



Newsletter

Musings from the Chair

We opened 2018 with an excellent concert at Mayfield School, a lovely venue which is new to us. Members of the audience tell me that the choir's sound was excellent and that even in the pianissimo passages the choir were clearly heard above the Killick Ensemble, our wonderful players. I also thought that the orchestra's rendition of the Brandenburg No. 3 was electrifying. Singing to an almost full house, with a great acoustic and excellent soloists, was a superb experience. The choir has received nothing but praise for this concert and we should all be really proud of ourselves.

The Public Engagement Programme (PEP) is well

under way. Late March saw our specially commissioned advertisement go public with a free spot in 'Word on the Street', which is distributed to over 6000 homes in Crowborough. Our thanks go to Penny Lindley and Ros Foskett, who have worked really hard on the PEP. I know that they would like some more help as the programme develops, so if you feel you could give an hour or so of your time, do let them know.

Some of you may remember our first 'gig' with Mark when we sang in a showcase event after the Crowborough Festival singing workshops in May 2017. We impressed quite a lot of people that day

and, as a result, even though the Festival proper only happens every two years, the Trustees and Mark have been asked to explore the possibility of giving a concert with community involvement during the October half term. Details are as yet still under discussion, but we are hoping to involve at least one of the other choirs in Crowborough and to commission a specially written work. It is all exciting stuff and proves we are being taken very seriously.

In the meantime, we look forward to preparing for 'A Night at the Opera' this coming term.

Keith



Photos: Nigel Cassford

You can see more photos from our Mayfield concert in the Members' area of the website and also on our Facebook page.

In fact, if you haven't done so already, why not follow us on Facebook.



Dates for your diary

First Rehearsal Summer Term	18 April
A Night at the Opera—Concert at United Church, Crowborough	23 June
Crowborough Community Concert—Beacon Academy (exact date tbc)	October
Armistice Concert: Campling Dona Nobis Pacem —St Denys Rotherfield	10 November

A Night at the Opera ...

No, this is not the 1935 Marx Brothers film, or the 1975 album by Queen, but our summer concert for this year! For our concert in June we'll be drawing on Mark's particular expertise to sing some opera.

Rather than just perform assorted choruses from various different operas, Mark's plan is for us to sing a selection of extended extracts, to include choruses and arias from favourite operas.

As an example, from Bizet's *Carmen*, we'll be performing the Flower Song, Habanera, the Toreador Song, and the March of the Toreadors, either sung by the choir or by one of our soloists.

As well as *Carmen*, the evening will include selected extracts from Verdi's *La Traviata* and Puccini's *Tosca*, among others.

The concert will take place in the United Church in Crowborough, to be followed by supper in the church hall.



Nick Milner-Gulland

Many of us have fond memories of working under the baton of Nick Milner-Gulland when CCS and Fletching Singers joined forces to perform Dvorak's 'Stabat Mater' and Haydn's 'Creation', among other works. As you probably know, Nick died last November. However, prior to that he had announced his intention to retire as Musical Director of Fletching Singers at Easter this year.

His final performance as MD with Fletching was to be Bach's St Matthew Passion, as a joint venture with East Sussex Bach Choir (ESBC). Fletching and ESBC decided to go ahead with the concert as a memorial to Nick. His place with the baton was taken by John Hancorn, and the concert took place the

day after CCS sang at Mayfield.

It was a very special and moving performance, with the period instruments of the Baroque Collective providing the two orchestras. Nick Pritchard, who sang the Evangelist in the St John Passion for us last year, once more performed beautifully. All Saints, Hove, which holds 500, was packed.

The concert was a fitting tribute to Nick. Anna Milner-Gulland said in an email to the choir: "Nick would have been both cheering and in tears!"

Keith



100 Club news

I hope all you 100 Clubbers had a Happy Easter. Unfortunately we couldn't manage our usual Easter draw due to the pesky snow and an early Easter putting paid to plans.

So instead, we will have our bumper draw with extra prize money, subtly changed into the 100 Club Spring Draw this year!

This will be held when we resume rehearsals after Easter. That will be the fifth of the six draws in our series, leaving one more draw in May,

making a total of eight more prizes to be won.

Well done to all those 100 Clubbers who have won a prize so far. It has been great to see a mixture of new and long-term members winning this year.

Good luck everyone.

Joyce



Next term's music

First of all, congratulations on a 100% return of copies after the last concert. I think that is the first time ever!

Next term Mark is producing another medley of operatic extracts in one book. This is the same principle as the summer concert last year and makes my life a great deal easier when we are singing extracts from several different sources. These books will be available for sale only and will cost £5 a copy.

Sheila

