



FRIENDS OF ROCHESTER CHORAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER ... 9TH October 2010

My previous letters, in February and May, were addressed to Friends individually but, since 40% of us are currently members of the RCS, it seems incongruous to give concert news they already have! Instead, and in the hope that you will pass it on to prospective Friends, I am addressing this, as a Newsletter, to all Friends.

Since May, much has happened at the RCS. The all-Italian concert on 7th June was a resounding success: musically. Although the attendance was considerably better than in the Spring, we had hoped for more. Those who came heard outstanding renditions: of the Rossini *Stabat Mater* by the RCS and Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony* by the Rochester Sinfonietta. Roger Sayer inspired us all to give performances that, according to many I spoke to, would have done credit to any of the finest concert halls in the land.

It is sad that such quality is not enjoyed by greater numbers of people and Roger is encouraging the RCS to reach more singers and listeners, including young people. The RCS Open Workshop on the Bach *B Minor Mass*, at Crow lane on 16th October (10 am to 3 pm) and Christmas concert, are two examples.

As I announced in May, a Friends' enclave was created for the Summer Concert interval, just by the Cathedral South door. Despite my offer to buy drinks for any new members you might bring along, few of us congregated there, preferring to join with the rest of the audience at refreshment. That is perfectly understandable and so we will shelve the idea for the present. (But do still introduce new Friends).

I have already announced that our Autumn Concert will be on Saturday 13th November, this time in the St George's Centre, in Chatham Maritime. As with all our evening concerts now, it will start at 7pm.

The programme is Stanford's *The Bluebird*; Schumann's *Zigeunerleben*; *The Carnival of the Animals* (for two pianos) by Saint Saëns and that wonderful celebration of pleasure *Carmina Burana* by Carl Orff.

We have performed several times in the St George's Centre and, if you haven't been there recently, you have a pleasant surprise in store. Formerly the Dockyard church, it is beautifully appointed, has fine acoustics, ample free parking and, according to the Leader of Medway Council, a new toilet block.

You will be able to sit anywhere, for the single ticket price of £12 so, may I again urge you to come if you possibly can and bring family, friends or neighbours with you. If you have transport difficulties or need further information, please get in touch with me.

On Saturday 11th December, we will give a concert of Christmas music in conjunction with St Margaret's Primary School, Troy Town. This will be at St Margaret's Church, Rochester at 7 pm. Tickets will be £6, accompanied children free.



The combined choir in Rochester, New Hampshire

Next year, on 9th April, we will be performing the Bach *B Minor Mass* and our Summer Concert will be Purcell's *Te Deum* and *Jubilate in D* and Rossini's exciting *Petite Messe Solennelle*, both of them in the Cathedral. Please note these dates in your diary.

And the RCS had an important social event, too. From 30th May to 6th June, a large number of singers defied the volcanic ash and the equally-destructive BA cabin crew strike, to go and

perform in three concerts in New England, as guests of the Granite State Choral Society of Rochester, New Hampshire. We sang The Fauré *Requiem*, some of Handel's *Coronation Anthems*, some moving spirituals and as an encore, Rutter's *A Gaelic Blessing*. These were all very enthusiastically received.

I presented the Mayor of Rochester with a scroll from Medway's Mayor and one to our hosts from the City of Rochester Society. The Mayor of Rochester presented us with an illuminated declaration that "June 5th 2010 was to be known as "Rochester Choral Society Day."

We last received a visit from The Granite State Choral Society in 2003 and we hope for another opportunity to return their hospitality in Rochester England.

If that should happen, I hope we, as Friends, will take part.

Although I have retired from the RCS Committee, its members have kindly asked me to remain as Friends Secretary, which I am happy to do.

May I end by urging you to help in any way you can, to swell our numbers. Until the Friends' brochure is re-issued I am enclosing two copies of a temporary leaflet summarising the benefits. I've made them especially for you to give away so please pass them on to your friends. (The dog doesn't count).

Thank you for your continuing support. Believe me, it is much needed and greatly appreciated. If you'd like to, please come and talk to me at the St George's Centre (I'm the one looking like a waiter in the bottom picture).

And please note: tickets are once again obtainable by writing to

**RCS Tickets, 246 City Way Rochester Kent ME1 2BN, phoning 01 634 401 049
or, for the busy-fingered: tickets@rochesterchoral.co.uk
(or, of course, from any RCS member).**

With friendly greetings

Malcolm Moulton



We presented gifts to the trip organisers: (on my left) Jessica Smith of RCS and, behind her, Jan Kaslowskas of GSCS