



# Chorister

*Col Canto Associates Quarterly Newsletter*

Welcome to the February 2020 'Chorister' Newsletter

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## **British Choirs on the Net**

Welcome to the February 2020 edition of the British Choirs on the Net 'Chorister' Newsletter. This newsletter has been sent to you as you or your choir are currently listed on one of the sites, or because the services you provide may be suitable for our website. In some cases it is sent to you as you have specifically requested a mailing. Whatever the reason, you are very welcome.

We have a listing of well over 4,000 choirs which have either websites, facebook entries or email addresses listed on the site. Given the popularity of choirs, covering various genres and styles, this number is only likely to grow and we welcome news of new choirs and their concerts.

Please continue to review your choir entries to ensure the listings remain as up to date as possible and advise if website addresses or facebook addresses change, if the conductor details change or if the email contact for the choir changes. Please review your choir entries on a regular basis and advise if any of the information needs to be updated. Where a choir has a website, that will be listed as the main contact point, otherwise facebook links or emails will be used. In order to promote choir websites and facebook pages we do not list choirs that are only contactable by telephone or post.

If you are interested in having a website for your choir please visit [www.choirsites.co.uk](http://www.choirsites.co.uk)

British Choirs on the Net is only as useful as the information held on it. Please email me with any corrections and omissions to choir information. Please email any corrections and amendments to [philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk](mailto:philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk)

## **Concertfinder & British Choirs on the Net**

Concertfinder is a free online concert diary. It is part of British Choirs on the Net under [www.choirs.org.uk](http://www.choirs.org.uk) and also a standalone website under [www.concertfinder.co.uk](http://www.concertfinder.co.uk).

Each concert is listed with the same prominence and for this reason I do not include the conductors, orchestra or soloists details. Additionally non choral works are omitted from the listing even when they form part of the concert programme. The only exception to this general rule is in December when I am happy to list Brass Bands where they are performing Christmas concerts with choirs.

Please submit your concert details via email in text format. Please do not send pdf or html posters which require the salient points to be extracted and this can delay posting the concert. Also do not forget to let me know the date of the concert as well as the who, where, what and ticket information. You will often find that I do not acknowledge the email, so please check the site to see if it has been added. [www.concertfinder.co.uk](http://www.concertfinder.co.uk)

If you use a ticket agency which adds a booking fee please ensure the ticket price you advertise is the full price you pay (including handling costs).

## **British Choirs on the Net Choral Conductor Forum**

This is a group set up on Facebook to enable Choral Directors, Choirs Secretaries and Choir members to informally discuss issues of performance practice, request new music and music exchanges, and discuss other choral related issues. There are currently almost 2,300 members and membership is by application. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/britishchoirs/?fref=ts>

## **British Choirs on the Net Mailing Services**

British Choirs on the Net holds a database of over 3,200 choir email contacts as a result of its business with these choirs. Their mailing addresses are collected whenever you ask for your choir to be listed. Email details may also be collected from public domain sources such as websites. We do not purchase email lists and we do not sell on our lists. Details of the data protection regulations that apply to our mailing list visit <http://www.choirs.org.uk/mailings.html>

These mailing lists are very important both to provide you with information from our subscribers, information about other choral services, concerts and general updates such as this newsletter. It is also important because it generates a small revenue which allows us to ensure that at least 90% of the content on British Choirs on the Net is free to list.

It is understood that some of the mailings may not be of interest to all the choirs, particularly if you are not a choir that tours or takes part in competitions, but I hope over the course of the year you will find items of interest.

