

THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION FOR ALL CHORISTERS

# NEWS & VIEWS

212

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHOIRS

SPRING 2017

**WORCESTER MALE VOICE CHOIR**  
*Highland Cathedral with Paddy on the pipes*

**SONGCYCLE**  
On yer bike?

**CONFERENCE 2017**  
Booking Forms inside

**NORWICH PHOENIX**  
Taking on the Eggheads

**K SHOES MALE VOICE CHOIR**  
Looking for a new image





From  
only  
£70.56 per  
choir

# Insurance that is in tune with your needs!

As a member of the National Association of Choirs we can offer you an insurance package from only £70.56 per choir, which includes:

- ◆ Money cover – up to a limit of £1,000
- ◆ Public and Products Liability – limit of indemnity £5,000,000
- ◆ Employers Liability – legal liability up to the limit of indemnity of £10,000,000

Higher limits can be provided and are subject to additional premiums.

**Additional cover can be arranged on an optional basis for a number of risks including:**

- ◆ All Risks on general choir property
- ◆ Personal effects of members
- ◆ Cancellation and postponement of productions
- ◆ Personal Accident
- ◆ Trustees and Directors Liability
- ◆ Public Liability top up to £10,000,000

To obtain a quotation or proposal form please contact our dedicated NAC insurance team:

Tel 01482 388513 Email [elaine.blakeston@jelfgroup.com](mailto:elaine.blakeston@jelfgroup.com) or visit our website

Jelf Insurance Partnership, Partnership House, Priory Park East  
Kingston upon Hull HU4 7DY  
Tel 01482 213215

**Jelf** | Insurance Partnership [www.insurance-partnership.com](http://www.insurance-partnership.com)

Jelf Insurance Partnership is a trading name of Jelf Insurance Brokers Ltd (Reg No. 0837227) which is part of Jelf Group plc (Reg No. 2975376) and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). Registered address: Hillside Court, Bowling Hill, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol BS37 6JX (Registered in England and Wales). Not all products and services offered are regulated by the FCA.

## Crawford's Corner



*I suppose I ought to wish everyone A Happy New Year but when it's already quite a way into the year I wonder what*

*the point would be.*

Here is the first issue of 2017 and I hope you find it worth reading. I fear it is a little later arriving than I would like but we can't have everything. Twenty-one choirs have contributed, which I find very pleasing. Everyone has been very busy and has travelled near and far to share song and fellowship.

They say 'Never explain, never apologise,' but I feel the need to do both to the wonderful gentlemen of the K Shoes Male Voice Choir. They sent me, with great satisfaction, an answer to my challenge to provide an image in portrait format that would be suitable for a front page picture. They sent me a rather good photograph of their choir which would have looked very good on the cover of this issue. Unfortunately for them Worcester Male Voice Choir included a marvellous image, of a lone piper, which I felt was the better of the two images for this issue. So, sorry K Shoes, you tried hard and another time it would have been successful. I have given you a large place on the Contents Page, it was the best I could do.

This issue also has something else rather different in that Jeff Campbell sent me a copy of his book in the hope that I would review it and advertise it so that he could sell copies to our membership. I think this was the most challenging thing I have been asked to do for some time. You will find my efforts on page 6. I really do hope that lots of people buy his book as it will provide much needed funds to benefit his granddaughter, Skye, who has Down's Syndrome.

Some choirs contribute to this publication on a regular basis, some occasionally and for some this issue represents their first attempt. I love to have all our regular contributions but it is especially pleasing when some take the plunge for the first time. It was rather nice to have a piece from Lesley Pringle, which is a new one from a member choir about her experiences as a new member of a choir. I hope you understood that.

The Amici Singers have been to Gibraltar and decided to let us all share in their delight. I would have loved some photos. How can you go abroad and not want to show everyone the photos. I've been to Gibraltar and as I write I can glance at a shelf and see a large Gibraltar shaped piece of blue glass. I must remember to dust it.

This issue will give you your last opportunity to use the booking forms to book for Annual Conference which, this year, is at the Cheltenham Chase Hotel and will, I trust, be very enjoyable. If you haven't been before, do come along. If you have been I look forward to seeing you again.

*Crawford*

## Chairman's Chat



*during January, even though learning and polishing our music continues.*

*After the very heavy work of concerts for Christmas on top of all the 'normal' commitments, there is some sort of peace to revel in*

In this issue our two new officers have introduced themselves. David is your man who will help you with all the fine details of PRS, copyright and anything else of that ilk because, let's admit it, it is a minefield which requires careful navigation. Karl has taken on the duties of music review and has dived in and reviewed a lot of music for his first report. All the legal things David deals with are rules and regulations, but Karl's reviews don't have those parameters, and his expressiveness might encourage you to expand your repertoire.

As usual I am reading about choirs' activities, social life, visits (both overseas and here in the UK) and I hope that these activities inspire the less adventurous of you to do anything that you dream of instead of just wishing. Music is a wonderful medium which unites us all – and the evidence is there in your write-ups, especially when new recruits joining choirs and realise what they're missing.

Details and programme of the annual conference - plus a booking form – are in the centrefold of this magazine, and I urge you to attend as it is a wonderful way to talk to other choirs, see merchandise on display

and also to hear choirs from that area in concert. The word is networking, but I feel that's too stuffy a word for the likes of us choristers. If I don't see you in Gloucester, there's always Norwich in 2017.

With my best wishes to you all.

*Brenda Wilkinson*



Members Open Forum  
Sunday 23 April 2017  
Cheltenham Chase Hotel  
- as part of Annual Conference

Saturday 17 June 2017  
11:00

Venue to be advised  
- please note date though.

Saturday 23 September 2017  
11:00

Best Western Plus  
Stoke on Trent City Centre  
Etruria Hall, Festival Way, Etruria,  
Stoke on Trent, ST1 5BQ

Sat 20 January 2018  
11:00

Twin Oaks Hotel  
Church Lane, Palterton  
Chesterfield



# CONT

ISSUE 212

## 6 Men Of Song

*We look at Jeff Campbell's book about Male Voice Choirs*

## 10 Amici Singers

*'Gibraltar? Yes please... lets's go'.*

## 13 The Phoenix Singers

*Lesley Pringle tells us about  
BEING THE NEW GIRL*

## 14 Caerphilly Ladies Choir

*This year they are celebrating their Golden Anniversary. Fifty wonderful years of singing together.*

### St Stythians Male Voice Choir

*Bristol Bound for a three day tour. John Houldsworth brings us the story.*

## 15 Mevagissey Male Voice Choir

*The men of Mevagissey Male Choir returned last month from a triumphant tour of Cyprus, where they entertained a huge audience at the ancient open-air amphitheatre in Curium.*

## 17 WILLENHALL SINGERS

*After struggling for the past three years to find and keep an accompanist we have two wonderful young men who are filling the rolls of accompanists and deputy MD/accompanist.*

### The Viva Musica Choir

*Autumn concert celebrated Her Majesty's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday.*

## 22 End Of The Track

*Eleven male vocalists – five tenors and six basses - came together eight years ago to form a singing group that specializes in music from the 1960s era (the Swinging Sixties).*

### Saddleworth Singers

*Thirtieth anniversary year*

## 23 Billingham Choral Society

*Billingham Choral Society was founded in 1951 and celebrated its 65<sup>th</sup> year in style.*

## 24 SongCycle

*The all singing all cycling male voice quartet*

### East Fife Male Voice Choir

*The choir was formed in 1957 in the Wemyss area of Fife, with a backing of the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation. It was a great outlet for the Miners of the time and others who have joined in the years since.*

## 26 The James Lambert Singers

*A mixed adult group of over 30 voices some of whom have been members since the choir was formed in 1969. Our repertoire is of popular light music, old and new, in English and Welsh which we sing to a pre-recorded accompaniment.*

## 27 The Glasgow Phoenix Choir

*The choir's new season got off to a great start with the first rehearsal of the year and a cheese and wine. We took the opportunity to have a glass of fizz to celebrate Marilyn J Smith's 25 years as conductor*

## 28 North Ferriby Ladies Choir

*Good-bye Zoe.*

## 29 Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir

*The choristers of the Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir are a happy bunch of men as they celebrate an unparalleled influx of new recruits (well unparalleled, probably, since its foundation in 1928).*

## 30 Worcester Male Voice Choir

*Autumn arrived and once more we were preparing for our Annual Concert.*

## 31 K Shoes Male Voice Choir

*I was challenged by your comments on the benefits of Portrait rather than Landscape format for choir member images!*

## 32 Cor Meibion Colwyn

*The choir has just completed a busy year, which included singing to audiences of thousands each time for the Proms in the Park and the Under 20 Rugby internationals in Parc Eirias Colwyn Bay, both of which were televised.*

## 34 Norwich Phoenix M V C NORWICH PHOENIX MVC TAKE ON THE EGGHEADS



Reg'd. Charity No. 1014630

**National Association of Choirs**  
*Joining the Nation in Choral Singing*

# ENTS

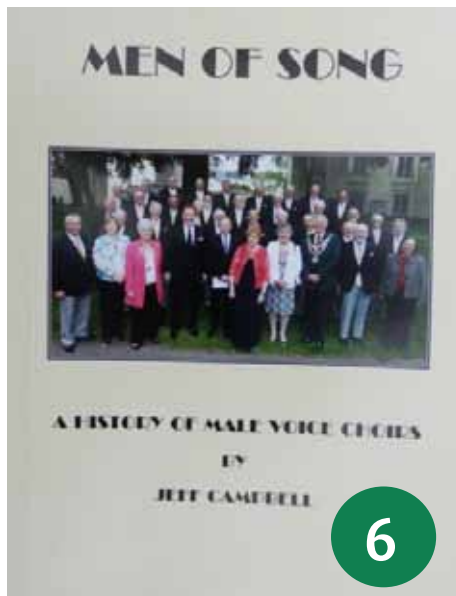
## REGULARS

- 3 Crawford's Corner
- Chairman's Chat
- 6 Music & Festivals
- 8 Puzzle Pages
- 33 Music Reviews
- 35 Puzzle Solutions
- New Members' Directory
- 36 Officer Information
- How To Send Stuff In

## CONFERENCE 19-21 BOOK NOW

## ADVERTISING

- 25 Alan Simmons Music
- 16/26 Barbershop
- 12 Fred Olsen Cruise Lines
- 2 Jelf Insurance
- 23 John Trent Wallace
- 31 Lyn Oakes
- 9 Majestic Publications
- 11 Mendip Male Voice
- 18 Rayburn Tours
- 26 Slaters



**Last date for submissions for Issue 213  
SUMMER 2017 - 30 April**

Views expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the policy, or opinions of the National Association of Choirs. Manuscripts submitted to the Editor for consideration must be the original work of the author and not under consideration by any other publication. Advertisements or other inserted material are accepted subject to current terms and conditions. Acceptance of an advertisement does not signify endorsement of the products or services by NAC.

## Music Officer



Let us help you.

The NAC Music Library is sitting there awaiting calls for help, but this year the telephone has not rung...

The library is not huge, but does contain the occasional little gem.

Ellan Vannin (SATB) sits alongside Doctor Foster (TTBB) with Waltzing Matilda (TTBB) snuggled in alongside. If you would like to see the complete list drop me an email. There are about 140 records within the library, a majority being male voice choir material. Give me a shout

[music.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:music.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

The thorny issue of pricing is still hot in my head! After some success with Boosey and Hawkes have been very willing to look at the pricing structure of their short order titles. I am still in conversation with Hal Leonard about the Ricordi titles and now Music Sales about the Durand catalogue, particularly Saint-Saen's *Ave Maria*: for just three pages of music, the current price levied is £6.50.

Sorry, you can get up off the floor now. I will let you know how we get on.

The other problem is titles which go out of print because a new edition has been published.

Recently a customer contacted me requiring a dozen top up copies of two titles which are out of print.

New arrangements have been published, but of course my customer didn't want these as he has half a set of the old one. Now we are doing battle with Hal Leonard about trying to print the old version... don't hold your breath.

Happy singing in 2017.

*David Goodwin*

## Music Review Officer

### An Introduction

*Karl lives in Overseal in South Derbyshire at the heart of Englands National Forest.*

He trained under the late John Dethick who was at one time the principle Baritone at Sadlers Wells and a past GMVC celebrity artiste.

Karl has been singing for many years, and has competed successfully at music festivals across the country. His performance repertoire includes Oratorio and Opera.

Themed evenings, which include Victorian and Edwardian, Lieder and Show songs are also a speciality.

Karl teaches Singing and voice coaching from his home in Overseal.

Accurate interpretation of composers' ideas from the scores have always been a central starting point for Karl's performances with personal interpretation added as the performance rehearsals progress.

'I have always believed in going back to the accurate notation as a solid foundation to the construction of a convincing performance.' He said. 'So many performances have been less than convincing because both soloists and choirs have learnt pieces from commercial CDs along with that CDs tuning and interpretation'

'I also encourage all singers in choral groups and solos to sing without any notes of words to look at as these inevitably lead the singer to look down, become introspective and not to make real contact with the audience.

One of the finest pieces of advice I have ever been given is 'Don't read the lesson – Preach the sermon'.

Karl is married to Dilys and they have three children all of whom are musicians and teachers.

Karl feels it an honour to be only the 6<sup>th</sup> Musical Director of the Gresley Male Voice choir in 112 years. He has been MD since 2004 with the time passing with great enjoyment for him and hard work by the choir. 'It only feels like 5 years to me.' he says, 'How long it feels like to the lads in the choir, I am not sure!'

He also owns his own business 'Karl Harper Music Services' under which umbrella he performs, teaches singing and repairs brass and woodwind instruments, reflecting his continuing expertise as a professional engineer.

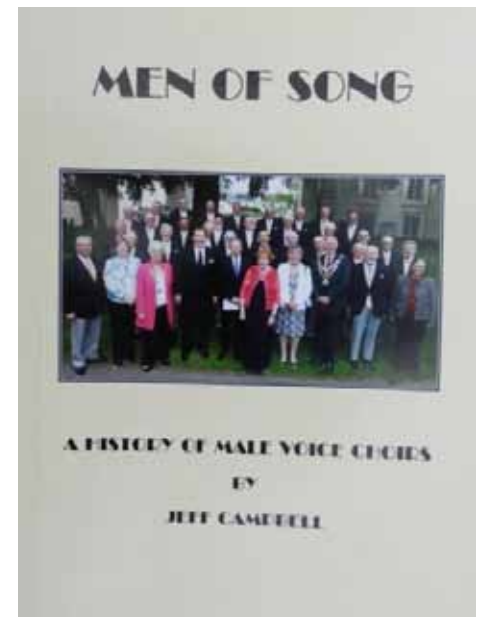
Karl's engineering experience coupled with his music and instrument repair skills have also been put to good use whilst designing a new trumpet the pTrumpet, the only trumpet in the world to use a totally plastic valve system and pipe run. The instrument has a consistent circular bore for all its main tubing with no constrictions anywhere.

He is currently working on a radical new design concept for a flute which will allow all players to own a lightweight and reliable instrument.

He is also working on equipment for the use of disabled performers so that all can have inclusive participations in performance.

**READ HIS FIRST REVIEWS ON PAGE 33**

*Crawford*



*I was recently sent a book with a request that I might look at it with a view to writing about it in this magazine and helping to promote the sale of it.*

The title of the book is 'Men Of Song' and it is subtitled 'A History Of Male Voice Choirs'. Its author is Jeff Campbell who is a chorister with The Tamar Valley Male Voice Choir of our Cornwall Group. He was born in Lancashire and previously sung with Rochdale Male Voice Choir and Elland Male Voice Choir.

