

Reading Choral Society 139th Season

Reading Choral Society Bids Farewell to Music Director, Peter Hopkins, and Welcomes Graham Bier as the Interim Director

In early December, Peter Hopkins announced his resignation from Reading Choral Society as the RCS Music Director. Peter has accepted the position as the Director of Music at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Richmond Virginia, with his new role beginning in February. St. Stephen's is one of the largest Episcopal Churches in the US.

Peter had been the RCS Music Director since 2007. Under his leadership, Reading Choral Society has grown musically. During his seven years, he led RCS in more than thirty performances at fourteen different venues throughout Berks county. He will be greatly missed by members of RCS, and we all wish him great success with his new church position in Richmond.



Reading Choral Society welcomed Graham Bier as the Interim Director in early January. Before Peter's departure, the two directors were able to share rehearsals and work together in a smooth transition between music leadership.

Graham is the Director of Music at Bryn Athyn Cathedral as well as a lecturer in music the Bryn Athyn College. He sings regularly in the Philadelphia area as a freelance bass-baritone, with such ensembles as The Crossing and Les Carnards Chantants.

He attended Oberlin Conservatory of Music as an undergraduate, holds an MA from the University of York (UK) in ensemble singing, and is in the final stages of fulfilling requirements for a PhD at the same institution. In addition to his course of study at Oberlin and the University of York, Graham studied conducting with Daniel Moe, Joseph Cullen, Adrian Lucas, and the eminent Chinese conductor Zhū Bù Xī. As Assistant Director of the elite academic chamber choir "The 24" for four years, Graham directed a wide range of choral music in concerts throughout England and China, produced a recording of new compositions, and a live BBC Radio broadcast from York Minster. Graham also served as Conductor of the University of York Concert Orchestra, Music Director of the Soon Amore Chamber Singers (UK) the Bulmer Choir (UK), and Assistant Chorusmaster of the Anna Maria Island Chorus and Orchestra (FL) among other ensembles, I Fagiolini, the Yorkshire Baroque Soloists and the Ebor Singers.



Gloria Singers

Join Reading Choral Society and singers from seven parochial schools throughout Berks County for this joint concert. This year RCS has a guest conductor for the event, Robin Bier, who will be working with singers in two workshops as well as directing the concert. We hope that you will be able to join us for the concert when the stage will be filled with over 100 parochial students grades three through high school plus members of RCS. John Paul II Center Tone Chime Choir will perform at the beginning of the concert.

5th Annual Gloria Singers Concert
Sunday, March 8, 5:30 PM
Berks Catholic High School Auditorium
FREE
Funding for this program is provided
by Reading Musical Foundation and
Reading Choral Society.

God Bless America Concert

The Ringgold Band has invited Reading Choral Society to be their guest artists in their 163rd Spring Anniversary Concert, on Sunday, March 29. The concert is titled, *God Bless America* and will feature patriotic music as well as music by American composers. Soloists will be Debbie Greenawald, Tyler Rutt and Alexandra Booth. Jim Seidel, the Ringgold Band Music Director, will be conducting this concert which will feature the Ringgold Band Youth Award Winner, Angela Behler, on flute playing an arrangement of *Oh Suzanna!*

Hope you will be able to join the Ringgold Band and Reading Choral Society at this performance!



Sunday, March 29, 2015, 3pm
Scottish Rite Cathedral

Wyomissing

Tickets \$15

Students Free

Tickets are available through
Ringgold Band Website
www.ringgolband.com
or through a member

Brahms Requiem

Reading Choral will be presenting in concert Brahms *A German Requiem*. The location of this concert is Sacred Heart Church in West Reading.

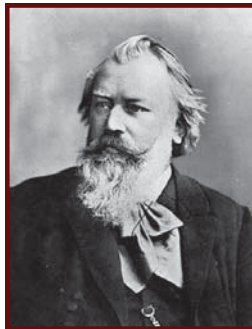
Under the leadership of Graham Bier, RCS will perform with two soloists and accompanied by a 20 piece orchestra. The Requiem is comprised of seven movements, making this work Brahms's longest compositions and is a masterpiece for orchestra, chorus and soloists.

We hope you will be able to join us for this concert that the Reading Choral Society singers have been preparing since their first rehearsal in September.

