

Melbourne Welsh Male Choir

Newsletter No 60 September 2022

A welcome return and a great send-off

The Choir's return to the Rosanna Uniting Church' quaint venue, as part of the Church's Arden Crescent concert series, was a veritable triumph with every seat in the venue taken. From the lively opening number *Every time*



Simon, Amelia and David at the conclusion of the Concert



I feel the Spirit

through the traditional Welsh hymns and anthems and opera standards like *The Soldiers Chorus* to the thunderous ending in the prayer for peace with the *World in Union* the (mainly masked) audience appear to have enjoyed every moment.

It was our guest artist - Amelia Wawrzon's - last performance before her departure to the UK to further her career at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

Her performance of opera classics - *O Mio Babbino Caro*, *Birdsong at Eventide* and *Maids of Cadiz*, demonstrated her vocal range and control, while her interaction with the choir in excerpts from *the Sound of Music* and her lead vocal in *You'll Never Walk Alone* demonstrated her versatility and the infectious warmth of her personality.

Amelia seems to have grown in stature since she first performed with us in the Basilica in Geelong, (the venue for her mother's wedding as she told us).

Bon voyage Amelia, we wish you every success in your international career.

Upcoming events and concerts

Legends of Brass - *Last Night of the Proms Concert*

2:00 p.m. Sunday 18th September 2022

Ivanhoe Centre, 275 Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe 3079

Our next performance will be as guests of the **Legends of Brass** in their traditional *Last Night of the Proms* concert at the beautiful Art Deco, **Ivanhoe Centre** and is scheduled for Sunday 18th September. The concert will also feature the **Old Scotch Pipes and Drums**.

The promo for the concert is shown below but, for choir patrons wishing to book by phone, please call Phil Tomlinson on 0408 280 953, since the choir has designated seats. Alternatively, book via the Choir's website.

The regular patrons of this enjoyable event often dress in costume with funny hats, bring their own banners, streamers and balloons and really enjoy a jolly good singsong in the community numbers.

The concert is often a sell-out, so be sure to book early.

Bookings via Trybooking or via the choir website www.melbournewelshchoir.com.au

LEGENDS OF BRASS

**A SPECTACULAR
LAST NIGHT OF THE
PROMS**

Privately Sponsored by
Banyule

**The Centre Ivanhoe
275 Upper Heidelberg Road
2.00pm SUNDAY,
SEPTEMBER 18, 2022**

Featuring
**The Legends of Brass with
Melbourne Welsh Male Choir
Old Scotch Pipes & Drums**

**Tickets \$30 LegendsOfBrass.com.au
or call David m: 0484 312 311 t: 9497 3637**

Our most popular show of the year. Come along and have a ball as you sing, wave flags and stomp your way through this fabulous afternoon concert.

***MWMC's Singer of the Year Competition – 2:00 p.m. Saturday 5th November 2022
Ringwood North Uniting Church, 14 Dickson Crescent, Ringwood North, 3134***

Our Annual *Singer of the Year* competition is on 5th November and was moved to allow more time for competitors to register, as well as fitting in with the choir's busy schedule. This year the event will be held at **North Ringwood Uniting Church**. The layout and acoustics are perfect for a concert and competition like SOTY, but the capacity is somewhat smaller than our previous venues so book early.

The elimination heats for SOTY will, as in earlier years, be held live at our rehearsal facilities at **Federation Estate**, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood on Friday 15th and Saturday 16th October from 7:00 p.m. onwards. A substantial portion of the choir will be on hand to provide an appreciative audience for the upcoming artists. The evening is open to the public and will provide those with an ear for music a perfect evening's free entertainment. So come and join us in listening to the best of Australia's emerging opera and musical theatre artists competing to make the *MWMC Singer of the Year 2022* final.

Bookings via the Choir website www.melbournewelshchoir.com.au

***Tuckers Geelong - 2:00 p.m. Friday 30th September 2022
St Mary of the Angels Basilica, 136-148, Yarra Street, Geelong 3022***

A fortnight after the Proms concert, we will be singing in the majestic, gothic, St Mary's Basilica in Geelong for our regular annual engagement at the beginning of Senior's week on Friday 30th September 2022.

Based on previous pre COVID experience we can expect a capacity audience for the concert which is sponsored by **Tuckers Funeral and Bereavement Services**.

Tickets will be available from Tuckers on 03 5221 4788

***Bernadette Robinson in concert with the Melbourne Welsh Choir
2:00 p.m. Sunday 30th October - Ulumbarra Theatre, 10 Gaol Road, Bendigo***

Our major concert for the year with our brilliant international guest artist is scheduled for Sunday 30th October at the **Ulumbarra Theatre** (in the former jail complex) in **Bendigo**.

