

Being a librarian ... what it involves

As most of you know, we have decided it's time to retire from our role as joint librarians after nearly ten years. Tracey has therefore asked us to say a little about what the position involves for the benefit of choir members who are interested in taking it on.

The routine each term is roughly the same. Once the Musical Director and the committee have confirmed the concert programme, and ideally about six months in advance, we contact the county music library in Norwich to confirm whether scores are available. We have a good working relationship with Jenny the librarian and her colleagues and if sufficient scores are not available in Norwich she can often obtain some from other public libraries. However, occasionally Norwich draws a blank. In that case we draw on the resources of other public and private libraries or contact other choirs, many of whom have small collections of their own.

Once hire details have been agreed and depending on the hire source we either collect scores from Fakenham Library or take delivery of them at home. Each score then has to have a number pencilled as a unique identifier for the FCS borrower. Come the first day of term we load up all the scores in our car and take them along for distribution to choir members, carefully recording which number goes to which person. Usually the main distribution goes on for two or three weeks as members return while the remaining scores are temporarily stored at the Salvation Army hall. And we try to be on hand as much as possible throughout the term to hand out scores to members who have come along without them.

Once the concert is over we collect up all the scores, either on the spot or at the first rehearsal of the new term. Usually one or two choir members either are unable or forget to return their scores so we have to get in touch with them to arrange delivery or collection.

Before we finally package the scores up for return to Fakenham Library or a more distant sender we ensure that as far as possible pencil marks have been erased, either by choir members or by ourselves and a group of volunteers (our legendary 'rubbing out parties').

That's about it. The role is a very satisfying one and a great way of meeting choir members. Everyone is very supportive and committee meetings are always extremely good natured with plenty of refreshments. There is a great sense of satisfaction, too, in seeing every choir member fully equipped at the start of term. Just bear in mind that you'll need a car with a reasonable amount of boot space, strong arms for lifting (or access to these!) and some score-friendly storage space at home. And we will of course be happy to provide whatever support the new librarian needs at the outset.

Tim and Sue