

EXCELSIOR



THE VOICE OF THE TREORCHY MALE CHOIR

RECORD FOR THE YEAR 1996 *THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY YEAR*

Edited by DEAN POWELL, *Publicity Officer*
and Sub-Edited by ISLWYN MORGAN, *Secretary*
with the assistance of
NORMAN MARTIN, *Registrar and Honorary Archivist*

1996
TREORCHY MALE CHOIR

<u>First Tenor</u>	<u>Second Tenor</u>	<u>First Bass</u>	<u>Second Bass</u>
Howells, Bryn Morgan, Gwyn	O'Brien, Fred Powell, David	Hale, Terry Howard, Geoffrey	Davies, Alun Morris, Alun

ABOVE—Committee members of each section

Bevan, Cyril Davies, Ieuan Evans, Arwel Evans, Darren Feldon, Lyn Hopkins, John Jackson, Ben Jones, Paul Knappgate, Jack Lewis, Alwyn Llewellyn, Dilwyn Lock, Ivor Morgan, Eric Morgan, Islwyn Morse, Roger Pate, Tom Phillips, Wyndham Powell, Dean Spanswick, Clive Stephens, Reg Turner, Robert Vaughan, Tony Weaver, John	Arundel Roger Costin, Andrew Foulkes, David Goodfield, Cyril Green, Ron Griffiths, Ben Harris, Joe Hillman, Don Horgan, Gary John, Idris Langley, Derek Llewellyn, Ivor Martin, Norman Moses, Jack Owen, Edward Rogers, Colin Walton, Ron Willis, Cliburn	Bailey, David Bowen, Alan Coulter, Terry Downton, David Edmunds, Phillip Erasmus, Haydn Evans, Paul Gale, Len Hughes, Meurig John, Mervyn Lewis, Alun Morgan, Maldwyn Owen, Keith Stacey, Daryl Stephens, Bert Watkin, William Wilcox, Mel Williams, David Young, Dennis	Brabham, Paul Evans, Gareth Griffiths, Robert Hopkins, Robert Iles, Alun Jacobs, George Jones, Bryn Jones, Peter Lawrence, Ieuan Lewis, Ken Mallin, John Morris, Peter Morris, Scott Peachy, Mike Rosser, David Strabel, John Tippet, Ray Trembath, David Waldin, Ken Williams, David
---	--	--	--

Life Members:

Ieuan Davies, Edmund Evans, Michael Gale, John Hopkins, Ben Jackson, Islwyn Morgan, Ben Griffiths, Norman Martin, Cliburn Willis, Cliff Chislett, Haydn Erasmus, Sam Griffiths, Eilir Wright, Reg Davies, Robert Griffiths, Ieuan Lawrence, John Mallin.

President:
C. T. TAYLOR, F.C.A.
(Life Member)

Conductor Emeritus:
JOHN CYNAN JONES, M.Mus., A.T.C.L.
(Life Member)

MUSIC STAFF

Conductor:
JOHN JENKINS, B.A., F.T.C.L., A.R.C.M., L.T.C.L., M.T.C.

Accompanist:
Mrs. MARION (MALLAM) WILLIAMS, B.Mus., A.R.C.M., L.T.C.L.

Associate Accompanist:
Mrs. HEATHER JAMES, B.Mus., P.G.C.E., A.B.S.M.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Chairman:
MEURIG HUGHES

Secretary:
ISLWYN MORGAN

Treasurer:
JOHN MALLIN

Vice-Chairman:
GARETH EVANS

Assistant Secretary:
DARYL STACEY

Librarian:
COLIN ROGERS

Assistant Librarian:
IVOR LOCK

Publicity Officer:
DEAN POWELL

Registrar & Hon. Archivist:
NORMAN MARTIN

Honorary Members—D. O. Griffiths, Tom Jones, Ronald Cass, Jon Schoffield, John Tucker, Brian Bates, Evan L. James, Harold Woody, Douglas Firstbrook, John Reid, James Kelso, Brian Anstee, Edward Fraser.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

I am delighted to congratulate the Treorchy Male Choir on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.

In those fifty years, the Choir has enchanted audiences the world over, in all types of venue, from the most celebrated to the most modest. Only recently it has given performances in the Albert Hall and the Washington Metropolitan Cathedral. But equally the Choir continues to sing in smaller venues and village halls, ensuring that it brings its magic to communities everywhere.

The achievements of the Treorchy Male Choir over the past fifty years are indeed impressive. I applaud the dedication and determination of the choristers and organisers, both past and present, and wish them every success for the next half century and beyond.

