



NEWSLETTER

April 2004

LAST TERM

Spring has arrived at last; the long dark evenings of winter are gone, the spring flowers are in full bloom and the first buds and blossom on the trees remind us again as we approach Easter of new life. We have experienced new life in the life of the choir as our younger members have settled in and are beginning to add their own contribution both vocally and socially. The fact that we still have a greater number of students waiting to join the choir than there are places available ten years after its formation continues to be a source of hope and encouragement for the future.

This past term has been relatively short; it heralded the start of our 10th anniversary celebrations and the usual concert commitments have continued to keep us busy.

In January we visited St. James' Methodist Church again as part of their Musical Concert Series. As usual we were made very

welcome and were able to provide a wide and varied programme. We are always appreciative of our members willing to contribute solo items and we were particularly pleased to include members singing solos for the first time on this occasion.

As many of you are aware our concert diary fills up quickly and many of our bookings are made twelve months in advance. We are always glad to accept invitations to sing at new venues and The People's Mission, Netherton was one such venue at the beginning of March. The acoustics of this large building were a singer's delight and what can only be described as a banquet enjoyed by singers and audience alike afterwards is a continued topic of conversation among the choir. £155 was raised in aid of Mary Stevens Hospice on this occasion.

Ingestre Hall, a seventeenth century Jacobean mansion set in the heart of the Staffordshire countryside, was the setting for a vocal residential weekend. The

main purpose of this was to prepare for the forthcoming production of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' but workshops also focused on vocal techniques, breathing, voice projection, diction and annunciation which were fun as well as educational. Everyone enjoyed the freedom to roam at will around this huge house and twenty-eight acres of ground, so much so that we plan to return to make a new choir recording next year.

The term drew to a close with a packed concert at Kingswinford Methodist Church when the choir presented a programme of music with a spring theme.

COME AND SING

You are warmly invited to join us in a 'Come and Sing' performance of Stainer's 'Crucifixion' at Central Methodist Church, Wolverhampton Street, Dudley, on Wednesday 7th April. This was the first large-scale cantata we sang ten years ago. There will be a rehearsal for singers at

7.15pm followed by a short break for a cold drink at 8pm. The performance proper will begin at 8.15pm when non-singers will be welcome to join us as the congregation. The soloists on this occasion will be Roy Boucher and Richard Skilbeck, two former members of the choir now at University, and the conductor will be Rosemary Philips of Viva Musica. Admission is free but there will be a free-will retiring offering in aid of the Edwards Trust, a charity which offers free accommodation for parents of sick children from around the country being cared for at the Princess Diana (Children's) Hospital in Birmingham. Please bring your own score if you have one: we have a limited supply of spare copies. Details for performance will be given out on the evening.

CONCERTS

You are warmly invited to join us at forthcoming concerts detailed below.

Saturday 8th May
**LIVE AND LOCAL
 CONCERT SERIES**
 7.30pm
 St. James' Church,
 Wollaston

Wednesday 26th May
**SONGS FROM THE
 SHOWS**
 7.30pm
 Dixons Green Methodist
 Church, Dudley

PRODUCTION

We invite you to join us at our annual production at the end of April. A booking form is included with this newsletter. The production will be a staged performance of the Andrew Lloyd-Webber hit musical 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat', made possible by the provision of a generous grant from the Arts Council of England. Performances are as follows:

Thursday 29th April
**DORMSTON THEATRE
 SEGLEY**

7.30pm

Friday 30th April
**SUMMERHILL SCHOOL
 KINGSWINFORD**

7.30pm

Saturday 1st May
**TIPTON GREEN
 METHODIST CHURCH**

2.30pm

Saturday 1st May
**CENTRAL METHODIST
 CHURCH, DUDLEY**

7.30pm

Tickets are on sale at £3.50 adults and £1.75 children including a programme. We look forward to seeing you.

Songs of Praise

Do join us if you are able for a Songs of Praise service in the grounds of Dudley Castle on Sunday 20th June at 7.00pm. Summerhill will feature as the guest choir and will also join an augmented choir, Salvation Army band, radio presenter, civic dignitaries and a congregation of

several thousand. The evening will include well-known hymns with both a traditional and modern flavour. Admission is free.

SUMMER CONCERT

On Saturday 26th June we are hosting a joint concert with Viva Musica in the Summerhill School Hall. The programme will include joint items, individual choir and solo items, all with a varied flavour. This is an opportunity for us to share our new facilities and we hope to fill the hall with a capacity audience. Tickets will be on sale shortly at £3.00 each, which will include a glass of wine or fruit juice at the interval.

PROMS

During the life of the choir we have experimented with summer concerts both in the evening and during the afternoon. This year we shall be trying something new. You are invited to join us for a 'Last Night of the Proms' on Saturday 10th July at Central Methodist Church, Dudley, beginning at 7.00pm. The programme will feature music from around the British Isles, together with the traditional flag waving 'Rule Britannia' and 'Land Of Hope And Glory'. Strawberries and apple juice will be served at the interval. Tickets will be on sale at £3.00 each.