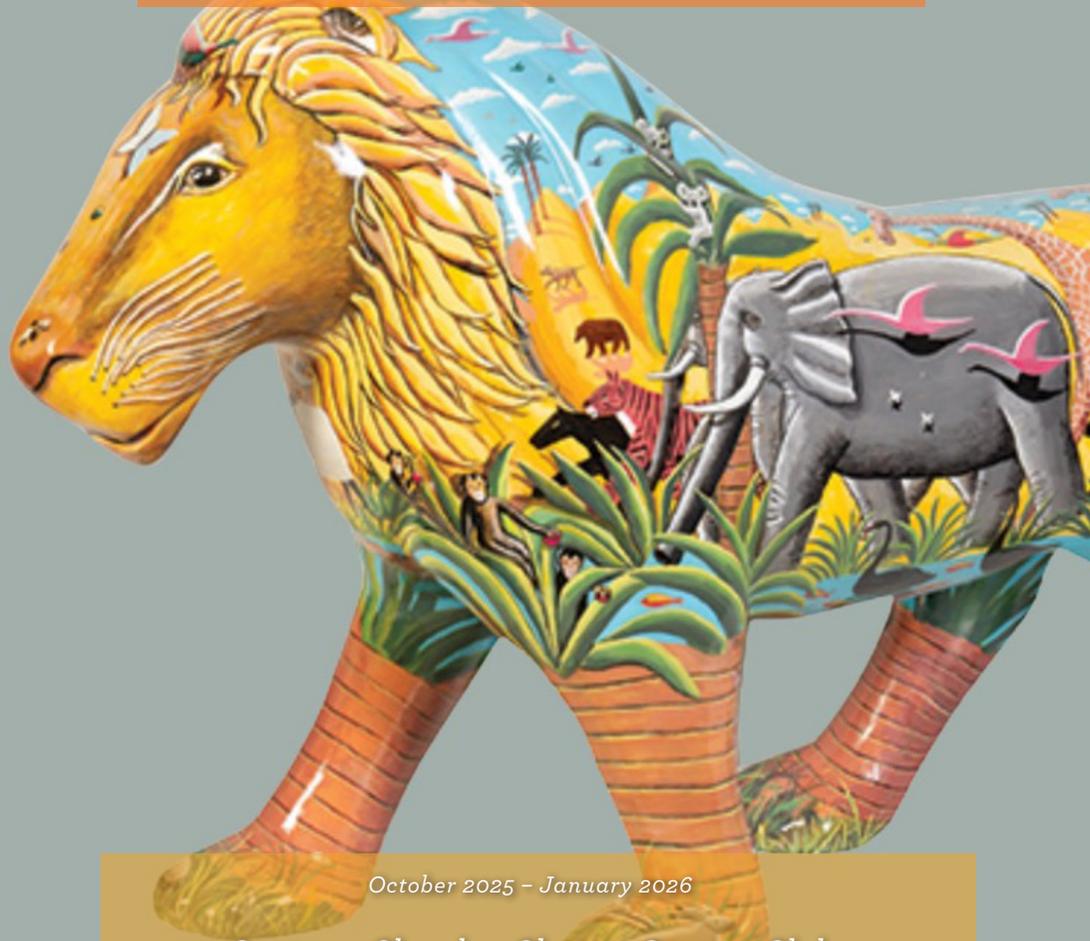


# *perspectives*

CHELTENHAMARTSCULTURE

*Cheltenham Arts Council: awards\_funding\_publicity\_events listings*



*October 2025 – January 2026*

*Cantores Chamber Choir • German Club  
Children's Choir Concerts • Cheltenham Playhouse  
Royal Scottish Country Dance Society*

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Please contact [editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk](mailto:editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk) for more information.

Submissions must be with us by the following dates for consideration for the next issue:

Mid December deadline for Feb/May Issue

Mid April deadline for June/Sept Issue

Mid August deadline for Oct/Jan Issue

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*Perspectives is produced three times a year.  
The next issue will span February - May 2026.*

**SUBMISSION (ADS AND EVENTS) MUST BE WITH US BY MID DECEMBER FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE NEXT ISSUE. PLEASE EMAIL EVENT DETAILS TO [PERSPECTIVES.LISTINGS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PERSPECTIVES.LISTINGS@GMAIL.COM)**



FRONT COVER - LION SCULPTURE BY PJ CROOK

LIONS AT LARGE TRAIL HAVE BEEN EXHIBITED ACROSS CHELTHENHAM AND GLOUCESTER TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE BIG SPACE

THE LARGE LIONS WILL THEN BE AUCTIONED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR PROPOSED NEW CANCER CARE FACILITIES IN CHELTHENHAM WITH DIGITAL CONSULTING ROOMS, SPACE FOR STATE-OF-THE-ART RESEARCH, AS WELL AS A THERAPEUTIC OUTSIDE SPACE.

FOR ALL THE DETAILS PLEASE VISIT: [LIONSATLARGE.CO.UK](http://LIONSATLARGE.CO.UK)



### PERSPECTIVES TEAM

EDITOR ELISE FORBES

LISTINGS ALICE HOODSON

IMAGE SOURCING NIKI WHITFIELD

DESIGN CHANTAL FREEMAN

## Dear Readers

I'm sure many of you will be reading this with feelings of regret at the end of a glorious summer. Never fear, this latest edition of Perspectives has arrived in time to reassure you that there is much to investigate and look forward to in the coming season of Cheltenham's cultural life. Although, I suppose, we may still be forgiven for looking back with some regret at the photograph of members of the RSCDS dancing in the rose garden at Cerney House on a glorious summer's day!

Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra and The Oriel Singers are both looking forward to celebrating impressive jubilees with more wonderful music making in the coming year, whilst local hero, Dick Whittington, is rehearsing for his role in this year's production of the ever-popular Christmas panto at the Playhouse. Thinking of drama, Cheltenham's lively theatre company, Parrot Productions, writes of innovative means of accessing fascinating work by local playwrights David Elder and Lou Beckett.

Choral music once again features strongly in this edition, demonstrating the pleasure experienced by many residents as members of choirs active in Cheltenham and the surrounding area. Some tell us of concerts yet to come, offering dates for our diaries, and encouraging new recruits to discover the joy of singing, whilst joining a friendly new community. We also publish a stimulating discussion of the future of choral singing in general from Sandra

Burne, who directs two quite distinctive choirs. It is a delight to include the report of Cheltenham Children's Choir's Summer Showcase at the Playhouse, accompanied by beautiful images of the enthusiastic performances of singers aged from five to eighteen.

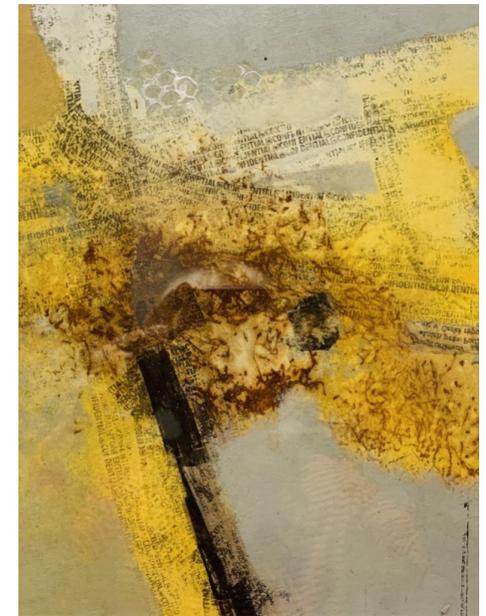
So, embrace the new season and consider joining in actively with all the cultural activities this corner of Gloucestershire has to offer!