While reading this book, I was glad that I was not a librarian tasked with finding the right bookshelf on which to place it. Neither the title nor subtitle really explain what the book is. It is part biography, part diary of the doings of the Tamar Valley Male Voice Choir, part collection of jokes and humorous stories (some of which I hope to use in News & Views) and part a collection of Male Voice Choir information. My own choir appears on page 234.

On page 84 is a list of Jeff's top ten male voice songs, with Morte Christe in first place. He also includes the audience's

most popular which he has gleaned by his assessment of the audience reaction when his choir sings the songs. You Raise Me Up has first place here. He includes his Christmas top ten with O Holy Night in first place and a German carol called Shneewaltzer in last place. His audience's most popular list for the Christmas season has Shneewaltzer in top spot.

He is concerned for the future of male voice choirs and I'm sure he would get no arguments from other MVCs as to the need for recruitment of 'young blood'. In the middle of these musings he is thinking about a regular publication about choir activities and performances. He suggests 'The Choir' or 'Chorister' as possible titles. (How about 'News & Views' Jeff?) he follows this with telling the reader that Brian Blessed is president of Cotswold MVC and lists nine of that gentleman's achievements, none of which include singing in a male voice choir.

Jeff includes a short history of the German Männerchor which may interest those choirs, like my own, that have in the past forged links with choirs abroad.

Chapter 3 is devoted to a description of a number of the members of The Tamar Valley Male Voice Choir with photographs included. The following chapter is devoted to Jeff's family beginning with the story to Skye, his granddaughter for whose benefit the book is written. Jeff will use the profits from the sales of the book for Skye who has Down's Syndrome.

Chapter 5 on gives the results of Jeff's extensive research into the male voice choirs of Britain. I don't know if he has missed any but he has certainly worked hard to include a great number.

In his conclusion he hopes that people have enjoyed reading his book and come to know his family and his dog, Scoot. He hopes that male readers who are not in a choir seriously consider joining one. He also hopes that any reader who knows of a male voice choir that has been missed will contact him with details of the choirs name and history. He hopes that he has persuaded the reader that male voice singing is a terrific hobby and experience which will long continue.

Details of how to obtain this book are included. Think about it. Perhaps when you

are lying on the beach this summer or sitting in a train or plane seat on the way to a holiday destination, you may find 'Men Of Song' a perfect way to pass the time. Especially when you are not singing in a male voice choir.

The paperback book is 344 pages with full colour pictures and costs £8 plus post and packing, payable by cheque. It is available now and initial enquiries should be made to

[menofsong2016@gmail.com](mailto:menofsong2016@gmail.com)

The postage and packing for the book to a UK address is £3.00. Send your cheque for £11 per book, payable to Jeff Campbell.

Don't forget your full name and address.

Jeff Campbell  
12 Fawns Close  
Ermington, Devon  
PL21 9NB

For any enquiries 01548 831559

*Crawford*



PETER DAVIES



PHILIP LAWSON

## **BANKS MUSIC PUBLICATIONS** NEW MALE VOICE CHOIR MATERIAL

The Granary, Wath Court, Hovingham,  
York YO62 4NN

Tel: 01653 628545

Email: [info@banksmusicpublications.co.uk](mailto:info@banksmusicpublications.co.uk)

[www.banksmusicpublications.co.uk](http://www.banksmusicpublications.co.uk)



ALWYN HUMPHREYS

### **STOP THE CAVALRY** (TTBB) PCS33 £1.95

*The classic Christmas hit from Jona  
Lewie, arranged by Philip Lawson*

### **THE WONDER OF YOU** (TTBB) PCS39 £1.75

*Performed by The Platters & Elvis,  
arranged by Alwyn Humphreys*

### **OH! IT'S A LOVELY WAR!** (TTBB) PCS40 £1.75

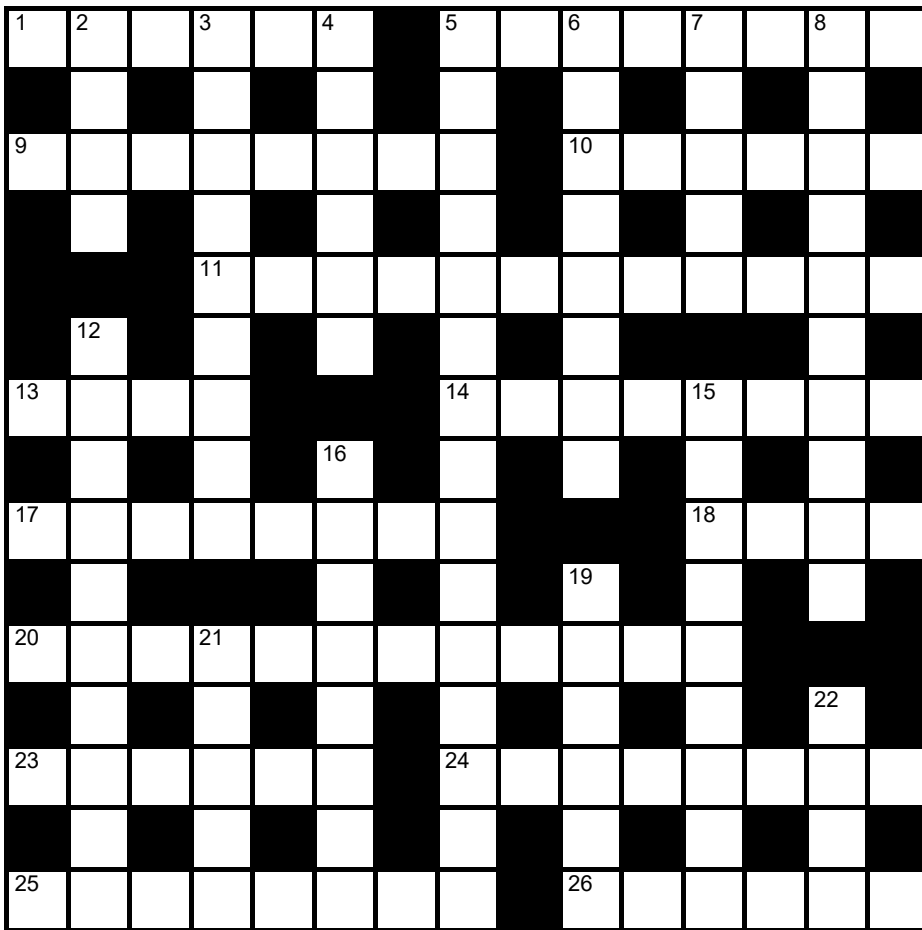
*The popular title song from the Joan  
Greenwood WW1 musical*

### **MEN OF POWER & SONG** (TTBB) ECS573 £1.95

*Written by Peter Davies - for all men  
who stand and sing!*

### **PANTYFEDWEN (TTBB) ECS591 £1.95** *The Welsh hymn tune, arranged by Tom Buchanan*

# PUZZLE PAGE



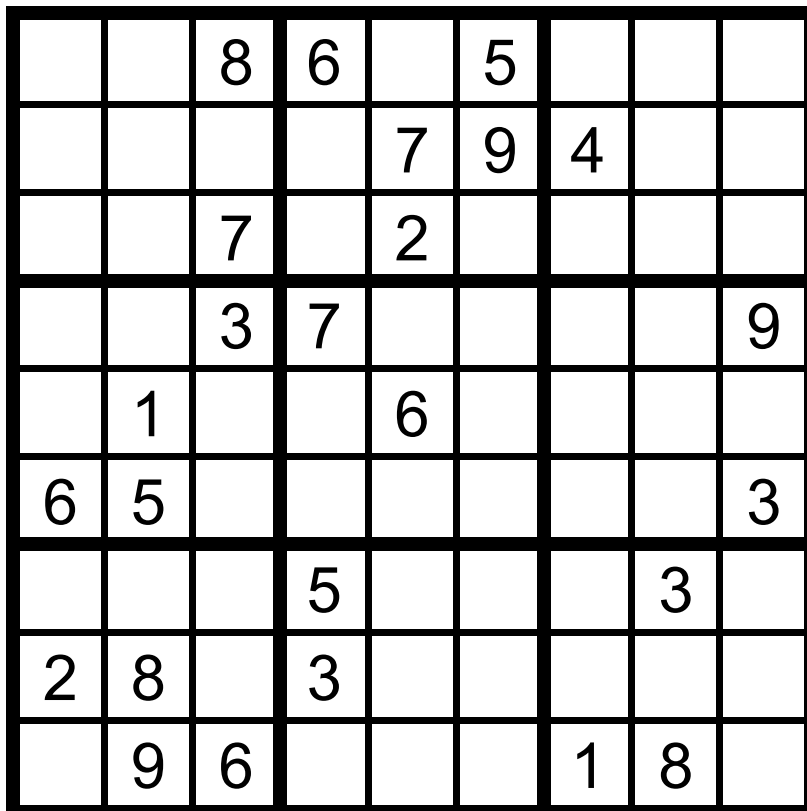
**Across**

- 1 Tough skin we hear (6)
- 5 Not disturbed by strife (8)
- 9 Old rodent of Brazil makes music (8)
- 10 Wine in a ferment (6)
- 11 Climacteric change of genial chef (6,2,4)
- 13 Mixed meat forms a squad (4)
- 14 Perhaps I'm a nasty supporter (8)
- 17 Within this corp I only feels the sting (8)
- 18 No Clue
- 20 Twice the sugar-coating (6-6)
- 23 Approachability enfolds paralytic anxiety disorder (6)
- 24 Not now (2,6)
- 25 Confound and bewilder (8)
- 26 Some less than two (6)

**Down**

- 2 This year could be intangible (4)
- 3 Tardy person has Camelot excited with the queen (9)
- 4 Broadcast blanket (6)
- 5 Cultivator's repast (10,5)
- 6 The morning isobar mixed nectar and pollen (8)
- 7 Modern missive wandering a mile (1-4)
- 8 Always triumphant (10)
- 12 Plot materials and directions night covers (10)
- 15 Stillness of a pace initially not counted yet (9)
- 16 Clerisy becomes IRA title (8)
- 19 Rhododendron possibly (6)
- 21 Mr Hindi (5)
- 22 Hateful intent (4)

**S  
U  
D  
O  
K  
U**



To have your own copy of this page to work on go to [www.nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](http://www.nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk) and look for the latest copy of News & Views then print the page Easy!



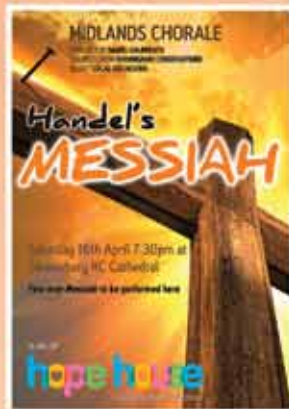


## ARE YOU ORGANISING A FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR YOUR LOCAL CHARITY?

## YOUR HOSPICE NEEDS YOU!

Will you be holding an event for your local Hospice to raise funds and celebrate their valuable work in the community?

We can provide **free of charge** complimentary programmes for your event.



majestic

PUBLICATIONS LTD

5 minerva court | chester west employment park | chester CH1 4QT  
tel » 01244 852360 | fax » 01244 852361  
email » jane.montague@majesticpublications.co.uk | www.majesticpublications.co.uk

## Amici Singers Thames North

### 'Gibraltar? Yes, please...let's go.'

*This was the reaction of the Committee, when Douglas Coombes and Carole Lindsay-Douglas suggested, back in early 2015, that a trip to the tiny British Overseas Territory, tucked onto Spain, might be a possibility. The whole choir enthusiastically embraced the idea and plans were made to take a choir of 37 and a number of friends away for a four-day adventure. Our superb accompanist, Trevor Hughes, was with us and our much-loved President, Brian Mack.*

Wednesday 25 May

The classic start to so many an Amici trip, a ride to Heathrow in a Safford's coach. Our green uniform made identification very simple, except occasionally when a random stranger had chosen to also travel in Amici colours - they were probably bemused as to why there were so many in jade.

Landing at Gibraltar was exciting as the runway crosses the road and is built out into the sea. When we came off the plane it was wonderful to step into warm sunshine and get a look at the famous Rock, towering above us.

We stayed at the Elliott hotel, a friendly, family-run business, well-situated to walk to most places.

Thursday 26 May

Breakfast on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor, with a stunning view over Gibraltar, before setting off to the cathedral. We're introduced to the Dean, the Revd. John Paddock. He talked us through the order of service we would be participating in on Sunday. We then formed a big scrambled semi-circle to sing the Dunstable *Alleluia*, appreciating the amazing acoustics. Walked short distance to the newly restored King's Chapel, a little gem with fascinating memorial plaques. Another a capella sing.

Free to find lunch, we scattered before the afternoon rehearsal.

Waiting outside the convent building, now the residence of the Governor of Gibraltar, we watched the small ceremony of Changing the Guard. We were then allowed into the convent, with a watchful security guard ensuring that a random tourist didn't slip in disguised as an Amici or 'loved one'. Greatly appreciated the grandeur of the double staircase, the decorated ceilings and

delightful courtyard garden in the centre of the building with orange trees and bougainvillea. Positioning choir and chamber ensemble created a logistical challenge. Instead of the carefully voiced three rows we'd rehearsed in, we became five rows, with players & Trevor to one side.

Two young lads from a nearby Spanish Conservatoire, walked across the border, to play 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> violin respectively. They joined Jane Roper (violin) our President, Brian Mack (viola) and Robert Brooke (cello). It was great to sing through the *Quedlinburg Missa Brevis* with them.

Then there was time to change and have something to eat/drink before the performance.

With only a few minutes before the start at 20.00 the audience was decidedly sparse but then a steady trickle of people arrived, clearly the Mediterranean relaxed approach and the gilt chairs looked less empty. Even with the windows opened behind us plus a large electric fan gently rotating in the corner, it was decidedly hot.

Undeterred, Douglas introduced the choir and we were off into his *Missa Brevis Pro Urbe Quedlinburg*. The small group valiantly followed Douglas; from the choir's point of view the accompaniment felt very different to the familiar keyboard one we rehearsed to, but it was really special to have the colours of the strings. The audience clearly appreciated the *Missa Brevis* and it was a great pleasure to give it another performance. The Spanish lads received extra applause.

As Douglas introduced items from '*Sing with the Spirit*' the choir repositioned themselves, the players left the stage and we changed gear to sing a very different style of music. During the spirituals, the heat took its toll of several choir members who had to either sit down or slip out... The rest of us made it through to the end with just the odd flap of a music folder to create a bit of extra breeze.

The second half of the programme allowed Trevor to work his particular magic with the Jerome Kern medley and the Gershwin songs. The folk songs were greatly enjoyed too. We left the Convent before 22.00 and returned to the hotel where there was a convivial jazz session...

Friday 27 May

Plenty of coffee and sustaining breakfasts were taken to prepare us for the school workshops ahead of us.

The first of these was at St Paul's First School, where a delightful collection of children excitedly filled their hall to await... what? I expect they'd been told that a choir from England was coming to see them and they were going to have a sort of music lesson. Douglas bounded in front of them and immediately launched into a rapid series of 'call and response' sounds. The children (and Amicis) soon got the hang of this and beamed with pleasure as they engaged in the most entertaining musical games - not realising that they were being taught to follow a conductor, read music and even compose a simple melody.

We left the school and headed in search of more coffee. The café we descended on probably didn't know what had hit them, but their takings should have been up significantly.

Our second stop was Bishop Fitzgerald Middle School. We were shown into a gym and seated on very low forms in a semi-circle. An electric keyboard was wheeled in for Trevor; the school choir entered and sat cross-legged before us. Again, the follow-my-leader vocal games pitched at a harder level for the slightly older children.

