

NEWS & VIEWS

205

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHOIRS

AUTUMN 2014

The Great War

1914-1918

Four Choirs

Commemorate

Thoughts on the passing
of our President

Worcester Male Voice Choir
at the Thiepval Cemetery





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National Association of Choirs

Joining the Nation in Choral Singing

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**Last date for submissions for Issue 206
SPRING 2015 - 31 December
On your doorstep by 1 February**

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Crawford's Corner



Two thoughts have dominated the editing of this issue. The first was about the number of choirs who are commemorating the 100th anniversary of the

Great War in which so many brave men gave their lives. The other is the loss to the NAC of Eric Jackson, a man who gave the greater part of his life to choral music. The

Officers, those I could get in touch with in time, have given their thoughts about working with Eric and his influence in the NAC.

I hope that in the next issue you will have the opportunity of writing about what Eric meant to you. He will have visited many of your concerts and celebrations; you will have seen and spoken to him at conference; you will have worked with him in the Midlands East Group or as Officers

of the NAC.

I invite you to send your thoughts to me so that I can add them to News & Views and share them with you all.

Thank you to all those choirs who have sent news of your work and play. You are such a busy lot, travelling the world or entertaining in your own 'neck of the woods'.

Crawford

Chairman's Chat



In writing my chat to you in this issue, I have a very heavy heart because I have to tell you that our President, Eric Jackson, has died. He dedicated an enormous part

of his life to music – in his own choir, for the Midlands East Group and nationally as an officer, then as Chair in 1989 and progressing to become President of the NAC. During that time he witnessed many changes in the officer team, in music for choirs, but he kept abreast of new ideas and technology which were used by the officers in their duties, but mostly he kept

us all grounded in the fellowship that music inspires. He will be greatly missed by us all here, but also by a lot more people whose lives he touched in the choral movement.

Looking through the magazine, I see many of you (myself included) have presented or taken part in concerts to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of WW1. The songs in these concerts reflect many aspects relating to conflict, comradeship, love and hate, and also the memories of home and the life to which everyone wished to return although tragically, for so many we know this wasn't to be. Music transcends almost every barrier and touches everyone's heart, be it the popular tune that is hummed and whistled every day, or the military tunes that instruct engagement of arms, respite from

hostility and finally the last post. Let us all never forget the price that was paid a century ago, and remember those whose lives were given.

In this vein, I'm sure there will be an abundance of concerts in four years' time celebrating the end of this conflict. But for now, with all the preparation it takes, there will be many of you dusting down your Christmas music – doesn't time fly? As the next edition will be in 2015, and as early as it may seem, may I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year. Then we go full circle and I will be looking forward to Conference, and if you haven't been before, why not try it?

Brenda Wilkinson



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Eric Jackson

**National Association of Choirs President,
Group Chair, chorister and friend.**

Brenda Wilkinson

Chairman and Membership Officer

Eric dedicated an enormous part of his life to music – in his own choir, for the Midlands East Group and nationally as an officer, then as Chair in 1989 and as President of the NAC. During that time he witnessed many changes in the Officer Team, in music for choirs, but he kept abreast of new ideas and technology which were used by the officers in their duties, but mostly he kept us all grounded in the fellowship that music inspires. He will be greatly missed by us all here, but also by a lot more people whose lives he touched in the choral movement.

Celia Johns

General Secretary

I started attending NAC Steering Group meetings in the early 1990s, when the Gildenburgh Choir joined the NAC. At that time Norman Williams was President, and Eric Jackson, Chairman, as he had been since 1989. My impression of Eric from the very first was that he was a gentle man who seldom raised his voice, but who knew a tremendous amount about the NAC and choral singing, through his own long experience both in singing and in the organisation of the Association. He was occasionally at a loss to know how to deal with some fiery attendees who were intent on having their say, but order prevailed when he finally managed to be heard.

In 2002 Norman Williams sadly died, and Eric was asked to relinquish the Chairman's role and take on that of President of the NAC.

At the 2005 AGM I became Treasurer. I remember that Eric's expense claims were always in on time, and always moderate, despite his travelling with Jan across the length and breadth of the UK to attend concerts to which they had been invited. He did love going to new places and meeting new people, and if there was a concert at the end of the meetings, so much the better. He was an excellent ambassador for the NAC, and the member choirs were only too happy to have him attending their events.

In 2009 I was elected as the Association's first lady Chairman. Eric was slightly stunned to be dealing with a lady as Chairman, I felt, but he was always so very supportive of all his Officers. I had one or two difficult decisions to make during my tenure, and I was grateful to receive, from Eric, a phone call or an email agreeing with my course of action and endorsing my decisions.

Eric's own singing continued almost to the end of his life, with the Gresley Male Voice Choir, of which he was a long-serving and valued member. I was honoured in November 2012 to be invited to a joint concert with Gresley MVC and Luton MVC, which was staged in order to pay tribute to Eric's years of service to the Choir. It was a very happy evening, with short speeches and a presentation to Eric and flowers for Jan, and I think they both were rather taken aback to realise just how much he was loved and valued by everybody present.

Over the last twelve months or so we have missed Eric's presence and constant encouragement and enthusiasm; there was definitely an empty chair at the Officer meetings. And for the first time he and Jan were forced to miss Annual Conference due to ill health.

We feared the worst, but it was still a horrible shock to receive the news of his sudden death on 25 August after a short illness.

Eric has left a hole in the Association which will be impossible to fill in the same way he did. The best thing we can do in his memory is to take the NAC forward into the future in the way he would have wished; to encourage choral singing across the UK and to ensure that the member choirs are supported in every way possible in their singing.

I will miss him immensely, and my heartfelt sympathy goes to Jan and all Eric's family and close friends.

Clive Lawton

Conference Co-ordinator

It was with sadness that I received news that a fellow chorister and friend, Eric Jackson had passed away. I know Eric was very poorly when I last saw him and gathered he was admitted to hospital shortly afterwards.

He was a giant in choral circles respected throughout the United Kingdom for his work with the National Association of Choirs of which he was President. Although he had not been present at recent meetings he kept himself informed of the work of the Association and continued to take a keen interest in developments. He was also a gentleman in the true sense of the word. A quiet man, who always had an encouraging word for everyone.

It was Eric who asked me to consider taking on the role of Treasurer for the Midlands East Group of the NAC which I did two years ago and which in turn led me to be a National Officer as Conference Coordinator. The experience of the last two years with the NAC has been amazing and I would not have had the opportunity had it not been for Eric. I have a lot to thank him for and do so now. I will miss his friendship and advice. Gresley MVC has lost a faithful servant. All of us have lost a good friend. Our thoughts must be with Janet and Eric's children at this sad time.

Bob Swallow

Publications Officer

When I joined the Officer Team to be the man who edits News & Views there was Eric. He seemed to have been there forever. He was part of the structure of the NAC. When voices were raised, not always in harmony, Eric was there to smooth feathers and egos.

In the many years I have been in a male voice choir I have met a number of men like Eric. They did not make a fuss, they did what was needed in a quiet manner. They were Gentlemen and gentle men. I often miss them as I will miss Eric.



This floral tribute was sent, by the Officers, on behalf of the National Association of Choirs.

Orpheus Male Voice Choir Grimsby/Cleethorpes

Lincolnshire

A CELEBRATION OF YOUTH MUSIC

The Orpheus presented a concert on 12 July 2014 at Central Hall, Grimsby.

'A Celebration of Youth Music' was aimed at serious young musicians aged 11 to 21 years, resident in North East Lincolnshire, and was open to both voice and instrumental performers.

The concert intended to give a platform for the young musicians of the area to display their talents, and at the same time gain valuable performance experience so vital for the development of musical talent.

OMVC was grateful for the support of Central Hall Trust and Soundboard in the presentation of the event.

The concert was part of our continued commitment to youth music and provided young people with a chance to display their skills in a public but relaxed environment. Over the years OMVC has encouraged young musicians to perform with them at concerts. Providing an opportunity for them to perform in their own right is seen as a significant development in the progress and development of young musical talent.

During the concert 84 young musicians performed in ensembles and groups, OMVC felt that this was an excellent way to add to the musicianship skills of performers.

The music ranged from Beethoven and Schubert to modern day Cold Play and concluded with a rousing Taiko Drum performance.

All performers received a memento of a commemorative T-shirt and printed bag to mark the occasion.

The groups ranged from concert bands to a cappella choirs and included a jazz combo, a youth choir and three soloists featuring piano, classical guitar and viola. The event provided two hours of an unforgettable music experience, which was enjoyed by a large and enthusiastic audience.

The event was compered by Hugh Riches of Estuary TV, received support from local businesses and was attended by the Mayor of North East Lincolnshire.

The concert was followed up with Richard Markham (Grimsby born international concert pianist and ABRSM Grades and Diploma Examiner) running a 'Concert Performance Class' on Sunday 13 July at The Central Hall for selected young musicians.

As a teenager Richard was given the opportunity by the Orpheus to appear as a soloist and develop his performance skills. In recognition he was happy to 'Chair'

the 'Concert Performance Class' and offer the benefit of his experience to the young musicians of the area. It was aimed specifically at young musicians who have achieved a minimum ABRSM Grade 6 in their speciality.

The young musicians were invited to set up their performance area, tune up, then make an entrance and perform a piece of about 10 minutes in length and leave the stage just like a concert but without a pressure of a large audience.

Richard then talked them through their performance and gave those attending hints and advice on improving their delivery and technique.

Ian Williams



MUSIC & FESTIVALS



My article on copyright issues last edition has trebled the number of calls and emails I get from choirs on the subject of arranging and copyrights, some have been easy to sort out,

others will require more time and some others, probably more time than I have left in office, but it does show a raising of awareness of this complex but important side to choir activities, and for that I am pleased.

The interesting letter that has come as a result of that article raises an interesting point but is a difficult one to answer and I have tried many lines of enquiry, of course there was a motion in the USA to extend copyright to the 'end of time' less one day and there have been many attempts to extend it to 95 years.

Many publishers fear that if there is no copyright beyond the death of the com-

poser, there will be a resultant loss of income with which to fund new pieces, or that they may not recoup the expense of promoting and printing new music, I have to say that the cost of promoting a piece of music, sending out samples, printing catalogues and these days the preparation of give away CDs is a major chunk of the music selling price, composers generally get 10% and on royalties, composers of music used in a sacred setting (services etc) get nothing at all.

The most sensible answer I have come across is that the 70 year rule relates to the extent of time that dependants of the composer and author may be expected to live and that copyright income may then go to the families of the composer, that seems a reasonable answer but I am not claiming it to be the definitive one and I would welcome any one letting me know what is the definitive one.

Brize Singers South West NAC group

Your article on page 5 of the Summer 2014 edition of News and Views under the

heading MUSIC & FESTIVALS reiterated the rules regarding the rights attached to the creators of music. I doubt whether anyone begrudges a composer or musician of any description a just reward for their labours but how on earth can seventy years after death be justified and who are the recipients of this largesse during those seventy years? The writer of the unattributed article writes, 'Consider this, the creation of music is, for many people, their living in exactly the same way as working in an office or collecting rubbish'. Very true, however, unlike the creators of music, the vast majority of your members - be they office workers, collectors of rubbish, employed or self-employed - work for many years knowing that when they die, their pension dies with them.

In the real world a patent on an invention lasts for a basic twenty years. If Sir Frank Whittle had kept up his patent on the jet engine, under a seventy year rule, the public would be paying royalties on air travel until the year 2066. Likewise, for example, having purchased a car - imagine paying royalties every time you drove or modified it!



LOCAL CHOIR URGENTLY NEEDS ACCOMPANIST

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Perhaps someone would be good enough to look into this subject and let us, your members, know more about this iniquitous '70 years after death' tax, how it came into being and how it is justified?

Maurice Spalding
Chairman

Hull Male Voice Choir Yorkshire East

Following the success of the 2014 Annual Conference Concert in Scarborough in April, Hull Male Voice Choir is already busy networking to plan joint concerts for inclusion in its 2015 concert season with other local NAC member choirs that participated in the event which raised a final sum of £2,844 to benefit Marie Curie Cancer Care. In addition, plans are now already at an advanced stage in respect of the previously announced joint concert with Mansfield & District Male Voice Choir on Saturday 6 June in the impressive Queen Elizabeth Grammar School at Mansfield which our Chairman – John Holmes – and myself visited when we travelled to Mansfield recently to finalise plans: in the true tradition of male voice choirs, we received a very warm and cordial welcome from its representatives who 'entertained' us after completing the business and prior to us being introduced to their choir at rehearsal in the evening – and having us sing without music.