Best wishes,

**Elise Forbes**

PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

[editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk](mailto:editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk)



PLUM NERSMITH COS MEMBER

## CANTORES CHAMBER CHOIR

### ANTICIPATING TWO OUTSTANDING PROGRAMMES THIS AUTUMN



**C**antores Chamber Choir is establishing a reputation for its innovative and diverse programmes. Following another successful collaboration with Fretwork this summer, performing music by Orlando Gibbons in Cirencester Parish Church to mark the 400th anniversary of the composer's death in June 1625, the choir presents two exciting programmes this autumn.

On Saturday 18th October at 4pm in the glorious acoustics of Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton, Cantores presents an eclectic programme entitled 'The Flight of Song' which weaves together sacred and secular pieces, both a cappella and with organ accompaniment, from the 16th Century to the present day, celebrating the joy of music and singing. The theme of singing psalms and playing instruments in worship to God, heard in

motets by Byrd, Gibbons, Monteverdi and Palestrina, features alongside music written in praise of the patron saint of music, Saint Cecilia, by Phillips and Howells. A beautiful six-part polyphonic piece by Lassus, *Musica Dei donum*, which speaks movingly about the power of music, sits alongside part-songs by Finzi, Bridge and Vaughan Williams, and contemporary pieces by Howard Skempton and Sarah Quartel.

On Saturday 6th December, the feast day of Saint Nicholas, at 7pm in St Philip and St James Church, Leckhampton, Cantores joins forces with the Bristol Ensemble, singers from the Beauregard Youth Choir, and soloists including tenor James Gilchrist, for a performance of Britten's dramatic work *St Nicolas* and Haydn's delightful *Missa Sancti Nicolai*.

**Tickets from the Cantores website:  
<https://www.cantores.net>**



PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN IN THE BEAUTIFUL CIRENCESTER PARISH CHURCH BY ROSIE SCULL.



## CHELTENHAM CHILDREN'S CHOIR CONCERTS - JUNE 2025

A CELEBRATION OF YOUTH, MUSIC AND COMMUNITY



**T**his June, the historic Playhouse Theatre in Cheltenham came alive with the joyful voices of Cheltenham Children's Choir. Across two uplifting performances, young singers from the Little Lyrics, Vocalise and Harmonise choirs filled the space with melodies that touched hearts, inspired smiles, and reminded us all of music's enduring magic.

Kicking off the celebration, the Little Lyrics Choir charmed the audience with a whimsical, feel-good selection of songs drawn from classics both old and beloved. These young singers, aged just 5 to 8, brought delightful energy to the stage with pieces like: We're Off to See the Wizard, Winnie the Pooh, Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da and The Sun Has Got His Hat On.

With playful choreography and beaming smiles, the children turned the afternoon into a magical experience. Their enthusiasm was contagious, and their well-rehearsed voices filled the theatre with nostalgia and joy.

As evening settled in, the older ensembles, aged 8-18, took to the stage and delivered a performance rich in harmony, soul and emotional power. With voices full of heart, Vocalise and Harmonise choirs presented contemporary favourites that brought energy and depth to the second half of the day. Songs

included Hold Back the River, Sweet Caroline, Hey Jude, and many more.

Each song was performed with passion and precision, whilst throughout the evening stunning solo performances stood out as moments of individual brilliance. Whether soulful and intimate or bold and spirited, these solos showcased the talent and growth of each young performer.

The collective sound and dynamic expression of the choirs reflected months of dedication and collaboration, guided by their musical leader. Each singer brought something special to the stage - whether it was innocent joy, confident artistry, or expressive storytelling. The concerts highlighted not only musical skill, but also the community spirit that the Cheltenham Children's Choir nurtures with every rehearsal, note and performance.

A heartfelt 'thank you' goes out to the families, organisers, choir directors and supporters who made these concerts possible. Their behind-the-scenes commitment helped shape an unforgettable day.

**If you know a child who loves to sing and might be interested in joining Cheltenham Children's Choir, please check out our website - [www.cheltenhamchildrenschoir.co.uk](http://www.cheltenhamchildrenschoir.co.uk).**



MOMENTS FROM THE CHELTENHAM CHILDREN'S CHOIRS SUMMER SHOWCASE



## CHELTENHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

### ANNUAL LOCAL HISTORY AFTERNOON HELD IN JULY

The CLHS Local History Afternoon of 2025, held at St. Andrew's church in Montpellier, was impeccably organised by Sue Brown with the support of a sub-committee consisting of Stuart Manton, Sue Robbins and Maggie Winterburn.

cool main hall, especially with coffee, tea, biscuits and cakes all available thanks to the efforts of the CLHS volunteers.

Beside the many LHS displays of interesting and intriguing themes to educate those hungry enough to learn more about their town, there were also talks



These events have been held fairly regularly since 2005, with the exception of the Covid lockdown summer of 2020. This year's meeting hosted many other Local History Societies, mostly displaying material on the theme of Hospitality throughout our town and the wider region. Given Cheltenham's reputation, over the past two hundred and fifty years or so, of being variously known as a 'spa town', 'regency town', 'festival town', 'holiday town', 'cultural town', or 'Capital of the Cotswolds', it seems only natural for our town to have a long association with hospitality. There was indeed plenty of that to be had inside the church's pleasantly

in the comparative cool of the Sanctuary or walks in the heat of this uncommonly hot summer, if one preferred.

The first talk was by Helen Wallimann on the subject of Hospitality in a Changing World: The Savoy Hotel Cheltenham, 1945-1986. Helen, who was brought up at the Savoy, spoke about her early years there in a fascinating talk about what has always been such a well-known landmark. Her talk was well attended and very well received. The steady footfall rapidly increased as people sought shade in the church hall and Garden Room to view the displays of Cheltenham LHS, Gloucestershire County History Trust CIO, Gloucestershire Family

History Society, Gloucestershire Branch Historical Association, Leckhampton LHS, Prestbury LHS and Swindon Village Society. Many of these societies had discovered a wide variety of previously unknown lodgings and landladies, bed and breakfast establishments, and even a few newly discovered hotels of the past. The Wilson also contributed to the event as part of their 'Big Museum Project', bringing along intriguing wooden boxes full of random, mysterious objects apparently concerning future exhibitions at the museum itself.

