

Saffron Walden Annual Town Meeting 2023

Saffron Walden Choral Society (SWCS)

Saffron Walden Town Council's grant of £300 was awarded in November 2022 towards Saffron Walden Choral Society's anniversary concert in June 2023. As the concert has not taken place yet, we cannot deliver any outcomes. However, we outline below the reason for the concert and give an interesting update.

In 1883, Saffron Walden's parish organist, T J Frye, founded Saffron Walden Musical Society. Five months after its conception, the choir gave its first performance which included Arne's Rule Britannia and excerpts from Handel's Acis and Galatea. According to ex-town clerk Malcolm White, from this unassuming beginning, there has been an uninterrupted record of classical choral music performance (live or online) by the choir ever since. And this, despite two world wars, two pandemics, a depression and a recession. In 1957 Saffron Walden Musical Society changed its name to Saffron Walden Choral Society (SWCS).

Today, SWCS continues to champion classical choral music through an innovative, wide ranging and approachable repertoire. *The Spirit of Christmas*, our annual outreach concert, has seen generations of children, and parents, enjoy high-quality traditional Christmas music for nearly 40 years. We consider classical choral singing to be a socially and cerebrally beneficial, inexpensive and highly enjoyable pastime, that is only to be encouraged. Now, celebrating our 140th anniversary, we wanted to acknowledge SWCS's long history of continuous music making and its place in Saffron Walden today with a musical gift.

For our celebratory concert on Saturday 24th June 2023 at Saffron Hall, we have commissioned a work by the composer and baritone, Roderick Williams OBE entitled, 'Sing Joyfully'. The piece is for choir with an element of audience participation. The publication of the work by Edition Peters also means other choirs and audiences, can enjoy the work at an affordable price - anywhere.

The interesting update, is from www.grovesartists.com:

'It has been announced that Roderick Williams OBE will be one of three soloists to perform during the coronation service for King Charles III at Westminster Abbey on the 6th May 2023. Roderick will sing alongside bass-baritone Sir Bryn Terfel and soprano Pretty Yende with a specially assembled "coronation orchestra" conducted by Sir Anthony Pappano. In addition to his performance as a soloist, Roderick is also one of ten British composers who have been commissioned to write music for the service.'

With what we can only describe as very good luck, our 140th Anniversary Concert falls shortly after the coronation. The grant from Saffron Walden Town Council has helped us to achieve all this.

Thank you.