

NEWSLETTER 43 AUTUMN 2024



PETERSFIELD MUSICAL FESTIVAL

Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to the start of our new season. We have already enjoyed our annual choral workshop, reviewed below. Everyone was delighted to see our Festival Conductor, Paul Spicer, in good health and he was pleased with the progress singers made in Ralph Vaughan Williams's plea for peace *Dona Nobis Pacem*, sadly so relevant today.



*Pam Buckley,
Festival Chair*

We are now looking forward to a broad range of music in the 2025 Festival, previewed here, including the very welcome return of Merry Opera with its lively production of Johann Strauss's Die Fledermaus.

I am delighted to report that new trustees have come forward whom we welcome here and our new Treasurer, Richard Stoneman has taken over from the indefatigable Rob Walker.

Philip Young is no longer a trustee but remains on the Music Committee. A key task Philip handled meticulously was that of Librarian for the two choral/orchestral concerts which involves checking editions and sources of choral music, ordering orchestral sets from publishers and libraries and arranging for distribution, clean-up and return. Do get in touch if you or someone you know may be interested.

We thank our new sponsors: The Lodge Dental Surgery and Littlejohn Bathrooms for their generous support of the Festival (see below.)

Thanks to Sarah Hard and Charlotte Beck for putting together this newsletter and to Simon O'Hea for coordinating the email distribution. Read on to find out more about our 2025 programme, what happened at the AGM and for details of the combined choir rehearsals, to which we warmly invite singers.

chairman@petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk

Our new Festival sponsors



We are delighted to announce a new sponsorship scheme for local businesses which will help fund the work of the Festival.



Littlejohn Bathrooms and the Lodge Dental Surgery are supporting PMF's mission as Bronze and Silver sponsors respectively. We are extremely grateful for their generosity and commitment to the Petersfield Musical Festival which enriches the lives of participants, performers, students, audiences and families.

Rupert Neville of The Lodge Dental Surgery in the heart of Petersfield 'is thrilled to participate in the March 2025 Petersfield Musical Festival as the Silver sponsor.'

Sarah Fascione of Littlejohn Bathrooms commented: 'We have supported the Festival in the past and now are delighted to step up to be Bronze sponsor for the March 2025 event.'

The Festival is in discussion with potential sponsors for the Gold; hopefully to be announced soon.

The Festival gratefully acknowledges the support of local authorities and businesses, the Friends of the Festival and other sponsors and donors.



Christmas Market

There will be a Christmas market in the Festival Hall on Saturday, 7th December. Sue Upton will be running a stall on behalf of the Festival. Please donate good quality saleable goods to Sue at the combined rehearsals or contact her about your donation on: 01730 302492

PMF appoints two new trustees

PMF is delighted to announce the election of two new trustees, who will be invaluable in supporting the Festival and its day-to-day administration. Both bring rich skill sets to the committee and have broad musical expertise.

Firstly Steve Bartholomew, formerly Petersfield Orchestra Chair and representative on the committee (2015-23), now takes over the role of Music Committee Secretary, which encompasses liaison with the performers to formalise contracts, agree rehearsal times and cover all logistical requirements. Steve is a keen bassoonist and has played with the orchestra since 2014.



Steve Bartholomew
Music Committee
Secretary

Louise Douglas has taken over the administration for the Michael Hurd Fund for Young Musicians. She has been involved over many years in the Festival of Young Composers' competition, which operates under the aegis of the MH Fund. Louise was formerly Head of Music at Alton School and continues to teach piano on a freelance basis. She is a member of the Renaissance Choir and also plays the bassoon and organ.



