

Dates For Your Diary

Please put these dates of our next three concerts into your diary:

Christmas Concert

8th December 2007

St. Mark's Church, Woodcote, Purley

Spring Concert

15th March 2008

St. John's Church, Old Coulsdon

Summer Concert

28th June 2008

De Stafford School, Burntwood Lane, Caterham

Please direct any feedback, comments or suggestions to:
George Feichter, email: george@escs.org.uk



NEWSLETTER

2007



TO DIM OR NOT TO DIM

I love trying to make music, but the complexities are sometimes baffling.

Recently I attempted to join in a session with a small band of string players. People were friendly and welcoming—they said they needed more guitarists. I was showered with sheets of music. When they rattled through lots of pieces which they obviously knew well, I was left standing at the starting post. Well, sitting actually.

As a new girl, I was obviously given the grottiest photocopies—ones which fell off the page at the right-hand margin, or were so faint I did not detect the repeat marks. In one tune, I started on page two, not having seen there was a page one. Handwritten music was tricky, too. Is that note on the line or above it?

When I learnt to play it was written notes and not by chord names and shapes, so I know few chords but have been trying to learn some more. One piece had notes with the chord names written below. Bar 1 was C, bar 2 was F, bar 3 looked like Aby but on later inspection became A flat 7, whatever that means. Oh my, what have I let myself in for? Line 2 contained a crescendo hairpin to F and down again. Fine, I can do that, assuming I know the notes to play. Line 4 had bar C, C again, Dm, then crescendo with DIM written boldly beneath. Now, that I cannot do. Not crescendo and diminuendo together! Oh, I get it. DIM has to be some sort of chord. We have never met. I must ask someone to introduce us some time.

The tune which followed was entitled “Make Believe” which just about summed up the evening for me. Am I going again? You bet I am. [If they'll have me, that is.]

Marion Davis

Did You Know ...

Enrico Caruso, the opera singer, was once arrested for pinching a woman's bottom in the monkey house of New York zoo.

Over and Above the CALL of Duty!!

After the March concert, I drove three of the music students to Purley Station. [How do they manage to get younger every year?] On an impulse I returned to the church in case there was need for more transport. On the way I was alarmed to hear a peculiar, loud noise unlike anything I had heard before, and, worryingly, it seemed to be inside the car. I was in traffic so could not stop to investigate. The noise stopped but started again as I parked at the church. I had no difficulty now locating the noise. A mobile phone on the floor! I rushed up to a young couple outside the church confident they would know which buttons to press. The owner was ringing from a friend's mobile onto her own phone to find out where it was. Oh, such clever stuff!

She was still at Purley Station, so I hurried back to re-unite her with the errant phone. As her train was just coming in, I was unable to ask how she, a music student, could have chosen such an indescribable cacophony for her phone. I only hope the phone is switched off next time she is in a concert.

Marion Davis

SPARE PART ANYONE?

I've been given some ink cartridges "surplus to requirements" and hope they will be suitable for a choir member's printer in return for a donation to choir funds. There are:

two Xprint XP-50 (black) and three XP-52 (colour), Epson compatible, for use with

400/600/800N/850/1520/1520H/850N/850NE/440/460/1520k/640/660/670/740/740i/750i/760/860/1160/480/580/MJ-

830C/830CS/930C/6000C/Stylus Scan 2000/2500/Stylus C20/C40

I hope someone out there can use them!

Ring Sue S. on 01883-347120.

Did You Know ...

Luciano Pavarotti once received 165 curtain calls and was applauded for one hour and 7 minutes by a German audience.

