

Harpenden Barbershop Harmony Club (HBHC) Newsletter May 2024

-Adopt a music Creator Project

The last newsletter had you all wondering what the new year would hold in store for HBHC as an exciting project and a special guest was alluded to. Well in January we could officially announce that we had been chose to take part in Making Music's "Adopt a Music Creator Scheme" and our special guest was to be St Albans based composer Charlotte Botterill.

The Adopt a Music Creator project brings together music groups and music creators to collaborate on creating a brand new piece of music. The project pairs leisure-time music groups with a music creator for a year, culminating in a premiere performance, a recording and a radio broadcast. The music creator has the opportunity to get to know a performing group and write a piece especially for them, while the group has the chance to contribute to the creation of a new work by some of the UK's most promising music creators. (Visit makingmusic.org.uk/opportunities/making-music-projects/adopt-music-creator to find out more.)

HBHC Chorus Director Dave Anstice-Pim and Chair Mike Rose attended the



scheme launch in the London Bridge offices of Making Music. What an interesting and exciting day this was! First of all HBHC was paired with a music creator, Charlotte Botterill from St Albans and a mentor, Jenni Pinnock

Jenni Pinnock, Mike Rose, Dave Anstice-Pim and Charlotte Botterill

from Cambridge. After introductions, the day was utilised by hearing past experiences from previous members of the scheme, followed by an exploring of ideas within each pairing.

Since then Charlotte and/or Jenni have met with the chorus 3 times...with more workshops to follow.



So far the workshops have generally involved HBHC singing a tag and chorus that Charlotte has worked on, The theme being memories echoing from the past.

Charlotte Botterill prompting HBHC members to remember their pasts!

The chorus was also asked to consider nostalgic thoughts and what it meant to them individually. Each member was asked to repeat these in a range of intensities, either all at once or in a round, to see how it sounded. Before long, memories of sights, sounds and smells from nostalgic school days, first loves and family holidays - amongst others – began to ring out. Some of these experiments have worked out - some didn't - but the whispering was particularly effective.

It's still a work in progress but the new piece is already marked out to have its World Premiere at a charity concert on Saturday 16th November at St John's Church in Harpenden. A BBC Radio 3 recording will also take place in the autumn. More details to follow...

What Else Have We Been Up To?

-HBHC participation in Music & Arts Festivals

The club has also recently successfully competed at two local musical festivals in Bedford and Milton Keynes – both in March- where it was commended on both occasions for singing ‘Do You Hear the People Sing?’ from Les Miserables and ‘To Make you Feel my Love’ a Bob Dylan classic that was covered by Adele in recent times. Rehearsals over the first quarter of the year have largely concentrated on these 2 songs.

-HBHC 40th Anniversary

The first event was the annual Honorary Members’ Evening at the Plough & Harrow Pub in Southdown on Thursday 15th February. It was especially significant this year as it is the club’s 40th anniversary year. Honorary Members Certificates were presented by Chair Mike Rose to 4 recipients – David Fensome, Jim Hoble, John Williams and Peter Underhill.



Brian Hocken and Ken Smith then regaled a 50+ strong audience with tales about the club’s origins and experiences past! Following a hot buffet, of course there was plenty of singing - of songs both old and new. It was a most enjoyable and special evening.



Upcoming Events

As mentioned, the **World Premiere** of our new song “**Echoes**” will be performed at a charity concert (for Macmillan) at 7pm on **Saturday 16th November at St John’s Church in Harpenden**, which will also double up as our **40th Anniversary Concert**. This will be a joint concert with The St Albans based **Abbey Gateway Orchestra**. A song list is currently being drawn up which will feature a joint piece with the AGO, as well as old favourites such as Ghost Riders and Sweet Caroline, along with some newer songs like To Make You Feel My Love and Shenandoah. Some audience participation is also planned.

Rehearsals for the foreseeable future will concentrate on the concert songs plus our new song of course. To help us to hone our performance skills, our old friend **Linda Corcoran** is planning to join us at some rehearsals in June (27th), July (4th), September (19th) and October (10th) - dates have now been confirmed.

To also celebrate our 40th Anniversary, all members plus partners have been invited to a **murder mystery evening** at **Bennets** in Harpenden on **Friday July 26th**. It should be great fun. There will be a Fish and chip supper provided for all.

We must be doing something right in **Redbourn**, as we have been asked back (again!) to perform in the annual **Gigs in the Garden Event on Saturday 20th July at 5pm**. These have always been great fun, so lets hope for a sunny evening on the day.

Overall, a busy time for HBHC. Following the end of term in July we will -as usual- be appearing at **various local hostelries throughout Thursdays in August** to keep the singing going. These venues and dates will be announced on our Facebook site in due course, so keep an eye open!

And finally, a hearty welcome to all our new members since the last newsletter; **Julie, Peter, David, Graeme, Sheila and Nosh**.