## **British Choirs on the Net Advertising Subscribers**

We are always grateful to companies who advertise their services on the British Choirs on the Net website and the 'Chorister' Newsletter. The subscription income that the advertising provides helps to pay for the ongoing running of the website including hosting and allows us to make the majority of the website free in terms of listing. (this includes the online choral concert diary at [www.concertfinder.co.uk](http://www.concertfinder.co.uk))

## **Choirsites**

They say every picture tells a story and the same rule applies with choirs. The choir that has a website where potential members can see pictures of the choir, their future concerts and repertoire is likely to prove more attractive than simply a listed choir with a text description and an e-mail contact. Choirsites provides low cost website hosting and design for choirs. Some of the choirs using this service include:

Abertillery Orpheus Male Choir  
Balsham Singers, Cambridge  
Holymoorside Choral Society, Derbyshire  
Nova, Bristol

[www.choirsites.co.uk](http://www.choirsites.co.uk)

## **SING, SHARE AND PERFORM WITH COMMUNITY SPIRIT**

Community choirs are invited to take part in [Community Spirit](#), a free project run by Town Hall Symphony Hall (THSH), in partnership with Associate Artists [Black Voices](#), which brings together the best homegrown vocal talent for an incredible choral music event.

*Community Spirit* provides the opportunity for choirs to sing, share choral music repertoire and perform as a collective in a large-scale concert on Symphony Hall's stage.

This year the project celebrates its tenth anniversary by focusing on popular songs previously performed at the choral music festival, along with new *Community Spirit* songs for the 2020s.

All community choirs are welcome to take part in this event and THSH encourages the participation of all choral music genres: classical, pop, rock, gospel, folk, reggae and barbershop.

Each community choir will choose, select and practice repertoire pieces in their own social and community environments, and then take part in mass choir rehearsals on Saturday mornings from February to June 2020.

The first mass rehearsal will take place on Saturday, 29 February 2020.

The final performance will take place at Symphony Hall at 6:00pm on Sunday, 21 June 2020.

Carol Pemberton MBE said: "Working in partnership with THSH, Black Voices launched Community Spirit in 2009. It is a choral project for Midlands-based choirs to showcase their unique talent, perform specially commissioned works in a combined mass chorus and share/exchange ideas, repertoire and techniques. The project began in Town Hall, and due to its growing popularity, moved to Symphony Hall in its third year. 12-14 choirs participate annually bringing over 300-500 voices together. New choirs are welcomed each year, engaged in a mix of foyer and main stage performances".

### **Who can apply?**

- Community choirs of all ages and abilities based in the Birmingham and the West Midlands area.
- New community choirs and established community choirs.
- Those that believe their choir is ready to tackle new types of choral music repertoire and is available to attend all rehearsal sessions and perform on the night.



## News release

# LICHFIELD FESTIVAL LAUNCHES SEARCH FOR FIRST 'MIDLANDS CHOIR OF THE YEAR'

**Final held in Lichfield Cathedral**

**Winning choir to perform live at 40<sup>th</sup> Lichfield Festival in 2021**

**Choirs invited from: Derbyshire | Herefordshire | Leicestershire | Lincolnshire | Northamptonshire | Nottinghamshire | Rutland | Shropshire | Staffordshire | Warwickshire | West Midlands | Worcestershire**

[www.mcoty.org](http://www.mcoty.org)

The search is on! Lichfield Festival has launched a brand new competition to find the inaugural [Midlands Choir of the Year](http://www.mcoty.org). The winning vocal group will not only receive a cash prize but the chance to perform live at the 40<sup>th</sup> Lichfield Festival in 2021.

Open to amateur, adult singing groups, the Festival is keen to hear from ensembles of all types and from all musical genres – from gospel to barbershop, classical to jazz, rock to a cappella, sacred or secular – and entries are being encouraged from across the Midlands region from Derbyshire and Herefordshire to Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire.

Semi-final and final rounds will be held live during this year's Festival with the final itself taking place in the stunning surroundings of Lichfield Cathedral.

The winning group will lift the first Midlands Choir of the Year trophy on 12 July and the victorious singers will then be offered a prestigious performance opportunity at the 40<sup>th</sup> Lichfield Festival in 2021.

