

## December concert

For the first time in the Music Society's existence (43 years) we had to cancel a concert. This was due to a failure in the power supply to the church which was put right in the early evening but too late to reverse the decision to cancel.

Thanks to all those who turned up on Saturday (some expecting to attend the concert) and helped to deconstruct the staging. If you know of anyone who wants a refund and has not yet claimed it, will you ask them to get in touch with Gilliane Sills by email: [concerts@woodstockmusic.info](mailto:concerts@woodstockmusic.info).

Please make sure you return your vocal scores (*The Seasons* and *Autumn's Treasures*) to Elizabeth this week. We have a huge bundle of programmes left, so do take one when you come to rehearsal.

*Paul writes:*

It was such a pity that we missed performing the concert twice but I thought both choir and orchestra were magnificent on Friday. The added 'extras' really worked!

## Woodstock Bookshop

Once again, the Woodstock Bookshop acted as our local box office, and sold 54 tickets. 30 of these were for the Saturday concert, so they had the extra task this time of advising customers about claiming a refund.

## Spring term 2019: Concerts Friday 5 & Saturday 6 April

### First choir rehearsal Thursday 10 January

#### Elgar: *The Light of Life* and *The Snow*

The rehearsal arrangements are slightly out of the ordinary this term. There will be some sectional rehearsals in the Woodstock Youth Club for the men (see the rehearsal schedule for dates and times). They have the lion's share of singing in *The Light of Life*, whereas the women have *The Snow* entirely to themselves, and will rehearse in the Community Centre as usual. The Youth Club is in the short Recreation Road, off New Road, behind the Primary School.

*The Light of Life* was Elgar's first oratorio, first performed in 1896. Elgar preferred the title *Lux Christi*, but his publishers thought it would sell better with an English title. In words taken from St John's Gospel, plus some additions by The Reverend Edward Capel Cure, it tells the story of a blind man whose sight was restored by Christ. It requires soprano, contralto, tenor and baritone soloists, and ours are Hannah Bennett, Susanna Spicer, Tristan Stocks and Quentin Hayes. Quentin says he sang it 10 years ago in the Japanese première with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra and a 120-strong chorus (singing from memory in impeccable English!). *The Snow* is a part song for female voices with orchestral accompaniment which Elgar wrote in 1894 to words by his wife Alice.

[You may be amused to know that a recent newspaper article about the closure of HMV on Oxford Street noted that it was Sir Edward Elgar who opened the shop in 1921, hoping that gramophones would put an end to the 'wild and virulent piano-playing popular in the suburbs'. Whatever would he say about streaming?]

#### Saint-Saëns: Cello Concerto in A minor

In addition to the choral works in the spring programme **Jacqueline Johnson** will be playing one of Saint-Saëns' two cello concertos – the one in A minor. It is unusual in that it is written as one continuous movement, but with three distinct sections. This will be Jacqui's fifth appearance with us; on previous occasions she has played the Dvorak, Brahms double, Schumann, and Elgar. There is also an extra item for unaccompanied choir by **Saint-Saëns: Les fleurs et les arbres**.

Joyce is having some eye treatment at various points in the spring, so Alistair Eden and Hugh Morgan will be taking turns to accompany the choir. However, Joyce will be coming along to conduct some sectional rehearsals for the women.

You will see from the rehearsal schedule that our pre-concert warm-ups in April are not in The Town Hall which is not available, so we have booked the Baptist Church in the High Street (No.5a), a few steps along the road from the Town Hall.

### **Chair-moving**

Thank you to everyone who helps with the chair rota which has now been in operation for 2 years and is generally going well. From January there will be 10 permanent teams of 6/7 people, each with a "team leader" who will tell you if and when you are needed. Rosemary will explain more at the first rehearsal.

### **Summer term 2019: Concerts Friday 12 & Saturday 13 July**

**First choir rehearsal: Thursday 25 April**

**Bob Chilcott: Requiem, Haydn: Missa Brevis in F major and Symphony No. 103 (Drum Roll)**

### **Chamber Choir trip to Newcastle: Wednesday 31 July to Sunday 4 August**

*Gilliane writes:*

44 people have signed up to go on the trip, 38 of whom are involved in the performance. We'll be rehearsing in Newcastle cathedral and performing in St George's Cullercoats, a church described on its website as "a local and regional icon, a jewel in our heritage, and a beacon to local people, seafarers and travellers. The magnificent building rises up from the famous long sands beach on the north-east coast and is a landmark for miles around". The organ is splendid and the acoustic is described as "fantastic". The rehearsal dates in Woodstock are Thursday 18 at 7.30pm, Sunday 28 July at 3.00pm and Tuesday 30 July at 7.00pm - note the change in the date of the first rehearsal from that shown on the original application form. The balance of payment (£245 per person for shared occupancy, £345 for single occupancy) is due by Thursday 6 June.

### **Winter concerts: Friday 13 & Saturday 14 December**

**First choir rehearsal: Thursday 12 September**

A programme of French music: Gounod: St Cecilia Mass, Méditation (orchestra), Fauré: Pavane, Dolly Suite (orchestra), Debussy: Marche Écossaise (orchestra)

### **Come and sing Mozart Requiem next week: Saturday 19 January 2019**

Oxford Pro Musica Singers are organising a sing-in of Mozart's Requiem in Witney Methodist Church. If you are interested, go to the OPMS website [www.opms.org.uk](http://www.opms.org.uk) for more details and to book a place.

A happy New Year to everyone!

*Evelyn Hendy, Secretary*