Meantime, we are greatly looking forward to our special concert to be held in the splendour of Hull's Guildhall on Saturday 18 October 2014 when the fabulous and very popular Maureen Hunter Singers will



be our special guests. They have been giving musical pleasure since being formed in 1984 and now have more than 70 young ladies in the senior choir (as well as over 40 children in the Junior Singers). Every year of their choir's existence has been marked with outstanding concerts, competitions or international tours and 2014 has been no exception, having enjoyed a concert tour to the Rhineland area of Germany and also performed in Cologne Cathedral as part of their 30 Anniversary Celebrations. So Hull Male Voice Choir is delighted that the Maureen Hunter Singers accepted its invitation to participate in this joint concert during their milestone year.

Then follows our annual and very popular 'Sounds of Christmas' Concert in The Guildhall, Hull on Friday 5 December when Westfield Primary School Choir of Cottingham will be our special guests.

Hull Male Voice Choir – which celebrated its Centenary in 2011 - is in urgent need of recruiting more choristers - especially First Tenor voices - since unfortunately, over recent months we have sadly said farewell to some of our long standing members. Until recently, the choir had been enjoying a membership of some 50 voices and whilst during the Centenary period

numbers were boosted above this level, disappointingly they have now fallen back to a level that begins to give some cause for some concern (as does the average age of the choir), particularly since of course not only is it essential to maintain numbers, but there has to be an equal balance of voices across all our four parts - and whilst first tenors are in short supply at present, of course persons who sing second tenor, baritone or bass will be just as welcome to come and join us. Does your choir suffer the same challenges, aiming at younger men?

Complacency is not an option for any choir and recruitment ideas from other choirs will be welcomed and should be sent to me at terrywallis@live.co.uk - but with over 256,000 people living in Hull made up of 50% men and the average age being only 37, I remain upbeat that there must be at least 20 men out of these 128,000 males just waiting to hear about our choir but the problem seems to be in reaching them - ironically, it is almost without exception that all our new members who have delayed coming along to experience the joy of singing in a male voice choir until 'retirement' comment that they only wish that they had joined such a choir many years previously - but why?

Membership of any choir offers great fellowship and friendship and of course the satisfaction of singing in concerts - after all, singing is good for your health, it gives pleasure to others at the same time whilst often raising much needed funds for national and local charitable organisations.

Terry Wallis
Public Relations Officer



Forthcoming Events

Events between this issue of News & Views and the next are in greater detail. The rest give only concert title, date, venue and contact. As the event date comes nearer they will be shown in more detail. Let us know when your events are happening so that we can let everyone know.

Send your event to

publications.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk

October

HULL MALE VOICE CHOIR

In joint concert with

THE MAUREEN HUNTER SINGERS

Saturday 18 October 2014

Venue: **The Guildhall, Kingston-upon-Hull**

In the magnificent setting of Kingston upon Hull's Guildhall, on Saturday 18 October 2014 the Hull Male Voice Choir – which celebrated its Centenary during 2011 – is proudly presenting a concert with Guest Artists The Maureen Hunter Singers during the year of its 30th Anniversary Celebrations.

Concert commences at 7.30

tickets – £8 (children £4) - available from Gough & Davy of 13 Paragon Street in Hull, our Choir Members or by calling 01482 656869.

Gwalia Singers

Joint Concert with

The Sydney Welsh Choir

Thursday 2 October 2014

Venue: **St Mary's Church, Swansea**

Time: 7.00

Cost: £8

Contact: Any Choir members or phone 402080

Gwalia Singers

Ladies Committee fund raising event

Friday 24 October 2014

Venue: **Clyne Golf Club, Swansea**

Time: 7.00

Contact: Any Choir members or phone 402080

November

Selston Music Festival

Saturday 29 November

Venue: **The Parish Hall Mansfield Road,**

Selston NG16 6EE

We want to encourage choirs to enter this year's festival, you may not be aware of just how easy it is to take part, you just need to sing two contrasting pieces from your own repertoire.

We have two classes;

Class 36, The Choir Challenge, you need to perform 2 accompanied, own choice pieces, not exceeding 8 minutes.

Entry fee is £15, with 1st prize £100.00, trophy and certificate, 2nd prize £50.00 and certificate.

Class 35, Vocal a capella groups (including Barber shop Choirs), you need to perform 2 unaccompanied pieces, not exceeding 8 minutes.

Entry fee is £10, with 1st prize £75.00, trophy and certificate, 2nd prize £25 and certificate.

You may feel able to enter both classes!

If you reach a high enough standard you may also be asked to take part in our winner's class at the end of the festival. The overall winner receives the County Cup and £50.00.

Each year we have 2 highly acclaimed adjudicators, this year the choirs will be adjudicated by Coral Gould MBE, LRAM, ARCM, LTCL, (Cert Ed).

For more details and full Syllabus look at www.selstonmusicfestival.co.uk

Please contact us to request an entry form selstonmusicfestival@gmail.com

Or Festival Co-ordinators, Mrs Sue Warde: 0115 8548295 or Mrs Faye Martin: 01773 863017

December

Gwalia Singers

Christmas Charity Concert.

Thursday 4 December 2014

Venue: **Vivian Hall, Blackpill, Swansea**

Time: 7.00

Contact: Any Choir members or phone 402080

Gwalia Singers

Christmas Charity Concert

Friday 5 December 2014

Venue: **Clyne Golf Club, Swansea**

Time: 8.00

Contact: Any Choir members or phone 402080

HULL MALE VOICE CHOIR SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS

Friday 5th December 2014

Venue: **The Guildhall, Kingston-upon-Hull**

Concert commences at 7.30

Tickets £7 (£3.50 children) will be available from early November from:

Gough & Davy, 13 Paragon Street, Hull
Reuben Hird on 01482 656869
Hull Male Voice Choir Members

Gwalia Singers

Ladies Christmas Charity Concert

Tuesday 9 December 2014

Venue: **Scout/Guide HQ, Swansea**

Time: 7.00

Contact: Any Choir members or phone 402080

Gwalia Singers

in concert with

St Thomas School Choir

Friday 16 December 2014

Venue: **St. Thomas Church, St. Thomas, Swansea**

Time: 7.00

Contact: Available from any choir member or on the door.

Hampshire Police Male Voice Choir Southern Counties

Having been chairman of the police choir for a number of years, giving the toast at our annual dinner to the guests, many of whom attend regularly had become a challenge! How do I make it different?



I am often asked by the guests, and other people, what songs we sing, so I say, 'songs from the shows, light opera, Welsh hymns etc but that doesn't give much of a clue without naming the songs. However, singing so many songs it would be impossible and boring to list them. So I thought, why not make it interesting by including them in a story? This I did for my speech and it was very well received. At the end I asked members to guess how many songs in our repertoire had been mentioned, which added a bit of fun to it.

Following the dinner many members asked if I what I was going to do with it? To date, nothing, but then I thought fellow singers may be interested to read it and try to guess how many songs are included.

Annual Dinner - Toast to the Guests

AS IF SOMEONE HAD SOUND AN ALARM I WOKE UP AND HEARD SOMEONE SAY TURN YOUR RADIO ON AND THE WEATHER FORECASTER SAYING OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING. I JUMPED OUT OF BED AND LOOKED OUT OF THE WINDOW. I SAW THE ROSE AND THOUGHT MY LORD WHAT A MORNING, WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD WE LIVE IN?

AS IT WAS SUNDAY I WENT TO CHURCH, BUT AS USUAL THERE WERE SOME EMPTY CHAIRS AND EMPTY TABLES. LED BY GOD'S CHOIR WE SANG A FEW HYMNS INCLUDING THE LORD IS MY LIGHT, THE CREATION AND THE EASTER HYMN. WE SANG THE LORDS PRAYER AND FINISHED WITH THE BLESSING OF AARON. I CAME OUT INVIGORATED THINKING GIVE ME THAT OLD TIME RELIGION.

I THOUGHT THAT ON A CLEAR DAY IT WOULD BE GOOD TO GO DOWN TO THE HARBOUR. THERE WAS A BOAT BOUND FOR THE RIO GRANDE BUT I WANTED TO STEAL AWAY MY WAY SO CALM IS THE SEA I JUMPED ONTO A BOAT AND STARTED SAILING.

CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR THE PRAYER, WHICH AS YOU KNOW ALWAYS ENDS WITH AMEN.

SOON OUT TO SEA I SAW THE FISHERMEN OF ENGLAND, WHAT A GROUP OF STOUT HEARTED MEN. I ALSO PASSED PEDRO THE FISHERMAN WHISTLING AWAY. I CARRIED ON TO SWANSEA TOWN TO SING TYDDI A RODDAIST, DEUS SALUTIS, LLANFAIR, YSBRYD Y NOS, GWAHODDIAD AND MANY OTHER SONGS IN WELSH.

BACK IN THE BOAT I SAILED PAST THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE AND GOT TO JERSEY TO SING HYMN OF LIBERATION BEFORE GOING TO FRANCE TO SING CANTIQUE DE RACINE, VIVA L'AMOUR AND LA MER IN FRENCH. AS I WANTED TO SEE SOME SUNSHINE I WENT TO THE MED AND VISITED ITALY TO SING NELLA FANTASIA AND VA PENSIERO IN ITALIAN.

IT WAS TIME TO LEAVE THE BOAT TO GO ON FOOT ACROSS EUROPE. SOMEONE SAID TO ME YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE BUT I DID AND CALLED INTO CZECH REPUBLIC TO SING CZECHOSLOVAKIAN DANCE SONG AND HUNGARY TO SING THE HUNGARIAN FOLK SONGS. EN ROUTE I CLIMBED EVERY MOUNTAIN, PASSED OL' MAN RIVER WHICH IS A DEEP RIVER AND

WENT UP JACOB'S LADDER. AFTER MANY A DUSTY MILE AND SOMETIMES WALKING ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT I GOT TO RUSSIA TO SING CAVALRY OF STEPPES, KALINKA AND DASHENKA.

NOW IT WAS TIME TO GET BACK IN THE BOAT HOPING TO BLOW THE WIND SOUTHERLY. BEFORE SETTLING IN TO THE LONG JOURNEY I DROPPED INTO FINLAND TO SING FINLANDIA THEN SCOTLAND FOR ERISKAY LOVE LILT AND MY LUV IS LIKE A RED RED ROSE.

GOING ACROSS THE ATLANTIC I CAME ACROSS THE JOLLY ROGER WHO WAS HAVING TROUBLE WITH A DRUNKEN SAILOR. I SUGGESTED HE CALLED THE GENDARMES BUT THEY SAID IT WAS JUST A BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATERS.

I GOT TO AMERICA SING AMERICAN TRILOGY AND BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC BEFORE GOING ON TO JAMAICA TO SING JAMAICAN FAREWELL. NOW THAT I WAS IN WARM WATERS I WASN'T SURPRISED TO SEE THE MERMAID, AND THOUGHT THERE IS NOTHING LIKE A DAME BUT GARRY GOT TOO EXCITED SO I HAD TO SAY SIT DOWN SIT DOWN YOU'RE ROCKING THE BOAT. I ALSO SAW MICHAEL ROW THE BOAT BUT REALLY HE WAS ONLY A ROVING.

WHEN I GOT TO AUSTRALIA I FULFILLED AN AMBITION BY SINGING AVA MARIA AND NESSUN DORMA IN THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE BEFORE DERRICK AND GEORGE SANG MY FAVOURITE THE PEARL FISHER'S DUET. AFTER SUCH A WONDERFUL OCCASION IT WAS OFF TO NEW ZEALAND TO SING HINE HINE AND POKERERANA IN MAORI.

I WAS NOW HOMESICK AND THOUGHT I WANT TO GO HOME. I DREAMED A DREAM WITH SOMEONE SAYING TO ME DO YOU HEAR THE PEOPLE SING BRING HIM HOME. IT WASN'T A DREAM I REALLY WAS GOING HOME.



BACK HOME I WANTED TO FIND A WOMAN AND SETTLE DOWN SO I WENT TO THE NIGHT CLUB AREA TO SEE WHAT WAS AVAILABLE. THERE WAS A LADY STANDING ON THE CORNER SO I SAID HELLO DOLLY BUT WHEN SHE SAID IN A SEXY WAY HEY LOOK ME OVER I QUICKLY MOVED ON!!

