

A busy busy schedule...

The choir has just had possibly the busiest and most demanding month in its history!

Kingston Town Hall Moorabbin – “Let All Men Sing”

On Sunday 29th September we performed with the Australian Welsh Male Choir and the Wanganui Male Choir from New Zealand at Kingston Town Hall, Moorabbin. The concert had been arranged some time before as part of the New Zealand Choir's tour of Victoria and Tasmania. For our part it was a useful opportunity to air some of the songs from the repertoire for the upcoming MCAA concert in Wollongong.

Having two and sometimes three choirs on stage simultaneously was something of a squeeze, but the audience appeared to enjoy every minute.

St Mary's Basilica Geelong

The following Friday 6th October, we performed in an afternoon concert for Geelong senior citizens, sponsored by Tuckers Funerals (the first with their new event coordinator - Sue Marshman) in the cathedral setting of St Mary's, and were once again well received by the packed audience.

Subsequent to our visit we have been informed that our engagement for next year (our 16th consecutive year) has been confirmed.

Having two choir soloists in Kevin Seerup and Colin Brown added depth to the concert's program, as well as providing a brief respite for the choir to recover their breath in the altar stalls.

It really was a joy to sing in the beautiful environment of the Basilica and we look forward to next year's concert.

Male Choirs Association of Australia Concert

WIN Sports and Entertainment Centre
Wollongong. NSW

A substantial proportion of the choir and their partners then packed their bags for Wollongong for the MCAA (Male Choirs Association of Australia) concert involving members of 14 choirs (330 choristers) from all parts of Australia plus the Wellington Choir from New Zealand.

With a full day's rehearsal for the choirs on Saturday 14th October and another rehearsal with the NSW Police Band on the Sunday morning before the concert that afternoon, it was important to arrive the day before.

The concept of having two choir conductors, Keiran Brandt-Sawdy and Tom Buchanan, worked well and the unusual encore with both the choir and the audience singing “Waltzing Matilda” was very well received with almost every person in the auditorium on their feet and singing.

Special thanks should go to the NSW Police Concert Band and the “String Family” for their musical contribution, which made it a very well balanced program. Wollongong itself was sunny for the entire weekend and proved to be a great city for sightseeing, shopping, relaxing, and dining.

Since most choristers drove to Wollongong the majority would have left home on the Thursday.

Despite the tiring journey, the partners had a chance to see the sights of Wollongong, including the amazing Buddhist temple, while the choristers had an opportunity to mingle and communicate with their interstate “brothers in song”.



The resulting performance on the Sunday afternoon met with tumultuous applause from an audience of over 1500 people and the last notes of “American Trilogy” just about raised the roof of the Entertainment Centre.



Karralyka Theatre, Ringwood “Songs from around the world”

Our engagement for Maroondah Morning Melodies was scheduled for 10:00 a.m. Tuesday 17th November, which meant a very quick dash back from Wollongong to Melbourne for a number of our choristers.

The full house at the Karralyka Theatre would have had no idea of how many miles most of the choir had motored to perform for them, but they left the venue well satisfied with the program of songs from a well-travelled choir!

We will attempt to manage future engagements to avoid such stresses in future but no doubt if someone wants our services in a tight timeframe we will probably still say yes.

Choir Member Profile

Our profile in this edition is of our deputy president and second tenor David Field pictured on the bus, during our tour to Cornwall earlier this year, with his lovely wife Fiona.



David joined the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir in 2013, having returned to singing in 2009 after a short break of 47 years. He found his voice again with the 250-strong Sing Australia (Hawthorn) choir, and then with the Open Door Community Singers.

After attending Melbourne Grammar School, David gained a Science degree in Mathematics from La Trobe University, and subsequently studied Psychology at the University of Melbourne.

Rather than becoming an Actuary, as envisaged by his father, he quite quickly transitioned into the Human Resources field, and worked in various corporate HR roles, before focusing on HR consulting and picking up additional qualifications as a Registered Psychologist, Executive Coach and accredited Management Consultant.

During the last 30+ years of his working life, David spent time both as a partner in an HR consulting group, working in recruitment, executive search, psychological assessment

and training, and as a career and executive coach with Lee Hecht Harrison/DBM, a global career transition firm.

Throughout his life, David has been passionate about sports. In his younger days, this sporting involvement centred on playing cricket and baseball, at both club and representative level, and he also completed three marathons. Both then and now, he has had a love for the game of golf - he has had the good fortune to be a member of Royal Melbourne Golf Club, and to have been able to play golf around Australia and overseas (with a tally of 190 different courses played!). In addition, he is active as a State-level golf rules official, and is Secretary of the Senior Golfers Society of Victoria. Most recently, he is also playing pennant bowls for Royal Melbourne.

As a passionate watcher of competitive sport, David sets out not to miss watching any potentially memorable events around the world - with the most recent highlight having been Richmond's long-awaited but magnificent AFL premiership this year!

On the non-sporting front, he has become progressively more heavily immersed over recent years in playing bridge, with 2-3 games per week, and an involvement as the Bridge Convenor at Royal Melbourne in the arranging of various bridge events during the year.

David and Fiona have two adult children, living in Echuca and London respectively, and spending time with their five grandchildren therefore necessitates (and provides good excuse for!) some regular travelling. Fiona is also a chorister and a golfer, so finding common interests together when travelling is not a huge challenge.

Some British Humour

A Desert Island

Two Englishmen, two Scotsmen, two Welshmen and two Irishmen were marooned on a desert island.

*The two Scotsmen got together and started a bank;
the two Welshmen got together and started a choir;
the two Irishmen got together and started a fight;
the two Englishmen never spoke to each other
- they hadn't been introduced!*

...and one without the Welsh...

