



Editor's Introduction - Fred Harrison

Welcome to this pre-Christmas issue of the Newsletter reviewing our much-enjoyed Diamond Jubilee Dinner, reminding us of fun at the "Jolly", letting us in on Ed's Olympic escapades, paying tribute to the long life of our much revered "pocket soprano" Maude, and reminiscing in rhyme on the 2011 Yorkshire Tour whilst at the same time

looking forward to enjoying the 2013 visit to Cardiff.

The Review, already prepared by Brian Unwin, of our triumphant "Stabat Mater" will appear in the Spring issue, and can already be seen on the website. Our thanks to him and all our contributors. Thanks as ever to Crow Watkin, Estate Agents, for the printing.

Jubilee Dinner Review - Barbara Steadman-Allen

Ten tables, imaginatively named after composers, seated 93 guests at the BCS 60th Anniversary dinner at Wotton House. Not many choral societies have survived 60 years. Pre-dinner drinks in a vaulted softly blue-lit room set the ambience. And however often some people see each other, there's always so much to say - plenty of easy conversation as we milled in preparation for the rest of the evening. Even putting aside the much anticipated evening menu, (prawn cocktail, chicken supreme and raspberry crême brûlée), this RH5 4JS venue was a tourist attraction in itself. Members of the Choral Society, past and present, had scrubbed up brilliantly in evening dress and bow ties (gender respective) and each looked a million euros.



hopes and aspirations of the choir. "The life of a society is its members", he said, and commented that the strength of the BCS was in its mutual support and social cohesion. We work and play together. Andy ended with *Te salutamus* ("We, the conductors, salute you, the choir.")

Simon Ames followed Andy, critical writer for the press of local societies including BCS. He writes about the great excellence of BCS performance, for which we thank him. The final speech came from a new member of the choir, Sue Abraham, who said that in 2 ½ years she has never regretted a single moment of joining.

Moving seamlessly from the blue-lit into the dining room, a light music band formed the backdrop for the continuing of 100 words per minute chatter of friends enjoying themselves. And a quiz. But not any old quiz. This was a quiz some of us could (for once) get our heads around. A quiz with one round in which "music" meant music not pop. Thank you to the organising committee! The Brahms table came first (well, tied with Stravinsky, but then competitiveness rules OK and your commentator sat on the Brahms table).

A single theme seemed to emerge in my mind - the future. The Olympic theme was about handing on the tradition to the next generation. Andy spoke about the future and so did Simon. The choir never belongs to the future, it can only belong to you and I in this present moment, but



yes, we have much into which we can invite the next generation, allowing them to share the privilege of music-making with us to the standard of excellence that we have attained.

Speeches are important moments at these events which are not just social occasions but milestones in the shared history of members. We listened to four speeches, the first from our chairlady, Jenni, who



thanked everyone: past members of BCS, the conductors over 60 years, the committee and then Tony and Estelle, Nick H-C and Jules for organising such a momentous evening. In her world debut as a poet, she recalled the BCS's past, its places, its buildings and its singing from the heart. We thank Jenni for bringing so much love and patience to the Chairman's task. Deeply thoughtful, as ever, Conductor

Andy's speech reflected on the fact that a conductor is no more than a transitory flicker in the history of a choral society. A conductor is a temporary custodian on its musical life, looking after the

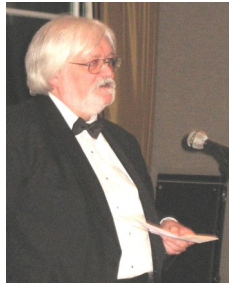
Great evening, great choir. Thanks!

May none of God's wonderful works keep silence, night or morning - bright stars, high mountains, deep seas, Brockham Choral Society - may all break into song as we contemplate his love. Father, for the last 60 years we thank you and for the years to come we want our music to bring beauty and hope to those who hear us. Give us your blessing, in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Adapted from 1000 prayers published by Lion



A View from the Jubilee Front - Andy Phillips



More so than most singers, a conductor is no more than a transitory flicker in the history of a choral society. We are, in effect, no more than temporary custodians of the musical life of a choir; our role is to look after the hopes and aspirations of the members and, with luck and a following wind, to help them enjoy their passion for singing, to help the choir develop and, in the end, when the time comes to hand over the reigns, to leave the choir in a better place than when we arrived - with a secure and sustainable future.

