



# Newsletter

## Welcome to the new season

We cannot begin a new season without commenting on the close of the last one. Our Victorian Evening proved to be a big success with an appreciative audience. A great many compliments were paid, not just to the quality of our singing, but also to the costumes and particularly the splendid Victorian-themed food. A huge vote of thanks goes to the indefatigable Anne Symons for the enormous amount of work she (and her helpers) did to serve up such a magnificent feast.

Thank you Anne, and thanks also to everyone else who undertook the countless jobs required to stage such a successful, enjoyable and, as Brian points out elsewhere, very profitable close to the

season.

During the summer break some of us had the privilege to attend the concert given at All Saints in Crowborough by the brilliant and internationally renowned vocal group Voces8. Their singing was truly inspiring and certainly made me want to aspire to the standards they set.

Now our own new season is only a few days away. Wednesday 3 September sees our first rehearsal - an earlier start than usual as our November concert is at the beginning of the month to coincide with Remembrance weekend. Our programme of Elgar's *Spirit of England* and *In Flanders Fields* by Noel Bannister represents our commemoration of the

outbreak the *Great War* in 1914. Our old friend Richard Sidaway returns as tenor soloist. Those of us lucky enough to have heard him when he performed the *Spirit of England* with us in 2004 will remember how moving it was to hear him sing the famous words from the poems of Laurence Binyon.

As ever, please try and persuade as many of your family, friends and acquaintances to buy a ticket and come along and share what promises to be a poignant yet uplifting evening.

**Jane**

Newsletter  
Editor



Born in Lancaster in 1869, Laurence Binyon was an art scholar, but also a poet and dramatist.

Moved by the casualties suffered by the British Expeditionary Force at the opening of the Great War, he wrote his poem *For the Fallen* while visiting the north Cornwall coast (there is a commemorative plaque at both Polzeath and Portreath). The piece was published in Binyon's volume of poetry *The Winning Fan* late in 1914.

The famous lines from the fifth stanza 'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them' still resonate as part of services of Remembrance today, and are included in Edward Elgar's *Spirit of England* (see Page 2).



Laurence Binyon (1869-1943)

### Dates for your diary

First Rehearsal Autumn Term	3 September
Additional Sunday rehearsal (tbc)	19 October
AGM (and rehearsal)	22 October
Concert—Elgar <i>Spirit of England</i> /Bannister <i>In Flanders Fields</i>	8 November
Easter Concert—Mozart C minor Mass (joint concert with Fletching Singers)	21 March 2015

# 'In truth the very voice of England'

In January 1915, Sir Edward Elgar's friend Sir Sidney Colvin suggested that he write a Requiem for those who had already died in the Great War, 'something in the spirit of Binyon's *For the Fallen*', which first appeared in the volume *The Winnowing Fan* in late 1914.

Elgar was deeply affected by the suffering caused by the war and readily accepted the idea, immediately setting to work sketching three of Binyon's poems for tenor or soprano solo, chorus and orchestra: *The Fourth of August*, *To Women* and, as the climax of the work, *For the Fallen* itself.

*To Women* and *For the Fallen* were first performed in Leeds on 3 May 1916 but *The Fourth of August* was not completed for another year. Elgar had deep musical and emotional ties to Germany and cannot have found it easy

to set this poem, which describes Germany as 'vampire of Europe's wasted will'. However, the horrors of Verdun and the Somme during 1916 hardened Elgar's feelings towards the country that had championed his music and he completed the setting in 1917. It was performed in the autumn, with the first performance of the complete work entitled *Spirit of England* (from a line in *For the Fallen*) later in the year.

Dedicated 'to the memory of our glorious men', *Spirit of England* reflects the mixed emotions of the Great War, standing between the gentility of Edwardian England and the horrors that were to tear Europe apart over the next half century. At the time, this resonant and powerful work was regarded as 'in truth the very voice of England'.



Sir Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

## From the Treasurer

As we prepare for another season of music we can look back on our Victorian Evening in June 2014, with supper in St Michael's Church Hall, Jarvis Brook.

The evening went off well and everyone attending enjoyed themselves. More to the point, the final account shows that we made a profit of £347.28, which was in no small way down to the bar takings of £169.97.

We were also fortunate in that choir members gave a sum of £159.00 towards the cost of the food for the supper. This did not quite cover the entire cost but made a big difference to the final total.

**Brian**



## Next term's music

Regarding the music for next term, a few copies of Elgar's *Spirit of England* will be available to buy at a cost of £7.50. For those of you wishing to hire copies of the Elgar the cost will be £3.

Noel Bannister's *In Flanders Fields* will have to be purchased by everyone at a cost of around £1.50 each.

**Sheila**



## 100 Club latest

For those of you not familiar with the 100 Club, for £12 you are allocated a number between 1-100. This is entered into the six prize draws each year. Half the funds collected are returned to members by three cash prizes each draw, with a bonus fourth prize at Christmas. The rest of the money goes towards choir funds to help finance our concerts (a great help when ticket sales can be so variable). Last year the 100 Club raised almost £350 for choir funds, and the winnings were spread between almost a third of our members. So why

don't you join the 100 Club? I have received some money for 2014-15 from existing members (and a big thank you to those people). I shall be collecting money at rehearsals during September. Many of the choir buy membership for other family members. You stand a good chance of winning a prize for you and family and really help boost choir funds too. Our first draw is on 8th October.

Good luck!

**Joyce**



## Annual General Meeting

Crowborough Choral Society hereby gives notice that in accordance with the Society's Constitution the AGM for 2014 will be held on:

Wednesday 22 October 2014.

[www.crowboroughchoral.com](http://www.crowboroughchoral.com)

