



From our Chairman...

Here we are at the start of a new term for St Mary's Singers and I am looking forward with great excitement to singing our major work this term, the Mozart Requiem. It is not going to be easy so I'm going to ask you all to work hard this term to get to rehearsals and to use any teaching materials you can get your hands on to learn the work. Douglas will tell you that most of it wasn't written by Mozart himself but put together by his editor Süßmayer from various fragments, however it is a glorious work and I'm really pleased that we are going to sing it. We will have soloists from outside the choir and a small orchestra, although I'm sad to say that my contact who has organised the orchestra for the last few years is no longer able to do that.

This brings me to the news which most of you will have already heard. I am going to stand down from the Chair of the committee at the end of this year. I've had a wonderful time holding the office and I'm very proud of what we have achieved while I've been Chairman, but this is my 11th year and it is certainly time I handed the honour on. I've announced this fairly early in the year because I want there to be plenty of time for St Mary's Singers to find a replacement. Needless to say I'm very happy to discuss what it involves with anyone who thinks they'd be interested taking over. I intend to keep singing with St Mary's Singers and will do my level best to avoid saying, 'I wouldn't have done it like that.'

Please note that the **Jubilee Gala Concert** is on Saturday 2nd June not the Monday of the bank holiday weekend which I think we've put in some of our publicity.

The rehearsal on Wednesday 15th Feb will be in Dunton Church not St Mary's Hall, as Potton Playhouse are performing **When We Are Married** in St Mary's Hall on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of that week.

We have decided to use the legacy from Arthur and Betty Warne to commission a new work from Douglas which will be premiered at the summer concert and also to run a competition for school children to write a Christmas Carol.

We are investigating the possibility of having a not quite annual dinner this year.

We've been talking about an update to the singing costume/uniform which we'll let you know about once it is finalised. Val Whiteley has contacted Gok Wan to see if we can be **Fashion Fixed**.

So as you can see there is plenty going on!

Happy New Year

Liz

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Forthcoming events in 2012 ...

Date	Event
Saturday 31 st March	Spring Concert at Dunton Church
Saturday June 2 nd	Gala for the Queen's Jubilee at Potton
Friday 29 th and Saturday 30 th June	Summer concert
Not yet arranged	Workshop & recruitment evening

There are a number of sites which play your voice parts for you, including:
www.learnchoralmusic.co.uk/Mozart/Requiem/requiem.html

Notes on this session's music

HANDEL'S ZADOK THE PRIEST

One of the last acts of George I before his death was to sign an Act which naturalized Handel and one of the composer's first commissions as a naturalized British citizen was to write music for the coronation of the Prince of Wales. So it was on October 11th 1727, when George II and Queen Caroline were crowned in Westminster Abbey, that Handel's four coronation anthems were first performed. At the time, Handel's relationship with the new King was not so cordial as it had been with his father. The text of these anthems were selected from the bible by Handel and they were performed by the composer's own selected choir of 'forty voices, and about 160 violins, trumpets, hautboys, kettle-drums, and basses proportionable; besides an organ which was erected behind the altar.' The actual ceremony did not altogether go as planned. Though 'both the musick and the performers

were the admiration of the audience.' **Zadok** was sung in the wrong place, as noted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who found 'the anthems in confusion; all irregular in the music.' Fortunately, the new King was so impressed that he not only decreed that the pensions which had been given previously to Handel were to be continued, but that an additional grant of £200 a year were to be given for his services as music master to the Princesses Amelia and Caroline. From that day George II became a fan of Handel and supported him over various issues and troubles that beset the composer in the future. Since 1727, **Zadok the Priest** has overshadowed the other three anthems, and has been performed at every coronation service since, being traditionally performed during the monarch's anointing. The background to the words of **Zadok** may be found in I Kings, Chapter 1.