I DECIDED TO GET ADVICE FROM MY FRIEND A FARMERS'S BOY CALLED OLIVER. HE SUGGESTED QUITE A FEW WOMEN. THERE WAS POLLY PERKINS OF PADDINGTON GREEN BUT BRYAN SCARTH LIKES HER SO THOUGHT BEST NOT, LIKEWISE MARIA HAS A SOFT SPOT FOR TREVOR ROMAN. THEN THERE WAS EILEEN AROON BUT SHE WAS THE OLD WOMAN. NOT THAT I AM SAYING ANYTHING DETRIMENTAL ABOUT OLDER WOMEN. IN THIS COMPANY WOULD I DARE, AND ESPECIALLY BEING MARRIED TO ONE! LILY OF THE VALLEY SOUNDED PROMISING BUT IT IS NOT UNUSUAL THAT SHE WANTED TO STAY IN THE GREEN GRASS OF HOME. I FOUND AMAZING GRACE REALLY AMAZING BUT I CANNOT GO INTO DETAILS IN MIXED COMPANY! HOWEVER I REALISED I COULDN'T COPE WITH HER LONG TERM!

THEN I MET MY TRUE LOVE, DELILAH. SHE WAS THE PORTRAIT OF MY LOVE, MY UNCHAINED MELODY. SHE WAS YOUNG AND SENTIMENTAL. I SAID TO HER LOVE COULD I ONLY TELL THEE, WITH MY FEELINGS FOR YOU, YOU RAISE ME UP.

TONIGHT I HAVE BEEN ON A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY BUT AS I TEND TO LOSE MY MEMORY NOW IS THE HOUR TO SAY FAREWELL GOOD FRIENDS. BUT BEFORE I FINISH, I BELIEVE THIS CHOIR IS MORE THAN COMRADES IN ARMS IT IS COMRADES IN SONG.

HONOURED GUESTS LADIES AND GENTLEMEN IT HAS BEEN A SOME ENCHANTED EVENING BUT THE LONG DAY CLOSES. IT IS TIME FOR THE SUNSET POEM.

GOOD NIGHT LADIES, PLEASE CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR THE PRAYER, WHICH AS YOU KNOW ENDS WITH AMEN.

Brian Wareham OBE
Chairman



Audley Male Voice Choir Midlands North Group

Diamond Anniversary Of Audley Male Voice Choir

Musical Director: Philip Broadhurst MBE

Choir Patron: Ingrid Surgenor MBE

For 60 years, Audley Male Voice Choir has provided audiences with many evenings of pleasure. Initially it was formed by Mr William Bowers, on 26 August 1954, in order to assist churches and chapels by giving concerts and singing at services when required. The choir also then began to compete at music festivals. After his retirement, Wallace Fryer and Geoffrey Statham conducted until the present Musical Director was appointed.

Philip Broadhurst, a local pharmacist, took charge of the baton in 1976. He has been the driving force behind the choir's current successes, and was awarded the MBE in 2001 for his services to the choir and the local community. Under his guidance the choir established a series of Celebrity Concerts, attracting more than fifty world class artistes from the world of opera. The busy concert and festival schedule continued, expanding to include the Northern and National Male Voice Championships, as well as tours to Malta, Cornwall and Scotland.

The men of the choir enjoy the camaraderie of being a member of a choir and that special feeling of singing together, whether that be in one of the many local churches and chapels or larger venues such as the Victoria Hall in Hanley. Over the years they have raised many thousands of pounds for local and national charities, and provide an annual bursary to a music student at the University of Keele.

The choir would not be what it is today without the many people who have helped along the way: accompanists, including Ian Riddle who has been with the choir for over twenty five years; committee members; audience, including the support from wives and partners, and of course, the choristers themselves.

The choir's birthday year will include a Gala Concert with the Brighthouse and Rastrick Band on 19 October 2014 a Celebrity Concert on 22 March 2015 and a Celebration Dinner also in March.

The choir looks forward to the next sixty years.

Philip Broadhurst

Send Your Submissions To Crawford At

publications.officer@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk



Budleigh Salterton Male Voice Choir

Devon

It all began on Wednesday 8 May 1974 when seven individuals; Mrs Pamela Jones, her husband Ivor and five other men gathered together and decided to start a Men's choir. Pam Jones was to be the Musical Director. The first rehearsal was held on 10 September when 18 members attended and by January the following year the news had spread and 31 choristers were present. The choir's first major concert took place in Exmouth Pavilion on 13 June 1975 to great acclaim in front of a packed house, and so the Budleigh Salterton Male Voice Choir began its journey culminating in its Fortieth Anniversary concert on 5 July 2014.

In that time the choir has had five Musical Directors, Pam for 18 years; Marian Room (4), Allen Coles from 1997 to 2012, Peter Good for 18 months and our present MD, Michael Graham, who took up the position in September 2013. Michael is a charismatic young man who in addition to being Organist and Director of Chapel Music at Exeter University is an Organ Scholar at Exeter Cathedral. He is in demand as a tenor soloist and has performed with local choral societies in the South West and further afield.

In common with most male voice choirs we sing for charities, both local and national, performing, usually every three to four weeks and over recent times we have raised on average £10,000 to

£12,000 a year. Our present calendar extends into 2016!

The concert took place in our home church of St Peter's in Budleigh Salterton, where we rehearse every Tuesday evening in the church hall. Every effort had been made to invite ex-choristers to the concert, of which some 25 were able to attend. Local dignitaries present included the Mayors of Budleigh Salterton and Exmouth and the Chairman of Sidmouth Town Council. There was a good audience which nearly filled the whole church.

Our two soloists were Val Howells, an excellent mezzo-soprano who has been a regular soloist with the choir over the past twenty years. Not only is she in demand for her vocal talents but she is also an established author of children's books. She sang two pieces in each half firstly by Michael Nyman and Matyas Seiber, the second pair by Ernest Chausson and Stephen Sondheim.

The other soloist was, Edward Woodhouse, a tenor who is presently a lay vicar in the Exeter Cathedral choir. Born in Brighton he started singing at the age of 7, later moving to the back row. He studied at Portsmouth and Exeter University where he completed an MA in History. Edward has recently taken on a number of solo roles ranging from works by Mozart, Haydn, Bach and Handel. His offering for the evening was Till Earth Outwears, a song-cycle by Gerald Finzi.

The soloists delighted the audience with their singing and both received warm applause.

The choir staged 63 out of our full complement of 65. We sang many of the favourite Male Voice Choir repertoire, especially memorable was By Babylon's Wave and Schubert's Holy, Holy, Holy. Modern songs from the shows included Les Miserables, South Pacific and New York New York. Finally we have a tradition to finish our concerts with Morte Criste, and we were delighted to welcome our founder and life president Pam Jones to the rostrum to conduct us together with many of the former choristers who were present.

So ended our Fortieth Anniversary concert. The question is 'where do we go from here?' We have a short tour to Yorkshire in September, we are singing in Exeter Cathedral in December and we have been invited to attend and compete in The Seventh International Male Voice Choir Festival in Truro next year. Our diary for 2015 is quickly filling up and we already have a provisional booking for 2016.

Our main concern is 'How do we attract younger men to join us?' At present we, like so many other choirs, don't have the answer to that question. One suggestion is to arrange visits to local senior schools to give short concerts and talks to see whether we can encourage lads in the sixth form to try it out. At present this is just an idea, if anyone out there has other ideas that have worked please advise.

Ken Evans

New Harmony Ladies Choir Bristol South West Group

The choir was formed in 1994 by the late Morris Pearson and this year is our twentieth anniversary. We had a very successful Anniversary Dinner in July held at The Bristol Golf Club and many past members and long-time friends of the choir attended. Everyone enjoyed the entertainment provided by the Steve Bloggs Trio and reminiscing over past events and concerts with the aid of scrapbooks compiled by members of the choir.

In April we held a Charity Concert at Horfield URC to raise money for the Southmead Hospital Coronary Care Unit who had cared for the late husband of one of our choristers, Elf Harris. Guest soloists were our own Musical Director, David Whitehead, and our Accompanist, John Lowe, who played piano duets to the great delight of all who attended.

In May we sang at St James Church, Mangotsfield, together with Mangotsfield C E Primary School Infants Choir. This was to aid the Church's 'Spend a Penny' appeal for funds to build new toilet facilities on the premises.

In June we took part in a concert at St

John the Baptist Church, Keynsham, with St John's Church Choir and solo spots provided by trumpeter, John Watkeys, organist, Alison Howell, soprano, Sara Crouch, a duet from Helen Davis (soprano) and William Stevens (bass), tenor David Tiley and again piano duets from our own David Whitehead and John Lowe.

We are now looking forward to our Anniversary Concert which will be held on 17 October at St Teresa's Church, Filton, Bristol. Our soloists on this occasion will be the Redland Six, an *a capella* group formerly pupils of Redland High School. We are delighted to confirm that Susan Marshfield, the well-known public speaker, will be our compere for the evening. The choir will be singing for the first time *A Song of Harmony* with music specially written for us by our President, Alwyn Humphreys who, work permitting, will be attending the concert. We would like to extend a warm welcome to all choristers with whom we have sung in the past twenty years to come and join with us in this celebration.

*Joan Lovell
Secretary*



Prudhoe Gleemen North East

Since its formation in 1903 the choir has had many special Annual Concerts with some well known guest soloists over the years, including Kathleen Ferrier, Owen Brannigan and more recently Graeme Danby. The concert this year, however, was special for two very different reasons, the first being

- Vienna
- Toronto
- Dublin
- Poitiers
- Venice
- Paris
- Bilbao
- Barcelona
- Ljubljana
- Dubrovnik
- Antwerp
- Madrid
- Reims
- Nice
- Boppard
- Lake Garda
- Valletta
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the celebration of 70 years continuous membership of one of its members.

Howard Taylor joined the choir in 1944 as an 18 year old. Being one of the first Bevin Boys Howard was assigned to one of the local pits and his subsequent university training and teaching in the Northumberland and Durham area have enabled Howard to have an unbroken association with the Gleemen. His rich baritone voice has graced the choir's concerts, both in group choral



and solo singing. The choir's President, Brian Japes, presented Howard with a long-service certificate to mark the occasion.

Secondly, Alison Williams completed 25 years as the choir's accompanist, Alison being Howard's daughter. Alison's husband, Graeme, has been a member of the bass section of the choir for 31 years.

To complete the family links, the choir's guest singers for the evening were 'Beati', a group of eight ladies, one of whom was Fiona Young, Alison's daughter. All the ladies are members of Harrogate Choral Society and, after getting together for a 'one-off' performance they are still together nine years later. Under the direction of Marilynne Davies and accompanied by Beryl Pankhurst, they delighted the audience with their beautifully controlled singing and were a perfect foil for the male voices under the direction of Judith Thompson who, incidentally, is only the sixth Musical Director in the choir's 110 year history.

Neville Fairbairn
Secretary

Hawarden Singers Wales North/ Cheshire West 60 YEARS OF SINGING

The Hawarden Singers were formed in 1954 by Dr Emlyn Roberts who set a standard of high quality singing.

Under his baton the choir went from strength to strength and won many accolades, both nationally and internationally including first prize at Llangollen International Eisteddfod, until he retired in 1988.

Dr Roberts was succeeded by Hywel John, a one time member of the choir in the bass section and already a choir master and headmaster at Rector Drew School in Hawarden, Flintshire. He continued to keep the high standard that Dr Roberts had set until he retired in 2001.

Malcolm Williams, who had previously sung in the tenor section of the choir and had much experience of performing in the musical world, then became the conductor and brought a fresh approach to the musical repertoire which has pleased the modern day concert goers.

Our President, Lord Barry Jones, has been a strong supporter and follower of the choir since 2008 for which we are very grateful.

In May, of this special year, the Singers

hosted The Chorale d'Auzeville, choir from Auzeville, near Toulouse, returning the hospitality given them in France two years ago.

During their four day stay the two choirs performed a well attended Two Choir Festival in The Church of the Holy Spirit, Ewloe.

Their programme included a wide range of music sung in different languages and culminated with a combined rendering of Faure's *Cantique de Jean Racine*.

The remaining days of the visit were busy with a tour of North Wales, a visit to Mostyn Hall and gardens and individual excursions with hosts to Liverpool, Chester and Llangollen and ending with a farewell party and buffet on the French guests' last evening - a good time was had by all and included impromptu singing by both choirs.

The rest of this special year for Hawarden will include a Beetle Drive, Barn Dance and, in October a 60th Anniversary dinner and celebratory concert.

