



# Chorister

November 2011

## Welcome to the November 'Chorister' Newsletter

### British Choirs on the Net

continues to grow both in terms of it's online presence and also, just as importantly, in its influence on British and International choral life.

Over the last few years British Choirs has been involved in the background with 'Choir of the Year', 'Last Choir Standing' and '123sing!'

As well as helping choral societies find new members, musical directors and accompanists British Choirs on the Net has worked with both individual choirs and large international organizations such as the United Nations and the British Council.

It continues to promote International choral festivals, choral composers, singing and choral conducting courses and opportunities for musical travel. In addition two new sites are being constructed to promote choirs and choral concerts in America and Australia.

Through its Facebook and Twitter sites it continues to build networks and circles of influence.

While musical participation and particularly choral music can influence and reflect society, British Choirs on the Net remains politically neutral in it's dealings and advocacy.

British Choirs on the Net is supported by advertising subscriptions from the following;



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CHOIRCONTACTINTERNATIONAL

**Chorister'** covers information and news regarding the web sites 'British Choirs on the Net', 'Concertfinder', 'Choirsites' and other associated websites under the banner of Col Canto Associates. The aim is to support the British Choral tradition, the Music Manifesto and 'Singing for Health'.

British Choirs on the 'Web' was created in 1995 by Rod Cuff. The final design included the legend 'British Choirs on the 'Net', so the web site name was changed to accommodate the logo.

In August 2002 Rod Cuff passed on the ownership of the site, and associated domain name, to [Phillip Tolley](#).

After sixteen years the [British Choirs on the Net](#) has achieved a prominent and established position within the choral community and has the admiration not just of the choirs using the site but also its competitors and imitators.

This newsletter has been sent to you as you are currently listed on one of the sites, or because the services you provide may be suitable for our website.

**TONSIL** Comprises organisations, including British Choirs on the Net, that work in the field of youth & adult singing. Formed in 1988, it meets two to three times a year or as needed to discuss and what can and should be happening in the world of choral singing, practice and education, in Britain and Internationally. TONSIL is less an official organisation, more an informal association whose function is to serve its member choral organisations and to act as forum for national and international vocal education and practice. Tonsil represents 14 organisations promoting choral singing across a wide variety of genres, supporting over 25,000 members choirs and over 500,000 singers, who each year perform to audiences totalling nearly 3 million. [www.tonsil.org.uk](http://www.tonsil.org.uk)

**New website** 2 new sites are currently under construction. Australian choirs on the Net [www.ozchoirs.org](http://www.ozchoirs.org) and American Choirs on the Net [www.choirsinamerica.org](http://www.choirsinamerica.org) To advertise on these sites please email [philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk](mailto:philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk)

**Lacock Courses** A brief note to alert you to some new courses that are now on the Lacock web site [www.lacock.org](http://www.lacock.org). The first is the Winter School between Christmas and New Year, which for the first will be in Corsham, near us in Wiltshire – fairly central and easy to get to at a time when the weather can make travel difficult. The Winter School has developed its own special character over the years: part reunion, part Christmas party. The conductor will be Paul Spicer.

The course for the adventurous for 2012 is Holy Week in Havana. The details plans include a concert in the cathedral, subject to the element of spontaneity that often gingers up arrangements in that part of the world. Luckily our man there, Carlos Aransay, knows Cuba well and has conducted the National Orchestra of Cuba and the Cuban National Ballet. For those that want to take the opportunity to see the rest of the country, we have a personal contact with a dependable travel agent in Havana.

One of the revelations of 2011 was the voice workshop run by Ghislaine Morgan. Even though most of the participants would have considered themselves experienced singers, the difference in the sound that the group made after even one day of Ghislaine's coaching was revelatory. I realised that this was the sort of course that amateur singers need more than anything, so next year I have invited Ghislaine to run a voice

workshop at my one of my favourite venues, Monteconero. It will run the week before Music at Monteconero in mid-June, so if you have the stamina you can stay for both courses.

If you've been to Monteconero you'll understand why I find it impossible to tear myself away. It's partly its fairy-tale situation, a monastery surrounded by oak forest on a mountain top on the Adriatic coast, but also that it has very much a family-run feeling about it: the current padrone, Augusto (his grandmother started the hotel in the 1950s) is always there, slicing prosciutto for the antipasto or perhaps even sweeping the courtyard. This year's Music at Monteconero will be directed by Patrick Craig, whose programme is based on settings of When David heard. Recent Monteconero weeks have filled rather quickly, so don't leave it too long if you're thinking of coming, especially if you are a soprano or a bass.

