

**OLDHAM  
CHORAL  
SOCIETY**

**IN THE  
RNCM  
CONCERT  
HALL**

**Sunday,  
11<sup>th</sup>  
November  
2018  
7 p.m.**



Armistice Centenary Concert  
**'On Land and Sea'**

# The Armed Man

A Mass for Peace - Sir Karl Jenkins

Songs of the Fleet -  
Charles Villiers Stanford

Fantasia on British Sea  
Songs  
Sir Henry Wood

**PROGRAMME - £2.00**



# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



On behalf of the Society I welcome you to our 2018/19 season. As this concert has fallen on the 11th day of the 11th month, it is appropriate that we mark the centenary of the Armistice which brought about the end of the Great War; a conflict the scale of whose slaughter even now evokes strong emotion. There is also almost a century separating the choral pieces chosen for this evening, which span the beginning and end of the 20th century. It is hoped these works will pay just tribute to those who have suffered in all conflicts, remind us of war's futility, but leave us feeling uplifted as we leave the concert hall.

This is my first concert as the Society's chairman. It is a great honour to take up this post which has been filled so ably and successfully by our retiring chairman Fred Jones who, along with his wife Margaret has served this Society quietly, faithfully and diligently for many years, Fred being chairman for the last 25 years. We wish them well in their retirement.

Following tradition, we shall be holding our annual Carol Concert on December 21st and we are delighted that Ashton Brass Band will be joining us for this event. Next spring we look forward to performing the Verdi Requiem, a work which has attracted controversial criticism down the years but is now a firm favourite with choirs and audiences alike.

Thank you for your support this evening; we hope to welcome you again through this season of interesting and varied works.

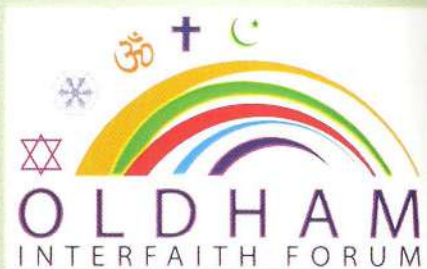
Gerard Marsden

## Oldham Interfaith Forum

### Many Faiths, One Community

Oldham Interfaith Forum upholds the right of each individual to live by his/her faith. We believe that all faith groups have a role to play in providing community cohesion.

Membership is open to faith communities which have a place of worship in Oldham. Currently, faith communities which take up those places are from Christian, Muslim and Hindu backgrounds. Members from other faiths who do not have a recognised place of worship in Oldham can be co-opted onto the Forum committee.



Visit our website: <http://oldhaminterfaith.org.uk>

Contact us: Tel: 0161 624 6733 Email: [oldham\\_interfaith@msn.com](mailto:oldham_interfaith@msn.com)



on Tuesday 4th December 2018 at 6.30 pm

at the Queen Elizabeth Hall,  
Oldham Civic Centre

Free entry by booking in advance at  
<http://oldhaminterfaith.org.uk/news>.



# OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY

with

**The East Lancs Sinfonia**

Leader: Sally Robinson

**Conductor: Nigel P. Wilkinson**

**Armistice Centenary Concert**

**“On Land and Sea”**

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**Sunday 11th November 2018**

**Royal Northern College of Music**

**Concert Hall**

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**Soloist: Dean Robinson (Bass-Baritone)**

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**Muezzin: Hafiz Mizan**

**on behalf of the Oldham Interfaith Forum**

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*THE ARMED MAN: a Mass for Peace*

*by Sir Karl Jenkins*

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*THE SONGS OF THE FLEET*

*by Sir Charles Villiers Stanford*

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*FANTASIA ON BRITISH SEA SONGS*

*by Sir Henry Wood*

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A full list of items can be found on the centre pages of this programme

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are set to silent mode or switched off**

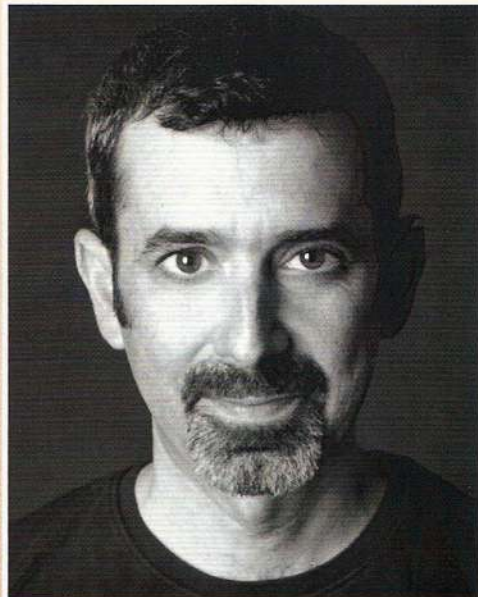


# DEAN ROBINSON

## Bass/baritone

The Australian bass Dean Robinson studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. He was awarded the Robin Kaye prize for Opera and was a recipient of several major scholarships from the Peter Moores Foundation.

Since graduating in 1993 he has appeared as principal guest artist with The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, English National Opera, Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Opera North and The Netherlands Opera. Festival appearances include The Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, Garsington Festival Opera and Pinchgut Opera (Sydney). His repertoire includes Figaro, Don Giovanni, Sarastro, Sparafucile, Zachariah (Nabucco), Colline, Claudio (Aгриppina) and Il Re (Ariodante).



