

Royal  
Northern  
College  
Of Music

Sunday

27th  
November  
2022

7pm

*Symphony No 5*  
*Antonin Dvořák*

**Conductor: Frank Lennon**

*The Creation* Abridg  
*Josef Haydn*

**Conductor: Nigel P Wilkinson**

*Programme ~ £2*

**mb:o**  
MANCHESTERBEETHOVENORCHESTRA

oldham  
choral  
society

Founded 1884



## Welcome to our autumn concert

An eclectic mix of wonderful music, tonight is something of an experiment. Back in 2019, an initiative was launched with the MBO for our two societies to join forces and perform Beethoven in 2020 to mark the composer's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Alas, along came the pandemic, which put paid to that and any other public concerts. The idea stayed with both societies however and we were delighted to find that the enthusiasm to perform together was retained by both parties. The two pieces you will hear tonight span the classical to romantic periods, from the oratorio "Creation" by Josef Haydn, first performed in 1798 and Anton Dvorak's 5<sup>th</sup> symphony, first performed in 1879.

It is with great pleasure that our efforts have come to fruition this evening and we are sure you will enjoy the fruits of our work. Oldham Choral Society is now coming to a turning point; our Music Director Nigel P. Wilkinson will shortly leave us after 24 years service. Nigel's contribution to the choir is immense, having built the choir into a major and prominent position in the north-west of England and I would like to thank him publicly on behalf of the choir members who have enjoyed making music with this quite remarkable personality.

OCS is still rebuilding the choir to its former strength in numbers and would love to hear from you if you would like to come and sing with us. Our contact details are in this programme.

Gerard Marsden  
OCS Chairman



*Programme:*

# *Symphony No 5*

*In Four Movements*

*Antonin Dvořák*

**Conductor: Frank Lennon**

# *The Creation* *Abridged*

*Josef Haydn*

**Soprano: Linda Richardson**

**Tenor: Nicholas Watts**

**Bass: Dean Robinson**

**Conductor: Nigel P Wilkinson**

**Oldham Choral Society Patrons 2022/23:**

Mrs S. Andrew; Mrs P. Ashworth; Mr & Mrs C. Barratt; Mr P. Blanchard; Miss J. Bromley; Mr & Mrs G. Buckley; Mrs I Cadman; Mr M.A. Clegg; Mr & Mrs B Cotton; Mrs J. Hamnett; Mrs N. Hartley; Mrs B. Hatfield; Mrs M. Hood; Mr & Mrs F. S. Jones; Mrs A. Joyce; Mr K.Lewis; Mr W.G. Marsden; Mr A. Mellor; Mrs N. Murphy; Mrs B. Sharples; Miss J. Tunn; Mrs C. Whitehead; Mrs B. Williams.



## **Manchester Beethoven Orchestra**

The Beethoven Society was founded in 1888 with the purpose of studying and performing high class music which was within the capability of amateur players. Although the orchestra changed its name for performance reasons a few years ago, its aims remain true to those of the founders. Apart from a brief period during the Covid epidemic, it has met regularly since 1888, even during the world wars. As the decades have passed, the orchestra has presented an increasing number of public performances and nowadays puts on four or five annually. Most of these support local and national charities. The majority of the concerts are performed in local churches, but at least one a season is held in a larger venue such as the Gorton Monastery, the new Stoller Hall or the Royal Northern College of Music, the venue for tonight's concert. We are delighted to take part, for the first time, in a joint concert with the Oldham Choral Society. We hope that one and all enjoy this exciting venture.

Frank Lennon

Music Director, Manchester Beethoven Orchestra



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Frank Lennon

Music Director, Manchester Beethoven Orchestra



## Antonín Dvořák - Symphony No.5 in F major, Opus 76 (1875)

It is with Symphony No. 5 that Dvořák leaves behind his symphonic apprenticeship and we hear much of what characterises his mature style from the very start. He was almost entirely self-taught as a composer having grown up in very humble circumstances, however as he was writing this symphony he was applying for a grant given to needy composers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire which he went on to win having submitted two symphonies, an opera and much chamber music. This meant that he was free to compose and this he did with a great burst of creativity.

