

# TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



## BRIEF HISTORY 1957

By Dean Powell, Publicity Officer  
& Honorary Archivist

## JANUARY

**Thursday January 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Hermon Chapel, Treorchy**

For the first concert of the year the Choir was joined on stage by Agnes Jenkins-Griffiths and Herbert Jones. The concert was held in aid of Calfaria Church, Treorchy.

**Thursday January 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Tabernacle Chapel, Ferndale**

The Conductor of the Pendyrus Male Choir, Arthur Duggan, performed the duties of Chairman for this evening's concert which featured the Choir along with soloists Ann Edwards (soprano) and elocutionist Herbert Jones.

## FEBRUARY

**Thursday February 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Rehearsal Room, Treorchy**

A BBC recording for St David's Day was made.

**Wednesday February 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Cory Hall, Cardiff**

The Choir recorded "Music of British Composers" for the BBC.

**Wednesday February 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Central Hall, Bargoed**

At the invitation of the Bargoed Girls Choir, the Treorchy men travelled to Bargoed to perform with them at the Central Hall. Also performing that night was Sylvia Matthews, Jean White and D.T.Davies.

## MARCH

**Sunday March 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Welfare Hall, Tylorstown**

In a presentation concert by the Rhondda Recognition Committee to composer Mansel Thomas, he conducted his arrangement of *Llef*. Also performing was Jean Morgan (soprano) and Elfed Havard (baritone).

## MAY

**Sunday May 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Bethesda Chapel, Ton Pentre**

A presentation concert took place to local GP Dr Fergus Armstrong.

**Saturday May 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Eisteddfod Marquee, Cardigan**

Following an absence of seven years Treorchy returned to the Semi National Eisteddfod, held in Cardigan and won the first prize. Although not a single male choir entered the 1957 National at Llangefni, three choirs competed at the Semi with Herbert Bardgett, Owen Bryngwyn and Prys Roberts as adjudicators.

## JUNE

### Sunday June 30<sup>th</sup>

#### Town Hall, Pontypridd

A concert was held in aid of Pontypridd YMCA with Ceinwen Rowlands (soprano), Richie Thomas (tenor) and David Kelly (bass).

## JULY

### Thursday July 4<sup>th</sup>

#### Parc Chapel, Cwmparc

A fundraising concert was held for the Cwmparc Fire Fund featuring tenor Delwyn Hughes and baritone Elfed Havard.

## SEPTEMBER

### Saturday September 28<sup>th</sup>

#### Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

At the concert in Treorchy the second half was broadcast for the BBC. Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Aled Rhys Williams and the concert also included contralto Helen Watts and the BBC Concert Orchestra (Conductor, Vilen Tausky).

## OCTOBER

### Thursday October 3<sup>rd</sup>

#### Gwyn Hall, Neath

The Choir performed a fundraising concert for the Welsh Association of OAP Groups (Neath Branch). Also on stage was soprano Adele Leigh with accompanist Joan Burns.

### Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup>

#### The Pavilion Porthcawl

The Choir once again entered the Miners' Eisteddfod in Porthcawl and claimed the first prize with another performance of *Dies Irae* from Cherubini's *Requiem in D Minor*. The adjudicator that day was none other than their old colleague Professor Alan Bush and although no other choir competed, he felt Treorchy was fully deserving of the first prize as he awarded them 94 points for the performance.

The Miners' Eisteddfod of 1957 was a memorable occasion for another significant event because a transatlantic radio link was put in place between the Pavilion in Porthcawl and a recording studio in New York, USA. The telephone link was made between the Choir and audience of miners and their families with singer Paul Robeson. It was seen as an important gesture of international solidarity with Robeson, a fierce critic of American capitalism and imperialism.

On sharing their greetings through song, Miners' Leader Will Paynter also addressed Robeson, who, on refusing to admit or deny he was a communist, the US State Department denied him a passport. He was determined to continue his connection with Wales, a place he had toured in the 1930s by performing concerts in the South

Wales valleys and had caught the sympathy of the miners when he sang in Jack Jones's 1939 film "Proud Valley".

**Saturday October 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Bethel Baptist Church, Glyncorrwg**

Their performance in Glyncorrwg was in aid of church funds and featured soprano Betti Jones and bass Harding Jenkins.

**Wednesday October 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Ararat Church, Whitchurch**

A concert was held in Whitchurch for the local Memorial Hall Fund and featured soprano Bessie Lloyd Jones and accompanist May Griffith-Jones.

## NOVEMBER

**Saturday November 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Gelli Colliery, Gelli**

To celebrate the 21st anniversary of the BBC television programme "The World Our Stage", the Choir performed from Gelli Colliery. They appeared alongside the Scottish Junior Singers who were performing in Edinburgh and the Royal Choral Society and London Symphony Orchestra who were in London. The event was hosted by film actor Trevor Howard.

## DECEMBER

**Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Royal Festival Hall, London**

The Choir undertook its second visit to the London Welsh Autumn Music Festival. The impressive list of fellow performers included Granville Jones (violin), Gwyneth Jones (soprano), Sian Phillips (Comper), Cemaes Children's Choir, Cardiff Choral Speaking Party, Maureen Guy, Hubert Greenslade (piano) and Cyril Anthony (organ)

**Wednesday December 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Bethlehem Chapel, Treorchy**

The Choir recorded a series of songs for Qualiton, including *Nant y Mynydd*, *Harlech*, *Sospan Fach*, *Deryn Pur* and *Hob y Deri Dando*.

**Thursday December 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Siloh Chapel, Pentre**

A concert was held by the St John Brigade (Rhondda Branch) featuring the Choir with Agness Jenkins-Griffiths and Idris Higgon.

**Sunday December 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Bethania Chapel, Treorchy**

The final concert of the year was a carol service featuring the Treorchy Secondary School Band, Beryl Richards and Harry Price.