

Eltham Choral society - Annual Report 2010-2011

Name: Eltham Choral Society
Short name: ECS
Registered Number: 1023904
Principal Address: 12 The Close,
New Barn,
Longfield,
Kent, DA3 7JA
President: Willard White
Vice President: Clive Efford MP
Musical Director: Peter Asprey

Objects of the Society:

The object of the Society shall be to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of choral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public choral concerts and recitals and by such other ways as the Society, through its committee, shall determine from time to time.

Trustees:

Rod Tutt	Chairman
Mike McQuillan	Vice Chairman & joint membership secretary
Fiona Gardiner	Secretary
John King	Treasurer
Sonia Ennals	Concert Management Team assistant
Mike Hamson	Newsletter secretary
Martin North	Meetings secretary
Valerie Seaton	Librarian, Friends of ECS Secretary
Gillian Smith	Publicity assistant
Maggie Watson	Publicity manager
Richard Wilkes	Concert management team leader

Report:

Chairman's Report

Another busy year has passed in which it has been a real delight to have been led by Peter Asprey, our Musical Director, with his firm, professional, yet gentle, good humoured manner, together with the quiet and unassuming talent of our accompanist, Charles Andrews. We are indeed fortunate to have them both in ECS. It has also been a year which has seen our membership rise to nearly one hundred.

Following the last AGM, our first commitment was the Christmas Concert at Holy Trinity Church where a large audience enjoyed 'Ancient and Modern Music for the Festive Season', and the concert featured the superb Onyx Brass Group. Just a week later, a few hardy souls sang Christmas Carols in the High Street in the most extreme of wintry conditions, raising funds for the Demelza House Charity to add to those monies already raised at the concert by our Christmas hamper raffles.

Our Easter Term commitment was a significant and demanding one - under the baton of Leigh O'Hara, it was a successful collaboration with the Choirs of Blackheath Halls, JAGS Choral Society and the Blackheath Halls Orchestra, three performances of Verdi's Requiem were given at Blackheath Halls to near capacity audiences who responded generously with standing ovations each evening. Such collaborations, involving nearly 300 singers and a large orchestra, required a great deal of planning and co-operation, and proved most successful and rewarding.

Our Summer Concert in June under the baton of Peter Asprey, part of the Arts' Festival at St. John the Baptist Church, Eltham, was a concert performance of Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, together with anthems by Handel and Purcell. The Amadeus Orchestra provided a fine accompaniment to the opera, together with high quality performances from four young professional soloists.

Recently, in October, ECS was joined by a number of visiting choristers for a very enjoyable singing day at St. Luke's Church, resulting in a choir of about 120 singers performing Mozart's Requiem to a large, appreciative audience in the

early evening. It was a great pleasure to welcome so many visitors and great to see a number of them join ECS on a more permanent basis.

A very warm welcome to all who have joined ECS during the year - we hope you are enjoying your singing. We now look forward to the Christmas Concert with works by Vaughan Williams and Gerald Finzi and other carol singing opportunities; to our summer tour in Koblenz, with our preview concert at Easter time of works by Elgar and Dvorak. We are also particularly anticipating our summer concert which we hope will feature our Young Composers' Competition Final. Thanks are due to all the committee members who have worked so hard in producing the format, conditions and publicity for the competition. We hope it will have a successful conclusion.

And Finally. An enormous thank you to all those who contribute to the continued smooth running of ECS: to Rev. Elaine Cranmer for allowing us to use the rehearsal facilities of St. Luke's Church, to all the members of the main committee and the Tour committee, to Win and the part-reps. for organising the refreshments, to all those who help with raffles and providing hospitality to visiting musicians and to David for planning a most enjoyable day trip to Brighton in May.

Thank you to all Society members for your continued support and enthusiasm. Happy singing in the year ahead.

Treasurer's Report

Financially, 2010/2011 has been another good year for the choir. We have spent some £18,000 on a range of activities promoting choral music, which is our prime purpose under our constitution. An overall surplus for the year of over £2,000 was due principally to modest requirements for subsidy for our concerts, to members' efforts in fund-raising and also the continuingly healthy size of the choir.

The main outgoings continue to be professional fees and there is general agreement that the choir receives superb value for money from our talented team. Subscriptions remained the same this year and this is largely thanks to the unceasing efforts of our fund-raisers and the substantial numbers of singers on roll. Weekly raffles and refreshment sales contribute a significant regular income. In addition, a successful excursion to Brighton and plant sales helped to swell the general fund-raising contribution to some £1,300.

The other major contributor to stable subscription rates continues to be the HM Revenue & Customs in the form of income tax rebates for those choir members who pay their subscriptions through Gift Aid. This is a painless method of contributing to choir funds. Since HM Revenue & Customs introduced "Gift Aid" in April 2000, replacing the covenanting arrangements, three quarters of choir members have felt able to sign up. The period of interim relief granted with the reduction of the tax rate to 20% ended in April 2011 but on current financial forecasts, the committee feels that finances and prospects are healthy for the foreseeable future and that an increase in subscription will not be necessary for year 2012/13.

The Committee of Eltham Choral Society
November 2011