

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016 - 2017**

Another busy and rewarding year for Eltham Choral Society , with its fair share of comings and goings. It has been the first full season for our new Musical Director, Max Barley, who, with high expectations, has constantly challenged us and pushes the the boundaries of our musical comfort zone. This year has also seen the departure of Charles Andrews, our accompanist for nine years . Charles never ceased to draw admiration for his accompanying and performance skills, and we wish him well for the future. Recently, we have welcomed Andrew Lenon as our new accompanist and we look forward to a long and happy association with him. .

Reflecting on our programme during the year, our usual large Christmas audience enjoyed works by Pergolesi and Chilcott, together with traditional carols, and a few days later more carol singing in the High Street raised money for one of our local charities, Demelza Children's Hospice.

Undoubtedly the musical highlight of the year was the World Premiere performance of 'In Flanders Fields, A War Cantata', by young composer Gareth Treseder. A beautifully evocative and sensitive composition, this work was commissioned by ECS, made possible by the generosity of an anonymous donor, who requested that the commission be based on a selection of poems written by 1st World War poets. It was a great privilege to have given its first performance.

Our summer concert, Mozart's Requiem, together with works by Handel and Bernstein, was followed most recently by our Come and Sing Day, a Festival of Spirituals, featuring works by Tippett, Chilcott and Hogan, designed in part to attract new singers to the Society. Unfortunately, this was not as successful as we had hoped, but it certainly asked musical questions of the choir !!!

Thanks as always to the Committee for all their endeavours - the successful organisation of a society of approximately a hundred members requires a willing commitment, and I am aware that this year has been and continues to be a particularly busy one, with preparations for next year's collaboration with West Barnes Singers and Wimbledon Youth Choir at Southwark Cathedral in a performance of Verdi's Requiem, and organising our tour to Lisbon in May. A particular thank you also is due to Maggie who is standing down as Treasurer.

Thank you to all who help and support in a variety of ways. Happy singing in the year ahead .

Roderick Tutt, Chairman ,Eltham Choral Society. October 2017