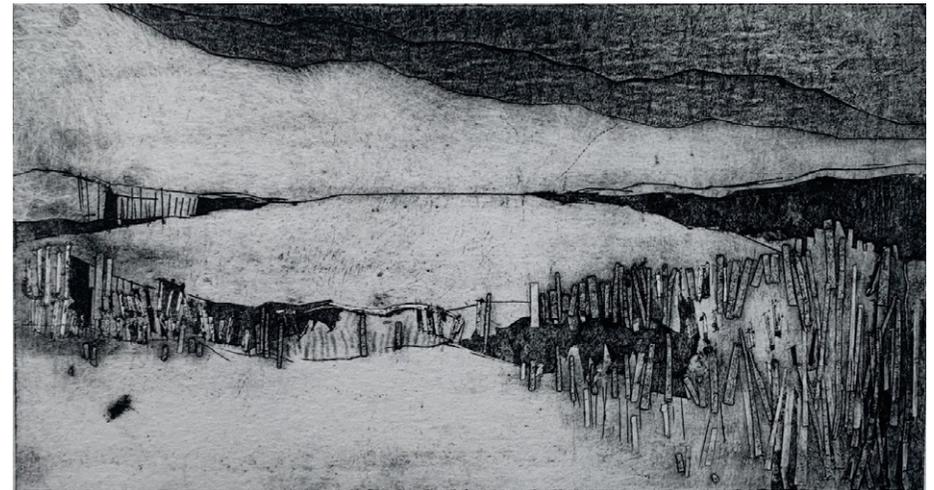
Hospitality with a nostalgic flavour of past times was on display with the Cheltenham Services Club, Oriental Cafe, Cosy Corner, Cadena Cafes, the Vegetarian Hotel in Winchcombe Street and the Food Reform Hotel in London Road, as well as lodging and boarding houses, pubs and the Savoy Hotel among other hotels on display. Bravely, given the temperature, David Elder set off to lead his walk entitled 'Boarding

and Lodging Houses for Visitors to the Spa', whilst Alan Jones went off with his party, eager to be shown 'Historic Hostelries and Bygone Boozers'.

Meanwhile, back in the Sanctuary, Dr Steven Blake entertained us all with his talk on What the Visitors Thought: A Light-Hearted Look at Cheltenham since the 1700s. This was a very well presented and amusing talk with delightful cameos of some of the characters and events from those times. It is interesting how some of the most negative and vindictive remarks made in the past about Cheltenham and its famous spring waters are some of the funniest, reflecting the ambition and aspirations of those who promoted entertainment, enjoyment and hospitality in this Regency spa town.

Cheltenham Local History Society is very grateful for the grant of £300 that Cheltenham Arts Council gave towards the costs of the afternoon.

David Jones



LIZ FREEDMAN COS MEMBER

## CHELTENHAM PLAYHOUSE

A CELEBRATORY PANTO IN ITS 80TH YEAR



**T**he Cheltenham Playhouse, with Matt Nolan Creative, has announced its 2025 pantomime, 'Dick Whittington', which will arrive at this historic theatre on 12th December. This will be an unmissable pantomime celebrating the 80th birthday of the Playhouse and providing the perfect festive outing for all ages.

Dick dreams of the bright lights of London Town, and he cannot wait to leave behind his old life at 'The Whittington' in Gloucestershire as he seeks fame and fortune. Dick is hanging up his pot washing, pint pouring and bingo calling for good because he is destined to be a STAR! Join Dick on the adventure of a lifetime as he

wonders if the streets will be paved with gold. Will he find fame at last? Will his furry feline friend prove useful? Or will King Rat hold him back?

This year's pantomime will be directed for the third year running by Kieran Mortell and feature the talented Theatre Studio ensemble. Enchanted singing and phenomenal dancing blend to create an unforgettable pantomime.

Dick Whittington opens at The Cheltenham Playhouse on Friday 12th December and runs through to Saturday 3rd January. Ticket prices start at £18, with family tickets also available.

*Anya Wood*

THERE ARE THREE DEDICATED SHOWS FOR 18+ AUDIENCES AND TWO RELAXED PERFORMANCES SCHEDULED. VISIT THE CHELTENHAM PLAYHOUSE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO BUY TICKETS:

[WWW.CHELTPLAYHOUSE.ORG.UK](http://WWW.CHELTPLAYHOUSE.ORG.UK)

## CHURCHDOWN CHORAL SOCIETY

'BRING ON THE CHORUS' BRINGS THE HOUSE DOWN



**W**ith their traditional concert and buffet supper at St Andrew's, Churchdown Choral Society finished another successful year, led by Tobias Lazenbury-Halliwell and accompanied by Maxim Nash.

The theme of the concert was 'Bring on the Chorus' with music from musicals, light opera and opera. The highlight was a medley from Les Misérables, which included solo performances from various members of the choir. Members of the audience were delighted to be sped on their way to the buffet supper with an encore of Gilbert and

Sullivan's 'Now to the banquet we press' from The Sorcerer.

Choir members are now on their summer break but are looking forward to starting their new term on Thursday 4th September. Rehearsals will immediately focus on the Mozart Requiem, which will be performed at two concerts in March in partnership with Newent Orchestra. Anyone who would be interested in taking part in these concerts should contact the choir on [churchdownchoral@gmail.com](mailto:churchdownchoral@gmail.com).

*Liz Kirkham*

## CHELTENHAM GERMAN CLUB

### TWO TALKS TO ROUND OFF THE 2024/5 SEASON

**The first talk was given on 11th April by one of our members, Greg Arnold, who now lives in Devon, but still takes a close interest in the Cheltenham German Club.**

Using a rich variety of photographs illustrating the river, castles, churches, towns, villages, and landscapes he passed along the way, together with the food and wine encountered, Greg spoke to us in German and brought his walk along the Mosel-Camino to vibrant life.

The following is a short quote from Greg, explaining how he discovered the Mosel-Camino and what delights await the walker in this beautiful area of Germany:

“The ‘Jakobsweg’, or Camino de Santiago, is a network of routes which lead to the tomb of St James in Santiago in Spain, which is also very popular in Germany.

I have done several of the routes, and some years ago in Spain, I met two German ladies from the Mosel area with whom I kept in contact.

I then found out that among the many routes in Europe there is one called the Mosel-Camino, which is a 160 km walk from Koblenz to Trier. The first week I walked with my German son-in-law and the second

week with the two German ladies. The route is fairly arduous as it doesn't follow the river, but meanders up and down between the many villages, vineyards, woods, and meadows. The distant, stunning views of river, vineyards, and gorgeous landscapes make up for aching legs and I was happy to arrive at the basilica and tomb of St Matthias in Trier and receive my certificate.”

For the second talk on 16th May, we invited Dr Nicholas Martin from Birmingham University to speak to us in German on the subject of “Gedächtnislücke Erster Weltkrieg in der Deutschen Erinnerung”. His research “Memory Lapse of the First World War in the German Commemoration” explores the reasons why in Germany, the Second World War is very much in the German conscience, whereas the awareness of the First World War lacks historical commemoration. It is different in Great Britain and in the English-speaking Commonwealth. His research seeks the reasons for this difference and investigates the reticence of the Germans regarding the difficult history of the First World War.

