



## *Welcome to the new season*

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### **Hello Members,**

After a wonderful summer break - Welcome back!

At the end of last season we said our sad 'Goodbyes' to Tom Newall, our inspirational conductor for the past five and a half years.

We have come a long way under Tom's dynamic leadership. Walton's masterpiece, 'Belshazzar's Feast' was a fitting finale to crown the dramatic and exciting performances we have enjoyed under his baton, and the farewell party at Ewood Park was

an evening to remember. We all wish him a stunning and musically fulfilling career ahead.

At the beginning of this 2018-19 Season we extend our congratulations and a warm welcome to Abi Kitching, Blackburn Music Society's newly appointed Musical Director.

Abi impressed us all with her passion for choral conducting and her ability to bring the music to life



*A warm welcome to the new season from Joy Fielding, Chair of Blackburn Music Society*

in well-planned, exciting rehearsals. We have some fantastic concerts in prospect.

Welcome Abi - we are all raring to go!

**Joy**

### Autumn Highlights

- Monday 3rd Sept. First rehearsal at St Mary's College.
- Open Rehearsals 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th Sept.
- Monday 24th Sept. Last date for Committee Nominations.
- Monday 1st Oct AGM
- Saturday 10th Nov. Armistice Centenary, Blackburn Cathedral

## *Abi Kitching joins BMS*

Abi Kitching has been appointed as our new Musical Director with effect from September 2018. She will be the sixth Musical Director of the Society. Abi graduated with a first class honours music degree from the University of Manchester in 2017. During her time at university, she was Musical Director of chamber choir

Ad Solem, and a student conductor of the Manchester Chorus and The Cosmo Singers. In the past year, she has been Assistant Conductor of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Chorus after being awarded the Alexander Gibson Memorial Fellowship. Abi currently works with a number of choirs and is also an active



soprano and regularly performs, broadcasts and records with various choirs.

**CHAIR (C)** - Co-ordinates all activities to achieve the objects of the Society, ensuring that the Constitution of the Society is followed.

**CONCERT SECRETARY (C)** - Takes responsibility for arrangements associated with concert performances and workshops.

**TREASURER (C)** - Ensures that the Society's finances are managed in an efficient manner in accordance with the Constitution.

**GENERAL SECRETARY (C)** - Assists the Chair in the coordination of the activities required to achieve the Objects of the Society.

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (C)** - Maintains and manages an accurate database of the Society's members and takes responsibility for the collection of fees, donations and claiming back Gift Aid.

**LIBRARIAN (C)** - Ensures singing members of the Society, soloists, orchestras and other instrumentalists are provided with music scores.

**ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN** - Assists the Librarian and takes responsibility for management of the database of the Society's music stocks.

**WEB MANAGER** - Maintains the website to promote a positive image for BMS and to promote our events.

**VOICE REPRESENTATIVE** - Represents the views of members of their Section to the Committee, cascades Committee decisions and proposals. Monitors section attendance.

**PUBLICITY MANAGER** - Promotes and publicises the Society and its events.

**PROGRAMME SECRETARY** - Designs and prepares printer's draft of concert programmes.

**FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER** - Responsible for the organisation of all front of house activities, production, distribution and sale of concert tickets and accounts for all monies received.

**STAGE MANAGER** - Responsible for organising the staging of performances.

(C) Indicates Committee Member

## **BMS is your Society, so how can you help to make it continue to flourish?**

*Attending rehearsals and meeting people is all part of the fun and we all benefit from that sense of belonging and pride in what we do.*

*Taking time to learn our parts helps our personal confidence and ensures that we, as a choir, can perform at our best on concert day.*

### **So, what else could you do to support BMS?**

*Everyone can help in many ways, here are some ideas:*

**Open Rehearsals:** Open Rehearsals will take place throughout September this year and we will focus on *The Armed Man*. These events are a really important way of introducing new singers. Please advertise this (free !) event to your friends who enjoy singing and any other music organisations that you know of.

**Gaining Sponsorship:** An important source of income for the Society comes from the support of our sponsors who advertise in our concert programmes. Please consider whether you know of anyone who has a business they may like to promote by advertising at our events. The cost would be: Full page £40 for one concert or £100 for all three concerts (Nov, Dec and March). Half page £20 for one concert or £50 for all three concerts. We can help with artwork if needed.

