

## Music Societies' Clashing Dates

All music society committees must hate discovering, too late to be in any reasonable position for changing their plans, that some other 'lot' has chosen the same date to put on a performance, too close for comfort. What makes for the discomfort? In the case of multiple copies being needed for a particular work, there may be some difficulty over obtaining sufficient printed copies of it, especially when having the 'right edition' is important. Worse than that, attendances often depend largely on relatives and friends of the singers and players involved (their 'fan base') for support, who with the best will in the world cannot be in two places at once, so clashing performances will inevitably reduce audience numbers in each.

In what some people might call the 'good old days' local authorities had representative music committees/councils whose job it was to monitor local plans and were in a position to identify when and where its organisations were in danger of clashing. That sensible system seems to be lacking in many areas, which is a pity. "We cannot afford it now" is a convenient excuse when likely as not the responsible body just gave up bothering about performance clashes as though quite inconsequential.

Back in 1991 however, on 5th October, *Creation* by Haydn was performed on the same evening at 92 different places in England, 6 in Wales, 9 in Scotland, 1 in Northern Ireland, 1 in the Channel Islands – a total for that single work of simultaneous clashing 109 different halls, churches, schools, colleges, theatres, chapels, abbeys, cathedrals, minsters, pavilions, leisure centres and hospitals. Could that have been by monstrous accident? No. It resulted from amazing co-operation under the heading of 'VOICES FOR HOSPICES' which obviously struck a common chord that resounded superbly.

The programme from which my information about it has been gleaned came into my possession with other 'stuff' from a former Sanderstead resident who 'downsized' on moving away in retirement. It set me wondering whether anyone in EDOA readership/membership might happen to have shared in that enterprise, being not too far away from High Wycombe or St Albans performances at that time and the number involved with choirs of some sort.

It was an idea significantly different from the massed choir events in places like the Royal Albert Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Central Hall Westminster, Barbican, et cetera, which have continuing followings and loyalties.

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[www.vfhchoir.com](http://www.vfhchoir.com) shows the total as 113. *Ed.*