



SoundBites - September 2018

A newsletter for members of Axminster & District Choral Society

Editor Juliet Henham

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event	Programme
04-Sep-18	Autumn term begins	
18-Sep-18	Committee	
16-Oct-18	AGM	Bring and Share
10-Nov-18	November concert	Vaughan Williams <i>Dona Nobis Pacem</i> & 6 songs in time of war + Lark ascending
15-Dec-18	Christmas Concert	Including Pergolesi's Magnificat and Holst's Christmas Day
15-Dec-18	Autumn Term Ends	
08-Jan-19	Spring Term Begins	
06-Apr-19	Spring Concert	Haydn – The Seasons
06-Apr-19	Spring Term Ends	
30-Apr-19	Summer Term Begins	
15-Jun-19	Summer Concert	Handel, Acis and Galatea
18-Jun-19	Summer Term Ends	Bring and Share
03-Sept-19	Autumn Term Begins	
17-Sept-19	Committee Meeting	
15-Oct-19	AGM	
16-Nov-19	November Concert	Puccini – <i>Messa di Gloria</i> , Elgar Psalm 29
14-Dec-19	Christmas Concert	Possibly joined by a West Gallery Choir
14-Dec-19	Autumn Term Ends	
07-Jan-20	Spring Term Begins	
31-Mar-20	Spring Term Ends	
04-Apr-20	Spring Concert	CPE Bach – St Matthew Passion

Chairman's Column

The London Symphony Orchestra and Chorus performed *Dona Nobis Pacem* at the Proms, to which Claire and I were fortunate to go. It was a splendid concert, not least for the exciting rendition of this work. The recording is available here - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/events/e9fxp6/play/agq9xj/p06crjcj> and a very interesting talk on the piece here - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/events/e9fxp6/play/agq9xj/p06hbn80>.

The committee chose the work specifically because of the juxtaposition of our concert date and the centenary of Armistice Day the following day. Let's hope it provides a fitting contribution to the remembrance activities in the town.

It is a pleasure to announce that two members, Juliet Henham and Kathryn Whitaker, have kindly agreed to be co-opted members of the committee. New committee members mean new ideas! Please let me know if you would like to contribute as a committee member.

The AGM is just around the corner, and as ever, there are positions to fill.

Peter and Gilly Lea-Cox are holding a fund-raising cheese and wine concert at their home. You are most cordially invited.

The concert will be at 6.30 for 7pm on Friday 12 October.

Richard Godfrey and Peter will be entertaining us with organ, piano and organ/piano duets. No tickets but donations in aid of Choral Society funds. Please let Peter know if you and partner would like to attend. First come first served! His email is gillyandpeter@gmail.com.

Concerts – prepared by Elizabeth Twining

The November concert

There are many ways to remember and reflect on the major wars of the last century and on those who have fought and died in them. For our concert on November 10th we have chosen three works by Ralph Vaughan Williams, who lived through both World Wars and was profoundly affected by his experiences. He saw at first hand some of World War One's worst horrors, and lost friends and relatives. He also saw its effects, culminating in World War Two.

The main work is his cantata *Dona Nobis Pacem*, 'Grant us peace', written in 1936, when the next war was beginning to look increasingly likely. It featured in this year's Prom season, one theme of which was the centenary of the Armistice. Vaughan Williams took his texts from Walt Whitman (who had himself experienced the American Civil War), from the Quaker John Bright, and from the Old Testament. It is a powerful work, beginning with a plea for peace, then moving through the horror and futility of war to reconciliation. The final movement speaks of hope and comfort, and the work ends as it began with the words '*Dona nobis pacem*'. Our soloists will be Harriet Mountford and Julian Rippon.

The concert also includes his set of Six Choral Songs, with words by Percy Shelley. They are subtitled 'To be sung in time of war', having been written at the beginning of the Second World War. The third work, '*The Lark Ascending*' was composed in 1914 and has justifiably become one of the best loved works in the concert repertoire. This joyful rhapsody will we hope appeal to everyone (and give the choir a chance to sit down!). The soloist will be the first violin in our orchestra.

Note: The recording of *Dona Nobis Pacem* mentioned at rehearsal is available from Kings College Recordings at £13 + £1.75 p&p.

Christmas concert 2018

Our Christmas concert will include Pergolesi's Magnificat and Holst's Christmas Day. For those who like to buy their own copies, we will be using the Walton edition, edited by Stroh and Red,

for the Pergolesi. The Holst is published by Novello. Peter plans to begin rehearsing these before the November concert and they will be distributed when he decides to start

Spring 2019

For the Haydn Seasons we will be using the OLD Novello edition, not the new one edited by Michael Pilkington.

Elizabeth

Fundraising – Mike King

Last year we raised about £500 from people outside the society through fundraising. This came from just two events: an Auction evening organised by Heather, and a coffee morning organised by Rosemary. The committee is going to take a hard look at improving on this figure. Fundraising is an activity where all members have an opportunity to do something to support the choir – as the advert says “every little helps”. If you have any ideas of events – either by yourself or with others – or are willing to help with activities that someone else organizes, then please put your head above the parapet and contact Cam.