EDITORIAL

*"No true and permanent fame can be founded except in labours
which promote the happiness of mankind"*

Charles Sumner

The choir's fiftieth anniversary marked another highly successful year in its history. To have maintained such a high standard of musical excellence for so long must surely stand as a testimony to the sheer hard work and dedication of both former and present music staff and choristers alike.

Above all, it was an opportunity for many choristers to look back and appreciate the enormous debt owed to John Haydn Davies, the choral genius who first lead the choir on the path of success. This was further maintained by John Cynan Jones and later by our present conductor, John Jenkins.

It also gave many of us the opportunity to look forward and consider the bright future ahead. Great deeds have been done and greater challenges have yet to be faced as we enter our second half century.

Due to the publication of the fiftieth anniversary book, this year's *Excelsior* has been greatly reduced. Once again may I express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to this edition.

Treorchy is a legend in choral music and long may it continue to be so. Now let us continue to lead the Welsh choral tradition well into the next century. May it be as successful as the last fifty golden years.

*"Look not mournfully into the Past
It comes not back again.
Wisely improve the Present – it is thine.
Go forth to meet the shadowy Future
Without fear, and with a manly heart."*
Longfellow

CONDUCTOR'S NOTES

When the invitation came in 1991 to become the conductor of the Treorchy Male Choir, the overwhelming feeling was of honour and pride in becoming a custodian of one of the finest dimensions of Welsh cultural life.

Five of the most pleasurable years of my musical career have now past. Years which have enabled me not only to travel three times to the United States, but also to perform with many eminent soloists, bands and orchestras, visit the most wonderful concert halls, churches and cathedrals

and make several recordings. Most importantly I have experienced the unique pleasure of sharing a way of life with an exceptional body of men, who although amateur in status, continue to demonstrate the highest of professional aims and aspirations.

May I propose a toast in tribute to members past and present for their tenacity, musicality and commitment as the finest ambassadors of Welsh culture and tradition.

PRESS COMMENTS

"It's 50 glorious years for Treorchy Male Choir and the world famous singers are celebrating with a new album. It is likely to enter record collections not just in the Rhondda, but all over the world and stands as a testimony to the continued success of this great Welsh institution."

(Rhondda Leader)

"With over 1,400 concerts behind them the Choir is adding to the figure at the rate of three a month. Bookings have been made throughout Wales and England. Treorchy's output is prodigious..."

(Western Mail)

"For 50 years the voices of Treorchy have carried far and wide, taking the name of Wales from the heart of the Rhondda to the four corners of the world."

(Rhondda Leader)

"The Treorchy Male Choir is one of the great institutions of Welsh life."

(Western Mail)

"Treorchy hits its half-century mark this month and it's an anniversary that's certain to be celebrated wherever the name is known."

(Rhondda Leader)

"It has sung its way around Britain, Europe, Australia, the USA and Canada. Accolades come in many forms, its reception by audiences world-wide, its record consecutive wins in the National Eisteddfod, and its commercial popularity as 44 recordings and over 100 television appearances emphasise."

(Western Mail)

"World famous entertainers have been happy to perform in partnership with the Choir. They read like a who's who of show business."

(Western Mail)

"There's no magic formula for maintaining its success over the decades. It is sheer hard work, unflagging commitment and a genuine love of choral singing."

(Western Mail)

"They have sung with Tom Jones and Ella Fitzgerald. They have sung in Russian, Latin and Japanese and though the pits in the valleys where they started 50 years ago have closed, the Treorchy is still singing."

(Daily Telegraph)

"Treorchy has long been recognised as the most famous Welsh choir in the world, thrilling audiences in every major concert hall as well as some of the greatest venues around the globe."

(South Wales Echo)

"Over the years the Choir grew into something of a myth. Cartoonists caricatured it and comedians made jokes about it!"

(Daily Telegraph)

"The golden anniversary of the world-famous Treorchy. Fifty wonderful years during which the Choir has captivated the hearts, ears and souls of everyone who has had the privilege and good fortune to hear it."

(Rhondda Leader)

"The tenors, their faces lifted to the spotlights, begin and then, like the surging of the sea and as expressionless, the bass section joins in, they can move you to tears or want to make you march to a drum. But what voices... with the choir full out they can shake a concert hall like a jet awaiting take off. What you are seeing is a way of life."