Choirs need to complete an online application and send their recorded entry ahead of the **closing date of 31 March 2020**. Full details of how to enter, plus full terms and conditions, are available at the Midlands Choir of the Year website [www.mcoty.org](http://www.mcoty.org)





Cornwall International Male Choral Festival founder Dr Roy Wales & 2019 Youth Champions the Duke of Cornwall Singers from St Stithian's College, South Africa (Photo Phil Monckton)

## A Gong for Founder of Cornwall's World Choral Festival

The musical maestro who founded Cornwall's thriving International Male Choral Festival twenty years ago has been recognised by The Queen with a British Empire Medal (BEM) for his services to Choral Music across the world.

Dr Roy Wales, who has spent a lifetime forming and conducting choirs and training choral conductors, was instrumental in setting up, developing and directing the Festival - now the largest event of its kind in the world.

Roy, who is currently celebrating his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday year with a series of concerts and events, was conducting a concert of massed Cornish Male Voice Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall in October 2000 when he had the inspiration to create an international music festival for MVCs hosted by those Cornish choirs.

He shared this vision with like-minded, influential people within Cornwall's musical community - bringing together an enthusiastic team of key organisers and volunteers and directing the first three of the biennial festivals before passing on the baton.

One of those founding team-members, John Larke, is as keenly involved today as he was twenty years ago and he says, "From the very first we realised Roy's ambition and scale for the Festival would attract choirs within Cornwall, the UK and across the globe to share their music with as many people as possible in this beautiful part of the world. In the event we have hosted choirs from every continent – it's a huge achievement."

Dr Roy Wales says, "Clearly I am very proud of the way the Festival has continued to develop and grow since I retired as Director and I am delighted that it is now regarded as the largest male choir festival worldwide. I always felt Cornwall was the right place to host an international male choral festival because of the extensive and longstanding male voice choir tradition in the county."

During the next Cornwall International Male Choral Festival - running from 29<sup>th</sup> April – May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021 - 60 choirs of all ages and nationalities will be taking part in 50 events in 40 venues to entertain more than 50,000 people. The International Concerts and Competitions will be taking place at Truro Cathedral and the Hall for Cornwall – which will be open once more following major renovations.

Already the 2021 event has signed up a quarter of the choirs who will be singing their hearts out across the county, with internationals registering an interest in attending including choirs from Brazil and South Africa, Australia and the USA, Iceland, Portugal, Croatia and Sweden.

As the choirs themselves sign up, composers from across the globe are vying to pen a winning piece of music for the 2021 event in the hotly contested Composers' Competition - a jewel in the crown of the Festival. The competition deadline is March 31<sup>st</sup> this year, with the bar for contenders set very high by the last winners who came from Seattle, Shanghai and Surrey.

"Although we have two years between each festival the work doesn't stop for a minute," says Director and Cornish musical supremo Gareth Churcher. "Over the twenty years since Roy Wales had his incredible vision, the Festival has grown in respect and stature to be internationally very famous and it's fantastic to have so many choirs and composers queueing up to take part.

"We're also looking forward to seeing the Hall for Cornwall back in action for 2021, giving singers of all ages and nationalities the opportunity to sing on a world-class stage. It will be a bonus for our established sponsors who have supported the Festival over the years – as well, potentially, as a showcase for a large corporate sponsor such as we have had in the past and hope to attract for next year's event!"

Full details of the 2021 Cornwall International Male Choral Festival, along with festival films, photos and information from previous events, can be found at [www.cimcf.uk](http://www.cimcf.uk) or for expressions of interest contact Gareth Churcher - [director@cimcf.uk](mailto:director@cimcf.uk).

Canada's Atlantic Boychoir on St Michael's Mount & 2019 Festival winners Klapa Kastav Male Vocal Ensemble from Croatia – photos by Phil Monckton



## Male voice choir give their Club Europe choir tour manager 5 out of 5!

A male voice choir from Talgarth in Wales have had a fabulous choir tour to Tuscany with Club Europe. The group rated their tour manager a resounding 5 out of 5! When not performing in the area's historic basilicas, the choir enjoyed visits to the Uffizi Gallery, San Gimignano and Montecatini Terme.



