



## Summer Newsletter – August 2020

Normally over the summer the Committee would be in touch with members and friends with reflections on the last season and information about the forthcoming season. O that this was all possible in these strange times! Welcome, nevertheless to a much-curtailed version of our newsletter.



### IMPACT OF COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS – AN UPDATE

Sadly, during the period since the secretary wrote to members, there has been little progress in determining when the choir will be able to commence rehearsing and performances. Further government guidance regarding singing and musical performances generally, was received earlier in August, but sadly the guidance did not really take the Committee any further forward in planning to safely restart Bach Society activities. Essentially all the regulations/guidance regarding social distancing and the sanitising requirements placed upon venues remains unchanged. Until such time as rehearsal and performance venues feel that they can safely open, it will not be possible for the choir to start up again. We will of course, keep in touch with our rehearsal venue and Sheffield Cathedral authorities as plans progress. This is a huge disappointment to the Committee as no doubt it will be to all our members, but safety must be everyone's first priority during these challenging times. Even if we were able to start singing again, we have to be mindful too of the potential impact of the Coronavirus on our audiences.

The Committee is mindful that even when we have the go-ahead, there may still be some members who do not feel they can take part. Whilst we all hope that the steps we and venues will have taken by that point enable everyone to feel confident to return, this clearly has implications for our plans too of course as we need a balanced choir! It is envisaged that when we get a little closer to 're-opening', we will survey all members to test out the practicality of the plans, whatever they may be!

So – as previously planned, the Committee is still hoping that by the new year, it may be possible to start rehearsals, but we will keep members informed as plans take shape. In the meantime a huge thankyou to everyone for your patience and understanding.



### Possible concert schedule for the 2020-21 season

Please note that it will not be practicable to produce a season brochure for 2020-21, nor will we be able to sell a season ticket. Some publicity will be arranged for any concerts that are able to go ahead and we hope that everyone will help to publicise events in addition to directing people to our website [www.sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk)

	<p><b>6 March 2021 (to be confirmed)</b>  <b>Bach St Matthew Passion</b>  <b>Sheffield Cathedral</b></p>
	<p>This performance of St Matthew Passion was already planned when our 2020-21 programme was impacted by Covid 19. In discussion with our conductor, the Committee are still hoping this can go ahead as planned. Simon's view is that this is much less demanding a work than St John and the vast majority of singers know the work very well. It may be that if we do go ahead with this, then rehearsals may be limited, so we would be dependent upon everyone use YouTube or other rehearsal tracks which would be circulated electronically, to refresh their personal knowledge of the work.</p> <p>We are hoping that the soloists previously booked will be able to join us too, but as with everything at the moment, we cannot be certain whether or not this concert can go ahead. Please watch this space for further news!!</p>
	<p><b>Late April 2021 (date to be confirmed)</b>  <b>Handel MESSIAH</b>  <b>Sheffield Cathedral</b></p>
	<p>Given that our annual performance of Handel's Messiah is a much-loved event in many people's calendar, the Committee thought this would be an ideal work to perform once we are able to sing again. Clearly this is music that we all know very well and in a 'normal' season, we would only allocate a couple of rehearsals to 'fine tune' the work, so this could be performed with minimal rehearsal time. The date suggested to Sheffield Cathedral is <b>Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021</b>, but for obvious reasons this is only a provisional booking at this stage, as we will have to be guided by others, including the Cathedral about the feasibility of this.</p>
	<p><b>Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2021 (to be confirmed)</b>  <b>'The Brilliance of Bach'</b>  <b>St Mark's Church Broomhill</b></p>
	<p>Again, assuming we are able to go ahead, this concert has been moved from October 2020 and will have broadly the same programme. Most of you already have a purple folder containing much of the music for this concert. The remainder of the purple folders have been residing in the boot of my car since we last met! These, and the remaining music for this concert will be distributed just as soon as we next meet. To remind everyone, the programme for this concert will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Jesu Joy of man's desiring</li> <li>❖ Sheep may safely graze</li> <li>❖ Jesu, meine Freude</li> <li>❖ Cantata 118 – O Jesu Christ, meins Lebens Licht</li> <li>❖ Popular Bach organ pieces including his Toccata &amp; Fugue in D minor</li> <li>❖ Orchestral suite in B minor (dances only)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>From our Chairman . . .</b></p>
	<p>These are indeed strange times and it will be odd not to be back on a Monday night at the start of September. However, hopefully as things move on, we will be able to set a date. There are not only the social distancing issues but those of a larger group using a building used by others, personal confidence, cleaning surfaces after use and probably</p>

