

History Rediscovered!

After we had almost given up hope, most of the archives turned up. They were found in a box combined with records from the Calne Music and Arts Festival.

To make sure this doesn't happen again, the Committee has asked the County Archive in Chippenham if they would hold them. We were delighted to learn that they will (and without charge!) We can use and add to them as we wish.

If you are holding any items about the choir and its history and would like them added to the main archive, please pass them to you Voice Rep. After all, we are one of the oldest choral societies in the country with a history worth retaining.

Musical Accompaniment

As the range of works being tackled by the choir has become more diversified and challenging, so has the range of orchestral instruments. Continuing this trend, which is what choir members want, means orchestras becoming bigger and with rarer instruments. Sometimes these are only used for a few moments in a concert. Apart from rising orchestra costs, this increases Phil's problems in finding musicians.

The Committee has decided to invest in a Roland FP90 organ that can meet some of these instrumental demands as well as providing realistic rehearsals. The choir needs to move forward and the cost will be offset by savings in orchestral costs as well as bringing Helen more into concerts, which can only be good.

It will be at Phil's discretion whether it be hired to members, but you can only ask. Any donations will be welcome and we shall be looking for external funding as well.



NEWSLETTER: January 2017

We look back at a two month spell that saw the choir produce two successful concerts. The first saw us linking again with the Calne Music and Arts Festival and then going on to sing a Christmas concert with a challenging programme. Both of these showed how the choir grows in confidence and is able to adapt to different music styles under Phil's leadership. In the Festival concert we were joined by St Mary's School junior choir, who performed brilliantly and showed the value of our choir aiming to perform with other school groups. During the Christmas concert I was sitting in the audience listening to a choir handling one of its most interesting programmes. I sat there wondering how many other local choral societies were tackling Christmas concert programmes as diverse as ours.

Shall we join the Festival again? We owe George thanks for agreeing detail with the Festival organisers, but it was overly complex. We are proposing that we are included in the programme, but we organise our own event. Whatever happens, we shall hold an Autumn 2017 Concert.

We also have to move our Spring Concert as the Church was pre-booked. The problem is that Calne has few suitable venues for orchestral concerts either due to size or school terms. We have looked at St Mary's in Devizes as it is being developed into a cultural centre, but this time we are going to St Andrew's Church in Chippenham as it is a venue that is experienced in events such as we stage.

David

Dates for your diary:

1 April 2017.	Spring concert at St Andrew's Church, Chippenham
17 July 2017.	Soiree
7 or 14 October 2017.	Autumn concert.
9 December 2017.	Proposed date for Christmas concert.
28 April 2018.	Proposed date for Spring concert.

Rehearsal schedule: February - May 2016

Always 1930 hours at Marden House unless shown otherwise

6 Feb
13 Feb – no rehearsal
20 Feb
27 Feb
6 March
13 March
20 March
27 March
30 March - concert rehearsal
1 April – rehearsal 1430 and concert 1930
3 April
10 April
17 April – no rehearsal
24 April
1 May – no rehearsal
8 May

Subscriptions and Gift Aid

As you will know, Gift Aid is an important additional revenue source for the choir and we claim this as a result of members declaring that they pay tax on the annual membership form. Janet, our Treasurer, asks that if your situation changes as a result of the significant increase in the tax threshold from April 2017, meaning that you no longer pay tax, that you let her know. Obviously, the choir must be able to justify the Gift Aid claim it makes.

Committee Members

George explained to the AGM that he was unable to continue either as Chairman or a Committee member. When combined with most of the rest of the Committee also standing for re-election, this meant we were unable to put a recommendation for Chair to the AGM. This will happen shortly, but these are the current members.

David Bishop (Tenor rep)
Janet Coombs (Treasurer)
Ewen Bird (Bass Rep)
David Gillett (Vice-Chairman & Secretary)
Caroline Keevil (Alto rep)
Mary Pennell (Librarian)
Simon Phillips
Jack Robinson
Jeremy Sidmouth
Kate Wilson (Soprano rep)

The Committee is looking for sponsorship. Jeremy has been leading this, but has his own business pressures. This has led to changes in the running of the 100 Club and the Committee is also considering whether we can combine this with the sponsorship needs. The Friends scheme has also been put aside for the moment for the same reason. More when the ideas are a little more solid.