Sunday, April 26, 2015, 4pm
Sacred Heart Church
West Reading

Tickets \$15 in advance/\$20 at door
Students \$5

Tickets are available through an
RCS member or call 610-898-1939



Holiday Extravaganza



Reading Choral Society held its first **Holiday Extravaganza** in December at the Hendel House in the Centre Park Historic District. The evening included delicious food, wine from Blair Vineyard, beer from Golden Avalanche Brewery, music by RCS Chamber Choir and guitarist, Brent Missimer, and a live auction led by auctioneer, Dan Shaffer. Thank you to all those that attended and helped to make this event a success! With your support RCS was able to raise over \$6,000 to support our education and outreach programs.

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Graham Bier
Interim Music Director

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Mary Bishop
Accompanist

Toni Marie Palmertree
Vocal Coach

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to perform, foster and advance choral music in the Reading and Berks County Community.

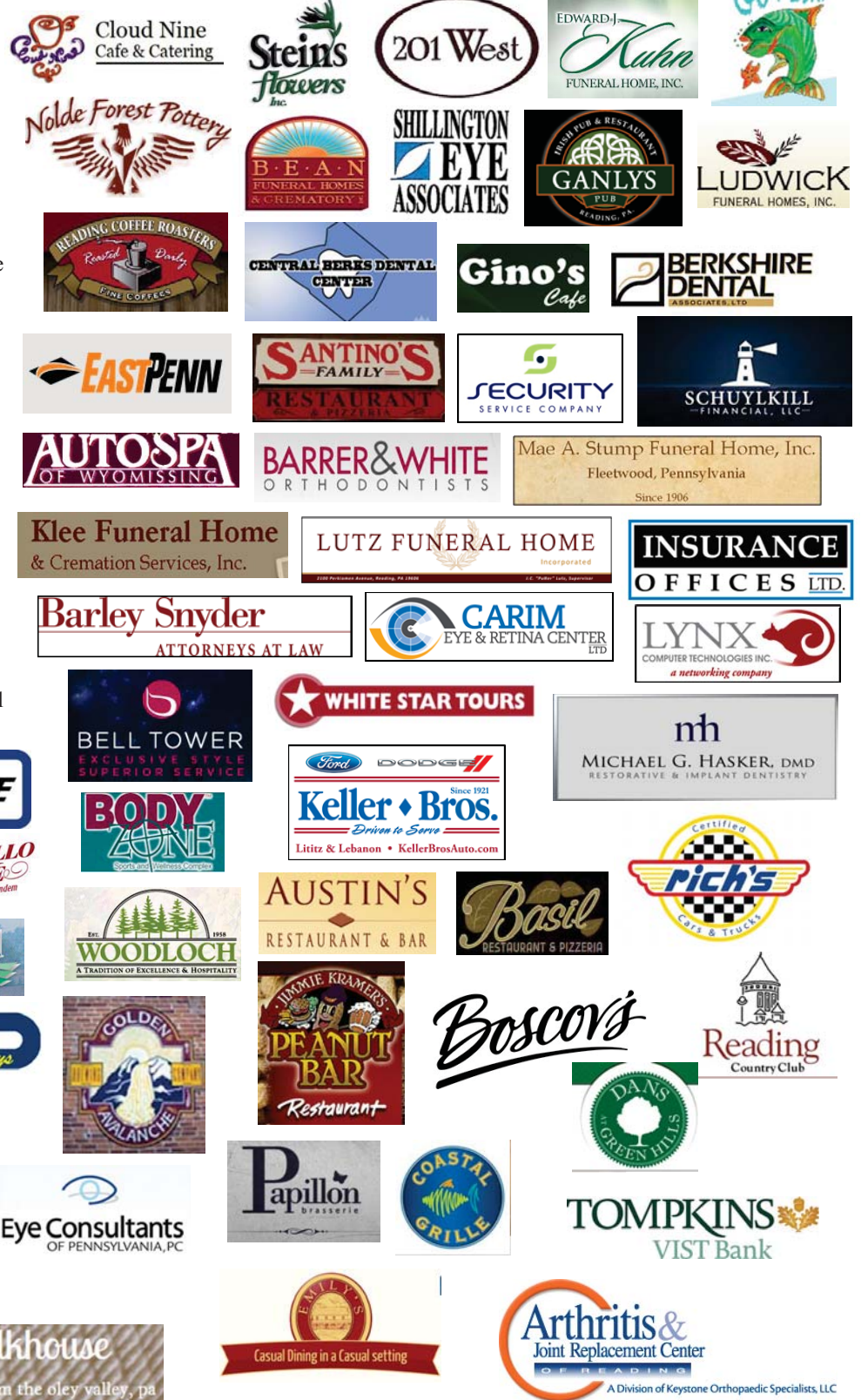
Thank you to RCS patrons!



