



With Christmas and New Year almost on us, may we take this opportunity to wish all of our friends and choir supporters a safe and Merry Christmas and a Happy and prosperous New Year.

Or as they say in the “language of heaven” - Welsh that is “Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd dda i chi pob” which translates to “a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all”

Recent Performances

Legends of Brass - Eltham Community Centre

The choir's joint concert with the Legends of Brass at Eltham was a sell-out for the 300-seat hall. The physical arrangement, with the brass band on stage and the choir on risers on the floor of the hall, proved to be quite effective and at the close of the concert, which had a Welsh Fantasy theme, the performers were given a standing ovation.

The combination worked so well both music directors agreed that we must repeat the collaboration.

Maroondah Bushwalking Club

At the request of our secretary - Alan Stevenson - who is also Vice President and Editor of the Maroondah Bushwalkers Club, we gave a concert in our own rehearsal rooms at Federation Estate, followed by sandwiches and cakes provided by the Bushwalkers Club for their end of year meeting.



Despite the fact that they have used the same premises as the choir since May this year, very few of the couple of hundred or so Bushwalking Club members (out of a membership of nearly 600 bushwalkers) had ever heard the Melbourne Welsh sing and, based on their enthusiastic applause and discussion with individuals afterwards, we expect a number of them will become “Friends of the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir” and regular attendees at our future concerts.

Mooroolbark Community Centre

In previous years this annual Christmas concert has been held over two days to accommodate the community demand since the capacity of the Community Centre is limited.

This year, in order to minimise the travel commitments for our choristers some of whom come from places as remote

as Traralgon, Mornington and Bacchus Marsh, we decided to hold the two sessions on one day. This was a successful move with a capacity audience for the 3 pm session and rather less for the 11 am morning session.

For both concerts the choir presented an eclectic mix of songs, from Welsh favourites, spirituals, songs from musicals, popular ballads and community carol singing plus solos from tenors Paul Etherington and Colin Brown.

At both sessions the choir left the audience wanting more, so the revised scheduling can be deemed to be a success.

Recruiting

The choir is always on the lookout for new members whether experienced choristers wanting a new challenge or young inexperienced singers who would benefit from the coaching and direction of our professional music team and the mentoring of our established choristers.

Our web based learning aids enable newcomers and established choristers to come up to speed with new and existing material.

Rehearsals are held every Wednesday (excepting school holidays) and run from 7:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. when the choir is updated by the president and secretary about upcoming events and related choir matters.

We urgently need younger members, although we welcome potential members of any age to come for an audition. I joined the choir following a chance meeting with one of the established members and found that, despite never having sung since being part of a university choir decades earlier, I felt totally comfortable after less than six months with the choir.

As Malcolm a relatively new recruit and the subject of this edition's profile says, “There are male choirs and then there are Welsh male choirs...”

If you are interested give Gwyn Harper, or any choir member, a call (Gwyn's number is 0419 562 353) and we will introduce you to an irreverent but highly motivated group of guys who love singing in 4-part harmony.

Hiring the choir

If you or your company are interested in promoting your image, rewarding your clients or staff, or celebrating a significant occasion, then we may well be your men.

For a few thousand dollars we can entertain with a few select songs or a complete 2-hour concert. We come as the complete package with electronic keyboard (if necessary) and choir risers. Our music professionals can assist with the staging and content of the performance and can help with the marketing and promotion if necessary. Give us a call and we will be pleased to tailor a performance to your individual requirements.

Sponsorship

The choir is actively seeking sponsors, in particular for annual funding of our major events including the prestigious Singer of the Year competition and concert.

If you would like to be associated with these wonderful events, or simply wish to have your name or product associated with the choir in concerts, programs or website etc., please contact Colin Brown or any member of the choir's committee and we will be delighted to work with you to make the most of your sponsorship.

Choir Member Profile

Mal Andrews - Bass

A long time ago in a country far, far away a child's cry split the night and I was born, the youngest of 3 brothers, of Welsh parentage into the Land of Dragons and the Red Dragon of Wales.

In junior school I played football and represented Newport Schools football team as goalkeeper when we won the Yeoman Shield in 1966 as the champions of Wales.

I went to Newport High School and then the University of Wales Aberystwyth where I gained a degree in Economics.

I love most sports and was a keen swimmer in my teens, swimming for City of Cardiff Swimming Club and unusually for most swimmers I found a natural ability with the butterfly stroke. At 17 years of age I qualified for the UK national finals, and was ranked the 4th fastest 200m Butterfly swimmer for my age.

Like all good Welshmen I learned the art of the great game – Rugby Union – and regularly bowed my head on Saturdays to those many 'altars' in Wales. After finishing school I played rugby for 12 years for my university, school old boys, and Newport RFC (with whom I toured Australia and New Zealand) before injuries persuaded me to retire.

I took up Golf in my late 20's playing regularly for about 15 years and reaching the dizzy heights of a single figure handicap before having a break from it because of too

many other interests occupying my time! I did introduce myself to my clubs about 10 years ago, and until recently had not swung a club for 5 years. Now I'm back on the course.

In my 20's I played as a defenceman for Bristol Blackhawks Ice Hockey club for 3 years.

I also played bass guitar in a band (Rebekah) for 9 years touring the British Universities' circuit and clubs and colleges in Europe. Those were the days of long flowing hair and beard!!!

I have 2 children – Helen (29) and Fraser (25) – and 2 grandchildren – Llwyd (5) and Angharad (3).