In sixty years, Brockham Choral Society has enjoyed (possibly endured) a whole host of conductors, each of whom has brought his own personality to the post and has left a part of himself with the choir - and the choir benefits from a growing legacy of individual flair, expertise, enthusiasm, knowledge and understanding.

As a conductor, each one of us likes to think that we might have a lasting influence on the choir and its members' musical lives. And more than that, we hope that, during our short time, we have made friends through our work - and friendships that will remain long after our departure from the post.

However, we also acknowledge that we are entirely dispensable - merely transient shadows in the long history of a society and we all know that it is the members themselves that make a choir - not the conductor. Even though we have a passing responsibility to guide the choir during our brief stay, the life force of the society is its members - and it is the members who shoulder the responsibility to ensure a sustainable future. And this choir, Brockham Choral Society, more than any choir I have known, has the membership to do this.

It has been, and remains, a pleasure and privilege to work with a choir where the social cohesion and mutual support has been so strong.

And I cannot over emphasise the importance of a strong, caring social structure in a choir. I have always asserted that a choir works best when it works sociably and where the members work and play together - and Brockham Choral Society is such a choir.

And this is why, whenever my time comes to pass on the baton, Brockham Choral Society will continue to succeed and flourish.

Sixty years of thoughtful and caring nurture have brought the choir to this place. With careful and sympathetic management and a willingness to maintain and develop the social and musical life of its members, there's no reason at all why the society should not be here in sixty years time to celebrate another significant milestone.

Te Salutamus



Our Chairman's Jubilee Celebration in Rhyme

I, unlike many in our choir, am not a professional writer of Poetry so I hope that it is not too embarrassing. Here goes:

Jenni Lee-Potter

When considering the joys of BCS, I wondered where to start.
Should it be with places, buildings, or singing from the heart?
We gather on a Tuesday night all eager to be seen.
It's hard to think that it all started on that lovely Brockham Green.
Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass and a few quite undecided
Love to meet drink, chat and sing and hope not to be chided.
The joys are many that's for sure, of which singing is just one.
For many it's the social whirl of all just having fun

The members of Brockham are unique in oh so many ways.
Many play on instruments and practice all their days.
So many are really talented, writing plays and books and such.
Others are really kind and sweet and nothing is too much.
Helping others is a real feature of so many other folk,
That none should feel despondent or ever give up hope.
A more social group of people you could never hope to meet
And Tuesdays down the wine bar is a feature of South Street.

Yet the music is the common factor, the reason for such joy,
To share together with one voice just like a girl and boy.
When we sing well and in good voice the joy we feel is great,
Whether it be church or concert hall or just at the school gate.
Tours, concerts, weddings and CD's all fill our hearts with glee.
Under the direction of our MD we aim to set them free.
Variety is the spice of life and of that you can be sure
As members of BCS we are always game for more.

United in our love of music and our camaraderie
We all love to embrace life and see what we might be;
The joy of those we have loved and lost and the joys of those to come,
BCS embraces life, in music and in song.
60 years have come and passed and the spirit still lives on
Of all those friends we've known and loved; our memories are long,
In music and in friendship and so much more of course;
Of parties, soirees, jollies and singing till we're hoarse.
We all hold a special place in our hearts for BCS
So let's all drink with joy and hope to its continuing success.

**And some examples of "music and camaraderie"
- a refreshment break before Evensong at Ockley
Parish Church, 12th May 2012.**



(Photos, Brian Richardson)



The Summer Jolly, 14 July 2012 - Val Harden

A July evening spent in the charming surroundings of Hill House Farm thanks to the generosity of our hosts Maureen and Gareth was a fitting way to bring our 2011-2012 season to a close. Space dictates that mentioning everyone involved is impossible, suffice to say the standard of entertainment was of the usual and now expected high standard, ably introduced by our own home grown impresario Fred Harrison. What sonorous tones the man possesses. His rendition of "Old Man River" reverberated around the lofty barn to everyone's delight. We were treated to a great many solos, duets, and trios, played on a



variety of instruments which included piano, flute, strings and even a harmonica, with glorious melodies soaring to the rafters and beyond. But mention must be made of Marion and Maureen's playing of Brahms's Rhapsody truly accomplished.