Contents

Chairman's Report	4
Conductor's Report	5
A Short Story	7
Pig Farming The Way Forward	8
Secretary's Report	10
Recipes	12
Treasurer's Report	13
Party Fudue	14
Memories of Molly	16
Over And Above The Call Of Duty	18
Spare Part Anyone?	18
To Dim Or Not To Dim	19
Dates For Your Diary	20

Chairman's Report

Last year was a bit like the curate's egg. The Easter Concert was one of the best we have ever done but the Summer Concert had to be re-arranged at the last minute. I think that Ian was rather despairing on the Tuesday rehearsal, but our audience never knew due to clever re-arranging on our oh so polite Japanese soloists singing delightfully. Della is always a great success too, and stole the show.

Within the last two weeks we have had bad news and good news. Sadly Molly Frost died on August 6th. She had not felt well enough to come to choir last term, but she enjoyed our presentation to her for her 90th birthday in March. Many of the choir attended her funeral at Croydon Crematorium. The good news is that John Kensett has left intensive care and is in a ward. It may be some time yet though before he will be back with us to tell the jokes!

Jackie Richmond is singing with us again and is well enough to cope with the Treasurer's paperwork, but would like an assistant to collect money and pay it into the bank. I have been doing this but hope that someone else will take over. You don't have to be a mathematical genius (I am not) just organised. Keith Cook is also hoping to be back next term.

Thank you to all the committee who have often had to double their jobs. Melanie Watts-Read stepped in at the last minute to organise the Summer Concert, Gill English organised the skittles evening, the Barn Dance and the Bring-and-Buy sale (all extremely successful). Ceinwen Jeremiah hosted the Summer Party, and Keith Cook organised the Christmas Party. Ian in his retirement from the BBC seems to be busier than ever and tries to keep us in order and get us to learn when I'm sure golf beckons. Jeffrey makes an excellent understudy when Ian is unable to come.

The choir would be in dire straits without all the money making schemes. Thanks to Joan F. for the marmalade, Keith C. for his eggs, Tree and Diane for their plants, Ann G. for her catalogue. Lastly many thanks to the Dales. John always seems to have something to solve any problems re staging, lighting or transport. What would we do without you!

See you on 4th September.

Cathy

Did You Know ...

Mozart began to compose at the age of 5, and wrote his first symphony at the age of 8?

The death some years ago of her twin sister Peggy, a music teacher in Farnham, was a great loss, but she was very proud of her sons and grandchildren, especially of grandson Chris's musical achievements: she brought him, when he was about ten years old, to play the saxophone at one of our "d.i.y." members' concerts in St.Luke's Church Hall, Whyteleafe.

Singing, sewing, gardening ... and rooting for Crystal Palace! Molly told me once that, shortly after her husband Don died, she was taken to Selhurst Park to watch a football match for the first time: her seat was high up in a stand, and when she reached it and turned round to see that green rectangle below, brilliant in the floodlights, she "fell in love" with the beautiful game, sometimes even missing a choir practice to attend a match - a subject of much friendly joshing from Ian at rehearsals! A season-ticket holder for 17 years, it must have been a thrill when her name and a birthday message were put up on the huge screens at Selhurst Park on the occasion of her 90th birthday. And, as Tree (who obviously knows more about this game than I do!) noticed, a hymn and a song indelibly linked to football - *Abide with Me*, and *Jerusalem* - were also included in the music at her funeral.

Molly has been so much a part of the ESCS for so long: she will be sadly missed by her many friends, who loved her *joie de vivre* and her sense of humour, and who admired her 'can do' attitude to life. Always game for a party, she was invariably among the last to leave post-concert gatherings round at 8 Queen's Park Road (thanks to the kindness of several choir members who acted as her chauffeurs) and how she loved the Barn Dance earlier this year which celebrated that 90th birthday with music and good fellowship!

Sue S.

Rather than flowers, the family requested donations to the British Heart Foundation: there will be a collection in Molly's memory at the beginning of next term.

Did You Know ...

F.J.Haydn wrote the 'Farewell Symphony' at the end of which all the musicians leave one by one.

