

For the Diary

Concerts

Saturday 16 December 2017 at 7:30pm
St Mary's Church, Church Street, Warwick.
Performing Handel's Messiah Part 1 and Christmas Music with soloists Imogen Russell (soprano), Margaret Parker (alto), Ed Valenti (tenor), Robin Jeffreys (bass)

Saturday 10 March 2018 7:30 pm
St Mary's Church, Church Street, Warwick
Performing Bach's St Matthew Passion

Saturday 22 September 2018 at 7:30 pm.
St Mary's Church, Church Street, Warwick
Performing Mendelssohn's Elijah

Social Events

Friday 26 January 2018 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm
Stoneleigh Deer Park Golf Club
Supper and skittles. Details to follow

Saturday 19 May 2018
Plant sale and afternoon tea. Details to follow

Rehearsals

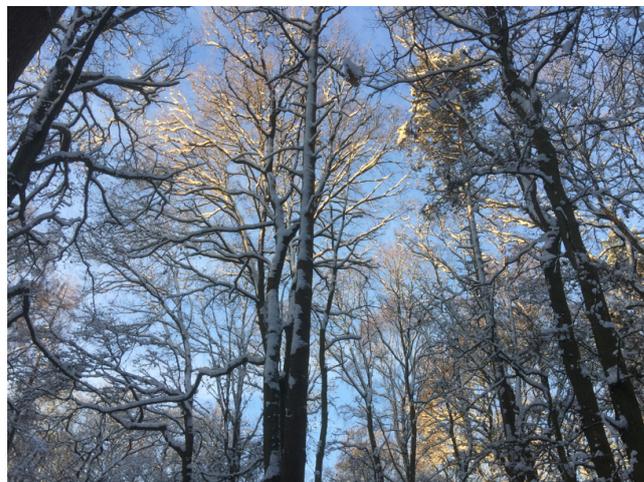
We rehearse every Thursday evening from October to July at Quinton Park Baptist Church Hall, Coventry. Rehearsals start at 7:15pm and finish at 9:30pm. Tea, coffee & biscuits are available at the interval. Rehearsals restart after the Christmas break on 4th January.

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



Winter Wonderland

As I write this, Coventry, and indeed most of the Midlands, has been temporarily gripped by proper Winter weather. Hopefully this won't prevent our intrepid singers from entertaining audiences at such varied venues as Stoneleigh Abbey and Brandon Hall Hotel. Our December diary has certainly been packed this year!

Our last full choir performance for 2017 should set everyone up nicely for Christmas and the New Year. In 2018 we can look forward to two wonderful concerts, the St Matthew Passion and Elijah, plus of course the Coventry Phil's 75th birthday.

Just in case you're at a loose end until we resume rehearsals on 4 January, I have compiled a Christmas puzzle accompanying this newsletter. No prizes and the solution will be in the next newsletter. Please also buy the Social Committee Quiz!

My favourite caption for the photo in the last newsletter was contributed by Dave Trivitt: "Help! I'm a singer, get me out of here!"

Contents

Page 2	Cov Phil Social Events
Page 3	Musings on "Middle Age"
Page 4/5	Christmas Puzzle

Cov Phil Social Events

For the benefit of new members and those who may never have attended any of our social events, we would like to give you some information.

Over the year the Social Committee organises a number of events so that Cov Phil members can socialise with fellow singers. Time during rehearsals is always limited, for obvious reasons, and it can take some time for members to get to know one another. The social events are an opportunity to do that. We are always happy to welcome partners and friends who are not members of the choir. We try to ensure that the price of tickets is kept to a minimum to cover our costs and organise a range of activities so that, hopefully, there is something to suit everyone.

We are always grateful for any suggestions for something new to try – please just talk to any Social Committee member. Thank you to those who completed the feedback form after the summer lunch; we are trying to follow up your ideas as soon as possible.

In the meantime here are some dates for your diaries:

Christmas Quiz – a paper quiz given out for £1 a sheet before Christmas and gathered in after Christmas – so you all have time to go away and Google the answers!!!

