

# ASSEMBLY HALL

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS

General Manager and Licensee : E. A. Gibbs

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## Diamond Jubilee



1909 - 1969

## Concert

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**SUNDAY**

**15th JUNE**

**8 p.m.**

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*Programme and Notes*

*One Shilling*

PROGRAMME

Royal Tunbridge Wells

# CHORAL SOCIETY

Royal Tunbridge Wells

# SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Leader: Thomas Geradine

*Rae Woodland*  
RAE WOODLAND

*Marjorie Thomas*  
MARJORIE THOMAS

*William McAlpine*  
WILLIAM McALPINE

*Roger Stalman*  
ROGER STALMAN

*Trevor Harvey*  
Conductor: **TREVOR HARVEY**

# PROGRAMME

**The National Anthem**

*arr. Benjamin Britten*

**March, Man of Kent**

*Arthur Duckworth*

**Blest Pair of Sirens**

*Parry*

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*Interval*

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**Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Opus 125, The Choral**

*Beethoven*

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**Patrons<sup>v</sup>are requested not to smoke during the performance**

# Programme Notes

**The National Anthem** . . . . . *arr. Benjamin Britten*

**March, Man of Kent** . . . . . *Arthur Duckworth, b.1896*

When this concert was first proposed it was suggested that a work by a local composer be commissioned, and Arthur Duckworth was approached. He suggested that his March, *Man of Kent*, (which has already been broadcast several times, including this morning) should be adapted to include a choral section if suitable words could be found. Myrtle Streeten, a member of the Town Council, agreed to write a poem for consideration, and it was immediately accepted as being just right for the music, and for the occasion. The work is today being performed for the first time in its choral version, in the presence of the composer and Mrs. Streeten. We think it will be very popular with music societies all over Kent—and possibly other counties too!

*C.W.*

See! they come from all around us  
Tramping down the wooded hill  
Men with swords and men with plough-shares  
We can hear their voices still.

They who trod these lanes before us  
Lead us on with hopes and dreams  
Calling us across the ages  
To fulfil their highest aims.

Blossom'd boughs in Kentish orchards,  
Trailing hops and growing corn  
Hills and valleys, streams and woodlands are the joys to which we're born.  
Children's laughter, strong man's labour,  
Village spire and hooded oast  
Point the way and guide the footsteps of our gaily marching host.

Now they come from all around us  
Tramping down the wooded hill,  
Men with swords and men with plough-shares,  
We can hear their voices still.

See! they gather in their thousands  
Rank on rank a mighty choir;  
Past and future link together  
All our hearts with pride inspire.

*Myrtle Streeten*

Sir Hubert Parry will always be remembered for *Jerusalem*, his setting of Blake's words that has become almost a second national anthem. It was first heard in 1916, near the end of a busy life in which Parry had been, as well as a composer, a pianist, a singer, Director of the Royal College of Music for twenty-four years, and Professor of Music at Oxford, and author of several books on music that are still widely read. His interests were many, his mind broad, and open to new ideas in music. No other composer since Purcell could equal Parry in his setting of the English language, its stresses and its rhythms, and this, added to his gift for great climaxes and for noble melodies, in the English tradition that was carried on by his younger contemporary Elgar and by Vaughan Williams, Holst and Walton, makes him as grateful to sing as to listen to. Although his works include a piano concerto and other orchestral and instrumental pieces, it is for his solo songs and choral works that his name will live.

The present work, first performed in 1887, is a setting of what Milton called "At a Solemn Musick". It is a short work but in the grand manner, and worthy of Milton, and there can surely be no higher praise. Milton, himself the son of a composer, loved music, and the poem is full of musical imagery, mirrored in Parry's setting. *M.V.*

Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of heav'n's joy,  
 Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse.  
 Wed your divine sounds, and mixed pow'r employ,  
 Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce:  
 And to our high-raised phantasy present  
 That undisturbed song of pure concert,  
 Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne  
 To Him that sits thereon,  
 With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;  
 Where the bright Seraphim in burning row,  
 Their loud, uplifted angel-trumpets blow,  
 And the cherubic host in thousand quires.  
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,  
 With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,  
 Hymns devout and holy psalms  
 Singing everlastingly:  
 That we on earth with undiscording voice  
 May rightly answer that melodious noise;  
 As once we did, till disproportioned sin  
 Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din  
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made  
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed  
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood  
 In first obedience, and their state of good.  
 O may we soon again renew that song,  
 And keep in tune with Heav'n, till God ere long  
 To His celestial concert us unite,  
 To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light.