WHAT A WONDERFUL YEAR!

www.hawardensingers.com

Janet Dyson Helsby
Publicity Officer



Gresley Male Voice Choir have just had a new uniform and the old one is for sale.

We have 75 red jackets of a good quality and condition for sale to a new or existing male voice choir who need to upgrade.

The jackets are red in colour and can be seen if one logs onto

www.gresleymalevoicechoir.org.uk

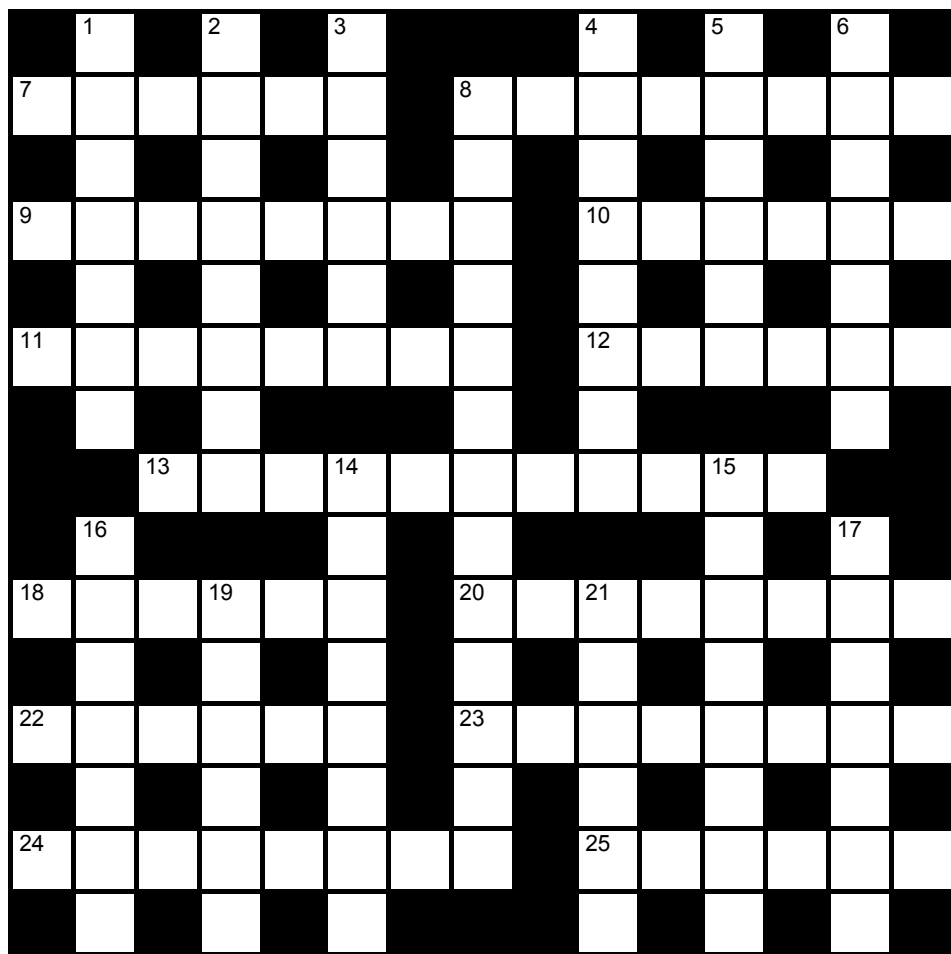
and click onto concerts The red jacket colour can be seen in some of our concerts.

Any reasonable offer would be acceptable.

Contact Clive Lawton 07939012458

PUZZLE PAGE

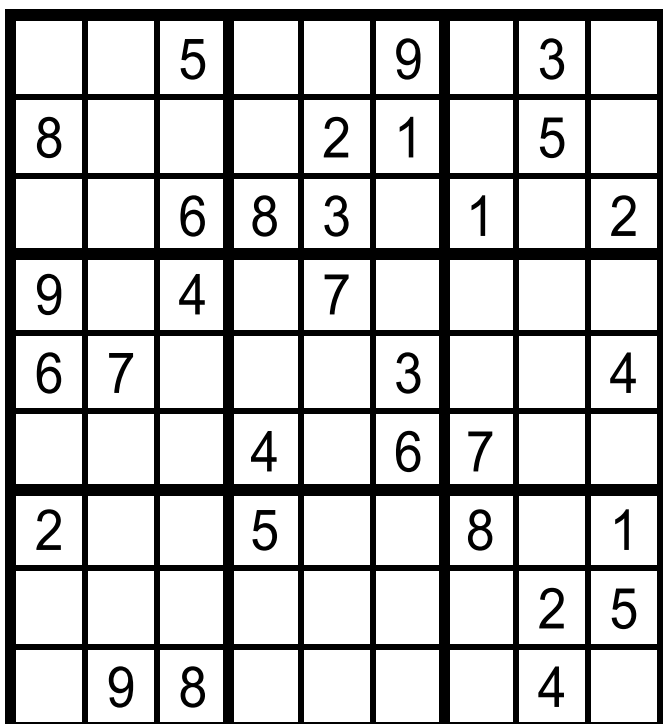
SOLUTIONS ON PAGE 34



To have your own copy of this page to work on go to www.nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk and look for the latest copy of News & Views then print the page. Easy!

**E
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Across

- 7 Florida or Indiana in short was once English moolah (6)
- 8 Unusual red signs cover the wound (8)
- 9 Barbarous boat leader may paddle, the swine (4,4)
- 10 Blinking difficult without it (6)
- 11 A properly organised periodic table without Peter is fiendish (8)
- 12 A failure in the scout agenda (6)
- 13 Deserves praise for earning money (11)
- 18 A ball of wool hit the plane (3-3)
- 20 Remove it perversely to work longer (8)
- 22 Place for an English setter after a fashion (6)
- 23 Averse to the straight lace girl wore (8)
- 24 Persuade to be a servant, protect from loss (8)
- 25 Filling food (6)

Down

- 1 Prohibited till I cite envelopes (7)
- 2 Badly bred lice are believable (8)
- 3 Open the United Nations paradiddle (6)
- 4 Physical exercise repeated with ill-formed iron sausage (8)
- 5 The upward slope smells (6)
- 6 Sinning surprisingly lasts until you're out (7)
- 8 Capricious cathedral cook found it tasty (4,9)
- 14 I hope I'm mature, what are you? (8)
- 15 Kept concealed beyond the future (8)
- 16 Discipline the wild colt Ron (7)
- 17 Strike to make an impression (7)
- 19 A sleep becomes a polite request (6)
- 21 Volunteer for strangely silent service (6)

Letter from NAC in Oz

First let me apologise for not producing an article for the last issue of *News & Views*. After 8 happy years with the Sydney Male Choir I have decided to hand in my uniform and find something else to do on Tuesday evenings! There were many factors involved in this difficult decision but one of them was the increasingly tedious journey, which could take almost 90 minutes in each direction often in the dark. I did, as you may guess miss the camaraderie of belonging to a choir so I have joined other ex-Sydney Male Choir members in the grandly named Men's Shed Chorale. More about this choir will follow in future missives.

When Jan & I first visited Australia on holiday I vividly remember seeing our first kookaburra when we were out for a walk near Sydney Harbour. We were so excited and impressed to have seen such an iconic creature. We just stopped and stared not even being able to take a photograph of it. Now we largely take them for granted and it is a rare day when we don't see at least one from the house. The word 'laughing' is often associated with the kookaburra



but if you hear half a dozen of them in full voice that is not a word that springs to mind! We had a spell of them having their 'arguments' outside our bedroom window at dawn. No way could we sleep through that especially as it was often followed closely by what sounded like a herd of elephants having a dance on the roof. This was the family of possums returning home after a night out. The photograph – then there were four - shows a collection of the big kingfishers on the power pole outside our house.

I have been saddened to receive 2 emails from my friends at the NAC about the deaths of Frank Rhodes and, more recent-

ly, Eric Jackson. I had the privilege of knowing both of these gentle men – in all senses of the words – during the years when I served on the NAC Committee. I first met Eric when I helped organise the NAC AGM & Conference in Peterborough in 1999 and remember his speech at the concluding concert in Peterborough Cathedral. After that he was a constant presence at the many meetings. He was always able to act with tact and dignity while making his point. I am often

reminded of Frank because we regularly use the mugs which he organised to commemorate the Conference held in Stoke on Trent in 2002. He made a great contribution to the NAC in his various capacities. Both of these fine men will be sorely missed.

Vale Frank Rhodes. Vale Eric Jackson.

As usual if you wish to contact me please do so via email at petefig@optusnet.com.au. I always look forward to contact from the UK.

Peter Marshall

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87th Annual General Meeting 27th Annual Conference Weekend 20-22 March 2015

The good news is that I have negotiated the same rate for Worthing next year as for Scarborough this year. No increase in the full conference cost of £185 inclusive, with no single room occupancy surcharge.



Hotel accommodation anywhere along the south coast can be expensive and especially in the area between Brighton and Portsmouth.



We are a big group and to keep us together is my first priority. Worthing has only one hotel which is large enough to accommodate us all under one roof.



This is the Chatsworth Hotel just off the promenade. It is a comfortable three star accommodation with adequate conference facilities.



It is within walking distance of our concert venue on Saturday

evening. The management are very much looking forward to hosting the conference and are keen to ensure every assistance is afforded to us. I am in the process of contacting various companies to set up trade stands and hope to have a good variety including ladies uniform attire.

I had the opportunity this year of putting faces to names and learning the system of conference organisation within the NAC, quite a task in itself I can assure you. I hope you enjoyed Scarborough this year and will be able to join us in 2015. I will include a detailed itinerary in the spring issue of News & Views.

On the subject of parking. Some good news. I have been able to negotiate secure parking in the adjacent multi storey park. At the moment I have obtained this for £4 per 24 hour stay. However, I may be able to reduce this further when I talk to them in the New Year. It would be useful to know how many cars need to be parked. I have included this question in the booking form. You will need to pay individually at the barrier, however, if I can obtain a ball park figure I may be able to negotiate a reduction.

A deposit of £70 per person is required with your booking form by the 30 November 2014 with the balance paid by 28 February 2015. Day delegate rates are the same as for this year in Scarborough including the price for meals. Concert tickets next year will be £10.

I look forward to meeting all our delegates next year.

Clive Lawton
Conference Coordinator.



Our main speaker next year will be Ronald Corp OBE composer, conductor, and Church of England priest. He is founder and Artistic Director of the New London Orchestra [NLO] and the New London Children's Choir. He is Musical Director of The London Chorus, a position he took up in 1994, and is also the Musical Director of the Highgate Choral Society.

Drawing on his experience with young people he has been asked to cover the subject of how to attract the young into choral singing, where to aim our endeavours to get young people interested in joining choirs. To quote one of our officers, "how do we make choral singing Cool" This together with instruction on voice control and singing technique.

By popular demand I will be asking Roger Hagarty of Rogers Music to demonstrate the latest advances in instrumentation from his impressive collection.

Helen Emery of Thames South will be teaching a piece of music to be sung by the delegates at the concert on Saturday evening.

27th Annual Conference Weekend 20-22 March 2015 Gala Concert Saturday 21 March The Assembly Rooms, Worthing



Assembly Hall

The Assembly Hall is one of Worthing's three key multi-purpose entertainment venues. Frequently hosting live bands; home to the Worthing Symphony Orchestra and the Wurlitzer Organ its acoustics make it ideal for music of all genres.

Dances are also frequently held in the venue owing to the sprung dance floor while comedians favour it for having the largest capacity of the town's venues. Often used in a theatre style it can easily become a venue for exhibitions, conferences, antiques and collectors fairs.

The Assembly Hall, has perhaps the finest acoustics in the country for classical music. It has long been recognised by the sound engineers of BBC Radio 2's Friday Night is Music Night and musicians enjoy working together in its special ambience.

The Assembly Hall is a versatile, multi-purpose venue that has all the facilities required to host a variety of entertainment events, from ballroom dancing to pop and rock concerts.

There is ample free parking immediately adjacent to the venue with the railway station and town centre just a short walk away.

Photo from Thames South Group includes some members from Sussex Gruffs MVC, The Pleasure Singers (ladies choir from Horsham) and The Rowland Singers (mixed choir Worthing) who along with Songbirds (ladies from Crawley not pictured) will be taking part in the joint concert at the Assembly Hall, Worthing on Saturday 21 March 2015 during the NAC's annual conference which next year is being held in Worthing and promises to be lots of fun.



Photo is credited to Simon Redhead Photography.