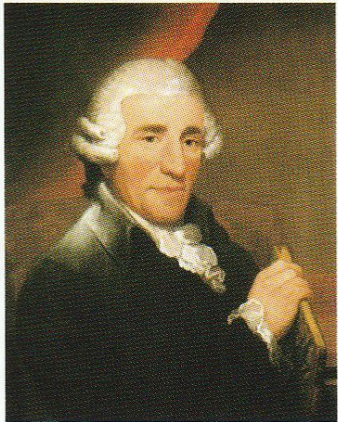
The symphony as a whole has the Dvořák hallmark of melodiousness and a bright positive spirit. The first movement demonstrates this by opening delightfully with a gentle clarinet theme over shimmering strings and then later we meet the more energetic ideas. As in all of this composer's works, although often energetic it does not become grandiose or tragic. Most often it is his gentle sensibility that moves us. The balance played out between the themes seems to be out in the Bohemian countryside where the daytime weather is changeable but ends with a warm summer evening.

The slow movement demonstrates the composer's mastery of orchestration in a lovely lyrical melody played out on lower and higher strings then later on the woodwind. However it is in the middle section that he captures our full attention with a strikingly original sounding theme with subtle harmony and shifting tonality accompanied by a string ostinato figure.

The scherzo begins with a left-over from the previous movement played out on the cellos but then we discover that the real substance of the movement is a folk dance in triple metre. The trio reminds us of the model composer for much of Dvořák's early work, Schubert.

The final movement opens with a strongly gestural theme that is developed at some length and after a new energetic musical idea the movement changes character by sliding into a surprisingly Puccini-like melody. These themes are all developed and then return with as much vigour as before except when the movement seems to temporarily run out of steam before driving towards an energetic ending.





## HAYDN'S CREATION

The Creation – composed between 1796 and 1798, is a relatively short oratorio, a musical setting of the biblical account of Creation told in 3 parts. Part 3 recalls the story of Adam and Eve, and so falls after the 6 days of Creation.

This evening we are performing an abbreviated version of The Creation that ends after the 6<sup>th</sup> day and omits Part 3 entirely. There are also some small cuts to parts 1 and 2 which give it a running time of under an hour. It will be sung – of course, in English and without an interval.

Written over 200 years ago by a naïve, idealistic Hungarian, and based on the now “outdated” Biblical account of evolution, it would be easy to underestimate the relevance and power of Haydn’s “Creation” in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This would be a mistake in my view.

Climate change and the awesome power of nature are very much in the news at present, with heatwaves, hurricanes and devastating floods all seemingly beyond the control of man, unless we make major changes to our lifestyles. And even if we make the changes deemed necessary, it is unlikely that we can ever bring nature under human control.

It seems to me, therefore, that in 2022, Haydn’s “Creation”, which “celebrates” (if that is the right word), the natural world in which we live in all its diversity, is as relevant now as it ever was, particularly with Part 3 omitted.

The devastating floods in Pakistan in recent months and droughts in many parts of the world serve to remind us of how small and insignificant man is in comparison to the vastness of the universe and how powerful the forces of nature are. Man has made many attempts over the years to control nature, but ultimately, when we contemplate the really big issues there is no power on earth that can change things.

In this sense little has changed since the time that this masterwork was written.

The biggest change of course is that back in 1798, the vast majority of people were “Creationists”. The theories of Darwin, and the scientific theories of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were in the future, and to all but a few, the creation of the world was a truly miraculous event, and the world and all that lived within in it was a monument to God.

Haydn himself was not, in fact, the simple, uneducated peasant, that he is often portrayed as being. He was in fact an enlightened thinker, and a scientist, but as a devout Catholic, and a “Creationist”, Biblical texts inspired him to write music of great joy and naïve, unquestioning faith. He professed himself incapable of writing solemn music when contemplating God – even in passages which normally suggest a



mood of contrition and sorrow, and his sole purpose in writing music was to praise God.

“When I think upon my God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes dance and leap from my pen” he cheerfully exclaimed. He was inspired by this particular text to compose unsophisticated music of breathtaking simplicity, and, - after the remarkable opening representing chaos, unceasing, uninhibited joy.

The work also displays his unique talent for depicting nature in music, such as the storm scenes, the wonderful sunrise music and the colourful depiction of various animals and birds

It is also worth drawing attention to Haydn’s musical characterisation.

For the angels he adopts a somewhat florid, lofty style, whilst for Part 3, (omitted this evening) the writing for Adam and Eve is simpler and more folk-like. In fact the whole work sparkles with the vitality and unfailing inspiration so characteristic of this remarkable composer, who was still experimenting and still surprising his listeners right up to the end of his life.

