

AMICI NEWS

OCTOBER 2014

Hello and welcome to another exciting edition of Amici News. I hope you all had a lovely summer break and are enjoying another action-packed term.

Chairman's Address:

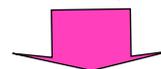
Dear Amici

We are now well into rehearsals in the 37th year of The Amici Singers. For some of us this is something that we just take for granted - the choir is a constant in our lives and something that we do every Thursday evening. For others it's something really new - or relatively new, and hopefully something to look forward to each Thursday. Whichever applies to you, I hope that like me, it's one evening in the week that you really look forward to. I sometimes feel, especially in the winter on a dark, wet and windy evening, that I don't want to stir out of the house...but after a couple of hours of singing, the mood has lifted and I go home feeling so much better - that's what music and particularly singing can do for you. So, fellow Amicis, I hope we have another successful year enjoying music-making and friendship together.

With very best wishes. Anne

This nugget came to my attention on Facebook and I just couldn't resist sharing! Amici committee meetings are far more productive!!

[Here is an Email from Trevor following our memorable visit to Belgium earlier this year:](#)



Just a quick line to say a huge thank you to you and the Amicis for a wonderful, and very moving trip to Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres.

Together, over the years, we've all enjoyed many remarkable, special, happy and unforgettable experiences, but I think that it's fair to say that singing at Tyne Cot, and under the arch of the Menin Gate, this year of all years, was an experience which touched each of us in a very special way.

Thank you all for the opportunity to take part in such a very special trip, whose significance seemed to be so properly encapsulated by the gentleman who spoke at the end of the concert in St. George's Church.



Summer Concert

In case you missed it - here is an email from Anne Bunker following the summer concert...

Dear Amici

Thank you so much to all of you who took part in yesterday evening's concert - if you enjoyed it as much as I did, then you will have had a good time. I received quite a few lovely comments from people in the audience before I left the church last night and all seemed to have enjoyed the concert, but the one piece of music that was mentioned most was the Mass - and can you blame them for that? Each time I sing it, I seem to find something new to like about it, and I do think that we are really getting to grips with it now - don't know if Douglas would agree!

I hope you enjoyed Ian Rowbotham's viola playing - it certainly added a new dimension to a lot of the pieces and I think both he and Paul Bryan did an excellent job considering we had only one rehearsal with them. Ian told me he thought the choir was 'very, very good' and I think that's praise indeed from a professional musician who must have heard scores of choirs in his time. So thank you all once again for making it such an enjoyable evening.

I also spoke to our President, Brian Mack who was quite emotional at the performance of the Mass. He said he was pleased to have heard the Mass in its entirety and to some extent it had helped him in some way. I was so pleased he made the effort to come to the concert, and he's looking forward greatly to the next one! I also, with Douglas' approval, told him about our proposed visit to Quedlinburg next year and asked him if he'd consider coming with us, and almost before I'd finished the sentence he was saying 'Count me in', so it looks as though we'll have our President with us when we go.

I want, here, to mention Jenny Wilkinson, who handled the concert arrangements 'on site' at Great Gransden - it relieved me of a lot of pressure, worry and angst - so thank you so much Jenny - it really is appreciated.

It just remains for me to say 'have a really good summer' and I look forward to seeing you all in September - and remember - try and encourage new members to come along.

With very best wishes. Anne

... and here is an email from Douglas

My Dear Amicis,

By now you would have read Anne's e-mail which I absolutely endorse. It was a very demanding day for you. As I am sure you appreciate I had to go through all the music at the rehearsal because of Paul and Ian. They did such a great job. After the rehearsal, Paul went home and still did a bit more practice on some of the points that arose from the rehearsal. Ian was a real find – lovely tone and so easy to work with. You may be interested to know that I have already sent his details, with a strong recommendation to Philip Head, the manager of the New Concert Orchestra.

