

For the Diary

Concerts

Saturday 18 May 2019 at 7:30 pm
St Mary's Church, Church Street, Warwick
Performing Mozart's *Requiem* & Haydn *Missa in Angustiis* "Nelson Mass"

Saturday 16 November 2019 at 7:30 pm
King Henry VIII School Concert Hall, Warwick Road, Coventry
Performing Orff's *Carmina Burana*

Saturday 14 December 2019 at 7:30 pm
King Henry VIII School Concert Hall, Warwick Road, Coventry (programme & venue tbc)

Social Events

Saturday 11 May 2019 pm
Plant sale at Glen & Geoff's house

Date tbc in June 2019
Tour of Stoneleigh Abbey followed by afternoon tea

Sunday 14 July 2019
Sunday lunch at Kenilworth Golf Club, Crewe Lane, Kenilworth

Rehearsals

We rehearse every Thursday evening from October to July at Quinton Park Baptist Church Hall, Coventry. Rehearsals start at 7:15pm and finish at 9:30pm. Tea, coffee & biscuits are available at the interval.

Find us Online

Our official website is at <http://www.covphilsoc.org.uk/>
and our official Facebook page is at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/27912395845/>

Membership enquiries

Email: secretary@covphilsoc.org.uk, or you are welcome to join us at one of our Thursday evening rehearsals

Music where you least expect it



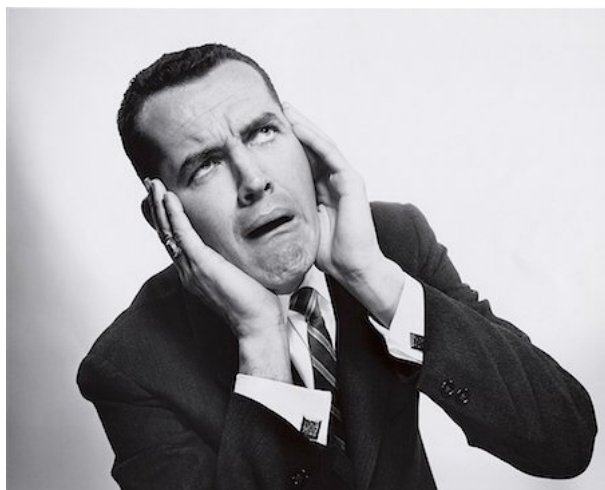
This rather arbitrary photo of me riding a camel in Wadi Rum in Jordan reminds me that many of my trips at home and abroad have been made particularly magical because of stumbling across random and spontaneous musical performances, like hearing James Galway rehearsing *Spring* from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* in King's College Chapel at the start of his solo career, or listening to a young Algerian street performer singing *Largo al factotum* (superbly) at the back of the cathedral in Barcelona at midnight, or enjoying Maori love songs in Rotorua, or catching a drift of Bedouin singing in the desert, the unexpectedness of these musical performances is almost more joyful than attending concerts. However, I have to say that even those moments are eclipsed by the experience of singing with an ensemble like the CovPhil. Henry's contribution on page 2 is a timely reminder that "everybody can and should sing"! Spread the word!

Rachael Bermingham
Chair

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“I Can’t Sing!”



For reasons I can’t quite understand I have the reputation in my family for being a bit of a singer. So I wasn’t surprised when my grandson, put up to it by his parents no doubt, asked me whether he should join the school choir (easy answer of course) and how he could be “more confident”. The second question foxed me, I admit. How to advise a seven year old to be “more confident”? I cobbled together some sort of reasonably satisfactory answer and he seemed happy and he did join the choir and appears to be enjoying it; job done.

But it made me think; lots of people say to me (and, no doubt, to you); “I wish I could sing but I don’t have a voice” or “I wish I could sing but I’m tone deaf”. What to say in response?

I suspect that lots of people can (and therefore should) sing though they think they can’t. I’m sure for some if not many it’s a question of confidence. On day one they may find it difficult to hear the difference between middle C and the note above; but they’ll very soon get the hang of it. And they may initially find it difficult to recognise from the dots and dashes on the page in front of them what they’re supposed to be singing. But they’ll soon get the hang of that too.

But how to persuade them to give it a go without sounding too naff and/or, even worse, enthusiastic? I tend to tell a story that you might enjoy; that I’ve had three auditions and failed two of them but have still been able to enjoy singing in

a number of more or less competent choirs. When I was eight I was at a school whose headmaster had attended that same school at the same time as my father; they had been friends. I was taken out of some lesson or other for a voice test which I failed. This didn’t bother me; who wants to sing when they’re eight? There was cricket! And rugby! And latin irregular verbs!

But I wrote to my parents and reported this failure. My father wrote to the headmaster, his old friend, asking for a reconsideration (“I would wish Henry to sing”) and I was taken out of class again, re-auditioned, and surprise surprise, my voice, musicianship and general aptitude had improved sufficiently for me to be admitted to the school choir.

Two decades or so later I was in Coventry and auditioned for what was then St Michael’s singers. Paul Leddington Wright quite correctly decided I wasn’t good enough but suggested I sang with an unauditioned choir for a year or so and try again later. So I joined the Cov Phil and have felt so happy there that I haven’t felt motivated to repeat my humiliation. So what’s the response to the “I can’t sing” assertion?

“Everybody can and should sing and there’s a choir out there to suit” (But it helps if you’ve got contacts in the right places).

Henry Whitney
Tenor

Useful Information

Committee Members – Rachael Bermingham (Chair), Colin Simmons (Secretary), John Thompson (Treasurer), Celia Lewis (Membership), Sheila Cowen, Henry Whitney (Librarian), Neil Kingdon (Ticketing), Jay Durrant, Clare Gelsthorpe, Margaret Jakiel, Hilary Ward, Mike Ward (Front of House)

Publicity - Margaret Jakiel, Heather Payne & Nathan Field (social media)

Social Committee - Sheila Cowen (Chair), Liz Chester, Jay Durrant, Margaret Thompson, Hilary Ward, Glenda Way