*John Milton.*

## Symphony No. 9 in D minor, op. 125, The Choral     *Beethoven 1770-1827*

*Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso. Molto vivace. Adagio molto e cantabile. Presto.*

RAE WOODLAND

WILLIAM McALPINE

MARJORIE THOMAS

ROGER STALMAN

Beethoven's method of composing was fragmentary. Ideas for tunes, even tiny phrases, would go down in a notebook as he thought of them, usually in the course of a country walk, and he would alter them again and again until he was satisfied, sometimes in the end coming back to his original thought, and so a composition would take shape. His works were therefore a long time a-growing and he often had several on the stocks at the same time. It was in 1824 that this Symphony was first heard—heard by the audience, but not by the composer, for Beethoven was by then stone deaf. He could see people clapping but could hear nothing. (To us this would be like television with the sound switched off). He had begun to make sketches for the symphony in 1817, as a wholly orchestral work. As far back as 1793 he had thoughts of setting to music Schiller's "Ode to Freedom" (as it was originally called), which had great appeal for Beethoven, with his strong views on brotherhood and equality. For political reasons, in those days of revolution, Schiller had later to change "Freedom" to "Joy". This setting was to have been a completely separate work from the present one, for which Beethoven was busy on an orchestral finale as late as 1823.

The first performance was in Vienna, but by rights it should have been in London, for in 1823 the Philharmonic Society of London had commissioned a symphony from Beethoven and had sent the money.

This is a mighty work, not just in terms of decibels, although Beethoven had no inhibitions about noise. If he wanted to shout, in his music or outside it, he shouted good and hard.

In a mysterious haze of sound the violins bring in a little repeated figure of two descending notes, which grows and grows—and we find it was a foreshadowing of the first theme beginning with the notes of the chord of D minor crashing down from top to bottom on the whole orchestra. There is a sense of relentless forging ahead, but there is a gentler moment when an up-and-down phrase on the woodwind brings in the second theme, a woodwind tune of ever-widening leaps over a staccato string accompaniment. A peremptory figure in jerky rhythm, and we have had the bricks, as it were, that Beethoven uses for his structure. The working-out middle section begins as did the movement. In it we hear bits of what has gone before, upside-down, rightway up—a great mind playing with its ideas. When the first theme returns it is for a moment in D major. Near the end there is a new tune on the woodwind, over dark mutterings on the strings. The end is uncompromisingly direct.

Next comes the Scherzo, though it is not so labelled. It begins with tremendous descending octaves, in a rhythmic figure that is often heard throughout, and this figure begins the movement proper, with a theme that for a while is used in a fugue, very quietly, but one senses great power held in leash; and there is a feeling of exhilaration as it swings along. The middle section or Trio is smoother, in the major, with two tunes at the same time, one on bassoons and one on oboes and clarinets, but later they change places, and at times we hear them over a long pedal-note. The Scherzo is repeated. A few bars of the Trio come in just before the end of the movement.

In the peaceful though not all quiet slow movement there are two tunes, one on the violins just after the start, and the other, with more movement, on violins and violas. Both these tunes are then elaborated, and near the end of the movement, the first theme is heard on the woodwind and horns, a little varied, while the violins play a running embroidery round it.

Almost without a pause after the serenity of the Adagio comes a terrific crash, a clash of notes, Beethoven at his most impatient. A restless passage, then a recitative-like phrase on cellos and basses, another crash, another recitative, and then, almost as though Beethoven's way of composing were set audibly before us, various themes are tried: the opening of the first movement, rejected vehemently by cellos and basses; part of the Scherzo, but that won't do either; neither will two bars of the Adagio. Then comes a fragment that *will* do, cellos and basses accept it, and begin, quite softly, the great tune, one of the world's greatest, although, as so often with Beethoven, it is simplicity itself. The whole orchestra plays an extended version of it (the movement is a huge set of free variations) but the clash comes again, and the recitative, this time with the baritone soloist singing Beethoven's own words, "O friends, not this sad music . . ." and to the great, simple melody he sings Schiller's words, followed by part of the choir. Soloists and choir alternate, and there is a huge climax; a pause, and very softly, almost falteringly at first, comes a joyful march. Later there is an exhilarating passage with a double fugue. The choir take up the great tune. A new idea comes in at the words "O ye millions . . ." and then this is combined with a version in a swinging rhythm of the main tune. Yet another version of it comes in a rapid pattern on the strings. There are a few bars of radiant stillness, then the exuberant end. *M.V.*

(The first three lines were by Beethoven himself.)