Now on Saturday, you really gave two concerts and there was no respite apart from the moments you sat down during introductions. Performing like this does require so much concentration that has to be sustained and I do congratulate you on what you achieved. I know that in the evening there were a few slips, but that in no way diminishes your achievement. You never allowed such things to interfere with the performance and the sign of a good choir is the ability to recover and put things behind you. If we did the concert today I am sure that those slips would not occur. But of course there could be others! You will be interested in the comments of Jeanne Rainford who was in the audience. She wrote:

For the first time I didn't sing with the choir as I felt that I had missed too many rehearsals due to health issues so I came along as a member of the audience. In all my twenty three years as an Amici I had never had that experience. I was so impressed at how good you were as a

choir and having heard the Mass in a church felt it was just right. So thank-you all for an enjoyable evening and I would like to think that I would be back in September.

It was so good to see Brian Mack who was in good form. Brian kept saying that he was so proud of the Amicis and how honoured he was to be the President. He was astonished to learn (as was Ian) that no one is auditioned and especially that a number cannot read music. They also said that the singers always looked as if they were enjoying themselves and Brian remarked that it was inspirational and coming to the concert did him a power of good. To receive praise from professional musicians is something to really cherish.

I was – and –am very moved by the way that you have taken on board *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. I know that it is difficult but now you perform it with such understanding, meaning and power that I never quite thought that you would achieve – may you continue to surprise me in this way. As for the *Missa Brevis*, you have made it very special for me – thank-you.

I would like to thank Anne, Elizabeth, Julie, Barbara, Kate and Ronnie for their introductions – there were some lovely personal touches just what I wanted. And thanks to Barbara and Trevor for organising the raffle that I hope was successful. What with George on the door, we do have a great team – I only hope I have not missed anyone out.

Love and best wishes, Douglas

And of course no look back would be complete without your valued contributions...

It was a real privilege to have taken part in such a delightful concert, and I cannot express in words how enjoyable I found the whole occasion.

In the meantime I wish you and the choir all the very best with your superb music making. **Ian (Rowbotham – viola player)**

And we couldn't do it at all without you Douglas, so thank you for accepting me into the Amicis, and this goes out to all the other members of the choir. I have only been a member for a relatively short time but I already feel part of the Amici family.

As I was told several times after the concert, I am no longer an Amici virgin, I have something in place for the next weeks so that withdrawal symptoms do not kick in, and look forward very much to seeing you again in September in our new Venue. **Lorraine**

Once again I would like to thank you both for a wonderful concert. I know how busy you both are and the time you give to "The Amici Singers" is very much appreciated. It was lovely being able to have a drink and chat with people after the concert, thank you for inviting us. **Margaret**

As a new member of 'Amici' I would like to say that I thoroughly enjoyed my first concert with you all and was impressed with the professional way everything was organised.

I would like to thank everyone in the choir as you have all made me feel very welcome.

Molina

I so enjoyed the viola parts you'd written. From where Kate and I were standing, it was quite hard to gauge any overall impression of how the whole thing sounded, but it was just lovely to sing the music we've worked on so hard this year. I have had "Anthem for Doomed Youth" stuck firmly in my brain again, it is such a powerful poem and your setting of it really does the words justice. I am so pleased we were able to sing it in Tyne Cot and at the Menin Gate - that was unforgettable.

I just love singing the Spirituals too and am proud I was standing on a train with you when you conceived the idea for the set of songs; they are a joy to perform and I think the audience really appreciated them. **Elizabeth**

I would just like to say, that I personally had another amazing concert with Amici last night. Each concert is so different but with the most uplifting feelings. We seem to get better and better and top the one we did before but I still have the most amazing feeling as I just love to sing anyway.

I would like to thank you for being so supportive throughout the year, to my favourite section leader in fact all of Amici for just being such lovely friends whom I really enjoy singing with.