Bärbel Hewett



## GOTHERINGTON SINGERS

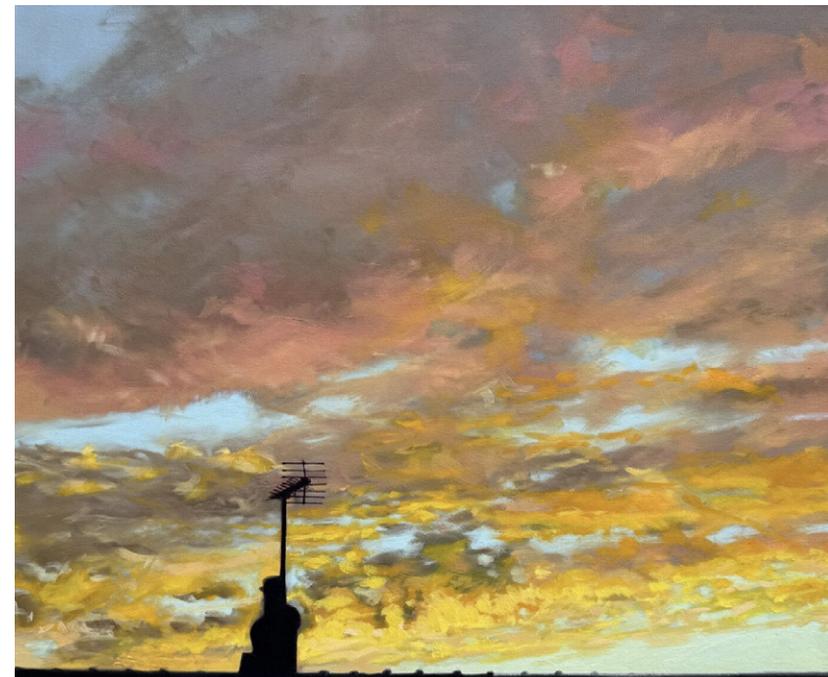
### THE JOY OF SONG RAISES MONEY FOR GOOD CAUSES

**Gotherington Singers is a very friendly female voice choir. We enjoy singing together and learning different types of music in a friendly, welcoming atmosphere.**

2024-5 was a busy year for us with a very successful Christmas concert in December and a ‘Come and Sing’ day in March where we learnt music from Les Misérables. We finished the summer term with a very well supported ‘Songs and Scones’ concert in the church of St Michael & All Angels in Bishop’s Cleeve, presenting a varied programme including music by JS Bach, Cole Porter, Bob Dylan, and a medley from Les Misérables. Donations made at our concerts this year were given to the Food Bank and the Alzheimer’s Society.

We are now looking forward to our 2025-6 season and learning still more songs. With the Christmas concert in mind, this will include the enjoyment of learning some new festive numbers. A new term with new music is an ideal time to come along and join us. No auditions are required, and a warm welcome awaits. Our practices are held at Gotherington Village Hall on Mondays in term time from 7:45-9:30 pm. Contact Sally at [sall.newbury@gmail.com](mailto:sall.newbury@gmail.com) or 01242 317276 for more information. A date for the diary – Christmas Concert at St Michael & All Angels in Bishop’s Cleeve on Saturday 6th December at 2pm.

Julie Devereux, Chairman



## AN OPINION PIECE

### A THOUGHT-PROVOKING DISCUSSION OF CHORAL MUSIC

#### Revealing surprising parallels between singing and shopping. Networks vs. Corner Shops and Local Choirs

The world of grocery shopping and community singing might seem unrelated, yet they share striking parallels. The onslaught of chain supermarkets mirrors the growth of large choir networks, while the demise of corner shops echoes the sad fate of many local independent choirs struggling to attract singers, find rehearsal venues, and maintain a professional online presence.

#### Supermarkets: Standardised Success

Walk into any supermarket chain and you'll find predictable comfort – familiar layouts, reliable selection, and consistent experiences across locations. Large choir networks (you know the ones – their titles include words such as Rock, Show, and Sing!) follow remarkably similar principles, offering standardised musical experiences with branded materials, consistent teaching methods, and carefully curated repertoires.

This approach brings undeniable benefits. For newcomers to singing, there's no intimidating audition – you simply turn up and join in. Professional management ensures regular rehearsals, organised performances, and clear progression. Like supermarkets, these networks undoubtedly provide convenience, reliability, and accessibility.

#### Corner Shops: Intimacy and Character

Yet anyone with a relationship to their local corner shop knows there's something irreplaceable about that personal service. The shopkeeper knows your name, offering flexibility and genuine community connection far beyond the transaction.

Local independent choirs offer the same deeply personal experience. Whether it's the village church choir, amateur operatic society, or chamber group meeting in someone's living room, these groups thrive on relationships and shared ownership and interests. The musical director might adjust repertoire based on members' interests, accommodate personal circumstances, or spend extra time helping nervous newcomers. These groups often achieve remarkably high standards through dedication to the local community and mutual support.

#### The Squeeze: Big Networks Crowding Out Local Voices

Here's where the analogy becomes concerning. Just as retail chains contributed to the decline of independent shops in our high streets, well-funded choir networks with substantial marketing budgets are squeezing out local operators.

Large networks can afford glossy campaigns, professional websites, and a curated social media presence that local choirs cannot match. When a franchised choir opens in a town with established local groups, the impact can be devastating. The marketing muscle of national brands, combined with “no auditions, just turn up and sing” appeal, quickly drains membership from groups that have served communities for decades.

This isn't just about numbers – it's about losing longstanding community infrastructure. When local choirs fold, communities lose the volunteers who organised fundraising events, connections between generations of families, and unique musical traditions reflecting local character and history.

The financial reality makes this squeeze almost inevitable. Local choirs operate on shoestring budgets with volunteers, unable to compete with professional marketing and slick presentation. We're seeing the emergence of “musical deserts” where standardised networks dominate while independent groups struggle to survive.

#### Protecting Choral Diversity

The challenge is supporting musical diversity in an increasingly unequal marketplace. Local authorities, arts councils, and community organisations could recognise that independent choirs need active support to survive against well-funded competition. This might mean prioritising local groups for venue bookings, providing marketing support, and maintaining funding streams for grassroots musical organisations.

We also need to educate potential choir members about what they gain – and

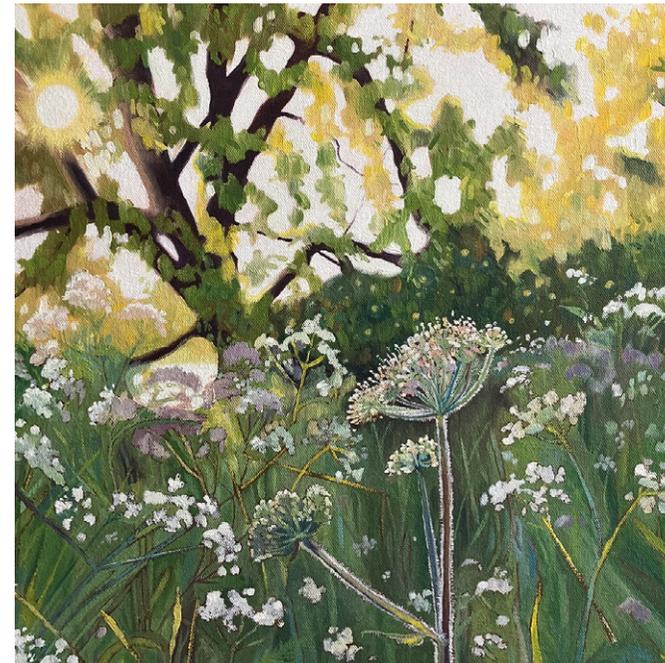
lose – when choosing between different singing groups. Although large networks serve important functions, we must actively nurture local independent choirs before they are lost forever.

The health of our choral communities depends on maintaining this ecosystem of choices. Supporting local groups is essential for keeping our musical landscapes rich and varied – building community one voice at a time, while we still can.

**Sandra Burne, Musical Director of  
Tapestry Chamber Choir and  
The Curious Choir**

\*In a musical town such as Cheltenham, I imagine that there may be others who might like to continue this discussion in a future edition of Perspectives.