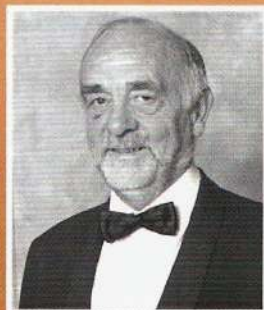
He has a diverse concert repertoire covering Bach, Handel, Mozart, Verdi, Berlioz, Elgar and Mendelssohn. He has sung under the direction of many distinguished conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Bernard Haitink, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Colin Davis, Leonard Slatkin, Kent Nagano, Antonio Pappano, Sir Colin Davis and Sir Richard Armstrong. He has recorded regularly for Chandos and Opera Rara, and on film he sings the role of First Officer in John Adams' The Death of Klinghoffer, and Goffredo in Judith Wiers' Armida.

Now a full-time member of the Opera North chorus Dean regularly sings principal roles with the company, most recently Count Ribbing (Un Ballo in Maschera), First Nazarene (Salome) and Kromov (The Merry Widow).



# FRED JONES

The society would like to place on record its sincere appreciation of Fred Jones, who has recently retired from the position of Choir Chairman after 25 years of dedicated service to the role, and 43 years as a chorister. During his time in office the choir enjoyed a period of steady expansion and improvement, and grew to be one of the largest and most successful choirs in the region. His total commitment and tireless work made a significant contribution to our development, and our current high standing.



We send our best wishes both to him and his wife Margaret who gave him unstinting support throughout this time, and we wish them good health and many more years of rewarding shared singing experiences freed from the burdens and responsibilities of office.

Thank you Fred & Margaret

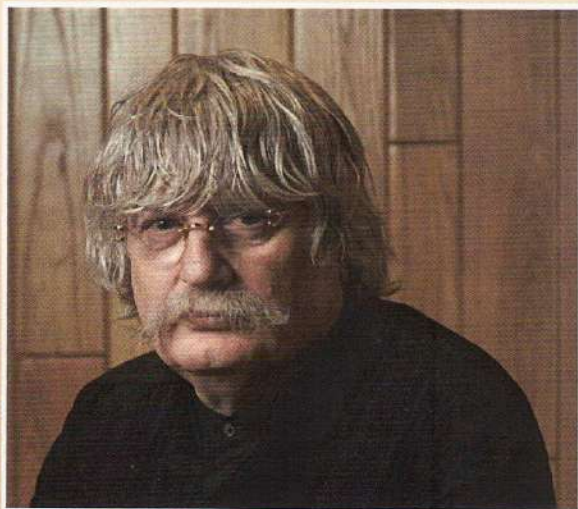


# SIR KARL JENKINS

## THE ARMED MAN (A Mass for Peace)

Karl Jenkins was born and grew up on the Gower Peninsula, the son of a local organist and choirmaster. He studied music at Cardiff University and then at the Royal Academy of Music. Originally an oboist, he took to the saxophone and established himself early on as a jazz musician. He then introduced the oboe as a jazz instrument.

As a composer he manages to combine very different styles of music from classical to pop and to draw on different cultures from around the globe. His *Adiemus: Songs of Sanctuary* (1994) topped the classical album charts.



*The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* was commissioned by the Royal Armouries to mark the transition from one millennium to another. It reflects on the passing of 'the most war-torn and destructive century in human history' and looks forward in hope to a more peaceful future. *The Armed Man* is dedicated to the victims of the Kosovo conflict, whose tragedy was unfolding as it was being composed. It was first performed in 2000 by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the National Youth Choir of Great Britain, conducted by Jenkins himself.

The texts were chosen jointly by the composer and the then Master of the Royal Armouries, Guy Wilson. A framework for the work is provided by the traditional Catholic Mass and includes settings of the *Kyrie*, *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei* and *Benedictus*, some of which have become popular self-standing pieces to be heard, for instance, on ClassicFM. But what makes the work distinctive are the lyrics drawn from many parts of the world and from diverse religions and cultures. The music too is cosmopolitan in its inspiration.

### THE ARMED MAN: A Mass for Peace

#### 1 The Armed Man (L'Homme Armé)

The '*Mass for Peace*' is introduced by a marching drumbeat and the tune of a French folk song (based on a 15th-century original) played on the flute / piccolo. The choir sing the folk song, which celebrates the man of arms: the armed man is to be feared, let every man arm himself with a coat of steel.

*L'homme armé doit on douter,  
On a fait partout crier  
Que chacun se viegne armer  
D'un haubregon de fer*



The Armed Man must be feared:  
Everywhere it has been decreed  
That every man should arm himself  
With an iron coat of mail



## 2 Call to Prayers (Adhaan)

A traditional Muslim *Adhaan* is sung in Arabic by a *muezzin* from the minaret of a mosque. The call to prayers is preceded by the declarations of faith.

*Allahu Akbar*  
*Ashadu an la illa-l-lah*  
*Ashadu anna Muhammadan Rasulu-l-lah*  
*Hayya ala-s-Salah, hayya ala-l-Falah*  
*Allahu Akbar, la illaha il la-lah*

Allah is the greatest  
I bear witness that there is no other god but Allah  
I bear witness that Muhammed is the messenger of  
Allah  
Rise up for prayer, rise up for Salvation  
Allah is the greatest, there is no god but Allah

## 3 Kyrie

The *Kyrie eleison* (Greek for Lord have mercy on us) is usually the opening part of a mass. After a solemn orchestral introduction, the sopranos lead with the main theme in 3/4 time and the choir take this up in turn. The *Christe eleison* (Christ have mercy on us) that follows is an episode in a quite different style – a piece of Renaissance polyphony marked, for the learned, 'after Palestrina'. The choir then returns to the *Kyrie eleison*, which we hear again with some musical variation.

