

NEWSLETTER 41 SPRING 2024

BY SARAH HARD



PETERSFIELD MUSICAL FESTIVAL

2024 Festival tickets now on sale!

Booking is now open for PMF and Petersfield Orchestra Friends and Participants

The Festival Priority Booking Office is handled by our Treasurer, Rob Walker. If you have any booking queries during the priority booking period, please contact Rob by email: robwalker4719@gmail.com or call 01428 654893.

There are several options for purchasing tickets:

Book and pay online

Via Ticket Source before public booking opens on 5th February (booking fee applies) using the Friends' or Participants' password.

www.ticketsource.co.uk/petersfieldmusicalfestival

Book via email and pay by bank transfer (BACS)

Complete the booking form online or by hand, mail it to Rob then pay via BACS. Please note that paying by bank transfer saves us banking charges.

Pay by post

Send your completed booking form with your cheque to Festival Booking Office, 1 Homelands Copse, Fernhurst, Haslemere, GU27 3JQ. Please include a stamped, addressed envelope to receive your tickets by post, otherwise please provide your email address.

Public booking opens on 5th February via the PMF website or at One Tree Books in Lavant Street.

For information about our concerts, download our 2024 colour leaflet at www.bit.ly/PMFEvents2024 or go to the PMF Events page: www.petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk/events/



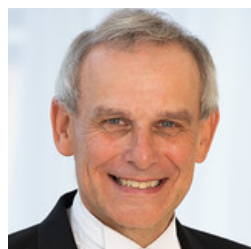
All events will be run in line with any Covid-19 regulations or guidance in force at the time. If an event has to be cancelled because of these regulations or guidance, we will offer you a full refund of the cost of your tickets.

Petersfield Musical Festival gratefully acknowledges support from...

Cllr J C Crissey continues to raise funds for his four mayoral charities, including PMF, for which we are very thankful.



PMF President receives New Year Honour



Jonathan Willcocks

We are delighted to announce that our President, Jonathan Willcocks, was awarded a BEM in this year's New Year's Honours list for services to music.

'I am so delighted to receive this public honour. For singers of all ages to be able to come together to make music of high quality

is a truly life-enhancing thing that brings so many new dimensions into their lives,' said Jonathan.

Other award winners with a connection to the Festival include Carolyn Samson, who sang for the Festival in 2000 as a rising star, and Kate Woolveridge (Joanna Kate Williams) who was engaged two years running to lead a vocal workshop in schools for the Michael Hurd Fund. The Fund is run by the Festival and gives awards to local young musicians to support them in their studies.

Festival updates

Mozart, Mass in C Minor

PMF is pleased to announce the return of Sofia Ticciati as the soprano soloist for Mozart's Mass in C Minor on Saturday 16th March. Sofia sang at the Festival in Dyson's The Canterbury Pilgrims in 2019. Clara Orif, who joined us last year at Jephtha, will take the role of second soprano. Another familiar singer will be George Curnow (Tenor) who has sung with the Petersfield Choir and SouthDowns Camerata, and Giles White (Baritone), music director of Rogate Choral Society.



Richard Pearce

Organ Recital by Richard Pearce

Details have been announced of Richard Pearce's in St. Peter's Church on 20th March. He will present a varied programme of

pieces from much-loved Bach fugues to lesser-known modern French composers such as Alain and Langlais, alongside a sonata by Elgar and a Chorale by César Franck.

Choral Workshop

The 2024 choral workshop will be held at Petersfield Methodist Church on Saturday 28th September. It will be run by the Festival conductor, Paul Spicer, and will focus on the poignant Dona Nobis Pacem, by Vaughan Williams, one of the pieces to be performed at the 2025 Festival.

Booking forms will be available during this year's Festival.

Festival extras

Pre-concert talk with Jamie Cochrane

Ticket holders may want to attend conductor Robin Browning's pre-concert talk with Jamie Cochrane, the soloist in Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto no. 2, on Thursday 21st March at 6.30pm.

