

To: Dr John Trigg
Chairman: Guildford Philharmonic
Choir
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FOUNDED 1876

PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

PRESIDENT: H. R. H. THE PRINCE OF WALES

the Bach Choir

Dear Dr Trigg,

Thank you for your letter of 3 September and for the kind invitation to succeed Todd Handley as President of the Guildford Philharmonic Choir, and to hold office for five years.

I apologize for the delay in this response due to the fact that I have been in Holland for a week during which time I have been very busy recording a CD and filming a programme for Dutch Television.

I should be pleased and honoured to accept your invitation, but there are two problems. . . . (i) I have been gradually retiring from honorary posts such as Patron, President or Vice-President of orchestras, choral societies and other musical organisations during the last six years (as I became 70 years of age at the end of 1989) and so it might seem strange to those organisations if I were to become President of a new one, even for five years).

(ii) I would not expect to be able to attend the AGM, or any of the Choir's concerts, and the members of the Guildford Phil Choir might therefore deduce (wrongly) that I had no interest in the Choir's activities.

Having said that, I am still holding honorary offices with many orchestras and choirs. . . especially those with which I have worked closely over the years, eg. in Cornwall (where I was born), Devon, Salisbury, Worcester, Cambridge, London (where I have worked) and they seem to be understanding that I cannot attend meetings or concerts, though I follow their activities with interest.

If you feel that the Guildford Phil Choir would not regard my absence from concerts as discourteous, I should be very happy to serve for five years, as I have very much enjoyed my concerts with the Choir and will always remember them with pleasure.

If, on reflection, you feel that it would be more appropriate to have as President a person who lives in Surrey, who can attend many of the Choir's concerts, and maybe find sponsors or in other ways promote the interests of the Choir, I shall quite understand.

In any event I send to you and to all members of the Guildford Philharmonic Choir my best wishes for continuing success in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely
David Willcocks

P.S. Maybe we could have a brief chat on the phone.