

April 2019

## **Information for new and potential members of the society**

Now that you are interested in joining, or maybe have already joined, the Nantwich Choral Society, may I welcome you and take this opportunity to provide answers to all of the questions which I am sure you have.

For most of the last 50 years it has been a principal of the organisation that professional musicians are engaged in the roles of Music Director, Accompanist and concert soloists. In addition, most of the orchestras used to accompany concert works also consist of professional musicians. Our repertoire is varied, ranging from traditional, well known choral works to less well known modern works, and to some works which are commissioned and written specifically for us.

However, the choir remains a non-auditioned society. All we ask is that you have an interest in our sort of music, that you have some basic ability to sing and that you wish to learn and develop your singing knowledge and skill. I am sure that you wouldn't be reading this if you didn't fulfil most of these criteria.

### **Rehearsals**

Rehearsals take place on Wednesday evenings in the Methodist Church, Hospital Street, Nantwich, between 7:30pm and 9:30pm. They are taken by our Music Director, John Naylor, with Simon Russell accompanying on the piano. The sessions are always hard work, especially when looking at new music, but remain very enjoyable. On your first visits you will be made to feel welcome. However, please don't feel overwhelmed by the apparent ability of the choir when new music is started at a rehearsal. In a society of this size there will always be people who have performed works before and who will know what they are doing. Remember, next time a work is performed, you will be one of those already familiar with it. This is particularly the case with the Family Christmas Concert.

### **Annual Programme**

We perform 3 or 4 concerts a year, these being Autumn, Christmas, Spring and usually Summer. In addition we run a Singing Workshop Day in September or October and an annual Come and Sing Event in January. The summer break is taken from after the Summer Concert, or the last agreed rehearsal in June, until the first Wednesday in September.

Members are expected to participate in all concerts, although it is accepted that this is not always possible for members with other commitments. In order to take part in a concert, it is necessary that as many rehearsals as possible are attended. If the member has not attended many rehearsals and they obviously do not sufficiently know the work, they should themselves determine whether they really should participate in that concert.

### **Concert Attire and Music Folders**

Each member is responsible for providing their own uniform which is:-

- Ladies: full length black skirt or trousers together with long sleeved black top, plus optional black jacket or cardigan, if cold. Alternatively a full length black dress with long sleeves may be worn, together with black hosiery and shoes. Please note that full length means to the floor or top of the feet, not mid calf.
- Men: Black dinner jacket and trousers, white shirt and black bow tie will be worn together with black socks and shoes. On some occasions, as advised before a concert, black trousers and black shirt (which will be worn open necked), together with black shoes will be worn.

For some concerts it is also necessary to use a plain black folder to hold the music. Such folders can be purchased at good stationery outlets.

### **Safety**

Usually at concerts, the choir performs in limited space and on temporary staging. For your own safety please take care, especially when moving around, and heed all instructions about safety and evacuation procedures from the Concert Manager and chairman. If you have mobility issues, eg problems with steps, please speak with the Concert Manager or Chairman and special arrangements will be made where possible.

### **Scores**

Our Librarian obtains scores from various libraries, at no additional cost to members, for most concerts. Such scores must be treated with respect and returned at the appropriate time after a concert. The librarian will specify when he wishes them to be returned, sometimes as the concert finishes, other times at the next rehearsal. If your loan copy becomes lost or damaged, you will have to pay the cost of replacement. You may write on the scores with a soft pencil, and when possible these marks should be erased before returning the copy after the concert. Prompt return is more important than erasing marks. If you find you are unable to be in a particular concert after having obtained a score, it is your responsibility to ensure the score is returned to the librarian before the date of the concert.

## **Social Events**

There is usually a social gathering after concerts in the Parish Rooms. Occasionally larger events will take place to celebrate particular events. The Choir's 50th Anniversary in 2022/3 will be such an event. Plenty of notice of such events will be provided.

## **Exchange Visits**

The choir organises optional exchange visits with the Ensemble Vocale Arpège de Mâcon in France and the Ludenscheid Oratorienchor in Germany. A German exchange is currently being planned for May/June 2020. Our trip to Ludenscheid and their return trip to Nantwich will occur within about 3 weeks of each other. There is no requirement for anyone to participate other than to take part in the Nantwich Concert, since this will be our normal summer concert. However, should you wish to participate, then assistance can be offered if required, or travel groups can be arranged. Accommodation in Germany is either with a family in their home, or in a local hotel which is within walking distance of the concert venue. Offers of accommodation in Nantwich, or the surrounding area, will also be welcome for the returning guests.

## **Subscriptions**

The annual subscription is due in September, after the AGM. Currently the membership fee is £90 (2018/19). The first term of membership is free, after which the appropriate 2/3rd subscription is due for the remaining terms of the year.

## **Gift Aid**

The society is a registered charity and as such we are able to claim Gift Aid on subscriptions and other donations. Gift Aid can be claimed on your subscription if you are UK taxpayer: the Treasurer can supply you with the relevant form. If you are not a UK taxpayer, then please make a nil return in order to help the Treasurer's records.

## **Fund Raising**

Subscriptions and ticket sales do not cover the costs of our concerts. In addition to seeking grants and sponsorship from local and national sources, we raise funds from wherever we can. At rehearsals there is a weekly raffle as well as sales of water and juice. In addition members sometimes bring plants, jewellery and greeting cards for sale, the profits going to the society. We run a "200 club" which currently costs £20 per year with 2 monthly cash prizes drawn on the first Wednesday of the month. In addition, a larger annual prize is

drawn in September. An annual Christmas raffle is also held and drawn at the Christmas Concert. All of these fund raising activities can add thousands to the society funds.

The society is also registered with [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk). You can raise money for NCS at no cost to yourself by buying online from your selected retailer (John Lewis, Amazon, M&S, Thomas Cook, P&O ferries, British Airways, Sainsburys, etc) so long as you enter the Easyfundraising website first and select the retailer from within that portal. Some 3000 plus retailers participate in the scheme so there is bound to be something to suit your travel, clothing, insurance or food needs. Please consider registering for this scheme. There is a link to it from the members' area of the society's website.

### **Website**

The society maintains a website [www.nantwichchoral.org.uk](http://www.nantwichchoral.org.uk). A variety of useful information is kept on the site, some of which is accessible to the general public, and some of which is restricted to members. On joining the society you will be provided with the access details for the member areas. Typically within the member areas audio rehearsal files and similar material will be found. We encourage members to use these files between rehearsals.

Adrian Percy  
Chairman