## 4 Save Me from Bloody Men

The words are taken from Psalms 56 and 59. It is sung by the basses and tenors of the choir 'a *cappella* (unaccompanied) in the style of a Gregorian Chant'. The Psalmist calls on God to be merciful and deliver him from his enemies. The final phrase, however, is interrupted by the sudden fateful beat of a drum that dispels any feeling that all will be well.

*Be merciful unto me, O God:*  
*For man would swallow me up.*  
*He fighting daily oppresses me.*  
*Mine enemies would daily swallow me up:*  
*For they be many that fight against me.*

*Oh thou most high,*  
*Defend me from them that rise up against me,*  
*Deliver me from the workers of iniquity,*  
*And save me from bloody men.*

## 5 Sanctus

The sense of foreboding is continued into this setting of what is traditionally one of the joyful sections of the Latin Mass. Percussion and brass combine to give a sense of military build-up, quite subverting the choir's hopeful chanting of the traditional words.

*Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus,*  
*Dominus, Deus, Sabaoth,*  
*Pleni sunt caeli et terra, gloria tua.*  
*Hosanna in excelsis!*

Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God of Hosts,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest!



Rudyard Kipling

## 6 Hymn Before Action

By now the people are bracing themselves for war and, in the words of Rudyard Kipling, the soldiers prepare for the ultimate sacrifice:

*The earth is full of anger,*  
*The seas are dark with wrath,*  
*The Nations in their harness*  
*Go up against our path.*

*High lust and froward bearing,*  
*Proud heart rebellious brow,*  
*Deaf ear and soul uncaring,*  
*We seek Thy mercy now!*

*Ere yet we loose the legions.*  
*Ere yet we draw the blade,*  
*Jehova of the Thunders,*  
*Lord God of Battles aid!*

*The sinner that forswore Thee,*  
*The fool that passed Thee by,*  
*Our times are known before Thee,*  
*Lord grant us strength to die!*



## 7 Charge!

Trumpets and drums stir up martial feelings. Most of the text is a stanza from John Dryden's *Ode for St Cecilia's Day* but this is interrupted in the middle by the words 'How blest is he who for his country dies'. These words are a loose translation of the much-quoted patriotic sentiment of the Roman poet Horace: *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. During the First World War these words became a sort of motto, referred to by the anti-war poet Wilfred Owen as 'the old lie'.

*The trumpet's loud clangour excites us to arms.  
With shrill notes of anger and mortal alarms.  
How blest is he who for his country dies.*

*The double double beat of the thundering drum  
Cries Hark! The foes come.  
Charge, 'tis too late, too late to retreat*

These words are sung as three verses (the second being repeated) by the whole choir, interspersed by 'the old lie', sung by the sopranos and altos, who seem to be inciting the men to fight. Screams are heard at the end as battle is engaged.

**After a period of silence the Last Post is sounded.**

## 8 Angry Flames

This is a setting of words by the Japanese poet Toge Sankichi, reflecting on the effects of the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima on 6th August 1945. Introduced by the tolling of bells and marked *Lacrimoso*, this movement, is mournful in mood.

*Pushing up through smoke from a world half darkened by overhanging cloud  
The shroud that mushroomed out and struck the dome of the sky.  
Black, red, blue, dance in the air, merge, scatter.  
Glittering sparks already tower over the whole city,  
Quivering like seaweed the mass of flames spurts forward.*

*Popping up in the dense smoke, crawling out, wreathed in fire, countless human beings on all fours,  
In a heap of embers that erupt and subside, hair rent, rigid in death. There smoulders a curse.*

## 9 Torches

This is a setting of part of the Hindu epic the *Mahabharata* in which the fate of animals caught in the conflagration is described:

*The animals scattered in all directions screaming terrible screams,  
Many were burning, others were burnt.  
All were shattered and scattered mindlessly, their eyes bulging.  
Some hugged their sons, others their fathers and mothers, unable to let them go.  
And so they died.  
Others leapt up in their thousands, faces disfigured and were consumed by the fire.  
Everywhere were bodies squirming on the ground, wings, eyes and paws all burning.  
They breathed their last as living torches.*

## 10 Agnus Dei



After the traumas of war this movement brings the hope of peace. It is a beautiful setting of part of the Latin Mass:

*Agnus Dei,  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
Miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei,  
Qui tollis peccata mundi,  
Dona nobis pacem.*

*Lamb of God,  
Who takes away the sins of the world,  
Have mercy upon us.  
Lamb of God,  
Who takes away the sins of the world,  
Grant us peace.*



## 11 Now the Guns have Stopped

A lonely survivor mourns the death of a friend in the battle. The words were written by Guy Wilson.

*Silent, so silent, now, now the guns have stopped.  
I have survived all, I who knew I would not.  
But now you are not here. I shall go home, alone;  
And must try to live life as before and hide my grief.  
For you, my dearest friend, who should be with me now,  
Not cold, too soon, and in your grave, alone.*



## 12 Benedictus

This movement is introduced by a serenely beautiful cello solo. The tune is taken up by the choir to words from the Latin Mass: Peace leads to rejoicing but after an explosive 'Hosanna' the mood of serenity returns.

*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.*

Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.  
Glory be to God on high.

