

With winter fast approaching the choir continues the hard but rewarding work of learning and rehearsing new material to hopefully delight our audiences.

We are privileged in having a Music Director of David Ashton-Smith's ability, who not only conducts and rehearses us, but also arranges new songs, and publishes them using the Sibelius computer program. In addition he sings and records the individual parts, which are then available to our choristers via the members section of our website. Anyone contemplating joining the choir (and we always need new recruits) can be assured that they will not find a better environment in which to learn and enjoy singing in four-part harmony.

David's professional relationships within the Victorian music community were instrumental in the choir being asked to provide the backing, together with the ladies from the Australian Ladies Choir, for a new song composed and sung by Mike Brady, which was performed prior to the ANZAC day match at the MCG between Essendon and Collingwood.

Those of you who watched Channel Seven's broadcast of that event may well have seen a subset of the two choirs providing the backing to Mike Brady on the day. The platform could only accommodate 20 choristers so 10 from each choir were welcomed to the MCG at 9:00 a.m. and performed with Mike and his musicians at 2:29 p.m. (precisely) – all for 3 minutes of performance!

Nevertheless being in the inner sanctum of the MCG on a big match day was a fascinating experience and hopefully the TV broadcast gave the choir some valuable publicity.



The above is panoramic photo taken during our rehearsal. You will note the MCG is almost totally empty. It was a very different matter at 2:29 p.m!

By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he's too old to go anywhere.

- Billy Crystal

Don't worry about avoiding temptation... as you grow older, it will avoid you.

- Winston Churchill

Choir Member Profile

First tenor Philip Tomlinson

Philip joined the Choir in 1986 after seeing an advertisement in the local newspaper and after 32 years membership with 5 of those years as President; he was recently made a Life Member. This is his story.

I grew up in Birmingham UK and have always sung either in choirs or in company with others while playing guitar.

My parents came from Oswestry on the border of Wales, so there was an affinity with the Welsh and I always remember enjoying the miners singing four-part harmony in the film "How Green Was My Valley".

After attempting to hitchhike to Australia and instead spending 3 months in Europe, I decided to emigrate to Australia on the £10 scheme in 1969 with a friend, with the intention of staying a couple of years. However during that time I secured a position with the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, at the then St Kilda branch. Following this I was made Assistant Manager at the Dandenong branch, where I met Colleen who was to become my wife in 1973.

We will celebrate our 45th wedding anniversary in September. We have 2 children Haydn and Claire and 3 grandchildren who are the loves of our lives.

My career at RACV involved promotions to Branch Manager at Eastland, Frankston, Northland and 230 Collins St Melbourne. I also spent 7 years as Administration Manager of RACV Finance.

After leaving RACV in 1999, I took the role of Customer Service Manager at Glen Eira City Council and later at Greater Dandenong Council. I also worked at Stonnington, Knox and Monash Councils and retired fully in 2012.

Joining the Choir has given Colleen and I the opportunity to travel overseas on choir tours to Cardiff Arms Park, British Columbia Canada, South Africa, the UK, including a massed choir concert at the Royal Albert Hall, London. Our most recent trip was last year when the choir was part of the Cornwall International Male Choir festival.





These tours generate great memories and camaraderie amongst members and their partners. I feel so fortunate to have joined the choir, which has provided so many interesting performances at fascinating venues such as Sydney Opera House, Hamer Hall, Dallas Brooks Hall and the Recital Centre in Melbourne, the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra, the Wollongong Entertainment Centre, and Port Arthur in Tasmania. I would encourage all interested men to come along and join the choir and enjoy the health and friendship benefits that come from singing with about 60 other fellows.

Membership of the choir is a very inexpensive hobby and our partners are usually very glad to get us out of the house.

My other interests include furniture restoration, which I did for many years, but that activity has tapered off recently. I now volunteer at U3A Knox as an Office Manager and attend a Ukulele class called Music Muster.

I am currently President of the Probus Club of Wantirna Heights and spent 20 years with the Lions Club organisation. As the choir's representative and a committee member of the Male Choirs Association of Australia (MCAA) I was the joint organiser of the 2012 MCAA concert at Dallas Brooks Hall.

I have rejoined the choir committee this year and am enjoying helping the choir to respond to the challenges facing us in what has become a very competitive entertainment environment. The forthcoming concerts with Teddy Tahu Rhodes and Kate Amos at the Recital Centre and the Ulumbarra Theatre in Bendigo, are exciting opportunities for the choir to showcase its wonderful eclectic repertoire and I look forward to being part of it.

Building our supporter database

If you have any friends or family who may be interested in having a copy of this newsletter please feel free to email a copy to them or alternatively give us their email address and we will send them a copy direct and ensure they continue to receive a copy whenever we produce the next version.

We do not make our database available to anyone and the only thing we promote is our concerts. In the unlikely event that you don't like our content, you can unsubscribe at any time.

Joint Concert with Frankston Ladies Choir at Robert Blackwood Hall 30 May 2018 sponsored by Allison Monkhouse

We are eagerly looking forward to returning to the Blackwood Hall, which has been the scene for many of our earlier concerts.

With almost all of the ground floor seats already allocated, this will potentially be the biggest audience we have performed for this year. If you haven't secured your free seat yet then please make sure you go to the website www.monkhouse.com.au to book now.

The delightful star of stage, television and radio, Denise Drysdale will compere the concert in her own inimitable way.