O friends not this sad music  
 Let us raise our voices in gladness  
 In songs of joy and happiness  
 Sing then Joy O Joy thou glorious light of  
 heaven  
 Daughter of Elysium  
 Filled with rapture thou hast given  
 Now unto thy shrine we come  
 Custom's law no more can sever  
 Those by thy sure magic tied  
 Brotherhood surrounds us ever  
 Where thy gentle wings abide.  
 All to whom true friends are granted  
 And true friendship give again  
 All by love's great pow'r enchanted  
 Lend your voices to the strain.  
 Though but one heart you have treasured  
 To our voices join your own  
 Lonely ones, in grief unmeasured,  
 Wander desolate alone.  
 Bounteous God, He freely giveth  
 Joy from Nature's endless store,  
 Blessing ev'rything that liveth,  
 Good or evil evermore  
 Wine and comradeship bestoweth  
 Ecstasy of love's embrace  
 E'en the worm His bounty knoweth  
 Angels see Him face to face  
 Face to face with Him.

Swift as suns in splendour glorious  
 Swinging through the realm of space,  
 Run your glad heroic race,  
 Joyful, fearless and victorious,  
 Run your glad, heroic race  
 Joy, thou glorious light of heaven,  
 Daughter of Elysium,  
 Filled with rapture thou hast given  
 Now unto thy shrine we come  
 Custom's law no more can sever  
 Those by thy sure magic tied,  
 Brotherhood surrounds us ever  
 Where thy gentle wings abide.  
 O ye millions freely gather  
 All the world in one embrace  
 Brothers, in His heav'nly place  
 Dwells an ever loving Father,  
 Know, ye millions, that He liveth?  
 Now before your Maker fall.  
 On His name in wonder call  
 High above the stars He liveth  
 Sing then, Joy, thou glorious light of  
 heaven.

*From Schiller's "Ode to Joy".  
 (English version by Owen Mase).*

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Tickets (15/-, 12/6, 10/-, 7/6) on sale at the Hall  
(Party reductions)

June 1968: Maidstone Opera Group's first visit to Tunbridge Wells  
(Cav. & Pag.) 'An unforgettable night'—*Kent & Sussex Courier*

## RUSTHALL PARISH CHURCH

**Saturday, 12th July, 1969**

**7.30 p.m.**

### **Opening Organ Recital**

**Dr. George Thalben-Ball**  
(B.B.C., Temple Church, City of Birmingham)

Admission by Programme - 3/6

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## ASSEMBLY HALL

### **Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra**

Conductor: JOHN LANCHBERY

#### **Season 1969 - 70**

Sunday, 5th October	3 p.m.	Sunday, 1st February	3 p.m.
<b>MALCOLM BINNS</b>		<b>NERINE BARRETT</b>	
Sunday, 2nd November	3 p.m.	Sunday, 1st March	3 p.m.
<b>CHARLES ROSEN</b>		<b>BEETHOVEN CONCERT</b>	
		<b>RAYMOND COHEN</b>	
		Guest Conductor:	
		<b>DAVID CUTFORTH</b>	
Sunday, 7th December	3 p.m.	Sunday, 5th April	3 p.m.
<b>DAVID MASON</b>		<b>JOHN BARSTOW</b>	

Programmes ready mid-July from Publicity Office, Town Hall; R. A. Bird, 3 Vale Road,  
Tunbridge Wells and Robt. Morley, 158 High Street, Tonbridge



# ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY

**Programmes for 1969-70**

**16th NOVEMBER**

**'Aida'** *Verdi*

Catherine Ryan, Jean Allister, Ninian Walden, John Lawrenson,  
Anthony Williams FULL ORCHESTRA

**14th DECEMBER**

**'Carnival of Animals' and Carols for Choir and Audience**

Marjorie Vinall and Derek Watmough (Two Pianos) ORCHESTRA

**15th MARCH, 1970**

**'St. John Passion'** *Bach*

Marion Milford, Paul Esswood, Peter Bamber, Michael Goldthorpe,  
Thomas Allen, Christopher Field FULL ORCHESTRA

*See Separate Announcements for details as to Prices and Booking Arrangements*

**Conductor : TREVOR HARVEY**

Details as to Membership may be obtained from the Hon. Sec., Cyril Wood, 45 High St., Tunbridge Wells (Tel. 23264)

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