Memories of Molly



Mary Kathleen - known to all as Molly - sang with the East Surrey Choral Society for longer than some members have been on this planet, joining way back in 1970: only Aldwyn Jones ('63) and Peter Jeffries ('64) have been with us longer. And how she loved to sing! Her obvious enjoyment was mirrored in the smile that lit up her face every Tuesday evening. Always a 'front row' soprano, what she lacked in inches she more than made up in personality.

Very much a local girl, she had vivid memories of wartime air raids, especially that at Kenley on the 18th August 1940, mute testimony to which are the memorial stones in the graveyard of her local church, St. Luke's. Belonging to that 'make do and mend' generation, and always keen to use her skills to help others, for many years she was a member of the Miller Centre's team of seamstresses, alongside Peter Jeffries' wife Beryl, creating the wonderful costumes we see on the stage month after month. She also used her sewing skills to run a 'repair and alteration' service for choir members - her slogan being "If it can be done, I can do it!" - donating half her fee to choir funds and raising a tidy amount over the years.

At the AGM in 1983, when Aldwyn as Chairman called for a volunteer to take on that very essential job of Publicity it was Molly who volunteered, and so from the following year (after Gwynneth Fookes had twisted my arm to take on the job of Hon. Sec.) we were working together on the committee for several years, Molly sharing the publicity portfolio latterly with Melanie.

Molly loved gardens and flowers, and was instrumental in obtaining a handsome arrangement of silk flowers which helped to decorate the platforms the choir used in churches and schools, as in Caterham School in 1998 when the programme included Schubert's "*God in the Thunderstorm*": her family chose this from the CD of the concert to play before the ceremony in Croydon's Crematorium.

Did You Know ...

According to the Guinness Book of Records, Telemann is the most prolific composer. He composed around 1700 cantatas, 27 passions, 9 operas, etc...

Another season at ESCS is over and we are all now able to enjoy the vagaries of the English summer. For me, the past year has been something of an experimental one, at times a rather steep learning curve, sometimes exciting, at others financially perilous! For the first time in 30 years, I have found myself working without a regular salary and I have often been tempted to think that this is *not* the right time of life to turn to freelance work in the music business. However, the year has been almost as busy as previous recent years when I was combining full-time work at the BBC with my teaching at the Guildhall.

When I was obliged to retire from "Auntie", my plan was to teach for possibly three days each week - probably Monday, Tuesday and Friday - and maybe play golf on the other two. That would have meant ESCS would have been tacked on to the end of my second day of teaching - all of this assuming, of course, that I had some students to teach! Well, cutting a long story very short, the best laid plans etc., etc.....!! Golf has been generally restricted to week-ends, as I have had so much teaching, with students from Guildhall, Sussex and City Universities and Peterhouse College, Cambridge - plus unexpected freelance work from the BBC and elsewhere - that I have had neither the time nor the energy to accommodate this obsession as planned. But now, summer is here, term is finished, housework can wait and I can play as much golf as I like.....in the glorious English summer! A week away in Devon last month with colleagues from the golf club put our waterproof gear to the test every day - and it all failed, every day!

As I write, I am accompanied by the sound of rumbling thunder and a torrential downpour, but even without rain, there is often enough water on golf courses to cause problems. Jesus, Moses and an older man were standing on the tee overlooking a short par three, the green guarded by a lake. Jesus stepped onto the tee, hit his shot and the ball bounced on top of the water and onto the green. Jesus followed his ball, walking across the water. Two putts later, he had his par. Moses hit his tee shot and it sank into the lake, whereupon he walked up to the water, parted it, found the ball and chipped his second shot onto the green. One putt later, he had his par. The old man stepped up to the tee and struck his tee shot. The ball was just about to plummet into the lake, when out of nowhere came an eagle that swooped down and carried off the ball. Suddenly, there was

Did You Know ...

Sergei Rachmaninoff is buried in Valhalla cemetery, New York. He is buried with his wife, who was also his cousin.

a flash of lightning and the eagle was struck dead, dropping the ball – straight into the hole, whereupon Jesus spoke up. “Dad, if you won’t take the game seriously, then I am not playing at all!”