One of this year's highpoints was leading the Victoria commemorations in his home city of Ávila . The culmination of the course was a concert in the cathedral on the actual date of the quatercentenary of Victoria's death. We performed the monumental Missa Laetatus sum with three choirs of twenty, five sackbuts of Il Nuovo Chiaroscuro and a bajón. The bishop and 700 other abulense came to listen and the whole event made quite a stir in the Spanish press. The Victoria commemorations continue with two events in London organised by the Iberian and Latin American Music Society: a symposium on Saturday 29 October and a Victoria Requiem from scratch in St Peter's Eaton Square, directed by Carlos Aransay on Saturday 26 November. You would be very welcome at both events. Details are on the ILAMS web site at <http://www.ilams.org.uk/concerts.htm>.

Andrew van der Beek

## **Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival**

### **Composers Competition 2012**

Every two years, Cornwall International Male Voice Choral Festival organises a six day Festival in which over 60 male voice choirs from across the UK and the rest of the world participate. In 2011, 50 different singing events were organised in 40 different locations across the County. The Festival also organises the largest international male voice choir competition in Europe. In 2011, 23 adult male choirs participated.

In the year between festivals, a Composers' Competition is organised. The 2012 competition has just been announced. With a prize of £1000, the competition is open to any UK resident composer. The composition must be for male choir (i.e. TTBB). The closing date is 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012. The adjudicator will be Dr. Alwyn Humphreys, MBE the internationally renowned conductor, arranger and composer of male voice choir music.

Further details and application forms for entry to the competition are available from the Festival website: [www.cimvcf.org.uk](http://www.cimvcf.org.uk).

## The Perfect Christmas Gift

Shown below is our set of choral design mugs. With original paintings from Mary Woodin, these fine bone china mugs are a little bit different and a pleasure to drink from.

They make wonderful gifts for your friends, and yourself!



Concert



Conductor





Rehearsal



Soloists



**SINGLE MUG** £8.99 + £1.50 p&p

**SET of 4** £31.99 + £4.95 p&p  
(in any combination)

If your choir buys 12 sets (48 mugs in any combination) the price reduces to £6.99 per mug, and can be sold to both choir members or visitors to your concerts.

A4 colour leaflets are available if you would like to hand them out to your members, or to your visitors.

ORDERS can be placed through our website [www.uniquebonechina.com](http://www.uniquebonechina.com) or

**By telephone on:** 01444 443800

**By post to:** Unique Bone China, Heasewood Farmhouse, Isaacs Lane, Haywards Heath, RH16 4RZ



## **ALED JONES ASKS PEOPLE TO 'SING OUT' FOR MARIE CURIE CANCER CARE**

Singer and television presenter Aled Jones is asking people to Sing Out for Marie Curie Cancer Care this Christmas time. Whether you are singing on your own, in a group or just with friends, Aled wants you to dedicate a Christmas performance to raising funds for the charity.

Aled said: "By singing out this Christmas time for Marie Curie Cancer Care with your choir, church or friends, you can help raise vital funds so that Marie Curie Nurses can continue to provide free care for terminally ill people in their own homes and the charity's hospices."

Marie Curie Nurses will be working throughout Christmas and the New Year, ensuring terminally ill patients can spend Christmas at home with their families or in one of the charity's hospices. Last year, 375 Marie Curie Nurses across the country cared for patients on Christmas Eve and Christmas day.

To take part all you need to do is choose a date between November and December to hold your singing event, decide on the venue and then warm up those vocal chords and get practising.

Registration is open until the 25 November 2011. To find out more about how you can organise your own event, please call 08700 340 040 or visit [www.mariecurie.org.uk/singout](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/singout).

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**British Choirs on the Net** The site continues to grow with over 2800 UK choirs now listed. We continue to welcome new choirs both UK based and internationally. We continue to successfully place music musical directors and accompanists with choral societies and choruses across the UK and also increasingly internationally. [www.choirs.org.uk](http://www.choirs.org.uk)

**Additions and Amendments** 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, email addresses or website choir addresses. Please email any corrections and amendments to [philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk](mailto:philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk)

**British Choirs on the Net Mailing Services** British Choirs on the Net holds a database of over 2000 choir email contacts as a result of its business with these choirs. While the site has no intention of selling this it can provide a mailing service to choirs and businesses to help promote events and services of interest to the choral community. Recent mailings have been sent out on behalf of the Barbican, Shorter House Choral Editions and the composer Eric Whitacre..

