

### Welcome back and thank you!

I hope you all had a good summer with some time for relaxation and recuperation.

As we start the new academic year it seems fitting to say a big thank you to the team headed up by Helen Normington for organising and running the July BBQ.



A great way to bring our family choir together to enjoy and celebrate, thank you all.

The start of the autumn term can be a time of change for many. A change of schools, friends, homework patterns etc. For those choristers going through this period, remember that choir is a constant and a grounding anchor for you. I know many have found this helpful and comforting in the past, as a caring musical community should be.

Welcome to any parents joining us as their children move up from Quavers or new singers trying out!

### The coming term

The first rehearsals will start week commencing Sept 2nd following their normal pattern.

The autumn term is a busy one with various civic services, concerts and major festivals coming up. We are thrown in at the deep end with our first Sunday back (8th) being our Patronal Festival for St. Mary. To this end, we are doing a **4.30pm welcome tea** on that day to get all parents and choristers together before the choristers sing their first choir service that evening. New parents are welcome to this too!

As choirs change it will take a little time for each group to find its new voice. It is therefore important that if there has to be an absence from a rehearsal or service, (barring a medical emergency) that I'm notified in good time. Unfortunately over the last year or so there has become a culture where it's ok to notify via the WhatsApp group (often to a reminder about timings) the day before an absence. This is not fair or reasonable and is not good for my mental health. Please take the time to go through the live calendar, with the link already shared and pinned on the WhatsApp group.

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1BEjvoA4NbyV8ukpDjLCDB2DnX\\_SYHS2v\\_euxqgfyM/edit?usp=drivesdk](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1BEjvoA4NbyV8ukpDjLCDB2DnX_SYHS2v_euxqgfyM/edit?usp=drivesdk)

I appreciate there will occasionally be alterations and I am already working on the Spring rota to enable earlier sharing of information.

### Choir Concert

On **Saturday October 5th** we are taking part in a joint concert between us and



Richard's 'Beauty in Sound' organisation. There will be choral and organ music as well as some well known hymns to join in with. There will be a late afternoon rehearsal and a 7.30pm concert. Tickets are on sale at—

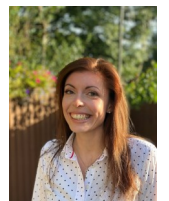


[www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk)

and search for Romsey Abbey. A flyer and poster to be shared will be available very shortly.

### Deanery Youth Day

Rosy is involved in helping to run a Deanery Youth Day. She writes, 'The Deanery Youth Away Day is a joint activity day with young people from Rownhams St John's Church to bring together young people together for adventure, fun and faith. Avon Tyrell is an outdoor UK activity centre so we have the whole day there on **Saturday 28th Sept** with a choice of abseiling or mountain bikes in the morning and canoeing or pedaloos in the afternoon. There are also two sessions around faith. It's going to be a really fun and exciting day! Especially as it's a way to encourage friendships and the sense of belonging and adventure. It's £25 for the day with support for this if needed.



We'll also be having a campfire themed youth group on the evening before, Friday 27th. Everyone coming to the day event is very welcome to join us for that evening too.'

### Weddings

Please keep your availability coming in for the two 1pm weddings on **Sept 14th & 28th**. I realise the second one clashes with the youth day.

## FORAM

Friends of Romsey Abbey Muisic. This is our parents' group which meets several times a year to help organise future social events and feedback information or concerns etc from you. Therefore it's helpful that we have representatives from all the groups. So if you are interested in coming on board for what is not an onerous task, please let me know.

We will be meeting before the welcome tea to look at social events for this term including the popular parents only evenings. Details of these will be published shortly.

## Singing sessions

As part of our ongoing resource and support to our singers we are trialling a set of singing sessions. These are designed to help individuals with specific vocal requirements or vocal health issues. The intention is for four half hour sessions over an eight week period to allow individuals to practice and implement the extra training. A whole group workshop is also in the planning for next year. These are being paid for from the FORAM funds that we have built up over the last few years, which also helps to subsidise the choir tour and other social events.

## Tour 2025!

We are planning the next choir tour! It is to Truro Cathedral in Cornwall and will be in the third week in August. In all likelihood the **19/20—24th**.



Please reserve these dates in your diary

when considering family plans for next summer as we do need a good body of our experienced singers as well as up and coming juniors to make this possible. We would be staying at Truro school very close to the Cathedral.

## New parents

Welcome to new choir parents!

There is a lot to take in at the start of everyone's journey so please feel free to ask questions no matter how small you might think it seems, we're here to help. So -

- There is a parent's WhatsApp group which is useful for giving out last minute information
- There is a live online calendar showing the rota of who's singing when
- My contact details are at the top of this newsletter

We don't expect new singers to start coming to services straight away and I will phase these in as it's appropriate for the individual.

When new singers start in the choir they are known as 'probationers' and will receive their blue cassock. After a while, having shown musical progress, commitment and that they are confident this is the right move for them, singers are formally inducted into the choir as a chorister at a service. Later on still, they will receive their white surplice, which indicates they are 'full choristers'.

We run the Royal School of Church Music's 'Voice for Life' scheme which is a series of workbooks introducing musical theory and practice as well as the basics of liturgical understanding and what it means to be part of a choir. Once each level is completed, a medal is awarded in recognition of their achievement. There is now a digital version of the scheme, most of which can be done online.

There is no charge for being a member of the choir unlike an after school club. What we do ask for in return for all the resource and sustained training over an extended period of time is a commitment to the group. Our primary function is to help lead the worship of the Abbey and therefore getting up on a Sunday morning when a choir is on the rota is part of the deal!

There's more information to impart but that's probably a good starting point without overwhelming you!

## Other events

I haven't singled out every event in this newsletter that's occurring this term, so do look out for dates on the calendar for [Light in the Abbey](#) at the end of half term, [George's Trust Concert](#), [Carols in the marketplace](#), and [Carols at Romsey Hospital](#). I hope we might sing [Carols at Mottisfont National Trust](#) too for the first time, I'm in contact with them at the moment.

## Bits 'n bobs

For those who didn't pick them up, pay packets will be available when we start back after our summer break.



There are a few choristers who missed out on ordering a choir hoodie first time around. We like all members to have one especially for when we're out and about. If you'd like to order one I can let you have the sizing chart. They're about £26 TBC.