

**Read on for: Rehearsal details; Tracks / recordings inc Ring the Bells rehearsal tracks; Sat 14 Dec concert arrangements inc pleas for help from Helen Kirk and Ann Garbett; Station Carols; Tickhill concert inc plea for raffle prizes; Party at Janet Bower's Thu 19 Dec; Messages from Nigel Gyte and Rachel Copley; Thanks; Diary dates, Password, Contact emails**

**Weekly update Sunday 8 December 2019 (also available at [Members Area / Weekly Updates](#))**

### **Next rehearsal**

Our next rehearsal is on Tuesday 10 December in the Upper School. This is the conductor's rehearsal for the Christmas concert.

Georgina will run her final workshop on Tuesday – all welcome; they have gone down very well indeed, many thanks Georgina. Thank you everyone for continuing to be friendly and welcoming to our many visitors as they decide whether to stay – which a number already have!

### **Rehearsal tracks and notes (attachments)**

Paul Fincham has released voice part rehearsal tracks for Ring The Bells: [ring the bells learning tracks](#). Please also find attached the rehearsal notes which Chair Paul has compiled from Darius' instructions. The revised 2019-20 rehearsal schedule is on [Darius' website](#) and on the Chorus website at [Members Area / Rehearsals](#). Piano and tutti rehearsal dates and times can be found at [Members Area / Diary dates](#). See below for members area user name and password.

Links to YouTube recordings and voice part rehearsal tracks for a number of the carols we will sing during the festive season, and to Paul's rehearsal notes, are on the Chorus website at: [Members Area / Rehearsals / Preparing the Music](#).

### **Arrangements for carol concert on Saturday 14 December 2019 (attachment)**

The concerts are in the City Hall on Saturday 14 December at 2pm and again at 5.30pm. The presenter is Tom Redmond, with the Black Dyke Band and Neil Taylor on the organ, Darius conducting. Tickets are [available online](#) or from the City Hall box office.

The [Xmas concert running order is here](#); please store all music in your black Chorus folders. If it's difficult to secure them all, wind some black elastic round the folder; the audience can't see it and it makes life a whole lot easier.

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress will be at the 2pm performance as they love brass bands and were very impressed with our singing at the ballroom concert.

The reason the concerts are so early this year is because the City Hall is holding the Snow Ball, a black tie dinner dance in the ballroom after the second show, and they are hoping to encourage people to go on to the dinner dance after our second concert. Tickets are £75 – see <https://www.sheffieldcityhall.co.uk/event/the-snow-ball>

**The compulsory 'on-the-day' rehearsal will be in the City Hall from 11.30am to 1pm.**

Access to the City Hall is via the Stage Door, which is down a set of steps towards the right hand side of the back of the City Hall. Please stick to the prescribed areas so that we don't compromise the City Hall's fire safety arrangements and make life difficult for front of house and technical staff.

Our electronic registration system will be set up on the production corridor as usual – just ask if you don't know where this is, and please try to remember your membership card. There will be a sheet for those new members who don't have a membership card yet.

Dressing rooms aren't in the basement as that is being prepared for the dinner dance in the ballroom. Ladies are in the Vincent Harris room and gents in the Barbirolli room, which is usual at Christmas. Space is very limited and members are advised to come in Chorus Dress if possible as it will be very cramped. Members of the Chorus with mobility limitations may use Dressing Room 1, which is at platform level up the stairs nearest to the Stage Door.

People who take a packed tea may eat it in the dressing room or in the corridor outside; please be sure to 'leave no trace'!

There should be bins, chairs, jugs of water and a mirror in each dressing room. The City Hall people usually put up signs just inside the Stage Door, but please ask if you aren't sure – the Stage Door folk are very helpful.

Chorus members are usually able to get a car parking voucher from the City Hall Box Office, enabling them to pay a reduced rate for a full day in the Q Park on Rockingham Street. Park your car, go to the box office and get the voucher, which you'll need when you pay. Please note that the voucher is only valid at the Rockingham Street car park. Please also note that only those to whom a City Hall parking permit has been allocated may park behind the City Hall.

Our Concerts and Rehearsal Officer James Oliver has organised the seating (seating plan attached); copies will be available on the day. Seats are unallocated within each voice part, and your seat for the rehearsal is your place for the concert. Please arrange yourselves so that tall people sit towards the back, or the outsides of the row, because of sight lines. Be prepared to move if asked either by James or by a Voice Rep.

A special plea – can members please stick to the seating plan and not alter it to be able to sit with friends, especially where this isolates colleagues from other voice parts, which is very disconcerting at the best of times but especially so given the City Hall's acoustic.