He was much affected by the oratorios of Handel that he had attended in London, and in common with most of Handel’s oratorios – though not *Messiah - The Creation* has named characters and is divided into acts and scenes. These consist of sequences of choruses, recitatives and arias. Haydn expands on the language of Handel in several ways however:

Most obviously, the orchestra adopts a greatly enlarged palette of colour and joins with the chorus in lively commentary on the narrative, employing the full resources of the classical symphony. In Handel, the orchestration generally remains constant throughout the course of a given movement. Haydn constantly varies the texture, and anticipates the Romantic orchestral of composers writing 50 years after his death.

There are no true da capos in *Creation*, although several arias have a three-part structure.

Haydn also makes far more use of orchestrally accompanied recitative than was the custom,

In addition he wrote 2 descriptive “tone poems” for orchestra to represent “Chaos” and “morning” respectively. These along with his depiction of sunrise are perhaps the most striking passages in the whole piece, but can often be overlooked, especially if the performance is given without orchestral accompaniment.

This may not be the greatest oratorio ever written, nor is it my personal favourite, but it is perhaps the work to which I would turn most often if I was in need of rejuvenation or inspiration. Its music is always, fundamentally, that of simple humanity – firmly rooted amongst men, but aspiring to be worthy of an infinitely benevolent God and His Creation. Through its simple optimism, its unaffected sincerity of expression and its true confidence in mankind’s potential for good, Joseph Haydn’s “*Creation*” comes as close to attaining perfection as any music ever can. Its universal message is as relevant and potent today as it ever was.



# *Symphony No 5*

*Antonin Dvořák*

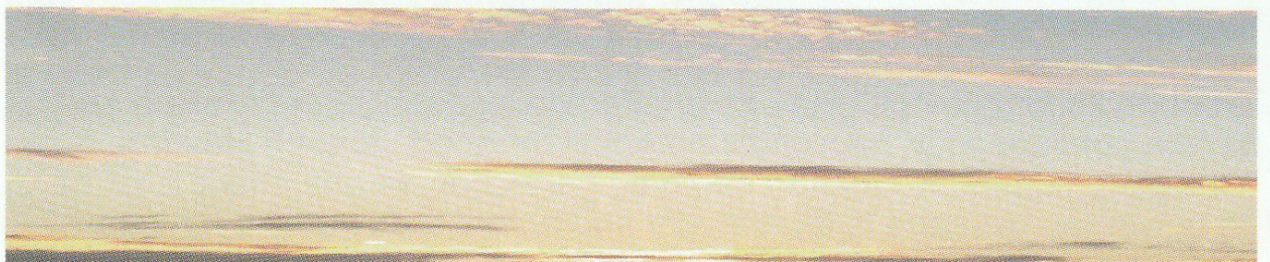
**In Four Movements:**

Allegro ma non Troppo

Andante con Moto

Scherzo

Allegro Molto





# *The Creation* (Abridged)

*Josef Haydn*

## **PART 1**

Nos 1 – 14 Complete (Duration 37 minutes)

## **Part 2**

No 15 (Recit)

No. 17 (Recit)

No. 18 (Recit)

No. 20 Choir - The Lord is Great

No. 21 (Recit)

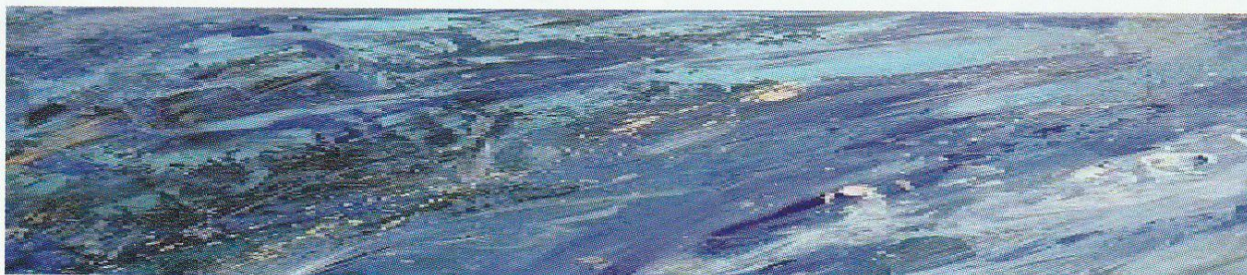
No. 23 Bass Solo – Now heaven in fullest Glory shone