Refreshed by lunch, we were then ready to visit the third school, close to the hotel. This time we were actually out in the playground, which had a sun cover, but was still very warm. Chattering youngsters filed in, sat crossed legged and gazed expectantly at us. Again, Douglas played games with them and we enjoyed their enthusiasm. In the heat we were all feeling quite soporific but the session went very well, particularly a spontaneous chorus of 'Happy Birthday' to a little boy who was six - his face as we started to sing and he realised that it was for him, was a picture.

Then we had free time until the conducting workshop at GAMPA.

The Gibraltar Academy of Music and Performing Arts is located in what had once been an ammunition store tunneled into the Rock, so windowless and brick-lined.

The choir was seated in three rows facing a somewhat apprehensive group of youngsters who'd come to learn about conducting. Douglas made us sing, *I've got rhythm* and got us to do it without him - to show how a good choir can manage alone. Then he asked, 'What can/must a conductor add?' Douglas explained how conductors should never get in the way of the music and how easy it is for a conductor to hinder rather than help. This was all fascinating

stuff for the choir, as well as his pupils. We sang the first eight bars of the Dunstable 'Alleluia'. In turn a few brave youngsters had a go at starting us, showing a crescendo/diminuendo, bringing us off and re-starting. Not at all easy! Their faces were wonderful - enormous concentration, frustration when they couldn't convey what they wanted to happen and beaming pleasure when something worked. For a piece of music with a very different feel, we then did the opening of 'Anthem for Doomed Youth'. This time, the young conductors had to show a really strong opening beat and learnt about the importance of diphthongs. So much to take in and so much to constantly work at...

Our dinner was at Cafe Solo in Casemates Square. A long table was reserved for those who had wanted to eat outside on the Terrace and another inside, for the prudent souls who decided not to risk getting cold after sunset. It was a leisurely affair but all we had to do was chat with friends and relax.

Saturday 28 May

A rarity on an Amici trip. Totally free day. However, most of the party had opted to take a Dolphin Safari and trip to the Rock. This wasn't happening until 11.15, thus giv-

ing most people a relaxed start to the day.

However, my husband, Alistair and I opted to climb the Mediterranean Steps, a fairly steep ascent of the Rock. At one place where we'd paused, my phone pinged and a text from O<sup>2</sup> cheerfully welcomed me to Morocco, it showed how close we were to Africa. We reached the top with a sense of considerable achievement. Explored the top of the Rock and came back down by the cable car, having carefully avoided too close a contact with the inquisitive Barbary Apes who have made the Rock their home.

Rest of day was spent pottering about sightseeing and having dinner. As we walked back to the hotel, frogs were singing their nocturnal recital - a real sign that we were in the Mediterranean.

Sunday 29 May

At breakfast, everyone full of what they'd done with their free day. Facebook posts already recording hilarity on the Dolphin Safari as laughing Amicis were drenched by waves coming over the boat and also a video of a group singing *Our love is here to stay...underground*.

The Governor attended the morning service. It felt very different singing the Mass

liturgically, but extremely beautiful, as the movements were absorbed into their 'proper' place in the service.

We encircled the congregation to sing 'Deep Peace'. The sentiment was greatly appreciated by those there and when we mingled afterwards the compliments flowed.

Back to the Eliott to check out and have some lunch before returning to the airport.

Uneventful flight home.

Our delightful mini-holiday was over.

*Elizabeth Gammell*

Why was the musician drunk?

He tried using a fifth with his tonic.



# For Sale Choir Staging with Trailer

Good, firm, solid set, made up of 5 risers for the staging, plus back and side safety rails. Purchased from 'Black Cat Music', their website: <https://www.blackcatmusic.co.uk/staging-risers/risers.html> gives a good demonstration of its simplicity in erecting. When up, the overall width is 6.25m [20'6"], depth is 1.6m [5'3"]; using the floor as a 4th 'step', an overall depth of 1.8m [6'] will accommodate 50/60 singers. The width can be reduced by leaving one or more sections out.



The staging is stored and transported to and from venues in a trailer, which will be supplied with the staging. All you need is a tow-bar. In 9 years, it has not had a great use - some 4/5 times a year.

**Offers or more info. to Mendip Male Voice Choir** via website or from Martin Dymond, Stage Manager, 01761 412654.



Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

# Choirs at sea

**Seek out adventure, explore new destinations, soak up cultures and traditions, and enjoy scenic sailing along rivers and through impressive fjords, all on a Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines holiday.**

A representative group of Côr Meibion De Cymru (The South Wales Male Choir) choristers took part in the Fred. Olsen "Fjords, Mountains and Glaciers" cruise in August of 2016 on board MS *Black Watch*.

The choir thrilled fellow passengers with two formal concerts (in addition to many more sporadic outbursts of song) as the *Black Watch* travelled from Harwich in mid-August to three ports in Norway and through some of its most picturesque fjords.

The cruise was blessed with excellent weather and the party responded accordingly. Both of the "formal" concerts aboard *Black Watch* were performed to

full capacity audiences and the delighted fellow passengers gave the choir a standing ovation at the end of each concert.

The whole tour party was most impressed, not only by the standards of service that they received whilst on board *Black Watch*, but also the polite, efficient and cheerful manner of the friendly staff. Choir vice-president Phil Howells thanked Captain Danielsen and his team for making the cruise on his "Happy Ship" such an enjoyable and memorable experience.

*Barri Hurford, Choir Compere, South Wales Male Voice choir.*

#### Choir Group Benefits:

- Tailor-made cruise fare
- Free places for group escorts
- Funding towards transport to and from the port
- Private rehearsal space on board
- The opportunity to perform for other guests
- Private choir drinks party
- Group dining
- Specialist shore excursions

**CONTACT  
US NOW  
TO WAITLIST  
FOR OUR 2018  
BROCHURE**



For a tailor-made quote for your choir please contact our **Group & Specialist Sales Team** on **01473 746 169** or email **group.sales@fredolsen.co.uk** from 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday

Group benefits may vary depending on cruise chosen. Please contact us for a tailor-made group quote on your chosen cruise.



## The Phoenix Singers Lincolnshire

### BEING THE NEW GIRL

*Just for the record I'm not a girl; at 52 I decided to join a choir for the very first time. All of us, at some point, have been the new girl (or boy...) haven't we?*

At 52 I decided to give up my full time job in order to do some of the things that I never had time to get around to, you know like knocking the garden into shape - growing vegetables (think of the money I would save), drawing and painting, sewing and music. Many years ago I played 2<sup>nd</sup> flute for a local orchestra: simply because there wasn't a slot for a third. So after contacting my old friend Amanda, who still played, I was soon convinced to accompany her to the choir that she sings with. She reassured me that they were a friendly lot and that they sang a good and varied programme so I thought I might give it a go. After all I can sing beautifully - recalls triumph at a karaoke evening after too many G & Ts.

So it was with a certain amount of trepidation that I turned up at a rather forbidding church where The Phoenix Singers hold their weekly rehearsals. I tried to make a quiet entrance but the huge wooden door creaked rather noisily and many a head turned so I tried to remind myself that they were a friendly lot as I was peered at. Amanda had told the director that I would be coming and I was welcomed in, given an enormous file of music and a friend to sit with at the back.

Right, this is week one, I thought to myself, I'll just sit and listen, but my new friend encouraged me. I stood up and sat down when everyone else did, I gazed at the music and tried to read the words and the notes at the same time and did that silent singing that we all did to start with... didn't we? The choir was amazing, I was blown away at how 25 ladies could produce such a fabulous sound, all of those different parts fitting together beautifully, I confess I felt rather humbled and more than a little scared. Driving home afterwards, my head was filled with music and I found myself singing and glowing - music does that doesn't it?

Next the big question was about what part to sing. Initially I was rather tempted by 2<sup>nd</sup> soprano - nestling nicely in the middle and not too high - but the problem is that singing is not as easy as playing the flute where as long as my fingers were in the right



The Phoenix Singers  
Me - 5<sup>th</sup> from the left on the back row

place then the right note would come out, with singing I could see that I should sing E flat but didn't know what that should sound like. In the end I plumped for singing 1<sup>st</sup> soprano because the melody was simply easier to sing, and I could always do that invisible singing for anything higher than an E flat.

So for the first few weeks I was a barely audible member of the choir, I began to get to know the music, Christmas pieces in August - are all choirs like that? I began to make some new friends and slowly began to enjoy myself. I felt encouraged and supported by my fellow choristers and found that Gloria, our director, was not quite as formidable as she first seemed, nearly, but not quite.

It was time for my first outing with the choir, an NAC concert in Grimsby. I was issued with my uniform, a rather flamboyant green affair. Again that feeling of unease and being well out of my depth washed over me as I arrived at the hall with hundreds of others. As we all changed into our uniforms something wonderful happened, for the first time I felt part of something that was truly worth feeling proud of. Each choir had its turn, we all did some pieces all together, then it was our turn, sick with nerves I walked onto the stage with no sheet music, Gloria is very firm on that, but as soon as we all started singing it was magical. I thought I wanted to join a choir to get better at singing and make some new friends, but it is only when you perform that it all really clicks in to place.

There have been more concerts since then, and with practice I have become better - even managing the occasional, if rather muted, top F - but nothing has compared

so far to the buzz after that first concert in Grimsby. I am now a member of our committee and it was at my first meeting that I was given a copy of News and Views. I felt I should share how now I am realising that while it might be considered miraculous for my singing to ever set the world on fire, I can fully appreciate the magic of many voices coming together.

Needless to say, the garden remains as full of dandelions as ever and I still go to the Co-op for my carrots; my watercolour set still has the wrapping on it and the pile of fabric is untouched but I am a fully paid up and active member of The Phoenix Singers - and I love it.

So why not go forth and be that friend to encourage someone to start singing with a choir - I am now utterly indebted to Amanda for opening up this fantastically new, and incredibly lyrical, world to me.

*Lesley Pringle*

### CHORAL STAGING FOR SALE

Quality Wenger Risers

for up to 100 voices.

Ten 3-step sets

complete with safety rails

and eight additional top steps

allowing different configurations

to be considered.

For further details

and photographs please contact

**01642 466938 or 01642 474730**

## Caerphilly Ladies Choir

### Wales South

2016 is a momentous year for the members of Caerphilly Ladies Choir. The choir first came into being in January 1966, and was known as the Margaret Roach Singers for thirty years. In 1996, many years after Margaret Roach's death, the choristers decided to change the choir's title to Caerphilly Ladies Choir, emphasising its connection with the town and the newly formed Caerphilly County Borough. So this year we are celebrating our Golden Anniversary. Fifty wonderful years of singing together.

The choir is based at Ysgol y Castell, Crescent Road, Caerphilly, and practices are held every Tuesday evening during term time. Our Director of Music is Jean Davies and our accompanist is Beverley Baker. The deputy MD and assistant accompanist is Ellie Baker. The choristers share a love of singing, raising funds for worthy causes and bringing enjoyment to many. We have great social times together too. Every May we go on a tour and we have sung in venues in Wales, England, Scotland, and abroad in France, Belgium, Germany and Spain. During these tours we link up for a joint concert with a local male choir. We have developed a wide repertoire, equally at home singing Welsh melodies, spirituals, opera choruses and sacred music as performing songs from musicals and popular songs.

The choir have twice taken part in the 'Festival of Brass and Music' at the Royal Albert Hall in London, joining with many other choirs to raise funds for Cancer Research UK. Only one other choir came from Wales.

So, during this Golden Anniversary year our forty two choristers have enjoyed many special events. We started off with a special dinner, followed in February with a visit to the Houses of Parliament. The highlight of that visit was giving a concert in the Speaker's House to MPs and members of the House of Lords. This was arranged by one of our Vice Presidents, our MP Wayne David. Since February we have given many concerts for charities locally and over the border into Gloucestershire twice. For our May tour this year we went to Cornwall. We were based in Looe and we gave a joint concert with Polperro Fishermen's Choir. We have sung in quite a variety of buildings but this was a first for us to sing inside the Lifeboat Station, after the boats had been taken out of course. In June we celebrated our special year with a Fifty Years of Song concert, with a duo



Caerphilly Ladies Choir

Cantare, supporting us. We invited former choristers from the last fifty years to come along. Many of them came and joined us in singing our final piece. Just after that we sang at a wedding celebration. This was very special to us as one of our sopranos, Jayne, had just married our MP Wayne David. Our Summer events culminated in a very special dinner when former choristers came from far and wide to celebrate with us.

This autumn we have continued our Golden Year of Song. One very important concert we gave was one to raise funds for the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund. We raised over £2,200. We recently sang at a chorister's son's wedding, and we have also entertained locally. Christmas carols are now on our practice list. Soon our special Golden Year will end, but we are now aiming for our next special year in ten years time. We are enthused by the joy and pleasure we get from singing together, and look forward to 2017. Our tour to Ireland in May 2017 is already arranged.

[www.caerphillyladieschoir.co.uk](http://www.caerphillyladieschoir.co.uk)

**Marjorie Gray**  
**Publicity Officer and Chairperson**

## St Stythians Male Voice Choir

### Cornwall

*Thursday 20 October. On a clear and bright autumnal morning, our two coaches containing 65 passengers (including 29 choristers) left Stithians' Methodist Church. After a brief comfort break at Hatherleigh we pressed on to Taunton for lunch. For some of us locally made faggots added to the holiday feeling. Thankfully, there was no time for shopping before travelling to the Doubletree Hotel in the centre of Bristol. This was to be our base for the next three nights - an excellent choice made by Kathryn, our Concert Secretary. On arrival there*

*was slight confusion over bookings. One room being double booked, which could have proved interesting - a bass and a baritone co-habiting! Whatever next?*

All issues were promptly sorted and we were treated to an excellent meal of either cod or chicken or a vegetarian option. There was then time for a quick practice before relaxing in the bar or venturing in to the 'outside world'. The Brewery House, only ten minutes walk away proved to be a good option (if you like a decent pint brewed on the premises, CAMRA recommended) although the entertainment in the bar at the hotel was, I am told, most enjoyable even if the whiskey was a little expensive.

Friday 21 October. An 'all you can eat' breakfast served between 6.30 and 10.00 and the 'icing on the cake', so to speak, black pudding. What more could anyone want? Then time for a leisurely walk around Bristol before a most interesting harbour trip. With our appetites duly whetted a small group of us decided to take the bus tour of the city. The guide made this most entertaining and informative. However, I think he thought we were never going to get off as we stayed on the bus for two hours, value for money. We arrived back at the hotel primed with all the relevant facts relating to Bristol's development since Anglo-Saxon times (Brigstow). The only negative is the revelation that John Cabot was in fact Giovanni Caboto from Genoa. Well at least Isambard Kingdom Brunel was English. It was necessary to have an early dinner prior to our performance at Staple Hill Methodist Church with OTM Bristol Chamber Choir (they are an auditioned choir under the Direction of Tom Jones, that's not unusual). The compère was Dr Roy Wales, St Stythians Choir's president. Is there a link?

The Bristol Chamber Choir sang in tight harmony, a really clear and concise sound,

most notably Seal Lullaby, as well as more modern pieces such as *Hallelujah* and *Stand By Me*. St Stythians MVC performed their eclectic repertoire of 'classics' as well as songs from the shows. An appreciative audience responded enthusiastically. After the show a lively after-glow took place back at the hotel led by Roger Richards.

Saturday 22 October. An early morning call was necessary in order to visit the largest parish church in England, next door to the hotel, which was very impressive. At 11.00 our party travelled to Bath and despite road works, we had plenty of time to explore the delights of the city; the Abbey; shops; rugby ground; narrow boats negotiating the locks. The evening concert took place at St Luke's Church, Wellsway and featured the Silver Ring Choir of Bath and St Stythians MVC. The programme of both choirs was extremely varied and a capacity audience responded enthusiastically. The choirs received a standing ovation at the end of the concert as St Stythians were requested to sing *Trelawny*. Dr Wales commented that 'This is the best that I have heard the choir sing' rare praise indeed from such an eminent musician. After the concert we enjoyed the most generous hospitality of the Silver Ring Choir. A contented group of choristers then entertained those present with Cornish songs and sea shanties. A most memorable evening was concluded by the after-glow back at the hotel. A lady celebrating her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday certainly won't forget the experience.

