

What an anniversary...

The 25th anniversary Singer of the Year competition was all that we could have hoped.

Great acoustics, wonderful competitors, a commanding, dramatic guest artist (Teddy Tahu Rhodes), a rejuvenated choir (after their overseas adventures) and an excellent programme made for a highly enjoyable SOTY concert at Camberwell Grammar School.

The winner on the night was Mezzo Soprano Bronte Zemlic, who will be taking the trophy and her \$5000 prize (presented by Cameron Semark, Director of Infiniti Brighton) to Cardiff, Wales to continue her music career under the tutelage of Dennis O'Neil at the Cardiff International Academy of Voice.

The Welsh often tell jokes against themselves...

Young Dylan comes home from school and tells his mother he's been given a part in the school play.

"Wonderful," says his mam. "What part is it?"

The boy says: "I play the part of the Welsh husband."

The mother scowls and says: "Go back and tell them you want a speaking part."

Upcoming concerts

A Triple Treat

On Sunday 15th October, the Melbourne Welsh and the Australia Welsh choirs will be in Wollongong NSW, for the MCAA (Male Choirs Association of Australia) concert **Let All Men Sing**. This concert will feature a massed choir, comprising 15 male choirs from NSW, Victoria, WA and the ACT, plus a male choir from Wellington NZ, singing with the NSW Police Band.

Since our "Melbourne Friends" are unlikely to be present at that unique concert in Wollongong, the Melbourne Welsh and the Australia Welsh choirs are joining together to form a smaller 'massed' choir, reproducing much of the MCAA Wollongong programme, on Friday afternoon 29th September (*public holiday for the AFL Grand Final*) at Kingston City Hall.

Since we are the only Welsh Male choirs in the Wollongong concert, and we are re-producing that concert on 29th, unfortunately there will be no Welsh language songs in the programme. Our part of the concert will showcase two completely new songs - *Sixteen Tons*, *Brothers Sing On!* as well as old favourites - *Speed Your Journey* (from *Nabucco*), *Deus Salutis*, *Shelter*, *Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit*, *Be Still My Soul* (Finlandia), and *Where Shall I Be?*

In addition there is a brand new arrangement of *You Raise Me Up*, and a foot tapping tongue-twisting song that we haven't sung for 20 years, the very popular *Rhythm of Life*.

The Wanganui Male Choir from NZ are touring here that weekend, and they will treat us to songs from their repertoire.

As a finale all three choirs will take the stage together and the three musical directors will conduct one item each - *Let All Men Sing*, *Morte Christe* (When I Survey the Wondrous Cross), and *An American Trilogy*. It promises to be a spectacular end to a special afternoon.

You must admit an opportunity like this doesn't come around too often, so act quickly and book tickets for this concert. 9556 4440 or visit Kingstonarts.com.au We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Kingston City Hall.



Bronte Zemlic and Cameron Semark

The competition was very close and the runners up Raphael Wong (baritone), Christina Russo (Soprano) and Chloe Harris (Mezzo Soprano) all put in moving performances leaving our judges (Graeme Wall, Margot Cory-wall and David Ashton-Smith) with a very difficult decision to make.

Bronte had been a runner-up in last year's competition, so we look forward to this year's runners-up returning next year to delight our audience once again.

Geelong Concert for Tuckers Funerals

On Friday October 6th the choir will once again be going west to one of its favourite venues, the magnificent St Mary's Basilica Geelong for our, now traditional, Seniors Week afternoon concert, sponsored by Tuckers Funerals.

The wonderful acoustics and the warm welcome from a usually packed audience makes this one of our favourite concerts.

This will be the 15th year we have been singing at the Basilica and the first time without Michele van Liessum who retired from Tuckers earlier this year. We would like to thank Michele for all her help over the past 14 years and we hope to see her in the audience. We welcome her successor Sue Marshman and look forward to working with her in the coming years.



Maroondah Morning Melodies at Karralyka Theatre

An early start for the choir on Tuesday 17th October when we perform "Songs from around the world" at the Karralyka Theatre in Ringwood. Many of our choir members are rushing back from Wollongong for this concert.

As a well travelled choir, we look forward to treating our audience to many of the songs we have had the pleasure of singing over the years. Expect a Welsh song (or two) plus possibly an African chant or a Maori lullabye and of course some Italian and American songs. Not forgetting *Danny Boy* from Ireland.

All in all it should be a fascinating and instructive morning's entertainment.

We look forward to seeing you at what is our "local" theatre



The rivalry between the Welsh and the English is legendary, certainly in terms of humour. Our sometime compere Bill Spawton brought this to our attention at the Singer of the Year concert -

A farmer was out tending his flock when he saw a man drinking with a cupped hand from a stream. He shouted over in Welsh: "Peidio yfed y dŵr! Mae'n fffiaidd! Nid oes carthion defaid ynddo!" which translated is "Don't drink the water! It's disgusting! There's sheep poo in it!"

The man at the stream lifted his head and carried on drinking. Realising the man couldn't hear him, the farmer moved closer and shouted the same thing in Welsh again.

But still the man couldn't hear him.

Finally the farmer walked right up to him and repeated his warning. To which the man replied: "Dreadfully sorry, my good man, I can't understand a word you say. Can you speak English, old chap?"

"Oh I see," said the farmer. "I was just saying if you use both hands you can get more in."

Choir Member Profile

In this edition we profile our Music Director, David Ashton-Smith (3rd from left) with wife Norma (2nd from left), our Patron Alwyn Humphries and his wife, current Music Director of the Morryston Orpheus, Joy Amman Davies during the choir's visit to Swansea earlier this year.