	<p>things as yet to develop or alter.</p> <p>I have great hopes for a start to our concert season in March and we are fortunate that St Matthew is a piece that we are familiar with. It is likely that rehearsal will be limited and so there will be some homework to do but more on that later as it becomes evident what we can and can't do.</p> <p>I have been decorating at the Chantrey centre in Norton and gardening busily. I am sure that many of you will have had the chance to tidy that cupboard that needed attention and I hope now that things are slightly more relaxed you have had the opportunity to meet with family and friends in appropriate environments.</p> <p>As Liz said we will keep you updated on possible dates etc and will also be keen to see how members feel about returning when we have some sort of plan. In the mean time I wish you all well and hope that it is not too long before we can all meet up again and start singing.</p> <p><i>Chris Walker</i>  Chairman  <a href="mailto:chairman@sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk">chairman@sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk</a></p>
	<p><b>From our Treasurer . . .</b></p>
	<p>As treasurer I would like to thank members for their continuing support of the choir through subscriptions, donations, sponsorship and fundraising all of which helps the choir remain resilient financially in these uncertain times. We are particularly grateful for a bequest from Eric Stuart which we hope to put towards the St Matthew performance if it is able to go ahead. Some members will remember Eric, who was our continuo 'cellist for many years.</p> <p>I would also like to thank everyone in adjusting to our change in bank account. If you are not sure of our new bank details, the sort code is 08-92-99, account no. 65877757. Subscriptions for 2020-21 will be reviewed once we know when the season can restart and will be based on the number of concerts we are able to put on. Obviously any additional donations are always welcome and will help to support the payment of our conductor and accompanist.</p> <p>Finally I would like to thank the generosity of audience and choir members who helped raise £1076 for the Cathedral Archer project in the retiring collection after December's Messiah.</p> <p><i>Kitty Ross</i>  Treasurer  <a href="mailto:treasurer@sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk">treasurer@sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk</a></p>
	<p><b>From our social secretary. . .</b></p>
	<p>It seems a very long time since we were last drinking tea or coffee at break, completely unaware that such simple pleasures would soon be denied us. It's a true saying that you don't know what you've got 'till it's gone. But thankfully it's also true that things can and do get better – which they will!</p>

	<p>I still need to thank those who sorted the refreshments each week, the folk who brought biscuits, and everyone who made scones, buns or biscuits for the monthly stall. Thanks to Pam and Vicky for providing tea-time meals for Simon, our soloists and accompanists – sadly on fewer occasions this season of course. Thanks also to Chris, Liz, Michael and Simon, for their continued support and help, and to everyone for being so positive and helpful – I really appreciate it.</p> <p>It seems a lifetime ago now, but thank you to everyone who attended the President’s dinner at the Silver Plate in February; we had a super evening, the meal was wonderful and you all made it so easy to organise – many thanks.</p> <p>Sadly we are unlikely to need mince pie and wine or juice donations this year, but let’s hope it won’t be too long before we are back together again and I’m badgering everyone for donations of something! Best wishes</p> <p><i>Anne Adams</i>  Social Secretary  <a href="mailto:anne.adams1954@gmail.com">anne.adams1954@gmail.com</a></p>
	<p><b>From our Conductor . . .</b></p>
	<p>It gives me much pleasure to be able to send special greetings to you all and to yours towards the end of August at the time when we would, under more normal circumstances, be getting geared up for our return to rehearsals following the Summer break! It is warmly to be hoped that we may be back with some live music in the early part of the next calendar year and I commend warmly to you the provisional schedule that has been drawn up by the Officers and Committee to occupy us during March, April and June. Additionally, 2021 is the centenary of the birth of legendary Bach Choir Conductor, Dr Roger Bullivant, and we will be finding a chance to commemorate that significant anniversary during the months ahead.</p> <p><i>Simon Lindley</i>  Conductor  <a href="mailto:lindleysimon@gmail.com">lindleysimon@gmail.com</a></p>
	<p><b>And finally  From the Secretary . . .</b></p>
	<p><b>CHOIR NEWS</b></p> <p>Over that last months I have heard from sopranos Clara Helladay, who has moved back to Sweden with her family and Deborah Varney who is now working away from Sheffield. Tenor Laurence Coates and basses John Beckett and Alan Yarranton have also cut back on their singing during the last few months. All these singers will be missed by all of us and I have sent thanks and good wishes to them all.</p> <p><b>KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH CHOIR MEMBERS</b></p> <p>When we are up and running again, the occasional announcements on Monday evening cannot be avoided, but the Committee do try very hard to keep the number of verbal announcements down and will continue to communicate with members via email. <b>Please make sure that you let me know if you change your email address.</b> Please also remember that under the GDPR legislation it is not possible to share individuals’ contact</p>

details with members without first gaining their consent.

### **MUSIC**

Please could everyone still hold onto their purple folder which I hope we will put to good use in June 2021! If we are able to go ahead with performances of St Matthew and Messiah, I am sure everyone will remember that you will need your own copy of these works, although we have a very small number of 'emergency' copies!!

We are living in ever changing times, and even as I type, further guidance has just been received from Making Music! We will be digesting this and keep in touch with you all if there are any changes to our current plans. In the meantime, best wishes from me too and I look forward to seeing everyone again as soon as it is safe to do so! Please keep safe and well.

*Liz Buxton*

Secretary

[secretary@sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk](mailto:secretary@sheffieldbachchoir.org.uk)