Sunday 23 October. After another excellent breakfast, time for a couple of songs in the foyer before Roy Wales, again, complimented both Ken and Kathryn, as well as the choir on their performance of the previous evening. Next stop Exeter and time for lunch in the sun before returning to the rain of Cornwall, never mind. What a fantastic tour.

Thanks, must go first, to Kathryn for all her time spent in organizing the tour, it must have taken days; our drivers Paddy and Gary, from OTS, who were brilliant and were 'prepared to go the extra mile'; the Doubletree

Hotel for excellent food and service and to our host choirs in Bristol and Bath.

If you feel that you would enjoy spending time with a very social group of people who enjoy singing and raising money for charity then why not join us. Our practice night is every Tuesday night 7.45-9.30 in the schoolroom at Stithians' Methodist Church, where there is plenty of parking. We look forward to seeing you there. Please check the choir website for further details or contact Secretary David Warren on 01326 341147 or 07894012522; Chairman Garnet Martin on 01326 240017 or any other choir member; or just look at our website at:

[ststythiansmalechoir.org.uk](http://ststythiansmalechoir.org.uk)

you can also follow us on Facebook

**John Houldsworth**

## Mevagissey Male Voice Choir Cornwall

*The men of Mevagissey Male Choir returned last month from a triumphant tour of Cyprus, where they raised almost £1,000 for the Royal British Legion at one concert, and entertained a huge audience at another, which was staged at the ancient open-air amphitheatre in Curium.*

A 70-strong party, plus accompanist Matt Fox's 5-month old son, Joel, and including 34 singers, made the trip to Limassol at the invitation of the Akrotiri and Episkopi Military Wives Choirs, who came together to host a concert at the dramatic, 3,000 seat Curium theatre, overlooking the Mediterranean and dating back to the first century BC.

The ladies were extending a relationship between the military wives' movement and the Mevagissey men that stretches back to 2013.

Earlier in the highly successful week-long tour, the Mevagissey men performed at the beachfront Terra e Mare Restaurant as guests of the Achord Ladies Community Choir, who were raising funds on behalf of the RBL.

Speaking on behalf of the Military Wives, Lucy Oldenshaw said: 'We had a brilliant night. We've had incredible feedback from everyone so far, from audience members and, thanks to social media, from around the world, with lovely comments from the UK, Sweden and the Caribbean to name a few. Hard to believe it's all over! But we have an amazing sense of pride at what we have achieved.'

Both concerts were held in early evening as temperatures cooled from their consistent daytime levels of 29-30°C, and both attracted audiences of several hundred.

Julie Edwards, Achord's MD, wrote: 'Mevagissey gave a tremendous performance... but the climax of the evening came when the choirs combined to perform *Morte Christe*. There weren't many dry eyes in the house at this point - truly hair-raising, goose-bump stuff. What could have topped off such an amazing evening? Finding out that the choirs' efforts had raised over €1000 for charity. We now look forward to making a return visit to Mevagissey next summer to join with Mevagissey on their 'home ground'.'

Huge thanks are due to Mevagissey Top Tenor Graham Rundle for the immense amount of hard work he put into organising the tour and making it such a memorable success. It was a tired, but very happy and grateful, group that disembarked at Exeter Airport at three in the morning on 24 October.

Mevagissey, who have just launched their first-ever Christmas CD - 'Sing for the Child' - will be giving two Christmas concerts in December, the first in St Andrew's with Mevagissey Ladies and the Falmouth School students on Friday 9 December and the second in Holy Trinity, St Austell, on Saturday 17.

For more information, go to [www.mevagisseychoir.co.uk](http://www.mevagisseychoir.co.uk) or phone Mike Tate on 01726 812046.

**Mike Tate**

The Curium





# THE BIG ONE

**BIG GUESTS**  
**BIG VENUE**  
**BIG SHOWS**  
**BIG CONTESTS**  
**BIG WEEKEND**

**BIC, Bournemouth**  
**26th - 29th May 2017**

**Biggest Barbershop Event**  
**Outside North America**

**British Association of Barbershop Singers**

**43rd Annual Convention**

**SING 2017**

**Bournemouth 26th - 29th May 2017**

Featuring

**THE KING'S SINGERS**

Internationally Acclaimed Vocal Ensemble



Photo by Chris O'Donovan

and **LEMON SQUEEZY**

2016 International Silver Medal Barbershop Quartet



**An Unforgettable Weekend**

Come and experience a Barbershop Convention for yourself, you won't be disappointed. There's so much to enjoy from contests, shows, workshops, masterclasses, mass singing and a whole lot more.

Full details on our Convention web site

**[www.sing2017.com](http://www.sing2017.com)**





Willenhall Singers

## WILLENHALL SINGERS MIDLANDS WEST

*Hello everyone, I'm Pam from Willenhall Singers. We were formally known as Willenhall Musical Society. Over the years the music we have sung has changed so much. In the early years (1940/50s) we sang lots of choral pieces and were very successful in competitions. These days we still sing some choral pieces but we now sing more popular music and songs from the shows even some pop. So last October we decided that to reflect the changes in our image and our singing a name change would be appropriate and we became Willenhall Singers.*

We sing for local churches and groups to help them raise funds for their own particular causes. Once or twice a year we nominate our own charity and put on a concert to raise funds for them. In the last few years we have raised around £37000 for local charities. In 2013 we raised £2000 for Wolverhampton Multiple Sclerosis and in 2014 we raised £1950 for The Royal British Legion/SSAFA. Last year we raised £1775 for our local Macmillan Nurses. This year on 19 November we were back at Sneyd Community Association to raise funds for Parkinson's disease. Check out our website for further information

[www.willenhallsingers.org](http://www.willenhallsingers.org)

You will be pleased to know that after struggling for the past three years to find and keep an accompanist we have two wonderful young men who are filling the rolls of accompanists and deputy MD/accompanist, so we are expecting great things at our next concert. Tickets for our

concerts are available on 01902 606428 or email us at [willenhallsingers@virginmedia.com](mailto:willenhallsingers@virginmedia.com).

We rehearse on Monday evenings in Portobello Methodist Church from 7.30 and we have lots of fun rehearsing new and not so new music. Anyone who can keep a tune is welcome to come along and see what we do and if they are interested. We are always looking for new members, especially men.

**Pamela Proffitt**  
**Chairman Willenhall Singers**

## The Viva Musica Choir Midlands South West

*Viva Musica Choir's autumn concert celebrated Her Majesty's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The concert took place on Saturday 15 October at The Ruskin Centre in Stourbridge. The programme reflected music from each decade since the Queen's birth until the present day.*

The Concert started with *Can't Help Loving that Man* by Jerome Kern, from the 1927 musical *Showboat*, with Soprano Wendy

Priestnall performing with the choir. Also by Kern, the choir performed *The Way You Look Tonight* from the 1936 film *Swing Time*.

The 1940's included *London Pride* by Noel Coward, *The White Cliffs of Dover* performed by alto Joanne Welch and a medley of Glen Miller favourites arranged and performed by the choir's accompanist Andrew Biggs. *Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven* by Goss started the concert's second half; this lovely hymn was sung during Princess Elizabeth's 1947 wedding ceremony to Prince Philip.

The 1960's would not be complete without Lennon and McCartney and the choir performed *Can't Buy Me Love*. The 1970's included an ABBA medley. Soprano Debbie Wright and baritone Matthew Terrado performed a duet from the 1986 musical *Phantom of the Opera* by Lloyd Webber.

The evening concluded with *The Call of Wisdom* by Will Todd, commissioned for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Thanksgiving Service in 2012.

During the evening, there were readings by members of the choir reflecting momentous events for both the Queen and the people of Britain.

The Choir is holding an Open Evening on Tuesday 17 January at 7.30 at Ham Dingle Primary School, Pedmore, Stourbridge.

For all ticket information and our full concert programme please visit our website [www.viva-musica.co.uk](http://www.viva-musica.co.uk) or our Facebook page.

New members are always welcome - please see our website for full details. Viva Musica is particularly looking for tenors and basses.

**Lorraine Newman**



The Viva Musica Choir

## Conference Coordinator



*May I commence this first report of 2017 by wishing you all a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year. It is a time of great activity now in the Lawton House-*

*hold as we prepare for the National Conference at Gloucester.*

As you can read from the detailed time-line printed within the News and Views, we have a packed itinerary for you to enjoy. We have excellent speakers in Jonathan Wilcocks, Douglas Combes and David Goodwin. A new addition to the weekend is the 'Come and Sing' invitation on Friday of conference to tune up the vocal equipment.

Another innovation is the 'Speed Dating' session with our trade stand personnel. This should be fun and a way of both supporting our regular exhibitors as well as picking up good tips from them. I hope delegates will support this with their presence.

Now is the time to send in your booking forms and deposits to me please. This enables me to give the hotel adequate notice of numbers and types of rooms etc. The hotel is spacious and very comfortable allowing much more to be achieved for you within the itinerary.

I must thank Adrian Law in particular for arranging the concert at Gloucester Cathedral and for the work of the participating choirs. I feel sure it will be fantastic.

I will keep this piece short as a full resumé of the hotel and main speaker, plus the detailed itinerary and a two page booking form is included within this publication.

Please send your bookings to me ASAP to

Clive Lawton  
Conference Coordinator  
20 Arthur's Court,  
Stretton,  
Burton Upon Trent  
Staffordshire  
DE13 0GS

Cheques to be made payable to the National Association of Choirs.

If you need to contact me on any matter regarding booking I can be contacted on 01283 569677 or 07939 012458. Please don't hesitate to call if you have a query. I am here to help if I can.

Best wishes and hope to see as many as possible at conference.

**Clive Lawton**

### HOW DO YOU KNOW THERE IS A SOPRANO AT YOUR DOOR?



**SHE CAN'T FIND HER KEY AND DOESN'T KNOW WHEN TO COME IN.**








Concert Tours for all Music Ensembles

# New Year, New Concert Tour!

INTERNATIONAL CHOIR TOURS TAILORED TO MATCH YOUR PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES



PERFORMANCE VENUES | PUBLICITY | EXCURSIONS | CONCERT PUBLICITY | ACCOMMODATION | TRANSPORT

'A wonderful tour which gave us the opportunity to get to better know choir members and to thoroughly enjoy singing in such fabulous surroundings.'

Regina Hanley, The Wolseley Singers, Prague 2016

Our price protection guarantee to you - enquire today and your quoted price will be valid for up to 6 weeks!

RAYBURNTOURS.COM/CONCERT • INFO@RAYBURNTOURS.COM • 01332 347 828





# National Association of Choirs

Joining the Nation in Choral Singing

## National Conference Booking Form 1 21-23 April 2017

Cheltenham Chase Hotel, Shurdington Rd, Brockworth GL3 4PB

### Conference Costs

#### Full Conference Stay

The price quoted is **per person for the whole conference**

There are no single room supplements

Price per person for whole conference includes admission to all lectures

two nights bed breakfast and evening meal

refreshments and free admission to Saturday evening concert

per person £230

Stay an extra night - Single £85 BB - Double/Twin (two persons) £95 BB

### Day Delegate [Saturday]

Please circle requirements

Refreshments and lunch included £40.00

Evening meal Saturday add £25.00

Concert ticket Saturday add £10.00

Gala Dinner add £35.00

### Payments

#### Full Conference Stay

Deposit of £70 [non refundable] by 30 November 2016, balance by 28 February 2017

**Final payment reminders will be sent**

### Day delegates

Payment in full when booking [non refundable]

Amount Submitted £ \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your completed forms and deposits to the address below

You must inform us in writing of any cancellation by 1 March 2016

[cancellations after this date will incur a charge of 50% of the total fee payable]

However substitute guests will be welcome

Cheques should be made payable to the National Association of Choirs

THE PERSONAL DETAILS OF EACH DELEGATE MUST BE ENTERED ON FORM 2

Please return your completed forms and deposits to

Clive Lawton - Conference Coordinator, 20 Arthur's Court, Stretton, Burton upon Trent Staffordshire DE13 0GS

01283 569677 or 07939012458

conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk



Reg'd. Charity No. 1014630

# National Association of Choirs

*Joining the Nation in Choral Singing*

## National Conference Booking Form 2 21-23 April 2017

Cheltenham Chase Hotel, Shurdington Rd, Brockworth GL3 4PB

The event is open to all who wish to attend on payment of the appropriate charges

### Guest 1

Title Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

First Name.....

Surname.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone Home.....Mobile.....

Email Address.....

Special Requirements

Diet [type].....

Disability [wheelchair user/handrails required etc.].....

NAC group.....

Choir Name.....

### Guest 2

Title Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

First Name.....

Surname.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone Home.....Mobile.....

Email Address.....

Special Requirements

Diet [type].....

Disability [wheelchair user/handrails required etc.].....

NAC group.....

Choir Name.....

**PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM FOR MORE GUESTS IF REQUIRED**

**Please return your completed forms and deposits to**

**Clive Lawton - Conference Coordinator, 20 Arthur's Court, Stretton, Burton upon Trent Staffordshire DE13 0GS**

**01283 569677 or 07939012458**

**conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk**



Reg'd. Charity No. 1014630

# National Association of Choirs

*Joining the Nation in Choral Singing*

## National Conference Provisional Timetable 21-23 April 2017

Cheltenham Chase Hotel, Shurdington Rd, Brockworth GL3 4PB

### Friday 21 April

- 2.00 Delegates arrive and register. Free Car Park - Coffee on arrival
- 4.00 National Officers' meeting
- 4.30-6.00 Come and Sing with Celia Johns and Karl Harper
- 7.30 Delegates and guests assemble for dinner
- 7.30 Reception National Officers and guests
- 8.00 Dinner is served
- 9.30 After dinner entertainment provided by Geoff Bourton and Pam Taverner
- 12.00 Bar closes

### Saturday 22 April

- 7.00 Access to trade stands to set up
- 7.30-9.00 Breakfast in main dining room
- 9.30-10.30 Seminar 1 Jonathan Wilcocks covers the working relationship he had with his late father, Sir David Wilcocks, and his musical life and experiences
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee and trade stand viewing
- 11.00-12.00 Seminar 2 Jonathan Wilcocks introduces a session including some of his own compositions and an overview of some SATB repertoire
- 12.00-1.00 Trade stand presentations  
(Four 15 minute presentations from trade stands present at conference)
- 1.00 Lunch and trade stand viewing (Lunch included in full delegate package)
- 2.00-3.00 Seminar 3 Jonathan Wilcocks will introduce delegates to a trilogy of songs entitled 'Sing for Africa' which requires a Tom Tom drum player
- 3.00-3.30 Coffee and trade stand viewing
- 3.30-4.30 Seminar 4 David Goodwin Fun and Frolics with PRS
- 5.00 Buffet meal before concert (included in full delegate Package)
- 6.45 Coaches to convey delegates to Cathedral depart hotel
- 7.30 Concert at Gloucester Cathedral - Choirs of Male and Female voices
- 10.00 approx Following concert, coaches will collect delegates to convey back to hotel where light refreshments will be provided
- 12.00 Bar closes

### Sunday 23 April

- 7.30-9.00 Breakfast  
For those delegates wishing to attend local churches, details will be available at hotel reception
- 9.30-10.30 Seminar 5 Dr Douglas Coombes. 'What's the score'
- 10.30-11.00 Coffee and trade stand viewing
- 11.00-11.30 Annual General Meeting
- 11.30-1.00 Members Open Forum
- 1.00 Conference closes (Lunch available in dining room at members' own expense)
- 1.00 National Officers' debrief meeting (guillotined after one hour)

## End Of The Track



### End Of The Track South West

*Like most, if not all of you reading this article, we sing for the pure enjoyment of singing. We are eleven male vocalists – five tenors and six basses - who have been individual members of various choirs throughout our busy lives until we came together eight years ago to form a singing group that specializes in music from the 1960s era (the Swinging Sixties).*

We select music from the huge range of material that we heard during our youth – or perhaps it was yesterday on Radio 2? Our aim is to reproduce the authentic sounds of the original recordings along with instrumental backing from guitar and light percussion. The formula appears to be working; for each of the last three years we have been requested to perform at around 40 concerts (we call them 'gigs' to make us feel like a real Sixties group).

