

Melbourne Welsh Male Choir

Newsletter No 57 June 2022



Take a crisp sun filled Sunday afternoon in the Dandenongs, a rustic pub with an open fire, high ceilings, good food and a range of drinks to suit your taste, what else would you want - well a Welsh Choir - that's what!



Following on from a highly successful concert at MLC and with a fair while to wait before our next scheduled concert at Mooroolbark in July, our Music Director arranged with the manager of the Mount Dandenong Hotel in Olinda to have the Choir perform at Sunday lunchtime in his establishment.

Attendance was not mandatory, but a significant proportion of the choir, including some from as far

away as Traralgon, turned up for what turned out to be a very enjoyable session.

Conducted by our MD - David Ashton-Smith and accompanied on the choir's electric piano by Simon Walters, we sang about a dozen songs from our repertoire with breaks to enjoy the hotel's meals and beverages. The high roof and the hard walls provided a good acoustic environment and the customers, the hotel management and staff, choristers and their guests all had a very enjoyable time. We look forward to the next event.

Upcoming events and Concerts

Mooroolbark Community Centre - 30th July

Because of the COVID pandemic, it has been nearly three years since our traditional Christmas Concert at Mooroolbark. The organisers decided it was too long to wait until Christmas 2022 to hear the choir again so they have invited us to perform on Saturday 30th July 2022.

As usual at Mooroolbark, because of the limited seating in the Community Centre, we will perform two concerts in the day, one at 11:00 a.m. with a repeat concert at 3:00 p.m.

To book please contact Yarra Ranges on 1300 368 333 or via email to

boxoffice@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Legends of Brass - 18th September

The choir has been invited to perform with the **Legends of Brass** at their annual Proms concert at the Heidelberg Centre in Ivanhoe on 18th September 2022. The concert will also include items by the *Rats of Tobruk Pipe Band*. With three very professional performing groups and a very popular program, this is likely to be a very well attended concert so be sure to book your tickets when they become available.



Tuckers Geelong – 30th September

The annual concert in one of our favourite venues, the beautiful St Mary's Basilica, on behalf of Tuckers Funerals will once again be held during Senior's week in Geelong.

Background to another of the songs in the choir's repertoire – *An American Trilogy*

“An American Trilogy” is a 1971 song medley arranged by country composer [Mickey Newbury](#) and popularized by [Elvis Presley](#), who included it as a [showstopper](#) in his concert routines. The medley uses three 19th-century songs:

- “Dixie” - a popular folk song about the southern United States.
- “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” - a marching hymn of the Union Army during the American Civil War; and
- “All My Trials” - a Bahamian lullaby related to African American spirituals and widely used by folk music revivalists.

Newbury first recorded “An American Trilogy” for his 1971 album *Frisco Mabel Joy*, and the medley featured prominently on his first concert album, *Live at Montezuma Hall*, released in 1973.

Presley began singing “An American Trilogy” in concert in January 1972; a live recording made the following month was released as a single by [RCA Records](#). Presley modifies Newbury's sequence by reprising after “All My Trials” both “Dixie” (in the solo flute) and with a bigger ending on “Battle Hymn”. He performs the medley in the 1972 filmed documentary *Elvis on Tour*. Elvis's version didn't equal the US chart success of Newbury's single, reaching No. 66 late in 1972 and peaking at No. 31 on the Easy Listening chart. However, it was included in both versions of the widely-seen 1973 satellite telecast *Aloha from Hawaii*. Elvis's recording was more successful in the UK, where it reached No. 8.

Alwyn Humphreys' arrangement for male choir is popular and features on albums by the [Cardiff Arms Park Male Choir](#) and [Morrison Orpheus Choir](#). Alwyn's arrangement is the one our choir sings.

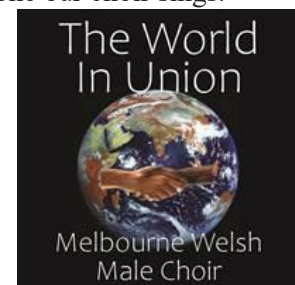
It was also arranged for the [Royal Philharmonic Orchestra](#) for the 2015 compilation album, *If I Can Dream*. In all, over 465 versions have been recorded by various artists.

The song is featured on the choir's latest CD - *The World in Union*, which is available via the choir's website www.melbournwelshchoir.com.au.

The lyrics of the song are shown below.

