

## Chair's Report on 2010

It's been a very good year for RBCS. There have been ups and downs of course, but on balance a very good year indeed.

We have adopted a strapline '*where your local community comes together to sing*' which we feel communicates what we're about. Being inclusive in this way opens the door to 'community support' funding which has been a great benefit.

In the last year the RBCS committee has focused on becoming a smooth operation. We don't always quite succeed, but we are definitely getting there. The results are great, but it has placed extra demands on committee members. So I must start with huge thank you to all the committee members for their time and energy and support.

There is another huge thank you to be said to Sue, our Musical Director, who continues to lead us cheerily into all sorts of musical adventures. I'd like to highlight just a few from 2010. In March, there was the Cherubini Requiem which we performed last spring, with 14 musicians, a really big work, musically and emotionally. Then in April, we had a collective walk-on part for a week at the Lyric, Hammersmith singing Bright Eyes. Come September we were rehearsing a modern Australian work for its UK premiere. But on the day, our musicians were stuck in snow in Surrey, so no premiere. With Rotherhithe deep in snow and singers struck down with flu, Sue rallied us, rehearsed us through an alternative programme and delivered a thoroughly enjoyable concert.

In addition to staging our own 3 concerts, we do at least 7 other performances each year. In 2010, at the Lyric theatre, at the Blue (twice), at Surrey Quays, at the Bermondsey Street festival (second time), at St Mary's church and at Southwark Arts Forum events. It is very pleasing to reach a bigger audience through these performances and our contribution is always well received.

On the financial side we've secured three grants and generous support from some anonymous sponsors brought to us by Sue. The grant funds have enabled us to invest in the choir, eg buying scores for our library and risers for the tenors and basses. The sponsorship has enabled us to be much more musically ambitious, paying for the musicians for the Cherubini, for example. We have in our scores library a useful collection of compilations which we can use again and again.

We've expanded the opportunities for choir members to sing solos or perform in small groups, and to write and present musical introductions at our concerts. We are including programme notes and translations where appropriate in our programmes. So there have been benefits for choir members and audience.

We have expanded our much-admired website. Everything is there, from this term's information sheet to our Child Safeguarding Policy. It has become our public face in many ways and brings to us not only members but also performing opportunities.

In another line of development we have strengthened our links to local organisations and that has started to bring new opportunities our way. Time & Talents, the Brunel Tunnel Museum, St James and St Mary's, Southwark Arts Forum, Southwark Council, Rotherhithe Community Council and others.

We adopted a new constitution and joined the national organisation for amateur music, [Making Music](#). This helps us find scores for hire, musicians, programme notes, insurance and expertise.

All of these developments I hope have added to the pleasure and enjoyment that the choir brings to members and others. There is more, much more, to come in 2011, with our postponed UK premiere of the Sarcich Percussion Mass and planned performances underground and overseas.

To sustain all this, we need to have 35-40 choir members every term and attract 80-100 in audience to our concerts. Telling the world about what we do is essential and for a community choir, word of mouth works best, so please do talk about the choir to your friends, colleagues and relatives, and invite them warmly along.

Thank you all for your support.

Clare Birks  
RBCS Chair 2010-11