

BACK PAGE MEDLEY...



## New Year's Eve in Vienna!

Inspired by the magic of the Carols from Kings College I embarked on a mission in January 2013, to visit Vienna for the New Year's Day's concert to celebrate Steve's 60th Birthday in 2014.

I entered the ballot and persuaded all six children to apply for tickets for each of the three concerts, so we had 21 chances of 'winning'. I was over the moon when my son was offered two. We told Steve on Christmas night, his reaction was predictably very emotional.

The New Year's Eve concert was in the magnificent 'golden room' of the Musikverein with its fantastic gilt décor, mass of flowers and superb acoustics. The Vienna Philharmonic was conducted by Daniel Barenboim in his inimitable flamboyant style with not a score in sight!

Afterwards the streets were thronged with people from all over the world celebrating. Live bands, huge screens and gluhwein, champagne and shots at every corner. We waltzed to the Blue Danube in the aptly named St Stephen's Platz at midnight and exchanged New Year greetings with so many different nationalities including two charming young men from Iran who were toasting 'freedom'.

So if you've ever wished you could be there – like us, you can!

Jools

## Over to you...

This is your Newsletter and we want to fill it with your contributions. They don't have to be connected with Brockham or even with music – just whatever grabs your imagination. The sort of things we're thinking of are:

- unusual experiences – it was great to hear Ed's Olympics story
- unusual hobbies or skills – we know there is a lot of talent in this choir
- recommendations of CDs, shows, books, restaurants that you think others would enjoy
- plugs for events you're involved in, especially charity events

- life with Brockham Choral – what does it mean to you?
- short stories and poetry
- jokes and cartoons
- photos – especially any appropriate for a caption competition
- tales from the tour and compromising pics! – forget 'what happens on tour stays on tour'
- punters' comments for Eavesdroppings – see below

Please send all contributions to Joy at Joy.ridley@surreycc.gov.uk or call 077 7175 3763  
Words: Joy. Colours and shapes: Soo

## Not a lot of people know that...

For future features, here are some ideas for you to contribute to Twice Around the Goldfish Bowl. We'd like you to take a leaf out of Leatherhead resident Sir Michael Caine's book and tell us something about yourself that no one else knows. Anything at all, the weirder the better! Another could be The Worst Job You've Ever Had...

## Talents register

We know our members have many skills, experience and talents which could be useful to the choir and its members, and we'd like to put together a register that we can all make use of. If you've a skill that you think could benefit the choir and its members, please let us know. Whether it's musical, handyman, electrical, legal, advisory, driving, dramatic, dressmaking, finance, chicken keeping... you get the idea.

## Eavesdroppings

Overheard at the Petite Messe Solennelle...

- ‘The best thing they've ever done’
  - ‘Good articulation and they looked as if they were enjoying themselves’
  - ‘Marion is the best pianist I've ever heard’
  - ‘A wonderful sound, especially the Agnus Dei’
- Even Martin Birch was heard to say it was very good. And praise indeed from our mezzo soloist who described BCS as
- ‘The best choir I've ever sung with’

‘When music hits you, you feel no pain’

Bob Marley

## Diary Dates

Saturday 5 April 2014  
St Martin's Church  
Bach Magnificat in D  
Mozart Eine Kleine  
Nachtmusik, Mozart Solemn  
Vespers K339

13 – 19 April 2014  
Holy Week Services  
Devotional services

Saturday 17 May 2014  
Rehearsal Day

Saturday 7 June 2014  
Dorking Halls  
The Armed Man and The  
Gallant Knight  
Malcolm Archer Commission

Saturday 22 November 2014  
St Martin's Church  
Mozart C minor Mass

Saturday 6 December 2014  
3:30pm St Martin's Church  
Family & Children's  
Christmas Concert

Saturday 28 March 2015  
St Martin's Church  
Bach St Matthew Passion

6 June 2015  
St Paul's Church  
Mini-Glyndebourne

21 November 2015  
St Martin's Church  
'Mass in Blue' by Will Todd

Brockham Choral



## Glorious music, laughs, hard work, friends and dragons...

We hope that you enjoyed our first edition enough to come back for second helpings and that you like the new title Twice around the Goldfish Bowl. If you don't recognise or understand the phrase, you're either a new member, in which case you're forgiven, or you may be a goldfish... This edition covers our activities over the last few months and a look ahead to another term of mild lunacy and wonderful music. We look forward to your contributions for your summer edition. Joy and Soo



## The Armed Man and the Gallant Knight

So you thought Carmina Burana was spectacular. Well, you ain't seen nothing yet! Our Dorking Halls audience is in for a real treat on 6 June 2014 when we hit them with the world premiere of George and the Dragon with music by Malcolm Archer and words by our very own Tony Earnshaw and Alison Jesson.

