

Spring concert: Mozart Requiem

It was marvellous to see the church full on both nights. Of course, Mozart is eternally popular, but tickets don't sell themselves, so thank you for bringing your friends and family to the concert. The Woodstock Bookshop also sold a large number of tickets to the general public who are still saying how much they enjoyed it. We thank the owner, Rachel Phipps, who came with her family on Saturday, for the work she and her staff do in acting as our box office.

Paul writes: I think the idea of including Salieri alongside the Mozart was well received and I am pleased that we can programme compositions such as the Jonathan Willcocks. The Requiem was very moving, the choir being given great support by the orchestra.

Library vocal scores

Elizabeth thanks all those who helped with the rubbing-out session. There wasn't as much to do as usual because some of the copies belonged to WMS, so it was finished quickly. Just to remind you: if you hire a library copy, rub out all previous marks, don't use a hard pencil (2B is preferred) and don't fold down corners, just make a note elsewhere of passages you need to practise.

Church refurbishment

St Mary Magdalene's is definitely closing in May for refurbishment. The work is scheduled to be finished in November, so we should be back there for our December concert when there will be improved lighting, heating and seating. Instead of the pews, there will be 250 chairs of which 150 will be placed permanently in the nave. The remaining 100 will be stacked to the side for use when required. 120 nave chairs have already been bought, so there are now 30 left to buy. The church is also selling off the existing pews at £100 or nearest offer. If you are interested in either of these options, you can email stmmwoodstock@gmail.com to find out more.

Summer concerts: Friday 7 & Saturday 8 July

Please note that the venue is St Mary's Church, Kidlington. If you, or those to whom you sell tickets, need directions to the church, we can provide a map.

The programme consists of movements from Handel's *L'Allegro ed Il Penseroso*, Haydn's *Symphony No.60*, and a selection of folk-songs taken from John Rutter's collection *The Sprig of Thyme*.

John Milton was in his youth when he wrote the poems *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, probably in 1631 while he was still at Cambridge. They evoke the pastoral landscape of the English countryside and express his delight in the sights and sounds of nature. Milton contrasts the moods of the cheerful and the thoughtful man, happiness and melancholy, day and night. Over one hundred years later, Handel was urged to use lines from these poems as the basis for a pastoral ode. He was a few days short of his 55th birthday in 1740 when he composed the music, yet he was able to capture the spirit of youth, creating airs and choruses which alternate in a way that emphasises the contrasting moods even more strongly. Paul has selected some movements for soloists alone, and others where the solos lead into choruses. Our soloists for this concert are soprano Katherine Walker who has sung for us many times, most recently in *Messiah* in December, and Hiroshi Amako who was the tenor for the Mozart *Requiem* and Jonathan Willcocks's *My hope is in thee* earlier this month.

Front of house: We are looking for a few more front of house helpers for this concert, as the venue is unfamiliar to us. If you are not singing in the summer term, but can come to the concert, or if you have a family member who is willing to help at the door or to serve interval drinks, please let Trevor know: t.hendy@tiscali.co.uk.

Summer Social: Sunday 9 July

Rosemary and Tom Lewis are organising another of their excellent lunch parties at their home, The Stables in Church Hanborough. A hot and cold buffet with drinks (alcoholic and soft) will be provided for £10 per head. We will ask you to sign up nearer the time, and give directions to those who haven't been before. We particularly hope newcomers will come along. We'd like the chance to get to know you better, as there's not much time to chat on rehearsal evenings.

Chamber Choir trip to Bury St Edmunds (Wednesday 26 - Sunday 30 July)

45 singers are going on this trip, plus a few family members. Paul has chosen some Venetian motets, English part-songs, some of Elgar's *Sea Pictures*, arranged for four-part chorus with piano accompaniment, and some lively songs from the *In the Mood* collection.

There will be three rehearsals in Woodstock before we go: Sunday 16 July, 2.30-5.30; Thursday 20 July, 7-10; Tuesday 25 July, 7 - 9.30. The rehearsals in Bury St Edmunds are in the United Reformed Church, as is the Saturday concert, starting at 8 pm. On the Friday we have a 40-minute slot in the Cathedral's Lunchtime Recital series at 1.10 to 1.50. Do encourage any friends you have in the area to come and hear us. A detailed itinerary and music list will be given out nearer the time. The balance (£225 per person in a shared room, and £265 for single occupancy) is due by 8th June. Please give your cheque (made payable to Woodstock Music Society) to Gilliane by then.

Autumn term : concerts Friday 8 and Saturday 9 December

First choir rehearsal: 7 September (no rehearsal 19 October, 26 October)

Paul has chosen Britten's *Saint Nicolas* as the main work. Also included in the programme are some arrangements of well-known Christmas carols by Geoffrey Bush which he grouped together as *A Christmas Cantata*, and for the orchestra two pieces from Philip Lane's collection *A Christmas String Album*.

Tax returns

If you are a taxpayer, you might like to look at the annual reminder from Richard Sills about Gift Aid.

Gift Aid rules for singers and players:

Under Gift Aid rules, WMS can claim tax relief on all of our members' subscriptions, except for a portion which relates to tuition (as opposed to preparation for concerts) given by the music director. The committee has deemed this tuition element to be £5.50 per annum per choir member but £0 per orchestral member. So, on your tax returns for **2016-2017**, choir members should quote a Gift Aid figure of £78.50; and orchestral members should quote a Gift Aid figure of £58. However, choir members who joined in January should quote their full part-year subscription of £56. Sorry for the complications!

Gift Aid rules for Patrons:

We are very grateful to our patrons for their presence at our concerts and for their financial support. A single patron's subscription is £50. However, under the rules governing Gift Aid we can claim tax relief on just £20 of this, the remaining £30 being (approximate) ticket value and therefore ineligible for relief. The double patrons' subscription is £80, of which £60 is ticket value and £20 donation. All patrons (single or double) should quote the £20 figure when entering gift aid on their tax return. The business rate stays the same at £85, and is not eligible for gift aid. Those who are both members and patrons should simply aggregate the two figures.

Advance notice of dates for 2018

Spring concert:	Friday 23 and Saturday 24 March.	First choir rehearsal: Thursday 4 January.
Summer concert:	Friday 6 and Saturday 7 July.	First choir rehearsal: Thursday 19 April.
Winter concert:	Friday 7 and Saturday 8 December.	First choir rehearsal: Thursday 6 September.

Don't forget to look at our website from time to time: www.woodstockmusic.info. As well as finding information about future concerts, if you look at the Members Page then go to Concert History, you can see the major works we have performed in the past.

Evelyn Hendy, Secretary, choir@woodstockmusic.info