



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Here we are again, just at the dawn of a new season. Following the first two rehearsals, I hope that you are as excited as I am, in the anticipation of presenting two beautiful and very different works for our first concert.

I always enjoy embracing and learning a new piece. The Jonathan Dove *For an Unknown Soldier* has already captivated me. The poems used are not only poignant but also extremely moving. The textures within the orchestration will bring the piece to life and I am sure the audience will be moved by the piece. Many of us have sung the Duruflé before, but for me this will be the first time with orchestra, and I can't wait to hear the colours that the orchestra will produce in this beautiful work. I know that as a chorus we will present not only a polished performance, but with the guidance of Peter, one of sensitivity. I am sure we will 'do Ian, Ann and Norman proud' in this concert we are dedicating to them.

As many of you know, Norman Robertson-Smith left the society a very generous bequest of £5,000. I would like to say at this point that fundraising for the society can't take a back seat. With the financial surplus from last season we have been able to keep subscriptions at the same level for another year.

Norman's gift gives us an added cushion, but all costs keep rising, so please do keep supporting all aspects of fundraising, from the weekly raffle to the 'Come and Sing' – and most importantly sell tickets. Singing to a full nave helps not only the bank balance, but it gives us all a huge boost to sing and give our best. Just think, if we each sold 4 tickets we would have 600 in the audience, before including our Patrons and other regular concert goers...

This is always a good time for me to thank someone. Well this time it is you, The Chorus. It really is a pleasure for me each week to turn up to rehearsal. Other than making music, I have always enjoyed the social aspect of being in a choir. We have members from all parts of the County (and a couple like me from 'over the hills in Herefordshire!') and from all walks of life. Singing together as members of the Worcester Festival Choral Society is unique. No two choruses are the same, and I like to think we are really rather special, so thank you everyone!

Ben Cooper (B)

SATURDAYS AT 7.30PM

2017-18 SEASON

WORCESTER CATHEDRAL





18 NOVEMBER 2017
DURUFLÉ: REQUIEM
DOVE: FOR AN UNKNOWN SOLDIER

9 DECEMBER 2017
HANDEL: MESSIAH

17 MARCH 2018
HAYDN: CREATION

7 APRIL 2018
**COME & SING:
ONE-DAY WORKSHOP**

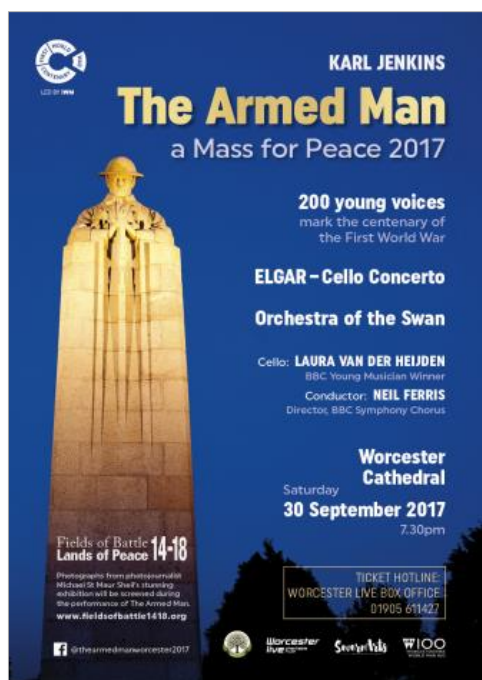
TICKETS £10 - £25 from
WORCESTER LIVE BOX OFFICE
01905 611427 or
worcestersfestivalchoralsociety.org.uk
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 506826

WFCS DIARY DATES 2017-18

First rehearsal of 2017-18 season	Monday 4 September 7.30pm
AGM as second half of rehearsal	Monday 18 September
Autumn Half Term break	Monday 23 October
Autumn Concert – Duruflé: <i>Requiem</i> / Dove: <i>For an Unknown Soldier</i>	Saturday 18 November
Winter Concert – Handel: <i>Messiah</i>	Saturday 9 December
First rehearsal of Spring term 2018	Monday 8 January 2018
Spring Half Term break	Monday 19 February 2018
Spring Concert 2018 – Haydn: <i>The Creation</i>	Saturday 17 March 2018
Annual Quiz Night	Friday 2 March 2018, 7.30pm, Powick Village Hall
Come and Sing Workshop	Saturday 7 April 2018 (music tbc)

