

NewSPAL

The performing arts library in Surrey

Monthly Update

Hello and welcome to the first newsletter of the autumn,

Woking building

In March (2021) we were excited to be given planning permission by Woking Borough Council (WBC) for our proposed new library in a WBC-owned building on Commercial Way. The building, which is currently a shell, would be a fabulous location for us - right in the centre of Woking, close to public transport but also with a small parking area (for collection etc), and on a pedestrian street, enabling the community to feel part of the library, and us to feel part of the community. NewSPAL has the potential to be a real asset to the new evolving high street and an enhancement to the cultural life of the town. The building was identified for us by WBC and they worked closely with us on drawing up the plans. So far so good.

Since then, we have been working with the Council to understand the implications of the fact that the building is currently a shell and so would need a lot of work before we (or anyone else) could move in to it. We have been told that the estimated cost for fitting out of the building is in excess of £500,000. We have also now been told (informally) by an officer of the Council that there is no money in the WBC budget to fit out the building. This is, of course, a huge concern for us since until we know where the long-term home of the SPAL collection will be, we cannot plan the final stages of getting NewSPAL operational.

We understand that the financial landscape for councils all across the country has very much changed in the last 18 months. NewSPAL's trustees have been trying hard to get clear information from WBC about the full implications of the Woking situation. It was, after all, WBC which proposed to us (in 2018) bringing NewSPAL to Woking and there is still a strong potential mutual benefit of doing so. But we are also, reluctantly but necessarily, actively investigating other options. We will keep you informed as soon as we have any more concrete news, and in the meantime we will continue to progress those elements of the project that we can in the circumstances.

Cataloguing news

On that note, regular cataloguing volunteers will know that we have completed the mammoth task of cataloguing the vocal sets!

We are also well on the way to completing drama sets. We have almost completed orchestral and school sets, and are moving onto the rather more complicated band sets and turning our attention to the rest of the collection, which consists of reference books, recordings (both CDs and DVDs), and individual scores and chamber music.

In the first part of October we will be training our team leaders, and refining the catalogue for these items, with a view to engaging our painstaking and assiduous volunteers in the task of making sure that our users can entirely trust that our catalogue is complete, accurate, and above all helpful! If you're looking for any DVDs directed by Kenneth Branagh, or a piece of music scored for a specific combination of instruments, or a specific edition of the book you need, we want our catalogue to reliably let you know whether we've got what you need, and to offer you alternatives where appropriate.

We will be in touch with volunteers soon, to start booking shifts on the new system.

Composer of the month

We have an extensive collection of material relating to Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), including reference works and recordings as well as scores. As the Leith Hill Musical Festival is returning next month with their Come & Sing event at Dorking Halls, we thought the time was right to showcase Ian Codd's article looking at RVW's long relationship with the Festival. To read the article [click here](#).

Upcoming events

Leith Hill Musical Festival is back! We are proud to present our first 2021 event: Come & Sing the Verdi Requiem on Saturday 16 October in Dorking Halls. See details and book at www.dorkinghalls.co.uk. We can't wait to sing with you!

Ashted Choral Society are thrilled to be back performing live again, with two events next month for you to enjoy:

Concert: Saturday 9 October 2021, 7.30pm

Mozart Requiem

Beethoven Choral Fantasia, and Piano Concerto No 2

St Martin's Church, Epsom KT17 4PX

Conductor: Andrew Storey

Come and Sing: Elijah

Saturday 30 October, 10am - 5pm

St George's Christian Centre, Ashted KT21 2DA

Musical director: Andrew Storey

Tickets for both are available from boxoffice@ashtedchoralsociety.org.uk or on 07835 115716.

Virgin Money Giving & CAF Donate

Finally for this month, you may already have heard that Virgin Money Giving is closing its books after the London Marathon in October. We are sorry to see them go - they have been a superb fundraising partner, and a very significant proportion of the funds you have been good enough to donate to NewSPAL has come through VMG.

If you are one of the kind people who donate to NewSPAL monthly through VMG, we will be in

touch with you individually. In due course we will switch to CAF Donate but if you are planning to make a donation to NewSPAL in the near future, please contact the Treasurer at treasurer@newspal.org.uk for details of our bank account where we are happy to receive direct donations.

Please do forward this to members of your group or any contacts who may be interested in keeping up to date with NewSPAL news.

If you don't follow us on Facebook or Twitter please consider giving us a follow. Our social media handles can be found at the bottom of this email or you can find us easily by searching @NewSPALibrary.