“Joshua, our tour manager, could not have been more helpful. He communicated with the group very well indeed. He made a significant contribution that was appreciated by all.

Alahree at Club Europe, was excellent - very helpful and understanding. The tour packs were good and so was the willingness to let us contact other choirs who used their services.

Overall, it was a well organised and enjoyable tour.”

*Peter Rowson, party leader for Cor Meibion Talgarth*





Whatever time of year you choose to travel, Tuscany has a superb range of venues suitable for all ensembles looking to do a music tour.

Over the summer, festivals are plentiful throughout the region and groups can perform in the gardens of the Villa Bottini in Lucca and the Jazz Festival in Camaliere. Choirs with a sacred repertoire have a chance to perform in the beautiful church in San Gimignano whilst for other ensembles, Montecatini holds a concert series at the beautiful spas.

[Find out more here.](#)



# You don't have to go abroad for your next music tour!

If you're looking for a close to home destination for your next tour, put your passport away! The UK has so much to offer music ensembles:

Perform in a theatre or art gallery on our [music tour to Cambridge](#)

In the historic St Giles' Cathedral on our [music tour to Edinburgh](#)

in Covent Garden on our [music tour to London](#)

In a summer festival on our [music tour to the Isle of Wight](#); or

Perform a joint concert with a local group on our [music tour to Derbyshire](#).

Find out more about all our [UK music tours](#).

Or better still, give us a call for a chat on Freephone 0800 496 4996.

## Some Club Europe Specials:

- Our Choral Retreats offer choirs the chance to perform a few concerts and relax in four-star luxury. Staying in an historic and sumptuous villa in the beautiful Italian region of Friuli Venezia Giulia, set in glorious grounds with wonderful food and facilities, our Choral Retreats will be a real treat for your members. There are rehearsal facilities on site, so you can work on material, or just have some fun. Or you can sit by the pool, wander around the gardens or enjoy an in house cooking class or game of tennis. There are plenty of wonderful places to visit, too; Venice and Treviso are a short drive away.
- "I Borghi più belli d'Italia" is an association of small Italian towns of historical interest which, thanks to a special partnership, we are delighted to be able to organise music tours to. There are some amazing 'gems' to discover in this region. Experience its unique culture, cuisine and warm hospitality, while performing in some enchanted places where time seems to have stood still.

### Find out more:

Visit: [www.club-europe.co.uk/music-tours](http://www.club-europe.co.uk/music-tours)

Call: Freephone 0800 496 4996

Email: [travel@club-europe.co.uk](mailto:travel@club-europe.co.uk)





## LACOCK NEWSLETTER

We're very pleased to have published details of a couple more courses this coming autumn. The first is a return, after a four-year gap, to the old Venetian port of Trogir, just along from Split on the Dalmatian coast in Croatia. It is one of my favourite places to go to sing: a miniature Venice with nearby swimming beaches, good food and wine, a bustling harbour and markets. Patrick Craig has come up with another stonker of a theme, the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, with settings of politically-motivated texts from both sides of the sectarian divide, by Byrd, Gibbons, Tomkins, Weelkes and others. The dates are 6 to 11 of September and all the details are on the Lacock website.

Another great find is a former convent in the middle of Lucca, where Robert Hollingworth will lead a consort week from 21 to 27 of September. Some of the time we will sing all together in a double choir and the rest as consorts with one or two voices to a part – you can choose which you prefer. Robert will be assisted by four invited Lacock scholars. The nuns left in 2015 and the building now has a sympathetic private owner, who is finding a variety of appropriate uses while preserving as much of the fabric and contemplative atmosphere as possible. There is accommodation for twenty-five people in single rooms.

