



ISLE OF MAN *Symphony* ORCHESTRA



NEWSLETTER

December 2024

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HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS!

Season's Greetings to all Members and Friends. The Gala Concert on Sunday, 24th November is still fresh in our memories (Photos p4). What a splendid send off for Maurice after 20 years of dedicated service! We've just started on the repertoire for our joint concert with Slaithwaite Phil next May, with Graham at the helm. Lots to look forward to! Read on for more details.

A Final Message from Maurice

My warmest congratulations on the success of our Gala Concert 2024. The audience's reaction to the various pieces tells the whole story. Several of our regulars spoke to me afterwards and many said that as much as they love Elgar's music, they did not know 'In the South', and what a fabulous piece it is. AGREE!

Evva was a wonderful soloist, and she played the 'cello concerto beautifully and with great feeling. I found her very easy to work with and can't help wondering if in a few seasons' time, we should invite her back to play the Dvorak 'cello concerto with us.

It had been a joy and a pleasure to be your musical director since 2004. It is an immense privilege to work with a group of dedicated musicians over a long period of time, gradually moulding the kind of performances which will delight audiences. I believe that we have succeeded magnificently and I am in awe of your dedication, professionalism and enthusiasm. Thank you for joining me on the journey.

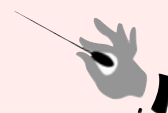
Thank you, too, to Bernard who has been my utterly reliable and experienced deputy conductor, and to Nigel and Graham who have taken up the challenge and directed the orchestra during recent Spring and Summer concerts. We have been fortunate over the years in maintaining good relationships with our regular guest musicians. We could not have tackled some of the music in our concerts without their support. Many of you assist the orchestra at concert weekends as 'roadies', programme and ticket sellers. And not forgetting Frank, our official IOMSO barman and photographer extraordinaire.

Heartfelt thanks to our committee without whose commitment we could never have achieved what we have achieved. It is easy to take a hard-working committee for granted; we would certainly miss them and grind to a halt if they suddenly decided to down tools. A very special thank you is due to Janet, our indefatigable librarian (there's a position it would be almost impossible to fill!), committee chairman, producer of our excellent programmes (much appreciated by our audiences) and much else besides.

I have been encouraged by your kind words upon my departure as conductor to plan a series of farewell appearances. (Just kiddin')

My best to you all

Maurice



Concert Dates for your Diaries.

Saturday 15th Feb 2025: Ramsey Choral Concert : St.Paul's Church, Ramsey : 7pm

Sunday 6th April Concert with IOMCS : Villa Marina : 3pm

Saturday 17th May : Concert with Slaithwaite Philharmonic : Villa Marina : 7.30pm

Saturday 19th July : Summer Concert : Peel Cathedral : 7.30pm

(Rehearsal schedule p.2)



Rehearsal Schedule 2024-25

December 11th & 18th : St. Johns : 7.30

** Dec 25th & Jan 1st : NO REHEARSAL **

Jan 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th : St. Johns : 7.30

Feb 5th & 12th : St. Johns : 7.30

** February 19th : NO REHEARSAL **

Feb 26th : St. Johns : 7.30

Mar 5th, 12th, 19th & 26th : St. Johns : 7.30

Choral Concert Rehearsals

Saturday 22nd February : Bemahague : 2.30

Wednesday 12th March : St. Johns : 7.30

Sunday 16th March : Bemahague : 2.30

Thursday 3rd April : Bemahague : 7.30

Saturday 5th April : Villa Marina : 2.30

Sunday 6th April : Villa Marina : Concert 3pm

** April 9th & 16th : NO REHEARSAL **



Ramsey Choral Concert

Directed by Nigel Harrison, Ramsey Choral is working towards its main concert on Saturday 15th February 2025 at 7pm in St. Paul's Church, Ramsey. The exciting programme includes Brahms' Song of Destiny, Elgar's folksy suite of 6 songs 'From the Bavarian Highlands', and Lars-Erik Larsson's God in Disguise, plus a movement of Mozart's Concerto for Flute and Harp, with Amoré du Plessis and Georgina Graham.