We will wear formal concert dress, except that gentlemen may wear a coloured bow tie, and ladies may wear Christmas brooches or earrings etc – including ones with flashing lights which we tend to turn on after the interval. However, apart from these departures from normal dress please be sure to wear the correct formal concert attire. [Check what you can and can't wear on the website here.](#) Please observe the relevant sections of our [stage procedure which you will find here.](#)

Sherry and mince pies will be served to Chorus and band members during the interval at the second show, on the production corridor. There will be two tables, so please move further into the room rather than all queuing up for the goodies at the first table, and move away from the tables when you've picked up a drink and a pie.

**If you haven't yet made a donation to cover the cost of the sherry and mince pies, please see Helen Kirk on Tuesday night.**

**Helen will need help on the day, so please speak to her if you are willing to help set up or to clear away afterwards. Only a few stayed to help her clear away last year so it took a long time, so do please stay and help if you can.**

After many years of making a Christmas cake for the raffle, which is drawn during the sherry and mince pies session, Janet Bower feels that this should be the last. Raffle tickets will be on sale on Tuesday evening and on Saturday so please don't miss the chance to win this last beautiful cake; grateful thanks to Janet.

Every year soprano Ann Garbett decorates the stage for our concerts, and if you can offer your help from 9.30am please let Ann Garbett or Anne Adams know. If you haven't time to help in the morning but have time to spare after the second concert, your help would be much appreciated. The tinsel and banners from the front rail need dismantling in a reasonable orderly fashion and put back into boxes. Just five minutes each from a few helpers would be marvellous! **Volunteers please see Ann Garbett or Administrator Anne Adams. Thank you.**

Ben Stone has volunteered to sell our Christmas CDs before and after each concert and during the intervals; thanks Ben!

Please note the following important health and safety advice:

Please don't wear perfume or aftershave, for either the rehearsal or the concert, as they can cause some members to have allergic reactions, and can interfere with efficient breathing.

Please take your usual sensible approach to reduce the risk of accidents, for example:

not using breakable vessels in dressing rooms

storing and carrying hot drinks safely

taking only cold bottled drinks on stage during rehearsal

no drinks on stage at all during the performance

keeping belongings out of thoroughfares, especially in restricted areas or on stage eg during rehearsal

taking care when using the stairs and steps to the stage, especially if there are items in the way

In the event of an emergency at the City Hall, a continuous alarm will be sounded and we will be directed out of the building to either the war memorial on Barker's Pool (fire), or to Devonshire Green (bomb alert). Please make sure you follow the directions of marshals and leave the building in an orderly fashion. Do not try to retrieve belongings.

Please look out for the raffle tickets which Richard Salt has been selling at rehearsals recently; the raffle tickets will be drawn at the second show interval. The proceeds go to Chorus funds and the main prize is one of soprano Janet Bower's amazing Christmas cakes, many thanks Janet.

The London Philharmonic Choir's recording of Paul Fincham's Ring the Bells in aid of the Crisis plan to end homelessness is available to stream on [Spotify](#) and download from [Apple Music](#). A short video about this project has also been shared on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). We let LPC know that we are singing this carol and are now [listed on their website](#) – along with all the other choirs which are singing it in aid of Crisis. There will be a bucket collection after each concert, in aid of this worthy charity.

### **Carols for Heart Research at Sheffield Station Tue 17 December (attachment)**

Thank you to all who have signed up for this jolly event, which will start at 4.15pm and run through to 6.30pm with a short break between what is effectively two repeat sessions. It's okay to drop in and out. Paul Henstridge will lead. You need Carols for Choirs and the Sheffield Carols leaflets, so please keep the two we're using on 14 December at the City Hall. Wrap up in suitably festive but warm gear – it's dry but usually very cold on the station forecourt. Carols list attached.

### **Tickhill Carol Concert Thursday 19 December 2019 (attachment)**

Thank you to the 9 sopranos, 4 altos, 3 tenors, 6 basses who have volunteered for the concert in Tickhill Parish Church. It will be on Thursday 19 December at 7.30pm (rehearsal 6.30pm). **We**

could do with more from all voice parts but especially altos and tenors, so do check your diaries and see if you can make it. Details including order of service attached (includes St Luke's arrangements). We run a raffle after the concert, to help pay the costs and hopefully make a bit extra for Alzheimer research UK. **If you have or can supply something suitable please give it to soprano Helen Kirk either on Tuesday or on Saturday 14 December at the City Hall carol concert.**

### **Bring a dish party at Janet Bower's Thursday 19 December**

All chorus members are invited to a 'bring a dish' party at Janet Bower's home in Tickhill after the carol concert. This is always a fun event and a great chance to get together with chorus friends. Janet's address is Medley Cottage, 56 Castlegate, DN11 9QU. It's five minutes walk from the church, and cars may be parked in the car park near the church which is never locked. All welcome, but don't go empty handed - please take a contribution to the buffet.