We fell about in laughter at the drama enacted by the "Harrow Road Players". French restaurants will never seem quite the same again! Finally, who could not love the Altos? A mass of pink confusion, sorry profusion, giving us our medicinal compound. We all went home feeling instantly better.



My Olympics Summer - Ed Criswick

A couple of years ago I applied to be a volunteer for the London 2012 Olympics. Eventually I was selected and became an official "Games Maker", and assigned to be a driver/assistant to a Vice President of the International Olympics Committee. In practice, I was the driver for him and his family plus occasional other IOC officials. Usually this meant driving from the Park Lane Hilton to the Olympic Park or Olympic Village (where I was lucky enough to have lunch a few times in the athletes' dining hall) or other Olympic venues such as Earls Court, the Excel Centre or the O₂.

Once or twice I had to take family members shopping, or go to non-Olympic venues such as St Paul's or the Guildhall, which seemed to be beyond the capability of my satnav so it was back to street atlases for these. I didn't have one of the 'branded' Olympics BMWs as my client wanted a people carrier, so I drove a Citroen C4 Picasso which I actually preferred to the BMWs. But I did get to drive in the

'Olympic Lanes' which gave a ridiculous feeling of superiority as you whizzed past 'ordinary' traffic stuck in jams.

I didn't meet anyone famous, just non-famous VIPs (who were all friendly and courteous). I saw some live Olympics events (volleyball and swimming) and went to the rehearsal of the opening ceremony, which was amazing. And my client, who was Italian, tried to involve me in various Italian team events, which was kind.

To sum up, I felt very privileged to be a small part of this extraordinary organisational feat, and very proud to have been able to help make it such a great success.



It is with sadness that we record the death in the early hours of November 16 of Maude Haycock, not long after her 92nd birthday.

Maude was a member of Brockham Choral Society for over 40 years, singing with several conductors

beginning with Chris Pratt and performing a range of choral works, not least the major Bach works and of course Messiah and Elijah. She tended to be an ever-present and her soprano voice remained appealing right up to recent times. Though small in stature her contribution was valued and she became almost iconic as the Choir's "pocket soprano". Mary Suckling said she enjoyed sitting next to Maudie at rehearsals because among other things, at last she was with someone she could look over. (Maude preferred to be called Maudie, and certainly not by her first name, Florence).

Maude was always in demand to sing a solo at the Society's annual "Jolly". "When you wish upon a Star" and "Christopher Robin" were particular favourites of hers. She was also notable when, on a choir carol singing visit to Broome Park Care Home, she visited the loo, pulled the wrong cord and set off the distress alarm!

She loved going on the biennial Choir tours, which were not without incident. On the German tour to Koblenz she was happy to share a room with Jenny Bartholomew's young daughter Sally despite a 60-year age gap. On one of their trips they were on a chair lift together in beautiful scenery. To get over their nervousness they sang, appro-

Maude

priately, "The Hills are Alive with the Sound of Music", two very sweet voices delighting those travelling in adjacent cars. On another tour, in Dinon, staying in a hotel whose security procedure was highly unsatisfactory she discovered a strange man in her room. We don't think she asked him to stay, but she was certainly not phased by him. It was good that she was able to go on the Yorkshire tour in 2011, aged 90, when she fulfilled her ambition to sing in York Minster.

(As a passing observation, she disliked Choir members drinking from water bottles. "What's wrong with glasses, she would say.) And a final memory to illustrate her active participation in the Choir: When only 3 or 4 years ago at a rehearsal our M.D. Andy asked if anyone would come out to illustrate the rhythm of a waltz in dance, she willingly, although in her late 80's, took the floor with a male partner.

We were delighted that we were able to entertain her at an open-air 90th birthday party given in her honour at Maureen and Gareth's home, with a specially-made birthday cake as part of the celebrations.