## 13 Better is Peace

The substantial final movement begins by returning to the music from the beginning adjusted for words expressing a totally different sentiment, taken from Thomas Malory

*Better is peace than always war, always war,  
And better is peace than evermore war.  
And better and better is peace.*

The choir then returns to the words of the first movement presented as a short fugue before offering *Better is peace* in a slightly different form.

*L'homme armé doit on douter  
Better is peace than always war, always war,  
And better is peace than evermore war, and better and better is peace*

This leads by an orchestral interlude to the Millennium music set to the words of Tennyson's new year poem.

*Ring, ring, ring, ring!  
Ring out the thousand wars of old.  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.  
Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring happy bells across the snow.  
The year is going, let him go.  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.  
Ring out old shapes of foul disease.  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold.*

*Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.  
Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand.  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.  
The year is going; let him go.  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.  
Ring, ring, ring, ring!*

The Mass for Peace ends, however, on a higher plane with a hymn using words from the Book of Revelation. The brass and percussion are suddenly silent and the hymn is sung unaccompanied.

*God shall wipe away all tears and there shall be no more death,  
Neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be anymore pain. Praise the Lord.*

Notes by Stuart Brown (adapted by NW)



# Sir Charles Villiers Stanford

Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924) was one of the leading musicians of his generation and had a profound effect on the development and history of English music as a performer, conductor, composer, teacher and writer.

Born in Dublin to an Anglo-Irish musical family, his musical gifts were recognized early. He studied piano and violin privately and subsequently the organ with Robert Prescott Stewart at Christchurch and St. Patrick's Cathedrals in Dublin. Stanford entered Queen's College Cambridge in 1870 as both an organ and classics scholar. While still an undergraduate he became Assistant Conductor of the Cambridge University Music Society and held the position of Conductor from 1875 to 1893. He became organist at Trinity College Cambridge in 1873 and subsequently studied composition in Leipzig and Berlin.



He was appointed Professor of Composition at the Royal College of Music in London in 1883 (a position that he held for more than forty years) and Professor of Music at Cambridge in 1888. As a teacher Stanford was sceptical about "modernism", and based his instruction on classical principles as exemplified by the great German masters, notably Brahms. He subsequently held appointments as Conductor of the Bach Choir in London, The Leeds Philharmonic Society and The Leeds Festival.

Stanford was a prolific composer, completing seven symphonies, eight string quartets, nine operas, more than 300 songs, 30 large scale choral works and a large body of chamber music. He also composed a substantial number of works for the organ, as well as anthems and settings of the Canticles for the Anglican church. He wrote extensively on music including three volumes of memoirs.

Today Stanford is largely remembered for his songs and religious music as well as his influence on several generations of composition students at the Royal College of Music. These included Sir Arthur Bliss, Frank Bridge, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Rebecca Clarke, Ivor Gurney, Gustav Holst, Herbert Howells, John Ireland, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Charles Wood.

There has been a significant revival of interest in Stanford's music over the past three decades and an increasing number of his works are now available in recordings.

Stanford was knighted in 1902 and in 1904 he became the first British composer to be elected a member of the Royal Academy of Arts in Berlin. His ashes are interred near Henry Purcell in Westminster Abbey.



# SONGS OF THE FLEET

Seafaring and the fearless constancy and bravery of the Royal Navy clearly stirred Stanford's emotions, and inspired him to compose two distinguished sets of sea songs during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to an earlier setting of Tennyson's *The Revenge – a ballad of the Fleet* (for the 1886 Leeds Festival), his *Songs of the Sea* (1904), also premiered at Leeds, is a cycle of five songs for baritone, male voice chorus, and orchestra, to poems by Henry Newbolt. As first performed by the renowned British baritone Harry Plunket-Green, the cycle enjoyed great success and was widely performed throughout the country. According to music critic Geoffrey Crankshaw:

*"Newbolt was particularly drawn to England's naval traditions and to the lure of the sea in general. His imagery was uncomplicated and his language bracing - just the right material for Stanford's down-to-earth honesty of vision .....*

*"Some general features of [Stanford's] style are readily grasped: for instance, he favoured swift forward movement; rhetoric is present, but never overdone. Then, too, his harmonies are lucid - some might say unadventurous, but they are always pertinent to the immediate task of underpinning a key-point in the text. Melodic lines are clean-cut, and the accompaniments are functional and airy in texture."*

When commissioned to write something for the Jubilee Congress of Naval Architects in 1910, Stanford happily determined to write a companion cycle of nautical songs also based on Newbolt, under the title *Songs of the Fleet*. The death of Edward VII caused the postponement of the Congress, so, being impatient, Stanford programmed them for the 1910 Leeds Festival, where Plunket-Green was again the soloist. Deliberately intended to complement the earlier cycle, Stanford reversed the scheme of its prequel by having three reflective songs interspersed by two lively ones. The consequence of this is to give the cycle a more solemn, introspective and reflective demeanour rather than the spirited energy and patriotic fervour of the earlier cycle.

The set opens with an impressive vision of the "waking" of the Dreadnought battleships, and at its centre we have a nocturnal depiction of the motionless fleet in "*The Middle Watch*", but it is the final song - "*Fare Wwell*" that serves as an apotheosis and funeral oration to both sets of songs. Unsurprisingly this song resonated with the British public during the war that followed as they stoically tried to come to terms with the sombre news of relentless Naval losses. The two vigorous songs that separate them are more in the spirit of the earlier cycle.