Reg'd. Charity No. 1014630

National Association of Choirs

Joining the Nation in Choral Singing

National Conference Booking Form 1 20-22 March 2015

The Chatsworth Hotel, The Steyne, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 3DU

Conference Costs

Full Conference Stay

The price quoted is **per person for the whole conference**

There are no single room supplements

Price per person for whole conference includes admission to all lectures

two nights bed breakfast and evening meal

refreshments and free admission to Saturday evening concert

per person £185

Day Delegate [Saturday]

Please circle requirements

Refreshments and lunch included £30.00

Evening meal Saturday add £32.50

Concert ticket Saturday add £ 10.00

Payments

Full Conference Stay

Deposit of £70 [non refundable] by 30 November 2014, balance by 28 February 2015

Final payment reminders will be sent

Day delegates

Payment in full when booking [non refundable]

Amount Submitted £ _____

Please return your completed forms and deposits to the address below

You must inform us in writing of any cancellation by 1 March 2015

[cancellations after this date will incur a charge of 50% of the total fee payable]

However substitute guests will be welcome

Cheques should be made payable to the National Association of Choirs

THE PERSONAL DETAILS OF EACH DELEGATE MUST BE ENTERED ON FORM 2

Please return your completed forms and deposits to

Clive Lawton- Conference Coordinator, 20 Arthur's Court, Stretton, Burton upon Trent Staffordshire DE13 0GS

07939012458

conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk



Reg'd. Charity No. 1014630

National Association of Choirs

Joining the Nation in Choral Singing

National Conference Booking Form 2 20-22 March 2015

The Chatsworth Hotel, The Steyne, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 3DU

The event is open to all who wish to attend on payment of the appropriate charges

Guest 1

Title Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

First Name.....

Surname.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone Home.....Mobile.....

Email Address.....

Special Requirements

Diet [type].....

Disability [wheelchair user/handrails required etc.].....

NAC group.....

Choir Name.....

Guest 2

Title Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

First Name.....

Surname.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone Home.....Mobile.....

Email Address.....

Special Requirements

Diet [type].....

Disability [wheelchair user/handrails required etc.].....

NAC group.....

Choir Name.....

PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM FOR MORE GUESTS IF REQUIRED

Please return your completed forms and deposits to

Clive Lawton- Conference Coordinator, 20 Arthur's Court, Stretton, Burton upon Trent Staffordshire DE13 0GS

07939012458

conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk

Thanet Male Voice Choir

Thames South

A visit to the Menin Gate in Ypres, Belgium is always an emotional experience as Thanet Male Voice Choir discovered two years ago when it went there to sing for the first time.

How much greater then was that emotion when TMVC paid its second visit on the weekend of 7/8 June this year – the 100th anniversary of the start of the 'Great War' and the 70th anniversary of D-Day.

Our journey started at 6.30 in Broadstairs and our close proximity to Dover meant that we were soon aboard a ferry and crossing the English Channel.

An uneventful coach journey followed and then an excellent lunch led us to an afternoon concert which we performed in St George's Church in Ypres and which was well received by the many people present, including the local priest who had been born in Wales.

There followed a violent storm, but this fortunately ceased as suddenly as it had started

and the choir joined the crowd at 'The Gate' which numbered about 2000 people.

Two pipers played and it was very pleasing to see so many wreaths laid by members of our younger generation.

We received plaudits from hosts of people on our renditions of *Abide With Me* and *Mansions of the Lord* which was very pleasing, but in truth just being part of the ceremony was sufficiently rewarding.

A night's rest led us to our return journey via the wonderful city of Ghent, where several of our number felt that a return journey was definitely something to put on their itinerary.

If anything our homeward Channel crossing was even smoother than the outward journey and we returned as a very happy, if tired, group of Thanetians, pleased to have been part of a memorable occasion.

*From Neil Armstrong
Secretary*



THE GREAT WAR

The Amici Singers Thames North

On 22 May 2014 the Amici Singers performed in front of over 1,000 people during the Last Post Service at the Menin Gate in Ypres, Belgium to commemorate those who fell there in World War One. The two items they sang were Anthem For Doomed Youth and Deep Peace (which they also sang at the site of 'Ground Zero' in New York in 2002) It was an extremely moving experience for all and a culmination of a very memorable tour of the area, during which they also performed a full concert in Ghent Cathedral, and in St Georges Chapel and another very moving performance at the Tyne Cot War Cemetery, the largest of its kind. It was a great honour for the Amicis to be involved in all these events, but to sing under the Arch at the Menin Gate which bears the names of 54,000 British and Commonwealth personnel who lost their lives in Ypres and the surrounding area was something very special. After the service, the Chief of the Army of New Zealand, Major General A D Gawn, MBE presented the Amicis with a commemorative medal, which was a very special moment.

As well as the serious side of the tour, there were also two canal boat trips and, on one evening, a somewhat boisterous evening meal was attended by most of the party. The boat trips and the meal were punctuated by bursts of spontaneous singing. Onlookers were left in no doubt that the Amicis were enjoying themselves!

Their founder, Musical Director and Conductor, Dr. Douglas Coombes MBE, who composed much of the music performed, said of the tour:-

'Over our 36 years of touring with the Amicis there have been many unforgettable and emotional experiences, such as singing at 'Ground Zero' in New York, but the singing at Tyne Cot cemetery (nearly 12000 graves) and at Menin Gate was very special and moving. Combined with the full concerts in Ghent Cathedral and St George's Church, Ypres, it was a memorable and wonderful trip.'

Margaret Prosser



1914-1918

Churchdown Male Voice Choir South West

REMEMBERING WW1

We had a glorious night of music, poetry and prose at Gloucester Cathedral on Saturday 19 July. 'Remembering WW1' was a concert in which Churchdown Male Voice Choir hosted the combined Military Wives Choirs of Innsworth and RAF Benson, Oxfordshire and with soloists Sue Black and trumpeter Justin Lewis.

In the presence of the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Dame Janet Trotter, the Mayor of Gloucester, Debbie Llewellyn, NAC Chair, Brenda Wilkinson, NAC General Secretary, Celia Johns and the choir president, Ian Mean, and his wife Judy, the evening began with an opening prayer from our choir chaplain, Reverend Marilyn Sharland, before three members of the Royal British Legion, for whom the concert was in support of, presented the standards.

A former member of the choir, 94 year old Norman Auld then read from the Laurence Binyon poem 'For the Fallen' and Justin Lewis played the Last Post and the Reveille. Compère, Sue Wilson, then took over for the rest of the evening. Throughout the concert Sue presented poems and readings that injected just the right amount of reverence into the concert and which made us all think of the tremendous cost of young lives in the 'war to end all wars'.

Ralph Barnes, resplendent in Union Jack waistcoat and with James Quinn at the piano led the Churchdown choir in pieces chosen to reflect the theme for the evening, *Comrades in Arms* was followed by *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *Mansions of the Lord* and *Soldier's Chorus*. Sue then introduced the choir's favourite soprano, Sue Black, who reminded the audience that she had been singing for the choir for over 30 years. Accompanied by James Quinn she sang the plaintive *Dido's Lament*, and *Nella Fantasia*, from the film 'The Mission'.

The Combined Military Wives Choir was then introduced. Under its musical team of Ralph and James, the choir presented a lovely programme which proved to be a refreshing change from the male voices and which was greatly appreciated by the 500 strong audience. They began with *Going Home*, a piece written for the wives choir especially by Brigitte Vymer, Musical Director of the RAF Benson Military Wives Choir. This was followed by *Wherever you are*, the song which is best associated with



the original Military Wives Choir set up by Gareth Malone. *Sing* by Gary Barlow completed their first set.

The first half concluded with a rousing performance of WW1 war songs by choirs and enthusiastic audience and led by Sue Black.

In the second half the Churchdown choir were led by a thrilling trumpet solo from Justin into *Where shall I be* (when the first trumpet sounds) and then the choir sang the wonderful *Bring him home* which as the compère reminded us was the situation during the Great War when there were millions of young men who didn't come home.

In Sue Black's second appearance she sang *We'll gather lilacs*, by Ivor Novello and invited the choir and audience to join in

with her. The Military Wives then returned with another song made famous from the Gareth Malone choir, *Stronger together* and the beautiful *Annie's Song* that John Denver wrote to his former wife. Their contribution concluded with *Rule the World*, a song written and performed by Take That.

To round off this exhilarating evening Sue Black, now dressed from head to toe in a Union flag led both choirs and audience in a second collection of songs sung throughout the war years and with Justin Lewis on trumpet, *Land of Hope and Glory* and *Jerusalem*.

All in all a concert which honoured all those young people from that dreadful conflict which changed the face of Europe for ever.

Barry Woods

Worcester Male Voice Choir Midlands South West

Huge impact during their very successful 5 day tour to Vernon, France.

In June this year 90 choristers, partners and supporters embarked on a tour to Vernon in France, a commune in the Department of Eure in the Haute – Normandy region. Vernon has a friendship agreement with the City of Worcester but the visit was initiated and meticulously organised by two stalwart members of the choir, Bob Saunders and Chris Horsfall. It was all encouraged by the Worcester Twinning Association who entered into the friendship agreement signed at the Guildhall, Worcester by the respective Mayors of Worcester and Vernon back in 2006. The members of the Vernon Twinning Association provided great assistance in ensuring that the choir had a full and appropriate programme helped undoubtedly by some of our French friends being members of both the twinning association and our French host choir.

2014 was an appropriate time to visit Vernon as it is situated on the banks of the River Seine where in 1944 the First Battalion Worcester Regiment established a bridgehead which led to the eventual liberation of Northern France and the Low Countries. The choir, joined by French civic dignitaries, war veterans, elected representatives and members of the Vernon Twinning Association, met at the English monument at Fontaine de Tilly. The monument is made of Malvern Stone from Worcestershire and commemorates those lost in the liberation of Vernon. Speeches were made by representatives of all parties present and the choir gave a moving rendition of the *Mansions of the Lord* as well as other pieces such as *Bring Him Home* and *You'll Never Walk Alone*. Wreaths were laid by Geoff Ruddock Chairman, the Deputy Mayor of Vernon and other English and French representatives. Prior to the memorial commemoration the choir visited the Church of St Nicholas de Veronnet where they also sung appropriate pieces from their repertoire including *Softly as I Leave You* and choristers then visited the war graves of soldiers from the Worcestershire Regiment.

During this busy day the choir had already performed at a local school which has links with Stanley Road Primary School, Worcester. Then the choir moved on to a residential and day centre for young

people with special needs. A range of popular pieces from our repertoire including *This old Man* and *When I'm 64* were appreciated. In the evening the host choir, Choeur d'Annebault, entertained us to dinner. At this and all the events Geoff Ruddock's excellent command of French and the attentive Vernon Twinning Association hosts ensured a rich friendship was generated throughout the visit and Geoff subsequently commented 'the objectives of the visit for the choir, the two cities and the Twinning Associations were all achieved'.



During the tour an annual country wide event, the 'Fete De La Musique,' took place and the choir were invited to participate at two major Vernon venues. The first was in the attractive gardens at the Au Jardin des Arts Centre where the Archives Tower, the remains of the ancient castle of Vernon, provided an interesting venue for the singing. This was followed by a concert in the Collegiale de Veron, an outstanding example of church architecture and a wonderful place to perform in. The Choir was in great voice and received a standing ovation from the packed audience. A further outstanding concert was held in the same venue the following evening when a joint concert by the Vernon and Worcester Choirs was performed. Nicolas Wright the Musical Director of WMVC commented, 'The Concerts in the Collegiate Church on the Saturday and Sunday were wonderful with the former being exceptional. This tour was something very special and memorable.' On the Sunday the joint singing of *Cantique de Jean Racine* was special for our choristers as they sang with no music whilst the French Choristers relied on their copies.

The choir's journey home took in one final visit. During 2014 it would not have been appropriate to be in France without also remembering those lost in the 1st World War. The choir visited the Anglo French war

cemetery at Theipval in the Somme. After singing in the Church choristers walked to the Thiepval Memorial to the Missing 72,194 soldiers with no known graves. This Anglo-French Battle memorial is designed as an arch representing the alliance of Britain and France in the Somme offence against the Germans. The choir sang for the final time and laid a wreath to those we all owe so much.