OTHER EVENTS FOR YOUR POTENTIAL INTEREST

21 (7.00pm), 23 (7.00pm) and 24 (3.00pm) September – Barber Institute, University of Birmingham – The Musical and Amicable Society, who featured in the successful Purely Bach and Purely Baroque Concerts and in a Worcester Three Choirs 2017 Late Nighter, are accompanying the first revival of the **Nicholas Porpora Opera *L'Agrippina*** since it was first performed in 1708 - www.amicables.co.uk and www.barber.org.uk



22-24 September – Discoed, Presteigne – Border Marches Early Music Forum – Early Music Weekend on Handel – A 2-day workshop for singers and players of orchestral instruments, with two evening concerts. Led by David Hatcher, with Philip Thorby. www.bmemf.org.uk

24 September – 4.00pm – Worcester Cathedral – Choral Evensong to commemorate the Battle of Passchendaele 1917

30 September – 7.30pm – Worcester Cathedral – *The Armed Man* – Karl Jenkins – 200 Young Voices with the Orchestra of the Swan – Worcester Live Box Office 01905 611427 (see poster left)

8 October – 8.00pm – Worcester Cathedral Chapter House – Chapter8 – in their concluding appearance with their founder member, Carol West (A).

12 October- 7.00pm – Worcester Cathedral – Armonico Consort – www.armonico.org.uk

WFCS AGM

The WFCS AGM will take place in the second half of the rehearsal on 18 September. This is an important event in our calendar. Relevant documents will be emailed beforehand.

CONCERT PROGRAMME ADVERTISING

Advertisements in our Concert Programmes are a valuable source of revenue and enhance their visual quality. The advertising rates are attractive. The advertisements are widely noticed and read. You may be surprised how many people you know who may welcome the opportunity of advertising with us.

Please give this some thought and put them in touch with our advertising co-ordinator (and Choral Chronicle Editor) Toby Hooper (T) - hooper.toby@btopenworld.com

WFCS ONLINE TICKET SALES and SOCIAL MEDIA

The Committee believes that the recent increase in our Concert ticket sales is attributable to a significant degree to the online ticket sales facility which our Tickets Secretary Judy Jenkins (A) and her husband Andrew have introduced, and to the targeted use of Social Media which our Marketing and Publicity Officer Michelle Whitefoot (S) has developed alongside the superb photographs by her husband Michael (Michael Whitefoot, professional photographer) which enhance our website, this Choral Chronicle and the big screens at Three Choirs.

Online Ticket Sales

Tickets for our three concerts in Season 2017-18 are now available from the WFCS website at www.worcesterfestivalchoralsociety.org.uk or from the Worcester Live Box Office on 01905 611427. Please book early to secure your preferred seats. A 20% discount is available to WFCS members only if you book seats for all three concerts at the same time. There is also a "Buy 5 and get 6th free" for any one concert. Both deals are available by contacting Judy Jenkins at jjjenkins@btinternet.com

Social Media

Set up to help grow interest in our concerts from new audiences, the WFCS Facebook page and Twitter feeds have grown their followings over the past season, now having 250 and 610 'followers' respectively. Both are packed with continually updated WFCS concert news, fun updates, useful local events, updates on music, places to visit, festivals, charities and much more throughout the year. Please help us to spread the message still further and gather momentum for the future! If you have a Facebook page, please [follow WFCS on Facebook](#) and Like/Share our posts to your family, friends and music-loving contacts. And if you are on Twitter – whether for home or business – please [follow our WFCS Twitter feed](#) and Like/RT our messages to the wider world.



THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL WORCESTER

The undoubted triumph of Peter Nardone's Worcester Three Choirs Festival 2017 in July – which featured around 40 WFCS members within the Festival Chorus - attracted, among other praise, the following:

Classic FM via Twitter on *A Child Of Our Time*: "Incredible Tippett at the Three Choirs Festival... Just stunning".

The Telegraph on *Dream of Gerontius*: "Where better to hear Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* than at the Three Choirs Festival? A moving and subtle performance... Space for the soloists to shine, which they certainly did".



