

BACK TO 'NORMAL'

Thank you to all the members who contributed to making the 2022/23 Season much closer to normal. It was marvellous to come back with a bang with *Carmina Burana*, *In the Fen Country* and contemporary composer Dani Howard's *Argentum* in November and I will report more on the season in my Chairman's speech to the AGM on 4 July.

Members will remember that a subcommittee, led by Catrina Nixon, is seeking to commission Dani Howard to write a substantial choral and orchestral work for The Phil on the theme of Welcoming Strangers for performance in the Norfolk & Norwich Festival in 2025. Although some funding has been secured, we are waiting for news from the Arts Council on whether they will provide the substantial funding needed to progress the project. Further funding will still be required if that is confirmed and we hope that members and supporters will be able to help us to achieve our goal of realising this exciting project.

At the AGM current committee members are prepared to be re-elected. Alex Atherton (Choir) and Steve Kent-Davies (Orchestra) are due to step down. If others would be prepared to take

on these positions, they would be very welcome to put their names forward. If not, both Alex and Steve have kindly indicated that they would be happy to be re-elected.

Following the sad death of Sue Prutton, we are looking for a new Front-of-House manager, so please do consider if you know of anyone who would be interested in taking on this role. Details can be obtained from Alison Rhodes.

We are also still looking to recruit a Publicity Officer. As we have a variety of venues for the coming season, effective publicity will be even more important. Catrina has done a sterling job in doing much of this work including press releases, press liaison and social media but has many other commitments and it would be a great boon if someone was prepared to put themselves forward to take on this role. They do not have to be a member of the Society.

There is a vacancy for a public representative as well.

I hope to see many of you at the Jazz Picnic on 3 June or the AGM on 4 July and wish you a very enjoyable summer.

Caroline Dixey

New Choral Boss

The Choir have been very busy over the last few weeks trialling the candidates to be the new Norwich Phil Choral conductor.

David Dunnett has been the Choral Conductor for over twenty-seven years and will be an almost impossible act to follow, but we are delighted to announce that Ashley Grote, Master of Music at Norwich Cathedral, has been appointed to the post. Although both other candidates were very strong, it is a great pleasure to be continuing the long-standing relationship between The Phil and Norwich Cathedral. Ashley will take up the baton starting from September 2024.

Many thanks to so many members for participating in the auditions and giving feedback on each of the candidates to the sub-committee and helping to inform their decision.



Ashley Grote, new Choral Conductor

Programme for the 2023-24 Season

4 November 2023 - at the Halls

Elgar **The Kingdom**

9 December 2023 - at the Halls

Rimsky-Korsakov **Suite: The Snow Maiden**

Dohnányi **Variations on a Nursery Song**

Tchaikovsky **Symphony No. 4 in F minor**

Piano soloist - Martin Roscoe

19 December 2023 - at the Halls

Family Christmas Concert

9 March 2024 - at Norwich Cathedral

Beethoven **Symphony No. 5 in C minor**

Mozart **Requiem in D minor**

20 April 2024 - Norfolk Showground Arena

The Phil goes to the Movies

As the Halls will be closing for major repairs and renovations for at least 12 months from January 2024, we have had to make alternative venue arrangements for the second half of next season and that in turn has meant some changes to our usual programme schedule.

Most significantly, it's David Dunnett's last season with the Phil as Chorus Conductor. It seemed fitting that his last full choral concert should be in the traditional St Andrews Hall setting and so that will now take place in November at the start of the season instead of at the end. He has chosen **Elgar's The Kingdom**, for a suitably grand farewell.

The orchestral concert on 9th December features **Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony** with Martin Roscoe returning to play the *Variations on a Nursery Song* by **Dohnányi**, and then the **Family Christmas Concert** with both choir and orchestra takes place on 19th December.



Martin Roscoe, Dohnányi soloist

For the remainder of the season, it has been a challenge to find suitable alternative venues at short notice. We have managed to secure the Cathedral on 9th March for the half-and-half choral/orchestral concert. The choral half – sadly David's last appearance with us - is **Mozart's Requiem** and, as the Cathedral has smaller performing space, the orchestral work will be on a similar scale – **Beethoven's 5th Symphony**.

