



**WEBSITE
UP & RUNNING!**

We are pleased to announce that our website is now up and running and can be viewed at www.aspirochoir.ie. We look forward to welcoming lots of visitors and their comments and suggestions.

Photographs from the Christmas show will be uploaded to the website for viewing shortly so make sure you log on and check them out!



Membership Fees

Membership fees for the next month/term are now due to be paid. It is vitally important that fees are paid promptly to enable us to meet our running expenses and keep a positive cash flow balance. The office is open to receipt payments each Tuesday & Thursday evening between 5pm - 6.30pm. It is essential that membership forms are completed and given into the office should contact need to be made in case of emergency. Please keep us informed of any changes to mobile numbers and email addresses as they occur. They are our preferred methods of contact in an effort to keep costs down.

Our funding application to the Arts Council for the current year has been submitted to the Arts Council but due to the current climate we anticipate a reduction in funding. We won't have any news on Arts Council funding till the end of January but all arts organisations have been told to expect a significant reduction in funding for 2010. Also our funding from Carlow County Council and Carlow Town Council is not yet known - Hopefully however cuts will be kept to a minimum!

Many thanks for your continued support.



**January 2010
Newsletter**

Dear All,

Happy New Year to everyone!

We must start by saying very many thanks to all for the help, co-operation and support with the production of our debut performance at Visual Carlow in early December. Undoubtedly without everyone being on board this production would not have been possible. The positive commentary and feedback, together with the rave reviews received, confirmed that the audiences enjoyed the shows and were pleased that Carlow now has a venue to showcase local talent.

The commitment of all participants, whether on stage or behind the scenes highlighted the sense of teamwork achievable within Aspiro and hopefully the experience enjoyed will remain with all into the future.

As we start 2010 in difficult economic circumstances, we would appeal for everyone to work with us to ensure that the success enjoyed to date can be built upon to ensure a confident future for our organisation in the years to come.

Looking forward to a successful & enjoyable year ahead and thanking you for your continued support.

Prague Trip

Plans are underway for the Senior Choir to travel to Prague in March 2010. The group will include more than 20 members who will perform over a number of concerts/workshops.

We hope they will enjoy the experience and wish them all a safe journey.

Lyric FM's 'Choirs for Christmas Competition'



On Wednesday 23rd December Aspiro were announced as the winners of Primary School Category of Lyric FM's 'Choirs for Christmas Competition' on Classic Drive with Niall Carroll.

Now in its eleventh year the competition runs annually at Christmas with the purpose of sharing the wealth of community music making that is on going around the country. Over 200 choirs from all around the country rehearsed and recorded a specially chosen festive choral piece for the Competition. From this overwhelming number of entries a record 72 choirs were chosen for airplay from 8th - 23rd December on RTE lyric fm with almost every county in Ireland was represented in the competition.

Aspiro members aged 8/9 - 12/13 sang 'A Candy Cane Christmas' by Dave and Jean Perry, which was part of their recent Christmas Show in the GB Shaw Theatre and are the proud winners of €200 plus a specially commissioned plaque by the Abbey Stained Glass Studios.

New Members

Aspiro are currently accepting applications for new members for their various ensembles catering for boys and girls from age 6/7 up to 20 yrs and beyond. So spread the word and/or invite a friend to come along & join in the fun!



Junior & Leaving Certificate Music Practicals

Some of you might not be aware that Aspiro members can sing as part of their Junior & Leaving Certificate practical exams. At Leaving Certificate this is worth 50% of their overall mark in music, which is lot to a pupil looking to maximise their points. If they also play a musical instrument (at a standard that will help them to maximise their points) they can opt to do half and half - instrumental and voice. If they are not confident enough to sing on their own they are allowed to bring in two people per part when singing in parts (as they do in Aspiro). When singing in a group the examiner observes and listens to the pupil being examined to hear the contribution they make to the overall sound of the group.

Pupils moving into secondary school or making subject choices for Junior or Leaving Certificate would be encouraged to think about this if they are serious about maximizing their points and of course are serious about reaching high standards in their singing.

Aspiro members have for some years now being using their singing talents very successfully as part of their practical exams and examiners have commented on the high standard of singing and in some instances have asked groups for an encore!

Aspiro members who are using solo or group singing for their practical exam should by now have decided on the pieces they are doing. It is important they communicate to Mary if they intend doing group singing or solo (if they are not having one to one voice lessons) so she can advise on pieces - styles, tempos, and use of languages etc. and arrange a time to listen to the group and extra lessons if needed. Groups should be meeting together for practice at least fortnightly and weekly from February on as the practical exams are immediately after the Easter holidays.

Please contact Mary 087-6536143 if you have any queries.