Like most choirs Worcester Male Voice Choir attempts to use all forms of media and its Website and Facebook presence is now well established. Currently its Facebook page has short explanations and several photographs of various aspects of the French tour. These can be viewed at

<https://www.facebook.com/worcestermalevoicechoirchoir.org.uk>

On our return to the UK the choir visited the Lawns Nursing Home in Kempsey just south of Worcester. It was arranged so that the choir would be able to entertain Derek Chapman a former member of the choir as well as the other residents and staff. This was another outdoor performance and the variety of music was enjoyed by all. The owners of the nursing home have generously sponsored the next choir CD due to be released in late autumn.

An additional engagement was held in July when the choir was invited to sing at the Centenary Celebration of the opening of the internationally famous Morgan Motors Factory in Malvern, Worcestershire. Another open air event with vast crowds of Morgan enthusiasts from all over the world as well as many local people. The outside event is a form which the choir is increasingly experienced in doing and is often a very popular type of occasion. Certainly it was again received very well and members of the management of the Company were near to tears when, accompanying an aircraft fly pass, the choir sang *Land of Hope and Glory*. To be associated with such an important international company is very important to the choir in terms of recognition, influence and even potential sponsorship.

Finally another new initiative was undertaken this year. Our very own Alan Simmonds, Vice Chairman of the choir (not to be confused with any one else by that name), initiated links with two High Schools; Ridgewood High School, Stourbridge and Chantry High School, Martley. As a result our Deputy Conductor Haydn Thomas had been working for sometime with a group at Ridgewood and with contact having been made with The Chantry, Nicholas Wright MD

devised an evening of singing when students from both schools attending a rehearsal with the choir which included some joint singing. One youngster was independently reported to have been reluctant to attend but after the event confessed to grandparents that the evening was brilliant. In November the choir will have a joint concert with the Chantry High School and we hope that this will encourage new supporters of the choir from parents and grandparents but also new choristers from the students.

Terry Dillingham
Public Relations Officer

very friendly group. While we take our music very seriously we have great fun at rehearsals and concerts. Our repertoire is very varied and covers most genres.

Our MD and conductor Dr Douglas Coombes is also a composer, workshop presenter and adjudicator and was recently awarded an MBE for services to music. He has worked a great deal with children.

We are privileged to have a regular accompanist, Trevor Hughes, who is very accomplished on the piano and organ

and has an excellent relationship with the choir.

We have performed in a number of countries over the years including France, Germany, and ten tours in the USA and have recently returned from a very successful trip to Belgium.

We are performing a concert at Leamington Spa in September. Our Christmas concert at Gamlingay in December is for the benefit of the Rotary Club and will include a children's concert in the afternoon. In May 2015 we are travelling to Quedlinburg in Germany to perform.

Our rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings at St Peter's Catholic Church in Station Road, Biggleswade, Beds and we are always looking for new members. There are no auditions. Our web site is: www.amicisingers.net

Margaret Prosser

The Amici Singers Thames North

The Amici Singers is a ladies only choir, based in Biggleswade, Beds. It was founded in 1978 by the present Musical Director, Dr Douglas Coombes, MBE. We have a membership of 55 ladies, some of whom have been with us since the beginning.

The word amici, of course, means 'friends' and we are indeed a



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The Aurora Trio

The trio was established by Heather Wrighton (harp), Joe Bronstein (viola) and Emma Halnan (flute) in 2012 whilst studying at the Royal Academy of Music. Emma and Heather had previously played as a harp and flute Duo: in 2010 they performed Mozart's flute and harp concerto with the European Union Chamber Orchestra. The trio's engagements have included a performance at the Chief Executive Innovation Awards held at The Victoria and Albert Museum and recitals at Benslow Music Trust, Hertfordshire, West Chilmington NADFAS Society and The Royal Academy of Music.

Flute Emma Halnan

Emma studies at the Royal Academy of Music with Kate Hill and William Bennett. She previously learnt with Anna Pope at the Purcell School, where she won the 2010 Fenton Leavers' Award. She recently won the International Award Carl Reinecke (Italy) and the Croydon Festival Concerto Competition 2013. Emma reached the Grad Final of BBC Young Musician of the Year 2010. She has played at many major venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Cadogan Hall and St John's, Smith Square. In 2010 she broadcast on BBC Radio 2 as soloist with the BBC Concert Orchestra. She has also performed concertos with orchestras including the European Union Chamber Orchestra and the Welsh Sinfonia: In 2014 she will perform with the London Mozart Players and Dulwich Symphony Orchestra. Emma performs regularly with pianist Daniel King Smith. Their forthcoming performances include recitals at The Fairfield Hall, St Martin's in the Fields and in Como, Italy.

<http://www.emmahalnan.co.uk>

Viola Joe Bronstein

Joe is currently in his final year of the postgraduate programme at the Royal Academy of Music studying the viola with Martin Outram, and prior to this, achieved a first class honours degree in Mathematics from the University of Manchester. His portfolio includes the Arensky String Quartet and the Aurora Trio, through to freelance orchestras such as the Orpheus Sinfonia and his flourishing duo partnership with pianist Albert Lau.



Joe has taken part in training schemes with the London Sinfonietta and the Britten Sinfonia, and travelled to Japan for the Pacific Music Festival 2013 as a result of a nomination by the Academy. Current projects include a concert at the Academy featuring baroque works for two violas including Bach Brandenburg Concerto no 6, an investigation into the use of the viola in the world of jazz, and a set of arrangements of film scores for string quartet. Joe's long term ambition is to have a full time playing career combining orchestral and chamber music. He plays a fine modern viola by James Stephenson.

www.joebronstein.co.uk

Harp Heather Wrighton

Heather was inspired to play the harp at the age of six and as a junior student at Trinity College of Music she studied harp with Gabriella Dall'Olio and Frances Kelly and continued her studies at The Royal Academy of Music, London with Karen Vaughan, graduating with an MA (Distinction), BMus (Hons) and an LRAM. From a young age Heather has been interested in different types of harps and in addition to the Classical Harp she plays Celtic, Baroque triple and Paraguayan Harps. Heather currently freelances as a

soloist, orchestral and chamber musician which has lead her to perform at prestigious concert venues including The Royal Festival Hall, Cardiff Millennium Centre, Royal Opera House, Cadogan Hall, St John's, Smith Square, Kings College Chapel, Cambridge, Glyndebourne Opera House, Kensington and St James' Palaces.

www.heatherwrighton.co.uk/auroratrio

It has been some time since we featured any soloists or groups. Enfield's International Voices have recommended Heather to us and she comes with a trio, two for one value. We have included their website information so that all you choirs in the south can get in touch, should you be looking for artistes to appear with you in concert.

If anyone has other soloists who you feel would be useful for members to know about please send us their details and we will be glad to featured them here.

Crawford

Pelham Singers Lincolnshire Group.



The Pelham Singers entertained the Mayor of North East Lincolnshire and Immingham Town Mayor and their guest at a coffee morning in Grimsby Minster on 31 May. The proceeds from the event will be shared between their chosen charities.

Janet Starkie

The Viva Musica Choir Midlands South West

Viva Musica is celebrating 25 years since its formation in 1989. To mark this special occasion the choir held a Silver Celebration concert at St James Church in Stourbridge on 17 May.



The choir was joined by Summerhill Choral Society led by Andrew Biggs, Viva's accompanist. The two choirs joined together for three items which were a great success. The programme included the first performance of *We Who are Left* by Tony Bridgewater, a piece commissioned by the choir for this special year. This piece marks the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I. During the evening four founder members shared special memories of the last 25 years. These included performing with Alfie Boe and *Amore*, hosting a choir from South Africa and performing at Symphony Hall and Worcester Cathedral.

The choir also held a concert on 14 June at Holy Trinity Church in Wollaston, Stourbridge. The concert was in aid of The White House Cancer Support in Dudley. The concert included religious, classical and modern pieces.

Viva Musica's next concert will be on Saturday 18 October 2014 at Dudley Town Hall, when the choir is very excited to be joined by Wynne Evans. Wynne is an accomplished tenor who has performed with the English and Welsh National Operas and his debut album went to number 1 in the classical music charts in 2011. Viva will also be debuting another specially

commissioned piece by Tony Bridgewater *Sing Sing; Music was Given*.

For all ticket information and our full concert programme please visit our website www.viva-musica.co.uk or our Facebook page.

Photograph kindly supplied by Ralph Mason Photography www.ralphmason.co.uk

New members are always welcome - please see our website for full details. Viva Musica is particularly looking for new tenors and basses.

Lorraine Newman

Greater Manchester Police Male Voice Choir Cantare Ladies Choir, Rochdale North West

It's been a while since either of the two choirs I conduct has featured in News & Views but our following season will prove to be a very special one for both groups and I wanted to share what we are up to with friends and colleagues.

I have been conducting the Cantare Ladies Choir since August 2011 and the GMPMVC since June 2012. They are both wonderful groups with rich and vibrant histories, both having celebrated milestones recently. The ladies celebrated 30 years last year, and the men celebrated 40 years in June of this year.

Both choirs operate in very different ways. The men undertake many concerts and performances every year (usually more

than twenty), entertaining communities across Manchester with male voice repertoire favourites and often raising large amounts of money for local charities. The ladies, similarly, perform for local causes, but take on fewer concerts and aim to do at least one competition a year. We recently won our category at the Mid-Somerset Music Festival in Bath this year singing two unusual and recently written pieces: Andrew Lipka's *Hope* and Sarah Quartel's *Songbird* from OUP's new 'Songbird' collection – worth checking out if you are looking for new repertoire!

Looking forward, we have a very ambitious and exciting year in store. The choirs are coming together for a large concert in July 2015 at the newly refurbished RNCM Concert Hall in Manchester to sing some great SATB choral works. Many members of both choirs only have experience of singing in single sex choirs and I wanted to give them the opportunity to sing some of the brilliant music that is available for SATB in addition to their usual repertoire.

We will be performing Fauré's *Requiem* and Bob Chilcott's *A Little Jazz Mass*, alongside a new commission from University of Manchester and Royal College of Music alumnus, Chris Roe. We held a composers' competition, inviting samples of music and proposals for a new work to complement the Chilcott and Faure, from composers under 30, with links to the North West. We received some exceptional entries which made judging very difficult. Luckily, we had the expertise of conductor, Manvinder Rattan, and composer, Gabriel Jackson, on hand to assess the applications. Chris's proposal, and the portfolio of works he submitted, demonstrated an excellent understanding of choral writing, as well as having a strong and interesting compositional voice.

Chris will be visiting both choirs soon in order to get to know them better before embarking on composing this new work. It is a really exciting chapter in the history of the choirs. Those who are in the Greater Manchester area, please put 18 July 2015 in your diaries. We hope to see you then.

Michael Betteridge

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Leeds Male Voice Choir Yorkshire West

THE RENAISSANCE OF LEEDS MALE VOICE CHOIR

Leeds Male Voice Choir is in the midst of its most successful year in decades after a spectacular summer concert. Following the triumph of June's 'The Best of British' in Leeds Minster the choir is hard at work on the festively themed 'The Spirit of Christmas' under the direction of the NAC's own Music and Festivals Officer, Tim Knight.

At the helm of Leeds Male Voice Choir since January Tim articulated his vision for the choir at an early stage 'We are just two years away from our centenary and are already developing plans for what is going to be a spectacular year for us'. Instilling a renewed focus and energy into the choir Tim drew on in-house talent to advertise, brand and market the choir and concert using social media and a range of local press, drawing in record audiences. Tim said 'Like all my choirs I wanted the primary focus to be on delivering the highest quality sound. But you can't overlook the importance of attracting as wider audience as possible. 'The Best of British' gave us the opportunity to create an original programme with a popular theme featuring a mixture of music that was both familiar but crucially that offered our audience something new.'

Lee Wallace, who sings in two of Tim's other choirs and joined Leeds Male Voice Choir in 2013 said, 'The choir is buoyant under Tim's direction and his detailed tuition has bolstered the confidence of those newer to singing. He brings a great sense of fun into rehearsals, encouraging



and cajoling us whilst mixing challenging pieces into the repertoire. Concert day was terrific and a three hundred strong audience waving Union flags was quite a sight!

Tim is keen that the choir tackle a whole range of pieces including the unfamiliar to keep things fresh and relevant: 'I wanted our summer concert to be a spectacular and celebratory affair so we planned musical tour of Great Britain alongside a commemorative look back to 1914 with a number of songs from the First World War'. The Best of British concert in June featured a range of music including *All Through the Night*, *Tydi a Roddaist*, *Carrickfergus*, *Highland Cathedral* and *Jerusalem* with Tim's own arrangement of *The Skye Boat Song* taking centre stage. Songs from the First World War included *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, *Roses of Picardy*, *Over There*, *Pack up your Troubles* and *It's a Long Way to Tipperary*. During the Last Night of the Proms style finale, the choir were joined by Leeds' very own Britannia and Leeds Minster was awash with red, white and blue flags and bunting as far as the eye could see. Tim said 'I am delighted with the success of the concert and the enthusiasm and passion it has brought from the choir and our audience has been amazing!'