**The Editor**



JACQUELINE HAMMOND -  
SIXTEENGALLERY.COM

## THE ORIEL SINGERS

### CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS OF THE JOY OF SONG

**2025 is an important year for the Oriel Singers as we celebrate fifty years of fellowship through singing. We've already had some wonderful events to mark the occasion, with the most important yet to come – our Jubilee concert in Pittville Pump Room on Saturday 18th October.**



ORIEL SINGERS AT THE PUMP ROOM EARLIER THIS YEAR

So put our 'Jubilee' concert in your diary as an event not to be missed. The programme covers centuries of choral music from Bach and Gibbons through to the present day with Eric Whitacre, Cheltenham's own Gustav Holst, Joanna Forbes L'Estrange and far more besides. Rather than poetry, there will be a narration taking the audience through some of the memorable events over the choir's first fifty years, not least its success in the 2005 Choir of the Year competition.

Going back to February, our popular 'Come and Sing' saw us joined by guests to learn three pieces the choir has enjoyed singing over the years: O clap your hands by Orlando Gibbons, who died 400 years ago this year; Bring us, O Lord God by William Harris, sung so poignantly at the Queen's committal service in Windsor; and We

shall walk through the valley by American composer, Undine Smith-Moore. Our Come and Sing events have the Oriel Singers at their heart, so guest singers can come and work on some more challenging repertoire with confidence, in the knowledge that they will be surrounded by singers who sing together every week.

Our next event was a recording in April. We were joined by producer Alex Eadon, Director of Music at Sherborne School for Boys and an old friend of mine, and Andrew Post, a professional recording engineer, to record a selection of pieces written for the

choir. We are particularly excited to share these recordings in the coming months as they represent music that is deeply personal to us both as individuals and as a group. There are three pieces that were commissioned in memory of loved ones, one piece especially written for the joyous marriage of two of our long-standing members, and a piece by local composer Michael Gryspeerdt, who was a great friend of the choir. Producer Alex did not know any of these pieces but was bowled over by their quality describing it as 'some really corking repertoire deserving of more widespread performance'.

Our concert in St Mary's, Charlton Kings, in May - Words and Music - showcased some wonderful music paired with words by great poets. Oriel Singers concerts usually feature readings, giving the music (and the singers) a space to breathe; for this concert, those readings were selected poems that made up the texts of the music we performed. What was even more special was seeing so many familiar faces in the audience for this local concert. Following the concert, we enjoyed a visit to the

home of Yoko Mathers, wife of George, who brought the initial quartet together and managed the choir for many years. His home in Oriel Terrace was the venue for the choir's rehearsals in its early days and ultimately gave the choir its name. This social event gave the choir a chance to celebrate, relax and enjoy each other's company.

At the end of June, we made our fourteenth visit to the lovely setting of Llanwenarth near Abergavenny where we performed a concert of varied repertoire largely shaped around our forthcoming Jubilee concert in October. This was a memorable event as it featured the unofficial premiere of Jubilee, a piece written by Neil Cox, a composer who spends his time between Gloucester and St David's, with words by our tenor and librarian-supreme, Paul Curtis. We are very excited to share this piece with our supporters in Cheltenham. It is a wonderful musical illustration of the life of the choir, particularly drawing on the theme of friendship and the camaraderie that develops when a small group of people make music together so regularly.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS ON SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER. TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED HERE: [HTTPS://CHELTENHAMTOWNHALL.ORG.UK/EVENT/JUBILEE-50-YEARS-OF-THE-ORIEL-SINGERS/](https://cheltenhamtownhall.org.uk/event/jubilee-50-years-of-the-oriel-singers/).**

**Ben Sawyer**  
Musical Director, The Oriel Singers

## LISTINGS: EVENTS DIRECTORY OCTOBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

## VISUAL ARTS

**Cotswold Art Club: Artist Demonstration**

Sat 18 Oct, 2.30 - 4.30pm,  
The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, Urban Landscapes Using Watercolour and Ink, with Cathy Reed. See [www.cotswoldartclub.com](http://www.cotswoldartclub.com)

**Cotswold Art Club: Artist Demonstration**

Sat 15 Nov, 2.30 - 4.30pm,  
The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, Impressionist with Oils, with Paul Oakley. See [www.cotswoldartclub.com](http://www.cotswoldartclub.com)

**Victorian Family Christmas Day**

Sat 13 Dec, 11am - 3pm,  
Holst Victorian House, Victorian baking and crafts

**AT THE GARDENS GALLERY, MONTPELLIER GARDENS:**

Core hours 10am - 5pm

**Mythologies: through the eyes of 9 Artists Collective**

Fri 10 - Sun 19 Oct

**Drawn Together**

Sat 25 - Tue 28 Oct, six diverse and inspiring artists, each exploring form, colour and emotion in their own distinctive way

**Nick Sargeant**

Wed 29 Oct - Tue 4 Nov

**Studio Liney**

Wed 5 - Tue 11 Nov

**Jane Powell**

Wed 12 - Tue 18 Nov

**Friday Morning Painters**

Wed 19 - Tue 25 Nov

**Into the Light:****Joanne Cope**

Wed 26 Nov - Tue 2 Dec

**Rhythm and Light:****Caroline Cattermull**

Wed 3 - Tue 9 Dec

**Wild: Kim Jarvis and****Kerry Phippen**

Wed 17 - Tue 23 Dec

## MUSIC

**Charlton Kings Choral Society Rehearsals**

Wednesdays, 7.30pm,  
St Philip and St James, Leckhampton, further info: [ckcsonline.org.uk](http://ckcsonline.org.uk), email: [thesecretary@ckcsonline.org.uk](mailto:thesecretary@ckcsonline.org.uk), tel. 01451 822277

**Cheltenham Choral Society Rehearsals**

Wednesdays, 7.30-9.30pm,  
St Andrew's Church, Montpellier, welcoming new members, see [cheltchoral.org](http://cheltchoral.org) for details



ALY LLOYD - SIXTEENGALLERY.COM

## EVENTS FOR OCTOBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

**Cleeve Harmony A Cappella Chorus Rehearsals**

Wednesdays, 7.30-10pm,  
Bishop's Cleeve Tithe Barn, new members welcome! See [cleeve-harmony.org.uk](http://cleeve-harmony.org.uk) or enquiries to [md@cleeve-harmony.org.uk](mailto:md@cleeve-harmony.org.uk)

**Musica Vera Rehearsals**

Wednesdays, 7.30-9.30pm,  
St Mary's, Prestbury, please email our secretary, Chris Carruthers, at [4chriscrs@gmail.com](mailto:4chriscrs@gmail.com) for further information. See [www.musicavera.org](http://www.musicavera.org)

**Cleeve Chorale Come and Sing: Bach Messiah Highlights**

Sat 11 Oct, 10am, St Michael & All Angels, Bishop's Cleeve, see [cleevechorale.co.uk](http://cleevechorale.co.uk)

**Cantores Chamber Choir: The Flight of Song**

Sat 18 Oct, 4pm, £15, U18s & students £5, Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton, cond. Simon Harper, tickets: [www.cantores.net](http://www.cantores.net)

**Cheltenham Music Society: Takács Quartet**

Tue 21 Oct, 7.30pm, Pittville Pump Room, string quartets by Haydn, Bartók, Schubert and Debussy, [cheltmusicsoc.co.uk](http://cheltmusicsoc.co.uk)