The members of the group live in Chippenham, Wiltshire or the surrounding villages. The majority of our performances raise funds for a local charity that organizes holiday activities for children with special needs; all profits from our three CD re-

cordings have been also dedicated to that charity. At our AGM in July our treasurer announced we had succeeded in raising £13,000 for the charity over the last seven years.

There are many organizations that provide us with regular bookings: The Women's Institute; luncheon clubs; handicapped clubs; day centres. With just eleven members we are able to go to places where more traditional choirs would never fit. We visit many of the residential and care homes around the Wiltshire area; sometimes there is very little room left once the audience is in place and we are set up to perform.

Obviously, our appeal is to a certain age group who remember the days of the 1960s, and we can see that our musical efforts really do brighten up the lives of our audiences. As you the reader probably know, music is a great communicator and can break down barriers. We have made many performances to audiences of dementia sufferers who initially appeared to hold no prospect of being entertained, and yet after one or two songs we could see some visible interest from them – fingers or toes tapping. After such visits we have received feedback from their relatives and carers to say how much every-

one enjoyed the music.

We are extremely lucky to have Phil Hall as our musical director. Phil has played lead guitar in a number of local groups down the years, and brings a great deal of stage experience to us along with his knowledge of vocal harmonies. He is a brilliant guitarist who can burst into most Sixties hits at the drop of a hat. We are also very thankful for the Internet and 'Youtube' as the source of potential material. As well as covering the usual SATB songs from artists such as the Beatles and Elvis, our repertoire includes hits from the Everly Brothers, Neil Diamond, The Byrds, Credence Clearwater Revival, Johnny Kidd and Billy J Kramer – and many, many more.

We would love to invite you along to see us perform, but unfortunately most of these events are not open to the general public. Indeed, we often worry if we will be allowed out after some of our performances – they never tell us the combination number to get through the door. However, if your choir is holding a concert near our area in 2017 and need a supporting act then please make contact with us. Details are on our website. I am sure you know how to use a good search engine.

Oh, and you may be wondering why 'End Of The Track'. Our name has nothing to do with the railways – although some may think we look like a pile of old buffers. No, the name comes from the location of our weekly rehearsals at the end of a farm track.

**Keith Clifford**  
Tracker Chairman

### Saddleworth Singers North West

*Saddleworth Singers was founded in 1987 by Mary Bradshaw and has a long standing faithful membership. The choir pride themselves on performing a wide variety of music - light, serious and everything in between. They rehearse on Tuesday evenings at The Springhead Community Centre, Ashes Lane in Oldham from 7.30 - 9.30.*

The choir also fund-raises for a different charity/worthy cause each year. In 2016, they raised £1750 for The Springhead Community Centre to aid with the cost of roof repairs. This year they are raising money for the MS Society.



Saddleworth Singers

**Tricia Hamer**

## Billingham Choral Society Northeast

*Billingham Choral Society was founded in 1951 and celebrated its 65<sup>th</sup> year in style.*

After various Musical Directors up until 1976, Margaret Pringle LLCM took on the role, conducting the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary concert as her debut. 40 years later she is still the MD - has no deputy - and has worked with various accompanists and many guest artists including Ben Thapa from G4 when he recorded a CD with the choir. The style of music has changed from full choral works to lighter, modern compositions and includes arrangements by Sir John Rutter, Jay Althouse, Michael Neaum, Leonard Cohen and other well-known names.

2016 has been a busy year for the 47 members, starting with the NAC Choral Spectacular in The Sage, Gateshead in April. In July, some members from 'Love in Motion' - a signing choir from California - performed with the choir for the second time for the Anniversary Concert before travelling on to Germany. In September, after the summer break, everyone enjoyed performing with G4 and Vox Fortura in the local theatre. To complete the year,

G4 invited the choir to join them again for a 'Christmas by Candlelight' presentation in Durham Cathedral - a wonderful experience. Performing to an audience of 2000 gives a real buzz. It is hoped we may be able to accompany them again in the not-too-distant future.

Apart from regular concerts and singing for weddings in the chapel at Wynyard Hall, each year the choir nominates a charity and collects money during December by singing festive music in local churches, banks and supermarkets, dressed in Christmas jumpers and Santa hats. This year almost £500 was collected for the local children's hospice. The 2016 selection of music included 'A night to remember' - a modern cantata by Harold de Cou, which tells the Christmas story with bible readings and music. The performance marked the switch-on for the lights at a local church Christmas tree festival. The theme for this event was 'The Queen' to celebrate her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday year so Margaret chose 'Jubilees' and decorated a tree with special coins etc to represent the silver, gold and diamond jubilees.

The choir is managed by a small committee, chaired by Evie Moralee and is grate-

ful to Stuart Pass who accompanies rehearsals and concerts. Members chose *As long as I have music* as the signature tune because music has helped so many through the ups and downs of everyday life. Weekly rehearsals are lively and provide a social outlet for the more elderly or single members. There are now 10 Honorary Life members - all over 80 years young and still enjoying singing. Over the years, the choir has sung with the Russian White Army Band as well as local bands and a choir from Zanacek, on board a DFDS ferry and in Bergen. Members have taken part in a Songs of Praise event, performed on TV with Diversity and also at a number of local 'Last Night of the Proms' performances. Everyone enjoys joining with other choirs from all over the Northeast for the NAC Choral Spectaculars in Newcastle when Margaret conducts a few of the massed mixed voice choirs items.

So, who knows what 2017 will bring or where the choir may perform. Watch this space...

**Evie Moralee**  
Chairperson

## Wow your audience with one of our popular songs!

### HAVEN'T MET YOU YET

The catchy US No 1 hit by Michael Bublé

### Fields of Gold

Sting's Classic Ballad

### Only You

Simple and Heartfelt Love Song by Yazoo

### Don't Stop Believin'

Ultimate Feel Good Song by Journey

### Crazy Little Thing Called Love

Michael Bublé's Vibrant, Swing Version

### Bui Doi

Stirring Anthem from Miss Saigon

Angels

Can You Feel The Love Tonight

Love of My Life

Lighthouse

Electricity

Circle of Life

February Song

Join the growing number of choirs singing our arrangements of

## Modern Classics for Men

Male Choral Music For Today's Audiences

Glory of Love

Anthem

More Than Words

The River of Dreams

To Make You Feel My Love

Could It Be Magic

Cry Me A River

Request your FREE perusal copies now

[music@johntrentwallace.com](mailto:music@johntrentwallace.com)

01245 323504

[www.johntrentwallace.com](http://www.johntrentwallace.com)

## SongCycle Thames North

The all singing all cycling male  
voice quartet

*For twenty years SongCycle have, on the second Saturday in September, cycled around churches in Essex to raise money for charity. This year to celebrate their twentieth birthday they decided to do something different.*

### THE BIG PSALMATHON

Visit just one church and sing unaccompanied to Anglican chant all 150 psalms, including a Gloria to each. That's 2,811 verses.

After 6 months of rehearsals it was all over in less than 24 hours. It actually took 15 hrs and 50 minutes including a five minute break every hour and scheduled breaks for breakfast, lunch, tea and supper.

On Saturday 10th September starting at 7.30 in the morning and singing only to the good Lord and themselves SongCycle embarked on this mammoth task. It has been done before by choirs alternating singers and organists, but as far as is known, never by a group of four fellows and unaccompanied. Sadly the Guinness Book of Records rejected their application telling SongCycle's secretary that it couldn't be beaten, but as far as SongCycle are concerned it is still a record.

The four members, Brian Lynn, Richard Baker, Nick Rayner and Sam Adams cycled to St Thomas of Canterbury Church in Brentwood, where they are all choristers, and with joyful hearts set off with enthu-

siasm, sing through Morning Prayer being held in the Lady Chapel and reaching Psalm 22 before pausing at 9.15 to devour a full English breakfast at a local café. It was soon time for them to resume however and at 10.18 they did just that, opening up the church to all visitors and hopefully more sponsors.

All sorts called in to hear them: members of the congregation; fellow choir members; friends; family and even complete strangers and they all appeared to enjoy their stay one way or another. Richard's father (80 years a chorister this year) even made the journey up from Devon, 'just to make sure they did it properly' you understand.

The lunch break was taken at about 1.40 after Psalm 61 and tea was served by the Church Centre café staff post Psalm 88 at about 4.30. Supper time arrived far too soon at 8 o'clock only having reached Psalm 118 but SongCycle, friends and family nonetheless tucked into a fish and chip supper from the Fish House in Brentwood and was washed down with some excellent ale provided by The Brentwood Brewing Company.

The remaining psalms were sung after supper and Psalm 150, sung to Sanford's arrangement, finished off the day at 11.20 to a rousing applause from the remaining congregation and helpers and was celebrated by a very tired SongCycle with a beer or two.

Can you believe it, with something like 165 years of singing psalms between the four members, there were still some that they had never sung before they started rehearsing them. Some went very well on

the day, most were sung to a very acceptable standard, but some, the few that were somewhat unfamiliar, may have been a little shaky at time, but SongCycle sang them all. The chants were by some well-known composers, some not so well known and most transposed down a tone or two from the Parish Psalter. Some chants were even composed by their very own members. It was great stuff and 'enjoyable but exhausting' said SongCycle.

SongCycle would like to thank all those who sponsored them and those who came and listened, those who manned the church and the church café, those who sponsored breakfast, lunch and supper and to Jonny and Sophie Baker for recording all the Psalms and taking some video clips which you will find on our web site or on YouTube.

It was all in a good cause too – The Friends of Essex Churches Trust and to date the total amount raised is over £4,000

See their web site for all other details and their next concert. [www.songcycle.co.uk](http://www.songcycle.co.uk)

*Richard Baker  
Treasurer and Secretary*

## East Fife Male Voice Choir Scotland East

*The choir is made up of men from all areas of Fife. It was formed in 1957 in the Wemyss area of Fife, with a backing of the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation. It was a great outlet for the Miners of the time and others who have joined in the years since. Being able to sing and socialise with like-minded men has always been a great pastime. Currently we have a membership of just over 55 men who practice each Monday evening with great enthusiasm. We sing in four-part harmony, (first Tenor; second Tenor; Baritone and Bass)*

We are fortunate in having Marilyn Boulton as our Musical Director. Her musical ability is extensive and having conducted many choirs and orchestras, such as Kent Youth Choir and the Symphony Orchestra, Chorus and Chamber Choir at the University of St Andrews we consider ourselves fortunate indeed to have her. She instils us with great enthusiasm and encourages us to reach even higher levels of performance perfection.

Marilyn has been busy introducing new music to the choir. We are enjoying the



SongCycle



wide variety of music, ranging from sacred to Hungarian folk song to many new contemporary songs which make our rehearsals extremely enjoyable.

Our accompanist, Robin Bell, is an Associate of the Royal College of Organists, London and has been organist in churches in Linlithgow, Grangemouth and Dunblane and he also has a vast range of credits to his name. Robin received an honorary award from the Royal School of Church Music at a special service in Salisbury Cathedral, so we can rightly say we have the best and it's now up to the men to do the rest.

Our autumn season commenced at the beginning of September with our first concert being at St Ninian's Church, Glenrothes. Our programme was well received by all who attended.

In October we headed up to Perth where we entertained a small but enthusiastic audience in Perth Cathedral. Their management committee were extremely grateful to the choir, as they are trying to raise a substantial amount of money for urgent repairs to this wonderful building.

Also in October we left Fife by coach and travelled to Hexham stopping at Jedburgh for a coffee break and a quick look round

the Woollen Mill for the accompanying wives, then on to Hexham arriving late afternoon. We had a wonderful couple of nights there as you can imagine with impromptu after dinner singing by individual choir members. Luckily we had taken up all the rooms at the Beaumont Hotel so no one was unduly disturbed with the raucous choruses being belted out. Needless to say this 'social event' went on till the small hours. On Saturday we joined up with Hexham Male Voice Choir for a concert at Hexham Methodist church to raise funds for their local Hospice at Home charity. The final total of the evening raised over £1,000 for the Hospice at Home funds.

Mid November saw us back in home territory visiting our friends at Wellesley Parish Church in Methil. The concert was arranged by Mary Reilly, whose late husband Tom was a long serving member of our choir. The concert raised over £1000 for church funds.

Our autumn season concluded with a concert at Pathhead Parish church, Kirkcaldy which, apart from being our rehearsal venue, offers the church as an ideal concert venue.

Following the choir's well-earned break over the festive season, we are now refreshed and looking forward to a busy first half to our 2017 season. This year the choir

will celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we are planning several celebratory events to mark this occasion.

In November, we had our Annual General Meeting. The choir is doing well, with a very hard working committee ensuring that all the administration is looked after in a timely and efficient manner.

Some of our 2017 events are:

21 April 2017 East Fife Male Voice Choir Annual concert

Then throughout the next few months we have several concerts arranged in the Fife, Edinburgh and Perth area.

Our concerts are approximately two hours in duration performed to audiences nationwide. The choir has undertaken tours to Germany and Italy and has also visited several venues in England and Wales. We always extend a warm welcome to choirs visiting from other areas of Britain and abroad and often undertake joint concerts with these choirs.

*George Paterson*  
*Publicity*



## INSPECTION COPIES IN AN INSTANT

**alansimmonsmusic.com** now has an email inspection copy service. To use it simply choose a piece of music on our website, click 'email yourself an inspection copy' and fill in your name and email address. A PDF will be in your inbox immediately. Our catalogue has over 500 pieces of choral music, including pop, folk music, show tunes and major choral works - in SATB, SAB, TTBB and SSA - so there's plenty to browse.

Visit **alansimmonsmusic.com** to find out more today

ALAN SIMMONS  
*Music*

Choral music for everyone

## The James Lambert Singers Wales North Cheshire West

Singing in Wrexham, North Wales, and often further afield, we are a mixed adult group of over 30 voices some of whom have been members since the choir was formed in 1969. Our repertoire is of popular light music, old and new, in English and Welsh which we sing to a pre-recorded accompaniment.

We practice once a week and sing at all sorts of celebrations and social events, led by our experienced musical director, Mair Evans (a founder member of the choir).

There have been several tours abroad in Europe and America, the latest of which was a trip to Cyprus when we were the guests of a local ladies choir called 'Achord' with whom we performed in a joint charity concert. Since returning, our year has been busy with several concerts and performances, including one at a very jolly wedding reception where the bride and



The James Lambert Singers

many guests were French and were all in fancy dress. We even managed a song in French.

We had a successful concert in Froncysyllte, near Llangollen in mid-summer where we were joined by a talented award winning young singer, Caitlin Drake who made a great contribution to the evening. The main project of the year was the recording of another CD which we finished in November and now, in December, we are busy with carols.