An Englishman, an Irishman and a Scotsman were out fishing in a boat on a lake together and doing very well.

'This is a terrific spot for fishing,' said the Englishman. 'How will we know where this spot is next time?'

'I've thought of that,' said the Scotsman, 'I've just put a mark on the side of the boat.'

'You idiot,' said the Irishman, 'how do you know we will get this boat the next time?'



Up coming events

A Welsh Fantasy – Legends of Brass and MWMC
2 pm Sunday, 19th November
Eltham Community Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham



The Eltham Community and Reception Centre is relatively new venue for the choir and we are looking forward to performing many of our favourite Welsh songs with the famous Legends of Brass who are probably best known for their annual “Last night at the Proms” concert.

The hall only holds 300 and over two thirds of the seats have been sold so make sure you call Lyn Cooper on **0408 596 356** to reserve your seats.



The Legends’ Music Director, Wayne Bowden is possibly the most distinguished brass band musician, music director and adjudicator in Victoria.

A Life Member of the Victorian Bands League, Wayne has been conducting Brass and Concert Bands since the age of twenty-two.

These include: Marist Brothers Bendigo, Strathfieldsaye Municipal, Geelong City, Malvern Brass, Diamond Valley Brass, Footscray Yarraville City Band, Camperdown Fire Brigade Band and the Melton Community Band.

From 1995 to 1998 Wayne was Music Director of the Victorian State Youth brass band.

He was MD of Sunshine Band from 2007 to 2013 and in 2011 was appointed MD of the famous Hawthorn Band.

Sunday, December 17 Christmas concert
Mooroolbark Community Centre
125 Brice Ave, Mooroolbark VIC 3138
11 am and 3 pm **1300 368 333**

Melbourne Welsh Male Choir

Mooroolbark Community Centre
Sun 17 Dec 11am & 3pm



A note for your diary

Following our wonderful concert with Teddy Tahu Rhodes at the Melbourne Recital Centre in November 2015 and his guest appearance at our Singer of the Year Concert this year we have been inundated with questions as to when we will have another concert with him.

I am pleased to announce that we have now contracted with Teddy to do two concerts with him next year. Actually that should really be one concert twice.

Rehearsing for a major concert is a significant human, logistical and financial commitment and therefore there is merit in performing the same concert twice in one weekend. Thus we plan to give one Saturday concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre and to repeat the performance the following day at the wonderful new Ulumbarra Theatre in Bendigo.

Details are yet to be finalised but the theatres have been booked for Saturday evening 23rd in Melbourne, and Sunday afternoon 24th June (2018) in Bendigo. More details e.g. prices and times, will be available closer to the dates but make sure you reserve this weekend in your diary now.





New Members

Why should you join a choir?

Well there are a number of reasons. Here's just four.

- Health - singing is a wonderful aerobic exercise. Not only does it improve your heart and lungs, it also stimulates the brain and memory cells and helps ward off ageing.
- Camaraderie - the choir is really a club for members who seek excellence in performing. The banter, which occurs during a rehearsal besides being funny and good-natured, is also sometimes quite clever.
- Relief from stress - once you are concentrating on singing along with your choir colleagues the worries and stresses of the day simply slip away
- Well-being - the real purpose for being in a choir is to deliver music in 4-part harmony, which excites and lifts both the audience and the choir. There is nothing quite like the feeling you get listening to the audience's applause after you've given a good performance.

Recruiting

The choir is always keen to attract new members.

Whether you are 18 or 88 years of age, if you are interested in seeing how the choir works, then come along to any rehearsal at Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood and you will be made very welcome. Whether you wish to observe with our occasional guests, or to sit within the body of the choir and sing along with us, the choice is yours.

The rehearsal facility is excellent with comfortable seats, good acoustics and probably the best music director and accompanist combination in Melbourne.

We have the benefit of our Music Director, David Ashton-Smith's background as an operatic singer and voice adjudicator in coaching our voice development and projection as well as teaching us new songs. He is ably assisted by our accompanist Simon Walters, whose keen ear picks up any problems with pitch or timing, which David might have missed. Incidentally both men also conduct other choirs (the Ashton - Smith Singers and Frankston Ladies choirs respectively) so they have plenty of practice!

We have established choristers nominated to look after all new and prospective members to ensure they are properly introduced to other members of their section and are equipped with the relevant music scores. They will also act as mentors for any questions you might have.

There is a break for tea or coffee at every rehearsal, which gives us the opportunity to chat to other choir members over a cuppa and, on the first Wednesday in the month, one of the sections will provide the choir and visitors with a (sometimes) sumptuous supper.

Car parking is plentiful and free, while Ringwood station is a 5-minute walk away.

If you call us on the numbers shown in this newsletter we will arrange to meet you, otherwise just come along on a Wednesday evening, introduce yourself and you will be made very welcome.

Once you decide to join the choir, we will provide you with web-based aids to assist you in learning and practising the individual parts at home, which makes the process of learning the repertoire that much easier.

Following a couple of rehearsal sessions and a formal audition you could be singing in one of our concerts within weeks and possibly joining us on our next tour.

Why hire the choir?

The choir has performed for many different organisations and at many different venues over the years.

We've sung at sporting events, TV and advertising studios, government and commercial conferences, private and public dinners, anniversary, marital and remembrance ceremonies, charity events and of course for State and Local Government.

Whether it's a 20-minute performance to rev up a group of delegates or a 3-hour concert at the local town hall or entertainment centre then we are your choir.

Our music professionals David Ashton-Smith (MD) and accompanist Simon Walters are the best in the business and can put together a programme, which meets your unique requirements, so if you are in the market for anything from a brief high impact chorus to a full 2-3 hour concert just give one of our team a call.

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