### **Message from Nigel Gyte**

*'Please say a big "THANK YOU" to the members of the Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus on my behalf. For the card, which I received in hospital., and the lovely flowers which I have just been presented with at home.*

*I have been told to expect it to take from 6 months to a year before I FULLY recover from the operation. It is the first time for over 50 years that my hair style has had a change. They shaved it all off! When I informed my brother Alan that my daughter Rachel said I looked just like him, his response was, "well all I can say is how lucky you are."*

*Ann and I will endeavour to attend your Christmas Concert, which we always enjoy. Meanwhile, I send my warmest best wishes to you all and hope you have a wonderful Christmas, followed by a Very Happy New Year! Love from Nigel X'*

### **Merry Christmas from our President Rachel Copley**

Rachel has sent the Chorus a lovely Christmas card, this will be displayed on the Chorus Notice Board. The message reads *'To all the 'Music Makers' within the Sheffield Phil., do have a very 'Merry Christmas', and a happy, healthy and fulfilling 'New Year', and my best wishes to all, Rachel Copley.'*

### **Thank you**

Thank you to all those who sang at Margaret Staniforth's funeral last Friday, and/or at St Luke's carol service on Sunday. Grateful thanks to Rachel Copley who conducted both events, which went very well.

### **Diary dates**

Saturday 14 December 2pm and 5.30pm: Carol concerts at City Hall; rehearsal 11.30am NOTE EARLIER TIMES!!!

*Elective event – Tuesday 17 December: teatime carol slot at Sheffield Station (to be confirmed)*

*Elective event – Thursday 19 December 2019: Tickhill Carol Concert, 7.30pm*

Saturday 18 April 2020 7pm – Messiah concert with Black Dyke Band in Sheffield cathedral.

Friday 1 May 2020 – compulsory piano rehearsal for Verdi *Requiem* with conductor Gianluca Marcianó at KES, tutti rehearsal City Hall Saturday 2 May 2020 from 2pm to 5pm (concert at 7pm)

TWO choir rehearsals for Mahler 8 in Manchester: 10.30 - 4pm on Saturday 6 June 2020 (counts for the MAR) and 2 - 6pm on Saturday 13 June 2020 (doesn't count for the MAR).

Tutti rehearsal for Mahler 8 from 1.30 to 4.30 on Saturday 20 June 2020 at Bridgewater Hall (concert at 7.30pm, no interval)

Concert dates and details, including piano and tutti rehearsal dates, times and locations, are posted on the Chorus website as soon as they become available so that members can plan their activities, at [Members Area / Diary dates](#). For example we have accepted an invitation to sing Mahler 2 on Sunday 7 March 2021 in the City Hall with Hallam Choral Society, Sheffield Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hallam Sinfonia, conducted by George Morton.

### **What to do if your contact details change**

Please send a message to [emailchange2019@sheffieldphil.org](mailto:emailchange2019@sheffieldphil.org) to ensure that your details are amended on the Membership database and that you continue to receive the weekly update.

### **Singing opportunities**

Details for a range of opportunities are on the Chorus website at [Members' Area / For information / Singing Opportunities](#)

### **Weekly updates and the Chorus website**

If ever you don't receive the weekly update, it is uploaded every week in [Members Area / Weekly Updates](#). The chorus user name is the same for every member, it's the word *member* and the password is *darius5*. These are for chorus members only so please don't share them. However, urgent messages such as rehearsal venue changes are always listed above the log-in box so members can read the important part without logging in.

The Members Area of the website lists all the information included in the update, eg rehearsal details, rehearsal notes and links to recordings, concert and re-audition arrangements, as well as dates for the following season, our official stage procedure, Darius' rehearsal schedule, how to look after your voice etc.

The website is available at <http://sheffieldphil.org> or via a Google search. If taken to an error page it is likely that your computer or laptop has stored the old website in its memory (cache) and you should clear it by pressing REFRESH, or F5 on your PC keyboard. Alternatively it may be that your router needs re-setting; try turning it off for 10 minutes before switching it on again. If none of this works please contact Anne Adams in the first instance, and she will inform the webmasters Matthew Morgan and Bill Best.

**Chair Paul Henstridge** [chairman@sheffieldphil.org](mailto:chairman@sheffieldphil.org)

**Administrator Anne Adams** [administrator@sheffieldphil.org](mailto:administrator@sheffieldphil.org)