



CAPELETTA

No 85

August 2024

*The Choir's Autumn Term will start on
Monday 2nd September*

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*The LHMFC Quiz will return on
Saturday 5th October
in Capel Memorial Hall*

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*The next LHMFC event is a
'Come & Sing' Mendelssohn 'Elijah'
on 19th October
in St Martin's, Dorking*

Capel Choral Society

Conductor: Anna Tabor **Accompanist:** Anthea Smallwood

Your Committee

Chairman:	Rosemary Goddard	
Secretary:	Rosemary Goddard	01306 711259
Treasurer:	Vacant	
Ladies' Representative:	Judy Craddock	
Men's Representative:	Ian Moir	01306 889817
Music Librarian:	Gill Moir	01306 889817
Press & Publicity & Capeletta Editor:	Ian Moir	01306 889817
Webmaster:	Dawn Richards	

It is the function of Voice Representatives to help the singers in their voice section, and to communicate to them any Committee matters or decisions which may affect them, and also to answer any queries or concerns which individual singers may have, or to take such matters to the Committee. Therefore, if you have any questions or concerns, please speak to your Voice Rep; if you don't know him or her by sight, ask someone to introduce you.

Chairman's Chat

By the time you are reading this the summer holidays will be drawing to a close and our thoughts will be turning to the new term. With that comes the promise of new music to learn and enjoy. As you know this year we will be singing Elgar's Dream of Gerontius. Personally this is a piece I do not know at all, apart from listening to it on Spotify but I am sure we will enjoy learning and performing the work in April.

But before leaping into the new season I would just like to thank all the choir, with Anna and Anthea at the front for our uplifting and very enjoyable concert at the end of June. With rehearsal time limited to a few weeks and by keeping the programme short and straightforward we were able to give a very creditable performance for the lovely supporters who came to hear us. I don't think they were just coming for the cream tea either! It was gratifying to hear so many positive comments afterwards which makes the hard work worthwhile.

Autumn Season starts 2nd September

We were also able to take the opportunity to formally thank Liz for her many years of dedication to Capel Choral Society. Without volunteers, organisations such as ours do not survive and Liz certainly did more than her fair share over a long period of time to support, promote and nurture the choir. For everything she has done we will always be very grateful. Fortunately for the choir, I think she and Brian will still be singing with us for a while at the beginning of the term.

At the end of April Capel Choral Society held a very successful Quiz Night which not only boosted our funds but has inspired the reintroduction of the LHMF Annual Quiz Night. We had presented the Capel Challenge Cup for this event, back in 2004, the Centenary of LHMF, and are the current holders having won in 2010. The LHMF Management Committee has decided to resume this annual event and as the holders we will be organizing the first one which will be on Saturday 5th October at Capel Village Hall. Brian has very kindly agreed to be the Quiz Master and I know I can rely on all of you to help with the catering and organization in whatever way you can. Each choir will send a team of 6, so we need our 6 keenest brains to volunteer please!! As most of you already know, Capel Choral Society was formed in 1904 so this October we will be celebrating 120 years of music making in Capel. I would like to take the opportunity to promote the choir and encourage more singers to join us. Whilst I don't propose we have a big party I would like to hear from you with suggestions of ways we can celebrate this milestone at the same time as advertising the choir to everyone. Maybe the really big celebration can be in 5 years' time!!

In the meantime, enjoy the rest of the summer and I look forward to seeing you all on Monday 2nd September.

Best wishes

Rosemary Goddard

Stop Press!

In the last Capeletta I included a plea for a new Choir Treasurer to replace long-serving Nick Ward.

The excellent news that after similar plea in the Capel Parish Magazine a lady has come forward from outside the Choir. She is also interested in joining the choir as a new singer.

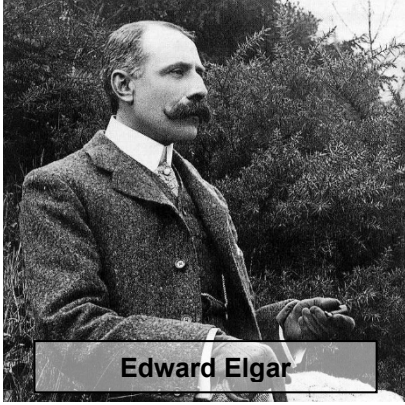
We warmly welcome Clare to Capel Choral.

