

## Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

### UPCOMING CONCERTS

**Sunday 9th November 2025, 3:00 pm**

Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells

**Whitbourn:** Annelies

Memorial concert for Tunbridge Wells composer James Whitbourn

**Saturday 13th December 2025, evening performance**

St James Church, Ferndale, Tunbridge Wells

**Rutter:** Where Icicles Hang

Plus choir and audience carols

ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CHORAL SOCIETY



## Hiawatha's Wedding Feast

Royal Tunbridge Wells  
**CHORAL**  
**SOCIETY**  
[www.rtwcs.org.uk](http://www.rtwcs.org.uk)  
registered charity 273310

28 June 2025, 7:30 pm

The Jubilee Theatre  
Holmewood House School

## Samuel Coleridge-Taylor – Hiawatha’s Wedding Feast

2025 is the 150th anniversary of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s birth. London-born and of mixed race, Coleridge-Taylor’s musical ability quickly became apparent. After joining the Royal College of Music at the age of fifteen, he was taught by Charles Villiers Stanford and his work was championed by Edward Elgar, who described him as “far and away the cleverest fellow going amongst the younger men”.

Coleridge-Taylor was so inspired by Longfellow’s epic poem, *The Song of Hiawatha*, that he not only wrote a trilogy of cantatas of the same name, but also named his only son Hiawatha. We are singing the first piece of the three, *Hiawatha’s Wedding Feast*, which celebrates the Native American leader Hiawatha’s marriage to Minnehaha.

## Samuel Coleridge-Taylor – Too Late For Love

Solo: James Beddoe

## Edward Elgar – Sea Pictures, arr. Donald Fraser

II	In Haven	Caroline Alice Elgar
IV	Where Corals Lie	Richard Garnett

*Sea Pictures* is a song cycle based on five poems written by various poets, including Elgar’s wife, each offering a different response to the ocean. We have chosen to sing two of the five songs. The cycle was set for contralto soloist and orchestra – for many of us, *Where Corals Lie* will be the most familiar, as sung by Dame Janet Baker. The musical depictions of the sea in its many characters are as vivid as those of the words.

## Ralph Vaughan Williams – Silent Noon

Solo: James Beddoe

## Ralph Vaughan Williams – In Windsor Forest

1. The Conspiracy (*Sigh no more, ladies*): The Merry Wives, having received Falstaff’s identical love letters, comment on male treachery as they plot their revenge.
2. Drinking Song (*Back and side go bare*): Falstaff and his friends celebrate with a drinking song praising “jolly good ale”.
3. Falstaff and the Fairies (*Round about in a fair ring-a*): The plot to torment Falstaff reaches its climax in Windsor Forest, where fairies are said to haunt.
4. Wedding Chorus (*See the Chariot at hand*): A celebration of the wedding of Anne Page and Fenton.
5. Epilogue (*Whether men do laugh or weep*): The rumbustious comedy is brought to an end with a chorus of reconciliation.

Vaughan Williams put together his own libretto for his opera, *Sir John in Love*, from Shakespeare’s play *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. To this he added poems from the Elizabethan period and some of the many folk songs that he had collected during his study of that genre. Five extracts from this opera were adapted for his song cycle, *In Windsor Forest*.

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**Conductor:** Robyn Sevastos

**Accompanist:** Craig Hudson

**Soloist:** James Beddoe