David joined the choir as acting Music Director in 2016 and the choir was delighted when he agreed to accept the permanent position later in the year. As a result he now has two major choirs to direct plus an extensive range of other musical and family interests and commitments.

A graduate of Melbourne High School, David studied singing in Melbourne for a period of 10 years with Bettine McCaughan. He reached the finals of many major singing competitions including the Melbourne Sun Aria on two



occasions and won a series of the popular Hector Crawford produced 'Showcase' TV talent show on channel 10 before going to London in 1971.

After a year singing in summer shows and pantomime, David gained a contract to sing principal roles with The English National Opera Co. He was to remain there for the next 8 years, singing many major roles in the company's busy performance seasons. Highlights were the roles of Sylvio in Il Paglicacci and Marcel in La Boheme.

David's conducting experience began when he led a youth choir in London at the Methodist Church in Stoneleigh.

During this time he also sang in many oratorio performances throughout England and Wales and was a regular guest on BBC radio with The BBC Concert Orchestra.

David returned to Australia in late 1979 to take up a combined teaching and performing career. Since then he has sung with the Victorian State Opera and in many oratorio performances in Melbourne, Adelaide and Tasmania.

He began a long association with the Australian Pops Orchestra (APO) in 1980 and became the Orchestra's resident compere and vocalist for the next ten years in programs ranging from the music of Vienna to Rodgers & Hammerstein.

His choir, The Ashton Smith Singers of Australia, has now been in existence for 37 years and performs regularly with the APO. David and his choir have contributed music for several Australian films working with composer Cezary Skubiszewski, with Mike Brady on several CD recordings and with Allan Zavod in film and in concert and in 1983 sang with Barry Humphries in his performances of Song of Australia. They have also performed with Michael Crawford, Sir Harry Secombe, Peter Allen and more recently with Andrea Bocelli in his 2015 Australian and New Zealand tour.

David was Managing director of the Australian Pops Orchestra during the period 2005 to 2009 mounting major concerts at the Sydney Opera House and at Hamer Hall at the Victorian Arts Centre as well as major corporate events at Crown Palladium and the Sofitel Collins St.

David has recorded two CD's. One 'An Die Musik' with pianist Claire Preston of mostly classical song repertoire and another of more relaxed Latin American songs with several prominent Melbourne musicians - 'Amor'.

David is closely associated with 'Australian Music Events' and puts together the orchestra for 'Opera in the Alps' and 'Opera in the Market' each year.

In addition David teaches singing and is a sought after vocal adjudicator, which was how the choir was introduced to him when he adjudicated our Singer of the Year competition.

Last year David's musical career hit a high note, when he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to the music community

He said he was "very excited and very humbled" to receive the prestigious award for his contribution to the performing arts, particularly music.

"You never set out to achieve these sort of things, I just loved singing from a young age and I played the piano - I've been very fortunate,"

"I have been lucky to be involved in music in many aspects and I just love it - it keeps me young".

Sponsorship

The choir is actively seeking sponsors, in particular for annual funding of our Singer of the Year Concert.

If you would like to be associated with this wonderful event, or simply wish to have your name or product associated with the choir, please contact any member of the choir's committee and we will be delighted to work with you to make the most of your sponsorship.

Alternatively if you would like to support our "crowd funding" initiative please log on to <https://chuffed.org/project/mwmc>

The choir is available for corporate and sporting events, dinners, anniversaries, weddings etc., so if you require anything from a flash mob to a full two-hour concert please contact Gwyn Harper, or any committee member to discuss these opportunities.

Up coming events

2 pm Friday, 29th September

Let all men Sing

Kingston City Hall, 985 Nepean Highway, Moorabbin

10:30 am Tuesday, 17th October

Songs from around the world

Karralyka Theatre, Mines Road, Ringwood,

2:30 pm Friday, 6th October

Recital at St Mary's Basilica (sponsored by Tuckers)

St Mary's Cathedral, 150 Yarra Street, Geelong

2:00 pm Sunday, 19th November

A Welsh Fantasy - Legends of Brass and MWMC

Eltham Community Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham



Melbourne Welsh News No. 15

www.melbournewelshchoir.com.au

23rd September 2017



*Australian Welsh
Male Choir*

Let All Men Sing



*Melbourne Welsh
Male Choir*



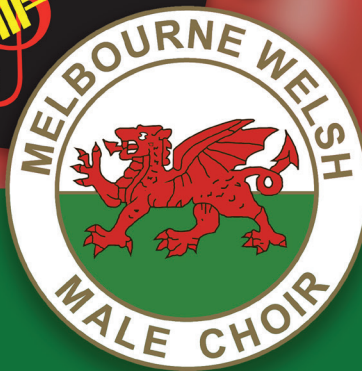
Wanganui Male Choir (NZ)

2 pm Friday 29th September

(Public holiday for
AFL Grand Final)

Kingston City Hall 985 Nepean Highway - next to Moorabbin station

Tickets: Kingston Arts Box Office 9556 4440 or www.kingstonarts.com.au
Adult \$30.00, Concession \$27.00, Group (6 or more) \$25.00 Children 15 and under \$15.00



Partnering for your pleasure

A Welsh Fantasy

The Legends of Brass and
The Melbourne Welsh Male Choir
in Concert

SUNDAY 19 NOVEMBER @ 2.30 pm
Eltham Community and Reception Centre
801 Main Road, Eltham

TICKETS: \$25 • Contact Lyn 0408 596 356

*Limited tickets
Expected to sell out early*

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