Big thank you's to Carole and Douglas without whom this probably couldn't happen but have a really good committee around them who work hard and pull everything together. Thank you. **Janice**

Thanks for including me in the Amici Family once more, although I thought it wise to miss the actual concert it was good to take part in the final rehearsal with the Accompanists.

Barbara (Bunce)

Thank you to you both for last night. The concert went well (apart from a few hiccups!) and the audience seemed to enjoy themselves. The viola accompaniment was beautiful and added an extra dimension to our singing. Ian was delighted to have been asked and said that we have fired up his enjoyment for playing.

*Thank you so very much for your hospitality following the concert. I cannot think of a better way to spend midsummer's night than with a wonderful group of friends. Amicis! As I have said before, I am very grateful for the opportunities and experiences that I have had over the past 5 years and I look forward to whatever lies ahead. **Julie***

Thank you for another wonderful Amici experience. Thanks to your enthusiasm, for me it felt like the first time, not the third time that I'd sung the programme. I appreciated the break that the sight-reading rehearsal gave me and did feel refreshed for the build up to the performance. Roger, Zoe and I enjoyed the after concert get-together and would like to thank you and Carole for inviting us and for your hospitality. **Maggie**

Royal Leamington Spa



Dear Amicis,

There were moments in the concert last Saturday at Leamington Spa when you were performing with all the musicality, blend and tone that most conductors of and composers for amateur choirs can only dream about. One of those moments was Anthem for Doomed Youth. I really believe that some of you do not realise how difficult it is – not only the notes, but the demands I have made on you to really put the message across. Every performance you have given up to last Saturday has always been good. But at the concert in Leamington, something happened – something that made it very special. Perhaps it was the wonderful heartfelt reading by Elizabeth that set the mood, perhaps it was because you really know and understand the words and music now and so you are very assured and confident in delivery; whatever the reason I was able to play around more with the second half of the work like never before. And here, Ronnie's voice just floated over this lovely web of sound – it really was haunting. Some of you have written to me saying that tears were very close at the end and that underlines that there was something magical about the performance. The audience responded to this with their silence and then applause and then comments afterwards. All the above also applies to Deep Peace. There were other moments as well with other songs – My Lord What A Morning, Deep River and I've Got A Robe.

In the rehearsal, Trevor was doing extra things in the Gershwin which was why I got him to play to you. This obviously paid dividends in the evening performance which I so much enjoyed. I was able to forget about conducting – I just listened.

So as you can gather there were a number of first division moments. Any 'creaks' were quickly overcome and I doubt if any of the audience noticed – you would have had to really know the music so well to have spotted these minor indiscretions. In the end I was really, really sorry the concert ended!

However, the big problem I had about last Saturday was that it took me ages to get to sleep - such is the power of the muse. It seems insufficient to say thank-you to you all, but I do mean it. You were a joy. So on to Christmas – we've a lot to do, but I have confidence in you as singers and friends,

Very best wishes, Douglas

Royal Leamington Spa

Dear Amici

Just a quick note to say a big 'thank you' to those of you who were able to go Leamington Spa yesterday. I hope, like me, you all had a good day - even the weather was kind. It would have been nice to see more people in the audience - I think there were more the last time we went - but I'm sure those who did attend the concert had a real treat. I felt the choir acquitted themselves well, and of course Trevor's playing, both his accompaniments and his solo pieces, were a joy to hear. I sometimes wonder if he will ever stop surprising us with his Gershwin interpretations - I hope not.

I want to thank you particularly, not just for the singing, but for making the day run smoothly. Everyone was on time, not just for the bus pickups, but also for rehearsals etc. It makes such a difference when we don't have to wait around for one or two people. I want also to thank Daniela - I think we now have our own personal 'Amici photographer'. I can't begin to imagine how many photographs she took and I can't wait to see them. I do hope the 'formal' photograph we had taken at the end of the concert is a good one - when everyone was in position it looked as though it would be a 'good shot'.

