



Newsletter

Patron: Sir Trevor Garland
Past Patron: Dr I G Dicker

March 2017

From the Director

Hi All

As usual, we start rehearsals and within a few weeks are in the season of Lent. Music for this time of year has been described as depressing and gloomy although I prefer sombre and solemn. This is, of course, a reflection on the build up to Good Friday and then Easter. In fact it could be argued that some of the finest music was written for Lent - the Bach passions spring to mind as being some of the most moving music ever written. There seems to be a feeling in much of today's society that everybody should be happy all of the time. Whilst I appreciate the merits of positivity, life throws some difficult situations and we need to be able to cope with the emotions of sadness as well as happiness. We need to be resilient to difficulties and accept all emotions. Some of the music for Lent is ideal for more introspective and reflective times.

I saw an advert on television recently claiming that a certain type of hot cross bun was the "best-kept secret" in the build up to Easter - I think that there may be more important aspects of Easter to consider! However, this does show how secular society is becoming.

Although it is a while ago, congratulations to Anne and Matt Walton on the birth of Rab. We look forward to welcoming Anne back in the fold soon... and also look forward to Rab joining the tenors in a few years!

I hope that you will be able to join us at some of our Lenten and Easter services.

Best wishes,

Jim Abraham
Director



Stations of the Cross – Holy Spirit, North Ryde – 18 March 2017

From the Chair

Greetings to all our followers

The year seems to be flying by already and we are now in the season of Lent and preparing music for Easter.

This is a small Newsletter so we can advertise where we will be singing for Easter and dates for the whole year.



Dinner after the North Ryde service – Bob, Jan, Madeleine, Jim, Nicola



Our program this year, as is usual, comes in fits and starts. Some months are very busy and there are quieter periods. Jim is also going home to see his family for his parent's 60th wedding anniversary in June. We are also still finalising some dates which will not appear in this list.

We hope you might check out where we are singing near you and add these events to your diary.

St Martin's Killara – ready for Evensong – March 2017

Recently Dave Lewis commented on the benefits of being in a choir such as ours. We are not too serious and enjoy each other's company. Consequently, we are as much a support group as a choir. He actually says: "I think I remarked that whether or not we individually needed therapy before we joined TCS, proof of these benefits is demonstrated by the fact that we are clearly all such sane, well balanced people now"

He also remembered that one of our former altos – Belle Keevers - is a Music Therapist, and I contacted her. She immediately sent back scholarly advice and also this article from the BBC News. I think we need to do a series on the benefits of singing – an important topic and relevant to TCS! *Most of the article is reprinted elsewhere in the Newsletter.*

Jim alluded to a new arrival. We have a new potential chorister in our midst! We congratulate Anne and Matt Walton on the birth of Robert Pringle Walton, born on 10th January 2017 and wish them well in their adventures as a family. Anne is a valuable alto and intends to start singing again soon!



We are also very pleased to announce that we have once more been given a grant from Ku-ring-gai Council towards new music, choral training workshops and a recording session. We are very grateful for this assistance in the work we do and acknowledgement of our presence in the Ku-ring-gai Council area.

We were again asked to sing Christmas Carols at the West Pymble shops last Christmas. This is something we really enjoy and appreciate being asked to take part in this community event.

We will also be involved in the Council Anzac Day service at St John's Gordon at 11.30am on Sunday 30th April 2017. Anyone interested would be most welcome.

As ever, a reminder that we would be grateful for any donations towards our ministry, however small. All donations of \$2 or over are tax deductible.

We look forward to seeing many of you during the year.

God bless

Jan Kneeshaw

TCS Program for 2017

Come and join us for the some of our events for 2017

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
March	Friday	17	7.00pm	Stations of the Cross	Holy Spirit, North Ryde
	Sunday	26	6.00pm	Choral Evensong	St John's, Dee Why
April	Sunday	2	10.30am	Solemn Mass	Christ Church, St Laurence
		2	6.30pm	Evensong	“
	Friday	14	2.30pm	Crucifixion - Stainer	St John's, Gordon
	Sunday	30	11.30am	Ku-ring-gai ANZAC Service	St John's, Gordon
May	Saturday	20	5.00pm	Order of St Lazarus Service	St Phillip's Church Hill
	Sunday	21	2.00pm	Evensong	2Ss Simon & Jude, Bowral
			2.45pm	Concert	
July	Saturday	1	6.00pm	Vigil Mass - TBC	St Mary's Cathedral
	Sunday	2	9.30am	Communion Service	Pymble Uniting Church
August	Sunday	6	6.00pm	Evensong	St John's Dee Why
	Sunday	13	4.00pm	Evensong	St John's Gordon
	Sunday	27	10.00am	Morning Prayer	St Swithun's Pymble
September	Sunday	3	9.30am	Choral Mass	St John's, Balmain
	Sunday	24	9.00am	Morning Service	Scots Kirk, Mosman
	Saturday	30	6.00pm	Vigil Mass	St Mary's Cathedral
October	Sunday	8	4.00pm	Evensong	Holy Trinity Terrigal
November	Sunday	12	4.00pm	Evensong	St John's Gordon
	Sunday	26	10.00am	Choral Eucharist	St John's Dee Why
December	Sunday	3	7.00pm	Advent Carols	St Alban's, Leura
	Sunday	10	6.00pm	Lesson and Carols	St John's, Balmain
	Friday	15	7.30pm	Lesson and Carols	St Peter's Cremorne
		17	7.30pm	Carol Service	St John's Gordon
	Sunday	24	11.00pm	Midnight Mass	St John's, Balmain

Check out our website and then tell your friends!

www.cathedralsingers.org.au

Would you like to consider joining us?