Stanford himself was sufficiently moved by this final song to rearrange it for piano in memory of Lord Kitchener following his death in 1916. ("*Farewell: In Memoriam K of K.*")





## 1 Sailing at dawn

One by one the pale stars die before the day now,  
One by one the great ships are stirring from their sleep,  
Cables all are rumbling, anchors all a-weigh now,  
Now the fleet's a fleet again, gliding towards the deep.

*Now the fleet's a fleet again, bound upon the old ways,  
Splendour of the past comes shining in the spray;  
Admirals of old time, bring us on the bold ways!  
Souls of all the sea-dogs, lead the line to-day!*

Far away behind us town and tower are dwindling,  
Home becomes a fair dream faded long ago;  
Infinitely glorious the height of heaven is kindling,  
Infinitely desolate the shoreless sea below.

*Now the fleet's a fleet again, bound upon the old ways...*

Once again with proud hearts we make the old surrender,  
Once again with high hearts serve the age to be,  
Not for us the warm life of Earth, secure and tender,  
Ours the eternal wandering and warfare of the sea.

*Now the fleet's a fleet again, bound upon the old ways...*

## 2 The song of the sou'wester

The sun was lost in a leaden sky,  
And the shore lay under our lee;  
When a great Sou' Wester hurricane high  
Came rollicking up the sea.  
He played with the fleet as a boy with boats  
Till out for the Downs we ran,  
And he laugh'd  
with the roar of a thousand throats  
At the militant ways of man:

*Oh! I am the enemy most of might,  
The other be who you please!  
Gunner and guns may all be right,  
Flags a-flying and armour tight,  
But I am the fellow you've first to fight --  
The giant that swings the seas.*

A dozen of middies were down below  
Chasing the X they love,  
While the table curtseyed long and slow  
And the lamps were giddy above.  
The lesson was all of a ship and a shot,  
And some of it may have been true,  
But the word they heard and never forgot  
Was the word of the wind that blew:



*Oh! I am the enemy most of might...*

The Middy with luck is a Captain soon,  
With luck he may hear one day  
His own big guns a-humming the tune  
"Twas in Trafalgar's Bay."  
But wherever he goes, with friends or foes,  
And whatever may there befall,  
He'll hear for ever a voice he knows  
For ever defying them all:

*Oh! I am the enemy most of might  
The other be who you please!  
Gunner and guns may all be right,  
Flags a-flying and armour tight,  
But I am the fellow you've first to fight --  
The giant that swings the seas....*



# Armistice Centenary Concert

*Part One*

## *THE ARMED MAN* *A Mass for Peace* *Sir Karl Jenkins*

*L'homme armé ('The Armed Man')*

*The Call to Prayers*

*Kyrie eleison ('Lord have mercy')*

*Save me from bloody men*

*Sanctus ('Holy, Holy, Holy')*

*Hymn before action*

*Charge!*

*Angry flames*

*Torches*

*Agnus Dei ('Lamb of God')*

*Now the guns have stopped*

*Benedictus ('Blessed is he ...')*

*Better is peace*



*There will be an interval of 20 minutes  
after Part One*



# "On Land and Sea"

*Part Two*

## *THE SONGS OF THE FLEET* *Sir Charles Villiers Stanford*

*Sailing at Dawn*  
*Song of the Sou'wester*  
*The Middle Watch*  
*The Little Admiral*  
*Farewell*

## *FANTASIA ON* *BRITISH SEA SONGS* *Sir Henry Wood*

*Bugle Calls*  
*The Saucy Arethusa*  
Euphonium solo: Howard Lorriman  
*Tom Bowling*  
Cello solo: Claire Babington  
*Jack the Lad (Hornpipe)*  
Violin solo: Sally Robinson    Flute solo: Christine Lorriman  
*Home Sweet Home*  
Oboe solo: Jonathan Tobutt  
*Farewell and Adieu, ye Spanish Ladies*  
*See the conquering hero comes*  
*Rule Britannia!*



### 3 The middle watch

In a blue dusk the ship astern  
Uplifts her slender spars,  
With golden lights that seem to burn  
Among the silver stars.  
Like fleets along a cloudy shore  
The constellations creep,  
Like planets on the ocean floor  
Our silent course we keep.

*And over the endless plain,  
Out of the night forlorn  
Rises a faint refrain,  
A song of the day to be born --  
Watch, oh watch till ye find again  
Life and the land of morn.*

From a dim West to a dark East  
Our lines unwavering head,  
As if their motion long had ceased  
And Time itself were dead.  
Vainly we watch the deep below,  
Vainly the void above,  
They died a thousand years ago --  
Life and the land we love.

*But over the endless plain,  
Out of the night forlorn  
Rises a faint refrain,  
A song of the day to be born --  
Watch, oh watch till ye find again  
Life and the land of morn*

### 4 The little admiral

Stand by to reckon up your battleships --  
Ten, twenty, thirty, there they go.  
Brag about your cruisers like Leviathans --  
A thousand men a-piece down below.  
But here's just one little Admiral --  
We're all of us his brothers and his sons,  
And he's worth, O he's worth at the very least  
Double all your tons and all your guns.

*Stand by to reckon up your battleships...  
Ten, twenty, thirty, there they go.  
Brag about your cruisers like Leviathans --  
A thousand men a-piece down below.*

See them on the forebridge signalling --  
A score of men a-hauling hand to hand,  
And the whole fleet flying like the wild geese  
Moved by some mysterious command.  
Where's the mighty will that shows the way to  
them,

The mind that sees ahead so quick and clear?  
He's there, Sir, walking all alone there --  
The little man whose voice you never hear

*Stand by to reckon up your battleships..*

There are queer things that only come to  
sailormen;  
They're true, but they're never understood;  
And I know one thing about the Admiral,  
That I can't tell rightly as I should..



