friends" at the concert.

Fundraising In October, I submitted two bids for funding for the choir. Sadly neither were successful - the BBC bid 400+ choirs bid for 75 funds and with the Essex Arts award approx £100,000 was bid for and there was only £21,000 in funding. However – I will continue to look for funding sources. Any ideas re-sponsor ship etc are welcome!

New members We were delighted that so many new members joined the choir in September and hope that they have all enjoyed the experience. We are expecting several more **new members** in January (men and women!) so if you see a face you don't recognise – please make them welcome!

Programme 2010 We have an exciting year of rehearsals and concerts coming up in 2010.

**March 13<sup>th</sup> 2010:** Vivaldi – Beatus Vir; Vivaldi – Magnificat; Handel – Four Coronation Anthems.  
**June 26<sup>th</sup> 2010:** Palestrina – Tu es Petrus; Britten – A Hymn to St Peter; Purcell – Come ye Sons of Art  
In the June concert, we are also hoping to join with Chelmsford Youth Choir to perform "Pictures of Night" by Essex composer Alan Bullard. Alan is one of the UK's most highly regarded contemporary

composers. Please let Jean Cooper (librarian) know ASAP if you have any of the music and will not need choir copies. ([jean\\_cooper1@hotmail.com](mailto:jean_cooper1@hotmail.com)).

CD sales I hope to have CDs of the works we are singing on sale – if you would like me to order rehearsal CDs please let me know asap.

### Rehearsal schedule (Jan - June 2010)

<i>Spring 2010</i>	<i>Summer 2010</i>
Jan 5 <sup>th</sup>	April 20 <sup>th</sup>
Jan 12 <sup>th</sup>	April 27 <sup>th</sup>
Jan 19 <sup>th</sup>	May 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Jan 26 <sup>th</sup>	May 11 <sup>th</sup>
Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup>	May 18 <sup>th</sup>
Feb 9 <sup>th</sup>	May 25 <sup>th</sup>
Feb 16 <sup>th</sup> no rehearsal (half term break)	June 1 <sup>st</sup> No rehearsal (half term break)
Feb 23 <sup>rd</sup>	June 8 <sup>th</sup>
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	June 15 <sup>th</sup>
March 9 <sup>th</sup>	June 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Concert March 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Concert June 26<sup>th</sup></b>
Rehearsal in Cathedral 2 – 5pm (to be confirmed)	Rehearsal in Cathedral 2 – 5pm (to be confirmed)

### Choir events 2010/2011



On **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010** Steph Valentine has generously offered us the use of one of her Thames barges for a **fund raising lunch**. ([www.top-sail.co.uk](http://www.top-sail.co.uk)) We have planned a walk in Heybridge Basin followed at approx. 1.30pm by lunch (soup, rolls, puds and wine) on the barge. Unfortunately it won't be sailing – it will be moored in Maldon. Please keep the date clear, tickets will be on sale soon.

**Quiz night:** a fund raising **quiz night** is being planned for later this term – details to follow.

**Choral workshop:** a **choral work shop** with Deborah Miles-Johnson (our soloist in the November concert) is being planned for the summer term. Deborah has worked with some excellent choirs e.g. BBC Symphony Chorus and the Philharmonic Chorus but is happy to work with us! Her website gives you some information of the sort of things she does. [www.choralclinic.co.uk](http://www.choralclinic.co.uk)

**Choir tour news:** A **choir tour** to Backnang is being planned for the last few days of the May/June half term break in 2011. Meetings are being organised with the twinning committee and we hope to keep the cost under £250 per person. Thanks to Prue Jones, Debbie Priddy, Juliet Coleman and Richard Till for organising this.

### Committee members

Peter Nardone – Musical Director  
 Alison Widgery - Chairman  
 Peter Kendal – Treasurer  
 Martin Burchett – Secretary  
 Stephanie Valentine – Membership Sec

Jean Cooper - Librarian  
 Karen Brown – Ladies' rep  
 Eric Gildersleve - Librarian  
 Royston van Tromp – Men's rep  
 Val Hoines – Friends Sec

Our next committee meeting is on Monday 11th January 2010 – if you have anything you would like us to consider at that meeting – please contact me or any of the committee.

I hope that you all have a very happy and healthy 2010.

Best wishes from

*Alison*

*Chelmsford Singers Chairman*

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