American Trilogy

Oh, I wish I was in the land of cotton
Old things they are not forgotten
Look away, look away, look away Dixieland
Oh, I wish I was in Dixie, away, away
In Dixieland I'll take my stand to live and die in Dixie
In Dixieland, where I was born
Early Lord one frosty morning
Look away, look away, look away Dixieland
Glory, glory hallelujah
Glory, glory hallelujah
Glory, glory hallelujah
His truth is marching on
So, hush little baby
Don't you cry
You know your daddy's bound to die
But all my trials, Lord, will soon be over



Glory, glory hallelujah
His truth is marching on
His truth is marching on

Chorister Profile - Peter Ernest Dangerfield - Baritone

I have always had a love of music and enjoyed singing from an early age.



This is me in my stockbroking days

I started life at Seaford and attended a small state school of 23 kids in six classes.

I graduated in tadpole collecting in the sandpits, fishing in the Kananook Creek and stealing apples at Shepherd's Orchard.

My father was a church organist. Both of his brothers served at Gallipoli; one was gassed in the battlefields of the Somme.

I applied and was accepted as a member of St Paul's Cathedral Choir and I recall having to sing "*Christopher Robin is saying his prayers*"

My secondary school education was at Mentone Grammar School where I was the school's tenor soloist for six years.

The first job I had was as an employment officer for HJ Heinz at Dandenong .

I then trained as an analyst with Dunn and Bradstreet for six years and became editor and manager of the Dun and Bradstreet Gazette.

During this time, I purchased a 5-acre poultry farm in Springvale South which I later subdivided.

I travelled to England and auditioned with the *D'Oyly Carte Opera* company for a part in *Trial by Jury*. I was not successful but I was encouraged to try again.

Returning home I married Judy, the girl of my dreams and worked as an underwriter for a leading stockbroking firm. During this time, I studied and obtained a bachelor's degree in Financial Planning.

As part of my underwriting job, I played a significant role in the float of many large industrials including Colley Cotton and Bond Corporation.

In my role as a real estate developer, I also developed properties at Pilgrim Court in Heatherdale and a large section of Upper Beaconsfield.

Prior to joining the choir, I sang with the *Gilbert and Sullivan Society* and the *City of Caulfield* choir. I have been a member of Melbourne Welsh Male Choir for the past 16 years.

I have found satisfaction and happiness in the choir as well as friendship.

Judy and I had four children all of whom have successful professional careers. They were not easy to raise but I am very proud of them.

The Melbourne Welsh Male Choir has been great for me.

Why join a choir?

Robert Rowat, a Canadian, joined a choir in 2015 and was so enthusiastic he wrote down his nine reasons for joining. They are equally applicable anyone thinking of joining the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir.

Here are his 9 points:

1. You get to sing great repertoire

When we think about great classical music, we tend to focus on symphonies, concertos, sonatas, string quartets and operas. But the truth is, many of the best composers saved their most inspired creativity for choral music. (Think Bach's B Minor Mass, Fauré's Requiem, Vaughan Williams's Sea Symphony.) In addition, all the great music theatre shows have marvellous chorus'.

2. It's an excellent stress reliever

You rush to meet deadlines, deal with unhappy clients, cope with an angry boss and if you're lucky eat lunch in front of your computer. By the time you get to your choir rehearsal, you're a nervous wreck. But sitting up straight, relaxing your shoulders and breathing from your diaphragm is a great way to return to your centre and leave the day's stress behind you.

3. You meet new people

Nowadays people make "friends" without ever meeting in person. Joining a choir is an old-school way to meet nice, like-minded people interested in having a good time together. What a concept!

4. You learn to listen

While it's fun to belt it out like Björling, a key to good choral singing is paying attention to what's going on around you - listening. (It's a good thing to do outside choir, too.) A rule of thumb is, if you can't hear the person next to you, you're singing too loudly.

5. It's a workout for your brain

Most choirs require basic music-reading skills, which are known to increase the capacity of your memory, sharpen your concentration and improve your spatial organization. You hit the gym three times a week to keep your body in shape (right?). Think of choir as a boot camp for your brain.

6. It's an exercise in teamwork

A choir is the perfect manifestation of the adage "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." You don't need to have a particularly beautiful voice to contribute to a beautiful, collective sound. Being part of something bigger than yourself is both humbling and motivating.

7. You don't need to buy any equipment

All you need to sing in a choir is your voice, a bottle of water and a pencil for marking your music. Simple and cheap!

8. You'll learn a lot of choir jokes

For example:

Q: How many tenors does it take to screw in a light bulb?

A: None. They can't get that high.

9. It's uplifting

Every day, we're bombarded with bad news: tragedy, terrorism, scandal, etc. While singing in a choir doesn't make those things go away, it's the perfect way to bring something positive and uplifting into your life.