WFCS members Leon Joynes (T) and Michelle Whitefoot (S) have written for us their following recollections of participating in the Festival Chorus at Worcester Three Choirs 2017:

Leon writes:

Thoughts from a longer serving member of the Three Choirs Chorus

My first Three Choirs Festival was at Gloucester in 1995, yet I continue to think of myself as a newcomer in this three hundred years of history. When I first took part there were still members of the chorus who had notched up many more years than I have now. I think there were some who had been involved for half a century and others who in their youth had seen 'Sir Edward' conduct in the Public Hall in Worcester. The then three 'chorus superintendents', a role re-branded now as 'chorus manager', seemed to have been in charge for ever.



It is a great privilege to be a member of the chorus and not in any way to be taken for granted because one belongs to this or that choral society. Where else might one, as a lover of choral music, be able to learn in the span of three months, and perform, within one week, so many of the great works, both old and new. We have sung with leading orchestras, more recently on a regular basis 'The Philharmonia', and guest conductors of our land and further afield. One guest conductor told us this year that no choir in Germany (or anywhere else) would do what we do!

The week of my first festival at Gloucester in 1995 was the hottest week of the summer and being packed in on the back row below the organ gave a taste of what was to come. Dinner Jacket and bow tie uniform for the men was the rule of the day for many years. Nowadays we are sometimes allowed the comfort of abandoning our jackets and singing in shirt sleeve order. Much more comfortable and it allows a little more room to breath on the platform. 2017 will go down in history as the year of a great, long requested innovation; the men have been permitted to wear open necked black shirts for all but the first and last nights and the opening service!

How very modern! The chorus nowadays, for various reasons, is considerably smaller and we felt less like the contents of a sardine tin on the platform.



There is much socialising with new and old friends, both singers and audience all in and around the venue of the 'Festival Club' wherever that may be in each of the three cities. The move in Worcester some twelve years ago from College Hall to 'The Club on the Green' in the marquee, now known as 'Festival Village', made for a whole new and more enjoyable atmosphere. This works particularly well in Worcester as College Green is enclosed but easily accessible.

I shall be ever grateful to the three, most recent, Worcester musical directors for the opportunity to take part in 23 festivals and intend to put my name

forward for next year in the hope of being accepted once more. Two more festivals and I could claim a whole quarter century of service, hard work and pleasure.

Leon Joynes (T)

Michelle writes:

A first-timer's perspective on the Three Choirs experience

"It won't be what you expect" said a Three Choirs Festival regular when I received the letter accepting me into the Worcester 2017 Festival Chorus. She was right – but not entirely. As a Festival first-timer it was everything I'd imagined – but also far more thrilling, daunting, rewarding, moving, sociable, nerve-racking and hard work than I had imagined.

After 18 evening rehearsals and 3 all-day rehearsals in three counties across 11 weeks, concluding with seven performances (preceded by more rehearsals) to around 5,000 concert-goers over the eight days of the Festival, we emerged 'tired but happy' with 11, varied works learned, many new friends with a common passion, and the pleasure of knowing that we did ourselves, our choral colleagues, and the audience proud.

Whether you are new to the Festival or have sung in it before, for every Chorus member the preparation is intense. You may know one work, but most will be entirely new and often challenging. Rehearsals (two to three per week) are obligatory, close-knit and fast-paced. Festival week itself often means taking a whole week's holiday from work. But you quickly realise just how good your fellow singers are – and the sound, both in local and massed rehearsals, is wonderful.



Throughout the May-July period you find yourself doing nightly musical homework to become note-perfect. Your emotions range from reasonably relaxed enjoyment in the early weeks, to slight panic mixed with excitement later on as you realise there is so much still to do, but so little time! (How Peter Nardone and Chris Allsop manage their own, far heavier, Festival and other workloads across those months is a miracle). But as soon as the Festival Chorus, superb Philharmonia Orchestra and excellent soloists come together, and when you stand, heart pounding, under the scorching platform

lighting to perform to the expectant audience stretching away before you, you know it's going to be one of your most exciting life experiences.

As a newcomer, you also notice how much more there is to the Festival than the 'flagship' evening concerts in Worcester Cathedral. This year's Festival also offered almost 70 other concerts and recitals, plus talks, plays and even children's workshops. A buzzing tented village in College Green drew the crowds all day – despite changeable weather – with refreshments, a craft fair and musical entertainment. Indeed, the Festival is extremely popular. In the Cathedral, even with many seats having no view of the stage (but benefiting from large TV monitors, which make you worry about making strange singing expressions) some concerts sell out in days. There are many long-standing Festival-goers, often attending multiple events. The media are refreshingly interested – our concerts won glowing national reviews, local papers ran Festival previews and reported on Prince Charles's attendance (with some of the Chorus meeting him), local radio stations did interviews and Radio 3 broadcast Evensong live.