Playing seriously, or even sensibly, on a golf course does not mean taking the fun out of the game, though I could name a few golfers who are well capable of the latter! True, improving as a player and working towards a lower handicap can be major objectives when on the course – and I am happy to report that for me both seem to be happening at present. But above all else, golf should be fun – as indeed should singing. My attitude to my work with ESCS is little different from my approach to golf, though the standard of my music-making is possibly rather more consistent! I strive to improve the choir, to achieve better musical standards, to challenge with harder repertoire. At the same time, I want the choir members to enjoy themselves. I am well aware that for many, Tuesday evenings are a regular social event and a highlight of the week and I am delighted that this is the case. ESCS is an important social circle and that has been amply demonstrated by the concern of members for others who for one reason and another have had difficulties during recent times. John, Keith, Peter J and Tree have all recently experienced anxieties with their health. Several others (self-included) have had tremendous support from choir members when having domestic or work problems – and camaraderie of this sort is invaluable. Only yesterday a sizeable representation from the choir attended the funeral of Molly Frost, who so sadly died a couple of weeks ago. She was a true enthusiast and a stalwart member of ESCS for many years and will be greatly missed – even if her loyalties on some Tuesday evenings were divided between choir and Crystal Palace Football Club – though, for this latter problem, she deserved – and needed - our sympathy and understanding!

All amateur organisations need their Mollies, their Johns, Keiths, Peters and Trees – even their questioning Richards! – and we have to make a special effort in the coming months to encourage another generation of choir members to prolong the life, both musical and social, of ESCS. Finding young singers for amateur choirs is getting harder; such activities no longer seem “cool”. Somehow, we need to recruit new members (of whatever age or experience) into all sections, so I urge all present members to encourage and pursue any potential new singers, so that we are able to develop and extend the choir’s musical horizons.

Did You Know ...

Handel’s “Messiah” was written and first performed to raise funds for a London orphanage.

1	2	3	4
(x) CAULIFLOWER	.	And a <u>big yellow</u>	<u>marrow</u> , and a
(y) <u>Ripe round</u>	to- <u>mato</u> ,	and a <u>long scarlet</u>	<u>runner</u> .
<u>Healthy green fibres are not</u>	<u>not found in aubergines</u>	<u>rather in celery</u>	<u>celery</u> , celery.
Cauliflower	.	and the big	yellow marrow
And a ripe	round tomato	and a long	scarlet runner
. <u>Yolk of eggs</u>	. <u>Greek moussaka</u>	. <u>Yolk of eggs</u>	. <u>Greek moussaka</u>
.	Cauli—	flower.	Cauliflower.
Cauliflower	Cauliflower	Cauliflower	Cauli-
FLOWER	[Cauliflower	Cauliflower	Cauliflower]
Fine.			DaCapo
			Anon. (for obvious reasons)

Party Fudue [Best pronounced as in 'fugue']

During a recent party at Ceinwen's, inspiration [?] for a party game came to some first basses [almost the lowest of the low] and second tenors [only slightly above]. This game can be played by any four people in the following way:

Recite the following lines of foodstuffs etc. to a strict rhythmic count of four.

(Some choir members may have some experience of this kind of recitation?)

Where the syllables are below a number, they are recited **on** that beat;

Where the syllables are printed **after** or **before** a beat, they are recited **after** or **before** that beat.

The **strict rhythmic count of 4** continues throughout the game.

The first person commences to recite at letter 'x'. When they reach letter 'y' the second person commences to recite at letter 'x' - and so on till all four people have started at letter 'x'.

The **larger** a word is printed, the **louder** it is spoken.

Fine means End; *DaCapo* indicates back to the beginning—and the recitation can continue till all present are escorted from the premises!

Richard Broadberry

Did You Know ...