(Daily Telegraph)

A REVIEW OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

March 1st

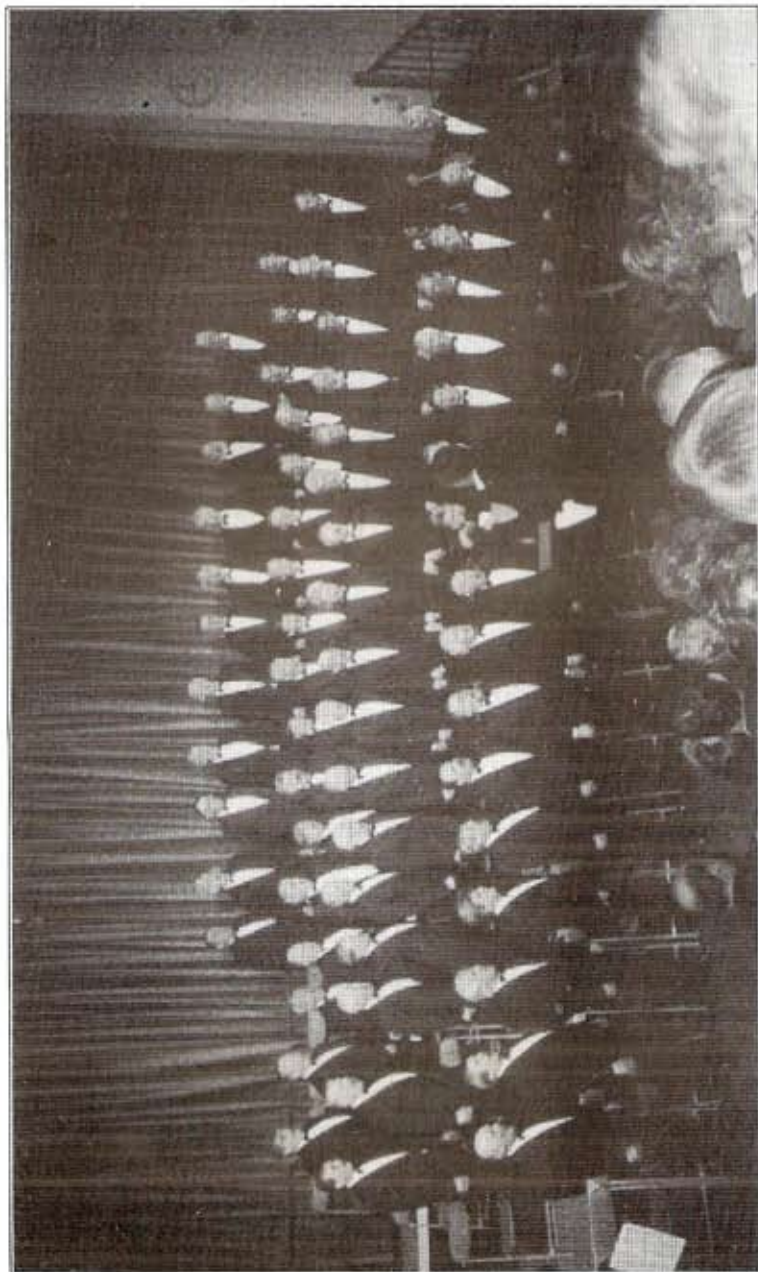
The Choir performed on BBC Radio's 'Friday Night Is Music Night' with Jason Howard, Beverly Humphreys, Roger Boyle and the BBC Concert Orchestra (Conductor: Robin Stapleton) in the Grand Theatre, Swansea.

March 11th

On a wet and miserable night the Choir performed in the pouring rain outside the Rhondda Heritage Park, Trehafod for the filming of the 'Gwahoddiad' television programme. Despite the bad weather the indomitable spirit of the Choir shone forth with singing of "Always Look On The Bright Side Of Life" and "Singing In The Rain" in between 'takes'!

March 14th

During the concert in Monmouth the Choir performed 'The Lords Prayer' in deepest sympathy to the people of Dunblane following their horrific tragedy on the previous day.



The Choir performing in the Haberdasher School for Girls, Monmouth.

March 19th

During the Annual General Meeting the Choir Chairman presented Mr. Alun Davies and Mr. Cyril Bevan with Long Service Membership Certificates for 21 years dedicated service to the Choir.

May 4th

Due to Mr. Jenkins' illness, the acquaintance with former assistant conductor Mr. Andrew Badham (Conductor, Cwmbach Male Choir) was renewed when he conducted the Choir in Paulton, Somerset.



Alun Davies and Cyril Bevan receiving their Long Service Certificates for 21 years of Choir membership.

29th June

Following the concert in the Embassy Theatre, the Choir enjoyed an overnight stay in Skegness.

