

## Formby Notes

### A newsletter for Formby Choral Society

[www.formbychoralsociety.org](http://www.formbychoralsociety.org)

#### Your newsletter

Some years ago we were treated to a monthly newsletter. It was in the days of print on paper - and people looked forward to reading the various items.

Amongst (many) other things discussed recently by the Marketing Team (henceforth known as MT) was the Newsletter and whether it was time to rejuvenate the idea. So here goes.

#### Writers needed

However your current writer doesn't intend to be editor on a long-term basis - so we need a volunteer, or two, to take on the task of putting together future editions. It's really not difficult ... this is being typed into a ready-made template.

#### Content is King

That phrase was coined in 1996 by Bill Gates, when he was talking about the future of the Internet. And so it is with the newsletter - we need content, which means we need **you** to write something to share - and you won't have to format it into the final document!

## CELEBRATE!



*That's what it said on the poster ...*

... so that's what we did.

And by all accounts we did it in style!

It was great to have Formby Band playing for us, and their choice of music was both exciting and entertaining. If there was a highlight amongst the highlights, it was probably the *Best of Bond* a medley of many of the popular 007 tunes.

Everyone was "wowed" by the two young soloists:

Anna Seager played the *Benedictus* from Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man* really beautifully; and Daisy Fern played *My Grandfather's Clock* with each variation becoming increasingly florid. I did start to wonder if it was actually possible to play any more notes in the space of one breath!

And people were "wowed" by the choir - I heard someone saying it was the best they'd heard us.





## Items for the future

As in the previous incarnation of the newsletter we'd love to hear from people. Things like:

- Holiday reminiscences
- Favourite concert experiences (and not just our own concerts!)
- Background to future repertoire
- Biographies of composers
- Local events ... that's why there's a picture of the **Lancaster Bomber** flying over Plex Moss Lane, when it made a special appearance at the recent Southport Air Show

And that's another point - **photographs** ... the adage goes *a picture is worth a thousand words* ... so you can send us those too!

Because it's going to be a digital newsletter, there's no cost involved in "printing" colour photos!

So ... getting writing, and get snapping - and email anything you have to:

[news@formbychoralsociety.org](mailto:news@formbychoralsociety.org)

## Next Season

### *So what's on the menu?*

You could say it's a mixture of a Set Menu, and *Tapas a la carta* because in November and March we get two large main courses served up with Brahms *Requiem* and Handel's *Messiah*. Whereas in December and June we will serve up the usual mix of shorter items providing a more varied diet.

Brahms' *German Requiem* (which we will be singing in English) ... is a monumental work, but an absolutely glorious piece sing. And as for *Messiah* - it was only 2019 when we last performed it, but doesn't that just feel like it was in a totally different age? We don't usually "do" *Messiah* every fourth year, but it seems the right time to bring one of mankind's greatest works of art back to Formby. These two pieces together make a veritable feast of choral music.

## Talking of food ...

I suppose we could give space to someone who wants to promote something ... I don't want to call it **advertising** - but if someone did want to make some sort of a contribution to the choir, I'm sure we could help. For certain, you can expect to see publicity for certain other choirs who happen to have some people in common with FCS - not least, for example a conductor or an accompanist!

But one new local business which I do want to encourage you to support if you can, is **The Little Butcher** who has recently opened in the group of shops on Piercefield Road, near the Grapes roundabout.

The meat is truly excellent and the butcher and his assistant are absolutely charming.



## Johannes Brahms ~ A German Requiem

I have included some links below which will take you to a Wikipedia article about the Requiem, some programme notes and also a biographical timeline of the composer.

Now you can see where programme notes are sometimes "lifted" from! Why re-invent the wheel when someone has already done the hard work and written notes.

Can you imagine the paper programme becoming a thing of the past? - with the whole audience reading programme notes, soloists biographies, and following the text and/or a translation ... all their phones during the concert, having scanned a single

QR code at the door! This might presuppose an audience of teenagers. It would be great to attract lots of young people to our concerts, the profile of our regular audience makes me think that they might still prefer the printed programme. I know many choir members keep them as a sort of archive of their performances. so perhaps we won't be saving trees quite yet.

We're doing this in the so-called **London version** - but I'm not going to tell you more about that at the moment. You'll either have to wait until September, or read about it in one of the sites linked below.

And if you want to have a good listen beforehand, you'd worse than this one live from Trinity College, Cambridge - it's sung in German, but it **IS** the London version (that's a clue).

<https://youtu.be/ppruSYpQZw>

This is an advantage of an online newsletter - you get clickable links to take you to all sorts of other places:

The German Requiem: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_German\\_Requiem\\_\(Brahms\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_German_Requiem_(Brahms))

Programme Notes: <http://www.choirs.org.uk/prognotes/brahms%20requiem.htm>

Brahms' Timeline <https://www.johannesbrahms.org/JBbio.htm>

**CONUNDRUM** Pictured are Mozart and his sister. We've not actually got anything of Mozart's scheduled for this year ... so in what way does this have **anything** to do with our programme for the 2022-2023 season? It's a fairly spurious link - but there is one.