Friday 26th January 2018: Skittles Night

Lots of fun to be had, with a dinner and some friendly rivalry as the table teams vie to knock down skittles and be the winners – but hey, who cares? It's just a great evening. Held at Stoneleigh Deer Park Golf Club - CV8 3DR. More details re. time and cost will follow.

Saturday 19th May: Plant Sale and Afternoon Tea

Come and get some bargain plants held at green-fingered Glen and Geoff Way's home in Kenilworth. There are usually some second-hand books on sale and tea and cake made by members. More details to follow.

Sunday 8th July: Sunday lunch

Held at The Windmill Hotel on the A45 in Allesley. The food is always excellent with a veggie option and the event is enlivened by a table top quiz and raffle. We have looked at other venues but the Windmill

offers the best value for money we can find and the staff know us and go out of their way to meet our needs so we have stayed with it for next year.

Other events during the year – further information nearer the time:

Bring and Share – usually on a choir night when choir members bring foodie contributions and we end up with too much stuff!! If you know of a good cause any remains can go to without flouting health and safety regulations please let us know.

Members' Evening – something similar but with contributions of song, instrumentals, poetry, readings and even dance if you feel like it. Offers open to any choir member to do your thing to a willing audience.

Strawberries and Cream – provided at the last rehearsal of the summer for the first time in 2017, but so well received we'll do it again next year.

FYI - Other social events NOT organised by the Social Committee include:

Knit and Stitch group which meets the first Tuesday of every month in members' houses. You may well have seen their amazingly creative items for sale for choir funds and/or for charity. Anyone welcome to join.

Summer Walks organised by David and Mary Grimsey. These replace Thursday rehearsals during the 'off-season' when choir closes down during the school summer holidays. They usually start and finish at a pub – say no more....

Hilary Ward

Useful Information

Committee Members - John Atkins (Chair), Peter Snaith (Secretary), John Thompson (Treasurer), Celia Lewis (Membership), Sheila Cowen (Social Chair), Henry Whitney (Librarian), Neil Kingdon (Ticketing), Rachael Bermingham, Jay Durrant, Clare Gelsthorpe, Margaret Jakiel, Andrew Kyle, Heather Payne, Clare Samson, Hilary Ward, Mike Ward (Front of House),

Publicity - Heather Payne, Margaret Jakiel, Andrew Kyle

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

“Old, me?”



We are used, aren't we, under our current leadership, to unflattering remarks about our ages. I was talking to one of our altos about that modest sign of age; that almost unconscious grunt that we make when we get up out of a chair and that too made me think about how we cope with what I shall charitably call late middle age.

I think there are three main strategies.

First option: you can fight it. Daily aerobic exercise. Careful attention to diet. If you're fussy about your appearance, like Wayne Rooney, a hair implant. Perhaps a bit of Botox. Even some minor cosmetic surgery. If you're lucky enough to have grandchildren you see them briefly between your gym session and Pilates; they think you always wear running shorts and they know your best time over 5k that year. So far as I.T. is concerned you wear a gadget that tells you how many steps you've taken that day and share training tips on a dedicated app.

You may not live for ever but it will seem like it.

Second option: giving in gracefully. This seems to involve: regular or indeed life membership of the National Trust, the presence of a blanket in the living room to put over your knees when it's chilly, the use of the word "chilly"; a belief that Velcro is now an acceptable fastening for clothing and shoes even for adults, the wearing of exercise footwear when not taking exercise, having a supply of boiled sweets or, worse, Werther's originals, in the glove box of your car and, in the worst cases, the purchase of a caravan or motor home. If you're lucky you're a much loved grandma or grandpa and a trusted mother or father in law. So far as I.T. is concerned you're a regular user of Skype but Facebook is so demanding and why don't people talk to each other any more and look up from their devices when they're walking?