But of course, for the Festival Chorus, our concerts are the focus. I discovered that participation means challenge, commitment and nerves of steel. By the end my vocal ability and sight-reading have improved, and my appreciation of choral music has expanded. I also found it an achievement, an uplifting experience and an honour to have been part of. I hope to do so again.

Michelle Whitefoot (S)

THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL **HEREFORD**

28 July to 4 August 2018

Geraint Bowen, Artistic Director of Hereford's Three Choirs Festival 2018, launches his Festival programme in these striking words:

"A century after the passing of the 1918 Representation of the People Act – the start of universal suffrage in the UK – we open the festival with a rare performance of the Mass in D by Ethel Smyth, a prominent member of the suffragette movement. Described by Bernard Shaw as "magnificent" and championed, along with her other works, by Beecham, the work deserves to be better known and more frequently performed".

Other works to be performed during the week include Holst's The Planets, Elgar's King Olaf (Festival premier, with Sir Andrew Davis), Monteverdi's Vespers, Bruckner's Te Deum, Parry's Invocation to Music (in the centenary year of Parry's death, with Sir Andrew Davis), Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms, and Brahms' Requiem.

Details - www.3choirs.org



WFCS SINGS AT THE WORCESTER PROMS

Picnics, Pimms and patriotism were the order of the day on Saturday 19th August, when 40 members of WFCS performed in Worcester's first, Proms-style concert at Worcestershire County Cricket Club's New Road Ground.

Accompanied by the National Symphony Orchestra, our 'Proms Chorus' performed *Zadok the Priest* and the *Hallelujah* chorus to a rapturous reception from the 900-strong audience. The Chorus also supported *You'll Never Walk Alone*, *Jerusalem*, *Land of Hope and Glory* and *Rule Britannia* alongside soprano soloist Annette Wardell. Other music included orchestral favourites such as the *1812 Overture* and *Nimrod*. The evening culminated with a spectacular fireworks display.

The chorus received glowing written feedback from the organisers, orchestra and soloist, including the following from conductor Justin Pearson: "The chorus were a true delight both musically and personally; please convey my congratulations and gratitude to each and every singer."

Our thanks to all members of WFCS who participated - as well as to those who had initially hoped to take part, but then stepped back due to the logistical limitations.



NEWS OF TWO IMPORTANT LOCAL ATTRACTIONS



The Elgar Birthplace: The Elgar Birthplace is expected to reopen on 1 September under the care of the National Trust which has taken a lease from the Elgar Foundation - www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Museum of Royal Worcester: Readers of recent WFCS concert programmes will remember the Museum of Royal Worcester's beautiful advertisements there. It is thrilling to know that this fine Museum is about to get even finer through refurbishment between November and May – www.museumofroyalworchester.org Until its temporary closure in November, the Museum's

Opening Hours are Monday to Saturday 10.00am to 5.00pm. We hope to welcome MoRW back as greatly appreciated concert programme advertisers in future WFCS seasons.

We record with great sadness and commiseration with their families the deaths of the following members since last WFCS term

Ian Pattison



Ian Pattison sang Bass in WFCS from 1964 and in many Three Choirs Festivals. He was a renowned trumpet player and arranger of music for brass. He conducted the Magdalene Singers and Orchestra in many concerts at St George's Barbourne. He also conducted the Tenbury Wells Operatic Society for many years. Ian was Librarian for WFCS and for Worcester Three Choirs Festivals.

Susan Snaith (S) remembers that it was her mother, when General Secretary of WFCS, who "harnessed his talents and enthusiasm" as Librarian. Susan also recalls that Ian acted as auctioneer at a Treasure Sale which her mother organised at The Guildhall in 1973 to raise funds for WFCS. John Bleney (B) recalls that he succeeded Ian as Librarian, estimating that between them they clocked up about 25 years in the role. John also remembers that Ian designed a WFCS logo in use for several seasons.

Ian was a Churchwarden at St George's Barbourne. He played significant parts in arrangements for preserving and enhancing St. George's, most recently, as the Worcester News celebrated in words and photographs, the restoration of the clock. Rev Jo Musson of St. George's writes on their website: "Ian loved this church and gave a lifetime of enthusiastic and committed service and leadership to its management, fabric, finance, music and fellowship".

