

NEWSLETTER 44 SPRING 2025

BY SARAH HARD AND PAMELA BUCKLEY



The 2025 Festival

Thoughts from conductor Paul Spicer



And so, we have another great Festival coming up soon, and as ever, we have two choral concerts which, judging by the first rehearsals, will be really exciting events. It is always a voyage of discovery when rehearsals start, partly getting into the new repertoire for

the season, but also, for me, seeing what the challenges are likely to be both in learning the music and in the quality of the singing. We had already had a workshop on Vaughan Williams's *Dona nobis pacem*, which is the centrepiece of the final concert, and so progress on that major work was quicker than it might have been if we were starting from scratch.

But we start with Haydn's beautiful and uplifting 'Creation' Mass, the *Schöpfungsmesse* which was written in 1801 and so called because Haydn used music he had already written and used in *The Creation* in the 'qui tollis peccata mundi' section of the 'Gloria' of this Mass. Apparently, the Empress Maria Theresa was so put out by this that she ordered Haydn to re-write the passage for her own copy! I suppose we should be impressed that she knew *The Creation* so well that she recognised the music straight away!



This is of little import to us, and it is just wonderful to have an opportunity to perform one of Haydn's less-often performed Masses, full of lyricism and his inimitable optimism.

This is paired with Vivaldi's ever-popular *Gloria*. Vivaldi is one of those composers whose style is immediately identifiable as his own. Right at the start, the unison octaves in the orchestral introduction, give their composer away instantly. The mixture of almost martial music with music of great lyricism and emotional depth is part of the reason for the enduring popularity of the work. This pair of great choral works will make a hugely attractive concert for both choir and audience. We look forward to seeing a full house!

The closing concert of the Festival pairs two remarkable English works by Parry and Vaughan Williams. Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens* has become one of the most admired and enjoyed choral works of its period. It was composed to a commission from Sir Charles Stanford when he was conductor of the London Bach Choir (in which Parry sang) and premiered in 1887. Parry had been trying to establish himself as a composer but had suffered some serious setbacks, but this work, short as it is, was an immediate success and has remained at the heart of the choral repertoire in this country (and elsewhere) ever since. It is a simply heart-warming work.



Thoughts from conductor Paul Spicer (contd.)

Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* was commissioned to mark the centenary of the Huddersfield Choral Society in 1936 and is an entirely appropriate work to perform in our war-torn times, as it was when it was written. RVW had been through the miseries of the Great War and this work was a heartfelt plea for peace. This was, of course, a futile hope in 1936 but it still stands as a deeply-felt expression of the need for nations

to work out their differences peacefully – something which seems as impossible now as it has ever been. He wrote a searingly impassioned work which I know all those singing have already been touched by. I hope that our performance will light a candle, if not in the hope that things are likely to change any time soon, then in remembrance of all the lives freely given in the hope of something better in the future.

2025 Festival tickets now on sale!

Booking is now open for Friends and Participants

Friends and participants have several options for purchasing tickets.

The Festival Priority Booking Office is handled by our Treasurer, Richard Stoneman. If you have received a form by email and your computer is one that can handle a fillable PDF, you can complete the form, email it to accounts@petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk and pay for your tickets by bank transfer. Alternatively, you can email Richard a scan or photograph of your completed form and pay by bank transfer.

You can book online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/petersfieldmusicalfestival (booking fee applies) using the Friends' or Participants' password to book before public booking opens on 3rd February.

If you prefer to pay by cheque, you can print the form and post it to Festival Booking Office, 11 Gorse Road, Petersfield, GU31 4HJ with a cheque (or pay by bank transfer, which saves us banking charges) and a stamped

addressed envelope. Tickets will be sent by email if we receive an email address and will only be sent by post if we receive a stamped, addressed envelope. If you have any booking queries during the priority booking period, please contact Richard by email or call **07778 037544**.

Public booking opens on 3rd February via the PMF website (see below); or at One Tree Books in Lavant Street, telephone **01730 261199**.

You can download our 2025 colour leaflet [here](#) or you can look up information about all our concerts on our Events page.



www.petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk

Festival extras

Petersfield Orchestra pre-concert talk

Ticket holders may want to attend conductor Robin Browning's pre-concert talk with Ariel Lanyi, the soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto no. 5 ('Emperor'), on Thursday 20th March at 6.30pm.

PMF stalwarts held successful Xmas market

Sue Upton and Katherine Minchin raised a total of £125 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 refreshments

The Rose Room at the Festival Hall will be open before and during the intervals of the evening concerts on 14th, 15th, 20th, 21st and 22nd 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 18th March. Wine and soft drinks will be available before and during the interval of Vox Cantab's choral concert on the evening of Wednesday 19th March.