**Concertfinder**, the online calendar of choral concerts, is now listing events for 2011 and 2012. 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 can delay posting the concert.

[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:

Balsham Singers, Cambridge  
Clarkson Singers Wisbech  
Monton Voices, Salford, Lancashire  
Holymoorside Choral Society, Derbyshire  
Leominster Choral Society, Herefordshire  
[www.choirsites.co.uk](http://www.choirsites.co.uk)

**Choirfriends** This small site is designed to help chorister get back in touch with their friends and colleagues when you move to other choirs or (heaven forbid) stop singing. Recent searches have been for former members of the Belfast Girls Choir (in the 1940-1950's) , Ulster Girls Choir, the Hall Russell Male Choir (in the 1920—1930's) and the Wolverhampton Girls Choir (in the 1950's) [www.choirfriends.co.uk](http://www.choirfriends.co.uk)

**VocalBroker** This is a site which lists vocal soloists seeking work with Choral Societies and Choruses on the Oratorio or concert platform. It is not an agency and the Societies negotiate directly with singers with vocalbroker taking no commission. They are all experience singers and choral societies and choruses are asked to consider these singers when selecting voices for concerts. [www.vocalbroker.co.uk](http://www.vocalbroker.co.uk)

**WeddingSingers** This is a site which lists soloists, choirs, barbershop and gospel group who are looking for work performing at weddings [www.weddingsingers.org.uk](http://www.weddingsingers.org.uk)

**British Choirs on the Net Choral Conductors Forum** This is a new group set upon 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.  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

We also have a presence on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/britishchoirs](http://www.twitter.com/britishchoirs)

**Concert Programme Notes** British Choirs on the Net hosts a library of Choral repertoire programme notes which are available for the free use of Choral Societies. We do ask however that you acknowledge in your concerts the authorship of these programme notes, as appropriate. Recent additions to the list include Stanford's Stabat Mater and Bob Chilcott's The Making of the Drum & Little Jazz Mass, all kindly provided by John Bawden. The latest addition is a new programme note for J S Bach St John Passion, provided by Peter Foster.

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The stories in this newsletter are selected from various emails received by me. If you have an item that you think would be of interest to the choral community please email me at [philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk](mailto:philliptolley@colcanto.co.uk)

Articles should not be time sensitive as the timing of this publication is not fixed and delays may occur. Equally if you wish to advertise your products on British Choirs on the Net website or this newsletter please contact me.



## Looking forward to the 2012 Choir Tour season

As 2011 draws to a close, the Concert Tours team at [Rayburn Tours](#) is already busy booking concerts for their 2012 groups! This year has been fantastic for touring choirs with reviews still flooding in and with Musical Directors raving about the positive impact of the tour on their choir. As Margaret Haynes from Bracknell Choral Society said upon returning from Tuscany: 'The tour achieved long-lasting results in bonding the choir members who took part', and we think this is exactly what a Choir Tour is all about.

We've had other great feedback from our tours this year. The Brixi Singers described their performance at Notre Dame as 'the experience of a lifetime'; Billingshurst Choral Society shared their excitement on discovering that one of their Prague venues had 'invited local TV crews to film the concert for local news!' and St John's Church Choir summed up not only theirs, but many other choirs' tours with: 'a great success, both musically and socially'.

But it's not just far-off destinations that have been popular this summer; the UK has been the destination of choice for many groups, including Roedean Girls' School Choir who travelled from South Africa for a mammoth 16 day tour. Performing at some incredible and prestigious venues, the girls wowed audiences across the country, including their Rayburn Tours Coordinator, Emily Thorp, who was lucky enough to watch their performance at Derby Cathedral: 'The group performed with genuine soul and gave the audience a real flavour of their homeland, the love they have for their country and the concern they share for the issues they face. The programme was punctuated with the beat of an African drum, which brought the venue alive and evoked the sounds and rhythms of the continent. For me, the girls produced a master class in choral performance.'

Looking forward to summer 2012, we have many choirs already preparing to travel, with the Rhineland emerging as a top destination. But wherever you and your choir want to perform, our Concert Tours team can make it happen, [visit our website](#) or [contact us](#) to start planning your 2012 Choir Tour.