Concert refreshments

The Rose Room at the Festival Hall will be open before and during the intervals of the evening concerts on 15th, 16th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd March, with a bar operated by members of Petersfield Lions Club.

Tea and coffee will be available before the lunchtime recital by recipients of grants from the Michael Hurd

Fund for Young Musicians on Tuesday 19th March.

Wine and soft drinks will be available before and during the interval of Richard Pearce's organ recital on the evening of Wednesday 20th March.

PMF stalwarts hold successful Xmas market

Sue Upton and Katherine Minchin raised a total of £140 at the recent Christmas market and are looking for good quality goods to sell at the Easter market. Please bring them to combined rehearsals or call Sue on 01730 302492.

Festival of Young Composers – 4th February

Come and see what the next generation of composers is up to! This year's Festival of Young Composers is taking place at 10am on 4th February at the Petersfield School and is open to the public. This will be the eighth competition, giving an ideal opportunity for imaginative musicians to share their creations with new audiences and receive expert feedback from a panel of judges.

Category A is open to young people aged 14 and under, and will this year feature Jude Gillham and William Sharps. The next age category, for composers aged 17 and under, will include Ava Groves and Joe Jolliffe (recorded performance) and William Hammond and Laurence Horwood (live performance). Refreshments are available, and the competition will finish at around 12.30pm following the presentation of awards and certificates of merit.

The Festival of Young Composers, which is run in association with the Michael Hurd Fund for Young Musicians, has so far given a platform to 48 young creatives since its inception in 2008. Their music is either played live or presented in recorded form to the public, and over £2,500 has been distributed in prize money to support the musical studies of the winners. Compositions have ranged from solo songs and piano music to a capella choral works, as well as a wide variety of instrumental ensembles.

All entries must be written for a maximum of twelve instruments or voices. Each year selected winning entries have been performed during the Petersfield Musical Festival Youth Concerts, a potential springboard into the wider world.

This year's Festival

Thoughts from conductor Paul Spicer



Paul Spicer

I am amazed to think that this year's Festival is my twentieth! How did that happen? But it must show that I enjoy coming to Petersfield and being with you all. I have always been grateful for the warmth of your welcome every time I come and that helps me to forget the usual road misery driving to you and back!

This year's Festival has two wonderfully different concerts, as we so often do. It is always a huge privilege to be able to direct a performance of Mozart's great C minor Mass, which was left tantalisingly unfinished at his death, like the Requiem. Also like the Requiem it is a work which has attracted a number of attempts at completion. In the case of the Mass the one by Robert Levin is really fine but is extremely challenging for the choir! But we are performing what Mozart left us and what we have is already quite challenging. Those singing it will undoubtedly scale those heights, and our first rehearsal last November showed the choir's enthusiasm for the work. I have always felt that if Mozart had finished the Mass, it would have stood alongside Bach's B minor Mass as one of the great choral edifices in the repertoire. Like the Bach, the sheer scale of it is extraordinary, and we feel as if we are on an epic journey from those first 'weeping' phrases of the Kyrie which are so beautiful.

Accompanying this will be Mozart's evergreen Symphony No.40 in G minor, and I know that Southern Pro Musica will really enjoy giving this popular work a performance to balance and complement that of the Mass. It will be good to welcome them back again.

At the end of the Festival, we have a concert of English music by Elgar, Dyson, Ireland and Rutter. Elgar's beautiful Serenade for Strings starts the programme followed by Dyson's Hierusalem. I know that some of you have found this work difficult to get to grips with but I am hoping that I will be able to persuade you of its beauty over the coming weeks. In fact, I think the opening prelude for the orchestra is one of the loveliest pieces of string writing I know from this period. Dyson was locally connected, living in Winchester and being involved with this Festival for which he composed Agincourt which we performed a few years ago. Of course, when we planned this concert we didn't know that Jerusalem was going to be so centre stage in world news, and praying for the 'peace of Jerusalem' is very much needed at present.