Louise Douglas
Administrator
MHFYM

Choral Workshop lifts the spirits and inspires hope

PMF hosted a sold-out choral workshop on 28th September when over 100 singers of all ages and abilities came together to rehearse and perform Ralph Vaughan Williams' moving plea for peace, *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

The beautiful and deeply moving work was written in 1936 and reflects on previous wars and foreshadows future conflict which was already looming on the horizon. Held at the Methodist Church in Petersfield under the expert guidance of Festival Conductor Paul Spicer, accompanied by Mark Dancer, the singers, drawn from Chichester, Guildford and Portsmouth as well as Petersfield and the surrounding villages, got to grips with the work enthusiastically. The piece will be performed as part of the Festival on 22nd March 2025.

Many singers – both experienced and newcomers – expressed their enjoyment at the end of the day. 'It was invigorating,' said one. 'I really enjoyed the day. I learnt a lot and it was nice to sit with so many good singers,' said another. A different singer underlined how a day-long rehearsal can help give an overview and shape to a piece of music: 'I now have an understanding of the whole piece and know that it's manageable and will be exciting to sing at the Festival. As always, Paul's all-round excellence shone through.'

PMF is delighted to have welcomed new singers joining the regular members from Fernhurst, Petersfield and Rogate Choral Societies. Many of them, on the back of their experience of the workshop, have decided to sing in the Festival Chorus next March. One alto, who thoroughly enjoyed the workshop, had come from Godalming after her mother, who lives in Petersfield, spotted the event on the website. 'I'm so pleased she did', she said. Paul Spicer summed the day up by saying: 'we had an excellent day. It was very productive and cheerful.'

Our grateful thanks go to Paul Spicer, Mark Dancer, the team who administered and organised the day, and all the participants.



Paul Spicer, with
Mark Dancer



Report from the Festival's AGM

Trustees, committee members, Friends, singers and members of the public attended the AGM on 19th September 2024.

Incoming Treasurer Richard Stoneman commented on the overall health of the charity's financial position due in large part to sell-out concerts and an increase in advertising revenue from the programme. However, the final tranche of EHDC Supporting Communities grant had been received, presenting a challenge for the forthcoming financial year.

Chair Pam Buckley reviewed the 2024 Festival, which comprised 11 concerts over nine days: eight in the Festival Hall and three in St Peter's, with music ranging from pop songs to organ fugues, choral works to jazz standards. She gave warm thanks to the people and organisations which played their part in making the Festival run smoothly, including the Festival Committee, front of house team and others. This year the Festival welcomed the support of Cllr J C Crissey as Town Mayor (2023-2024) who attended several concerts and added an extra flourish to our final concert by presenting the Festival, as one of his mayoral charities, with a 'huge' cheque for £1,000.

Four retiring trustees were thanked for their service: Philip

Young, former Chairman and Musical Director, who first joined the Committee in 1980, Rob Walker, Treasurer for the past seven years, Sue Bint, administrator of the Michael Hurd Fund for Young Musicians for the last six years, and Marcia Fielden, former Secretary, who had been on the Committee for fourteen years and served on both the Music Committee and the Michael Hurd Fund review panel. Louise Douglas and Steve Bartholomew were warmly welcomed as new trustees as Michael Hurd Fund administrator and Music Committee Secretary respectively.

Sue Bint reported that The Festival of Young Composers, which took place in February 2024, attracted impressive entries and winning compositions by William Sharp and Laurence Horwood were performed at the Monday Youth Concert. Louise Douglas and Lucy Flint had been welcomed onto the Review Panel and over the past year, trustees awarded five young musicians financial assistance from the Michael Hurd Fund for Young Musicians towards buying instruments, lessons or courses. Philip Young noted how much he has enjoyed working with everyone over his 44 years of involvement with the Festival, which he believes is in a strong position for the future.

Festival 2025

Sarah Hard looks ahead to the wide range of music on offer at the 2025 Festival



Sarah Hard

The 2025 Festival promises to deliver another wide array of music catering to diverse audiences. From a brass band to a Beethoven piano concerto; chamber music to the flagship choral works, there is something for all tastes. The following events will take place at the Festival Hall unless otherwise stated.

