

Newsletter Summer 2021

Dates for your diary

2021

9 Sep	First rehearsal
21 Oct	AGM
28 Oct	Half term
4 Dec	Concert
11 Dec	Carols on the Green

2022

6 Jan	First rehearsal
24 Feb	Half term
14 & 21 Apr	Easter holiday
21 May	Concert

Rehearsals

Thursday 7.15 to 9pm.

Music for Autumn session

Handel: Chandos Anthem 'The King shall rejoice'

Vivaldi: Credo

And music by Holst, John Rutter and Howard Goodall

Music for Spring session

Puccini: Messa di Gloria

Schubert: Mass in G

Mendelssohn: Hear my prayer

Voice representatives

SOP 1 Pauline Rossi

SOP 2 Sheila Handover

ALTO Annie Dayment

TENOR Roger Baron

BASS Jeff Grist

From the Chairman

After a difficult year, I must say that I am delighted that some of us who have been able to cope with Zoom have kept the Shaldon Singers flag flying. We owe a tremendous amount to Tim, our MD, who organised an engaging variety of music that has seen us through the dark days of lockdown into some light-hearted summer singing. It was amazing how enjoyable our Zoom concerts were too, and we were delighted that quite a few friends joined us for these.

Seeing Tim's friendly, cheerful face each week, it was not easy to realise that he had previously seen himself as having his IT L-plates on. By the time he had run online lessons for his school classes and Zoom sessions for us, he broke through the barrier and we would now award him a medal for IT competence. So well done and a big thank you to you, Tim.

Tim has written about the music in his report below. It is sobering to realise that he has not yet been able to conduct a single 'live' rehearsal since taking over as our MD in April last year. We have plans for this to change in September.

Your committee now has a plan for our longed-for live rehearsals to resume. Our risk assessment is being sent out with this Newsletter and lists the measures we are taking to meet safely. **Please do read it.** The notes on page 3 below set out some other points you need to know.

I am extremely grateful to the committee for their unwavering support and willingness to attend the many Zoom meetings that we have needed to keep the choir running in unprecedented times. Many thanks to you all.

New accompanist – Anna Cockcroft

We are pleased to be able to welcome Anna Cockcroft to accompany us for rehearsals. For many years Anna has gathered our orchestral players and been the leader of the orchestra, so she is an old friend of the choir.

Carols on the Green – Saturday 11 December, 6pm

We have been asked to lead the singing at Carols on the Green in Shaldon. This is the Saturday after our concert, which will be a lovely way to end the term.

Best wishes, Ann Pardoe

Annual subscription: £75

Please pay by bank transfer to:

Shaldon Singers

Acc. No.: 01985478

Sort Code: 30-96-06

with your name as reference

Deadline: 23 September 2021

Alternatively, Mary can collect cheques, or cash, at the rehearsal. Please have your cheque ready written; for cash payments, please put the exact amount in a sealed envelope with your name on it.

Please confirm whether you will be returning in September. If you are going to miss the first few weeks, please arrange for your subs to be paid on time.

Mary Mears: 01626 351895

Ann Pardoe: 01626 873709

shaldonsingers@gmail.com

Annual subscription

We want to return to a programme as near normal as possible in September, but anticipate a much greater financial outlay than last year, when we pared everything to the bone.

Although times are uncertain, we are planning our usual concerts for December and May. We delayed the increase in subscriptions which was due last year, and now face some higher bills than previously, for insurance, hire of music, etc. Our audience numbers are also very uncertain.

For these reasons we are setting our annual subscription at £75 per person.

Please pay by bank transfer if possible, or follow the instructions above for cheque or cash. Thank you.

Ann Pardoe

From the Musical Director

Well, I don't think any of us could have predicted the year that we have just experienced on so many levels!

Starting the year on Zoom as we had finished the previous one was a great disappointment to us all – but our only real option for carrying on with weekly rehearsals and experiencing the Shaldon Singers community spirit in the comfort of our own homes, enjoying rehearsals with a mug of tea/coffee/cocoa or more often than not something a little stronger to lubricate the vocal cords!

I feel it is important to recognise the amazing dedication and good humour of the Zoom stalwarts who stuck with the programme through the glitches and delay and frozen screens: your perseverance was very much appreciated. I always finished the Thursday evening sessions uplifted by great music and the company of a wonderful group of singers.

While it was impossible to hear ourselves together as a choir, meeting on Zoom gave us the opportunity to sing with some magnificent vocal groups and soloists which in many ways brought our sessions to a new level. What follows is a brief resume of the music that we rehearsed and 'performed' in multiple seasonal concerts.

The autumn term commenced with Fauré's *Requiem* and *Cantique de Jean Racine*, which we performed in a French-themed evening in November. In December we hosted an evening of carols largely selected by members of the choir including the West Gallery version of *While Shepherds Watched* and a Shaldon favourite encore *Jingle Bells* arranged by Sir David Willcocks. Once again the choir dressed up for the occasion, tinsel and glitter being the order of the day!

The Spring term was taken up with rehearsing Haydn's *Creation*, a challenging work to rehearse on Zoom but a rewarding virtual concert in May was enjoyed by many.

We rounded off the year with a short sequence of summer sessions with a group of around 20 hard-core Zoomzingers with an eclectic mix of sacred and secular music.

I must thank those of you who have Zoomed every week for putting up with me. To say that I am looking forward to hearing the choir again in St Peter's is a massive understatement! I very much hope that those of you who didn't join us on Zoom will return in September for hopefully a more normal year of Shaldon Singers.

Best wishes, Tim

Plans for the return to live singing

Risk assessment

As a priority, the committee has spent time considering the Health and Safety issues. We think that we have come up with ideas that will give singers the confidence to return.

Singing produces aerosols that can spread coronavirus; with this in mind we have considered what we hope are the best ways of avoiding infection spread as far as possible. We are relying on the majority, if not all, of our singers being vaccinated and taking care not to attend rehearsals if unwell.

Our risk assessment is being sent out with this Newsletter. **Please read this as it affects everyone.** It includes:

- a request that everyone takes a lateral flow test that is negative before coming to rehearsals each week. No one who feels at all unwell should attend rehearsals.
- the use of a seating plan for sitting in alternate seats to give us a bit of space, and the opening of some doors and windows to aid ventilation in the Church. There will be a limited number of more isolated seating positions, so let me know if you are particularly vulnerable.

Rehearsal recordings

If, by some unlucky chance, restrictions are reimposed, we will be able to record rehearsals, whether that is of a small group or on Zoom. In either case, we will send out a link to the recording. (If it were a Zoom rehearsal, you would not need Zoom software to watch the recording.)

Music

We will be singing some pieces that are available as free downloadable files, rather than hiring the copies from the library. These will be emailed to you for you to print out. We know how difficult it is to shuffle loose sheets, so it would be best if you could bring them along in a black ring folder which you can then use in rehearsals and in concerts.

If you do not have the equipment to print copies, do let me know and sheets can be provided for you.

Ann Pardoe