Since I last wrote we have had enjoyable courses in our Andalusian venue Jimena de la Frontera, a trip to Italy with weeks in Venice and Rome and most recently our long-established winter school just up the road from us in Corsham, where the Town Hall is an unrivalled venue in terms of comfort and convenience. The week is always marked by a New Year's Eve party at Cantax House, with a festive dinner followed by a Victorian-style concert party with songs and recitations. Shortly before midnight we traipse out into the garden to hear the bell ringers in the church tower tolling the funeral knell for the dying Old Year – usually punctuated by some oaf unable to wait a few more minutes to let off his fireworks. Then at midnight the New Year is welcomed with a full peal, toasts are drunk, Auld Lang Syne is sung and no one is left with any doubt about the appropriate time to say goodbye and return home to bed.

The courses with Eamonn Dougan in Ambleside in May and with Rory McCleery in Edinburgh in July are now almost full, so get in touch right away if you were hoping to come to either but haven't yet done anything about it. We are pleased that our efforts to ensure a good balance and compatibility of voices, together with limiting the size of groups to chamber-choir scale are really paying off and we don't seem to have any trouble attracting good applicants for all our courses. We're just sorry we can't always fit in everyone who wants to come. We're particularly glad that all is already in place for the summer courses as in June we will be severely distracted by the weddings of both Gog's eldest daughter Laura and my younger son Bertie – not to each other. Also Lucy, as Gog's sister-in-law and current chatelaine of the Brakspear demesne, will be up to her elbows in marquees, Paris goblets, giltwood dining chairs and the like.

Once again, thank you for reading this far. Details of all Lacock courses can be found at [www.lacock.org](http://www.lacock.org). If you'd rather not be on this list, just reply with 'unsubscribe' as the subject.

Andrew, Lucy and Gog

Cantax House, Lacock, Chippenham SN15 2JZ

Dear Singer,

**Come to PRAGUE for four days of joyous music-making, including  
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS *A SEA SYMPHONY*, DVORAK *TE DEUM*, and  
FAURE *REQUIEM*.**

Under their inspirational director Leslie Olive, the English Arts Chorale (Surrey) and Eye Bach Choir (Suffolk) are inviting visiting singers to join them for an exceptional singing holiday in Prague from 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The project is a three-way collaboration between the two English choirs and the spectacular young Symphony Orchestra of the Prague Conservatoire.

During the tour, *Te Deum* and *A Sea Symphony* will be performed in the magnificent Baroque church of St. Salvator, standing proudly at the grand entrance to the world-famous Charles Bridge. A further concert, including the *Faure Requiem* accompanied with organ, will take place in the stunning St Ludmila Church, where every wall and pillar is meticulously decorated.

Singers joining the tour also have the option to sing in two further performances of *A Sea Symphony* and *Te Deum* at:

St Edmundsbury Cathedral in the ancient town of Bury St Edmunds (28<sup>th</sup> March), where King Cnut founded the Abbey 1,000 years ago and  
the Royal Academy of Music in London (29<sup>th</sup> March)

Singers may opt for EITHER:

the whole three-concert package (at a cost of £450 plus flights), OR for  
PRAGUE only (cost £350 plus flights).

These costs are on a shared accommodation basis – the single room supplement is £100. A  
spouse/partner is also welcome to come to Prague at a cost of £250 plus flights.

Please note that there are places available for a few SOPRANOS and ALTOS, but especially TENORS  
AND BASSES.

Applicants who live within reach of rehearsal programmes at EYE (Fridays) or REIGATE (Mondays) will  
be expected to join those rehearsal programmes, but with some flexibility reflecting your knowledge  
of these works and the level of your music-reading.