I've been with him when hope sank under us --  
He hardly seemed a mortal like the rest,  
I could swear that he had stars upon his uniform,  
And one sleeve pinned across his breast.

*Stand by to reckon up your battleships...*

Some day we're bound to sight the enemy,  
He's coming, tho' he hasn't yet a name.  
Keel to keel and gun to gun he'll challenge us  
To meet him at the Great Armada game.  
None knows what may be the end of it,  
But we'll all give our bodies and our souls  
To see the little Admiral a-playing him  
A rubber of the old Long Bowls!

*Stand by to reckon up your battleships...*



Farewell, farewell, farewell.  
Mother, with unbowed head  
Hear thou across the sea  
The farewell of the dead,  
The dead who died for thee.

Greet them again with tender words and grave,  
For, saving thee, themselves they could not save.

To keep the house unharmed  
Their fathers built so fair,  
Deeming endurance armed  
Better than brute despair,  
They found the secret of the word that saith,  
"Service is sweet, for all true life is death."

So greet thou well thy dead  
Across the homeless sea,  
And be thou comforted  
Because they died for thee.  
Far off they served, but now their deed is done  
For evermore their life and thine are one.



### **If you would like to sing with the choir**

please contact: Ray Smith on 07784 358 799

Rehearsals are held every Monday evening at Chadderton Town Hall

- ◇ We aim to sing and promote quality choral music
- ◇ With first-class soloists and professional orchestral accompaniment
- ◇ Low annual membership fee
- ◇ We are a very friendly and sociable organisation

For all the latest news and gossip about Oldham Choral Society

please visit our **FACEBOOK** page: Oldham Choral Society

If you have enjoyed our concert why not leave feedback?

You can also make suggestions for future concerts.





# “THE WAR TO END ALL WARS”

- **World War 1 began on July 28, 1914.** It lasted four years, three months and 14 days.
- **Tension had been building between nations in Europe for over a decade**, but the incident that finally led to the outbreak of war was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, by a Serb in Sarajevo.
- **All the main powers of Europe were dragged into war** because of a series of alliances and treaties that their leaders had signed up to.
- **There were therefore two sides in the war:** *The Central Powers*: Germany and Austria-Hungary, and *The Triple Entente* (also known as *The Allies*): Britain, France, Ireland and Russia.
- **Italy originally sided with the Central Powers.** They were part of a *Triple Alliance* with Germany and Austria-Hungary but they did not initially enter the war because their alliance was supposed to be defensive.
- **Later, Italy joined WW1 on the side of the Triple Entente.** They declared war on Austria-Hungary in May, 1915 and Germany in August, 1916.
- **America was not keen to join in the carnage**, but finally joined the conflict on April 6, 1917, following the sinking of British passenger ship *Lusitania* by a German submarine. 1,195 passengers drowned including 128 Americans, and this finally turned American public opinion against the Germans. The U.S.A. were therefore only in combat for 7 months. During this time, around 116,000 American soldiers were killed and 204,000 were injured.
- **In total a staggering 65 million soldiers were mobilized during the war.**
- **A battlefield explosion in France was heard in England.** The majority of WW1 was fought in muddy trenches but one group of miners dug underground tunnels to detonate mines behind enemy trenches. One mine, in Messines Ridge in Belgium, detonated 900,000lbs of explosives and completely destroyed the German front line. This explosion was so loud and so powerful that the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, heard it all the way back in Downing Street, London - 140 miles away.
- **Chemical weapons were first used in WW1.** The Germans were the first to use lethal gases when they used a chlorine gas attack. Later they also developed and used the most effective gas of the First World War - mustard gas. The British were shocked at the German use of poison gas, but developed their own gas warfare to retaliate.



Over 8 million soldiers died in World War 1, and another 21 million were injured.

The biggest losses were experienced at:

Passchendaele (848,614),  
Verdun (976,000)

The Somme (1,219,201),  
The Spring Offensive of 1918  
(1,539,715)

The Hundred Days Offensive  
[also 1918] (1,855,369)



This was described as "The war to end all wars". In the 100 years that have followed it is estimated that around 180 million people have died in wars – or as a consequence of them.



- The youngest British soldier was just 12 years old. A boy called Sidney Lewis lied about his age so that he could join the war and fight for his country. He was one of 250,000 underage soldiers who lied so that they could enlist.
- Over 12 million letters were posted to the front line every week. A special mail office was built in Regent's Park, and it took only 2 days for a letter to be delivered to the trenches - even during the war. Over 2 billion letters and 114 million parcels had been sent by the time the war ended.
- In 1918 German citizens began striking and demonstrating against the war. They were starving and the economy was collapsing because of the Naval blockade of their ports. Mass protests broke out following the example of Russia, where the 1917 revolution had overthrown Tsar Nicholas II.
- German Kaiser, Wilhelm II stepped down on November 9, 1918. The leaders of both sides of the war met at Compiègne, France and the Armistice was signed in a railway carriage.
- The Armistice on November 11, 1918 ended the fighting, but it took another six months to negotiate peace before the *Treaty of Versailles* was signed on June 28th 1919.
- Under the terms of the treaty Germany had to accept full responsibility for causing the war, had to surrender some of its lands and colonies, and to limit the size of its military. They were also ordered to pay huge reparations, which severely limited their prospects for economic recovery and ultimately paved the way for Nazism. A *League of Nations* was also formed to prevent future wars.
- Blood banks were first used in WW1. U.S. Army doctor Captain Oswald Johnson established a blood bank on the Western Front in 1917. Blood was kept on ice for up to 28 days using sodium citrate to prevent it from coagulating and becoming unusable.
- Plastic surgery was invented because of the First World War. Surgeon Harold Gillies helped shrapnel victims who had terrible facial injuries with one of the earliest examples of plastic surgery. The techniques used by Dr Gillies pioneered the techniques for facial reconstructive surgery.
- Journalists were banned from reporting because the British Government wanted to control and censor the grim news from the trenches. Despite the threat of the death penalty, a handful of journalists defied the authorities to describe the horrific conditions faced by the soldiers.



