



# NEWSLETTER

January 2004

## HAPPY NEW YEAR

On behalf of the Choral Society may I wish you all a happy, peaceful, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Last term saw the usual changes in membership as several of our more senior members left to continue their studies at Sixth Form College or University. Whilst we are sad to say goodbye to those who have given loyal support we are always glad to welcome new members and this term was no exception. Recruiting boys into the choir is always difficult and it has been very encouraging to see a growing number of boys attending choral groups in school this past term. Equally encouraging has been the number of boys admitted to the Choral Society. Wesley Biggs, Ryan Jones, Luke Mason and Adam Soley join the tenors whilst Alex Butler joins the bass; we hope their stay with us will be a long and happy one.

Our concert diary last term was a mixture of concerts in

local churches, Choral Evensong at Birmingham Cathedral and our usual Christmas Concerts. This year we were joined by the Kings' String Quartet and Glynne Primary School Choir and were very encouraged by the large audiences attending. We were also very pleased to hear that a concert held in the new school hall in November in aid of Macmillan Nurses raised £1200.

## 10th Year

2004 is a very special one for the choir because it marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its foundation. Although the actual month is September we have planned a series of celebrations and special events over the coming year. Having looked through the archive materials roughly three hundred students have belonged to the Choral Society during that time. Some of them still keep in touch with us and we are always interested to hear from them; some are now teachers themselves, others are involved in the theatre,

quite a number have settled outside the Midlands area and others are now settled with children. Others found their musical inspiration through the life of the choir and continue to be involved in choral and instrumental groups. That in itself makes all the hard work and dedication of students and staff worthwhile.

It is therefore right and proper that we should mark this milestone not only so that we can look back to what has passed but also so that we can move forward. We are encouraged by the fact that the number of students waiting to join exceeds the number of places available, a very positive sign that the life of the choir is guaranteed for the foreseeable future.

## CONCERTS

Many of our concerts are organised by local churches in aid of a variety of good causes. We invite you to join us at any of our concerts this term, details of which are included overleaf.

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January  
**MUSICAL CONCERT  
SERIES**

7.45pm

St. James' Methodist  
Church, Pensnett

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March  
**SPRING CONCERT**

7.00pm

The People's Mission,  
Netherton

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March  
**VOICES OF SPRING**

7.00pm

Kingswinford Methodist  
Church

## ReSiDeNtial

During the weekend of March 5<sup>th</sup> –7<sup>th</sup> the choir will be involved with a singing weekend at Ingestre Hall, a Jacobean mansion set in the Staffordshire countryside. No matter how well planned there never seems to be enough rehearsal time, especially for large-scale concerts and productions. The main purpose of the weekend is to prepare for our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary production at the end of April which will involve four performances of Andrew Lloyd-Webber's hit musical 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat'. We shall be spending time concentrating upon improving and extending various vocal techniques as well as working on the music for 'Joseph'. We are pleased that a number of parents and students in school will

be involved in the production this year and some of them will be joining us at Ingestre Hall. Publicity flyers and booking forms for tickets will be distributed at the end of February. We are hoping for bumper audiences this year to help us celebrate not only our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary but the culmination of a £5000 project made possible by a grant from the Arts Council of England.

## COME AND SING

The first large-scale choral work ever sung by the Choral Society was Stainer's 'Crucifixion', performed at Central Methodist Church during Holy Week 1994. We were then in the formative stage of the present day choir and were then known as the St. Cecilia Chorale, so named after the patron saint of music. On that occasion our soloists were Charles Renshaw, a member of staff working with Dudley Performing Arts, and Alan Fairs of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. We have continued a tradition of performing this at Central usually every other year. This year we shall be doing the same at Central Methodist Church, Dudley, on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April, beginning at 7.30pm, but this year we would like you to join in with a 'Come and Sing' event. Rosemary Phillips of Viva Musica will be conducting and leading a short rehearsal of the chorus parts before the

performance proper. Our soloists this year will be Roy Boucher (Tenor) and Richard Skilbeck (Bass), two former members who are now studying at University but will be returning to join us. There will be a small number of scores available if you are unable to provide your own. Those of you who wish to listen but not sing will also be very welcome. Admission is free although there will be a retiring offering in aid of charity. Do join us if you are able, it would be lovely to see the church full as it has been on so many occasions when 'Crucifixion' has been sung.

## Website

Don't forget to visit our website for up to date information on the life and progress of the choir. The address is

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

## FUTURE EVENTS

Advance notice of some of our forthcoming events and concerts during the first half of this year.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April –  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May  
**'JOSEPH AND THE  
AMAZING  
TECHNICOLOR  
DREAMCOAT'**

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July  
**'LAST NIGHT OF THE  
PROMS'**