

Dear Mr Winton

Reading Male Voice Choir

I am writing to express the sadness of the Choir at hearing last week of your father's death, and our condolences to you and your family at this very sad time for you all.

The Choir is proud of its association with your late father, Sir Nicholas Winton, who attended two of our concerts over the past five years, and on both occasions had a big impact on us. We were delighted to have him in our audience.

The first occasion was a concert we gave at Trinity Church, Lower Earley, Reading, in May 2010. We always sing to support and help raise money for local charities. On this occasion we were singing with the Charvil Girls' Choir, which at the time included a 12-year old local girl called Sophie Grosz De-Quenne, whose grandfather was one of the children your late father had helped escape on a Kindertransport train from Prague in 1938. At the interval, your father approached our Musical Director, Gwyn Arch MBE, and offered to donate £50 to the charity if we sang an encore of *Speed your Journey*, the Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves from Verdi's opera *Nabucco*. This we were very pleased to do. At this stage we did not know your father's identify, but we were doubly pleased to sing for him when we did. We still regard this as one of the highlights of our performing career, which goes back over 43 years.

Your late father told us that *Nabucco*, and in particular the Hebrew Slaves' Chorus, held particular relevance and resonance for him, and he told us that he would never play his CD of the opera again without thinking of the Choir. We in turn remember him whenever we sing the piece.

Sir Nicholas attended a second Choir concert, in February 2011. This was at All Saints Church, Marlow, and on this occasion he was our guest of honour. We sang *Speed your Journey* again for him, as part of the concert programme, and gave him a copy of our 40th anniversary CD, *XL*.

The Choir feels that it has been specially touched by having had this connection with your late father, and many men have expressed their personal sadness this week on hearing of his death. We still feature him on our website, an image taken at our 2011 Marlow concert of Sir Nicholas with our soprano soloist, Lori Tingay Weber.

Your late father was a remarkable and brave man who did great deeds in his life, with modesty and without personal regard. He made a difference to the lives of so many young Jewish children. The world is a poorer place with his death.

With our best wishes and deepest condolences,

John Clarke, Chairman
Reading Male Voice Choir