Bernadette Robinson will be our guest artist. Bernadette's acclaimed performances in multiple sell-out seasons of the one-woman musical plays *Songs For Nobodies* and Bernadette Robinson's *Pennsylvania Avenue* have confirmed her standing as one of Australia's leading singer/actresses.

Together with eventual winner Cate Blanchett, Bernadette was nominated for a Helpmann Award (Australia's Olivier Awards) in 2012 as Best Female Actor in a Play.



Bernadette played the role of Beatrice in Nick Enright and Terry Clarke's *The Venetian Twins* and has appeared in lead roles with *Chamber Made Opera* and *Wellington City Opera*. She is a familiar figure on Australian concert stages, having given sell-out concerts at the Sydney Opera House, Adelaide Festival Centre, the Melbourne Recital Centre and its neighbour, Hamer Hall, and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

Bernadette studied voice with the legendary Dame Joan Hammond at the Victorian College of the Arts before embarking on her professional *Cats*. She presented her earlier solo shows, *You*

career in productions of *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Might As Well Live*, *Calling All Angels* and *Patsy Cline: Her Songs, Her Story* around Australia to critical and audience acclaim.

In addition to her one-woman shows, Bernadette has had great success performing at high profile events for large corporates across Australia and (singing in English and in local languages) in Tokyo, Beijing (during the 2008 Olympic Games), Shanghai (during the 2010 World Expo), Hong Kong, Macau, Buenos Aires, Singapore, Paris, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Toronto.



Tickets are available online from gotix@bendigo.voc.gov.au, the theatre box office 50 View Street, Bendigo, or by phone 03 5434 6100.

Background to another of the songs in the choir's repertoire – *Hine e Hine*

This famous New Zealand lullaby is a choir favourite, which we have performed with our New Zealand guest artist and friend Teddy Tahu Rhodes at the Melbourne Recital Centre.

Composed by Fannie Rose Howie under her stage name Princess Te Rangī Pai, it is the best-known New Zealand Mōari song.

It is said to be the lullaby that this international singing star consoled herself with when her health, career, and family life was collapsing all about her.

Hine e Hine

E tangi ana koe	<i>You are weeping</i>
Hine e hine	<i>Little girl, darling girl</i>
E ngenge ana koe	<i>You are weary</i>
Hine e hine.	<i>Little girl, darling girl</i>

Kati tō pouri rā	<i>Be sad no longer</i>
Noho i te aroha	<i>There is love for you</i>
Te ngākau o te Matua	<i>In the heart of the Father</i>
Hine e hine.	<i>Little girl, darling girl</i>

Fannie Rose Howie 1868-1916
 Pane Poata, Princess Te Rangī Pai
 Te Whanau-a-Apanui, Ngati Porou

According to family sources, *Fanny Rose Porter* was born at Tokomaru Bay, on 11 January 1868. She was the eldest of nine children of *Herewaka Porourangi Potae* (also known as *Rangi-i-paea*) and her husband *Thomas William Porter* who, for five years, was the mayor of Gisborne.

Fanny and her three sisters attended Mrs Sheppard's Ladies' School in Napier. They received their early musical education at home. Possessed of a fine natural contralto voice, *Fanny Porter* began to perform in public. After marrying civil servant *John Howie* in Christchurch on 15 October 1891, she studied singing in Australia and she is said to have toured there in 1898 before returning to New Zealand.

By 1900 she was using as a stage name a shortened version of her mother's name, *Te Rangi Pai* (The Beautiful Spirit).

In December that year Fanny departed for England to study with the baritone *Charles Stanley*. Arriving in London with her husband in early 1901, Fanny embarked on training for concert, oratorio, and ballad singing.



Princess Te Rangi Pai aka Fannie Rose Howie

With a vocal range from mezzo-soprano to contralto, she could handle many styles. Using the name, *The Princess Te Rangi Pai*, she gave her début performance in Liverpool in 1901, and was highly praised by the critics. Thereafter she was in much demand for recital work.

The deaths of her mother and youngest brother Robert late in 1904, and her own ill-health led Fanny to return to New Zealand in 1905. She made several popular tours through New Zealand in 1906 and 1907, and on her final tour she achieved acclaim with her own most famous composition, *Hine E Hine*.

But further health problems and disputes with her father, who had sold her mother's extensive Maori land interests, sapped her strength and she was forced to retire.

Fanny Howie died at Opotiki on 20 May 1916, and was buried at Maungaroa, under a pohutukawa tree.

Why join a choir?

We hope you liked Canadian, Robert Rowat's **nine reasons for joining a choir**, which was featured in our last three newsletters.

Expanding on the last three of his points, specifically in relation to our choir.

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!

In addition, with our choir, once you have auditioned successfully, we provide you with a choir suit, tie and shirt, at no additional cost. In addition, you are given access to all the repertoire via the member's section of the Choir's website, including all the music, which you can print out or transfer to a computer tablet for use in rehearsals. We even have computer whiz who can help you do it!