For those of you who weren't able to go with us yesterday, for whatever reason, we hope we did you proud. From a conversation I had with one of the Dale Street organisers when we were leaving, I think we'll be invited back sometime in the future, so hopefully you'll be able to go next time.

We can now start concentrating in earnest on the Christmas music - lots to learn and for some of us some 'blasts from the past' to re-learn, so I look forward to seeing you on Thursday for our next rehearsal.

With best wishes. **Anne (Bunker)**

Dear Douglas, Just a big official THANK YOU from the Action for Children Support Group to you, Trevor and the choir for a truly wonderful evening of music on Saturday. Everyone enjoyed it tremendously. Our minister, Andy Laird, who was unable to come for your last visit, was really impressed, and said that you and the choir produced such a wonderful atmosphere as well as great music. He was also very appreciative of Trevor's playing, saying 'we don't often hear our organ played like that'. I very much hope that you will be able to visit us again in the future. Best wishes to you all. **Jo**

Dear Anne & all. Well. I for one thoroughly enjoyed the day. Although I was tired on Sunday I could happily have repeated the process. Roll on next visit! **Lesley (Hammadani)**

Dear Douglas and Carole.

Once again I would like to thank you both so much for the wonderful day we spent in Leamington Spa. Great friends, good food and of course, wonderful music, what more could one want. Thank you .

Love **Margaret (Prosser)**

Dear Douglas

Many, many thanks for yet another lovely Amici Away-day. It was, as ever, fun to be together and really nice that we had some of the newer members with us, so hopefully they will feel more part of the Amici family. It is the trips that bond us.

As for the music, well... a day spent singing is pretty much my idea of bliss. It was wonderful having Trevor on such sublime form too! Thank you for letting us just listen to him play the Gershwin and Anthem for Doomed Youth. The more I sing the Spirituals, the more I'm enjoying them - they have so much in them.

With my love and thanks
Elizabeth (Gammell)

And there's more . . .

Dear Douglas, Thank you so much for yesterday and all your hard work to make it another very enjoyable and fulfilling Amici 'away-day' and concert. The whole day went well and I think we all truly 'felt the spirit'. I so enjoyed singing the spirituals and I felt we captured the mood of them well, conveying our enjoyment to the audience. The performance of Doomed Youth brought me very close to tears and the stillness and silence after we had sung the last note was so poignant and quite moving. Deep Peace was beautiful and such a fitting end to a truly eclectic programme of music.

As always, in true Amici style, we enjoyed each other's company, had a laugh and, above all, made beautiful music, filling the hearts of our audience and our own of course, with joy, happiness and peace.

Bring on the next one! Thank you again.

Very best wishes, **Pat (Fisher)**

Dear Douglas . I hope you enjoyed our day in Leamington Spa yesterday as much as I did. I felt the whole day was very relaxed and I think that helped towards the choir's performance, which to my amateur ears was relatively good. The audience, though not as big as last time, seemed to be very appreciative (although I did spot one man who appeared to be asleep for part of the second half!!), and I think we'll be getting an invitation to go back again sometime in the future.

On behalf of the choir 'thank you' for another great music-making experience - another one for the memory bank. I thought Trevor was in particularly good form, even though I gather he wasn't overly impressed with the organ.

Best wishes, Anne Bunker

Something to look forward to !!!

The St Swithun's Singers: Christmas Concert in the Sandy Parish Church, Wednesday 17 December at 7.30pm. The usual eclectic selection of sacred and secular music, readings and musical contributions from Trevor and Gillian.



There will be refreshments in the interval; tickets still only cost £4.00. It's always lovely to have Amici's in the audience - it makes a real difference to the audience participation items! Please come along and share our music. Elizabeth Gammell

poet's Corner

The conversation went like this.

"To USA. but why?"

"Our choir is going on a tour"

Ronnie gave the reply

"New members are always welcome"

"Then count me in". I say

That was April 2002 - I'll never regret that day!!