Formed in 1916 at Broom Colliery in Middleton in Leeds, the choir has been singing across Yorkshire for almost a century. Since the millennium the choir struggled to attract new members, but in recent years there has been a turnaround. Now with a membership in excess of forty, there is an increased interest from established singers in the area and those men seeking to join the choir who are keen to learn to sing. The success of the

Best of British concert and has drawn new members into the choir, both from the audience and the extensive press coverage.



With members aged 19 to 89, the choir attracts a diverse range of men from throughout the city and is proud of its inclusive approach. With a strong use of social media, the choir has been able to draw in many younger members and there is now a gathering momentum leading into their centenary year. Lee said 'We have some fantastic plans for 'The Spirit of Christmas' on 13 December, where we'll be seen and heard as never before. With a different theme for each of our major concerts so we are providing something new each time for our audiences. The journey to 2016 is going to be one hell of a ride'.

Robert Butler



Exeter Police and Community Choir Devon

Exeter Police and Community Choir, which marked its 50th anniversary later last year, has two further reasons to celebrate.

TWO MORE REASONS TO CELEBRATE

The choir is proud to have **Percy Prowse**, a former police officer and a top tenor in the choir, as this year's Lord Mayor of Exeter. He is also Conservative city councillor for Duryard ward and a county councillor.

He will continue to forge close links between the choir and the city during his mayoral year and the highlight will be the Lord Mayor's Christmas concert at Exeter Cathedral in December. He will be supporting Exeter Leukaemia Fund charity (ELF) during his term in office.

Mr Prowse was secretary of the choir when David Williams took over as Musical Director – and in this next year Mr Williams will celebrate 20 years leading the choir. At one time he was also Musical Director of the Torbay Police Choir.

The choir has now started its summer break and will then resume rehearsals on 8 September when the priority will be preparations for the 'start of season' concert on Thursday 25 September at 7.30 in the Salvation Army Temple in Exeter.



Tickets are still priced at only £6.00. They are available now from John Fox 33, Ide Lane, Alphington, Exeter EX2 8UR 01392 211753 (please send an SAE) or through any choir member.

Bruce Pell



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Mevagissey Male Choir Cornwall

LIFE AT 40 BEGINS WITH A BANG!

'What a fantastic concert. Everything came together perfectly. Well done everyone.' That was Cornish Guardian columnist Alan Cooper's comment on leaving his seat at Mevagissey Male Choir's 40th Anniversary concert at the Eden Project on 30 May.

Long-serving members of the choir – no fewer than eight founder members took part - said they couldn't remember a concert like it, while our most regular followers said we'd never sung better. And those hearing the choir for the first time professed themselves astonished at the quality.

As the audience took their seats in Eden's Gallery Room, with its glass wall overlooking the world-famous Biomes, they were greeted with a magnificent slide display of the choir's history, masterfully put together by second tenor Des Honey, to the accompaniment of an overture by the Cornish Sinfonia Orchestra.

Mevagissey's music programme, chosen to reflect each of the choir's four decades, began with *Comrades in Arms*, the first song ever sung in concert. This was followed by other favourites, from *Goin' Home* and Verdi's *Speed Your Journey*, to *Whispering Hope* (with soprano Alison Harvey as guest soloist, reprising her CD performance); *Nessun Dorma* and the choir's latest triumph, *Au Fond Du Temple Saint*, the popular aria from Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*. The audience was brought to its feet several times, including for *Bohemian Rhapsody*,



with guitar accompaniment by choir second tenor Graham Hoskins.

But there was more! Guest artists included the Plymouth Military Wives' Choir, under musical director Rob Young, who sang with great precision and gusto, and Ralph McTell, an old friend of the Choir whose *Streets of London* smash hit was enjoying its own 40-year anniversary. He led the choir in the song that made him famous. The Cornish Sinfonia, directed by David Frost, accompanied the Choir on many pieces, as well as playing a number or two from their own repertoire and the whole was compèred admirably by Nick Hart, former MD of the County of Cornwall Male Voice Choir and Loveny Male Voice Choir, and a great friend to Mevagissey for many years.

The concert concluded with a rousing version of *Morte Criste* by the choir and the PMWC in unison, a fitting finale to the evening. Although of course, it wasn't over. Singers and audience had a couple of hours in very delightful surroundings to

mingle and chat – and, yes, to sing again, rather more informally.

And yet, in the afternoon, it had all looked so unpromising. Our rehearsal with the orchestra threw up one problem after another. Had we bitten off more than we could chew? It required all the musical expertise of Graham Willcocks and David Frost, and the technical knowhow of sound engineer John Cornfield from Sawmills Studio, to overcome the numerous difficulties; but overcome them they did and the 400-strong audience got a show.

Going Down a Storm at The Minack

Three weeks earlier, Mevagissey and the Military Wives were entertaining a full house of 700 at Cornwall's Minack Theatre. Sou'westers, thermal underwear, sleeping bags... all were present, if not necessarily obvious, as we prepared for what was forecast to be stormy night at the world-famous open-air auditorium on 10 May. As it happened, we shouldn't have worried – well not too much, anyway. It wasn't exactly a balmy evening but the rain held off and the blustery wind wasn't too big a problem, except for MD Graham Willcocks and his sheets of music!

But what a wonderful night it was. Can there be a more stunningly picturesque venue to sing than this cliff-side theatre, chiselled out of the rock above Porthcurno's golden beach? The turquoise of the sea, lashed into white foam by the wind, in the evening sunshine, and then the dark shapes of the cliffs silhouetted in the background once night fell, with the singers picked out by the theatre lights.

Nobody was more overwhelmed than the Plymouth Military Wives, whose 'oohs' and 'aahs' as they peered over the theatre walls to the sands below perfectly captured the atmosphere, while their



beautiful black and purple pashminas added magnificently to the colour of the evening, growing in radiance as dusk descended.

As Mechelle Cooney, PMWC Events Coordinator commented later: *'Enjoyed ourselves is an understatement. As an original member of the choir, I have sung in some wonderful venues but that is top of the list so far, stunning. Thank you very much for making it such a memory that us girls will remember for a long time. How could you not perform on such an occasion, in front of a capacity audience of 700?'*

And in the words of one member of the audience from Oxford: *'I felt I had to write to say thank you to all the members of your superb choir for making our visit to the Minack Theatre so memorable. We thought your choir was wonderful; the variety of music plus the presentation was a real joy. You must all be so proud to be members'.*

Mr Chapman added that the Military Wives Choir *'certainly lived up to their billing and reputation. They were terrific and to watch them in that setting was really quite special'*, while Adrian Wilton, our compère, was praised for his *'good clean Cornish humour'*.

'Thanks to you all,' he concluded, *'this was a superb concert, and I know was so appreciated by the vast audience. Congratulations on your 40 years, and may you go from strength to strength'.*

What a fantastic tribute. And the icing on the cake was a call from the Minack to invite us back in May 2016 – which of course we lost no time in accepting!

Mike Tate

Ferry Blend Choir Scotland East

Ferry Blend, South Queensferry's own SATB mixed voice community choir, has had an exciting two years. Two existing choirs, the Ferry Singers and Dalmeny Blend, joined forces in early 2012 to create a new and stronger ensemble.

With the help of a grant from Awards for All Scotland, we were able to buy new uniforms and music, and spread our wings, attending workshops at Celtic Connections and participating in the Fife Festival of Music.

The choir has blossomed and now numbers close to fifty members with experienced singers as well as newcomers to choral singing.

As well as our Annual Summer Concerts we sing regularly in the area for churches, pensioners' groups and local events, including the Big Sing Baton Relay event for the Commonwealth Games and The Forth Bridges 50th Birthday Festival in September.

We have an inclusive ethos and try to incorporate as many genres as we can. Our programmes typically includes Scottish, light popular, folk or world, spirituals and gospel songs. We also sing a range of a capella material and embrace the pop classics of Bob Dylan, Sting, Abba and the Beatles, contrasted with songs from the musicals as well as music from our local Scottish folk artists.

Musical director Sue McPhail says 'the choir is reaping the benefits of a revival in group singing, helped by a not-so-quiet revolution that has seen new Barbershop, Military Wives, community and rock choirs spring up nation-wide. People who sing are happy, positive and more confident - just ask any of the Ferry Blenders.'

www.ferryblendchoir.yolasite.com

Janice Robertson

Swift Singers Thames North

Celebrated 25 years with a grand

TWENTY-FIFTH ANIVERSARY CONCERT

Well, what a stupendous success this concert turned out to be!



Our Chairman, Margaret Small, welcomed the Mayor of Chelmsford City Council, Councillor Robert Villa and Mayoress, Mrs Valerie Villa, the Deputy Mayor of South Woodham Ferrers, Peter Wyatt and his

guest Christine Revell.

The Dame Elizabeth Hall at the William de Ferrers Centre was filled to capacity and the music flowed. Our Musical Director, Clive Smit, always brings fun to our concerts and arranges a lot of our music while our talented accompanist Derrick Thompson keeps us in the right key.

The whole concert was brilliant! Songs included A Brief History of the Swift Singers put together by Clive which included excerpts from old repertoires including *Sing a Song of Sixpence*, *Nun's Chorus*, *Any Dream Will Do* and ending with *All That Jazz*, also *Steal Away* and an upbeat *Da Doo Ron Ron*, as well as many other



favourites. Our guest soloist Harpist Olivia Ter-Berg played and sang various pieces. She was a joy to listen to and watch.

After the interval we presented a large cheque in the sum of £1,000 to Farleigh Hospice representative Mr Sholto Morton, who gave us an insight into the workings of the hospice.

During the second half of the concert we were amazed to be presented with a beautiful cake made by Irene Smith, which we devoured at our next rehearsal; delicious.

All in all a fabulous evening. Many thanks to all those who helped and especially to the audience who supported us and our charity for the night.

The choir will be entertaining up to 250 guests at Hylands House in Chelmsford at the inauguration of the new Chairman of Essex County Council, Norman Hume, on 18 September and are also looking forward to 12 December when it will be performing Nativity at Danbury Mission, Essex. This is a wonderful piece for Christmas composed by our Musical Director, Clive Smith, for choir, soloists and instrumentalists. For this performance we will be joined by Grammaticus, a choir formed by parents and supporters of Chelmsford Grammar Schools.

For more information about Swift Singers please go to website www.swiftsingers.co.uk

Carol Selwood
Secretary

The Appledore Singers Devon

'Quay Notes' the new CD from The Appledore Singers.

Have you ever recorded a CD? For The Appledore Singers it was a project filled with energy, exhaustion – and sheer fun!

We had already recorded one CD, some years ago as part of a college project, which had sold well among choir members and the local community. This time, though, we decided to seek the services of a respected professional recording specialist, Steve Swinden, (Chorum Records), and when we arrived at Appledore Community Primary School - our usual rehearsal venue - he had duly transformed the hall with baffles and microphones, into a recording studio, complete with red light.

Our Musical Director, Pam Beechey, conducted us whilst her husband, Chris, accompanied us on the piano - occasionally swapping roles when Chris and another 'husband of', Anthony - joined our small close harmony group, 'The Pips', to provide the bass line for three numbers.

The choir had over twenty tracks to record and this took two sessions, both on a Saturday from 9.00 - 4.00; however, we did have breaks for coffee, lunch and tea, the food being provided by choir members themselves; we all greatly appreciated - and enjoyed - this opportunity to socialise.



Incidentally, unlike in a city, where you have to contend with traffic and aircraft during a recording, here it was seagulls on the roof which provided light relief for the choir, (but a headache for the sound engineer). Still, being in a seaside town, we soon got used to the interruptions.

That all took place in March and we awaited the arrival of the CDs with great anticipation: how would we sound? What would be our favourite track? And so, last Friday, they appeared - and how pleased we are.

'Quay Notes' consists of songs old and new; 'showstoppers', Top Ten hits as well as a couple of gospel numbers; something for everyone and it shows the choir off to great advantage. Yes, recording was, indeed, a worthwhile effort.