I was a public sector accountant for 30 years before retiring at 50. I also worked in the fraud sector for 10 years. After retiring I worked in the charity sector for 4 years and then for Scottish and Southern Energy for 9 months.

I am proud of my Welsh heritage and speak the language, following in the footsteps of my mother, whose first language was Welsh.

I still follow Ice Hockey (Cardiff Devils). I enjoy most sports, good food and drink, I am a keen photographer, and appreciate most genres of music (with a soft spot for Jazz).

There are male choirs and then there are Welsh male choirs and I sang as a bass with the Risca Male Choir for almost 20 years. I have travelled to many parts of the world, with and without the Risca Male Choir, and in December 2016 the silver haired enchantress whom I had known since we were 10 years old in Junior school and High school lured me from my homeland to a strange land on the other side of the world... Australia? She had cast a spell on me and we were married in January 2017. Early in 2017 I joined the Melbourne Welsh

Male Choir, who have made me very welcome and I look forward to another 20 years of song and camaraderie with them.





Forthcoming Concerts for your diary

A Concert to celebrate St David's Day – 24th February

The choir will be in recess until January 24th when we will be gearing up for our St David's Day Concert which will this year be at the MLC auditorium in Barker's Road, Kew on the Saturday before St David's Day (which, as everyone knows is the 1st of March).

Our guest artist for this concert will be Kate Amos, whom you may recall was the Choir's Singer of the Year in 2016. With the proceeds of her prize Kate travelled to Wales to study under the renowned operatic coach Denis O'Neill at the International Academy of Voice in Cardiff.

If she was good enough to win our competition against some fairly formidable opposition then what will she be like after a year's mentoring under Denis O'Neill? You'll have to come along to the MLC auditorium to find out.

**Note: Earlybird Offer \$25 Adult
until Australia Day**

Welsh Church Gymanfa Ganu Sunday 4th March.

The choir will again have representatives at the traditional Gymanfa Ganu (community singing) at St Michael's Church in Collins Street. This free event has representatives from all the Welsh Choirs in the area i.e. Australian, Melbourne and Victorian Welsh male choirs and the Geelong ladies choir, located in the balcony of the church and leading the singing.

This year's guest conductor is Ildid Anne Jones the Music Director of Cor Hogia'r Ddwylan from Anglesey in Wales. This is the choir we partnered with to give a joint concert at Moriah Chapel in Llangefni, Isle of Anglesey, when we toured Wales prior to our participation in the Festival of Male Choirs (1000 Voices) at London's Albert Hall in 2008.

The featured soloists will be Aled Wyn Davies and Rhys Meirion (who was one of our guest artists, together with Sally Anne Russell, at our Christmas concert at Hamer Hall in 2005).

**A Welsh Celebration for
St David's Day**

**Melbourne
Welsh Male Choir**

Conductor David Ashton-Smith OAM
Accompanist Simon Walters

Associate Artist Kate Amos
Singer of the Year winner 2016

**The James Tatoulis
Auditorium - MLC**
207 Barkers Road, Kew
7.30 pm Saturday
24th February 2018

www.melbournewelshchoir.com.au/tickets
Ph: 9800 3889

Adult \$30 Group (6 or more) \$25
Children (under 15) \$20

**Until 26th January
Early Bird
\$25**



Teddy Tahu-Rhodes at Melbourne Recital Centre/ Ulumbarra Theatre Bendigo

In addition to her performance with the Choir for the St David's Day concert, Kate Amos will also be a second guest artist for our concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre with Teddy Tahu-Rhodes on 23rd June.

This concert will be repeated the following day in Bendigo at the beautiful new Ulumbarra Theatre, which was formerly the prison. We have heard that the venue has wonderful acoustics and is state of the art for both artists and audience, so we are looking forward to performing there.

Teddy is in great form, as anyone who saw him perform recently in "From Broadway to La Scala" at the Hamer Hall will confirm. His rendering of the soliloquy from "Carousel" was quite breathtaking. We don't yet know what he will be singing with us so watch this space.

Tickets are available from the theatres so book now.

Silly Christmas Humour

- Q. What did the hat say to the scarf?
A. You hang around while I go on ahead.
- Q. Where do little fish go each morning?
A. To plaice school.
- Q. What did the traffic light say to the zebra crossing?
A. Don't look now I'm changing.
- Q. What do you get if you cross a parrot with a centipede?
A. A walkie-talkie.

.... and finally a couple of music jokes.

- Q. How many music conductors does it take to change a light bulb?
A. We don't know, no one ever watches them.
- Q. How can you tell when a chorister is at your door?
A. They can't find the key and they never know when to come in.
- Q. What part of the turkey is musical?
A. The drumstick.

Melbourne Welsh Male Choir
with **Teddy Tahu-Rhodes**
and 2016 Singer of the Year **Kate Amos**
conducted by
David Ashton-Smith OAM



Melbourne Recital Centre
Cnr Southbank Blvd & Sturt St, Southbank
Saturday 23rd June 2 pm
For tickets visit melbournerecital.com.au
or call 9699 3333
A Reserve \$70 + B Reserve \$60 + C Reserve \$45
Pensioner Concession & Group (6+) Available
Transaction & delivery fees may apply

and
Ulumbarra Theatre
Bendigo
2 pm Sunday
24th June
For tickets visit gotix.com.au
or call 5434 6100



Adult \$45 + Concession \$40 + Subscriber \$38 + Student \$25

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

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