If anyone wants to join us, please get in touch, or if your choir is ever looking for

another choir to sing with, perhaps in a joint concert, please tell us. If you are some distance from North Wales we could maybe come over for a weekend for a concert, and of course some socialising! We have a website

[www.thejameslambertsingers.com](http://www.thejameslambertsingers.com)

and are also on Facebook. However, please feel free to contact our secretary, Phil, 07774 850677 or [philip.hughes@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:philip.hughes@hotmail.co.uk)

*Philip Hughes*

**NOW AT  
SLATERS**



**COLOURED BLAZERS, WHITE TUXEDOS, BLACK DINNER SUITS IN A LARGE RANGE OF SIZES.**

LOUNGE SUITS FROM  
FREE FITTING AND  
ALTERATION SERVICE

£**49**

SLATERS GLASGOW

165 HOWARD STREET GLASGOW  
G1 4HF T: 0141 552 7171

SLATERS NOTTINGHAM

3 THE POULTRY, NOTTINGHAM  
NG1 2HN T: 0115 950 2633

SLATERS CARDIFF

ST DAVIDS CENTRE, 2 HILLS STREET  
CARDIFF CF10 2LE T: 02920 667480

24 STORES AROUND THE U.K. FIND US ON-LINE AT [WWW.SLATERS.CO.UK](http://WWW.SLATERS.CO.UK)



**slaters**  
MENSWEAR AND FORMAL HIRE

## The Glasgow Phoenix Choir Scotland West

Sponsored by Co-op Funeralcare

Conductor and Director of Music – Marilyn J Smith, MBE, LRAM

*This part of our season has been very busy and a mix of happy and sad events. The choir's new season got off to a great start with the first rehearsal of the year and a cheese and wine. We took the opportunity to have a glass of fizz to celebrate Marilyn J Smith's 25 years as conductor and to present her with a watch. And what an amazing 25 years it's been with recordings, countless amazing concerts and tours all over Britain and to Europe and the USA.*

The choir enjoyed its Highland Tour in late September, performing concerts in Strathpeffer, Elgin and on the Isle of Skye, where we're already planning a full visit for 2019. All three concerts were very successful and enjoyable, though I think our concert in St Giles, Elgin was a highlight. One of the most enjoyable aspects of a tour is the chance to spend time together and this choir is a very warm and friendly social group. We also like a wee mental challenge and so had the pleasure of taking part in a quiz to raise some funds for St Andrew's Hospice, for whom we would go on to perform a concert in October. The quiz raised £110 and was followed up with a raffle at the choir's annual open rehearsal, which raised £286. On the evening of our, very successful, Hospice concert in the Town House in Hamilton, Lady Bonomy, our choir president, handed over a cheque for £400 from the choir. We also launched our new postcard CD, which we hope will raise as much as £25,000 for the hospice.

We had a terrific turn out at our open rehearsal which resulted in many people coming for auditions and we have now welcomed ten new members to our ranks... four of whom are men. We hope that they all feel welcome and are enjoying their experience with us, so far.

The choir was very sorry to hear of the untimely death of John Taylor, one of our friends from Co-op Funeralcare. John had taken early retirement and we had expected a long and happy time in front of him. Despite outwardly looking fit and healthy, John died very suddenly on 22 October. He was a well-loved and friendly character who will be greatly missed by all who knew him. The choir extend their condolences to his wife, Arwen.



Marilyn Smith presentation

Mary McKay, who had recently retired from singing with our first soprano section after 60 years, was due to travel to the Highlands with us in September. Unfortunately, she needed emergency surgery and, although she appeared to be making good progress, died following an acute infection on 8 November. Singing with the choir was a continuation of a family tradition as Mary's father had been a member of our predecessors, the Glasgow Orpheus Choir. Mary had been a primary school teacher and had a somewhat stern appearance. It quickly became apparent, though, that this was a fake... she had a warm smile and a well-developed sense of the ridiculous. Though she had stopped singing, Mary retained her connection with the choir and could always be relied upon to help at events, to support us all and to make new members feel welcome. She will be greatly missed.

In late November, we had a successful return to St Francis Xavier Church in Carfin, home of the National Shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes, for which the concert was aiming to raise funds. The phrase 'the best laid plans, etc', might have been coined for this occasion. Sadly, our excellent deputy conductor and accompanist, Cameron Murdoch, was involved in a road traffic accident – thankfully sustaining no injuries but resulting in a useless vehicle. So, there we were, one of us ready to conduct, 70+ of us ready to sing and hmm... Fortunately, we are a choir of multi-talented individuals and one of our sopranos, Elspeth Shearer, stepped into the breach. Marilyn had to alter her intended programme of music and everything went miraculously well. Cameron was much missed but what a great job Marilyn and Elspeth did in his absence. To top all that off, we raised an amazing £2,500 including a very generous donation from a member of the church.

Into December, we had two busy weekends of Christmas concerts starting with a welcome return to Linlithgow, and a further opportunity for stepping into the breach by a soprano. Liz Dingwall's lovely rendition of *Oh, Holy Night* was cut short by her being overcome by pain and needing to sit down, eerily, just prior to the line 'Fall on your knees...'; with barely time to think things through, Elaine McIlree stepped forward and continued where Liz had left off. I suspect the audience thought it was deliberate. Next day we visited Edinburgh where we had a record-breaking audience and a much-recovered Liz gave a glorious rendition of *Oh, Holy Night*, which brought tears to many an eye. As an additional treat, we had a five-piece ensemble from our friends of the Co-op Funeralcare Band; next we performed in Glasgow Royal Concert Hall; and, lastly a return to one of our favourite spots - East Kilbride... we're very big in East Kilbride.

For our concert in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall we were joined by the choirs of St Aloysius College and by the full Co-op Funeralcare Band to not only celebrate Christmas but also the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Marilyn Smith as conductor. The choir presented Marilyn with a beautiful silver goblet and she received flowers from our friend Lesley Van Dyk, on behalf of Co-op Funeralcare, as well as from the choir. In addition, we had a special presentation to Lady Jan Bonomy, current choir president and choir member for 50 years. No-one who looks at Jan quite believes she's been with the choir for so long.

As I write, the choir is on a well-earned break until 9 January and this report constitutes my last duty of the year. May I take this opportunity to wish you all a great New Year of singing for 2017.

**Anne Kay**  
Publicity Officer

## North Ferriby Ladies Choir Yorkshire North and East

### Good-bye Zoe.



Zoe Dixon

When Zoe Dixon, a founding member of our choir, announced she would be moving house and leaving us, we decided only a really special celebration and thank-you would do. Oh, and this small tribute, too.

Zoe joined North Ferriby Ladies Choir in 1974, when a group of about 20 ladies squeezed into someone's front room and began enjoying the sort of camaraderie, fun and dedication that is still our hallmark today. Dresses for concerts were lovingly made by hand, words learnt by heart in caravans (oh, we never use music scores in our concerts) and no-one could be ill on Festival or concert days, because there were so few singers in each part. Later arrivals to our choir are still regaled with accounts of broken down coaches, costume changes en route, and Zoe's all too frequent spectacular falls. In fact, Zoe is largely responsible for our Health and Safety policy and First Aid box. Ah yes, Zoe's time with us has not been without its 'ups and downs'.

Zoe has played an integral part in all our adventures. Her sweet and distinctive voice, and thoughtful readings, have entertained and moved us at countless Christmas concerts and events over the years. She has sung in the Royal Albert Hall, Hull's Guildhall, churches both ancient and modern, Paul's military battery, and with established choirs and newly formed school ones. She has helped us raise thousands of pounds for charity; baked and eaten cakes; artistically draped her scarf; blinged

up her outfits; sashayed down the catwalk at fashion shows; come face to face with sharks at The Deep; and had a flutter at Race Nights. Zoe's enthusiasm has not waned over the 40 years she has been in the choir, and she puts us to shame with the time spent practising each week. And all with her gentle sense of humour, lovely smile and unruffled approach. She will leave a 'Zoe-shaped hole'.

In appreciation, we spent a lovely October afternoon in Zoe's company at the Buddhist Centre at Kilnwick Percy in the glorious Yorkshire Wolds. A fascinating tour of the country house and a talk about its restoration was followed by a session of meditation and a lovely buffet. We had lots of balloons and photos, a special cake, some presents and the odd tear. Oh, and the obligatory browse in the gift shop.

So, we wish Zoe all the best for her next exciting chapter, remind her that we will be following her to sing at her new country abode, and we thank her for the loyalty, commitment and warmth she has brought to our choir.

Zoe, you have set the Gold Standard.

*Jackie Piccos and Marion Escritt*

## The King's Singers



Photo: Andy Staples

## IN CONCERT

### BIC Bournemouth

27th May 2017 - 9.00pm

The King's Singers are performing in concert at the British Association of Barbershop Singers 43rd Annual Convention in Bournemouth on the 27th May. They will be supported by an International Award-Winning Barbershop quartet from Sweden.

Tickets are only available from Venue Cymru in Llandudno, who are the appointed ticket agent for this event.

**TICKETS: £30**

Plus £3.00 Box Office Administration Fee per transaction

**Tel: 01492 872000**

10.00am to 7.30pm (Mon-Sat)

[www.venuecymru.co.uk](http://www.venuecymru.co.uk)

Concert promoted by the British Association of Barbershop Singers  
Registered Charity No: 1080930, as part of its Annual 4-day Convention.

[www.singbarbershop.com](http://www.singbarbershop.com)

## Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir

### South West

#### Male Voice Choir gets younger.

*The choristers of the Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir (OWMVC) are a happy bunch of men as they celebrate an unparalleled influx of new recruits (well unparalleled, probably, since its foundation in 1928).*

A little while ago, a few of the choir woke up one morning and realised they weren't getting any younger. It dawns on most individuals eventually but, in this context, they realised the average age of the choir was creeping up. With the imminent 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary they thought that something really needed to be done if they were to conduct their next decade as strongly as the last nine and reach the centenary in 2028.

Exactly how to go about recruiting new blood wasn't easy to answer. Over recent years, new members have either been cajoled by friends and neighbours who already sing with the choir or their temptation has overcome any self-doubt and hesitation after attending a concert performance. Typically, that has meant they've just about kept pace with the natural attrition of people moving away or leaving for health reasons. In the past 20 years the membership has gradually risen from mid-thirties to mid-forties, peaking at just over 50 a couple of years ago before slipping back again. It needed a different approach if they were to find an untapped vein of singers interested in the special style of a Welsh male voice choir, and one in England to boot.

Recruitment is never easy in Oxford as there are so many other choirs, choral so-



The choir with potential recruits, Tim Croston on piano

cialties and singing groups of such a wide variety; many of which also rehearse on a Thursday. If that wasn't enough, having *male* in the name immediately cuts the potential by 50% and then adding *Welsh* in there may well be a secondary limit, though for some, it's what attracts them. The choir has never excluded non-welsh, at least not since shortly after its foundation, and whilst there are a good number of members who are Welsh or have Welsh ancestry, many others join just for the opportunity to sing and enjoy the camaraderie and banter. The few that do pluck-up the courage to join frequently say they'd have joined years ago if only they'd known about the choir; and yet, the OWMVC has been performing throughout Oxfordshire for the last 88 years. A new approach was clearly needed to spread the word.

It was decided that a dedicated open taster evening should be held where people could come along and get an idea of what it's like to sing with them. Anyone has always been welcome to attend a rehearsal but it was felt that if the evening was delib-

erately focussed on new people, with help and support for those who've never sung before, it might get a few more along and encourage them to stay.

Past attempts at publicity have generally been low budget affairs consisting of a few posters dotted around town, a mention on the choir's website and Facebook page (which only reaches people who are already friends), and maybe a small mention in the Oxford city newspaper. This time it was felt that an investment in the choir's future was needed. It was also realised that, with the diaspora of current membership stretching beyond Oxfordshire borders in all directions, the net should be cast more widely than just the city of Oxford. Adverts were placed in several parish and community magazines around the county, which garnered some welcome offers of free publicity due to the charitable fund-raising of the choir. A large advert was also placed in the Oxford Times and paid Facebook promotion was used for the first time.

There was a very pleasing response with many registering for the taster evening and several others contacting to say they couldn't make the night but would like to come another time. After a few return visits just to be sure, the choir is now pleased to report they're now 20% bigger, having surpassed their previous membership record. And they've suddenly got a lot younger.

Information about the choir and the concert can be found on their web site: [oxfordwelshmvc.org.uk](http://oxfordwelshmvc.org.uk)

**Philip Gibbs**  
Vice Chairman.



Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir and potential recruits with conductor Helen Swift

## Worcester Male Voice Choir Midlands South West

Autumn arrived and once more we were preparing for our Annual Concert. Always a splendid occasion held in College Hall, Worcester; part of King's School but the building actually adjoins Worcester Cathedral. Not easy access for the audience but a beautiful building with excellent acoustics. We always have a splendid raffle, try to do something new, something special.

This year was no exception with our MD, Nicolas Wright, devising and delivering another very different concert with a pretty unique entry to start off the proceedings; the sound of bagpipes. Yes bagpipes! Paddy Levack who learnt to play the bagpipes whilst at school at the Edinburgh Academy joined us. We were opening with a new piece *Highland Cathedral*. Paddy on the bagpipes, Becky Waite another soloist on the trumpet, Keith Hearnshaw our accomplished guest organist and our late 2<sup>nd</sup> Tenor Dave Lumsden (a very proud Scot himself) on the drum. Yes the sound was very loud and the choir worked hard to sing their two verses above the incredible volume from the trio. In fact after our rehearsal Nicolas had decided the trio should perform from the balcony at one end of the Hall whilst the choir was at the other. It certainly got the Concert off to a very special start.

Becky also played several other pieces during the concert including the *Trumpet Concerto* arr by Telemann and *Trumpet Voluntary* arr by Stanley and together with Keith accompanied the choir when it sang *Where Shall I Be*. Keith also played an organ solo and accompanied several other pieces. Add in our accompanist Sheila Leatherland and assistant accompanist Scott Wolfendon and you have a very talented team delivering a programme that was really well received by a capacity audience.

The choir contributed with a range of stirring pieces including *Calon Lan*, *Cohen's Hallelujah*, and *Vivaldi's Gloria*. The concert set us up for the period through to Christmas only to be spoilt by the loss of our dear friend and chorister Dave Lumsden just a couple of months after the Annual concert. Dave was a special chorister; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tenor, soloist, and held the following choir posts ; Treasurer, 2<sup>nd</sup> tenor rep, 100 Club organiser, Music Sub Committee rep and Sponsorship Officer.

October saw the choir performing a concert at St George's Church in Barbourne, Worcester in aid of funds for the local



Worcester Male Voice Choir

branch of Macmillan Cancer Support. At this Concert our MD unearthed yet another outstanding young schoolboy Jude Winter who played both the piano and French Horn. It really does auger well for the future when such talent exists despite the doom and gloom about the lack of resources that seem to go into music in our schools.

Our regular commitment in November is at the very popular Victorian Fayre which takes over the city for the weekend. It has developed so much over the years and we are now provided with a temporary but purpose designed covered stage. A good audience enjoyed our range of singing including our introduction of some of our Christmas repertoire including several new pieces. We always try to attract some new choristers at our events like this and it looks as though we have been successful again.

The first week of December saw us hold our two Christmas Concerts on successive nights at Pershore Abbey. This year we were supporting the Mayor of Pershore's Charity Fund 2016/17 and specifically two charities, St Richards Hospice and Kids Run Free. Our MD had secured the outstanding Joanne Jefferis on cello and a young bass/baritone Samuel James who shows great promise and may well achieve his ambition of singing in West End shows. Always a popular concert and we again had two excellent audiences who thoroughly enjoyed their own participation in a number of Christmas carols. Sadly by this time our 2<sup>nd</sup> tenor Dave had passed away but we sang one of his many favourites *The Holy City* and we dedicated *What Would I do without My Music* to his memory.