'Quay Notes' price £6 (plus p&p £1.75), is available from Penny Chambers.

penny.chambers@virgin.net

'Seek a smile thro' Song'

Viv Zussman
Publicity

Hartlepool Ladies Choir North East

Following a mention of our choir in the 2011 Spring Issue of News and Views we were fortunate enough to have been invited to take part in the Festival of Brass and Voices 2012 at the Royal Albert Hall, leaving many of us with enough happy memories to last a lifetime.

As a busy and in demand choir we do not have a lot of time to rest on our laurels as we seem always to be rehearsing and preparing for yet another challenge, and the past three years have been busy ones for us, helping, with our concerts to raise money for many well deserved causes. The ceremonial Mayor of Hartlepool paid our choir the compliment of hosting a civic reception on two occasions as a thank you for our efforts in helping to raise a large sum of money for his local charities.

The Musical Director of our choir, David Gibson, who also directs the other well known Hartlepool Male Voice Choir is to be honoured for his dedicated work in promoting choral music in the area, and will be made a Freeman of the town which of course confers many privileges, not least of which is the right to graze his sheep on the Town Moor.

Among the many performances we have been involved with during the recent past have included a concert at the Sage, Gateshead, combined appearances with the Male Voice Choir as well as our own summer concerts which have now become

a feature of the Hartlepool summer season. The most fun and relaxed evening was on the occasion of a fiftieth wedding celebration for one of our members, when we took part in a 'flash mob' event, much to the astonishment of the hundreds of guests and the surprise and pleasure of the happy couple.

In the coming months we look forward to taking part in several concert performances at various churches and other venues in and around Hartlepool, in particular one in aid of the charity Lepra, now in its ninetieth year and doing a lot of good work in helping to raise funds to aid in the control and spread of the crippling disease of leprosy.

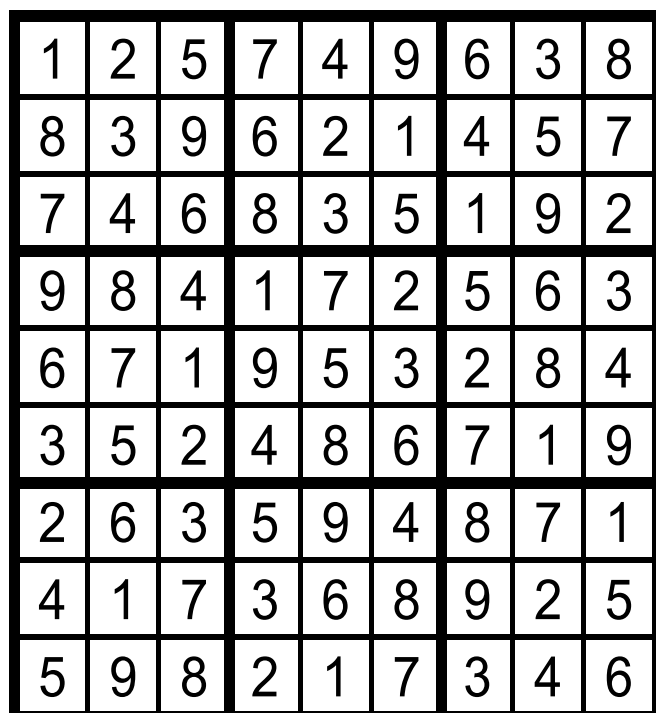
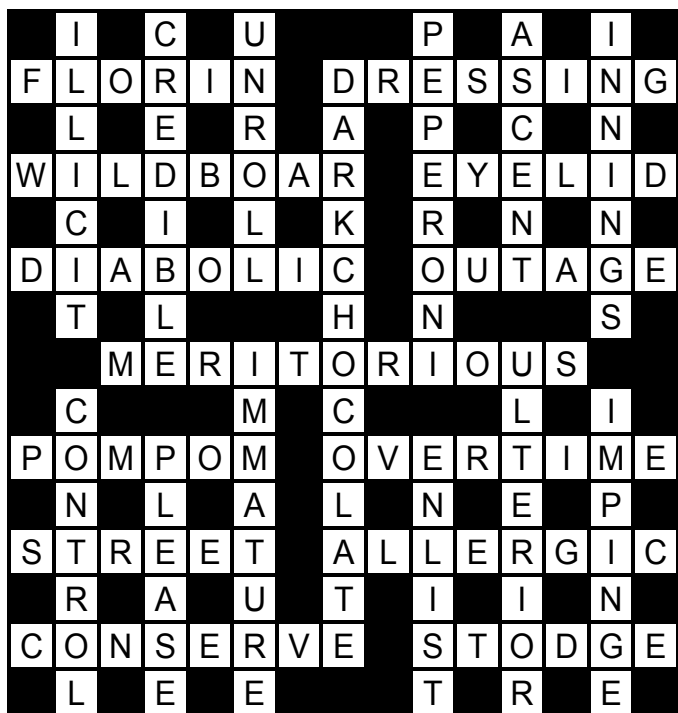
As the start of the First World War is remembered nationally, here in Hartlepool the Bombardment of the town in December 1914 will also be



commemorated, as it was the first town in mainland Britain to be shelled from the sea by the German Navy, resulting in the deaths of 112 men, women and children, and over 200 casualties, as well as killing Theo Jones who is acknowledged to be the first British soldier to die on British soil in the Great War. A concert to commemorate this historic event will be held in December featuring our ladies choir as well as the Hartlepool Male Voice Choir, respectfully remembering in song the bravery of those who faced the onslaught of 1000 shells fired during the 45 minutes it took to wreak such devastation and death.

Looking ahead to 2015 our diary is filling up nicely and plans are already in hand for return concerts to the Sage as well as a much anticipated visit to the Royal Albert Hall for the Festival of Brass and Voices, where it is hoped old friendships will be renewed and new ones forged.

Eileen McConnell
Publicity



Mozart - Ein musikalischer Spaß K. 522



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New Members' Directory

If they are in your group give them a call and say hello.

ACCORD INSPIRATIONAL GOSPEL CHOIR

NW Mixed voices 12 choristers

David Adelman 37 Bowker Vale Gardens, Manchester M9 8EY
0161 795 6560 davidadelman1959@gmail.com www.accordgospel.com

BARCLAYS HOUSE CHOIR

Southern Counties Mixed Voices 50 choristers

Adrian Purkiss Flat 6 Talbot Pines, 39 Talbot Avenue, Bournemouth BH3 7HS
07944 308422 bhchoir@wavp.co.uk www.bhchoir.org.uk

CHOIR POWER

Thames S Mixed voices 50 choristers

Marion Shuster 11 Forest View Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 4AW
01342 312824 shustermarion@hotmail.com www.learn2sing.org

CITYSOUND CHOIR

South West Mixed voices 35 choristers

Mrs Liz Castle 3 Elm Close, Bowerhill, Melksham, Wilts SN12 6SD
01225 707370 secretaryqtcitysound@hotmail.co.uk
www.citysound.org.uk

CONONLEY SINGERS

YorksS Mixed voices 58 choristers

Mike Swinden Pottin Lodge, Woodside Lane, Cononley BD20 8PE
01535 637263 cononleysingers@gmail.com

DROITWICH SPA COMMUNITY CHOIR

MidsSW Mixed voices 80 choristers

Liz Dutton 11 South Park Drive, Droitwich Spa, Worcester WR9 9BY
07975 834573 info@droitwichchoir.co.uk www.droitwichchoir.co.uk

FLIMBY MVC

Cumbria/IoM 25 choristers

Mr Michael Robertson Ellesmere, Camp Road, Maryport, Cumbria CA15 6JL
01900 818143 mikerob229@yahoo.co.uk
www.flimbymalevoicechoir.moonfruit.com

GORSEINON YOUTH CHOIR

WalesS 30 choristers

Kerry Rogers 117 Trinity Street, Gorseinon, Swansea SA4 4EQ
07855 566858 gorseinonyouthchoir@gmail.com
www.gorseinonyouthchoir.co.uk

JUST 4 MEN

North East 4 choristers

John Dixon 19 Woodhorn Drive, Stakeford, Choppington, Northumberland
NE62 5EN
01670 813584 jdjohndixon40@gmail.com

LYGONIAN SINGERS

MidsSW

James T Powell Normandy, Abbotswood, Greenhill, Evesham WR11 4NS
01386 442440 jtpnormandy@gmail.com

MALPAS LADIES CHOIR

North West 36 choristers

Mrs Alison Shackleton 9 Deppenbech Close, Malpas, Cheshire SY14 8QS
01948 860445

POCKLINGTON CIRCUIT CHOIR

YorksN Mixed voices 45 choristers

Mrs Karen Stonehouse Partridge Hall, Burnby, E Yorks YO42 1RD
01430 873267 gilpin@jimnjane.fsnet.co.uk

RICKMANSWORTH PLAYERS CHOIR

ThamesN Mixed voices 27 choristers

Peter Gold 10 Church Lane, Rickmansworth WD3 8HD
07971 680271 choirmaster@rickmansworth-players.org.uk

RUGBY PHILHARMONIC CHOIR

MidsW Mixed voices 90 choristers

Doreen Long 2 Juliet Drive, Woodlands, Rugby CV22 6LY
01788 812802 mervynbethen@tiscali.co.uk
www.rugbyphilharmonic.co.uk

SING4FUN

MidsN Mixed voices 40 choristers

Dale Kynaston 91 Harley Close, Wellington, Telford TF1 3LF
01952 243825 info@sing4fun.biz www.sing4fun.biz

STONELEIGH LADIES CHOIR

MidsW 29 choristers

Mrs Kathleen McCutcheon 5 Hadleigh Road, Finham, Coventry CV3 6FF
02476 410100 kate_mccutcheon@yahoo.co.uk

STRICTLY A CAPPELLA

ThamesN Mixed voices 40 choristers

Helen Lappert 13 Folly Close, Radlett, Herts WD7 8DR
07799 068554

THEFUNKYCHOIR.COM

NW Mixed voices 55 choristers

Brent Robinson c/o 22 Salisbury Close, Crewe CW2 6JN
07944 953243 TheFunkyChoir.com@gmail.com www.TheFunkyChoir.com

TRINITY COMMUNITY CHOIR

ThamesN Mixed voices

Caroline Snowdon Heatherslade, Manor Lane, Newbury RG14 2QT
01635 40164 c.snowdon@tiscali.co.uk

UPBEAT!

Anglia Ladies voices 50 choristers

Carol Jopling 35 Gurdon Road, Grundisburgh, Woodbridge Suffolk IP13 6XP
01473 735812 carol.jopling@btinternet.com

UNA VOCE

NI Ladies voices 27 choristers

Mrs E McWilliams 22 Rathmena Gardens, Ballyclare, Co Antrim BT39 9HU
07815 199728 lizmcwilliams1@sky.com

VOCAL IMPACT YOUTH CHOIR

Southern Counties 14 choristers

Samuel Adams 83 Pilford Heath Road, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2LY
01202 887192 samuel@vocalimpact.org.uk www.vocalimpact.org.uk

WIDE VALLEY SINGERS

SW Ladies voices 40 choristers

Maureen Wakefield 6 Hillview Avenue, Brockworth, Glos GL3 4AZ
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www.widervalleysingers.weebly.com

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How I like to receive articles for News & Views.

The first thing is to send your article **attached** to (not in the body of) an email to

publications.officer@national_associationofchoirs.org.uk

'Wow! that is a long email address', I hear you say. Yes it is but you will find that once it's in your computer you can just start to type it and your computer will offer to finish it for you.

Many of our contributors love to show their prowess by sending in wonderful finished articles with **coloured** headlines, five different **fonts** and many **underlinings**, *italics* and **bold** bits. Then, of course, I have to spend time taking them all out before I can set their article up the way you will see it in the magazine. **KEEP IT SIMPLE!**

HOUSE STYLE

- We use Calibri 10pt in News & Views. (If you don't have this, don't worry I can soon change the one you use.)
- Set your paragraphs to single space with no spacing before or after paragraphs.
- Start with the name of your choir.
- Then say the NAC group your choir is in.
- Write your article.
- Say who has written it.
- Quotes use single speech marks (same key as @ but without the shift).
- Dates do not include st nd rd or th
- Abbreviations do not have full stops.
- Song titles are shown in *italics*.
- Do not put photos in the text.

- Don't use am or pm in times.
- Unless the word 'choir' is part of a title it should **NOT** have a capital letter.
- Your choir is singular so 'the choir is' not 'the choir are'.

Send me pictures as high res .jpgs of between 1 and 5Mb or more, minimum 300 dpi.

Attach them to an email.

If this is hard to understand then ring me and I'll talk you through it.

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