Contact Jan Kneeshaw on 9144 4915 or the Director,

Jim Abraham on 0405 817 276

Email: jan.kneeshaw@optusnet.com.au



Stainer's Crucifixion

✘ Good Friday

14 April 2017

2.30pm

St John's Church

Corner Pacific Hwy/St Johns Ave

Gordon

The Cathedral Singers

Spencer Darby, Tenor

Hayden Barrington, Baritone

Brett McKern, Organist

Jim Abraham, Choir Director

Free Entry

Donations to The Cathedral Singers encouraged

Choir singers 'synchronise their heartbeats.

Choir members are so

By Rebecca Morelle Science reporter, BBC World Service

- 9 July 2013
- From the section *Science & Environment*

Full article: <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-23230411>



TCS Dedication - February 2017

Choir singers not only harmonise their voices, they also synchronise their heartbeats, a study suggests.

Researchers in Sweden monitored the heart rates of singers as they performed a variety of choral works. They found that as the members sang in unison, their pulses began to speed up and slow down at the same rate.

Writing in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*, the scientists believe the synchrony occurs because the singers coordinate their breathing.

Dr Bjorn Vickhoff, from the Sahlgrenska Academy at Gothenburg University in Sweden, said: "The pulse goes down when you exhale and when you inhale it goes up.

"So when you are singing, you are singing on the air when you are exhaling so the heart rate would go down. And between the phrases you have to inhale and the pulse will go up.

"If this is so then heart rate would follow the structure of the song or the phrases, and this is what we measured and this is what we confirmed."

Sing from the heart

The scientists studied 15 choir members as they performed different types of songs. They found that the more structured the work, the more the singers' heart rates increased or decreased together.

Slow chants, for example, produced the most synchrony. The researchers also found that choral singing had the overall effect of slowing the heart rate. This, they said, was another effect of the controlled breathing.

Dr Vickhoff explained: "When you exhale you activate the vagus nerve, we think, that goes from the brain stem to the heart. And when that is activated the heart beats slower."

The researchers now want to investigate whether singing could have an impact on our health.

"There have been studies on yoga breathing, which is very close to this, and also on guided breathing and they have seen long-terms effects on blood pressure... and they have seen that you can bring down your blood pressure.

"We speculate that it is possible singing could also be beneficial".





Former TCS Choral scholar makes good

Extract from Feature article in SMH on 14 March 2017

Operantics' Katie Miller-Crispe takes DIY approach.

On a shoe-string: Operantics' Katie Miller-Crispe and Jessica Harper. Photo: Christopher Pearce



Evening rush-hour buses rumble by as the young artists come to rehearse, straight from their day jobs, including book-editing, teaching and retail.

They are all classically trained singers in their 20s who dream of mainstage operatic careers. Performing is their passion. The dozen young artists have gathered to rehearse Strauss's operetta *Die Fledermaus* (The Bat) for fledgling independent opera company, Operantics.

It is a tiny organisation with bold ambitions. Behind the shoe-string company is 28-year-old soprano Katie Miller-Crispe. Energetic and enterprising, she formed Operantics after completing a Bachelor of Music and a Masters in Publishing.

"I was looking at pursuing a singing career," she says, "and I was looking at what was available in Sydney, what kind of opportunities were on offer and the kind of opportunities that I would like to see."

With scant opportunities available, she decided to put on her own show. "You have to do something. You can't afford to sit at home and wait," she says.

Initially, she planned a one-off production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* in 2015, funded largely from her own pocket.

But its success gave her the confidence to keep going. The company, based at the Independent in North Sydney, staged its first full season last year with productions that included the opera *Mansfield Park*, based on Jane Austen's novel, and Bellini's *La Sonnambula*.

"We keep everything as low cost as possible. I have friends who help me make costumes; we rent things only when necessary. It's very black box," says Miller-Crispe.

For Miller-Crispe, the chance to choose repertoire is also part of the appeal of forming the company. "You get the opportunity to try new things and influence what repertoire gets in front of people's eye balls. You get to explore things that really interest you personally without really having to ask anybody's permission," she says.

On the cards for later this year is a World War 1 memorial concert, a Weimar Republic cabaret and Mozart's little known opera *La finta giardiniera*.

It is a dilemma for aspiring performers, who after years of training are unable to make a living at their art form. But the reality is that many artists in the independent sector are not paid. As the recent National Opera Review found, opportunities for artists – and especially young artists – have declined significantly since the global financial crisis.

Die Fledermaus is at The Independent, North Sydney, on April 20–23. www.operantics.com.au

For the full article, see:

<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/music/operantics-katie-millercrispe-takes-diy-approach-20170313-guww8a.html>

Photos: Katie as a TCS choral scholar in 2010 (at top) and in the grounds of the Rectory of Peterborough Cathedral on the TCS Tour – 2011.



Congratulations, Katie!!

Ed