**Committee Membership:** Committee Members are Trustees of the Society (which is a Registered Charity) and are legally and financially responsible for the business of the Society. They attend regular, formal Committee Meetings and are responsible for directing the strategy, organisation and business of the Society. If you are interested in becoming a Committee member, please contact Joy for an informal chat before 24th Sept (last date for Committee nominations).

**Job Roles:** A wide range of skills are needed to organise and run the Society and all Job Roles are formally-defined. Some Job Roles require membership of the Committee, whilst others can be undertaken outside of Committee commitments. Job Role specifications are available on request from the Secretary at [bbmusicoc@gmail.com](mailto:bbmusicoc@gmail.com)

**Assisting a Job Role:** A number of Job Roles need assistance from time to time. This is a good way to get to know the ropes and extremely valuable help. Let us know, if you would like to help in an informal way.

**Volunteering:** Every rehearsal and event needs volunteers. It is really helpful if we know up-front our 'go to' people for reliable help. Simply let us know that you would like to be informally listed to assist with certain tasks. We particularly need people to set up chairs, porter piano and amp (roadies!), make the brews, sell programmes, steward front of house, collect in scores, help concert clear up, write concert reviews and news items etc.

# Abi's Page

Abi speaks about joining BMS as MD and looks at our forthcoming programme...



## Hello singers!

It is a true privilege for me to be able to welcome you to the next year with Blackburn Music Society. I am thrilled to be taking this job and I join your excitement for the year ahead; we have a wonderful and varied 18/19 concert series collaborating with some extremely high quality ensembles.

Firstly, huge congratulations on your performance of *Belshazzar's Feast*, no easy feat. It was great to be behind ranks singing with you all and I hope you managed to enjoy the piece for its enormous scale and storytelling. Well done.

Like you all, I love singing. I have always sung in choirs and as a soloist and I thrive off working in a creative way. We are all very privileged to have the experience of performing large works and being a voice in a collective choir. I have always found this a very empowering activity and one which can always be enhanced as our understanding of singing improves. I will be working closely with you all through *The Armed Man* rehearsals and beyond, to form a vocabulary and understanding of singing technique. I invite you throughout this process to ask questions, so that we all fully understand and are able to implement these ideas.

In the coming years, I would like to see us continuing to take on beautiful, challenging works, collaborating, and enjoying singing to wider and wider audiences. I am continually thinking of new ways to engage audiences and singers in my jobs, and working with BMS is no exception. This year we are lucky enough to be performing *Messiah* with the professional orchestra - Northern Baroque Sinfonia- and I have suggested that we do this 'by candlelight' to magnify what will already be an atmospheric performance.

Fantastically, this has been approved. (Don't worry, I will make sure we can adequately read our scores!) I think ideas like this can enhance choral singing and be successful. In the next few years I hope we can provide truly memorable performances. A new year and MD undoubtedly gives us a chance to invite others to be part of this, and I encourage you all to be at the forefront of recruiting members by thinking of at least one person who you could bring along to see if they enjoy it.

Looking further ahead, we take on *Brahms Requiem* in March, a stunning piece of music which explores the ideas of humanism, and the cycle of life and death. I think it is very fitting at a time where much of the world is very divided. But the fun doesn't end there! We have just commissioned Manchester based composer and conductor, Rory Johnston, to write a piece of music for us using local texts which we will premiere in our summer concert.

So, I hope I have whetted your appetite for the coming year. There are wonderful recordings of all the pieces we are learning online (for the *Armed Man*: 'Jenkins: The Armed Man' with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and National Youth Choir of GB is great), and, I am assured, *thousands* of pencils sold in all kinds of varieties across the country - I encourage you to make use of both resources!

*Enjoy the last few weeks of summer and I look forward to seeing you all in September!*

**Abi**

*Looking back on a season of fun and laughter.  
Can you name and date these events? (No prizes sorry!)*





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*Members' feedback said... 'Singing in BMS rehearsals can be physically, emotionally and mentally stimulating. Actually, performing great choral works, as opposed to listening to them, can be exhilarating and moving, with the added bonus of a shared experience, which intensifies the effect.'*

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## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

**Gill Broom talks about subscriptions, Data Protection and members' feedback from the BMS Survey undertaken earlier this year:**

### Subscriptions

With an exciting season ahead of us subscriptions for the 2018/19 season remain at £60 per member. Subs may be paid by cash, cheque – please make payable to Blackburn Music Society, or through internet banking SORT CODE: 09-01-29 ACCOUNT No. 03825862, please enter your sur-name and choir number in the reference field (thank you!)

