



Aberdeen Orpheus Choir 2011

Orpheus News

October 2015

News about James McNaught

I was down in Glasgow last weekend and met up with my nephew James and I thought some of you may be interested to hear how he is getting on.

After graduating from University James pursued his passion for the arts and began working for the Edinburgh based auctioneers Lyon and Turnbull. He is based in the Business Development team who run a varied events programme all over Scotland from Valuation Days to Charity Events. He is based in the Glasgow office and is currently working towards his RICS accreditation in Arts and Antiques Valuation.

He is still keeping his music going and has tried a variety of choirs but none have quite hit the spot although he has just joined the Glasgow Phoenix Choir and had his first night on Monday which he really enjoyed. He has also just bought his first flat in the West End so has been busy doing it up and moved in a few weeks ago.

I am hoping he may manage up to our Summer Concert and then stay on for the Bob Chilcott workshop the following day.

Sheila

Orpheus Music

A regular article where we look at pieces that the Orpheus have sung over the years. This issue, we look at In Windsor Forest by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Vaughan Williams was busy during the 1920s. In addition to teaching and conducting he premiered over 40 works during the decade including a symphony, the Mass in G Minor, an oratorio, a ballet and 2 operas – Hugh the Drover and Sir John in Love. The latter's libretto (written by Vaughan Williams himself) is partly based on Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor and employs a number of traditional English melodies including Greensleeves. Sir John in Love was premiered in 1929 and then 2 years later, he composed a cantata for chorus and orchestra based on the opera – In Windsor Forest.

The piece consists of five movements and stretches for a wholly digestible quarter of an hour or so. Vaughan Williams tended to utilise the chorus heavily in his operas but it is interesting to note how well his solo and ensemble writing translates to choral singing. For example, the cantata's opening section, The Conspiracy, re-casts the opera's duet, Sigh No More Ladies, for female chorus and it forms a powerful and celebratory opening to the piece.

In Windsor Forest through its length explores a variety of moods and textures as it builds towards a memorable and stirring close in the Epilogue. This pokes delightfully at our tendency to take ourselves and our lives too seriously – 'And the world is but a play'. You'll find a terrific version of the finale by the Festival Singers of Florida on YouTube. [Click here](#) to listen.

Facebook and Twitter

To bring the choir into the social media age a facebook page has been created. We shall use it to help advertise our concerts and the likes of our forthcoming Chilcott workshop.

<http://www.facebook.com/aberdeenorpheuschoir>

Please 'Like' the page and invite your friends and family to 'like' it too.

--- Stop Press ---

And there's more...we now have twitter! @orpheusabz

'O Rejoice in the Lord'

As some of you may know, I had sung very little secular music until Marian Bissett invited me to join Orpheus. She was its conductor as well as being organist and director of music at Rubislaw Parish Church. I had always sung in my home church choir and on going to Glasgow University became a member of the Chapel Choir there – a most memorable experience.

We rehearsed at 9.15 a.m. each Sunday before the service at 11 a.m. Dressed in our academic robes we processed in to the choir stalls each morning. I started off in my scarlet gown and later 'graduated' to black master's robe and purple hood.

Responding to Gordon's request, I rummaged in the piano stool and found the order of service for 6th

November 1966, when 'gifts of stained glass and embroidered work' were to be dedicated. The final stained glass, a gift of Lord Bilsland of Kinrara, had been installed in two long windows and depicted philosophy and science.

Dedication over, the choir followed with the anthem, 'O Rejoice in the Lord' by Balakirev (1837-1910). At the very moment the first incredible chord resounded around the stone walls of the Chapel, the sun burst through, suffusing the Chapel and its floor in the most glorious colours of the newly installed stained glass. What theatricality, what timing, what a miracle!

Listen to the Balakirev on YouTube and you will understand why, after all these years, that is the track I would pass on. Margaret Wood

What's on locally...

George Jameson (Scotland's first portrait painter) exhibition, Maritime Museum, Until Nov 29 – free admission.

'Working 9 to 5...' - Exhibition on the development of office work, Tolbooth Museum, Oct 31 2015 – Apr 30 2016. Free.

Ministry of Crafts craft fair, Crown Terrace Methodist Church, Nov 7 & Dec 5 – 11am- 4 pm. Free.

Women, Medicine and WW1 – a panel discussion, Med-Chi Society Hall, Polwarth Building, ARI, Nov 13 – 6-7 pm. Free.

Candybelle's Vintage Village, Christmas vintage fair/afternoon tea, Urban Village Resort, Prime 4 Retail Park, Kingswells, Nov 14 – 10am – 4pm. Free entry.

Dates for the Diary**Friday 30th Oct.**

Choir Social – Scottish Theme Rubislaw Church Centre 7.30pm (Partners invited)

**Wednesday 2nd Dec.**
TBC

Rehearsal at Community Church, Westhill - 7.15pm

Friday 4th Dec.

Christmas Concert at Community Church, Westhill – 7.30pm

Wednesday 9th Dec.

Rehearsal at Craigiebuckler Church 8pm

Friday 11th Dec.

Christmas Concert at Craigiebuckler Church 7.30pm. Followed by pizza

**Sunday 20th Dec.**Crown Terrace Church Service 6.30pm (**probable**)**2016****Wednesday 6th Jan.**

New session starts 7.15pm

Friday 1st April

Civic Reception – Town and County Hall 6.30 – 8pm (Partners invited)

Sunday 15th May

Rehearsal – Rubislaw Church hall 2pm – 5pm

Friday 20th May

Christian Aid Concert – Skene Parish Church 7.30pm

Wednesday 25th May

Rehearsal Queens Cross Church 7.15pm

Friday 27th May60th Anniversary Concert, Queens Cross Church 7.30pm**Saturday 28th May**

Bob Chilcott Workshop – Venue to be confirmed 11am – 4.30pm

Wednesday 1st June

AGM

Summer Concert at Aboyne. Possibly June the 4th with social. To be confirmed.**HOLIDAYS!!**



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Orpheus – a brief history

Orpheus is a figure from Greek mythology who is famed for his musicianship. Apollo gave him his golden lyre and taught him to play. He was so gifted that his music and singing could charm all living things, coax trees to dance and divert the course of rivers. He was an Argonaut and his playing allowed safe passage by the sirens. He travelled to the underworld to rescue his dead wife Eurydice. His music so captivated Hades and Persephone that they allowed him to take her back to earth. He looked back, against their instruction, before she reached the upper world, however, and lost her again, forever. Orpheus had a brother called Linus who went on to appear in Snoopy.