The production will be a feast for the eyes as well as the ears, with dramatic lighting effects and costumes, a fight scene, the death of the dragon, a wedding... the drama is unending.

We are fortunate enough to be joined by choirs from Dunottar School and two local primaries,

five outstanding soloists and the highly accomplished Chameleon Arts Orchestra. Malcolm's music is stunning, with a wide range of styles and moods capturing precisely the colour and the passions of the story. Tony and Ali's lyrics complement the music perfectly and add humour, sentiment and thrills in exactly the right balance.

Before the Dragon breathes his fire, we have Karl Jenkins' The Armed Man, one of his darkest compositions with chilling melodies used to convey the tragedy and suffering caused by war. It was commissioned by Britain's Royal Armouries to reflect on war and peace in a

multi-cultural society, and the lyrics come from classic poets, biblical verses and traditional mass, as well as Muslim, Hindu and Japanese sources. It's a powerful work that stirs the emotions and raises the hairs on the back of your neck – a perfect match for George and the Dragon. BUT this production is a huge undertaking and we want as many people as possible to have the chance to enjoy it. We need you all to go out there and enthuse your families, friends and colleagues. So please start getting it in diaries right now, and make a real difference for BCS.

Joy Ridley  
Slightly daunted director

## View from the Chair

I was greatly touched by the support shown to me last September when it became clear I'd not ducked sufficiently to avoid the 'fickle-finger-of-fate' and had thus been elected chairman. Hugs were complemented by billets-doux offering avuncular – and materteral – advice. It is an honour to contribute in this way to a choir that aspires to be the best in the area, that never fails to amaze in its friendliness and social warmth and that has been known to watch the conductor occasionally. Ancient arms may cause the score to dip floor-ward, we may sometimes blame our varifocals – how much better half-moons might be – but our Director of Music can't be missed – except by not watching. It's been a revelation standing in the front of the choir for recent concerts – nowhere to hide and wholly bereft of excuse not to watch Andy. It's also nice to hear what a stunning sound the girls can make.

Given the effort we all put into rehearsals and concerts as Team Brockham please spread the word to the wide networks of all your friends and acquaintances, sell tickets as avidly as a street-trader might and let's get as many gluteal muscles as possible on the seats at St Martins and the Dorking Halls for our next concerts.

Nick Tanton

‘The music is not in the notes, but in the silence between’

Mozart





There was much excitement at the auditions for Santa's little helpers...

## Singing lifts the soul, whatever the age

### Choir

We rush from work, from computers, ipads and Christmas shopping, through darkness and rain. Are we mad to fit more singing into a busy pre-Christmas schedule? Probably. We enter with some hesitation: Will we be welcome? Will we sing in tune? Our fears met by bright smiles, cheery chatter, and a glass of almost mulled wine.

### Residents

We sit in our lounge. It's warm and cosy, much the same as most evenings – looking at familiar faces, lined with life's experiences of pain and joy, and familiar carers offering support, a listening ear, a smile or a joke. Christmas is coming – a break in the routine.

We sit and wait.

Then the door opens and a motley group of people enters, adorned in colourful clothes, some with dangling earrings sparkling brightly, some

with flashing bow ties, some bedecked with tinsel. Fresh, cold night air wafts into the room and we look expectantly at the group assembled before us. Sheets of words are handed out, although the words of the carols the 'young' folk sing are so familiar, learned many years ago in school or church.

The smiling director sounds a tuning fork and the carols commence. The joyful carols remind us of past Christmases. Singing lifts the soul, whatever our age.

### Choir

We may be mad, but we did have fun! Wending our way home via the Red Lion at Betchworth, we quench our thirst with a glass or two of wine or beer, a plate of chips, a selection of tasty snacks, lively conversation and good wishes. The last BCS social event of 2013 ends on a very satisfying seasonal note.

Estelle Earnshaw

## New members' corner

I joined the choir in March this year and found the most friendly atmosphere and a very professional approach to singing. My first concert, *Carmina Burana*, was an experience that will stay with me forever – an explosive introduction! I was, however, very nervous even though I have sung at the Dorking Halls in the Leith Hill Music Festival on many occasions. Then came the trip to Wales which was extremely enjoyable and enabled me to get to know a lot of you better and remember your names!