Mozart's Requiem

In July 1791, Franz Anton Leitgeb, a steward of Count Franz von Walsegg-Stuppach was sent to Mozart by the Count to commission a requiem. The Count who was a very minor composer had dreams of wanting to become a leading composer of the day. His wife had just died and he planned to pass the requiem off as his own. Hence the *cloak and dagger* aspect of the commission. The Count had previously commissioned works from other composers and had passed them off as his own. One can wonder why the Count wanted Mozart to write a sacred work. Mozart was not known in Vienna as a composer of such music. No one had commissioned him to write a major work for the church during the ten years he had lived in Vienna. The unfinished Mass in C Minor, K.427, composed in 1782/83, was written for Salzburg and probably never performed in Vienna. Why, then, did Count Walsegg seek out Mozart, rather than someone more closely associated with sacred music, to compose a Requiem? Whatever the reasons, Walsegg apparently approached no one else. Leitgeb, acting on behalf of the Count, made several visits to Mozart's house,

most of them unannounced. To the superstitious Mozart, who was dying, these visits seemed to be supernatural. Much of the music that Mozart managed to write was on his deathbed. At the time of his death, the requiem was unfinished and Mozart's wife, Constanze feared that the money already received (50%) for the work would have to be returned when it was discovered that the work was incomplete. So she tried to get other composers such as Joseph Eybler and Maximilian Stadler, to complete the work. In the end, one of Mozart's pupils, Franz Süssmayr agreed. It is a bit of a puzzle why Süssmayr was not approached straight away as he has been with Mozart for most of the composer's last month. Of the twelve movements, only the Requiem's opening movement, the *Requiem aeternam*, along with much of the *Kyrie* and portions of the *Sequence*, the long poem beginning with the *Dies Irae* and ending with bars 1-8 of the *Lacrimosa*, were completed by Mozart. For much of the work Mozart had composed some vocal parts with a figured bass which indicated the chords to be used. There were also some sketches such as the use of the trombone at the start of the

Mozart's Requiem (Cont'd)

Tuba Mirum. Some of the requiem had been orchestrated already by Eybler and Stadler which Süßmayr used. The *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei* were not even started by Mozart so Süßmayr composed them. The *Lacrymosa* had only the first 8 bars so Süßmayr completed that. However, as Süßmayr spent much time with Mozart, we are not sure what transpired between the two and Mozart may have indicted his intentions. For example, Constanza said that at the last moment Mozart told Süßmayr to repeat the *Kyrie* double fugue for the *Cum sanctis* at the end. By the end of 1792, the Requiem was completed with Süßmayr forging Mozart's signature and dating it 1791! It was handed over, but no mention was made of the part that Süßmayr played in the completion of the work. I do wonder whether the Count's envoy kept asking for the score and whether he or the Count was suspicious of the work's authenticity, having to wait for a year after the composer's death to receive the requiem and perhaps realising the signature was a forgery especially with a date which was one year after the composer's death. I presume that they were told that the copying of the

work was taking time, as it was indeed a copy that was presented. Perhaps in the end the Count did find out as Mozart's friends knew the truth. Perhaps that was why the Count's copy disappeared for fifty years to be rediscovered in 1839. Today the Count's copy with Mozart's manuscripts is in the Vienna State Library. In the February of 1800, Süßmayr in a letter to the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel who were starting a new edition of the Requiem wrote: "The task finally was referred to me because it was known during Mozart's lifetime I had often played and sung through the finished pieces by him, that he had frequently discussed the working out of this piece with me, and that he had indicated to me the basis and plan for his instrumentation." Süßmayr also stated that Mozart's last completed verse was *Qua resurget ex favilla*, line 2 of the *Lacrymosa* and that he, Süßmayr had completed the *Dies irae* and the *Offertorium* from sketches, and that the *Sanctus*, *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei* were "completely new by me."

Guide to the Latin Pronunciation (Italianate)

VOWELS

There are only five vowels: I–E–A–O–U,
pronounced ee–eh–ah–aw–oo,
as in *bee bet bar ball boon*.