Third option: giving in disgracefully. This seems to be the option adopted by most of our tenors. A carefree attitude to dry cleaning and alcohol consumption. Eccentric ties. Trips abroad with friends old enough to know better to watch sport, allegedly, in places euphemistically called party towns like Prague or Krakow or Dublin. Being on first name terms with the local custody officer. Purchase of a motorbike and membership of a whisky appreciation society. If you're lucky you're allowed to see your grandchildren under close supervision by your daughter or daughter in law and you're a much admired wicked uncle or aunt. As to I.T. you've signed up with Tinder; more in hope than expectation..

Of course the sensible approach is an attitude to old age that's a bit all of them; an attitude that's about being a bit careful but not giving up and sitting back, and giving it a bash even if, occasionally, it's a bit selfish or even risky.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, wrote a wonderful piece called "Ulysses" in which our hero after his heroics at Troy and elsewhere contemplates a further departure and adventures in his old age.

It's too long to give you all of it but the last few lines are fabulous.

They are.....

"Though much is taken, much abides. Though we are not now that strength that in the old days moved Heaven and Earth, that which we are, we are; one equal temper of heroic hearts, made weak by time and fate but strong in will to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Rock on?

Henry Whitney

Newsletters

We would love to hear from you with suggestions for articles. Our next issue will be published in March so if you have any articles, events, photos or other contributions for this one (deadline end of January) or future issues please email news@covphilsoc.org.uk or speak to any committee member.



COVENTRY PHILHARMONIC CHRISTMAS PUZZLE



This puzzle is based on the “Which?” puzzles in the GCHQ Puzzle Book. The grid below contains 78 words, which can be divided into 12 sets: one set of 12 words, one set of 11 words, one set of 10 words and so on down to one set of two words and one set of just one word. The words in each set are connected to the size of the set. So the words in the set of 12 have some connection with 12, the words in the set of 11 have some connection with 11, and so on. You need to identify the word in the set of one and why.

For an example of how to solve this puzzle, see overleaf. No prizes as this is just for fun. The solution will be printed in the next newsletter.

AMSTERDAM	ANSWERS	ANTWERP	AWNINGS	BAG
BAKER	BAR	BARNACLE	BERLIN	BIRD
BIRNBAUM	BLOW	BOBOLINK	BONHAM	BRANCH
BRENT	BRIDES	BRUFORD	CANADA	CHAMBER
CHANCELLOR	CHOWCHILLA	COLLINS	COPELAND	DAIRY
DARK	DOWN	DRAIN	E	FAVEROLLES
FIRST	FLEETWOOD	GOOD	GROHL	HAND
HOOPOE	HORN	HOSE	HOUDAN	HOUSE
IRON	JANE	JIM	KILLER	LAND
LAW	LOS ANGELES	LUCK	MARANS	MAYOR
MOON	NURSE	OLIVE	OVER	PAINTED
PAN	PARIS	PARLOUR	PEEWIT	PILGRIM
RAWNESS	RICH	SHIP	SNOW	STARR
STOVE	SWAN	TAIL	TAWNIES	TAWSING
THE	TIME	WAR	WASTING	WATER
WATTS	WEANERS	WIND		



HOW THE PUZZLE WORKS

AMIGOS	CLASSICAL	GEORGE	JOHN	PAUL
PENTATONIC SCALE	POLAR	QUINTUPLETS	RINGO	SECT
SENSES	STAVE	TASTE	TENORS	WITCHES

Looking at this smaller grid of 15 words, you may spot an obvious group of GEORGE, JOHN, PAUL and RINGO - the Fab FOUR.

You might then notice that AMIGOS, TENORS and WITCHES form another set of words which can all be preceded by "The THREE".

QUINTUPLETS might give you a clue for the next set - groups which contain FIVE items - PENTATONIC SCALE, QUINTUPLETS, SENSES, STAVE and TASTE.

We are left with three words: CLASSICAL, POLAR and SECT.

You can form new words with POLAR and SECT by prefixing both with "bi", meaning TWO.

And finally, the CLASSICAL is the common name for Prokofiev's FIRST symphony - number ONE.