We agree with everything that Robert Rowat said and if you would like to enjoy the benefits, he lists then call me on 0419 562 353 or just come along to our rehearsal rooms at Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood, and you will be made most welcome.

Hiring the choir

The choir is available for community, corporate and sporting events, dinners, anniversaries, weddings etc., at most times in the year. So, if you are, or know of, an organization which might require anything from a short rousing opening to a conference (say) to a full two-hour concert, together with quality guest artists and an orchestra or band (if required), please contact **Gwyn Harper (0419 562 353)** or any committee member. Bear in mind that we're talking about a choir of up to 50 voices plus a professional music director and accompanist.

We have an eclectic repertoire, a great sound and provide excellent entertainment and value for money.

Sponsoring the choir

The choir is a not-for-profit organization and relies on revenue from concerts, membership fees, sponsorship and donations for its continuing operation.

If you would simply like to donate to the choir, please contact any member of the committee. The choir is a registered charitable body and all donations are acknowledged and are tax deductible.

Alternatively, if you have a product or service which you believe might appeal to our audiences, then please contact us and we will be delighted to promote your product in our marketing and promotional material and in our concerts.

The choir is actively seeking donors and sponsors for the support of our prestigious *Singer of the Year (SOTY)* concert which, in 2022, we expect to be able to hold before a live audience.

This event, which has been running for 29 years is open to singers under the age of 35 and draws competitors from all parts of the state and indeed interstate. A testament to its success and drawing power is the number of winners and runners-up of this competition who have gone on to make careers on concert and opera stages worldwide. Our 2013 Winner *Stacey Alleaume*, recently performed as *Violetta* in Opera Australia's production of *La Traviata* at the State Theatre, Melbourne.

In addition to awarding monetary prizes to the finalists, the choir gives them an opportunity to perform as guest artists in our concerts during the year.

All sponsors are acknowledged in our programs and publicity material and are given the opportunity to be involved in the presentation ceremonies on the Singer of the Year finals' night and in the elimination heats.

The choir is able to perform at a sponsor's nominated site if required, as we have done in the past.

If you would like to be associated with any of our prestigious concerts, please contact any member of the choir's committee and we will be delighted to work with you to get the best value out of your sponsorship dollar.

Communicating with the Choir

Feel free to copy or circulate this newsletter to any of your friends and relatives or, if you would like us to add them to our distribution list, so they get their copy direct, simply let us know their email address.

Alternatively, they can subscribe directly to the newsletter via our website:

www.melbournewelshchoir.com.au or via our Facebook page.

We treat all information provided as confidential and our subscribers can opt out at any time.

Email is our preferred way of communication with our supporters, so please send us an email and we'll respond promptly to whatever queries you may have. Alternately if you want to speak with the newsletter editor about any of the content, please phone 0419 562 353.

Your feedback is important to us, so let us know what you think about the choir, our newsletters, or our recent performances, whether on video or live.

Please introduce us to your friends and be sure to let us know what you would like to see us perform in our future concerts.

In times like these, laughter is still the best medicine.

The story of Irishman, Michael O'Flaherty a victim of modern-day depression

This is a very sad but true story of the depression that can haunt a man.

My friend Michael was so sick and tired of the world; of COVID, the Russian aggression, of global warming, of politics and the rest of the stories that our media deem important to broadcast.

Michael drove his car into his garage and then sealed every doorway and window as best he could.

He got back into his car and wound down all the windows, selected his favourite radio station and started the car.

Four days later, a worried neighbour peered through his garage window and saw him in the car.

She notified the police and ambulance and they broke in and pulled Michael from the car.

A little sip of water and surprisingly he was in perfect condition but his Tesla had a flat battery!

Mother knows best

A husband and wife had a fight.

The wife the called up her mum and said, "He fought with me again, I am coming to live with you".

Mum said, "No darling, he must pay for his mistake".

"I am coming to live with you"!

Grandmother's Funeral

Dai and Ianto were having a beer in their local pub in Treorchy and Dai asked Ianto how his grandmother's funeral had gone.

Ianto said "Everything was all going fine, the service was lovely and the singing was good, but when we were standing around the graveside for the burial, there happened to be gravedigger nearby, with his radio turned up loudly, listening to the match in Twickenham. We heard the match commentator say that Wales had lost to England by 3 points and it cast a pall over the whole proceedings!"

A woman tells her boyfriend to share his worries

"When we get married, I want to share all your worries and troubles and lighten your burden," a young woman said to her boyfriend.

"That's very kind of you, darling," her boyfriend replied. "But I don't have any worries or troubles."

"Well, that's because we aren't married yet."

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