Applicants who live elsewhere in the UK (and are unable to join those rehearsal programmes) are still  
encouraged to apply if they:

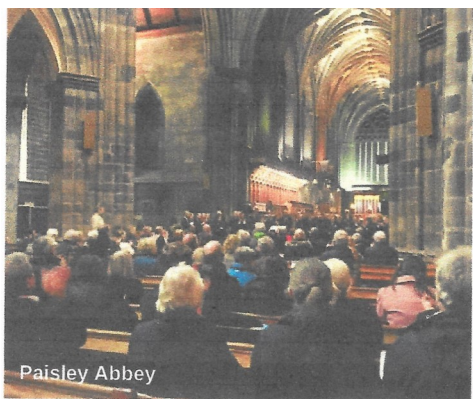
Have fully prepared and performed all of this repertoire at least twice before; OR  
have outstanding sight-reading, or both, AND  
will guarantee to attend a FULL DAY workshop in COLCHESTER, ESSEX, on SATURDAY 7<sup>th</sup> MARCH.

Full details including dates and costs can be found online at [www.englisharts.org](http://www.englisharts.org). For further information or to book a place please email [wietske.hendriksen@outlook.com](mailto:wietske.hendriksen@outlook.com)

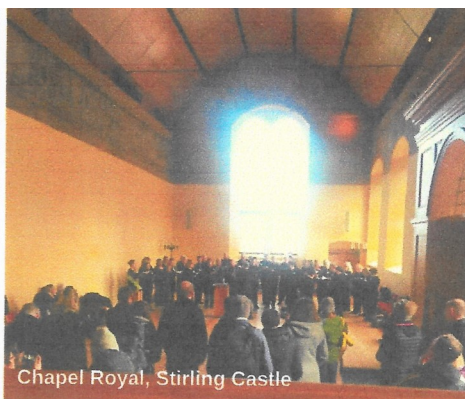
**Please contact us to confirm your place by end of February at the latest.**

Claire Kelly  
Project Team, English Arts Chorale





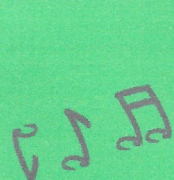
Paisley Abbey



Chapel Royal, Stirling Castle

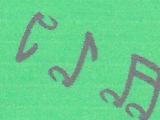


Holy Rude, Stirling



# Sound Escapes

UK  
PERFORMANCE  
TOURS



## Bespoke Concert Tours for Choirs across the UK & Ireland

Since launching in January 2019 from their Nottingham HQ, the team at Sound Escapes UK has certainly found their niche by offering tailor-made concert tours for adult choirs who wish to perform in beautiful and unique locations across the UK and Ireland. Company owner, Jo Porter recently accompanied a choir from Yorkshire on their annual Autumn tour. Usually accustomed to more far-flung destinations, this year the choir opted for Bonnie Scotland!

*'With our base in the historic city of Stirling, I had the pleasure of accompanying this most talented choir throughout their four-day tour of this beautiful region. With four concerts supporting local charities in Paisley Abbey, St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Glasgow, the Chapel Royal at Stirling Castle and Church of the Holy Rude in Stirling, the choir captivated audiences with their beautiful programme of music to include heavenly performances of 'Only in Sleep' (Esenvalds), 'May it Be' (Enya) and 'Deep Peace' (Knight). We even managed to fit in visits to a very atmospheric Loch Lomond, Glasgow, the Falkirk Wheel and iconic horse-head structures, 'The Kelpies' which were all thoroughly enjoyed in spite of the Scottish drizzle and topped off with much-needed relaxation time (and a wee dram or two!) much later in the day.'*

A tour with Sound Escapes UK provides you with the personal touch and peace of mind knowing that every care is taken to deliver a high-quality bespoke concert touring package to meet your personal performance aspirations and every need and your finances protected with our reputable bonding company, Protected Travel Services. Please get in touch!



Contact Jo Porter on 0115 874 6396  
Web: [www.soundescapesuk.com](http://www.soundescapesuk.com) E-mail: [jo.porter@soundescapesuk.com](mailto:jo.porter@soundescapesuk.com)  
Registered office Beeston, Nottinghamshire