After John Ireland's lovely Downland Suite for strings we end the concert with John Rutter's Magnificat – tuneful, joyful and entirely representative of Rutter's popular style. This doesn't mean that it, too, doesn't have its challenges, but they are entirely within reach of this choir! It should be a really lovely concert which everyone will enjoy on the night.

I very much look forward to rehearsing with you all.

In Memoriam

We remember fondly and gratefully former Festival committee members who have died recently

Simon Blumlein served on the Festival committee from 1993 to 2006 and ran the Festival box office from his CD shop in Dragon Street. He was the son of Alan Blumlein, the pioneering sound engineer who devised (among other inventions) the first stereo sound system. Simon was very active latterly in the belated recognition of his father's achievements. His wife, Anne, ran a popular dance school in Petersfield until she suffered a serious stroke, after which Simon gave up his shop to look after her. He was a well-known Petersfield personality and a great raconteur who loved to talk about his father's work and his school days at Dartington. He celebrated a milestone birthday by walking down Dragon Street on his hands!

Jackie Philipps was a leading member of the Festival committee from 1987 to 2004. She was minutes secretary from 1992 and the driving force behind the campaign for a Festival 'ambiance' that included the painted front panels and other cladding on the stage, and the foyer display. Jackie was part of the Front of House team in the 2023 Festival, selling programmes. As well as the Festival, she was much involved in the town's musical theatre societies, latterly as president of Petersfield Theatre Group and DSM in their productions. She was a great friend of Michael Hurd and enjoyed retelling his (often risqué) jokes.

Please Donate to Petersfield Musical Festival

We are hugely indebted to everyone who supports us: local authorities, businesses, programme advertisers, Friends of the Festival and other sponsors and donors.

If you would like to make a donation, please do so via the JustGiving link on our webpage:

www.petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk/support-us/donate/
or by signing up to the East Hampshire Community

Lottery with Petersfield Musical Festival as your nominated charity.

You may also like to sponsor all or part of the fee of a soloist or musician, or a group of musicians, for any of our concerts or recitals (choral or other) during the Festival. For more information, please contact our Treasurer, Rob Walker, on 01428 654893 or robwalker4719@gmail.com.

Choral update *From Sally Maybury, Choir Secretary*

Saturday 16 March, Mozart Mass in C minor

Concert dress

Ladies: black long-sleeved tops, black long skirts or trousers. No shiny/sparkly jewellery please.

Men: black open-neck long-sleeved shirts, black trousers.

Rehearsal dates and sections

At Petersfield Methodist Church*

Thursday 8 February 7.30pm Credo, Sanctus/Osanna

Saturday 2 March 2pm Sanctus/Osanna for Benedictus

At Petersfield Festival Hall**

Thursday 14th March 7pm Final piano rehearsal

Saturday 16th March 2pm Full rehearsal with orchestra

Saturday 16th March 7.30pm Performance

*Petersfield Methodist Church: Station Road, Petersfield
GU32 3EB

** Petersfield Festival Hall, Heath Road, Petersfield GU31 4EA

Saturday 23rd March Dyson/ Rutter

Concert dress

Ladies: single-coloured long-sleeved tops (not black or white), black long skirts or trousers. No shiny/sparkly jewellery please.

Men - single-coloured open-neck long-sleeved shirts (not black or white), black trousers.

Rehearsal dates and sections

At Petersfield Methodist Church*

Friday 9 February 7.30pm Dyson Fig 15-end, Rutter Nos 5 & 6

Saturday 2 March 10.30am Dyson revision from beginning, Rutter No 7 & revision

At Petersfield Festival Hall**

Tuesday 19th March 7pm Final piano rehearsal

Saturday 23rd March 2pm Full rehearsal with orchestra

Saturday 23rd March 7.30pm Performance

If you cannot attend a rehearsal or need further information, please let Sally know by email at cmaybury@btinternet.com