# Sir Henry Wood and FANTASIA ON BRITISH SEA SONGS

Sir Henry Joseph Wood CH was an English conductor best known for his association with London's annual series of promenade concerts, known as the Proms. He conducted them for nearly half a century, introducing hundreds of new works to British audiences. After his death the concerts were officially renamed in his honour as the "Henry Wood Promenade Concerts", although nowadays they are generally referred to as the BBC Proms.

He composed the Fantasia on British Sea Songs, (the work for which he is most celebrated), in 1905 for a concert celebrating the centenary of the Battle of Trafalgar. It caught the public imagination immediately, with its mixture of sea-shanties, together with Handel's "See the Conquering Hero Comes" and Arne's "Rule, Britannia!". He personally conducted it at the Proms more than forty times, and it eventually became a fixture at the "Last Night of the Proms". A highlight of the Fantasia is the hornpipe "Jack's the Lad". Wood said of it:

*"They stamp their feet in time to the hornpipe – that is until I whip up the orchestra to a fierce accelerando which leaves behind all those whose stamping technique is not of the very finest quality. I like to win by two bars, if possible; but sometimes have to be content with a bar and a half. It is good fun, and I enjoy it as much as they."*

Wood was born on March 3rd 1869 in modest circumstances to parents who encouraged his musical talent and started his career as an organist. During his studies at the Royal Academy of Music he came under the influence of the famous voice teacher Manuel Garcia and became his accompanist. After similar work for Richard D'Oyly Carte's opera companies on the works of Arthur Sullivan and others, Wood became the conductor of a small operatic touring company. He was soon engaged by the larger Carl Rosa Opera Company. One notable event in his career was conducting the British premiere in 1892 of Tchaikovsky's opera Eugene Onegin.

From the mid-1890s until his death, Wood focused on concert conducting. He was engaged by the impresario Robert Newman to conduct a series of promenade concerts at the Queen's Hall, offering a mixture of classical and popular music at low prices. The series was successful, and Wood conducted annual promenade series until his death on August 19th 1944. By the 1920s, Wood had steered the repertoire entirely towards classical music. When the Queen's Hall was destroyed by bombing in 1941, the Proms moved to the Royal Albert Hall.

During his lifetime Sir Henry Wood declined the chief conductorships of the New York Philharmonic and Boston Symphony Orchestras, believing it to be his duty to serve music in the United Kingdom. He was remarkably successful in this and had an enormous influence on the musical life of Britain, greatly improving access to classical music, raising the standard of orchestral playing and nurturing the taste of the public, presenting a vast repertoire of music spanning four centuries.





## See the Conqu'ring Hero Comes

*See the conqu'ring hero comes.  
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums  
Sports prepare, the laurel bring,  
Songs of triumph to him sing.  
See the conqu'ring hero comes  
Sound the trumpets beat the drums*



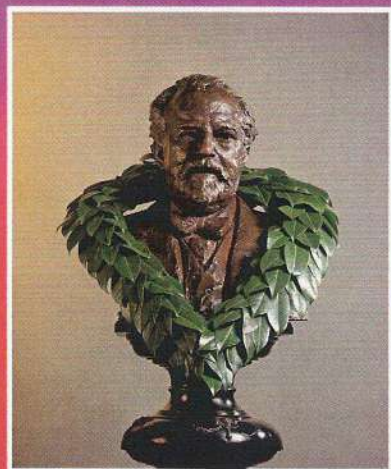
## Rule, Britannia!

*When Britain first, at heaven's command,  
Arose, arose, arose from out the azure main,  
This was the charter, the charter of the land,  
And Guardian Angels sang this strain:*

*Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!  
Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.*

*The nations not so blest as thee  
Must, in their turn, to tyrants fall,  
While thou shalt flourish,  
Shalt flourish great and free;  
The dread and envy of them all.*

*Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!  
Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.*



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Music Director : Nigel P Wilkinson

Conductor Emeritus : John Bethell MBE

Concert Manager : Gerard Marsden

Ticket Secretary : Eileen Scott

Patrons' Secretary : Sylvia Andrew

Webmaster : Tricia Golden

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Eva Dale

Margaret Hood

Fred Jones

Alan Mellor

Nancy Murphy

Peter Quan

Eric Youd



# OLDHAM CHORAL SOCIETY 2018

\*\* = 50 years service

§ = 30 years service

+ = 20 years service

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Christine Birks<sup>+</sup>  
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Brenda Buckley<sup>§</sup>  
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Lynn Cotton  
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Andrew Summers



# JEFFREY LAWTON (1938 – 2018)

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the sudden death of our Patron Jeffrey Lawton on the eve of our previous concert "The Dream of Gerontius"

Amongst many things, Jeff was a great Gerontius, and sang his "official" farewell concert for us in that role back in 2003. It was therefore a particularly poignant occasion for many of us that evening.