Friday 14 March, 7.30 pm

Liss Band with Hampshire Police Male Voice Choir



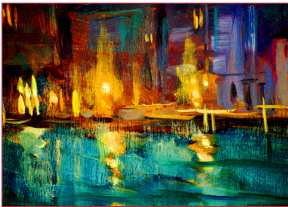
Mike Pennicotte-Henrie,
Liss Band musical director
Geoffrey Porter,
HPMVC director

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, Liss Band is at the heart of the local community and well-known for highly entertaining performances ranging from summer afternoon teas to evening concerts.

Hampshire Police Male Voice Choir can 'go from a caress to a roar' and will be singing a broad repertoire from hymns to pop songs.

Saturday 15 March, 7.30pm

Gloria!



Vivaldi *Gloria in D RV589*
Haydn *'Creation' Mass*
Corelli *Concerto Grosso op.6 no.8*

Paul Spicer, conductor | Mark Dancer, organ

Festival Chorus, with Petersfield and Rogate Choral Societies
Soloists to be announced
Southern Pro Musica

Vivaldi's Gloria is widely regarded as one of the greatest Baroque choral works. Energetic, rhythmic movements alternate with reflective passages and memorable solos, accompanied by strings, oboes and trumpet. The Gloria promises to be a joyous occasion for both singers and audience alike.

While practically every baroque composer wrote their own unique "Christmas" concerto, Corelli's is widely viewed as one of the finest, no apology is therefore made for programming this beautiful piece in March!

Haydn's 'Creation' Mass named after a brief quotation in it from his oratorio The Creation, has not been performed before at the Festival. It offers plenty of appealing tunes, catchy rhythms, striking manipulations of tempo and mood, and compelling choral and solo movements.

Sunday 16 March, 3.00pm-4.00pm

Family Concert

Dancing through the Movies



South Downs Camerata will take their young audience on a journey of 'Dancing through the Movies' to include film music from Harry Potter, Sleeping Beauty and others. There will be dancing and fun for all the family.

South Downs Camerata | Sara Deborah Timossi, musical director

Monday 17 and Wednesday 19 March, 7.00pm

Youth Concerts

From Mozart to Matilda



Singers and instrumentalists from local schools and youth music organisations will be showing off their skills. The Combined Schools Choir will sing songs from Simon & Garfunkel, Flanders & Swann, the musical Matilda and many more. Items for combined school wind and jazz bands will be complemented by the Petersfield Schools String Orchestra.

Tuesday 18 March, 1.00pm at St Peter's Church

Lunchtime recital

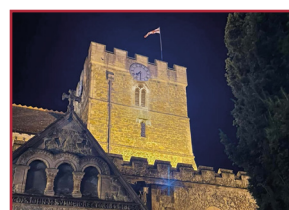


The
Michael Hurd
Fund for
Young
Musicians

Recipients of the Michael Hurd Fund for Young Musicians awards Elliot Cundy (double bass) and Mariia Liaskovets (violin) will be demonstrating their youthful skills at this popular event.

Wednesday 19 March, 7.30pm at St Peter's Church

Vox Cantab



Vox Cantab, a chamber choir comprising current and former Cambridge University singers, will treat us to a varied programme of choral works under the guidance of former Churcher's student, Louisa Denby.

Louisa Denby, artistic director

Thursday 20 March, 7.30pm

Petersfield Orchestra



Liadov *Baba Yaga*
Beethoven *Piano Concerto No.5*
(*Emperor*)
Shostakovich *Symphony No.10*

Ariel Lanyi, piano
Robin Browning, conductor

An inspiring evening of classical music, taking the audience on a journey from Beethoven's grand heroism, through Shostakovich's emotional depth, to Liadov's mythic whimsy.