æ and oe are the same as E (eh)

i is sometimes spelt y, but is still pronounced EE

When two vowels come together, each keeps its own sound, separate and distinct
e.g. Dies - *dee-ays*, Sábaoth¹ – *Sah-bah-haut*

The only diphthongs are Eu and Au - lengthen the first vowel and shorten the second (Exáudi)

U preceded by Q or GN is sung quickly (glide) (Réquiem, Ágnus)

CONSONANTS

C before E or I is CH as in church *lúceat – loo-chay-aht; cóeli – chay-lee*

C before A, O and U is K *cáro – kah-roh*

CH is K *Chríte – Kree-stay*

CU is KOO, not as in “Queue” *s’æculum – say-koo-loom*

G before A, O and U is hard as in “god” *ergo – air-goh*

G before E or I is soft as in “gem”, if before E or I *cóget – coh-jayt*

GN is like NY, *Ágnus – Ahn-yooce*

H is silent as in “honest” *hymnus – im-nooce; Hosánna – Oh-zahn-nah*

J is Y *júdex – Yoo-dayx; majestatis – mah-yay-stah-teece*

S is SS *sánctus – Sahnk-tooce*

S between two vowels is softened - *misériæ – mee-zai-ree-a*

TH is hard *Sábaoth – Sah-bah-haut*

TI + vowel is TSEE + vowel *oratióne – o-rah-tsee-oh-naym*

TU is pronounced TOO, not as in “tube” *perpétua – pair-pay-too-ah*

X is KS *Rex – Rayks; lux – looks*

XC before E and I is KSH *excélsis – eks-shel-seece*

¹ There are no accents in Latin—the acute accent here and elsewhere indicates the stressed syllable.

Posture, posture, posture ...

I have noticed at rehearsals some of you sit and stand in a way which does not help singing. So here is an article I wrote a while back for the newsletter of *Up Beat*, an association for conductors (and would-be conductors) I founded in 2008. (Incidentally it has been very successful as there are now over 300 members – and still growing.)

- ◇ Posture is possibly the most important part of singing. Bad posture quickly leads to tiredness, bad breathing, poor tone quality and the wrong attitude to singing.
- ◇ When singing vary the position of the singers. Do not leave them too long sitting or standing.

Standing

- ◇ The feet should be firmly on the ground and slightly apart, not wider than the shoulders with an even distribution of weight - do not put weight on one hip with a resulting one stiff leg and the other bent.
- ◇ Legs should never be crossed. Also legs must not be locked, but knees should be relaxed and very slightly bent.
- ◇ Tension in the legs affects the whole body and the breathing.
- ◇ Feel tall with shoulders back and chest reasonable high - but never raise the shoulders, especially when taking a breath. This will break up the flow of air and restrict the quality of sound. Raising the shoulders often takes place when you ask singers (especially young ones) to take a big or deep breath. I never say, "Take a big breath," I just say, "Breathe." Incidentally I never use the word *concentrate*. So often singers (again especially young ones) *screw up* their faces and become tense when told to *concentrate*.
- ◇ The head should be relaxed, held up evenly and naturally and not *pushed to one side*.
- ◇ The hands should be at the sides: they should not be behind the back or grasped in front, or folded, which will cause body tension.
- ◇ Always remember that if we stand incorrectly, we put many muscles under stress, and often we will not notice or feel the problem at the time - but we will pay for it later.

Sitting

- ◇ Do not cross the legs. This is often done out of habit and to rest music on the lap
- ◇ When music is on the lap, this makes the singer look down, causing tension around the neck and encourages the body to sag. Then when the singer looks up, the back of the neck becomes tight. Constant straightening up from the sagging position, which often means pulling back the shoulders, raising the ribcage and arching the back is tiring and also causes wear and tear on the voice and brain. So always hold up the music in a relaxed comfortable position, so that only the eyes move, and not the head, to look at the teacher/conductor
- ◇ So when sitting it is a good idea to sit forward with both feet on the ground, at right angles to the ground and with legs slightly apart. Make sure that everyone is sitting on the two bony knobbls of the buttocks. These can easily be found by sitting on the hands. No matter how well padded the individual, these knobbls can be found.

Short people are like quavers in music. They are still as important as crotchets, but they take up less space!