You can listen to a good rendition of Toch's 'Geographical Fugue' by visiting <http://www.lycochoir.com/mp3s/1993choircd/geographicalfugue.html>

We reconvene on September 4th to start work on two works by Benjamin Britten, which I think you will enjoy - *Rejoice in the Lamb* and *A Ceremony of Carols* (concert date December 8th). Music for the Easter concert (March 15th) will contain Stainer's Victorian warhorse *The Crucifixion* and another contrasted work, yet to be confirmed, to give ESCS more of a musical challenge (and help me retain my sanity!). The summer programme will probably be based on British music. I do urge all members to make themselves available for the concert on June 28th, otherwise we could face a similar problem to this year, where music ended up short of confidence as well as short of choir numbers and rehearsal time.

Enjoy the summer break. The sun is now out – and I am now equipped with the aqua-lung and flippers – essential equipment for the modern-day golfer, though I have to admit the wet suit and snorkel do rather restrict the swing!

Ian Kennedy

A short story:

Many moons ago as a young newly qualified staff nurse, I was taking Matron (extinct species) on a male surgical ward round. One patient who was just coming to from his anaesthetic having had a haemorrhoidectomy, had (of necessity) his !*?***! strapped up with a wide plaster strip to give the surgeon a free rein. Unfortunately the theatre staff had not thought to remove it while he was still under the anaesthetic. Just as I was at his bed with Matron - who had a remarkable likeness to Hattie Jacques - he cried desperately "Where are they! Where are they?" Matron, thinking he was referring to his dentures - said, "Don't worry dear - they are in a glass of water by your bed!" Needless to say, the patient lapsed back into unconsciousness!!

Gill English

Did You Know ...

Franz Liszt was Wagner's father-in-law!

Recently a copy of this letter has been received. Would this be a way of raising choir funds??

Nigel Johnson-Hill
Park Farm
Milland
Liphook
GU30 7JT

Rt.Hon.David Miliband MP
Secretary of State,
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA),
Nobel House,
17 Smith Square,
London SW1P WJR

16 May 2007

Dear Secretary of State,

My friend, who is in farming at the moment, recently received a cheque for £3,000 from the Rural Payments Agency for not rearing pigs. I would now like to join the “not rearing pigs” business.

In your opinion, what is the best kind of farm not to rear pigs on, and which is the best breed of pigs not to rear? I want to be sure I approach this endeavour in keeping with all government policies, as dictated by the EU under the Common Agricultural Policy. I would prefer not to rear bacon pigs, but if this is not the type you want not rearing, I will just as gladly not rear porkers. Are there any advantages in not rearing rare breeds such as Saddlebacks or Gloucester Old Spots, or are there too many people already not rearing these?

As I see it, the hardest part of this programme will be keeping an accurate record of how many pigs I haven't reared. Are there any Government or Local Authority courses on this?

Treasurer's Report

As always, we have had a very enjoyable year of singing, not to mention the various social activities. We have all appreciated having Jeffrey as our accompanist, as on top of being very talented he fits in so well with us. Gill has proved to be a very competent secretary with the added bonus of being full of good ideas.

Our membership numbers are still somewhat low and this affects several aspects of our finances, including less income from subscriptions and lower ticket sales. Our bank account balances in 2005 were around £17,500, in 2005 they were just under £16,000 and this year I expect the amount to be between £13,000 and £14,000. Please consider Gift Aid if you are a taxpayer - it makes a significant contribution to our yearly income. Thanks are due to those in the choir who raise funds in ways which are so beneficial to us and so enjoyable - which is really the main aim. We have Gill's Barn Dance and Bring and Buy, Joan's marmalade, Ann G's catalogue, Keith's eggs, Sue's and Diane's plants and Marion's walks. I hope I haven't missed anyone.

