



TOP CHOIR KENT

A Festival for Kent Choirs

Patron: The Rt Hon and Rt Rev. The Lord Carey of Clifton

PRESS RELEASE

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Embargo: 0001hrs, Thursday 15th September 2012

Top Choir Kent 2012 Launched

The search is on to find Top Choir Kent 2012. This prestige event – organised by the Rotary Club of Canterbury - is in its third year and promises to be better than ever. The event is open to amateur choirs of all ages based in Kent, the Medway Authority and the London Boroughs of “Old Kent”.

The grand finale will be on Saturday 31 March 2012 at the Shirley Hall in Canterbury. The eight short-listed choirs will battle it out before a panel of judges headed by Dr David Flood, Organist and Master of Choristers at Canterbury Cathedral who will be joined by Susan Wanless, Director of Music at the University of Kent and David Burrige, former Kent Secondary Adviser for Music. The winners of Top Choir Kent 2011, *Viva Acappella*, from Orpington, although not competing, will also be performing.

The winners will receive the Top Choir Kent Trophy as well as being given a unique opportunity to showcase their talents at the Canterbury Festival in October 2012. Additionally each of the eight finalists will receive a cash prize.

Harry Cragg, President of the Rotary Club of Canterbury said: “This is a fine example of Rotary working with the community to produce an exciting event whilst at the same time raising money for charity.” He added: “The 2011 final, earlier this year, generated over £6,500 for the Rotary Club of Canterbury to use in support of a wide range of charities. The end of competition collection additionally raised in excess of £1,000 for the Pilgrims Hospices.”

Top Choir Kent 2012 features two major innovations: choirs will now be permitted to have piano accompaniment if they wish - and the entry fee has been dropped. Both features reflect the desire of the organisers to promote the event not just as a competition but also as a festival for singing in Kent. John Harris, Competition Director, said: “Since its inception Top Choir Kent has showcased some fantastic choirs but we also want to encourage equally talented groups to enter that may be daunted by having to sing unaccompanied.” He continued: “Top Choir Kent has proved very successful financially and, as a further show of community support, we wish to help the choirs by scrapping the entry fee.”

Rosie Turner, Director of the Canterbury Festival is excited at the prospect of the 2012 competition. She said: “The standard of the singing at Top Choir Kent is fantastic. I’m looking forward to scheduling the winners in the 2012 Canterbury Festival.”

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The event sponsor is Belmont International Ltd, Insurance Brokers, from Sevenoaks. Barrie Etchells, Founder and Managing Director of Belmont said: "To hear a choir in good voice is spine tingling and it is a pleasure for us to be supporting Top Choir Kent 2012. Personal achievement and teamwork are essential ingredients in rising to the top in competition and we are looking forward to an uplifting occasion."

BBC Radio Kent is the competition's media partner and will be broadcasting selected entries on the Sunday Programme with Martin Buchanan throughout the winter and the station will record the final on 31 March 2012 for subsequent transmission.

Choirs are encouraged to get their entries in well before the deadline of 31st January 2012 to stand a better chance of being heard on the radio. Will Roffey, BBC Radio Kent's Assistant Editor is delighted to be involved. He said: "Singing in choirs is one of the nation's favourite pastimes and we're looking forward to bringing some of the best local performances to audiences across the county."

The closing date for entries is 31st January 2012. Full details, entry forms and competition rules can be found at: <http://www.topchoirkent.org> Rotary charities both locally and internationally will benefit from the funds raised.

Accompanying Photograph: TCK_2012_Launch.jpg (No Restrictions)

Dr David Flood, Top Choir Kent Chairman of Judges and Organist and Master of Choristers at Canterbury Cathedral (left); Harry Cragg, President, Rotary Club of Canterbury (right).

Also attached is the Top Choir Kent logo ([Top_Choir_Kent_Master_Logo.jpg](#)) for your unrestricted use.

Notes for Editors

Further details, full Top Choir Kent competition rules and entry forms can be found online at: www.topchoirkent.org

Further Information

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