Lesley Hammadani



"I don't sing because I'm happy;
I'm happy because I sing"

William James, American Philosopher, 1842-1910

[www.brainyquote.com]





Getting to know you...

This month I have been getting to know ... Ronnie White

	<p>How long have you been an Amici?</p>	<p>36 years (joined 6 months after founding)</p>
	<p>Have you always lived in this area?</p>	<p>Born in Somerset, moved to Bedfordshire from Portsmouth in 1971</p>
	<p>What do you consider to be your favourite song?</p>	<p>??? Too many to choose!</p>
	<p>What is your favourite place?</p>	<p>Quedlinburg/Senlis</p>
	<p>Tell us about your favourite hobbies</p>	<p>Choral singing – member of 5 choirs; old cars; travelling</p>
	<p>What is your favourite food?</p>	<p>Fish / Scallops</p>
	<p>Please describe yourself in just three words</p>	<p>Patient, Supportive, Cheerful</p>
	<p>What is your greatest achievement?</p>	<p>Being part of a happy family</p>
	<p>Who has provided your greatest inspiration?:</p>	<p>My college music tutor</p>

	Share something that most people wouldn't know about you?	As a child I wanted to be either a bus Conductress <u>or</u> the organist at Westminster Abbey. I'm still waiting to achieve the latter!
	What makes you laugh out loud?	A good shared joke
	Who would you most like to have a cup of tea with?	Helen Mirren
	What piece of advice would you give to your teenage self?	Don't give up!
	Do you have any pets?	Unfortunately no longer – very fond of cats
	What is your favourite colour?	Purple (Purple Ronnie?)
	What is your treasured childhood memory?	Driving a Ferguson tractor on our farm
	What has been your greatest challenge?	Supporting Bill through his serious health problems during 2013
	Where in the world would you like to travel to that you haven't visited before?	New Zealand
	What book have you read recently?	Barchester Towers – Anthony Trollope
	Who is your favourite composer?	J.S. Bach, Handel, Mozart

Puzzle Page Solutions

Dates for your Diary

Rehearsal dates 2014-2015

Autumn Term: Sep 04 - Dec 18

Spring Term: Jan 08 - Mar 19

Summer Term: Apr 09 - Jun 25

November 2014

Saturday 15th

Jigsaw Evening with a 'Bring & Share' supper
Compete in teams to complete your jigsaw in the fastest time.

Venue: Gamlingay Eco Hub

Entry: £5 per person

December 2014

Saturday 20th

Christmas Concert

Afternoon & Evening concert

Venue: Gamlingay Eco Hub

May 2015

Tuesday 26th – Sunday 31st

Visit to Quedlinburg, Germany

More details coming soon

February 2015

Provisional date: Saturday 21st

10am- 4pm CD Recording: Quedlinburg Mass

Sing With The Spirit and

Anthem Of Doomed Youth

More details to follow soon

7pm for 7.30pm - Amici Dinner

Venue: John O' Gaunt Golf Club

Important Notice

If you cannot find a piece of music which we are working on, please kindly refrain from interrupting the rehearsal, but share with your neighbour and speak to Carole in the interval or at the end of the evening. It will not only save time and extend our rehearsal time but it will assist in managing the music effectively. Additionally, please order your music in a way that makes sense to you so that music can be found quickly and easily. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

I hope you enjoyed the puzzles and brainteasers in the summer edition.

But how did you get on?

Here are the solutions!

LinkWord: Contralto

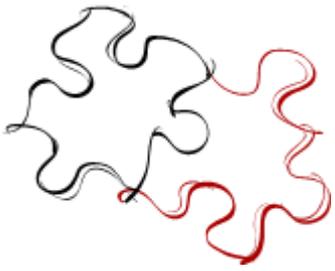
There were a total of 97 words you could have found in the last puzzle. A full list is available on request.