Thanks to Cathy's hard work, my load has been considerably lightened. She deals very efficiently with paying money in and out to the bank, paying bills while keeping notes and a careful eye on the balance. I catch up each month for my records. Annual accounts are required by the Charity Commission as well as Choir members. Gift Aid details have to be sent for each member (who pays through it) each year as do programme details (and a cheque!) to Making Music to pay for membership, insurance and Performing Rights. As regards the accounts you see, my records agree very satisfyingly with the bank statements each month but itemising them at the end of the year so that the total of the individual items also agree seems to be a different matter and when the required figure eventually comes up on my calculator it feels to me like a 'Eureka' moment and I'm happy for the rest of the day!
I wish you all a good summer and look forward to meeting again in September.

Jackie

Did You Know ...

Handel's 'Water music' is so called because it was first performed on a barge on the river Thames.

Finally, I would like to thank Ian on behalf of us all for his loyalty and patience through the rough times and the smooth. We can always be sure of a stimulating evening on Tuesdays - even if he's had a bad golf day!! Not many choirs have a vocal coach as Music Director, and we are fortunate to be able to have his advice and suggestions, delivered in his inimitable way!
So I look forward to seeing you all back on Sept. 4th., full of renewed energy and resolve to make the next concert one of the best!

Gill English

From Penny O'Meara:

Apparently the chicken drumsticks and the sausages I did for the summer party were very popular. So here are the recipes:

Barbecued Chicken Drumsticks

Mix together 4x15ml spoons Worcestershire sauce; 4x 15ml spoons brown sugar; 2 x 15ml spoons red wine vinegar; 3 x 15ml spoons tomato ketchup; 2 x 15ml spoons tomato puree; dash of sweet chilli sauce to taste; celery salt. Prick the chicken with a fork and spread the marinade over. Leave in the fridge for 24 hours, turning from time to time. Bake in the oven and leave to cool in the marinade.

Quantities can be doubled, tripled etc according to numbers.

Honey Glazed Sausages/Chipolatas

24 medium sized sausages

Mix together 4 Tablespoons Clear Honey, 3 teaspoons Dijon Mustard, 4 teaspoons Worcestershire Sauce, 4 Tablespoons Apricot Jam and spread over the sausages. Leave to marinate overnight and bake in the oven. Leave until cold before removing from the marinade.

As you can see it is all very hit and miss! Have a good summer - Penny

Did You Know ...

The opera 'Aida' was written specifically to celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal.

My friend is very satisfied with this business. He has been rearing pigs for forty years or so, and the best he ever made on them was £1,422 in 1968. That is - until this year, when he received a cheque for not rearing any.

If I get £3,000 for not rearing 50 pigs, will I get £6,000 for not rearing 100?

I plan to operate on a small scale at first, holding myself down to about 4,000 pigs not raised, which will mean about £240,000 for the first year. As I become more expert in not rearing pigs, I plan to be more ambitious, perhaps increasing to, say, 40,000 pigs not reared in my second year, for which I should expect about £2.4 million from your department. Incidentally, I wonder if I would be eligible to receive tradable carbon credits for all these pigs not producing harmful and polluting methane gases?

Another point: These pigs that I plan not to rear will not eat 2,000 tonnes of cereals. I understand that you also pay farmers for not growing crops. Will I qualify for payments for not growing cereals to not feed the pigs I don't rear?

I am also considering the "not milking cows" business, so please send any information you have on that too. Please could you also include the current Defra advice on set aside fields? Can this be done on an e-commerce basis with virtual fields (of which I seem to have several thousand hectares)?

In view of the above you will realise that I will be totally unemployed, and will therefore qualify for unemployment benefits.

I shall of course be voting for your party at the next general election.

Yours faithfully,

Nigel Johnson-Hill

Secretary's Report

I do hope you are all enjoying the summer break and are having a good rest!

The last year has passed so quickly, and has seen comings and goings and ups and downs, but as always the positives have outweighed the negatives! On the sad side, our dear little Molly Frost is with us no more. I shall always think of her with a smile - her sense of humour was infectious, and she had a busy 90 years, with so many interests. I am so glad that we celebrated her last birthday in style at the Barn Dance. Sue will be writing elsewhere in this newsletter an appreciation of Molly and her time in E.S.C.S. We will hold a collection for The British Heart Foundation in memory of Molly at the first rehearsal of next term.