**Cheltenham Philharmonic Orchestra: Light from Darkness**

Sun 16 Nov, 3pm, Princess Hall, Cheltenham Ladies

College, Marking 80 years since the liberation of Auschwitz, Korngold: Violin Concerto with soloist Diana Galvydyte, Zemlinsky: Symphony No.2, Daniel Belinfante: Awakening - A Pastorale. Tickets: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cheltphilorch](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cheltphilorch)

**Cheltenham Music Society: VOCES8**

Thu 20 Nov, 7.30pm, Pittville Pump Room, a wide-ranging programme of choral music from the Renaissance to the present, [cheltmusicsoc.co.uk](http://cheltmusicsoc.co.uk)

**Cheltenham Choral Society: Handel's Messiah**

Sat 22 Nov, St Matthew's Church, with Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra. See [cheltchoral.org](http://cheltchoral.org)

**Cheltenham Bach Choir: Handel and Vivaldi**

Sat 22 Nov, 7.30pm, Tewkesbury Abbey, Vivaldi Gloria, Handel Dixit Dominus, Zadok the Priest and The King Shall Rejoice. Tickets: [ticketsource.co.uk/cheltenham-bach-choir](http://ticketsource.co.uk/cheltenham-bach-choir) or [tickets@cheltbachchoir.com](http://tickets@cheltbachchoir.com) or on the door

**Charlton Kings Choral Society**

Sat 29 Nov, 7.30pm, Holy Apostles Church, Handel:

Coronation Anthem: Let thy hand be strengthened, Handel: Organ Concerto Op.4 No.6 in Bb, Handel: Acis and Galatea. Hannah Davey, soprano, James Gilchrist, tenor, Joseph Hancock, tenor, Fionn Ó hAlmhain, bass. Feat. Regency Sinfonia and Fiona Brown, organ, cond. John Wright

**Musica Vera: A Season to Sing**

Sat 29 Nov, 7.30pm, St Mary's, Prestbury, a new choral re-imagining of Vivaldi's Four Seasons in its 300th anniversary by RSCM composer Joanna Forbes L'Estrange. See [www.musicavera.org](http://www.musicavera.org)

**Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts**

entries open from 1st December and close on 1st February, see [cfpa.org.uk](http://cfpa.org.uk) for details of 2026's centenary festival, or email [info@cfpa.org.uk](mailto:info@cfpa.org.uk) for details of volunteering opportunities

**Cantores Chamber Choir: Celebrating St Nicolas**

Sat 6 Dec, 7pm, £20, U18s & students £5, St Philip and St James, Leckhampton, with Bristol Ensemble, Britten: St Nicolas, Haydn: Missa Sancti Nicolai, with James Gilchrist, cond. Simon

## EVENTS FOR OCTOBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

Harper, tickets:  
www.cantores.net

**Cheltenham Music Society:  
Castalian String Quartet**

Thu 11 Dec, 7.30pm, Pittville Pump Room, Quartets by Haydn, Mendelssohn and Beethoven, cheltmusicsoc.co.uk

**Cleeve Chorale: Christmas Celebration**

Sat 13 Dec, 7.30pm, St Michael & All Angels, Bishop's Cleeve, see cleevechorale.co.uk

**Cheltenham Choral Society: Carols by Candlelight**

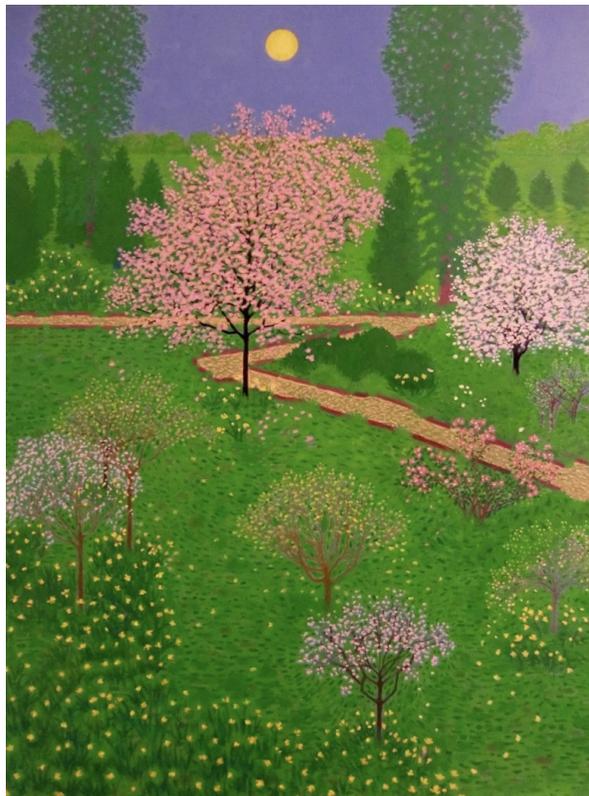
Wed 17 Dec, with The Beauregard Academy and St Mary's Primary School. For details, see cheltchoral.org

**Charlton Kings Choral Society: Carols**

Thu 18 Dec, St Mary's Church, Charlton Kings, Carol concert with Montpellier Brass Ensemble

**Cheltenham Bach Choir: Carols and Christmas Music**

Sat 20 Dec, 6.30pm, Princess Hall, Cheltenham Ladies College, a concert for all the family, with Claire Alsop (organ and piano) and the Beauregard Academy. Tickets: ticketsource.co.uk/cheltenham-bach-choir or tickets@cheltbachchoir.com or on the door



ANGELA SUMMERFIELD

**Cheltenham Music Society: Roderick Williams (baritone) and Christopher Glynn (piano)**

Tue 6 Jan, 7.30pm, Parabola Arts Centre, Cheltenham Ladies College, An English Song Winterreise, cheltmusicsoc.co.uk

**Cheltenham Philharmonic Orchestra: Vive la France!**

Sun 25 Jan, 3pm, Princess Hall, Cheltenham Ladies College, Ravel: Piano Concerto for the Left Hand with soloist Karl Lutchmayer, Saint Saëns: Symphony No.3 "Organ Symphony", Debussy: Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune. Tickets: www.ticketsource.co.uk/cheltphilorch

## STAGE &amp; DANCE

**Promenade Productions Present: Elf the Musical**

Tue 4- Sun 9 Nov, 7pm/2pm, Playhouse, tickets from Playhouse box office or www.promenadeproductions.co.uk

**Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts**

entries open from 1st December and close on 1st February, see cfpa.org.uk for details of 2026's centenary festival, or email info@cfpa.org.uk for details of volunteering opportunities

**Promenade Productions: Rapunzel auditions**

see www.promenadeproductions.co.uk for details of auditions and pre-auditions for February's panto