Please pay subs by 30th September as our constitution states that only those who are members of the society are able to stand for office and vote at the AGM.

### Data Protection

Over the past few months you have probably been inundated with information about the new laws regarding data protection. BMS has also had to update its policies and privacy notices in relation to the new legislation. Please do not hesitate to ask if you would like a copy of our new policies.

In February 2018 members were asked to complete a short online survey to give the committee insight into what members enjoyed, what areas of the choir could be developed and to look forward to future performances.

The responses continue to be evaluated by the committee and will form the basis of future discussions and actions in the coming season.

Here is a 'taste' of what the survey showed:

58 responses and one letter were received from a membership of 86 choir members, equating to a 69% of registered members responding.

The vast majority of respondents wrote of their pleasure at singing a variety of repertoire, the challenge and joy of singing new pieces, improving their own skill and the exhilaration of the final performance.

Additionally respondents commented on the congenial, friendly atmosphere at rehearsals, friendship, fun, good humour, good organisation and communication.

Whilst many were very pleased with the society as it is presently an equal number suggested that there should be more social events to enable them to meet more members of the choir, not just those they sit near.

Some expressed concern over the cramped rehearsal space and requested that rehearsals start and end promptly. It was also suggested that notices be given at the start of the break to allow more time for socialising.

Some members stated that at times in the past season they had felt unprepared for performances through lack of rehearsal time for some new and complex pieces and it was suggested that more sectional rehearsals would help members feel more confident.

*Look out for more feedback in the coming weeks!*

**Gill**

Your feedback and ideas are important to the Society.

You can contact any of the Committee at the central email address.

Similarly, if you have any queries or would like to offer help in any way, please let us know.

*E-mail: [bbmusicsoc@gmail.com](mailto:bbmusicsoc@gmail.com)*

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*MARGARET CRANE*

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*LIZ HACKING*

*MARY LEDWICK*

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*MARGARET MCALLESTER*

*SUE PARKINSON*

*ESTHER SHAW*

*SARAH WEAL*

*VACANT*

*CHAIR*

*MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY*

*GEN. COMMITTEE*

*PROGRAMME SECRETARY*

*DEPUTY LIBRARIAN*

*TREASURER*

*GENERAL SECRETARY*

*FRONT OF HOUSE*

*GEN. COMMITTEE*

*PUBLICITY MANAGER*

*ASSISTANT SECRETARY*

*LIBRARIAN*

## DIARY DATES 2018–2019

Keep up to date: please check BMS website for latest detailed rehearsal schedule

Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> September 7.15pm St Mary's College, Blackburn

**Weekly rehearsals recommence** Annual choir subscription (£60) due by 30<sup>th</sup> Sept.

Mon Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 7.15pm St Mary's College, Blackburn

**Four Open Rehearsals** Invite your friends to join us. All singers welcome!

Mon 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 8.45pm. St Mary's College, Blackburn **Annual General Meeting**

Wed 10<sup>th</sup> Oct **First Committee Meeting**

Sat 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 7pm Rehearsal: 2pm Blackburn Cathedral **'Blackburn Remembers'** The Armed Man

Sat 1<sup>st</sup> December 7pm Rehearsal: 2pm Blackburn Cathedral **'Messiah by Candlelight'**

Nov/Dec date t.b.c. Supporting the Community **Carol singing event/s**

Mon 10<sup>th</sup> Dec (meet at) 7pm Blackburn Cathedral **Light up a Life Service**

Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2019 10am–3.30pm Salesbury Memorial Hall **Brahms Requiem Singing Day**

Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar 2019 7pm Rehearsal: 2pm Blackburn Cathedral **Brahms 'A German Requiem'**

Apr 2019 date t.b.c. Blackburn Cathedral **Royal Society of St George Service**

Sun 9<sup>th</sup> Jun 2019 location/time t.b.c. **Summer Concert**

Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> Jun 2019 time t.b.c. King George's Hall, Blackburn **Blackburn Festival of Voice**

Jun 2019 date t.b.c. **End of season social event**

We're on  
the web!

[www.blackburnmusicsociety.org.uk](http://www.blackburnmusicsociety.org.uk)