2014-15 Business Patrons—until date of printing

Thank you to all our patrons. Without your support we would not be able to have our concerts and programs continue. With your generous gifts we have been able to do just some of the following:

- Hire an orchestra of highly skilled musicians for the RCS concerts.
- Expand RCS outreach programs to include Gloria Singers; scholarships and awards to high school and college students; and Berks Choir Games.
- Hire additional vocal coaches who works weekly with our singers in improving their vocal skills.
- Hire an accomplished pianist, Mary Bishop, for weekly rehearsals and concerts.
- Check the RCS website for additional business patrons!





READING CHORAL SOCIETY

GoggleWorks Center for the Arts
201 Washington Street, Suite 504
Reading, PA 19601-4040

Phone: 610-898-1939

www.readingchoral.org

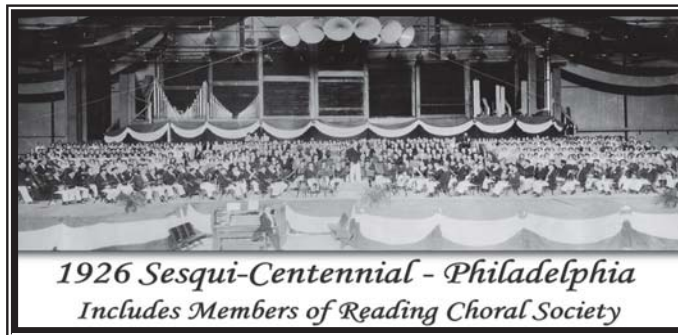
E-mail: information@readingchoral.org



Concert season is underwritten in part by grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and the Reading Musical Foundation.

Reading Choral Society receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency, funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Founded in 1875, the Reading Choral Society is one of America’s oldest musical ensembles, and from its earliest days has pursued performances characterized by vocal excellence and musical distinction. Under its current director, Graham Bier (the twelfth person to hold this position), approximately 65 dedicated semi-professional singers perform in the RCS. Through the RCS performances, the members enrich and enliven the musical life of the greater Reading community and the surrounding counties.



Berks Choir Games

Join us for our 2nd Annual for Berks Choir Games, a choral festival for the community.

May 7th—9th!

This year's Choir Games will provide three days of fun and excitement surrounding all of your favorite types of choral music.

Thursday, May 7 Community Night

Trinity Lutheran Church 7:30pm

- ◆ Open to Community and Church Choirs, Chamber Choirs and Vocal Ensembles

Friday, May 8 Chamber Choir Stage

Location TBD 8pm

- ◆ RCS Chamber Choir
- ◆ Les Canards Chantants
- ◆ And more!

Saturday, May 9 Miller Center for the Arts

1pm Adjudication Round

- ◆ For public & private school choirs, chamber choirs or vocal ensembles (8+ singers)

Small concert following adjudication rounds

Did you know :

RCS first performed the Brahms Requiem in 1924. This will be Reading Choral Society’s seventh performance of the Requiem.

Brahms was ruthless about his own music, destroying scores that he felt were not his best even late in his career, along with all his sketches.

Brahms was famous for his large beard and portly appearance, but he was quite thin as a youth, with baby-smooth cheeks, and didn’t grow his beard until he was 45.

7:30 pm Finale Concert:

We invite you to come to hear this concert filled with choral music from gospel to classical, barbershop and jazz. The Reading Choral Society will be joined by:

- ◆ Essence of Joy Alumni Choir
- ◆ Boyertown High School Show Choir
- ◆ The Ducks Jazz Ensemble
- ◆ Vocal Standard

More details of these events will be available at www.berkschoirgames.org .

Love to sing & looking for a chorus to join?

Consider joining RCS!

More information about auditioning is on the RCS website.

Like us on Facebook & Follow us on Twitter