Dates for your diary

September 2 nd	Start of Autumn Term
October 7th	CCS AGM (tbc)
October 5th	LHMF Quiz
October 19 th	LHMF 'Come& Sing' (<i>Elijah</i>), St Martin's Church, Dorking
TBA	CCS Christmas Concert
And into 2025:	
January 6 th	First CCS Spring Term rehearsal
January 12 th	First LHMF Combined Rehearsal, Dorking Halls
January 18 th	First LHMF <i>Messiah</i> rehearsal
February 22 nd	Second LHMF Combined Rehearsal
March 10 th	LHMF Handel <i>Messiah</i>
March 29 th	Third LHMF Combined Rehearsal
April 11 th & 12 th	LHMF Festival (CCS Friday)

Festival Music 2025

The full chorus work set for the 2025 Leith Hill Festival is Edward Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*. Elgar composed this large two-part choral work in 1900; although often referred to as an Oratorio, Elgar did not approve of the term. It became to be regarded as the Composer's finest choral work despite a disastrous under-



Edward Elgar

rehearsed first performance in Birmingham. It actually achieved fame in Germany where such as Richard Strauss in particular praised the work.

The Dream of Gerontius is a setting of a poem by the 19th century theologian and Catholic cleric John Henry Newman. This describes the death of an old man (the Greek 'Geron' means and old man) in the first part and in

the second his subsequent journey in the immediate afterlife to meet his God.

There are typical 'Elgarian' tunes in the work, including the great hymn *Praise to the Holiest* which rises to a crescendo as Gerontius approaches his judgement.

There are three soloists, a tenor as Gerontius, a priest (bass) and Gerontius' Guardian Angel, a mezzo-soprano. There is a classic recording which features the great mezzo Janet Baker and I remember a Festival performance at which Dame Janet was a guest. I encountered Brian Kay in the corridor before the performance muttering 'I've lost my contralto – I suppose we could ask Dame Janet!'

Ian Moir

Editor's Exposition

Another summer is again passing far too quickly, but it does mean that we return to Monday rehearsals soon.

As Rosemary has mentioned, this October marks the Choir's 120th anniversary, having been formed as a result of a meeting on the 5th of October 1904. An entry in the November 1904 parish magazine states that:

"A meeting was held, by invitation, at the Schools on Saturday October 22nd (1904) to consider the advisability of the formation of a Choral Society in Capel. There is quite sufficient musical talent in the village to form such a society, and the weekly meetings for the practice of the music would be a very pleasant evening's work and recreation. Some twenty-six gave in their names at the close of the meeting as being willing to join."

Although it doesn't appear that the choir was formed specifically to take part in the Leith Hill Festival, it did enter the inaugural Leith Hill Musical Competitions (as it was initially) on the 10th May 1905. The Choir distinguished itself by winning the Challenge Banner for the 'Quartette' Class.

As far as I can ascertain, the Choir has taken part in every Festival since 1905 and is now unique in this respect amongst the current Festival choirs. I hope we can make the forthcoming anniversary a bit of an occasion and celebrate the Choir's long history with pride.

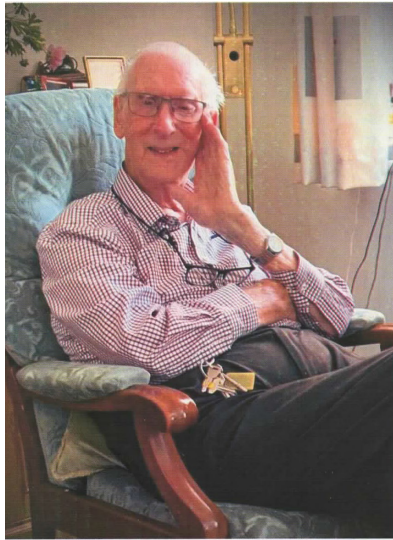
I look forward to seeing you again on the 2nd September.

PS Capeletta is circulated mostly by email apart from a few who prefer a printed copy. If you would like a printed copy please let me know.

Ian Moir

Norman Myall

28th December 1923 - 1st August 2024



Norman Myall passed away peacefully on the 1st August, having attained the grand age of 100 on the 28th December 2023.

Norman was the husband of Eileen Myall, the long-term Secretary of Capel Choral, who passed away on the 10th December 2014.

Norman was a semi-professional violinist, and met Eileen at the home of a music teacher. He and Eileen subsequently gave recitals together.

I have been sending Capeletta copies to Norman and received notes of thanks from him – he obviously was pleased to be kept in touch with the Choir. His daughter informed me recently that he had moved from a home in Reigate to a care home in Dorking.

