

Teddy and the Melbourne Welsh



Those of you (and there were a lot), who attended the concert with Teddy Tahu Rhodes last month, were treated to a veritable feast of good music.

From Teddy's powerful opening "*the Song of the golden calf - Le veau d'or*" from Gounod's *Faust*, to the gentle harmonies of the choir's "*Danny Boy*" there was something for everyone in the performance and the standing ovation at the end of the concert said it all.

The Recital Hall is a wonderful place to sing for a choir since the acoustics enable each chorister to hear every one else around him, as well as the piano. Similarly the soloists had no need for microphones. It was just as rewarding for the audience with the design of the hall ensuring that the sound carries to every part of the hall.

Teddy was freshly returned from portraying *Faust* in Perth and his imposing stature allied to his glorious bass baritone voice was something to behold.

From his evocative solo "*Some enchanted evening*" to the gentle duet with Lucas "*Lily's eyes*" and his interaction with the choir for "*Hine e Hine*", "*Sweet Molly Malone*", "*Stars*", "*Do you hear the people sing*" and "*New York, New York*", his beautiful voice lit up the hall and thrilled the audience.

Teddy donned one of the Choir's Welsh tartan waistcoats (albeit somewhat small for him) to fit in with the rest of the choir for the second half of the concert, and his enjoyment in singing with the choir

was obvious, we look forward to performing with him again.

Good weather, a full house, a great venue and a wonderful concert, what better ways are there to spend a Sunday afternoon in Melbourne?

It's a small world.

On the evening prior to our concert with Teddy, another friend and former conductor of the Melbourne Welsh **Doug Heywood** conducted the Cammerata orchestra and the Camberwell Chorale in Handel's *Messiah* at Hawthorn Town Hall and who did we find as bass soloist but our 2015 Singer of the Year - **Michael Lampard**, while the soprano was **Lee Abrahmsen**, our 2012 SOTY winner and the Choir's guest artist for our Morning Melodies concert at the Arts Centre earlier this year.

For the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's performance of the *Messiah* at the Hamer Hall last weekend, the soloists included the choir's new friend and guest artist **Teddy Tahu Rhodes** (see above) and yet another previous SOTY winner and great friend of the Choir (who was responsible for the Choir's invitation to the Kathaumixw festival in Canada) mezzo-soprano **Sally-Anne Russell**.

Frankston Arts Centre

Speaking of friends - **Roy Best** - who was our guest artist for the Choir's St David's day concert at the Karralyka theatre in Ringwood earlier this year was one of the headline acts for *Morning Melodies – Spirit of Christmas* concerts in Frankston's Performing Arts Centre on Friday Dec 4th, together with compere **Chris McKenna** and soprano **Cheryl Darvidis**. The Melbourne Welsh were also guest artists and we performed *Joy to the World*, *The Angel Carol*, *Silver Bells* and the first airing of the popular "Hallelujah" (with a Christmas oriented third verse written and arranged by Jim Clancy - director of the famed *Vocal Majority*) and of course, since we are a Welsh choir we finished with the wonderful *Gwahoddiad* with its rousing amens.

As usual the Morning Melodies were on at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., which meant an early rise and a long drive for many of our members. We hope we generated some Frankston area fans as a result of the performance.

St David's Day Celebration



Our aforementioned friend, **Roy Best** has once again agreed to be our guest artist for our *St David's Day Concert* at the Karralyka Centre in Mines Road, Ringwood on Saturday 27th February 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Our other guest artist is **Cath Connelly** a



local girl with an international reputation as a Celtic harpist. Cath has been playing the Celtic harp professionally since 1998. She is now considered one of Australia's leading Celtic harpers, with her career flourishing since

claiming 3rd prize (Seniors Division) in the 2004 Turlough O'Carolan Harp Competition, Nobber, County Meath, Ireland.

Cath returned to Ireland to perform in 2006, 2009 and 2014. She also completed a solo tour of the East Coast of USA in 2012.



By popular demand **Bill Spawton**, one of our second tenors, will again compere the concert and we expect him to once again treat us to some of Dylan Thomas' beautiful Welsh poetry.

The celebration of Welsh culture and in particular, choral singing will resound all over the world on our patron Saint's birthday. So bake, savour and enjoy your Welsh cakes, pin on your leeks or daffodils and join with us for a great evening's entertainment.

(Tickets www.melbournewelshchoir.com.au/tickets tel: **9870 8891** or ask any chorister)

Mooroolbark Christmas Concerts

The choir will again be giving two Christmas concerts at Mooroolbark Community Centre on Saturday 12th December at 7:00 p.m. and Sunday 13 December at 2:00 p.m.

Two concerts have been scheduled because the Centre is restricted to 200+ seats and the Sunday concert is already a sell-out. There are still seats for the Saturday show so come and join us for a combination of beautiful harmonies and community carol singing - you won't be disappointed. (Tickets from Mooroolbark Community Centre 9726 5488)

The 2016 Gymanfa Ganu

For those friends of the choir who have not attended a *Gymanfa Ganu* in Melbourne, you really have missed a wonderful free afternoon of Welsh entertainment.

Organised by the Melbourne Welsh Church, the event is held at St Michael's Church on the corner of Collins and Russell Streets, since the Welsh Church itself is too small to accommodate the usual audience numbers. Members of all four Welsh choirs in Victoria - the Australian Welsh, Victorian Welsh, Geelong Ladies Choir and of course the Melbourne Welsh will all be in



the balcony to lead the hymn singing and also to perform special choral items.

From Wales, **Rhys Meirion** (classical tenor), **Ffion Haf Jones** (2015 Blue Riband winner at the National Eisteddfod of Wales) and the popular Welsh conductor and organist **Rob Nicholls** (former MD of the two time winning National Eisteddfod choir **Côr Meibion Taf**), have all accepted invitations be guests of the Welsh Church of Melbourne at the 2016 Gymanfa Ganu. The choir '**Excelsis**' will also perform.

Dechrua Canu, Dechrua Canmol (a television series featuring congregational Christian singing in the Welsh language) are showing interest in televising the event. What a wonderful afternoon it should be.

Long time friends of the choir may recall that **Rhys Meirion** (then contracted by the Australian Opera) was our guest artist together with **Sally-Anne Russell** at the concert, which we performed at Hamer Hall in 2005.

This year's *Gymanfa Ganu* will be from 3:00 p.m. on Sunday 28th February 2016, entrance is free, so come early to get good seats.

CHOIR DIRECTORY

President: Mike Lyons

president@melbournewelshchoir.com.au

Vice-President: Doug Utley

vicepresident@melbournewelshchoir.com.au

Secretary: Alan Stevenson

secretary@melbournewelshchoir.com.au

Treasurer: Paul Gawthorn

treasurer@melbournewelshchoir.com.au

Music Director: Lucas de Jong

Committee: David Field, Herb Jenkins, Alan Hughes, David Phillips, Gwyn Harper,

CHOIR TELEPHONE: (03) 9870 8891

TICKET SALES: (03) 9870 8891

THIS NEWSLETTER: The production of this newsletter is a joint effort. Contributions of all kinds are sought from members to keep the newsletter varied and interesting. We also welcome contributions from our supporters.

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Gwyn Harper, Editor