The second orchestral concert has had to be rescheduled to 20th April at the Showground Arena. We've chosen a programme of **classic and popular film music** from some of the greatest hits in cinema. Including music from the **Bond movies** and **John Williams**, as well as classic scores by **Erich Korngold** (*The Sea Hawk*) and **Bernard Hermann** (*North by North West*). Full details to follow, but hopefully it will draw a good crowd!

Catrina Nixon



Fearsomely easy questions from Matt Andrews and Caroline Furniss at the Phil's Annual Quiz on **Friday, 26th January 2024**

Put the date in your diaries, start watching *The Chase* and *Pointless* to get your brains in gear and dig out those classy hors d'oeuvre recipes to complement the Grosvenor Bar's sublime fish and chips. The Orchestra Team triumphed in 2023...

Choir Teams, it's time for revenge...

NOT Online!

AGM

The Phil's Annual General Meeting will be held on **7.00pm, Tuesday, 4th July, 2023**, at The George Hotel, Arlington Lane, Norwich

Great to be meeting up for real for our AGM this year. Watch out for the agenda and papers which will be circulated in early June. This is your opportunity to raise any issues. about the way the Phil is run.

Jazz in the Garden from 5:30pm, Saturday 3rd June at Hapton House, NR15 1AD



What could be nicer than chilling in a beautiful South Norfolk Garden with a picnic and a glass of fizz, listening to the Jazz Collective Trio, with music from the Phil Horn Quartet as you arrive?

All that, knowing that you're doing it in aid of the Norwich Phil and Hapton Church. Bring your own picnic, ticket includes a welcome glass of bubbly + one glass of wine or soft drink and a snack from the barbecue. There's even a heated pool and croquet available. Easy parking.

Tickets £25 - to book, click this link: bit.ly/3o7XXiy or scan the QR code:



Can't make it? Donate a Raffle Prize - [contact Sally W-L.](#)

Subscriptions



The Committee is still looking at the budgets for next season due to the complexities and additional cost associated with using different venues. They will agree the increase to the subscriptions on 31st May.

All Society members will be advised as soon after that as possible.

Taking a back seat

Ursula Pank, Leader of the Phil Cellos has decided it's time to take on a slightly easier role, a bit further back in the cello section.



Ursula Pank

Thank you Ursula, for your amazing (and



continuing) contribution to the Phil and the music we play. We are extremely grateful for all the experience you are able share.

Here you are getting some of that experience a couple of years back.

Farewell to Liz Marjoram, and welcome Christine Rayfield

Our amazing Orchestral Leader, Liz Marjoram played her final concert as Leader with the Phil in March this year: Mendelssohn's Elijah, which she says she loves. At a recent orchestra rehearsal, she was presented with a chocolate drinks machine, a framed photo of the orchestra and a lot of chocolate, in appreciation of the wonderful contribution she has made to the Orchestra. And then at the post-concert party, Caroline Dixey and David Dunnett thanked Liz for everything she has done, and she was presented with some flowers, wine, and yes, more chocolates! Liz is not leaving us altogether though. She's joining the altos of the Choir for more musical delights in future seasons.



Liz Marjoram



Leader chat



New Leader, Chris Rayfield

To step into Liz's near-unattainable shoes, we welcome Christine Rayfield.

Chris only joined the Phil string section in 2021, but is keen to get stuck into her new role. She picks up her Leader's bow for the first time in September later this year.

Choral Notes

What an eventful season! The joy of **Carmina Burana** drawing a keen audience; although some people might describe this as a love or hate piece! Wherever you stand, it does demand some stamina and good breath control. After the previous lack of rehearsals, due to Covid, it was a delight to be able to return to a sense of normality. Christmas was back on the agenda with all the traditional fun, and chance to sing some of those well loved hymns and carols. I sensed the audience, too, were so pleased to relax and have a great night! The New Year brought a challenge to a work we've not sung for a good while, **Elijah**. Rehearsals seemed to go on for ever to get us to achieve our best standards as we know maestro Dunnett won't settle for less!! The fabulous voice of Elijah really set the mood and took us, and the audience, with him to a great final concert.