No. 24 (Recit)

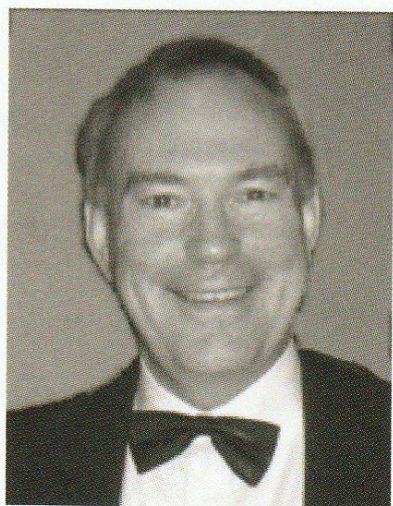
No. 25 Tenor solo – In Native Worth

No. 26 (Recit)

No. 27b Choir - Achieved is the Glorious Work (Version 2)  
(Duration 18 minutes)





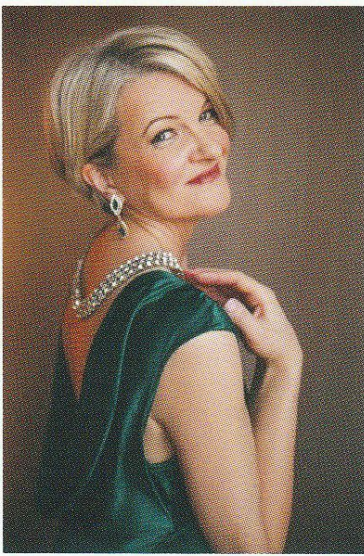


## Frank Lennon - Conductor

Having led the orchestra for thirteen years, Frank took over as Conductor of the Manchester Beethoven Orchestra after the untimely death of John Crosdale in 2004. He has also conducted concerts for the Gorton Philharmonic and Salford Symphony Orchestras, and worked with the Warrington Youth and High Peak Orchestras. He was the Music Director for Eric Proctor's oratorio *The Prodigal Son* with the Peel Singers. Frank continues to play the violin in local ensembles, including the Amaretti Chamber Orchestra. In 2012 he was appointed Musical Director of the Burnley Orchestra.







## Linda Richardson - Soprano

Soprano Linda Richardson's extensive career spans over forty operatic roles for major companies in the UK and abroad. After completing studies at the Royal Northern College of Music and the National Opera Studio, Linda became a Company Principal for the English National Opera. She has also performed principal roles for UK-based Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Opera North, Opera Holland Park, Garsington Opera, English Touring Opera, and international companies and houses in Barcelona, Amsterdam, Nantes, Dubai, and Venice.

Recent seasons include *Violetta La Traviata*; *Cio-Cio San Madama Butterfly*; the title role in *Anna Bolena*; *Amaltea Mosè in Egitto*; and *Elvira I Puritani*. She has sung with various international conductors including Bernard Haitink, Edo de Waart, Sir Mark Elder, Danielle Rustioni, Libor Pešek, Carol Rizzi, and Shao Chia Lu.

No stranger to concerts and festivals, Linda has appeared in concert with various orchestras, including the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, The Hallé, London Symphony Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, the Utrecht Radio Kamerorkest, Internationales Kammermusikfestival Nürnberg, and Festival De La Vezere, France, among others. Other appearances also include performances in collaboration with the Solti-Te Kanawa Academia, with Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, and for the Jose Carreras Gala Concert at the Royal Albert Hall with Jose Carreras.

Media work includes multiple performances for the BBC both on radio and TV, and CD recordings of *Un Ballo in Maschera* with Dennis O'Neil and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (Chandos), *Summer's End: The Poems of Margaret Buckle*, joined by Ian Partridge with narration by Niamh Cusack and Gabriel Woolf (Meridian), as well as her solo debut CD of soprano arias with John Wilson and the Sinfonia of London (Chandos). Her performance as Annie in Jonathan Dove's debut TV opera *When She Died* (in memory of Princess Diana) on Channel 4 was watched by 900,000 viewers, a record viewership for a contemporary opera broadcast.

Always willing to guide training voices, Linda has led masterclasses and performance workshops at English National Opera, Opera North, Clonter Opera, as well as adjudicating the Oncken Song Prize for the Royal Northern College of Music. Linda continues to serve on various opera audition and performance panels, and also returns regularly to the RNCM to give performance masterclasses in vocal performance.





