

July concert: Haydn, Rutter, Handel

"A magical concert," someone said on their way out. But of course it's not magic, it's down to hard work and commitment by Paul and the choir and orchestra, all becoming thoroughly engaged in the delightful music. There were many favourable comments about the choice of music, especially mentioning the contrast between the first and second halves of the programme and within the Handel itself. Audiences love Katherine Walker and have now taken Hiroshi Amako to their hearts. Everyone is sure to be pleased that he is taking on the title role of Saint Nicolas in Britten's cantata in December.

Chris Osman would like to thank all those people who help with the provision of refreshments during the concert interval: setting up, serving, clearing away, washing up and helping with the final packing up at the end of each concert. He says, "It is truly a case of many hands making light work." We are always keen to make sure new members feel welcome and valued, and this was evident from the way they joined in by helping with staging and refreshments. We have a great committee who do so much work behind the scenes, backed up by others such as Barbara who keeps our patrons informed, and Rosemary and Tom who immediately rose to the challenge of organising a chair-moving rota and, above all, hosted the successful summer party.

Library vocal scores

Elizabeth thanks all those who helped with the rubbing-out session in July. If you borrow a library copy, rub out all previous marks with a soft pencil when you get it. If you find you must drop out for any reason, return your music to Elizabeth quickly. The copies usually have to go back to the library a few days after the concert.

Summer Social: Sunday 9 July

The day was sunny for Rosemary and Tom Lewis's WMS lunch party in Church Hanborough. Over 70 people came and we all had a thoroughly good time. The event obviously involved a lot of work, so thank you both.

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

Thank you Gilliane, for all the organisation that went into this trip. It was an uplifting experience to sing in the cathedral, and a completely different one, but no less enjoyable, to sing in the intimate space of the United Reformed Church. Several of members of the choir had encouraged people they know to come along, which added to the friendly atmosphere. The money raised in the retiring collection for the St Nicholas Hospice was £430, and we added a further sum from the small surplus in the trips account.

Autumn term: concerts Friday 8 and Saturday 9 December

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

The main work is Benjamin Britten's *Saint Nicolas* which calls for a string orchestra with piano duet and organ, plus a tenor soloist and three young boys. There are many stories about the saint, some of them told in Eric Crozier's libretto. As well as saving the lives of three boys, Nicolas gave gold to a nobleman who had fallen on hard times so that he could provide dowries for his three daughters, he rescued shipwrecked sailors, and so on. Closer to home, you can see an altar cloth depicting him and the boys displayed on the wall in the chancel of St Mary Magdalene's! As mentioned above, Hiroshi Amako is our tenor this time, David Blackwell and Alistair Eden are the piano duettists, and David Hewett from St Mary's Kidlington is the organist. Harry Waine, Daniel Waine and Joseph Hewett will be the three young boys. We have done this work once before, in 1989, with Richard Morton as the tenor soloist. The boys who sang then are now in their thirties, with children of their own. How time flies!

The other choral work in the programme is *A Christmas Cantata*, consisting of some well-known and some less well-known Christmas carols which Geoffrey Bush arranged and grouped together to form a complete work, though we are doing only a selection of these. The orchestra will add to the Christmas festivities with three pieces from Philip Lane's collection *A Christmas String Album: The Last Sleep of the Virgin* (from *La Vierge*) by Jules Massenet and *Waltz* from *The Christmas Tree Suite* by Vladimir Rébikov, and *Pastoral Symphony* by Francesco Manfredini.

Community Centre Chairs

Rosemary and Tom have done a superb job in organising the choir's chair rota on Thursday evenings. Please put a tick (can help) or a cross (cannot help) at the end of your line in the register at the first rehearsal so that this term's rota can be drawn up quickly. Also indicate if you want to help in the same week as someone you travel with. As long as there are enough people volunteering, your name should come up only once a term.

Annual General Meeting: Thursday 12 October

This will be held in the Community Centre at 7.30, immediately before the choir rehearsal. If you have any suggestions which you would like the committee to consider, please let Evelyn know in advance by emailing choir@woodstockmusic.info. Under the terms of our constitution, members of the committee are elected for one year. The current members, Will Clark, Evelyn Hendy, Douglas Mason, Elizabeth Mason, John Morris, Christopher Osman, Gilliane Sills, Richard Sills, Xanthe Sturt Taylor and Ruth Sutherland, are all willing to stand again for re-election.

Ticket prices

Our ticket prices have remained the same since 2013 but in order to maintain a healthy balance in our accounts, the committee has now felt it necessary to increase the price by £1, starting with the December concert, as follows: In advance: £13 (£12 concessions), and at the door £14 (£13 concessions). The price of tickets for full-time students remains the same at £5 and there is still no charge for accompanied children under 16.

Subscriptions

The subscription for choir members for the next financial year September 2017 to August 2018 is **£87**. Please bring a cheque for that amount, made payable to Woodstock Music Society, to the first rehearsal you attend.

Patrons

A single patron's subscription has remained the same since 2003, but in view of the increase in ticket prices, we have raised the patrons' subscription to £60 for one person and £90 for a couple. Patrons are entitled to a ticket for three concerts, plus a complimentary programme and drink at each concert. If you know of anyone who comes regularly to our concerts, please ask them if they are interested in becoming a patron. If they are, would you let our patrons' secretary Barbara Pix know, and she will be happy to write to them.

Church re-opening service: Thursday 9 November: 8 pm

St Mary Magdalene Church will be re-opened on Thursday 9 November with improved lighting and heating and chairs instead of pews. 150 chairs will be placed permanently in the nave and the remaining 100 will be stacked to the side for use when required. This is really good news for all those who have shifted pews in the past. The Music Society has been invited to take part in the opening service, together with the Woodstock and Bladon Church choirs, with Paul conducting. The music chosen is Parry: *I was glad* and Bruckner: *Locus iste*. If you would like to sing in this service, please sign up in advance on the sheets provided at rehearsals. Our normal rehearsal that week has been re-scheduled for Wednesday 8 November, in St Mary Magdalene Church. We will rehearse the Parry and Bruckner from 7 to 7.45 for those singing in the service, and the Britten and Bush from 7.45 to 9.30. There will also be a short run-through of the service music on the 9th at 7 pm.

KAOS autumn production

Kidlington Amateur Operatic Society's show this year is Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*. The performances are in Gosford Hill School on four nights: Wednesday 18th to Saturday 21st October. Tickets will be available from certain shops in Kidlington and at our rehearsals. They are the same price each night: £13, or £8 for children and full-time students.

Dates for 2018

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

Emails

Please let Evelyn know if you change your email address. This will only be used for WMS business unless you would like to be sent information about other local concerts. Currently, 17 members have elected to receive such information, but your name can be added to (or deleted from that group, if you wish).

Evelyn Hendy, Secretary, choir@woodstockmusic.info