HARROGATE THEATRE CHOIR - NEWSLETTER SPRING 2026

Happy half term to all of you!

Well, the last five months seem to have flown past and it's timely for a quick review of what's past and an update on what's to come!

Newby Hall

By the time some of you have read this (right to the end, please!) we may have performed in Newby Hall gardens. As I write this the sun is shining and is forecast to continue for Sunday; it promises to be an interesting afternoon, as outdoor gigs always prove to be! It's a lovely venue, however, and hopefully we will be entertaining a big crowd, with an opportunity to recruit some audience for our concert on 19 June in Harrogate.

Raffles

You will have seen Gerry's message about supporting Candlelighters at that concert, by raffling one of our amazing hampers, and why we decided to help the charity in its 50th year. I know how generous you all are and am sure that we will raise a goodly sum through your efforts.

We will also be raffling a hamper (or two) at our sell-out Christmas concert at the West Park Centre. The chosen charity is Capture, set up by Vicky Robayna in memory of her photographer daughter Liz Hatton, whose images made national headlines before her untimely death last year. As a Harrogate charity she is delighted it has been selected and her enthusiastic responses suggests we can expect a lot of support.

Choir uniform

On the subject of concerts, at our last Committee meeting it was commented that the appearance of Members singing at concerts has been markedly better and you have all the heeded the request to follow the guidelines. It all helps to support the increasingly professional approach of HTC!

Highlights

Not a summary of our many good points but a plea, please – Mel does a tremendous job collating and distributing music to us all and requests that any marks in HTC copies are made in pencil only. There is some 'evidence' that a few singers are using *highlighter pens* to emphasise their voice parts – please do not do this. If there are permanent marks like these on scores when they are returned you will be charged for replacement of the score. Mel has also sent out the definitive list of music which we should each have – please check that you have it all!

Gerry

We have been served extremely well and very long in her role by Gerry but the time is fast approaching when she needs to rebalance and step back from promoting our activities single-handedly, be it social media, legacy print, posters, seeking advertisers etc – you get the message. There are 52 Members of HTC and somewhere amongst you there will be experience

of what we need - we are looking for two or three of those not already involved actively in the promotion of our concerts to form a publicity group to work with the Committee and take forward the fabulous but exhausting foundation which Gerry has laid. I know that she will want to continue involvement to some extent but she also needs a large proportion of her life back! I'm sure she will want to continue to take an active part but please let her know if you can help.

Abbey Road 2028

I have outlined a preferred programme for a recording session at Abbey Road Studios which I hope will allow as many HTC Members to take part in what is an awesome experience (I still have a copy of the CD we 'cut' in another choir!). By going down by coach late afternoon/early evening on the Friday – exact dates are not yet agreed – recording all day Saturday and returning late that night, I hope those with caring responsibilities will be able to make arrangements; this plan also keeps costs within sensible bounds. We have a recording fund set aside and there will be an element of subsidy for the costs and we will seek to use group discount (eg on overnight accommodation) as far as possible at the next meeting of the Committee - to plan concerts in 2028 and 2029 – we will go firm on date and approach Abbey Road to book; unsurprisingly it always a popular venue and early booking is essential.

Whilst it is too early at this stage to ask for firm commitment (with deposits!), we will need to avoid Easter (16 April) and I would ask that you 'reserve' Fridays/Saturdays in mid- to late-March in your diaries where possible.

Concerts to come ….

Following our cancellation of the concert in Northallerton, our next concert at West Park Centre is on Friday 19 June is an 'upgrade' from the 'pop-up' we had planned. For the remainder of the term, we'll be working towards our Autumn highlight at the Crown Hotel on Sunday 18 October – we're hoping to rehearse there on the day before so keep that clear for the moment, please.

We have now been notified that the concert in Ripon on 21 November, which we had added to the programme, has been cancelled but **please keep the date** in your diaries as there is somewhere else under discussion. And then our Christmas concert at West Park Centre to round off a busy year of performing.

….. Summer Party

Those of you who came last year will remember the epic party at Tim's and they have once again offered to host the Choir on Saturday 11 July. Allison will be in touch with more details but please make it if you can – wives, husbands, partners, children, fine weather all welcome!

And that's quite sufficient for now … thank you for reading and see you next Thursday if not before!!

Keep practising!

Andrew