July 11th

The Choir performed in the Centenary Concert of St. George's Church, Cwmparc, which was organised by Conductor Emeritus, Mr. John Cynan Jones. Mr. Jones also accompanied the Choir on the church organ.

July 13th

The Choir was delighted to see Choir President Cliff Taylor in the audience at the Victoria Methodist Church, Weston-super-Mare. Owing to ill-health he had been unable to take an active role in the Choir's activities for some considerable time.

July 17th

The Choir joined forces with Cwmbach Male Choir for the 10th Annual Welsh Proms in St. David's Hall, Cardiff. Under the baton of Mr. Owain Arwel Hughes, and with the Halle Orchestra, the massed choir performed the 'Grand March' from Verdi's 'Aida' for the first time.

September 1st

The Choir's Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition opened in the Rhondda Heritage Park, Trehafod. During the same week the Choir's 'Fifty Golden Years' anniversary publication was released. It featured a large selection of photographs, a brief history and over seventy greetings from heads of state, church dignitaries, eminent scholars, politicians and international celebrities.

October 10th

The highly successful annual concert at the Park & Dare Theatre featured the local Treorchy Comprehensive School Orchestra under the conductorship of Philip Hier.

The Choir's two founder members, Mr. Cliburn Willis and Mr. Haydn Erasmus, were presented with suitably engraved gold wristwatches in appreciation of their fifty years service in the progression of the Choir. This pleasant incident was tinged with sadness as it was the last appearance of Mr. Cliburn Willis as he had moved to Milton Keynes.

October 20th

The fiftieth anniversary concert was held in the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea and featured Jason Howard, Ros Evans, the West Glamorgan Youth Brass Band and Roy Noble. The capacity audience rewarded the Choir with tremendous applause, making this a highly successful anniversary performance.

During the interval two photographers from the *Daily Telegraph* took photographs of all the choristers. These were later featured in the *Telegraph*



The eight remaining singing Life Members of the choir pictured before the anniversary concert in the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea (from left to right) John Mallin, John Hopkins, Ben Jackson, Norman Martin, Islwyn Morgan, Haydn Erasmus, Ieuan Lawrence and Robert Griffiths.

Magazine, accompanied by a four-page article written by Mr. Byron Rogers in celebration of the anniversary.

November 23rd

Following the concert in the Milton Rooms, the Choir enjoyed an overnight stay in Malton, Yorkshire.

December 22nd

The Choir performed on BBC Radio 2's 'Good Morning' programme with Don Maclean, Su Pollard, Roger Royle and Max Boyce from Cardiff Castle. This successful recording was later broadcast on Christmas morning.

THE FOUNDER MEMBERS



During the Annual Concert the two founder members, Mr. Cliburn Willis and Mr. Haydn Erasmus were presented with suitably engraved gold wristwatches in appreciation of their fifty years of dedicated service to the Choir.

"Please convey to the Chairman, officers, committee and choristers my most sincere and grateful thanks for making the fiftieth anniversary concert a night I shall never forget. The presentation of the watch is something I shall always treasure. It will always be a constant reminder of the wonderful years spent as a member of the most famous choir."

Cliburn Willis

"I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to the committee and to all the members of the Treorchy Male Choir on one of the best kept secrets for the fifty years of my membership. The presentation by the choir

Chairman of the beautifully inscribed wristwatch was most humbly and proudly received and I thank you most sincerely. On behalf of myself and my family (this would not have been possible without the support and help of my dear wife Jean), I thank you again. Wishing the Choir all the very best and all success in the future. I remain always a humble chorister."

Haydn Erasmus

POST BAG

"I am afraid that I shall not be able to attend the Choir's engagement in Skegness in June. We shall be holding a joint family celebration of the birthdays of two of my sons. One born on 29th June and the other on 30th June. Different years, of course! I hope the Choir has a very successful concert."

Richard Todd

"Congratulations Treorchy on your 50th Anniversary"

Judy & Nigel Chivers, Cheltenham

"Best wishes on your 50th anniversary."

Brian Bates (Hon. Member)

"Congratulations on 50 Golden Years and many good wishes for the future."

Val & Adrian Dix, Cheltenham

"Dropping you a line from 'down under' with congratulations and good wishes for many happy returns on your fiftieth anniversary. You have made a wonderful contribution to world music and we salute you and thank you at this special time. God bless you all."

Roy & Anne MacDonald, Waikerie, Australia

"Fiftieth year! Well done! We, the grandchildren of William Thomas (Conductor of Treorchy Male Choir 1884-1896) congratulate you all on your achievements and continuing success. We are sure that William is proud that Treorchy is still associated with a world renowned Choir. Here's to the next 50!"

