

Greetings from Hawkes Bay!!

I trust that all the practice is still going well and that the mouths are getting accustomed to the new shapes Joe has suggested we achieve. Must admit that personally I do find it all a bit challenging but I do hope that I will achieve some progress.

A very short note from me as the small committee is still working on just how we might progress. We have a meeting next Wednesday with Joe and will have more to report at that stage.

Big news over the past couple of days is that our fundraising team of Jocelyn and Anthony have managed to get a grant of \$5000.00 from the Four Winds Foundation for Music Team expenses. Many thanks to the two of you for your efforts.

I for one am looking forward to the next weekend in Palmerston North but unfortunately will only be able to be there for the Saturday as the weekend clashes with the second hand book sale that Carol and I are very involved with. However we Northeners will have to be at our best as we will be joined by Alison on the piano and Brent Woon a new member from the South.

Well that's about it from me at this stage but Joe has provided some important info

MD Chat GPT (Great Performance Tips)

Thanks for your efforts over the March rehearsal weekends where I got to spend a bit of time with each singer sorting out a starting point for improving vocal technique and musicianship. 90% of the choir still need to work on vowel placement which is disappointing but fixable so I expect you to have it fixed very soon. It was good to see some progress on music reading i.e. Musicianship.

*You were **each** given a specific set of exercises to work on so the next step is to see what progress you have made over the month. I have had responses and comments from less than 10% of the choir. I hope this is not indicative of your attitude to change and improvement.*

You will be aware that I can't spend that much time each weekend on individual sessions so I will be watching during rehearsal to see if you have progressed and commenting as we go. Please take instruction in a positive way and be supportive of each other. Learning to listen and observing others is the best way you can improve the cohesive sound. Complacency is really boring to listen to in singing. Every note is important.

The concert in Hamilton will be the same repertoire as Art Deco with the "Easter Hymn" added. The whole concert will be from memory including the "Easter Hymn" and "Ukuthula".

The sound tracks for "The River" and "Ballade to the Moon" will be on the website soon if not already there by the time this gets to you. I want you to focus on "The River" as your first priority. "Ballade" will take quite a while but will be worth the effort.

"Te Aotearoa" is still insecure so please work that one. Use the translation on the back and write the key words in your score so you know what you are saying. This will help with memorising. Practice your resonant vowel placement in the bits where you don't have words. Make the best sound you can at all times.

6 of the songs at Art Deco were not secure so we will need to focus on making them more comfortable. All my Trials Lord, Anything goes, As Time goes by, Away from the roll of the sea, Ching a ring chaw, Down to the river to pray.

*Please go over your music as often as possible and each time choose a different aspect to focus on, e.g. **the rhythm** sing the whole song on "Pum", **the resonance** sing on [i] or [u], **the dynamics** where they are written, **the phrases** where do you breathe and how long is each note.*

Remember that 10-15 minutes of full-on concentrated rehearsal twice a day is better than 1 hour of singing along without focus.

Well that's about it from us keep up the good work

Ray