After a year off the choir accepted an invitation to sing again at the local radio station BBC Hereford & Worcester Celebration of Christmas which was held in the Malvern Forum Theatre. Another very popular event with a sell out of the 800

plus tickets in the first 4 days, as well as the WMVC, the Worcestershire Symphony Orchestra, soloist Hannah Just, Wilf's Carnival Band, and Blobbie Williams doing his Robbie Williams tribute. Add to this the varied performances by the BBC presenters and you got a real night of fun and enjoyment. *The Master of the House* session with presenters Malcolm Boyden and Toni McDonald together with members of the Worcestershire Rock Choir was great entertainment and a repeat of something they had prepared and sung for the Children in Need appeal earlier in the year.

Top of the bill though was probably presenter and for his sins President of WMVC Dave Bradley, who told the story of Rindacella - yes a story with non traditional language! The Celebration was recorded and will go out on the radio on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. WMVC sang *Deck the Hall, Past Three O'Clock, In the Bleak Midwinter*, the Christmas version of *Kwmbaya*, and Nicolas Wright's arrangements of both *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas* and *White Christmas* and not only did they go down well but they reflected fully the Christmas nature of the event. On the following day we came down to earth again as it was the funeral of Dave Lumsden. However it was planned by the family to be a true celebration of his life and the Church service, the farewell at the crematorium and the afterglow were just that. Over 50 attended and sang out well, supported by friends of the choir and many others who attended all three elements. A wonderful send off and great support to his family. The day underlined the friendship, support and companionship male voice singing can provide.

The Christmas season continued and we were pleased to visit a local school to take part in their concert and to take Christmas cheer to a local nursing home. It is very important to support such organisations in our local community and it proved as always both stimulating and humbling. One

more commitment left before the Christmas break. Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December saw the choir event we call Bringing Christmas Cheer to Shoppers. We booked the Bell Tower in the Crowngate Shopping Centre in Worcester and went through most of our Christmas repertoire. Never a choir to miss an opportunity so we achieved three things; entertained the shoppers, had a bucket collection for Midlands Air Ambulance and sought to recruit more new choristers to start with us in the New Year. Plenty planned for the New Year; choir party, a tour, annual awards dinner, additions to the repertoire and above all plenty of singing and good fellowship. Enjoy 2017

**Terry Dillingham**  
Public Relations Officer

**K Shoes Male Voice Choir**  
NAC Group Cumbria/IOM

*I was challenged by your comments on the benefits of Portrait rather than Landscape format for choir member images! It certainly makes sense but as we all know is very hard to achieve. In the end extensive corraling was required but I am pleased to report that no choir members were harmed during the process.*



K Shoes Male Voice Choir

As Male Voice Choirs only occur in nature in parallel lines (except when informal eating or drinking are enjoyed) we knew it would be not be easy but would still be something worthwhile to aim for. A new annual image was definitely required, so Janis, the photographer was asked to create two main poses, one that would look good on the front of the NAC magazine and leave space for a headline and one... you've guessed...

in lines. In the end we were delighted by the results and now have a good image for use in our programmes, saving dangerous neck twisting by our readers.

On a different subject our concert starring The King's Singers was a great success, attracting an audience of over 500 and generating over £6,000 for St John's Hospice. We look forward to a fun filled 2017 and extend the compliments of the Season to all singers and supporters in any shape or form.

**Doug Armitage**  
Chairman

Sorry Doug, you were beaten by a bagpiper.

*Crawford*



LYN OAKES



**LOOKING GOOD, SOUNDING GREAT.**

- SUPPLIERS OF QUALITY CLOTHING TO CHOIRS AND BANDS.
- EXCELLENT SELECTION OF COLOURS AND CLOTHS FOR JACKETS AND TROUSERS.
- EXTENSIVE RANGE OF ACCESSORIES AVAILABLE.
- FULL EMBROIDERY SERVICE.
- FULL OR PART SUPPLY.

**WE VISIT AND MEASURE AT YOUR CONVIENIENCE.**  
PLEASE CONTACT US TO DISCUSS YOUR NEEDS.

Tel: 01299 827360 | Web: [www.lynoakes.co.uk](http://www.lynoakes.co.uk) | Email: [sales@lynoakes.co.uk](mailto:sales@lynoakes.co.uk)

## Cor Meibion Colwyn WalesN/CheshireW

*The choir has just completed a busy year, which included singing to audiences of thousands each time for the Proms in the Park and the Under 20 Rugby internationals in Parc Eirias Colwyn Bay, both of which were televised. We are a choir of 52 singers with an age range of 18 to 82. Since the choir was reformed in 1972 we have won the National Eisteddfod of Wales on three occasions, as well as winning the Cork Music Festival, the Isle of Man festival, the Pan Celtic festival in two competitions in Derry in 2015. Also in 2015 we were placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the International Musical Eisteddfod in Llangollen.*

Colwyn Male Voice Choir returned from a sell-out tour of North America in August and September 2016. The Colwyn tour of 71 choristers and guests began with a tour of the Vancouver city and then a tour of Vancouver Island the next day. 22 of the party then took flights by sea planes from Vancouver harbour and others went on a whale spotting boat. On 28 August, the choir of 41 voices sang at the 500 capacity Ryerson United church to a full enthusiastic audience, sharing a programme with the Vancouver Orpheus Male Voice Choir. This was a return concert for both choirs as Colwyn had hosted the Vancouver choir the previous year. The two choirs ended the programme with Gwahoddiad (Invitation) to a standing ovation. The next day Colwyn travelled through the Rockies to Salmon Arm on the large Shuswap lake. While this is a small town, the local organisers and audience had made very special efforts to host and prepare for the concert. Their volunteers built a special stage and one concert goer travelled 150 miles each way to the concert. The 350-seat church was completely sold out and there was a further standing ovation. Many people without tickets had to be turned away. The following 2 days were spent in the Banff area and the whole choir took the cable car gondolas to the top of the 8000 feet Sulphur Mountain, while many walked on to the next peak. Later we sang at the famous Lake Louise (with snow and glacier in the distance) to an audience of tourists and a Native American chief (see picture).

Colwyn then travelled to Calgary, where the choir was the special guest choir of the North American Festival of Wales, which was attended by people from across the USA and Canada. Here the choir sang at the Saturday evening concert on 3 September to a full capacity audience of 750



at the Knox United church to a great reception from the whole audience. Many locals without tickets had to be turned away. On Sunday 4, Colwyn sang to a total of around 800 in the two Cymanfa Ganu. Both the Canadian organisers and the choir considered all the concerts and tour a great success. While in Canada, we also sold around 300 of our new CD 'Calon Lan' which was first released by Sani in August 2016. These are £12 plus postage from the address below. Currently we are also selling them on eBay and in some local shops.

Colwyn returned to Wales on 6 September and was soon busy again singing at the televised Proms in the Park in Parc Eirias on 10 September, along with distinguished Royal Northern College of Music student and local baritone Ieuan Jones. In October we travelled to Dolfor near Newtown in mid Wales to a new Community Hall that was built with Euro funding. There we sang for Macmillan Cancer Research to a great reception and a great day out was capped by a fantastic buffet provided by local community, the choir completing the evening with many songs and hymns at the Dolfor Inn. Amongst our 30 concerts in 2016 were one in celebration of the 150 year anniversary of St John's Church Llandudno and around 10 Christmas and other charity events.

A special highlight of 2016 was our televised competition in the unaccompanied folk song section of the annual national Cerdd Dant competition in November 2016. We sang live on S4C and you can see our performance on iplayer. Our own choice piece in the competition was Fflat Huw Puw, a comic song about a real flat

bottomed boat that used to sail between the Cambrian and North Wales coasts and Liverpool. The ship eventually was shipwrecked off Barmouth in the 1850s. Our comic song kept the audience enthusiastic and awake at midnight and got special praise from the audience, adjudicators and the TV commentators. The song was arranged and stage managed by our Musical Director Tudur Eames and the mentions in turn a series of small harbours, starting appropriately in Pwllheli, where the competition was held. Here is a picture of part of the crew of the Fflat Huw Puw from our performance. Earlier in 2016 we recorded songs as part of the S4C hymn singing Dechrau Canu Dechrau Canmol programme and this was broadcast on Sunday 11 December.

2017 will be a busy year for the choir as well, with around 20 concerts already lined up and we will welcome the Snowdon Male Choir from Kent in one of our 2017 concerts. 2018 is blank at present, but a concert is planned for a new venue for us in 2019. We will be very pleased to welcome visitors to our concerts and rehearsals and to consider other engagements.

CONTACT Charles Cooksley Secretary Cor Meibion Colwyn for further details. 21 Allanson Road Rhos on Sea Colwyn Bay Phone 01492 548670 email : [charles@colwyn.plus.com](mailto:charles@colwyn.plus.com) Website : [www.cormeibioncolwyn.co.uk](http://www.cormeibioncolwyn.co.uk)

*Charles Cooksley*



## Music Reviews

### Full of the Moon

Banks Music Publications GCL020

Composer Christopher Gunning  
Lyrics Karla Kuskin

With the Words of Karla Kuskin ringing in our ears Christopher Gunning's wonderful piece evokes the turbulence which dogs exhibit as they drive their enthusiastic way through our lives.

The piece is so structured rhythmically and harmonically it has the audience looking this way and that trying to find out where they (the dogs) have got to.

The vibrant enthusiasm of the piece sees the dogs finally running out of energy and panting at the final section. However, the harmony still has a sense of mischief even at the end.

Where are, they going next, I wonder?

A fun piece which I believe will leave you smiling.

This piece is a Tour de Force if performed as the composer intended but requires great accuracy and commitment to pull it off.

However technically not a piece to be undertaken lightly but if the voices and accompanist are there and you are successful – Wow.

### All Things Bright and Beautiful

Banks Music Publications GCL018

Composer David Blackwell  
Lyrics C F Alexander

When there are several compositions to C F Alexander's wonderfully uplifting words it is always a joy to hear a new one which totally enchants from the very beginning.

The piece is so crafted for Junior Choir (The Chamber Choir at Oxford High Junior School) that the parts fall into alignment with an easy grace.

I would have no hesitation to bring this to my junior choir but it also lends itself to performance of a small group of amateur singers who want to branch out without the support of a large choir round them – also very good for the development of sight singing for newer singers.

### Can It Be True

Banks Music Publications BMP012

Composer Jaqueline Burley  
Lyrics Susan Hill

Winner in 2014 of the BBC Radio 3 Carol Competition this Carol invokes the theme of the 'Lion lying down with the Lamb' and the incredible news of Christmas with the story of peace and reconciliation being enacted by the changing attitudes of all the animals involved.

The chorus gently carries the story both dark and hopeful to its positive conclusion with the accompaniment gently skipping along always full of hope.

If you want a carol with an unusual story setting but with the Christmas light of hope, then this certainly fits the bill.

Can be sung by any group and as with all good Christmas pieces is a positive balance between something different and relatively easy to learn as it may only be sung once per year.

### Lead Kindly Light

Banks Music Publications GCL006

Composer Alex Patterson  
Lyrics John Henry Newman

From the outset, we are wrapped in a rich harmonic journey which wonderfully captures the anxiety homesickness and frustration which Newman felt whilst ill and waiting for a boat in Palermo.

His feelings were intensified when on route to Marseilles the boat was becalmed for a week at which point Newman relinquishes himself to God's will and wrote the words to *Lead Kindly Light*.

The richness of the setting points to the inner turmoil and the ending leaves a tantalising glimpse of the inner anguish and striving for the ultimate truth later in his life.

This is a very challenging piece with hints of the great Sullivan arrangement of its time and written in a continuously moving chordal progression and now is a reinterpretation of this, its time!

As this an 'A Capella' study, great accuracy of diction, pitch and sostenuto is demanded from the singers and assured direction from the conductor to really bring out all its subtleties.

Should the choir have these qualities then this would be a great addition to any repertoire.

### Cantata – 'A Better World'

<http://raysaunders.com/index.htm>

Composer Ray Saunders  
Lyrics Ray Saunders

This is a piece which I have had and been studying and considering in depth for some time.

I commend Ray for tackling such a difficult subject and interpreting it in choral form.

The cantata is a bold and possibly contentious work to highlight the plight of refugees from the world's conflict zones.

The overall work describes the journey of a single/multiple (1st-3rd) person and their perceptions and thoughts of each stage of the journey.

Musically there is a relentless drive throughout the piece which attempts to create in the listener the onward but determined slow movement to their goal but with occasional looks to the life left behind and the perceived home to come.

I would have liked a section in the composition from the point of view of the receiving country to ground the journey for the listener and indicate a view of the final goal and the immigrant's reception.

This piece is a niche work but would be an interesting if long work to include in a choir's repertoire to highlight the British diversity in choral music.

I would recommend conductors to listen to the selection of audio of parts of the cantata on Ray's site to decide for themselves the suitability for their group but sadly these seem to be now removed.

<http://www.raysaunders.com/index.htm>

**Karl Harper**  
*Music Review Officer*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
OR  
TO SEND MUSIC FOR REVIEW  
SEE THE CONTACT DETAILS  
ON THE BACK PAGE  
OF THIS MAGAZINE**

## Norwich Phoenix M V C East Anglia

### NORWICH PHOENIX MVC TAKE ON THE EGGHEADS

In early January 2016 our committee was pondering the question of publicity in order to increase audiences and attract new members. A suggestion that we should put forward a team to challenge the Eggheads was made, more as a joke than anything else. However, I was charged with investigating the idea and at the first practice of the year asked for volunteers. Four members said they were prepared to give it a go and so I went on line, found an Eggheads website and downloaded the application forms. With a little bit of judicious arm-twisting we persuaded a sixth man to become our reserve. Unfortunately, I had found an out of date website in London, so our initial application was returned 'not known at this address'. A second attempt sent to Glasgow was more successful, although it was several months before I received a telephone call saying they would like to take things further. All six of us were called individually and asked a set of trial questions. We must have done well enough because we were told they wanted us to participate in an audition.

It turned out that there were insufficient applications from East Anglia to hold a physical audition, so we were asked to make a DVD introducing ourselves. My daughter-in-law filmed us and acted as interviewer. We started the recording with echoes of the Five Smith Brothers' quintuple rising 'Hello' – explainable from the team's average age of 75. They liked our DVD and we were short-listed.

Meanwhile we had been researching the many strengths and few weaknesses in the Eggheads' team and testing our own abilities in each of the subject areas. We also monitored the frequency of subjects being selected for questions. Out of this research we put together a strategy to cover as many eventualities as we could. We eventually heard that we had been selected to appear and learned we would have to travel to Glasgow for the recording. Unfortunately, our reserve was unable to make the date, but a new choir member volunteered to step in. So we would have a full complement.

We had chosen the team name 'Yes, Sarah!' in appreciation of our musical director, Sarah Sheldrake. A lovely, enthusiastic and very capable conductor, Sarah manages to control the thirty-odd aged reprobates that make up the choir membership with good humour and regular queries like 'Does that make sense?' and 'Are you happy with that?' to which the anticipated reply is a unanimous and positive 'Yes, Sarah!' Our travel and accommodation were arranged and paid for by the Eggheads production team.



Norwich is not the easiest place to travel from by train. Our journey required changes at Ely, Peterborough and York. Unfortunately, our intended last leg from York to Glasgow was scuppered by the sight of the Glasgow train disappearing out of the station as we arrived. So, we had to go via Edinburgh and arrived quite late. Our hotel was functional and the beds comfortable. We did a little more rehearsing in the morning before being picked up by taxi and taken to the BBC studios on the south bank of the Clyde. Security on entry was of airport level but we were met by a small team of young men and women who looked after us throughout the visit with kindness and superb helpfulness.

We had been sent an information pack for contestants detailing what we should wear and what was permitted and forbidden in the studios, but the young people put flesh on its bones and relaxed us professionally. In the Green Room we handed over the four shirts we had been asked to bring and the wardrobe department selected the most appropriate and pressed them. We had an enjoyable buffet lunch and practised the opening bars of *Chattanooga Chu Chu* which was to be our token serenade of the Eggheads.