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.

As with all community organisations, within the choir there is a lot of good-humoured banter including the inevitable (usually lame) joke telling

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.

When you are concentrating on your voice blending in with the rest of the choir, the cares of the day have to take second place. There is nothing like singing within a choir to relieve the stresses of the day.

If you agree with Robert Rowat and would like to enjoy the many benefits a choir offers, then call me on 0419 562 353 or just come along to our rehearsal rooms at Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood, on a Wednesday evening and you will be made most welcome.

Vale Judith Durham

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of one of the Choir's friends and possibly our most famous guest performer - Judith Durham.



We were privileged to have Judith perform with us twenty years ago at the Hamer Hall at the Arts Centre on 3rd March 2002.

She admitted she was nervous, because it was the first time, she had performed solo with a full orchestra and choir, but like the true professional she was, it did not affect her performance and the capacity audience were captivated.

The majority of the songs she sang were her own compositions including *Wales you're a Dreamland*, *Australia Land of Today* and *My father's last words* which she sang in that haunting crystal-clear voice.

The highlight of the evening was when the 65-voice Melbourne Welsh choir began singing, in Russian, the ballad "*Stenka Razin*" (the melody on which Tom Springfield based the Seekers hit), which morphed into Judith singing the "*The Carnival is Over*".

None of the choir members who were there on that night will forget that moment and the thunderous applause that followed it.

For contractual reasons we could not include that song on the recording we made of the concert, but the rest of the program is still available on the Choir's CD *Melbourne Welsh Choir with Judith Durham*.

Rest in peace Judith, we may never see or hear your like again.

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 great 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 after running the competition via video for two years during COVID, we plan hold in front of a live audience this November.

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.

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.

Cheeky cleaning

I took my suit to the cleaners, who wanted to charge me \$15.

Instead I gave my suit to the charity shop next door.

They cleaned and pressed it and put it in the window.

I bought it back for \$4.50

Advice to those getting old

I asked one of my friends who has crossed 70 and is heading to 80 what sort of changes he is feeling in himself?

He sent me the following very interesting lines, which I would like to share with you

1. After loving my parents, my spouse, my children, my siblings, my friends, now I have started loving myself.
2. I just realized that I am not "Atlas". The world does not rest on my shoulders.
3. I have now stopped bargaining with vegetable and fruit vendors. A few cents more is not going to burn a hole in my pocket, but it might help the poor fellow save for his daughter's school fees.
4. I pay my waitress a big tip. The extra money might bring a smile to her face. She is toiling much harder for a living than I.
5. I stopped telling the elderly that they've already narrated that story many times. The story allows them to walk down the memory lane and relive the past.
6. I have learned not to correct people even when I know they are wrong. The onus of making everyone perfect is not on me. Peace is more precious than perfection.
7. I give compliments freely and generously. Compliments are a mood enhancer not only for the recipient, but also for me. And a small tip for the recipient of a compliment, never, NEVER turn it down, just say "Thank you".
8. I have learned not to bother about a crease or a spot on my shirt. Personality speaks louder than appearances.
9. I walk away from people who don't value me. They might not know my worth, but I do.
10. I remain cool when someone plays dirty to outrun me in the rat race. I am not a rat and neither am I in any race.
11. I am learning not to be embarrassed by my emotions. It's my emotions that make me human.
12. I have learned that it's better to drop the ego than to break a relationship. My ego will keep me aloof, whereas with relationships I will never be alone.
13. I have learned to live each day as if it's the last. After all, it just might be.
14. I am doing what makes me happy. I am responsible for my happiness, and I owe it to myself. Happiness is a choice. You can be happy at any time, just choose to be!

I decided to send this to all my friends. Why do we have to wait to be 60 or 70 or 80, why can't we practice this at any stage and age....

I stole this, I don't know who to credit it to, but thank you

Sermon demonstration

A minister of the church decided that a visual demonstration would add emphasis to his Sunday sermon.

Four worms were placed into four separate jars.

The first worm was put into a container of alcohol.

The second worm was put into a container of cigarette smoke.

The third worm was put into a container of chocolate syrup.

The fourth worm was put into a container of good clean soil.

At the conclusion of the sermon, the Minister reported the following results:

The first worm in alcohol - Dead.

The second worm in cigarette smoke - Dead.

Third worm in chocolate syrup - Dead.

Fourth worm in good clean soil - Alive.

So, the Minister asked the congregation, "What did you learn from this demonstration?"

A woman sitting in the back, quickly raised her hand and said, "As long as you drink, smoke and eat chocolate, you won't have worms!"

Self-Diagnosis

A man went into a GP's office and said "I need help. I think I'm a moth."

"You really need a psychiatrist," said the GP.

"Probably, but your light was on"

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