The BBC used to say "*answers on a postcard please*" - but in this digital age I shall say answers on an email please, to:

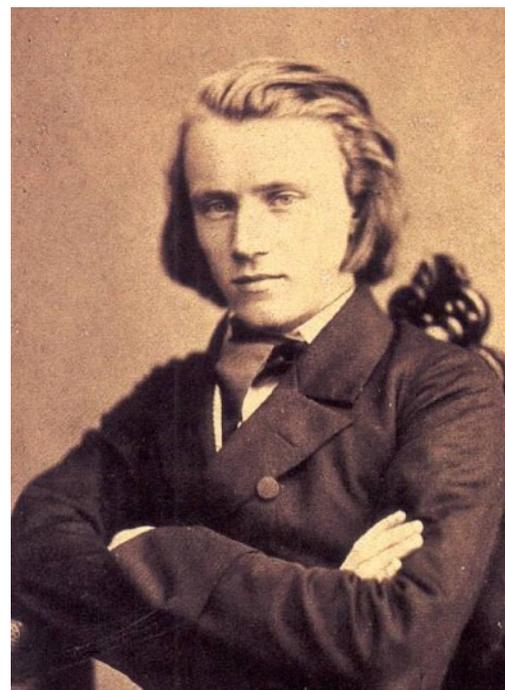
[news@formbychoralsociety.org](mailto:news@formbychoralsociety.org)



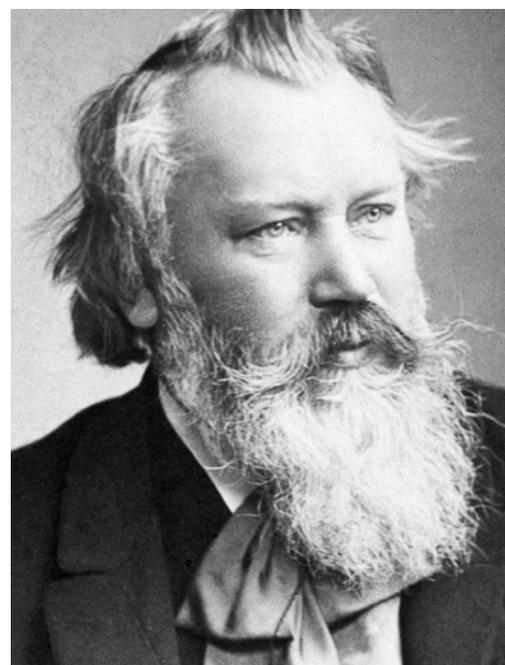
## Brahms and the Red Hedgehog

Johannes Brahms was certainly open to life's pleasures, and he would never decline a good meal. He once told a friend, "I live in Vienna as if I were in the country," and he ate his lunch at the same restaurant every day. The "Rother Igel" (The Red Hedgehog) was a famous tavern close to St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna that hosted musical performances and swarmed with celebrated musicians and countless music critics.

Brahms, always eating in the company of friends, was very fond of beef goulash, and he had a special weakness for beef pilaff. He loved a jug or two of beer, and for special occasions, the restaurant kept a small barrel of the finest Hungarian Tokay for his private consumption. He also loved herring salad, and there was a rumour that "when opening a can of sardines, Brahms would drink the oil directly out of the can." After lunch, Brahms "would stop at the Casino in the Stadtpark for relaxation... seated at a little marble table on the high terrace, sipping his coffee seasoned with a glass of cognac and eagerly reading the daily papers." The good life in the Imperial City eventually took its toll, and Brahms became significantly overweight.



*Above* A photo of the young Brahms, and *below*, the more customary image with his trademark beard



**Links to YouTube recordings sung in English, as individual movements**

- 1 - <https://youtu.be/kWHi5F0spJ8>
- 2 - <https://youtu.be/DO4aEOCZEf8>
- 3 - <https://youtu.be/as2srXMm5JE>
- 4 - <https://youtu.be/AlpNFv9PZw4>
- 5 - <https://youtu.be/sQ4X4F0WUzM>
- 6 - <https://youtu.be/DxdWRLqa8Xw>
- 7 - <https://youtu.be/GL-Ls4vq3B4>

So - over to you. Who's going to give it a go, and produce some content for the next e-dition of *Formby Notes*?

Enjoy the summer, and see you in September. Look out for the usual pre-season email from Carol, with registration form and AGM information

Remember - you will always find more practical information on our website at [www.formbychoralsociety.org/members](http://www.formbychoralsociety.org/members)

We will be extending our content during the summer, so do visit regularly

**P**eople are asking about the dates for next season ... so here they are in the adjacent panel. They appear on our website on the 2022-2023 Season page.

There is also a **Live Schedule** on the Member's page which indicates the rehearsal dates.

John Cosgrove (Tenor and member of the MT) is also going to create a visual 'calendar' which will another **at a glance** way of helping you plan your diary ... in that hope that FCS will always take first priority on a Wednesday.

We also hope that everyone will put the dates of the concerts in their diaries, and make every effort to avoid arranging something to conflict with concert days. It is rather sad to see people do all the hard work at rehearsal, but then not have the pleasure of performing in the concert. Equally, it is a bit tough on other singers if they lose the support of people who had been sitting near them ...

Please try to put **your** choir **first**

#### Your committee

Chairman	Carol Cairns
Secretary	Claire Fraser Mavis Kilby
Membership	Alison Powell
Treasurer	Wendy Thorpe
Members	Mike Abbott Angela Bramhall Beryl Howard Pat Williams

## Dates for 2022-23

**7<sup>th</sup> September**  
**First rehearsal**

**5<sup>th</sup> October**  
**AGM (and rehearsal)**

**19<sup>th</sup> November**  
**Brahms *Requiem***

**17<sup>th</sup> December**  
**Carols with Brass**

**25<sup>th</sup> March**  
**Handel *Messiah***

**10<sup>th</sup> June**  
***Summer Concert***