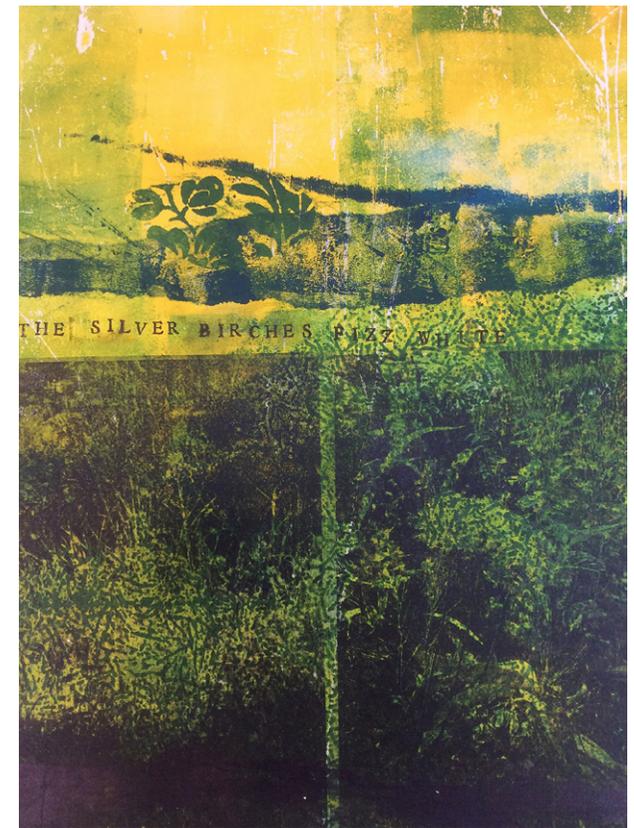
## LECTURES &amp; MEETINGS

**Holst Victorian House: From Bombs to Bellbottoms**

until 1 Nov, to celebrate 50 years since the museum opened its doors to the public in October 1975, this temporary exhibition sees two C.19th spaces turned into C.20th room sets; visitors will gain a fascinating insight into the house's domestic life during the past century

**Cercle Français: Victor Hugo, un homme de convictions**

Mon 6 Oct, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, with Germaine Jones, see cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk



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**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Tue 7 Oct, 10.30am, St Luke's Hall, talk: Funeral Trains: the Cheltenham and Gloucestershire Connections, with Nicholas Wheatley. See cheltlocalhistory.org.uk

**Victorian Book Group: The Ghost Stories of Wilkie Collins**

Mon 13 Oct, 2pm, Holst Victorian House, holstvictorianhouse.org.uk

**The Arts Society Cheltenham: The Art of Marriage in Renaissance Italy**

Tue 14 Oct, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students £4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with Dr Lydia Goodson. This talk looks at weddings and at the lavish array of objects and paintings made to celebrate marriage in Renaissance Italy. See theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk or email info.cheltenham@theartssociety.org

## EVENTS FOR OCTOBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

**Cercle Français: Saint Antoine: l'abbaye au coeur du Dauphiné**

Mon 20 Oct, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall (via Zoom), with Thierry Viennois, see [cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Wed 22 Oct, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, talk: Roger Fenton, mid-19th century photographer, and his visit to Cheltenham, with John White

**Holst Victorian House 50th Birthday**

Sat 25 Oct, 10am-4pm, visit for just 50p, pick an outfit from our vintage dressing up box and party like it's 1975!

**Friends of The Wilson**

Tue 28 Oct, 2pm, members £11, non-members £13, St Matthew's Church, talk: R & A Garrett - House Decorators, with Emma Ferry. Booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)

**Leckhampton Local History Society**

Tue 28 Oct, 7.30pm, members and U18s free, visitors £3, St Peter's Church, Leckhampton, talk: Mr Jenkins's Antediluvian Repository, and other curiosities of 1850s Leckhampton



JENNYWESTBROOK.COM

and Cheltenham, with Christine Whittemore

**Cercle Français: L'épopée Michelin**

Mon 3 Nov, 7.30pm, Zoom to members at home, with Claude Rapport, see [cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**Victorian Book Group: The Yellow Wall-Paper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman**

Mon 10 Nov, 2pm, Holst Victorian House,

[holstvictorianhouse.org.uk](http://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk)

**Friends of The Wilson**

Tue 11 Nov, 2pm, members £11, non-members £13, St Matthew's Church, talk: World War One Poems & Paintings, with Nick Nelson. Booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)



KATH COOPER

**The Arts Society Cheltenham: The Echoing Scream; the Birth of Expressionism**

Tue 11 Nov, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students £4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with Gavin Plumley. Explosive and emotive, the aftershocks of Munch's vision were felt across the world: in art and music, literature, dance and film. See [theartsocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartsocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email [info@theartsociety.cheltenham.org.uk](mailto:info@theartsociety.cheltenham.org.uk)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Wed 19 Nov, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, talk: The Genesis of Cheltenham South Town, with Stuart Manton

**The Arts Society Cheltenham: Day of Special Interest: The Treasures of the Turf**

Thu 20 Nov, 10am-3pm, members £33, non-members £38, to coincide with the autumn race meeting season

at Cheltenham, lecturer Christopher Garibaldi gives some insight into the fine and decorative arts surrounding horses and horseracing. See [theartsocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartsocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email [info@theartsociety.cheltenham.org.uk](mailto:info@theartsociety.cheltenham.org.uk)

## EVENTS FOR OCTOBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

**Leckhampton Local History Society**

Tues 25 Nov, 7.30pm, members and U18s free, visitors £3, St Peter's Church, Leckhampton

talk: What the visitors thought: a light-hearted look at Cheltenham since the 1700s, with Steven Blake

**Holst Victorian House at Christmas**

from 1 Dec, 10am-4pm, enjoy the traditional Christmas decorations around the house

**Cercle Français: Soirée Film**

Mon 1 Dec, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, avec un verre de vin gratuit, see [cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Tue 2 Dec, 10.30am, St Luke's Hall, talk: Origins and Development of the University of Gloucestershire, with Dr Matthew Andrews

**Victorian Book Group: Christmas at Thompson Hall by Anthony Trollope**

Mon 8 Dec, 2pm, Holst Victorian House, [holstvictorianhouse.org.uk](http://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk)

**The Arts Society Cheltenham: Blenheim Palace: Christmas Past and Present**

Tue 9 Dec, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students £4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with Antonia Keaney. This talk looks at how Christmas has been celebrated over the years and how each November, the Palace and its grounds are transformed into a Christmas feast for the eyes. See [theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email info. [cheltenham@theartssociety.org](mailto:cheltenham@theartssociety.org)

**Victorian Family Christmas Day**

Sat 13 Dec, 11am-3pm, Holst Victorian House, Victorian baking and crafts

**Museum by Candlelight**

Sat 20 Dec, 5.30pm, 6pm, 6.30-7.30pm, Holst Victorian House

**The Arts Society Cheltenham: The Art of Laughter**

Tue 13 Dec, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students £4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with Marisa Beekenkamp-Wladimiroff. Seldom did one country produce so many comical paintings as the Netherlands did during the Dutch Golden Age. See

[theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email info. [cheltenham@theartssociety.org](mailto:cheltenham@theartssociety.org)

**Friends of The Wilson**

Tue 20 Jan, 2pm, members £11, non-members £13, St Matthew's Church, talk: The Life and Works of Edward Elgar, with Tim Brain. Booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Wed 21 Jan, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall

talk: Blood, Magic and Power: the murder by witchcraft of William Baynton, with Louise Ryland-Epton

**Leckhampton Local History Society**

Tue 27 Jan, 7.30pm, members and U18s free, visitors £3, St Peter's Church, Leckhampton, talk: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Cotswold Churches, with Kirsty Hartsiotis

## PARROT PRODUCTIONS

## EXCITING NEWS OF ACCESS TO TWO PAST PERFORMANCES

**T**hanks to a grant from the Cheltenham Arts Council, Parrot Productions were able to make a film version of David Elder's play 'The King's Message' and an audio version of Lou Beckett's play 'A Rose by Any Other Name'.