Moving into the professional world of opera later in life than the average singer, (after he had been made redundant from his job with a catalogue company!), Jeff became one of the most sought after tenors in the world in his specific field, and sang in the major houses in every continent of the world. He was particularly in demand for his Tristan - a role that very few singers can take on due to its extreme demands on both stamina and technique; and was one of only two British tenors to sing the epic role of Siegfried in a complete "Ring Cycle" at Covent Garden. (The other being Alberto Remedios).



When he stood in at the Royal Opera for Placido Domingo as Otello - at quite short notice -, it hit the headlines, and he was even invited to be a guest on "Wogan" - which was massive at the time.

He later became a respected member of staff here at the RNCM and an ambassador for Welsh National Opera, (with whom he had started his professional career in the chorus and in small roles), but at heart he was always an "Oldham-er", a fan of the "Latics" and a family man.

Jeff was a great Lancastrian who had a great career, and - significantly - played a full role in the renaissance of this choir over the past 20 years. He rarely missed a concert and always passed on criticism and praise in equal measure, but he was proud to be Patron of the choir, and always keen to encourage and promote us.

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## PATRONS 2018

*We are grateful to the following patrons for financially supporting our work.*

*Please consider becoming a patron. There is no minimum donation.*

*For further details please contact Mrs Sylvia Andrew on 0161 626 4032.*

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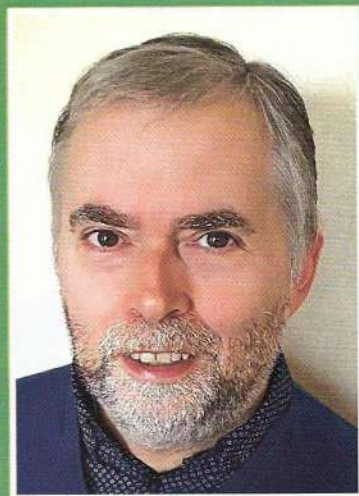


# NIGEL WILKINSON

## Musical Director

Nigel completed 20 years as the choir's Music Director and Principal Conductor earlier this year, so this concert opens his 21st season with us.

During his period of tenure the choir has developed significantly, with numbers increasing significantly in all parts, and standards improving. He has also been instrumental in helping to bring top international soloists to sing with the choir, the quality of which have made OCS the envy of many other choirs. He has also been responsible for engaging the East Lancs Sinfonia as our guest orchestra, an orchestral ensemble that he formed almost 20 years ago, to accompany choral concerts and similar events, and they have become our regular partners in performances over the years.



Burnley-born Nigel was educated at Nelson Grammar School, Manchester University and the RNCM, where he studied for 3 years with the legendary vocal coach Paddy McGuigan.

Whilst pursuing a full-time career in education, he has held a number of prominent musical posts. These include Music Director of the Burnley and District G & S Society for 19 years, Director of the East Lancs Youth Orchestra for almost a decade, and conductor of the Nelson Civic Ladies Choir, and for the last four years he has been the Director of Music and Principal conductor of Burnley Municipal Choir.

For many years he ran a very successful 3 part choir at St Hilda's RC High School, that won the BBC Christmas Carol Competition, and toured Europe on several occasions performing in some prestigious locations including the "Alhambra" at Granada and Barcelona Cathedral. He led the Youth Orchestra to the final five of the Sainsbury's Youth Orchestra Competition and conducted them in concerts at La Madeleine in Paris, in Venice and Slovenia. He has led many choral workshops over the years, most recently leading over a hundred singers in a performance of the Poulenc and Vivaldi Glorias in Preston Minster last October.

With our choir, he has led and organised two very successful trips to Ireland and helped the choir to extend and improve its performance standards and prestige to the point where we are one of the North West's most outstanding choirs.

His extensive repertoire ranges from the Bach *St Matthew Passion* and Handel's *Messiah*, through the great classical works, to large-scale performances of the big Romantic works, such as Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, the Brahms *German Requiem*, the Verdi *Requiem*, and many works by Elgar. Twentieth century repertoire includes Durufle, Fauré, Bernstein, Orff, Weill, Karl Jenkins, and Rutter. In lighter music he has conducted theatre works ranging from Offenbach, Strauss, Gilbert and Sullivan and Novello, to *My Fair Lady*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* and *Barnum*.





## FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Friday December 21st  
at 7.30p.m. in **OLDHAM PARISH CHURCH**

### Our Annual Christmas Concert

A seasonal feast of  
popular favourites  
with carols for all.

with the **Ashton Brass Band**  
(A Championship Section Band)

Tickets: £7.50 – available from any choir member or on the door



**SUNDAY APRIL 28<sup>th</sup>**

**At 7.00pm**

**At the RNCM**

*One of the most spectacular  
works in the choral repertoire*

## THE VERDI REQUIEM

Soloists:

Soprano: Linda Richardson

Mezzo: Kathleen Wilkinson

Tenor: David Butt Philip

Bass: Thomas D Hopkinson

The East Lanes Sinfonia

Conductor: Nigel P Wilkinson

(Further details to follow on website)



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**Oldham Choral Society at the Royal Northern College of Music**

*Oldham Choral Society is a member of Making Music, North West and a Registered Charity – No: 518255*