

WATFORD PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 7th OCTOBER 2019

SECRETARY'S REPORT TO THE SOCIETY ON THE 84th SEASON

The Society's 84th season was the fifth under the guidance of our conductor Michael Cayton and the third under the leadership of Chairman David Pollak. The Society presented four concerts:

10th November 2018 at the Watford Colosseum: For the first time, the Society combined with The Chiltern Choir to perform two modern classics: Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man* and John Rutter's *Requiem*, with soprano soloist Emily Rowley-Jones, Muezzin Reeyaaz Goolamhossen and cornet player Sergeant Tony Adie. The outcome was a notably richer sound and a fitting and moving commemoration of the centenary of the ending of the First World War.

12th December 2018 at the Watford Colosseum: for the annual Christmas concert, the Society was privileged to welcome Patron Andrew Shore as baritone soloist, who gave memorable performances of *Silent Night* and *White Christmas*. The Kingsway Junior School Choir, directed by Grace Carter, sang with great enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment as they performed Christmas songs that ranged from John Henry Hopkins to Mariah Carey. The audience joined the choir and orchestra in singing some popular traditional carols under the guidance of compere Tim Venner.

28th April 2019 at the Watford Colosseum: The Society's Spring concert was dedicated to the memory of Delphine Groves, a long-serving member of the choir and a generous benefactor to the Society. Members of Delphine's family were among the audience to enjoy an uplifting and joyful performance of Haydn's *Creation* featuring three talented young soloists making their debuts with the Society: Milly Forrest, Gareth Dafydd Morris and Laurence Williams.

29th June 2019 at the Watford Colosseum: On a hot June night, the Society presented "A Summer Prom". The first half featured extracts from *There Was A Child* by Jonathan Dove, a contemporary and very challenging work. Choir and orchestra were on more familiar ground in the second half with a programme of popular marches and songs that inspired the flag-waving audience to join in with enthusiasm. Soloists Emily Rowley-Jones and Peter Van Hulle made a welcome return.

Workshops: members of both the Society and the Chiltern Choir took part in a workshop at the Bushey Arena to prepare for the November concert. Meanwhile the orchestra enjoyed a series of workshops devoted to Schubert symphonies.

Vice President: The Society was saddened by news of the death of their Vice President and former Radlett resident Richard Baker OBE, at the age of 93.

Barbara Marshall Fund: Grants from the Barbara Marshall Fund, established to benefit young musicians, were made to violinist Leo Appel, soprano Milly Forrest and the Watford Youth Sinfonia.

External performances: Members of the Society sang Christmas carols for the Peace Hospice and also appeared by invitation at various private and family occasions.

Social event: the year concluded with a well-attended social event held at Watford Girls' Grammar School which was much enjoyed.