**The King's Message**

The play was first performed in 2023 at Cheltenham Heritage Open Days. A film version of this has now been produced using the local company S.O.S Film / Photography / Sound (see <https://www.sosfilmphotographysound.com/>). It has been included in the programme for Cheltenham Heritage Open Days (12-21 September 2025) and is freely available via the Civic Society website as a digital download. The King's Message takes place against the backdrop of King George III's visit to Cheltenham in 1788 when Colonel Stephen Digby, the Queen's Vice-Chamberlain, and Fanny Burney, diarist and Keeper of the Queen's Robes, are having an affair. However, it is a humbler character, Hannah Forty, a pumper at the spa, who becomes centre stage when she is summoned to the Royal Court to answer questions about why she received a personal letter from the king and what it contains.

Without giving too much away, the main plot of the play then centres around the attempts made by Colonel Stephen Digby, played by Edward Derbyshire, and Fanny Burney, played by Cathie Rolinson, to discover the letter's contents, and why Hannah Forty, played by Marianne Gaston, is so unwilling to divulge this. Inspired by and partly adapted from real events, the play reaches a surprising and amusing climax.

**A Rose by Any Other Name**

The play was performed in 2023 at Cheltenham Heritage Open Days and then in 2024 there was a tour to five locations in the Southwest. The funds from the CAC were used to pay the actors for an audio performance that was shared with The Cotswold Listener and made freely available on all leading podcasts.

The play features a young woman, a literary journalist, who starts to ask questions about the authorship of the Shakespeare plays; she finds herself facing a wave of hostility from her boss, her boyfriend, and a Shakespeare scholar. The play looks at the evidence behind the Shakespeare authorship question and asks whether there are reasonable enough grounds for the question to become a legitimate area of scholarship. And perhaps an even braver question, should it be added to school curricula?

The play culminates in a debate between the literary journalist and the Shakespeare scholar. In an audience vote across five performances, around 80% of the audiences thought the subject should be added to school curricula.

In a further exciting development, 'A Rose by Any Other Name' will be performed this autumn at the White Bear Theatre Pub from 8th - 11th October at the London Fringe. Tickets will become available soon.



THE KING'S MESSAGE, PARROT PRODUCTIONS, EDWARD DERBYSHIRE AND CATHIE ROLINSON DURING FILMING



THE KING'S MESSAGE, PARROT PRODUCTIONS, CATHIE ROLINSON, MARIANNE GASTON AND EDWARD DERBYSHIRE DURING FILMING

## CHELTENHAM BRANCH OF THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY

### TEMPTING IDEAS FOR BOTH SUMMER AND WINTER

**W**hat do Scottish Country Dancers do in the summer? They carry on dancing, of course!

Our dancing year ended with a Garden Dance in the delightful rose gardens at Cerney House on a perfect summer afternoon. Many of our members enjoyed dancing in the open air to recorded music on the lawn, albeit slightly challenged by uneven ground! It was a real treat for the senses – the sight and scent of the gorgeous roses, the sound of joyful music and the delicious cakes for refreshment! It was a wonderful way

to finish the season, doing what we love best and having fun with friends in such beautiful surroundings.

The club is now on its summer break giving our teachers a well-earned rest. However, this does not mean that there is no dancing! A few clubs locally and further afield continue with informal social dancing over the summer and are very happy to welcome members from other clubs. This is a great way to meet new people and to continue to pursue our passion.

For some people this is not enough! There are several Scottish country dancing



holidays at venues both in the UK and abroad. The daytimes are usually free for exploring the local area and each evening there is a full programme of Scottish country dancing accompanied by live musicians. This is an excellent way to get our fix of dancing and discover new places at the same time!

The ultimate in dancing holidays must be the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (RSCDS) Summer School. Every summer the RSCDS gathers at St Andrew's University for four glorious weeks of Scottish country dancing and music. People come from clubs all over the world to spend time enjoying dancing and improving their skills and technique. Every morning there are classes for all abilities, from absolute beginners up to the final level of teacher training – something for everyone! In the afternoons there are optional special interest classes or guests are free to enjoy the delights of St Andrew's, time on the beach maybe or exploring the town. The highlight of each day is a fun and exuberant evening of Scottish country dancing with music played by some of the very talented musicians who are also honing their skills

at the Summer School. Nothing beats the sound of multiple accordions and fiddles, and it's guaranteed to get people dancing! Sometimes this spills over until the 'wee small hours' with impromptu jamming sessions continuing the lively, high-spirited entertainment. The fun and friendship we share during the time here is amazing and people return home with greater enthusiasm and with invitations to visit new friends in far flung places.

As we approach the end of the summer and the nights start to draw in, any sense of sadness is quickly replaced by the anticipation of the new dancing year. We know that our long winter evenings will be brightened up by regular club nights, informal social dances and elegant balls.

Our new term starts on Monday 8th September. We meet in St Lukes church hall in Cheltenham, 7:30-9:30pm. If you are interested and would like to try out Scottish country dancing, you will be made very welcome. We have a designated beginners' class which, judging by the laughter that emanates from the room, is great fun!

**Anne Wyatt**

**More information can be found on our website:**

**[www.rscdscheltenham.org](http://www.rscdscheltenham.org)**

## YOUNG MUSICIAN CONCERTS

### A NEW PROGRAMME FOR THE AUTUMN

Please find listed below the Young Musician Concerts in Pittville Pump Room this autumn, arranged by the Cheltenham Music Festival Society in collaboration with the Cheltenham Trust. The concerts take place on Tuesdays at 1:00pm during school term-times; entry is free, and no tickets are required. There is a retiring collection to help cover the charge from The Cheltenham Trust for the use of the Pump Room and, where applicable, pay travel expenses for some of the individual performers. **Andrew Auster**

23rd September:	Robin Smith (piano)
30th September:	Hilary Cronin (soprano) & Will Mason (piano)
7th October:	Tim Rumsey (piano)
14th October:	Bridget Yee (piano)
4th November:	Solihull School
11th November:	Pate's Grammar School
18th November:	Bournside School
25th November:	Cheltenham College
2nd December:	Ottillie Wallace (violin) & Winnie Chan (piano)

## CHELTENHAM CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

### DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS PLANNED FOR 2026

**C**heltenham Chamber Orchestra will be marking its Diamond Jubilee Year in 2026 with a special concert at Cheltenham Town Hall on Saturday 17th January at 7:30pm.

The conductor will be Toby Purser, and the programme will include Arnold's *Serenade for Small Orchestra*, Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* (soloist George Ewart), and Beethoven's *Symphony No 6*. The concert is being held in memory of Oliver Goldfinch, who was a loyal supporter and friend of the CCO for many years.

The orchestra was founded in 1966 by Laurence Hudson and continues to sustain its reputation for bringing a wide variety of music to its audiences. Four concerts are held each year offering an extensive repertoire together with a high standard of performance and subsidised tickets for young people. As well as working with established artists, the orchestra has a policy of providing a platform for talented young local musicians.



**Details about the CCO can be found on <http://www.cheltenhamchamberorchestra.org.uk> and we can be followed on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/cheltenhamchamberorchestra>**