The two choirs will sing separate brackets of songs and will also combine for some spectacular numbers.

A couple of our new songs will be premiered at this concert. If you can make it for this Morning Melodies style of program we would love to see you.

We guarantee you won't be disappointed.



*Youth would be an ideal state
if it came a little later in life.*

- Herbert Henry Asquith



Recent Choir Concert

St Andrews Church, Brighton 22 April

The choir returned to St Andrews for a Sunday afternoon concert on a glorious autumn afternoon with the sun streaming through the stained glass windows.

Despite the weather and the other attractions a reasonably sized audience enjoyed a feast of choral and solo singing in the beautiful high ceilinged church.

Songs like Myfanwy (which we have just been brought back into our concert repertoire) and Prayer from Lohengrin demonstrated the choir's ability to convey the quiet feeling of love lost as well as the full throated power and passion of a full opera chorus.

Our soloist Chloe Harris demonstrated her range with songs as different as Can't help lovin' that man and Ave Maria, both of which the audience loved.

The encore piece "When the saints go Marching in" ended a very enjoyable afternoon.



Hiring the choir

While the choir is a not for profit organisation, in order to maintain our professional image and pay for our music professionals, rehearsal facilities and other choir services we need to generate revenue. 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 the answer to your requirements.

For a negotiated fee we can provide entertainment with a number of appropriate songs or we can provide a complete 2-hour concert. We have a large repertoire of songs from opera choruses and songs from musical theatre to pop and folk music. 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 we can also help with marketing and promotion if necessary. Give us a call and we will be pleased to tailor a performance to your individual requirements.

Concert with Teddy Tahu Rhodes and Kate Amos at Melbourne Recital Centre 23rd June & Ulumbarra Theatre Bendigo 24th June

These two concerts with Teddy Tahu Rhodes and Kate Amos will take place at the Melbourne Recital Centre on 23rd June 2018 and the following afternoon in Bendigo at the beautiful new Ulumbarra Theatre.

We will be advertising these concerts via radio, newspapers and internet over the coming weeks, so make sure you get your seats as soon as possible.

The tickets are reasonably priced for such venues, with special discounts for six or more.

So band together with your friends for what promises to be an unforgettable afternoon concert.

Teddy is in great form, and you may have seen the ABC TV advert promoting his recent Album "I'll walk beside you". Some of the songs from that CD will feature in the show and, as usual, there will be some interesting joint numbers with Teddy and the choir.

Tickets are available from the relevant theatres so book now.



Laughter is the best medicine

My wife is from Wales

Martyn Williams from Carmarthen, South Wales, was visiting London for the first time. He really wanted to buy a hat and the one he chose was priced at £20.

Martyn spoke to the shop assistant, "Back home in Carmarthen I could get a hat like this for only £5."

The assistant answered, "Well, sir, the thing is we have a large shop window here, often in the sun, and when the hats fade we send them to places like Carmarthen. And by the way my wife comes from Carmarthen. You may have known her. She was Blodwyn Thomas, who lived at the bakery."

"Yes, I know her, boyo," replied Martyn smiling. "She was very pretty. I took her out many a time. But you know, when things get a bit faded in Carmarthen we send them to London".



Recruiting

As part of our promotion for the concerts with Teddy and Kate we are running a campaign outlining the health benefits of being in a choir. This will feature two of our longer serving choir members Terry Thomas and Gwyn Harper. In addition to explaining how they came to join



the choir the article points out the benefits which each individual feels comes from being part of a choir and the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir in particular.

If you would like to experience the benefits of being a chorister or just to observe the choir in full voice, pop along to our rehearsal venue at Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood.

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 especially welcome younger members, but prospective choristers of any age are urged to come along to listen, participate in a rehearsal session and possibly audition to join the choir. If you are interested in coming along, please give Gwyn Harper (0419 562 353), or any choir member, a call and we will introduce you to an irreverent but highly motivated group of guys who love singing in 4-part harmony.

Be careful what you wish for.

A Welshman, Scot and Englishman are walking when they come across a lantern and a genie pops out and grants them one wish each.

The Scot says: "I am a sheep herder, like my dad before me. I want my country to be full of lovely sheep farms." Whoosh, and so it was.

The Englishman was amazed and says: "I want a wall around England to keep those damned Scots and Welsh out." Bang, there was a wall around England.

The Welshman says: "Tell me more about this wall."

The genie says: "It's 200 feet high, 100 feet thick, it goes all around England, and nothing can get in or out."

The Welshman says: "Fill it with water."

How to spell Aberystwyth

Morgan, a youngster, was describing in an essay his holiday in Aberystwyth. He astonished and delighted his teacher by spelling the Town's name correctly every time he used it.

The next, day Miss Jones, his teacher called him to the front of the class and said, "Show the class how well you can spell. Write "Aberystwyth" on the blackboard."

"Please, Miss Jones, I can't anymore," Morgan pleaded, "I've eaten all my rock."



Sponsorship

The choir is actively seeking sponsors, in particular for of our major events including the prestigious Singer of the Year competition and concert. If you would like to be associated with this concert, or simply wish to have your name or product associated with the choir in concerts, programs or website etc., please contact Colin Brown (0409 188 109) or any member of the choir's committee and we will be delighted to work with you to make the most of your sponsorship. All donations are tax deductible.

The choir is a registered charity. so if you would like to make a donation to assist in keeping the soul of Welsh choral singing alive and well in Melbourne then please do so by contacting the choir secretary.

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