My introduction to singing started as a child in North Holmwood church choir where my father was a church warden. I also joined my school choir and sang in many operas and concerts and there I had my first experience of singing in the Leith Hill Music Festival and have continued to do so over the years while being a member of Beare Green and Newdigate Choral Society. However it was necessary for me to have a two-year break.

I then started volunteering in the Oxfam Bookshop and discovered that a member of the staff sang with Brockham. After I expressed a desire to start singing again, Pam Pettman suggested that I come along with her and give it a try. Well, I was hooked on my first rehearsal and now hope to sing as long as my voice and legs and Andy will let me. You are a very professional choir and I thank you all for your encouragement and friendship.

Pauline Whitehead, Soprano

If you're a new member, we'd love to know more about you. A photo would be great too...Contact details are on the back page. Joy

## At some point the wheels fall off...

A village hall – functional, bright – transformed. Tables with decorations, glasses, place settings. Laughter, the hum of conversation, the clink of wine glasses. BCS are back at Newdigate Village Hall for the annual dinner. And what a dinner. Antipasto followed by fish pie or moussaka and a selection of desserts, all lovingly prepared by a horde of choir members. Wine, of course, and coffee to follow. And as we sit back and relax, Fred Harrison appears, the MC's MC, to introduce the entertainment.

The entertainment starts with song – Solweig's song to be precise, brought to us by Bridget Doughty and

continues with a duet from Jill and Briony and Jane Stride's well honed rendition of poems appropriate for the occasion. At some point the wheels fall off, so there's only one wheel on the Sucklings' wagon – or is it the Criswicks'? – to much amusement. Nower Players bring us a play of few words, mainly 'do' and 'be', demonstrating that we have learnt something this term, and we finish with a song. And so it goes.

In all of this we are reminded of what a good social choir this is. Good company, good food, and a lot of people contributing to a thoroughly good evening. Our thanks go to all.

### REVIEW



I greatly enjoyed the Rossini Mass, which I had never heard before. It was a very fine performance. The balance was excellent, the diction musical and clear and it sounded as though the choir were really enjoying their singing, the sopranos producing a truly lovely tone. It was sung with real verve and we all enjoyed it greatly. I very much admired the firm and supportive playing of Marion on the piano. Someone should have given her a bouquet, but perhaps she said she did not want a fuss. I am told that Andy Phillips smiled as he conducted – and, if he did, I imagine that the reason was that the choir was doing what he wanted.

It was a really good concert with a most informative and very welcome short talk beforehand. I am told that the mezzo soloist said you were the best choir she had ever sung with – and I am not surprised. Well done and thank you.

Peter Slot

'I wish you music to help with the burdens of life, and to help you release your happiness to others'  
Ludwig van Beethoven



The angelic faces and voices of Powell Corderoy School

## Rejoice and be merry!

The spirit of Christmas arrived for me on Sat 14 December in St Martin's Church. BCS's accomplished singing of carols was well-received by all those present and indeed set a good example to the school choirs by the quality of the singing and the obvious enjoyment of doing so. The programme chosen introduced the children to traditional carols which many may not have heard of. The school choirs were a credit to themselves and their teachers. The Powell Corderoy School's inspired choice of Sing a Song in Unison emphasised the whole point of the service – all ages singing together! Rutter's Carol Rejoice and Be Merry, sung by the combined choirs, gave the children the experience and excitement of singing in a large group although something a little simpler may have been more beneficial. I also enjoyed hearing many of my personal favourites from the CD! It was a pity that not more people attended the concert – they missed out on a great occasion.

Mary White



## I haven't got my glasses so I can't see where my glass is...

Improve on this caption – a bottle of Merlot for the competition winner. Entries by 6 June



What, no Merlot...?

## The Tony Awards!

I suppose we should have seen it coming – he is Brockham's answer to Samuel Beckett and Shakespeare – but Tony Earnshaw excelled himself by winning both competitions from our inaugural edition.

We were thrilled with the number and quality of the entries for both the caption competition and Name the Newsletter. The entrants' names were removed before adjudication to avoid any bias and the judges were unanimous in their selection. There was a moment's hesitation about giving Tony both awards, but they decided it would be wrong not to.

So our winner was crowned with a holly wreath – an uncomfortable but festive alternative to laurel – and handed a bottle of decent port and a Denbies voucher.

In his honour, the prize for the caption competition will for ever more be known as the Tony Award.



Winning caption

'It's a Brockham pizza – comes with three glasses of Merlot'