A Glossary of Choral Music Terms

- Tonic:** A smooth liquid generally enjoyed over ice after choir rehearsal.
- Dominant:** In a choral relationship, usually the soprano.
- Augmentation:** Delicate surgery for altos involving the implantation of “falsettos”.
- Leitmotif:** Like a regular motif, but less filling.
- Score:** Basses 8, Tenors 0.
- Riff:** What happens when someone sits in your place.
- Contralto:** An alto who has been convicted of a felony.
- Polychoral Motet:** Six parrots singing “Exultate Justi”.
- Aleatoric Music:** Music composed by the random selection of pitches and rhythms. Frequently performed by singers when sight-reading.
- Basso Continuo:** When the conductor can’t get the fools to stop singing.
- Castrato:** The highest male voice (some alteration required.)
- Etude:** What comes right before the Beatitudes.
- Concerto Grosso:** An accordion concert.
- Glissando:** What directly precedes the highest note in the soprano part.
- Theme:** We HATE this music.
- Theme and Variations:** We HATE the music, the composer and all his/her family.
- Smorzando:** The “All-you-can-eat” buffet at Luciano’s.
- Grand Pause:** When the conductor loses his place.
- Perfect Pitch:** Throwing an accordion into a skip without hitting the sides.
- Cantus Firmus:** A singer in good physical condition (as opposed to “Cantus Flabbioso”.)
- Antiphonal:** Screening all your calls.
- Sackbutt:** A male choral singer over 65, particularly one who slumps in their seat.
- Choral Partitas:** Small choir get-togethers that are frequently interrupted by the police.
- Fantasia:** An alto in a leather skirt.

Those email addresses again...

The Members’ Handbook and Members’ Directory will shortly be published. New members will be given a printed copy and existing members will get an email copy of the Members’ Directory.

To avoid last year’s embarrassment where we took a dozen issues before getting the email addresses correct, please make sure that Maggie Vicarage has your current details. Under the Data Protection Act, we are obliged to ensure that any personal data we hold about you is up-to-date, but we can’t do this without your help.

Rehearsal Schedule: January – March 2012

Please note that in the **Requiem**, *Recordare; Tuba Mirum & Benedictus* are for soloist

January 11	Requiem	<i>Requiem; Kyrie; Rex Tremendae; Confutatis</i>
	Zadok	<i>God save the King</i>
January 18	Requiem	<i>Agnus Dei-Cum sanctis; Confutatis; Lacrymosa</i>
	Zadok	<i>God save the King</i>
January 25	Requiem	<i>Lacrymosa; Domine Jesu; Hostia; Kyrie;</i>
	Zadok	<i>God save the King</i>
February 1	Requiem	<i>Dies Irae; Sanctus-Osanna; Agnus Dei-Cum Sanctis</i>
February 8	Requiem	<i>Requiem; Kyrie; Dies Irae; Rex tremendae; Confutatis</i>
	Zadok	<i>complete</i>
February 15	Requiem	<i>Lacrymosa; Domine Jesu; Hostias; Sanctus-Osanna</i>
February 22	Requiem	<i>Agnus Dei-Cum sanctis; Dies Irae; Rex tremendae; Confutatis</i>
	Zadok	<i>complete</i>
February 29	Requiem	<i>Requiem; Kyrie; - Lacrymosa; Domine Jesu; Hostias; Sanctus-Osanna</i>
March 7	Requiem	<i>Agnus-Dei-Cum sanctis; Dies Irae; Rex tremendae; Confutatis</i>
March 14	Requiem	<i>Requiem; Kyrie; Dies Irae; Rex tremendae; Confutatis</i>
	Zadok	<i>complete</i>
March 21	Requiem	<i>Lacrymosa; Domine Jesu; Hostias; Sanctus–Osanna; Agnus Dei–Cum sanctis;</i>
March 28	All	Complete run through of all music
March 31	Rehearsal	2:00 pm at Dunton Church
	Concert	7:00 pm

Concert Running Order

- ◆ Handel: Zadok the Priest
- ◆ A concerto
- ◆ Three pieces for Choir
(you will have the music for these pieces by the end of January at the latest; they will not be difficult!)
- ◆ Interval
- ◆ Mozart Requiem