Norman Myall's funeral was held on the 12th of August in a packed Friends Meeting House in Capel, where he was interred alongside Eileen. There were refreshments after at the Church. Norman was obviously much loved by his extensive family and friends.

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Aldeburgh Festival 2024

Once again we booked a fortnight in Suffolk, mainly to attend the Aldeburgh Festival. Our 'usual' holiday cottage in the charming village of Middleton was fortunately available again and served as a convenient and comfortable base for the Festival, being within easy driving distance of concert venues at Snape, Blythburgh, Aldeburgh itself, and Orford.

The village pub, The Bell, tucked away in a corner off the village green, had reportedly been closed earlier in the year due to the



The Bell Inn (in distance)

retirement of the Landlord, but had reopened by Adnams brewers and was being run by staff supplied by Adnams. It would be a great shame

if this very typical charming village pub was to be lost.

The Festival as usual was an eclectic mix of music over a large range of periods, from mediaeval to modern new works.

There was also one notable non-musical work, a Japanese 'Noh' play. This very traditional, 15th Century, Japanese play *Sumidagawa* was performed, in mediaeval Japanese(!), by a Japanese group.

The title means 'Sumida River' and the theme was adapted by Benjamin Britten for his opera *Curlew River* which is set in Suffolk. A performance of this was given in the Festival, unfortunately the day we had to come home.

Fortunately, before the actual play there was a summary given by 'the river' in English which gave some guidance to the following Noh play. The action is slow-moving and very symbolic. It was all a fascinating experience in a packed Maltings concert hall.

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We attended 14 concerts in total, plus the Noh play. We thought this was pretty good going until we met up with two charming Swiss sisters who were booked for every concert!

The most memorable ones we attended included concert in Ely Cathedral, for which coach transport was fortunately available. This was given by the superb vocal group 'Tenebrae' to a packed Cathedral. They performed pieces from 16th Century Gibbons and Tallis to modern Tavener, Whitacre, and Roderick Williams, the latter a celebrated baritone turned composer who has sung for the LHMF in the past.

The most memorable piece was a performance of Tallis' *Spem in Alium* a 40-part motet in which 8 groups of 5 were dispersed around under the beautiful 'Octagon' above the tower crossing. We were thankful to be coach borne for the return journey as the A14 main route was closed for road works and we had to follow a very cross-country route, arriving back in Aldeburgh after midnight!

The one day on which we were booked for three concerts we first drove down to Orford for a concert in the church which included



Snape Maltings concert hall at dusk

string quartets by Beethoven. Then it was back to Snape for a concert, after some lunch, in the smaller Britten Studio, of works by French composers of the 18th Century and earlier.

After this concert I thought I'd lost the cottage keys! Panic!

I eventually managed to contact the cottage caretaker who directed me to some spare keys in a garden shed.

After getting into the cottage I found the original keys which had gone through a hole in my jacket pocket and were in the lining! Oh embarrassment!

This meant a very quick bite to eat and a dash back to Snape just in time for the evening concert.

Other concerts included one which consisted of a programme of music performed at the first Aldeburgh Festival in 1948, in celebration of its 75th anniversary.

The programme included works by Purcell and Handel, and Britten's *Saint Nicolas* cantata.

As usual we didn't have much time for other activities – we did manage trips to Southwold (which features endlessly on a TV advert), Halesworth – a delightful Suffolk town, and the antique centre in Yoxford (which has featured on the TV 'Road Trip') where Gill gave in to temptation and bought some of her favourite blue china. We also had lunch with Christine Wallace, former Chairman of Capel Choral and now resident in Snape.

The homeward journey brought us down to earth with a lengthy delay at the Dartford crossing due to a lorry fire, and road works on the M25. It was worth it however, for the delights of the Aldeburgh Festival!

Then it was straight into the Capel summer concert the next day.....

Ian Moir

Some space for YOUR article!

The next edition of *Capectetta* will be issued at the start of 2025

HOWEVER -

**Please submit copy ANYTIME – PLEASE!
(I'm sure you can do better than me!)**

Copy may be in paper form, delivered by hand, posted to:

26 Parkway, Dorking RH4 1EU

- or sent electronically to:

ianmoir20@yahoo.com

**The opinions expressed in *Capectetta* are those of the writer,
and do not necessarily represent the views of the
Committee.**

Choir Members' Details

For the purposes of the circulation of *Capectetta* and for other communication needs, Choir members' details are stored electronically. These consist of name, address and phone number only.

If any member has any objection to their details being so held, please contact the Secretary.

General communications to singers are always sent as 'bcc' so only the recipient's own email address is visible.

