

# QUEENS PARK SINGERS

Registered Charity 1094265

## ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2004

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Signed on behalf of the Committee

RIVA JOFFE  
Chair

Date:



# I Music Director's report

The main Queens Park Singers events during the 2003-04 season were the All Souls Day concert on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2003 and the Spring Concert on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2004. We also held a workshop before the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2003 (and this also served as the first rehearsal for the All Souls concert) and a Lent Workshop on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2004. We sang for the Family Carols service on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2003 and for the Centenary Service of St Anne's Church, Brondesbury on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2004. All events took place at the church of St Anne and St Andrew, 125 Salusbury Road, London NW6: more detailed programmes are available on the website – [queensparksingers.org.uk](http://queensparksingers.org.uk).

- **All Souls Day Concert, Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2003:** the main work here was Victoria's Requiem, which was interspersed by music for consort of viols. This was a concert without the participation of the Juniors and this, perhaps combined with the solemn nature of the music itself, resulted in a very small audience. This was a great pity because our performance of one of the greatest masterpieces of the Renaissance was rather good and, combined with the truly beautiful and expressive playing of the consort, made for a memorable musical experience.
- **Carol Service, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2003:** We did a couple of choir slots -- Byrd *O magnum mysterium*, Freundt *Wie schön singt der Engel Schar*, Baston *Heut ist geboren Gottes Sohn* -- and the Juniors sang a carol by Mary Phillips; otherwise supporting the congregation in well-known carols.
- **Lent Workshop, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2004:** We revisited Josquin *Stabat Mater*; also looked at a French chanson and a madrigal by Monteverdi; this workshop was quite well attended
- **Spring Concert, Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2004:** A programme of Czech music, celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Janáček, and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Dvorák; choral items were Janáček's *Otcenas* (Our Father), Peter Eben's *Noc* (The Night) and some of the Moravian folk songs of Dvorák, arranged by Janáček; we also had a string band for Dvorák's *Serenade for Strings*, and a wind ensemble (assembled by Hugh Rosenbaum) for Janáček's *Mladi*; the Juniors also took part, singing children's songs by Tibor Freso. This was a most enjoyable concert, and we had a capacity audience
- **St Anne's Centenary Service, Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2004:** We sang Bruckner's *Locus iste* again, plus Byrd *Laudibus in sanctis*; we had a pretty good group of singers for this event.

## The Junior Singers

The Junior Singers took part in the Spring Concert and in the Carol service. Mary Phillips is now conducting the Juniors and I just act as back-up and accompanist. The children and I very much appreciate Mary's participation: she is very experienced in working with young choirs, which I am not! ! I must also mention here the work that Jane Cox has done to bring children into the group; you might imagine that this would not be a great problem, but in fact

it proves to be a very labour intensive task, and somewhat dispiriting when children you think are coming don't in fact participate, or come to one session and not the next.

### **Some general remarks**

We have continued the pattern of three Sunday evening rehearsals, plus rehearsal on the day, for concerts. We have also added note-learning rehearsals for those who feel they need some extra help before the main rehearsals get under way. These have not been well attended in general, though those who have participated have felt, I believe, that they benefited from them. I have to reiterate here that the rehearsal schedule is an absolute minimum needed to get the music into shape and the ideal is that everyone taking part in a concert should attend all of the main rehearsals and the note-learning if necessary. The choir is made up of a mixture of rather experienced singers and also of much less experienced singers. Without the more experienced the concerts would not happen: just think about it -- the less experienced singers would need several more rehearsals, progress would be slow, and the result would be discouragement. The more experienced singers can't be expected to (and wouldn't anyway) come to lots of rehearsal, so a compromise has to be found. The minimal schedule also implies that some work on the notes be done at home, and especially by the less experienced singers. Obviously if there are extra rehearsals for them, it makes sense to come along to them. It might be thought that this pattern is not ideal, which indeed it isn't, but it is the only one which is likely to work since everyone is too busy to attend a lot of rehearsals, or at least there are not enough people able and willing to commit the necessary time to make it viable otherwise. As I said last year, I am not willing to lead lots of rehearsals with only a small proportion of the choir attending each of them; we need to rehearse extremely efficiently in terms of everyone's scarce time.