A Memorial Service for Ian will be held at St. George's Barbourne on Saturday 16 Sept, 6.00pm.

Ann Randall



Ann Randall sang Alto in WFCS and at Three Choirs. Ann was born in Blackpool. She joined the choir at her local Baptist Church and performed in some amateur dramatic productions.

Ann moved to London in 1962 and sang in local choirs. After she and Fred, who is now a WFCS Patron, married in 1967, and they moved to Surrey in 1973, she sang regularly with larger and smaller, usually unaccompanied, groups, including CODA (Croydon Operatic and Dramatic Association) and the Jubilate Singers. In Hertfordshire from 1983 she sang with the St Alban's Bach Choir and the Elstree Singers, an unaccompanied group. Ann joined WFCS after moving to Ladywood in 1993. She maintained her interest in unaccompanied singing for many years with the Julian Singers under Sheila Quine.

Away from singing, Ann enjoyed Scottish Country Dancing, gardening, bridge and Hadzor & Oddingley WI. She dearly loved the Malvern Hills, she volunteered at the Elgar Birthplace Museum, and she gave time also to Worcester's Cards For Good Causes arrangements at Christmas.

In all her busy life Ann enjoyed nothing more than the company of her and Fred's daughter and son and their five grandchildren.

Norman Robertson-Smith



Norman Robertson-Smith sang Tenor in WFCS and at Three Choirs. He sang in the Bromsgrove Choral Society for some 14 years before joining WFCS in 2011.

Norman was born in Oswestry and lived in his early years at his father's various Army postings. He went to Birmingham University, then to Reading, then lived during the rest of his life never far from Malvern which he regarded as where he was really brought up. From an early age he was interested in playing the piano and in choral singing. After qualifying as a solicitor he joined the firm of Pugh, Fisher, Holyoake and Foster, which became Morton Fisher and later the present MFG Solicitors, who, through Norman's introduction, and the valued commitment of their present Managing Director Suzanne Lee and Marketing Manager Lizzie Armstrong, are welcome WFCS concert programme advertisers.

In the course of his distinguished legal career Norman took a case against the UK Government to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, and won. Voluntarily, Norman was Chair of the Official Prison Visitors at HMP Long Lartin. Prison Visitors befriend prisoners and monitor their welfare. General Sir David (now Lord) Ramsbotham, when Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons, said: "No praise can be too high for the work of the voluntary Official Prison Visitors".

Norman was a Churchwarden at Tibberton. Soon after Norman and Sally moved there Norman sang with The Bowbrook Singers, drawn from all the Bowbrook parishes, in a performance of Messiah as part of Millennium celebrations. Members of WFCS were among the choir at Norman's funeral at St Andrew's, Ombersley, and his family were touched and grateful for the cards and letters they received.

WFCS COMMITTEE

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 506826

CHAIRMAN	Ben Cooper (B)	b.cooper@lineone.net	01684 541421
TREASURER	David Norledge (T)	dnorledge@moog.com	07930 982752
GENERAL SECRETARY	Lesley Bellerby (A)	bellerbylp9@btinternet.com	01562 820409
LIBRARIAN	Jenny Brumhead (A)	jnbrumhead@gmail.com	01905 763299
CHORAL CHRONICLE & PROGRAMME ADVERTISING	Toby Hooper (T)	hooper.toby@btopenworld.com	07917 808449
TICKETS SECRETARY	Judy Jenkins (A)	jgjenkins@btinternet.com	01905 354533
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Sally Rees (S)	rees.sallyjane@gmail.com	01684 564721
PATRONS SECRETARY	Anne Renshaw (S)	annerenshaw@me.com	01905 351736
SOCIAL SECRETARY	Sue White (S)	susanwhite36@btinternet.com	07970 597229
MARKETING & PUBLICITY	Michelle Whitefoot (S)	michelle@whitefootpr.co.uk	01886 812779

Keep your eye on www.worcesterfestivalchoralsociety.org.uk for updates and member information all year round – and help promote our concerts on Social Media:



[Worcester Festival Choral Society](http://www.worcesterfestivalchoralsociety.org.uk)



[@WorcsChoral](https://twitter.com/WorcsChoral)