If you have agreed to play in this concert, rehearsals are as follows : –

Sunday 19th Jan : St. Andrew's Church : 2.30

Sunday 26th Jan : St. Paul's Church : 2.30

Sunday 9th Feb : St. Paul's Church : 2.30

Saturday 15th Feb : St. Paul's Church :

Rehearsal 2.30 - 5 : Concert 7pm

This is always an excellent concert, so if you're not playing, do come along and listen. The refreshments are always rather delicious!

Joint Concert with Slaithwaite Philharmonic Orchestra Villa Marina, Saturday, 17th May : 7.30pm.

We are very excited about our forthcoming joint concert with the Slaithwaite Philharmonic Orchestra (It's pronounced 'Slawit' by the way!). Last time they came in 2014 it was a very special concert - greatly enjoyed by players and audience alike.

This time we'll be playing some very challenging repertoire : Chabrier's España, Britten's Young Person's Guide, Mussorgsky's Night on a Bare Mountain and Mahler's Symphony no.1, plus a piece by Haydn Wood (born in Slaithwaite, brought up on the Isle of Man). The combined orchestras should add up to over 100 players!

This is a very expensive project and we have been very fortunate to receive generous funding towards the costs – £2,000 from the M.S.Dickinson Trust and £6,000 from the IOM Arts Council's Extraordinary Events fund. We are extremely grateful for these grants, as they will enable us to book travel and accommodation for SPO and of course to book the Villa Marina for the rehearsals and concert.

We've made a start on tackling the music with Graham, and so far all is going very well. Graham will conduct the first half of the concert and SPO's conductor, Ben Ellin, will conduct the Mahler Symphony. We'll keep you updated with our progress.

**EXTRA
ORDINARY
EVENTS**

**60
years**

Concert with Isle of Man Choral Society Villa Marina, Sunday, 6th April : 3pm.

Next April's concert with IOMCS, once again under the direction of Mandy Griffin, contains a slightly unusual combination of pieces. All of the music is by French composers – Fauré's Requiem, Poulenc's Gloria and a selection of pieces from Berlioz's Carmen.

We are all familiar with the Fauré, having played it several times before. The Poulenc is not so well known, though we have performed it with IOMCS some years ago. I'm sure everyone knows Carmen! We'll be playing the Overture, plus 3 pieces : Habañera, Je dis, and the Toreador's song.

The rehearsal schedule is in red on our full schedule on page 2. Please make a note of these dates now. We've kept rehearsals to a minimum, so please try to attend all of them.

Please watch for further updates about ticket sales etc. in the New Year.

Farewell to Maurice!

As we all know, Maurice made his final appearance conducting the orchestra in the Villa Marina on 24th November. I hope he was duly impressed with the effort we all made to produce the best performance we could for him! I personally enjoyed the concert and the audience showed their appreciation with their loud applause. It was good to be able to recognise his 20 years of commitment to IOMCSO with a presentation at the end of the concert. In case you didn't see the gift, it was a framed print of a John Miller Nicholson painting of Old St. Matthew's Church. He already has it hanging on his wall at home. It was also good to mark the event with a post-concert buffet, which I think everyone enjoyed. (Thanks to Claire & Anne Catering for a lovely spread.)

Charles Guard, our very hands-on patron, kindly organised a video recording of the whole concert, despite the fact that he couldn't be there as he had been taken ill the day before. He has started editing the video and has allowed me to make public a short section of the film - Haydn Wood's Lutine Ahoy! You can see it by following this link :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PxJufPVESEw>

Hopefully we will be able to witness the whole concert when Charles has finished editing it.

In the meantime may I say a personal thank you to Maurice for his dedication to IOMCSO and the way he has encouraged us to tackle ever more challenging music : I don't think that 20 years ago we would have imagined playing Sibelius Symphony no.2 or Scheherazade in the Villa Marina!

So, well done Maurice on all you have achieved. Enjoy a bit of relaxation, but please come back and join the horn section if you can cope with a bit of blowing now and then!

***Bannaghtyn y nollick as
BLEIN VIE NOA***



Gala Concert, Villa Marina, Sunday 24th November 2024



All photos courtesy of Frank Warburton