Support for PMF

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 directly via [JustGiving](https://www.justgiving.com/petersfieldmusicalfestival) or via our webpage: petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk/support-us/donate/

You can also sign 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, Richard Stoneman, on **07778037544** or accounts@petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk

PMF sponsors and donors

Petersfield Musical Festival gratefully acknowledges the support of our Silver sponsor The Lodge Dental Surgery, our Bronze sponsor Littlejohn Bathrooms, local authorities, the Friends of the Festival, our programme advertisers and all donors.



Choral Workshop



The 2025 choral workshop will be held at Petersfield Methodist Church on Saturday 27th September. It will be run by the Festival conductor, Paul Spicer, and will focus on the Verdi *Requiem*, which will be performed at the 2026 Festival.

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

In memoriam



Emily Hoh

It is with great regret that we announce the sudden death of Emily Hoh, who performed at PMF's lunchtime concert in St. Peter's in March 2024. Emily, in her early twenties, was accompanying MHFYM award holder Rebecca McNaught on piano.

MHFYM



Through the **Michael Hurd Fund for Young Musicians**, the Festival assists young instrumentalists, singers and composers, many of whom go on to take part in the concerts. The Fund supports any special project to develop the skills and experience of young musicians, such as a contribution towards:

- the purchase of music, instruments or other equipment
- tuition fees for a series of lessons
- consultation lessons
- participation in workshops, master classes or residential courses
- auditions

For more information, go to www.petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk/young-musicians/michael-hurd-fund/

You can contact the Fund's administrator, Louise Douglas via info@petersfieldmusicalfestival.org.uk or via 143 Borough Rd, Petersfield, GU32 3LP

Choral update

From Sally Maybury, Choir Secretary

Concert dress for Festival Chorus - both concerts

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

Choral etiquette

At the concerts, please remember to • stand when Paul comes in • turn pages quietly and discreetly when following a solo number • stand when invited, to acknowledge applause, without clapping. But feel free to applaud the soloists, orchestra and Paul when you are sitting.

Saturday 15 March
Gloria! Vivaldi/Haydn

Rehearsal dates and sections

At Petersfield Methodist Church*
Thursday 6th February 7.30 pm Vivaldi Mvt 7-end;
Haydn Sanctus & Benedictus
Saturday 1st March 2pm Vivaldi revision; Haydn
Agnus Dei & revision
At Petersfield Festival Hall**
Thursday 13th March 7pm Final piano rehearsal
Saturday 15th March 2pm Full rehearsal with orchestra
Saturday 15th March 7.30pm Performance

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

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

Saturday 22nd March Dona Nobis pacem
Vaughan Williams/Parry

Rehearsal dates and sections

At Petersfield Methodist Church*
Friday 7 February 7.30pm Parry from start; RVW
Mvts 5 & 6
Saturday 1st March 10.30am revision
At Petersfield Festival Hall**
Tuesday 18th March 7pm Final piano rehearsal
Saturday 22nd March 2pm Full rehearsal with orchestra
Saturday 22nd March 7.30pm Performance

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

Festival line-up 2025

Friday 14 March, 7.30 pm
Liss Band with Hampshire Police
Male Voice Choir



Saturday 15 March, 7.30pm
Gloria!

Vivaldi, Haydn and Corelli
Festival Chorus with soloists
Southern Pro Musica
Paul Spicer, conductor



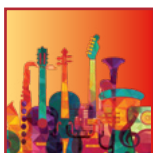
Sunday 16 March, 3.00pm
Family Concert
Dancing through the Movies
SouthDowns Camerata



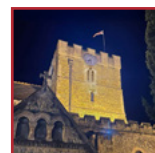
Monday 17 and Wednesday
19 March, 7.00pm
Youth Concerts
From Mozart to Matilda



Tuesday 18 March, 1.00pm*
Lunchtime Recital
Recipients of the Michael Hurd Fund for
Young Musicians awards

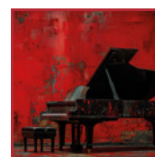


Wednesday 19 March, 7.30pm*
Vox Cantab, Chamber Choir
Inspired by Petersfield



Thursday 20 March, 7.30pm
Pre-concert talk at 6.30pm

Petersfield Orchestra
Liadov, Beethoven, Shostakovich
Ariel Lanyi, piano
Robin Browning, conductor



Friday 21 March, 7.30pm
The Merry Opera Company
Die Fledermaus



Saturday 22 March, 7.30pm

Dona Nobis Pacem
Parry, Delius, Saint-Saëns, Vaughan Williams
Festival Chorus with soloists
Basingstoke Symphony Orchestra
Paul Spicer and Stephen Scotchmer,
conductors



*St Peter's Church