MatchWord:

Birthday	Card	Deck
Bubble	Bath	Towel
Royal	Mail	Merge
Hard	Work	Horse
Family	Tree	House
Wedding	Ring	Binder
Petty	Cash	Register
Library	Book	Voucher
Trap	Door	Handle
Jail	Bird	Seed

Sudoku:

7	5	8	2	4	6	9	1	3
6	9	4	5	3	1	2	8	7
1	2	3	8	9	7	4	6	5
2	7	6	9	8	5	3	4	1
3	8	5	1	7	4	6	2	9
4	1	9	6	2	3	5	7	8
9	6	7	4	5	8	1	3	2
5	3	1	7	6	2	8	9	4
8	4	2	3	1	9	7	5	6



Puzzle Page

L	N	Q	P	D	J	U	R	H	O	K	G	M	P	M	M	I	L	I	
O	C	G	P	T	O	R	C	C	X	B	E	D	P	M	U	C	S	A	J
F	N	T	Z	L	Y	B	H	U	B	F	G	H	G	L	M	L	P	N	Y
C	D	W	U	Y	N	B	X	P	C	K	E	A	Y	M	K	W	C	O	H
V	O	S	P	Q	F	H	Z	Q	W	V	Q	R	Q	S	R	A	N	I	S
Y	V	P	I	G	A	S	C	W	Y	W	P	M	C	T	W	K	I	T	G
F	R	I	E	N	D	S	H	I	P	F	Q	O	B	J	L	Y	O	A	N
V	I	Q	U	G	G	Y	K	S	E	K	N	T	L	A	S	M	M	I	
B	U	W	P	M	U	I	G	L	J	O	D	Y	Z	G	S	I	N	R	R
B	Y	E	L	H	A	H	N	U	Y	J	M	V	X	E	O	E	L	O	I
R	Z	K	I	J	V	D	V	G	F	W	R	S	N	D	L	T	N	F	P
G	A	Q	F	W	C	R	F	G	M	L	T	R	S	D	L	J	Q	S	S
W	R	H	T	X	W	O	D	O	W	M	E	J	R	F	T	H	Q	N	N
M	I	D	I	I	E	W	M	F	V	H	G	E	R	M	F	K	N	A	I
U	Z	Q	N	D	A	K	V	M	T	F	T	U	A	W	O	X	J	R	R
S	D	E	G	N	M	M	Z	E	U	H	V	D	P	J	Z	P	E	T	V
I	P	Z	U	S	M	P	G	P	G	N	G	I	I	V	Y	B	V	H	H
C	U	G	M	N	R	O	C	U	E	A	I	T	L	R	W	A	U	B	V
R	K	E	A	B	T	W	A	L	U	C	X	T	V	E	R	O	X	A	V
I	O	F	U	N	S	L	C	Q	D	N	V	T	Y	Y	A	X	T	G	O

I have an exciting new twist for you this time... Over the summer, eager FaceBookers among you will have noticed that I set a challenge – to share one word that describes what Amici means to you. All of your responses are concealed within the grid, but can you find two mystery words that also capture the spirit of the Amicis?

Amiciness is ...

Community	Joy
Friendship	Laughter
Fun	Togetherness
Harmony	Transformational
Inspiring	Uplifting

TrackWord

R	I	C
S	O	R
T	E	H

Clue: An Amici member
 Making sure you use the centre square in the grid above how many words can you discover?
 Minimum word length: 3

Sudoku

			7	4	1	6		
5	3		9	2				
		7	8		6		2	9
8	7	4					3	
						4	8	
			5					
	8		9	2		4		
2			3		6			
			6			2	9	



MatchWord

Hair	_____	Rule
Wrist	_____	Tower
Brown	_____	Bin
Green	_____	Cutter
Tap	_____	Filter
Bulgur	_____	Flakes
Oven	_____	Puppet
Tall	_____	Teller
Freshly	_____	Beans
Gentle	_____	Panda