I visited John Kensett in hospital with Sue yesterday. (13. 7. 07) What a remarkable man! After all he has been through, and the weeks in hospital, there he was, sitting up and looking very good in the circumstances! He was interested to know what is going on in the choir, and wants the first rehearsal to be held in Tilgate Ward at East Surrey Hospital! It will be a long haul regaining his strength, but he and his lovely physios are determined to do it.

The most enjoyable performance for me during the last season was Haydn's 'Creation'. I know some of us had sung it previously, but I think that most people took responsibility for their own learning and I am sure the rehearsal CDs (my hobby horse!) helped. We have them again for our next concert, so please ensure that you use them at home for the Britten at Christmas.

In May, a group of altos went to the Royal Albert Hall to sing in Brahms 'Requiem' with a huge choir of about 1,500 people. As ever it was a moving experience and wonderful to sing in the R.A.H. acoustics. Many thanks to Linda Horton for organising it.

It was great that Della could take time out of her busy schedule to sing in our summer concert. Her choice of songs was very fitting for our 'Round the World' theme, and it was an education to see the energy and commitment she put into her performance. Jeffrey accompanied Della and also the choir with great skill and expertise, especially as he was transposing at a rate of knots for some of Della's songs! We all relaxed and enjoyed his solos, which were just right for a summer evening. We do appreciate having him as our accompanist, and very much enjoy his sense of humour. It was a shame that of necessity we had to omit the beautiful Vaughan Williams songs - were they too difficult for us, or did we not work hard enough? Food for thought.

Did You Know ...

You can view and print the diary dates sheet directly from our web site at www.escs.org.uk.

We are very keen to have new members in the choir, which has lost various people due to moving away, illness or work commitments. We are circulating school staff rooms within a 10 mile radius, asking for people to come and join us. In each school there must be at least one member of staff who is a musician, and we may gain new members that way. Oddly, just as I wrote that, the telephone rang - a new experienced soprano is starting with us next term!

We have a new venue for our Easter concert, when we will perform Stainer's 'Crucifixion' at St. John's, Old Coulsdon. This church is beautifully situated, and will be more convenient for our audience who live nearby. I am looking forward to our concert there, as that church has a lovely friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

I have also been really happy with the success of the social side of the choir. Our new venture of a skittles evening was great fun and quite hilarious! Thank you to John Kensett. Date for your diary - I have booked Weds. Oct. 3rd. at the same venue - the British Legion at Limpsfield - for our next skittles evening. We can only have 24, so first come, first served. It will cost £10, and includes a meal, and very good value too!

The Bring and Buy evening was more successful than I could have imagined. Everyone entered into the spirit of it and we raised over £200 for the choir. Thank you so much for your great support. This will now be an annual event after Christmas.

The Barn Dance for Molly was a great success - thanks to all who came and brought family and friends. But huge thanks to that small band of people who gave their all for the organising of the hall and the lovely food and drink among other things. It is hard work for us girls to get all the tables from under the stage and put them up - so another time some extra male help would be appreciated! We have decided that the Barn Dance will be held 2 yearly, so that it will be something 'special' to look forward to. Any ideas for an event to take its place on the social calendar will be gratefully received. We are thinking perhaps of a coach trip somewhere?

The parties have been fun and well attended. Keith Cook, although unwell, organised our Christmas party with his usual expertise, and we were very grateful to Ceinwen and Keith Jeremiah who allowed us to 'take over' their house for the summer party. For both events our stalwart band of ladies came up with the goods for the catering and the lovely puddings - thank you girls - you were brilliant! It would be good if other people would volunteer from time to time.....even the men!! And why not!!

Did You Know ...

Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' was adopted as the European Union's national anthem in 1972.