

Chair's report season 24-25

Before the season, Adrian had been approached by a member of the Islington Choral society – an ex BBC colleague who wanted to know if we could play for a couple of concerts and this resulted in a collaboration for two concerts – Haydn's creation at St Andrew's Holborn on the 24th Nov 24 and Elgar's 'The Kingdom' at Sinfonia St Johns on 6th April 2025. These two concerts provided a welcome boost to the finances of WPO as we were paid plus we didn't incur the usual costs of music hire, rehearsal venue, concert venue, conductor etc. This has enabled us to keep membership subs down and benefits everybody. I'm very grateful for all those regular members of WPO who gave their time to support these concerts. Unfortunately there don't seem to be more forthcoming bookings so far.

Back to our normal concerts, Concert 1 was at St John's Waterloo.

We played Dvorak's Carnival overture, Shostakovitch Piano concerto no 2, Prokofiev Lieutenant Kije and Bartok Concerto for orchestra Our soloist was Aidan Chan.

Concert 2 was Walton Spitfire Prelude & Fugue, Mozart Violin Concerto in A, soloist Jordan Brooks and Mahler 5. This was also at St Johns.

Concert 3 at St Johns Waterloo saw us play Elgar 'In the South', Bernstein 'on the Waterfront' and Bliss colour symphony.

Finally in concert 4 we played Barber first essay for Orchestra, Tchaikovsky variations on a rococo theme with soloist Kosta Popovic and Bruckner 9 at St Johns Waterloo.

Once again huge thanks go to all in the committee who put a lot of work into keeping the show on the road. As you remember Frank Burgum on trumpet stood down from WPO as librarian last year and also 1st trumpet, We miss him greatly but he still very kindly helps in the background: he has produced the schedule for next season and also prints the programmes.

We are also sorry to see Alexia leave the WPO after valiantly struggling back for rehearsals from deepest Wiltshire is proving too time consuming, we will miss her too, and her efficient work as membership secretary.

Special thanks to Dug whose job of doing the refreshments is very important – we all appreciate what he does.

I'd like to thank all the members of the committee for the time they give up to make sure the WPO runs smoothly and we all have a great time playing interesting rep.

I'd like to thanks Jonathan for steering us through some challenging pieces and the anecdotes – very few of which I've heard twice despite being in the WPO for a long ime, and of course to Chrstian for leading so brilliantly.

We need to emphasise that clearing up after the concerts needs everyone's help. People do clear their chairs and stands but we need more helpers to stay behind to move back the heavy church furniture around the altar, so it is not just left to a few to struggle with (such as Derek and Dominic).