## Nicholas Watts - Tenor

We are delighted to welcome Nicholas Watts back to sing with choir this evening following a most impressive debut with us in our most recent concert.

Nicholas was born in Yorkshire, and began his vocal training as a Foundation Scholar at the Royal College of Music, studying with Margaret Kingsley.

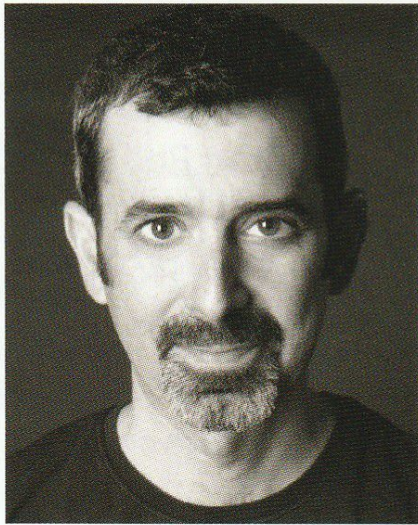
Whilst at the RCM, he won the Concerto Prize, for his performance of Britten's *Serenade*. He was also a member of the Benjamin Britten International Opera School, and Les Arts Florissants' 'Jardin des Voix' programme.

Nicholas made his solo operatic debut performing in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, at English National Opera. He has since worked as a principal artist at The Royal Opera House Covent Garden, The Theatre an Der Wien, The Teatro Real (Madrid), Scottish Opera, Opera North, and Garsington Festival Opera.

Roles performed include: *Acis and Gauletea*; Tamino *Die Zauberflote*; Il Contino Belfiore *La finta giardiniera*; Ferrando *Così fan tutte*; Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni*; Count Almaviva *The Barber of Seville*; Vasek *The Bartered Bride*; Camille *The Merry Widow*; Scaramuccio *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Albert *Albert Herring*; Peter Quint *The Turn of the Screw*; and Jack *Into the Woods*.

Nicholas has enjoyed an extensive concert and recital career. He has sung under the direction of Sir John Elliot Gardiner, William Christie, and Sir Mark Elder; and has performed in concert venues such as The Wigmore Hall, the Symphony Hall - Birmingham, the Barbican Hall - London, the Salle Pleyel - Paris, and the Lincoln Centre - New York.





## Dean Robinson - Bass

The Australian bass Dean Robinson studied at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester with major support 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 Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, Garsington Festival Opera and Pinchgut Opera (Sydney). His repertoire includes title roles in *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*, Sarastro, *Zauberflote*; Sparafucile, *Rigoletto*; Zachariah *Nabucco*; Colline, *La Boheme*, Claudio, *Agrippina*; 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 Weirs' *Armida*. Now a full-time member of Opera North's chorus he has sung over 30 principal roles with the company, most recently Abraham Kaplan, *Street Scene*; Mr Lindquist, *A Little Night Music* and Dancairo, *Carmen*.

He now resides with his wife Rachel Luxon in nearby Barnoldswick and makes the daily commute to Leeds. He has been a regular soloist with the choir in recent years and we are delighted to have him back with us for this special performance of "The Creation".



# Manchester Beethoven Orchestra Players

## **Violin 1**

Heather Allen  
Maryam Atti  
Hannah Olbrich  
Sophie Davies  
Judy Schoombie  
Siobhan Kelly  
Anne-Louise Coldicott  
Chris Lukey  
Rosalind Harwood  
Aoife McHugh  
Madelene Cooney  
Oliver Little  
Peshawa Gazale

## **Violin 2**

Anne Byrne  
Sophie Foreman  
Ann Large  
Joanne MacLachlan  
Nedra Davis  
Apollo Walker  
Helen McHugh  
Rosalind Corser  
Joan Corser

## **Viola**

Amy Louvre  
Martin Stuart  
Jackie Fisk  
John Owen  
Luis Alvaro Salas Delgado

## **Cello**

Helen Smith  
Jill Mundy  
Eleri Jackson  
Patrick Jones  
Sarah Coke  
Rebecca Pimblett  
Patricia Goulcher  
Emily Crompton

