

Royal Tunbridge Wells
CHORAL
SOCIETY

Start of Season Newsletter: 2022/2023

A very warm welcome, everyone, to our 2022/23 season and especially to our new members - we're very much looking forward to meeting you. We've got a packed programme arranged for your delight and delectation so let's get on with the show!

Term starts again next **Monday, September 5th** at our usual venue of **St John's Church Hall, Amherst Road** and the rehearsals will start at their usual time of **7.30pm**. It is also an opportunity for us to finally return to our usual timetable with the rehearsal running until **9.30pm**, a full two hours with a short break halfway through.

KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Our first concert will be at **3pm** on **Sunday, October 30th** at the **Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells**. I appreciate that this is a couple of weeks earlier than our usual concerts but this has arisen due to a one off scheduling problem at their end. Next year I'm guaranteed that we'll be back to our regular spot in mid November. We shall be performing Handel's Messiah.

At Christmas, we'll be at St Mary's, Goudhurst on **Saturday, December 10th**. During lockdown one of the pieces we were introduced to was Charpentier's Midnight Mass and our Musical Director, Robyn, is putting together a programme taking this work as inspiration / centrepiece.

After the Christmas break, term will restart on **Monday, January 9th 2023**. We shall be rehearsing Karl Jenkins' The Peacemakers for a performance at the Assembly Hall Theatre at 3pm on **Sunday, April 16th 2023**.

And to round off our season, there'll be a Summer Sing with a programme of music from Gilbert & Sullivan. This will take place towards the end of June - I'll advise actual details and date once we've secured an appropriate venue.

MUSIC

We open with **Handel's Messiah** - we shall be using the **Oxford University Press** version and scores will be available for hire at a cost of £2 from our Librarian Judith Henderson on the 5th. If you could have the exact change ready that would help keep the line moving!

Whilst appreciating that this a work that may well already grace members' own shelves, it would nevertheless be helpful if we are all able to sing from the same version as it makes rehearsals so much more efficient to follow in terms of page and bar numbers, etcetera.

Whenever using a hire copy, please do remember to use a soft lead 2B pencil when noting any of Robyn's rehearsal directions. Judith and her trusty team of library elves have to ensure that all of these marks are erased before the scores are returned to the hiring library so if we can make this task a little easier where possible it would be most appreciated.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subject to ratification at the AGM in November, the subscription for 2022/23 will be increasing slightly to £145, from its current level of £140. We appreciate that this is hardly welcome news amidst the current cost of living crisis but it is still modest. In considering the length of our season, with 35 scheduled rehearsals and four concert opportunities, we feel it represents extremely good value for money. Subscriptions are due at the beginning of the season and can either be paid in full or in two instalments, with £70 in September and £75 in January. The subscription for students and under-25s remains at £25.

If you are able to pay by on-line transfer that would be very much appreciated.

Bank details	Account name	RTWCS
	Sort Code	40-52-40
	Account no:	00017884

Please use your name as the “reference” and email our Treasurer, Ailsa McMahon (ailsamcmahon@hotmail.com) to let her know.

As a charity we are able to claim tax back on any donations and part of the subscription under the Gift Aid scheme. If you are in a position to sign a Gift Aid form, please will you check that we have one from you - if not, they are available on request from the Treasurer. [For information, the tuition element of this year’s sub is calculated as £11].

REHEARSAL PROTOCOL

We are indebted to St John’s for once again allowing us to rehearse in their Church hall.

This time last year we were just finding our way back into face to face rehearsals after the eighteen month suspension of activities due to the Covid pandemic. Face masks, hand sanitiser at every turn, all the windows and doors wide open - it was certainly a learning curve for all of us.

Now, whilst routine screening for Covid no longer may be the norm, it remains beholden on us all to maintain vigilance and continue to be considerate to others. If you have symptoms of any illness that others may not want and you might be contagious then please just stay away from rehearsals. To put it simply, we love you but we don't wish to share!

The Committee will continue to review our procedures with the team at St Johns, as well as any future HMG Public Health guidance and suggested best practice from Making Music.

WEBSITE

All of this information and more can be found on our web site, especially with regard to future concert dates, rehearsal schedules, concert photographs, rehearsal notes and other useful snippets of information. It's worth a bookmark on your browser!

From time to time we do organise photography sessions for publicity and promotional purposes. The best of these appear on our web site but may also be found in a wider context, for instance as concert publicity within the Assembly Hall's digital marketing site. ***If you would prefer not to be photographed,*** then please let me or any other committee member know. It's not a problem, we just need to know your preferences so we can accommodate them accordingly.

AND FINALLY

In common with lots of other choirs, we're always on the look out for willing volunteers to help with the many essential tasks that keep the wider show on the road. At a recent Committee meeting we drew up a preliminary list of some of the more obvious, which I've listed below. Some of these jobs are more extensive than others, some need doing every week whilst others are just needed on the day. But they all contribute to the smooth running of the choir so if you feel you could help in any way we'd love to hear from you.

Keeper of the keys - opening up each week, oversight of rehearsal room set up

Raffle - running a weekly fund raiser

Social event coordinator

Notice board coordinator (for incoming events)

Box Office coordinator for tickets sales (at Christmas and summer)

Production coordinator for concert programmes (content, artwork, advertising)

And of course, if you have a proposal or recommendation that doesn't appear above, don't hesitate to put it forward. We may not always be able to leap to action immediately but we do need the ideas to be mooted in the first place.

As ever, if you have any questions I'm happy to try to answer them - and if I can't, then I'll find the one can! Enjoy the Bank holiday and I look forward to seeing you all next week.

With kindest regards,

Janet Noble
General Secretary, RTWCS
August 2022