ANDY'S SUBMISSIONS TO RADIO 3'S MUSICAL MAP

CIRENCESTER ×

Cirencester Choral Society

Choral Music

This year CCS celebrates its 150th anniversary. The first known record of the Society by name, in October 1863, relates to choral classes given by Frederick Helmore, "choir master to His late Royal Highness, the Prince Consort, &c,&c,&c". Highlights include being conducted by Sir Hubert Parry in a performance of his oratorio Job in 1905, and having Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, then Music Master at Cirencester Grammar School, as Conductor for the 1959-60 season.

Andrew (Chairman)

Cirencester Choral Society

Andrew (Cirencester)

SHOREHAM

Sea and coast

Hubert Parry was an accomplished sailor and the only composer ever to be elected to the Royal Yacht Squadron. He began sailing when living at Littlehampton for the benefit of his wife's health. The Lloyds Yacht Register has a record of his owning the 21 ton Latois built by former boatbuilders Stow & Sons of Shoreham. According to an extract from The Musical Times of July 1898 Parry was a fearless yachtsman: "I have been nearly drowned heaps of times. Once I went round the Isle of Wight in a gale and nearly drove my skipper out of his wits!" Albeit only in a canoe, he once saved his vessel after a capsize by swimming two miles to shore with the boat's painter between his teeth, so determined was he not to lose his ship! His experience of sailing the seas around the British Isles would no doubt have influenced his writing of the music for the fourth movement of Invocation to Music, his ode to Henry Purcell written in collaboration with poet Robert Bridges to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Purcell's death in 1895. This work is recognised by Parry scholars as having had a big influence on his pupils at the Royal College of Music, in particular Vaughan Williams and his Sea Symphony, but Invocation is rarely if ever sung. Can I suggest therefore a pin for Parry in the Channel off the Sussex coast along with a hearing of the fourth movement of Invocation to Music?

Andrew (Cirencester)