Friday 21 March, 7.30pm

The Merry Opera Company

Die Fledermaus



Revel in the sparkling wit and delicious mischief of Johann Strauss' timeless operetta. Whether you're a seasoned opera lover or a newcomer to the world of operetta, Merry Opera's brilliant singers, directed by Guido Martin-Brandis

with a witty English translation, promise a night of unforgettable melodies, fizzy frolics and cheeky capers. Don't miss the chance to be swept away by this operatic masterpiece.

Guido Martin-Brandis, director

Keep an eye on the Events section of our website for updates

Saturday 22 March, 7.30pm

Dona Nobis Pacem



Parry *Blest Pair of Sirens*
Delius *Summer Evening*
Saint-Saëns *Cello Concerto No. 1*
Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem*

Festival Chorus with Petersfield and Fernhurst Choral Societies

Lucy Scotchmer, cello
Caroline Taylor, soprano | Thomas Humphreys, baritone
Basingstoke Symphony Orchestra
Paul Spicer and Stephen Scotchmer, conductors

It would be hard to imagine a more uplifting tribute to the power of music than Hubert Parry's 1887 setting of the noble words of Milton's 'Ode At a Solemn Music', especially in its original richly textured 8-part version.

Delius' *Summer Evening* is a short tone poem for orchestra and evokes the quintessential beauty of the English countryside.

Saint-Saëns' *Cello Concerto No.1* is a firm favourite of many great cellists. It does not follow the conventional three-part concerto structure but was composed as one longer movement linked by themes in a more cyclical way.

Ralph Vaughan Williams' powerful plea for peace, *Dona Nobis Pacem*, was written in 1936. This beautiful, deeply moving and ultimately optimistic work has lost none of its relevance. Set for chorus and orchestra with soprano and baritone soloists, it combines Biblical texts with the vivid, dramatic poems of Walt Whitman.

Combined Rehearsals *From Sally Maybury, Choir Secretary*

We are looking forward to welcoming all our singers to this year's rehearsals and concerts – both our regular choral society members and independent singers who join as part of the Festival Chorus. All singers are expected to attend the combined rehearsals. The choir subscription is £24 per concert, covering all the combined rehearsals. Sections to be rehearsed are listed below. Please look at them before the rehearsal, it makes all the difference. Please note the car park behind the Methodist Church is not available for joint rehearsals. Unless otherwise stated, all rehearsals are at **Petersfield Methodist Church, Station Road, Petersfield GU32 3E**.

Please note the later revised start dates of 29 and 30 November.

Vivaldi and Haydn rehearsals

Fri. 29 November 7.30–9.30 pm

Vivaldi: Movements 1 and 2 (possibly 4 if time)
Haydn: Kyrie and Gloria (as far as there is time)

Sat. 25 January 2025 10.30 am–12.30 pm

Vivaldi: Movements 4 and 5
Haydn: Gloria to the end and Credo

Thu. 6 February 7.30–9.30 pm

Vivaldi: Movement 7–end | Haydn: Sanctus and Benedictus

Sat. 1 March 2–4 pm

Vivaldi: revision | Haydn: Agnus Dei and revision

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

Thu. 13 March 7–9.30 pm

Final rehearsal, Vivaldi and Haydn

Sat. 15 March 2 pm and 7.30 pm

Rehearsal and concert: Vivaldi *Gloria*, Haydn 'Creation' Mass

Parry and Vaughan Williams

Sat. 30 November 10.30 am–12.30pm

Parry: to letter D (p.14) | RVW: Movements 1 and 2

Sat. 25 January 2025 2–4 pm

Parry: letter D to the end | RVW: Movements 3 and 4

Fri. 7 February 7.30–9.30 pm

Parry from start | RVW: Movements 5 and 6

Sat. 1 March 10.30 am–12.30 pm

Parry revision | RVW: Movement 6 and revision

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

Tue. 18 March 7–9.30 pm

Final rehearsal Parry and Vaughan Williams

Sat. 22 March 2 pm and 7.30 pm

Rehearsal and concert: Parry *Blest Pair of Sirens*, Vaughan Williams *Dona Nobis Pacem*

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