We shall miss her very much. It is fitting that members of the Society have been able to take part in the choir at her funeral service on 3rd December 2012.





Brockham Choral Society

www.brockhamchoral.org

BROCKHAM CHORAL
SOCIETY

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Dates for your Diary

Family Christmas Concert

Saturday 8 December, 3.30pm
St Martin's Church
Dorking RH4 1DW

Carol Singing

Tuesday 11 December, 7.30pm
Reigate Beaumont & Broome Park.,

Spring Rehearsals

Start Tuesday 8 January 2013
8pm Powell Corderoy School

Murder Mystery Event

Tour to Cardiff 2013 - David John
Saturday 26 January 2013
Details to come.

Easter Concert

Saturday 23 March 2013
7.30pm, St Martins Church,
Dorking RH4 1DW
Vivaldi Gloria and J.S. Bach
Cantata & Motet.

Summer Rehearsals

Start Tuesday 2 April 2013
8pm Powell Corderoy School

Rehearsal Day for Carmina Burana

Saturday 11 May 2013, 10am - 4pm.

Summer Concert

Saturday 8 June 2013, 7.30pm
Constant Lambert Rio Grande
Carl Orff, Carmina Burana.

Teas on the Green, The Jolly

Dates to be announced.

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[Please inform your Representative if you cannot attend a Rehearsal.](#)

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Altos	Moira Sinden	0208 770 0764
Tenors	Robin Luff	01306 884093
Basses	Ray White	01306 888959

And the 2011 Tour in rhyme - Alison Jesson

THE GRAPES OF YORK

After weeks of intensive rehearsals, of anthems and hymns and much more, we assembled with all of our luggage and set off on the Brockham Choir Tour.

The journey was quite entertaining helped along with champagne and good talk and soon we achieved our objective - the Ibis Hotel, based in York.

In the restaurant, that Reuben had Googled, reputed for fine wine and food, we met up with a choir of Norwegians and sang songs which became awfully rude.

Next day was a trip out to Fountain's, of the ruins, just time for a glimpse, before we headed back up into Ripon to meet the Brass Band, Yorkshire Imps.

The first concert gave us some wobbles, "Blest City", "My Soul", "Steal Away", so we collapsed in the bar to drink Shiraz and vowed we'd sing better next day.

York's Mayor showed us all round the Mansion, the House where his forbears would dine

and to hear what they drank with their dinner showed what novices we were with wine.

Next stop was at Leeds where we sampled good pub grub and fine Pinot Noir and it gave us a glow of contentment to be part of this wonderful choir.

That evening our concert was stunning, the Parry, the Jenkins, the Guest. We sang for all the war heroes and wept for those we loved best.

On Sunday, with time off for luncheon and as much wine as any could want, we performed our last concert at Selby where Andy'd been dunked in the font.

That night we returned quite exhausted, from missing our afternoon snooze, and were told that we'd drunk all the Merlot and the hotel was now out of booze.

But the highlight for most was York Minster, the Hallelujahs made our hearts soar and although we'd need time to recover, it was voted the best-ever tour.

Tour to Cardiff 2013 - David John

This is planned from Thursday 1 August to Monday 5 August. Fifty singers (including 23 altos!) and six non-singers are touring. Initial deposits of £20 per head have been paid, and the tour outline is as follows:

- return travel by coach from Dorking
- four nights accommodation on B&B basis (mostly in shared rooms) in centrally located Hilton Hotel
- concert programme of 2 formal, 2 informal and one church service
- tour lunch on final day

The hotel is located on the edge of the very large pedestrianised shopping centre. Cardiff Castle, Sophia Gardens, National Museum of Wales and Millennium stadium are all within 10 minutes walk and well worth visiting.

The Millennium Centre (Opera House) and Welsh assembly building are at Cardiff Bay, 10 minutes away by bus.

A more detailed itinerary will be circulated in the New Year. In the meantime this gives an idea of what is planned.

Members' News. We are pleased to welcome, three new Altos: Christine Bass, Diana Burgess and Katherine Montgomery. And we are sorry to note that long-standing Bass, Brian Richardson's illness now requires him to be cared for in a hospice.