Robert Thomas

"A note to say how very much I enjoyed the annual concert last night. I am sure my father would have been thrilled to see the choir entering its second 50 years and I know he would have been particularly pleased to see so many

local young musicians performing so well. Congratulations and best wishes for the next 50 years."

Cllr. Geraint Davies

(Son of Mr. John Haydn Davies, Founder Conductor)

"October 16th, 1996 is a red-letter day in the history of TMC and it is my pleasure to extend on behalf of the musical director, officers and members of Pendyrus my hearty congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of your 50th anniversary. You may be justly proud of your achievements, and Pendyrus is delighted to send fraternal greetings on this special occasion and wish you all continued success in the future."

John Lewis, Secretary
Pendyrus Male Choir

"To Treorchy Male Choir many congratulations on your 50th anniversary. Here's to your next 50 years of music making."

Morrison Orpheus Choir

"Best wishes on your 50th Anniversary."

Ystradgynlais Male Choir

"Warmest congratulations on your superb Golden Anniversary book. I feel proud to have been asked to write the foreword. You have produced an outstandingly impressive history of the Choir. May you go from strength to strength."

The Right Honourable The Viscount Tonypany

"Thank you for sending a copy of the souvenir publication. I think it is splendid. Many congratulations on its appearance."

Dr. R. Brinley Jones

"Thank you for sending me a copy of your anniversary 'tome'. What a handsome way to celebrate fifty glorious years and what a marvellous collection of tributes. Heartiest congratulations."

Mike Sammes



ATTENDANCE RECORD

During the year 72 rehearsals were held (Sunday 2, Monday 1, Tuesday 38, Thursday 31) and 28 engagements.

*Rehearsals**Engagements*

CENTURY CLUB (100% attendance)

Fred O'Brien	Islwyn Morgan
	Reg Stephens
	Fred O'Brien
	Norman Martin
	Ron Walton
	Len Gale

NIFTY NINETIES CLUB (90% attendance)

Arwel Evans	John Hopkins
John Hopkins	Alun Lewis
Roger Morse	John Weaver
Reg Stephens	Jack Moses
John Weaver	Haydn Erasmus
Roger Arundell	Meurig Hughes
Norman Martin	Terry Coultard
David Powell	Geoffrey Howard
Colin Rogers	Mal Morgan
Haydn Erasmus	William Watkin
Meurig Hughes	Alun Davies
Daryl Stacey	George Jacobs
Paul Brabham	Bryn Jones
George Jacobs	Peter Morris
Bryn Jones	Ken Lewis
Peter Morris	Alun Morris
David Rosser	

CONCERT ENGAGEMENTS, 1996

<i>January</i>	
Thursday 18th	St. David's Church, Tonyrefail
<i>February</i>	
Saturday 24th	Parr Hall, Warrington
<i>March</i>	
Friday 1st	Grand Theatre, Swansea (radio broadcast)
Wednesday 6th	Tremains Hotel, Cwmparc (television broadcast)
Thursday 7th	Bethlehem Chapel, Treorchy (radio broadcast)
Monday 11th	Heritage Park, Trehafod (television broadcast)
Thursday 14th	Haberdasher School for Girls, Monmouth
<i>April</i>	
Friday 5th	Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy
Saturday 27th	Octagon Theatre, Yeovil
<i>May</i>	
Saturday 4th	Central Methodist Hall, Paulton
Saturday 18th	Royal College, Forest of Dean, Coleford
Thursday 23rd	Leisure Centre, Newport
<i>June</i>	
Friday 7th	St. Mary's Church, Usk
Saturday 15th	The Guildhall, Axminster
Saturday 29th	Embassy Theatre, Skegness
<i>July</i>	
Thursday 11th	St. George's Church, Cwmparc
Saturday 13th	Victoria Church, Weston-super-Mare
Wednesday 17th	St. David's Hall, Cardiff
<i>September</i>	
Saturday 14th	Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa
<i>October</i>	
Thursday 10th	Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy
Sunday 20th	Brangwyn Hall, Swansea
Saturday 26th	Blundell School, Tiverton
<i>November</i>	
Saturday 9th	The Town Hall, Cheltenham
Sunday 10th	Blaenrhondda/Treherbert Cenotaphs
Tuesday 12th	Rehearsal Room, Treorchy (television broadcast)
Saturday 23rd	Milton Rooms, Malton
<i>December</i>	
Saturday 14th	Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy
Sunday 22nd	The Castle, Cardiff (radio broadcast)