## **Double Bass**

Ken Greaves  
Andrew Byrne  
Alex Proudfoot

## **Flute**

Helena Cant  
Eleanor Underhill

## **Oboe**

Alf Pollard  
Lucy Stones

## **Clarinet**

Martin Cook  
Alice Nicolay

## **Bassoon**

Rosalyn Comer  
Rebecca Higgins

## **Contra Bassoon**

Simon Roberts

## **French Horn**

Kate Flannery  
Anne Moorhouse  
Jane Brooks  
Andy Qualters

## **Trumpet**

Chris Kay  
Filip Jandus

## **Trombone**

Matthew Cherry  
Tim Paton

## **Bass Trombone**

Hazel McKay

## **Timpani**

Darren Niman



# Oldham Choral Society Members

## Sopranos

Louise Platts  
Christine Whitehead  
Sally Ferguson  
Ann Bray  
Kirsty Haugh  
Mal Hardiker  
Elaine Shaw\*\*\*  
Val Dawson  
Alison Coates  
Linda Butcher  
Margaret Ulyatt  
Sybil Lamb  
Claire Ellis  
Margaret Martin  
Margaret Hood \*\*\*\*\*  
June O'Grady  
Patricia Heaton  
Fiona Heston\*\*  
Julia Robinson  
Sheila Tolley  
Brenda Wildish  
Janet Roche  
Marjorie Richards\*\*\*  
Mary Crossley  
Jill Bromley\*\*\*  
Susan Smith  
Lorna Ashton\*\*\*  
Jill Hamnett  
Angela Robbins

## Altos

Sylvia Andrew\*\*\*  
Kathleen Pugh  
Susan Padwell  
Maureen Harrison  
Eileen Scott  
Nancy Murphy\*\*\*\*\*  
Lydia Seddon  
Louise Whittaker  
Carol Vaudrey\*\*  
Ann Joyce\*\*  
Elizabeth Weiner  
Iva Mottley  
Margaret Rawlins  
Gillian Barker  
Pat Ashworth  
Jo-Anna Dobbs  
Helen Rigby  
Janet Albiston\*\*  
Brenda Sharples  
Christine Grimes\*\*\*  
Janet Lindley  
Patrician Golden  
Judith Stott  
Edna Gill  
Caroline Knights  
Brenda Roberts

## Tenors

John Dearden  
Derek Clutterbuck  
Alan Reeves  
Damien Gilmartin  
Mike Rooke  
Lawrence Croft  
Barry Cotton\*\*  
Keith Weiner\*\*  
Giles Dennis  
John Richards  
Alan Scott  
Rodney Porter  
Gerard Marsden  
John Doyle  
Philippa Whittaker  
Richard Blair

## Bass

Peter Garrity  
Christopher Barrett  
David Shipp  
Mike Edmondson  
Andrew Summers  
Philip Blanchard  
Mike Clegg  
Frank Boocock  
Philip Shaw\*\*\*  
Bill Hardiker  
Peter Kerton  
Frank Osondu

## Key

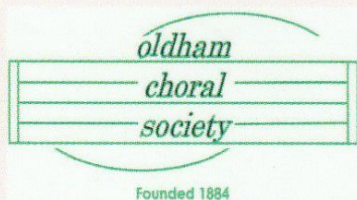
\*\* - 20 year membership

\*\*\* - 30 year membership

\*\*\*\*\* - 50 year membership

[www.oldhamchoral.org.uk](http://www.oldhamchoral.org.uk)





# Save the Dates.....

**OCS - Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 7.30pm**

We look forward to our annual **Christmas Carol Concert** with Ashton Band to be held at **Oldham Parish Church**.

**MBO - Saturday, January 28 2023 at 7.30pm**

**Winter Concert** to be held at **Christ Church, Darley Avenue Manchester M20 2ZD** An evening of popular classical orchestral music

**OCS - Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 7.00pm**

Oldham Choral Society will present **Mendelssohn's 'Elijah'** at the **Royal Northern College of Music**.

**OCS - In June 2023** (date and time to be confirmed) we look forward to a **Summer Celebration Concert**

If you enjoy singing and have wondered about joining a choir, why not come along and try? All are welcome!

Oldham Choral Society holds regular rehearsals - time and venue: 7.20 p.m. - 9.35 p.m. (With 15 minute interval) at Chadderton Town Hall Garforth Street OL9 6PY

For further details visit [www.oldhamchoral.org.uk](http://www.oldhamchoral.org.uk) find us on Facebook or contact: Gerard Marsden on 01706 558342

Oldham Choral Society is a member of Making Music North West and a registered charity - Number 518225