Now comes the great realisation that our wonderfully popular and lovable conductor has only one season left with us! The Appointments Sub-Committee decided that they would go for an open competition to find David's successor. A process that had to be open, robust and fair. Having nine applicants tells its own story but can you imagine the pain of going through each one at an audition - Zadok nine times!! Fortunately the Sub-Committee managed to reduce it to three candidates, all of whom were interviewed before being given audition

slots. The task of getting full feedback from the choir members was felt to be essential and Diana Hare and I duly took on the task. We both agreed that it would not be possible to get everything we wanted after the rehearsal, given the time restrictions at the Hewett School, and we thought that the Survey Monkey method would give everyone a chance to say how they really felt in complete anonymity (also ensuring that those less computer-minded would be able to speak to one of us to have their input). Diana and I wish to offer you huge thanks for your input. More than 75% returns on each conductor was amazing. We also took turns in attending the Sub-Committee debrief, after each conductor. Me after Ashley, Diana after Benedict and both of us after Tim. We gave initial reactions to each and then I collated all the survey responses and passed them to Sally. You now all know the result, congratulations to Ashley! One final year with David and one final concert in the Cathedral, due to The Halls ongoing works, seems a fitting way to close a great chapter in the Phil's history.

I cannot finish without just saying how sad it is when long serving members leave this world and this year is no exception. Let's be grateful for all they have given to us and honour their memory in our music.

Paul Allen

ELIJAH IS GOING TO KOBLENZ



The Chorus are delighted to be going to Koblenz on 3-7th April 2024 to join the Kor Institut Koblenz for a second airing of **Mendelssohn's Elijah**. The performance in Norwich was very well received back in March, and after a 2 year delay due to Covid-19, the Koblenz choir are greatly looking forward to our visit.



Long Service Awards

We can't quite believe it but this year we awarded two Long Service Awards totalling a combined contribution of **127 years** singing with the Phil!

Margaret Rowe a stalwart of the Alto section notched up **67 years** and Dorothy Philpott, soprano, **60 years!** An incredible achievement for both ladies.

They were presented with their awards and flowers at the last rehearsal before the Christmas Concert when the Society was all together at St Andrews Hall.

And they're both still singing with us - well done them!



Dorothy and Margaret receiving their awards from David Dunnett

Major Overhaul for the Halls

The Halls are going to be out of action due to a major refurbishment which will take at least a year, starting January 2024.

As our regular 'concert home', this has been challenging for the Phil, to say the least. The end date is as yet unclear. We shall have to plan for it to last through the 2024/25 season as a precaution. But be assured, we will continue to make great music, even if the venues have to change.



Orchestra Team nail it at the Quiz

It's been a while coming, but after many years of Choir Team triumphs the Orchestra Team finally won the annual Quiz and Chips and the Challenge cup again.



Quiz and Challenge Cup winners:
(L-R) Christopher Elson, John and Chris Rayfield, Catrina Nixon, Geraint Hancock, Andy Thompson and Bex Woodward



Caroline Furniss and Matt Andrews enjoy being Quizmasters



Paul and Steph Allen enjoying not being Quizmasters

Sue Prutton

We were greatly saddened in December 2022 when we heard that Sue Prutton had passed away. Sue had been our Front of House manager for over eight years and was a very active and valued member of the Norwich Phil team.

At concerts she managed everything with effortless efficiency, and audiences were assured that all was well in her capable hands.



Part of the musical fabric of the City and active right up until the end, Sue was always there to help and support in any way she could. We are very grateful for everything she did.

SAD FAREWELLS



Frances Beadle



Sue Bailey

We also lost Frances Beadle, who sang first alto in the Choir and who had been a Chorus Representative on the Phil Committee, and Sue Bailey, also one of the Choir's first altos. Both will be fondly remembered by all those who knew them.



Photo Gallery

Some excellent shots of choir and Orchestra taken by Bill Smith at the Carmina Burana rehearsal