Then came our first surprise. We would be facing two new Eggheads, Beth and Steve, who had been through the selection process just recently. All we knew about them was a brief resume that was pinned to the Green Room wall. So, our strategy had somewhat disintegrated. The second surprise followed shortly afterwards. The previous team of contestants had just beaten the Eggheads and scooped the substantial accumulated pool of cash on offer to winning teams. So, we were back to £1000. Frankly we were not too upset as our aim was to raise local publicity for the choir with anything we won as a bonus to help choir funds.

We were taken to make-up and met 'Tremendous knowledge Dave' coming out on twin sticks. He was charming and very friendly. He told us he was suffering from gout and was obviously in a lot of pain. Later he went everywhere in a wheelchair. He would be one of our opponents. Soon afterwards we were sitting just outside the studios in the room where individual head-to-heads would sit. Jeremy Vine, Steve, Beth, Barry and Pat

came through and shook our hands. Their smiles of welcome continued the relaxing theme that had lasted through out the visit so far. Judith followed them, unmistakable in her unique manner. In the studios we were given last minute instructions by the Director and introduced ourselves to camera individually.

The Eggheads came in and we chatted informally to them until Jeremy arrived when quite quickly we were off. The filming took around an hour and a half but was broken up into short sections after each of which chairs were rearranged and people went to and from the individual question room. Things went very well to begin with. Keith answered all his questions on Food and Drink – the one subject we had not expected – but Dave got his last one wrong. Eddie outscored Beth 2-1 on Music and Chris, our retired history teacher, defeated Barry on his favourite subject – history.

From then on it was downhill. Neither Jerry nor I fancied Arts and Books but he valiantly volunteered, had very difficult questions and lost to Steve. But we still had a 4-2 advantage for the final General Knowledge round. We got our first question right but will all long remember listening to the second one with a sinking feeling in our hearts. 'What does the first A in the education-related acronym AQA stand for – academic, assessment or authority? We had no idea. Our ex-teacher had retired long before AQA had come into being.

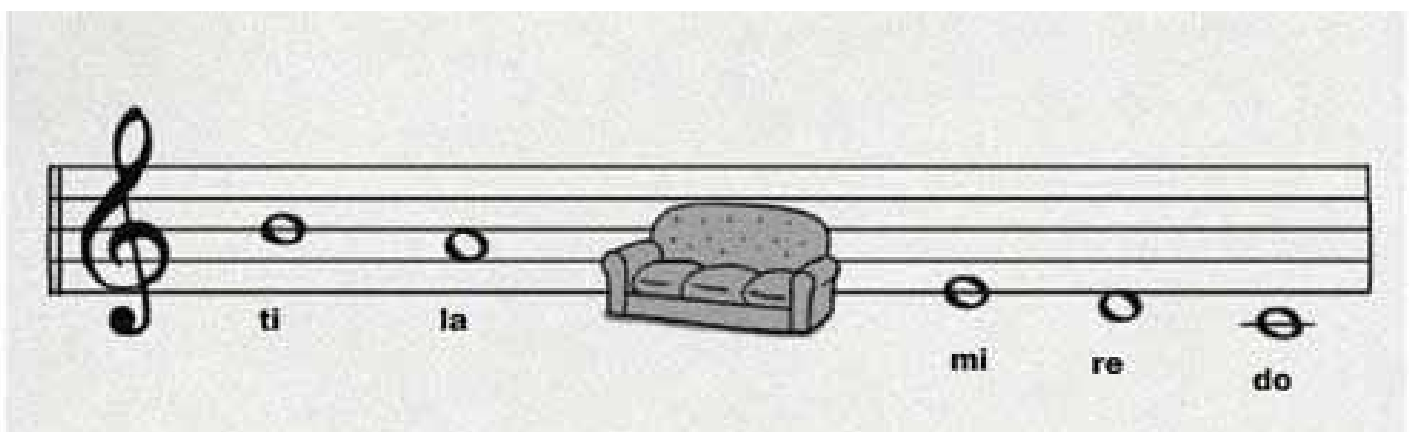
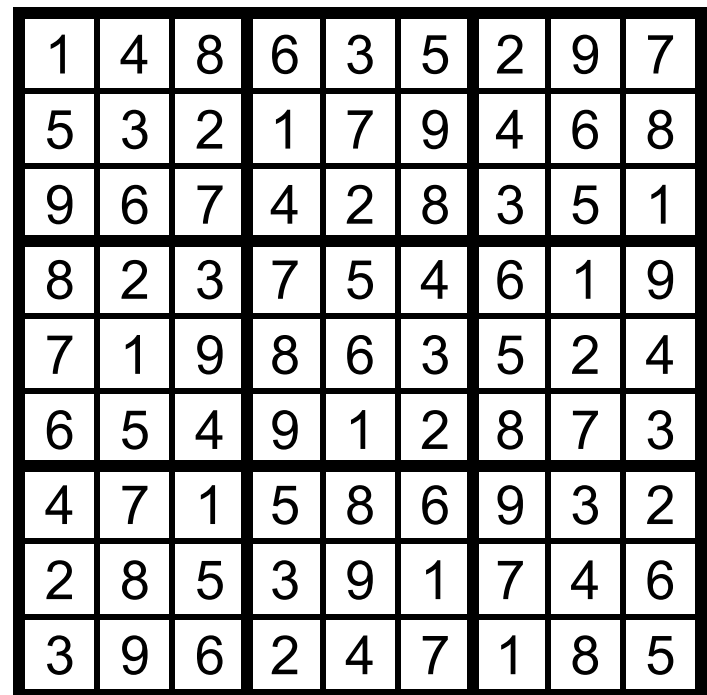
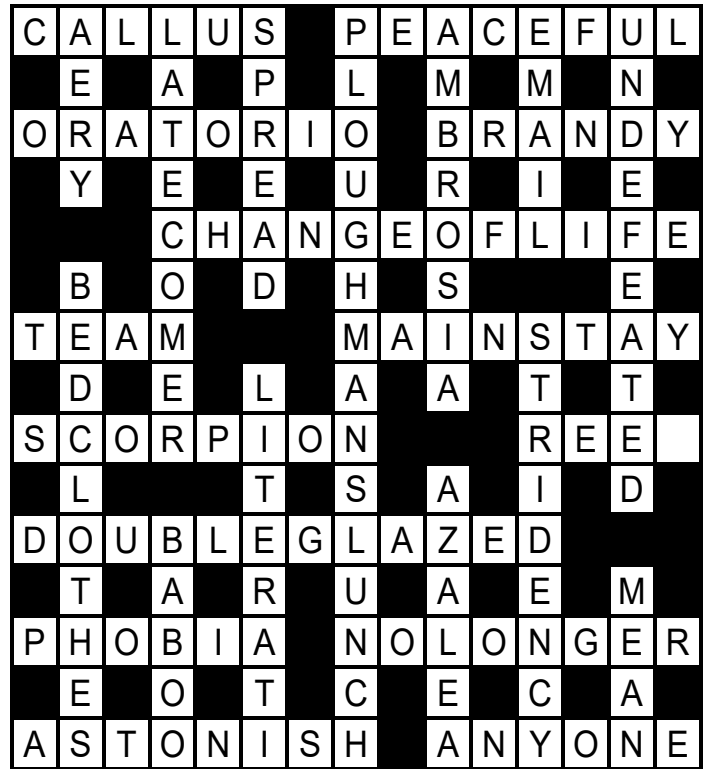
We pondered and assumed the first A would be an adjective, so we picked academic. It was wrong and we were soon 1-2 down. Having four in the final round can prove a disadvantage as there is a tendency to talk yourselves out of the right answer, and that's what we did on our final question. It had been a marvellous experience, thoroughly enjoyed by all of us and subsequently by the rest of the choir and our friends and families when it was transmitted (even though they cut our song). Best of all we got a half page spread in the Eastern Daily Press. Objective achieved.

**Philip Bourne**  
Captain of 'Yes, Sarah'

# New Members' Directory

If they are in your group give them a call and say hello.

- BERWICK MVC** Scotland East 45 choristers  
 John Alexander 6 Lambton Green, Coldstream TD12 9EN  
 01890 853640 [bmvc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:bmvc@hotmail.co.uk) [www.berwickmvc.org](http://www.berwickmvc.org)
- CARILLON** ThamesN Mixed voices 30 choristers  
 Susannah Edwards 18 Moreton Avenue, Harpenden, Herts AL5 2ET  
 07813 253176 [carillonsec@gmail.com](mailto:carillonsec@gmail.com) [www.carillonchamberchoir.org](http://www.carillonchamberchoir.org)
- CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH LADIES** NW 52 choristers  
 Mavis Spencer 3 Ivy Cottage, Whitehough Chinley, High Peak SK23 6EJ  
 01663 750825 [mavisspencer@hotmail.com](mailto:mavisspencer@hotmail.com) [www.chapelenlefrithladieschoir.co.uk](http://www.chapelenlefrithladieschoir.co.uk)
- DUNFERMLINE CHORAL UNION** ScotE Mixed voices 123 choristers  
 Mandy Miller 177 Duddingston Drive, Kirkcaldy KY2 6XQ  
 01592 591903 [mandychoir@hotmail.com](mailto:mandychoir@hotmail.com)  
[www.groupspaces.com/dunfermlinechoralunion](http://www.groupspaces.com/dunfermlinechoralunion)
- DUNFERMLINE JUNIOR CHORUS** ScotE Youth voices  
 Mandy Miller 177 Duddingston Drive, Kirkcaldy KY2 6XQ  
 01592 591903 [mandychoir@hotmail.com](mailto:mandychoir@hotmail.com)
- FEATHERSTONE MVC** YorksW 64 choristers  
 Brian Grieves 13 Springfield Grove, Crofton, Wakefield WF4 1EY  
 01924 864889 [choir@fmvc.co.uk](mailto:choir@fmvc.co.uk) [www.fmvc.co.uk](http://www.fmvc.co.uk)
- HEADINGLEY VOICES** YorksW Mixed voices 95 choristers  
 Janie Percy-Smith 3 Ashwood Villas, Leeds LS6 2EJ  
 07913 447517 [percysmithjanie@gmail.com](mailto:percysmithjanie@gmail.com) [www.headingleyvoices.com](http://www.headingleyvoices.com)
- PIPERS CHOIR** Cornwall Mixed voices 41 choristers  
 Mrs Jane Smith 2 Higher Bojewyan, Pendeen, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7TR  
 01736 785820 [jan smith123@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jan smith123@tiscali.co.uk)
- STATION SINGERS** Yorks N&E Mixed voices 150 choristers  
 William Gedy 55 Maison Dieu, Richmond, N Yorks DL10 7AT  
 07710 739192 [wgedye@btinternet.com](mailto:wgedye@btinternet.com) [www.richmondstationsingers.co.uk](http://www.richmondstationsingers.co.uk)
- WIRED FOR SOUND COMMUNITY CHOIR** NW Mixed voices 45 choristers  
 Christine Wardle 33 Pewterspear Lane, Appleton, Warrington WA4 5DY  
 01925 262887 [christinemwardle@hotmail.com](mailto:christinemwardle@hotmail.com)  
[www.wiredforsoundwarrington.com](http://www.wiredforsoundwarrington.com)
- THE NOTEABLES** ScotE Mixed voices 60 choristers  
 Fiona Farnan 3 Ross Avenue, Dalgety Bay, Fife KY11 9YN  
 07870 455141 [fionafarnan@gmail.com](mailto:fionafarnan@gmail.com)
- PONTYPOOL MALE CHOIR** WalesS 24 choristers  
 Peter Kinsey Llyn y Coed, Parc Road, Llangybi, Mon NP15 1NL  
 01633 450781 [pjk2808@gmail.com](mailto:pjk2808@gmail.com) <http://pontypoolmalechoir.wales/>



## The Officers

Ronald Corp SSC OBE-  President

**Brenda E Wilkinson** - *Chairman & Membership Officer*

'Andante', 23 Mendip Close, Ashby de la Zouch,  
Leicester LE65 1DZ

01530 411178

[chairman@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:chairman@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

[membership.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:membership.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

**Celia Johns** - *General Secretary & Webmaster*

350 March Road, Turves, Whittlesey,  
Peterborough PE7 2DW

01733 840370

[general.secretary@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:general.secretary@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

[webmaster@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

**Paul Gailiunas** - *Treasurer*

25 Hedley Terrace, Gosforth,  
Newcastle, NE3 1DP

0191 285 0654

[treasurer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

**Clive Lawton** - *Conference Co-ordinator*

20 Arthur's Court, Stretton,  
Burton on Trent, DE13 0GS

01283 569677

[conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

**Bob Swallow** - *Publications Officer*

8 Charles Avenue, Laceby,  
Grimsby DN37 7HA

01472 500130

[publications.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:publications.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

**John Croft** - *Services Officer & Public Relations Officer*

15 Glendale, The Bayle,  
Folkestone, Kent, CT20 1SH

01303 240345

[services.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:services.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

[pre@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:pre@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

**David Goodwin** - *Music & Festivals Officer*

20 Piercy End, Kirkbymoorside  
York YO62 6DF

01751 432931 Office: 01653 628545

[music.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:music.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

[info@banksmusicpublications.co.uk](mailto:info@banksmusicpublications.co.uk)

**Karl Harper** - *Co-opted Music Review Officer*

67 Woodville Road, Overseas  
Derbyshire DE12 6LU

01283 760354 07976 548969

[music\\_reviews@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:music_reviews@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

**Natasha Cole** - *Co-opted Officer*

89 Stopsley Way  
Luton, LU2 7JU

01582 259836

[NAcath@icloud.com](mailto:NAcath@icloud.com)

Registered Charity: 1014630

*Vice Presidents*

**Bob Barratt** - *Music Publisher*

**Richard Bradley** - *ret Chairman, PRO,  
Services Officer*

**Jean Cooper** - *ret General Secretary*

**Gerald Haigh** - *ret Chairman*

**Ken Hone** - *ret Group 11 Chairman*

**Peter Marshall** - *ret Services Officer*

**John Robbins** - *ret Gen. Secretary*

**Alan Simmons** - *Music Publisher*

**Doris Williams** - *Music and Festivals  
Consultant*

### How I like to receive articles for News & Views.

The first thing is to send your article **attached** to (not in the body of) an email to

[publications.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk](mailto:publications.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk)

'Wow! that is a long email address', I hear you say. Yes it is but you will find that once it's in your computer you can just start to type it and your computer will offer to finish it for you.

Many of our contributors love to show their prowess by sending in wonderful finished articles with **coloured** headlines, five different **fonts** and many **underlinings**, *italics* and **bold** bits. Then, of course, I have to spend time taking them all out before I can set their article up the way you will see it in the magazine. **KEEP IT SIMPLE!**

### HOUSE STYLE

We use Calibri 10pt in News & Views. (If you don't have this, don't worry I can soon change the one you use.)

Set your paragraphs to single space with no spacing before or after paragraphs.

Start with the name of your choir.

Then say the NAC group your choir is in.

Write your article.

Say who has written it.

Quotes use single speech marks (same key as @ but without the shift).

Dates do not include <sup>st nd rd</sup> or <sup>th</sup>

Abbreviations do not have full stops.

Song titles are shown in *italics*.

Do not put photos in the text.

Don't use am or pm in times.

Unless the word 'choir' is part of a title it should **NOT** have a capital letter.

Your choir is singular so 'the choir is' not 'the choir are'.

Send me pictures as high res .jpegs of between 1 and 5Mb or more, minimum 300 dpi.

Attach them to an email.

If this is hard to understand then ring me and I'll talk you through it.

01472 500130

PLEASE DO WRITE IN

*Crawford*