It can be seen very clearly from what happened in the two concerts this season that the participation of the Juniors is a significant factor in bringing in an audience. I don't feel that we should let audience appeal dominate all other considerations but it is certainly dispiriting to sing to a tiny audience. In the case of the All Souls Concert there are other things to consider:

- early rehearsals did not go well because of poor attendance
- both Liz and I were out of London at the time when we would normally have been bashing the pavements to publicise to the local community and friends further afield.

The overall time scale of our schedule means that if things don't seem to be falling into place people don't feel they want to invite their friends and by the time it is all coming together it's too late. An audience of 15 means that the participants brought less than one person each to that concert. There is no fabulous publicity machine on hand; we have to bring our own audience if we don't want to sing to an empty church.

We do seem to have a very fluid membership. It's good that there are new people joining us all the time, but we also need sustained commitment on the part of longer-standing members if we are to raise our standards. This is really intended as a local community project and if you would like to see it continue please come and participate. We have now reached a point where we need more people to be actively engaged in making it all happen. I said last year that "I know I shall run out of steam in the longer run otherwise". I have now run out of steam and feel the need to take a break from organising full scale events. The choir will not

continue unless there are more people willing to commit some part of their time and their enthusiasm to ensuring that it does so. It isn't only a question of people willing to do some organisational legwork; even more important is that people take part in events whenever possible, and even when they can't participate, at least come along to support the choir on the day, and bring friends along too. **This is very serious:** the whole enterprise needs more commitment, in all shapes and forms, in order to remain viable.

### **Thanks**

I would like to thank the committee for all their work during the year, Ruth Kitching for assembling the string band, Hugh Rosenbaum for assembling the wind group for the May concert, and all those who have helped with refreshments and clearing up on the day of concerts. As ever, thanks to Fr Fergus for his continued encouragement of our musical endeavours and for allowing us to use the building for concerts and rehearsals.

**David Till**  
**Music Director**

## II Treasurer's report

The accounts for the financial year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004 are set out on pages 6 to 8 below. The bulk of the Society's income (see note 2(a) on page 7) is from subscriptions from members, who can choose from a number of options to suit their individual preferences. Even after taking account of the exceptional level of subscriptions in 2002-03, the income from subscriptions has fallen back somewhat this year. In part this will reflect the fact that we have put on fewer concerts (the "subscription year" starts in October) and that more performers are choosing the "pay as you go" option.

As a registered charity, the Society was able to claim back £150 of tax from the Inland Revenue, in respect of donations made under the Gift Aid scheme. Ticket income remains a useful source of income.

The detailed costs of running the society are shown in Note 3(a) on page 7. The increase in room hire is more apparent than real: the year in question includes two major concerts (including one in May 2003, at the end of the previous "season"). We have also spent more this year on visiting soloists and instrumentalists. We also donated £150 from our ticket sales to the soup kitchen at St Mary's Church, Willesden.

Taking income and expenditure together (page 6), we made a very slight deficit (some £85) during the year. So our accumulated surplus still remains healthy, at £1,758, all held as cash in our bank account with HSBC (see the balance sheet on page 8).

I am very grateful to Robert Devereux for conducting the independent scrutiny of the accounts, as required by the Society's constitution. We are not required, by the Charity Commission or our own constitution, to subject the accounts to a full and formal audit.

I would be happy to answer questions on the accounts at the AGM, or at any time. It would be helpful to have advance notice of any questions to be raised at the AGM.

Simon Judge  
Hon Treasurer  
62 Teignmouth Road  
LONDON NW2 4DX  
020 8452 2290  
Email: [money@queensparksingers.org.uk](mailto:money@queensparksingers.org.uk)

## **IV Factual information required by the Charity Commission**

### Constitution and objects of the Society:

As adopted at the inaugural meeting of the Society on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2002, the objects of the Society shall be to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of choral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public concerts and workshops, and for such other purposes as shall be exclusively charitable as the committee may from time to time decide.

### Principal address of the Society:

c/o 62 Teignmouth Road  
LONDON NW2 4DX

### Bankers to the Society:

HSBC  
50-52 Kilburn High Road  
LONDON NW5 4HJ

### Officers and Trustees of the Society

Chair	Riva Joffe
Secretary	Catherine Fried
Music Director	David Till
Treasurer	Simon Judge
Librarian	Liz Till

### Scrutineer of the Society's Accounts

Robert Devereux Esq  
8 Radnor Road  
LONDON NW6

### Other contact details

Website: [www.queensparksingers.org.uk](http://www.queensparksingers.org.uk) (includes details of past and future events)  
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