

TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



BRIEF HISTORY 1964

By Dean Powell, Publicity Officer
& Honorary Archivist

JANUARY

Thursday January 9th

English Congregational Church, Porth

The Choir gave a concert for the church building fund with soprano Betty Jones and tenor Towyn Evans.

Monday January 27th

EMI Factory, Treorchy

The Choir made an "All Together" broadcast with John Morgan, Mary Kendall and presenter Alun Williams. The accompanist was young Ferndale pianist Brian Davies.

FEBRUARY

Thursday February 6th

Green Street Chapel, Aberdare

The Choir made its first appearance here with Sam Griffiths and Herbert Jones.

Sunday February 9th

RAF Base, St Athan

The Choir made a television broadcast for BBC with D. Roy, Richie Allan Trio, K. Roberts, Ervin Davies Trio and A. Edwards.

Wednesday February 19th

Welfare Hall, Seven Sisters

The Choir travelled to Seven Sisters for a performance with Ken Pugh (bass) David Williams (tenor) and elocutionist Cliff Grist (elocutionist).

Thursday February 20th

EMI Factory, Treorchy

The Choir filmed a television programme for the BBC presenter by Michael Aspel and also starring Norma Proctor, Treorchy Brass Band and the BBC Orchestra.

MARCH

Wednesday March 11th

City Hall, Cardiff

The Choir appeared in a short concert following the NCB Safety Awards Dinner.

Saturday March 14th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

Organised by the Rhondda Borough Council Entertainment's Committee, the concert also featured the Harrow Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Charles Hambourg.

APRIL

Thursday April 16th

Rehearsal Room, Treorchy

The Choir broadcast an "All Together" programme from the rehearsal room with Alun Williams.

Saturday April 25th

Noddfa Chapel, Treorchy

The Choir welcomed the Doncaster Wheatsheaf Girls Choir, conductor John Barker, to Treorchy for the weekend to perform with the men of Treorchy. The concert featured Herbert Jones and soloists from the Doncaster choir.

Thursday April 30th

Rehearsal Room, Treorchy

The Choir made a television broadcast from the rehearsal room.

MAY

Friday May 9th

Seabank Hotel, Porthcawl

The Choir appeared in a National Coal Board Dinner.

JUNE

Saturday June 6th

Elliot Pavilion, Borehamwood

Organised by the Elstree and Borehamwood Fundraising Committee, the Choir performed for the Freedom from Hunger Campaign with Olga Wilson (pianist), Janet Eggledden (clarinet) and Cyril Heels (violinist).

Sunday June 7th

Elliot Pavilion, Borehamwood

Organised by the Elstree and Borehamwood Fundraising Committee, the Choir performed for the Freedom from Hunger Campaign with Olga Wilson (pianist), Janet Eggledden (clarinet) and Cyril Heels (violinist).

Saturday June 20th

The Marquee, Pershore

The Choir appeared in the Pershore Festival with Sam Griffiths and Maldwyn Phillips.

Tuesday June 30th

Rehearsal Room, Treorchy

The Choir performed for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Delegation.

AUGUST

Saturday August 8th

National Eisteddfod of Wales, Swansea

Following weeks of serious ill-health, John Haydn Davies was able to conductor his Choir at his last appearance in the National Eisteddfod of Wales, Swansea. At 4.45pm John Haydn mounted the podium and surveyed his choir of 98 men. Months of painstaking rehearsals had come to this and at his signal, three bars of piano accompaniment from his dearest friend Tom Jones, led to the dramatic attack of the

male voice singers. Matthias's lively *Y Pren Ar Y Bryn*, was followed by Victoria's *Arglwydd Da Nid Wyf Deilwng*. By the third piece, *Paracelsus*, John Haydn was visibly shaking and his conducting had become imprecise. As the loud applause continued with the finale of the piece, he staggered off the stage and was bundled into the car before being whisked to his bed in Treherbert where he awaited the news of the result.

This was indeed a supreme effort on behalf of a conductor and his men. It was with a sense of sheer bewilderment that they announced Treorchy Male Choir as the winner of the National Eisteddfod with 269 points. They were followed by Pontarddulais (266), Pendyrus (265), Morryston (263), Manselton (253) and Rhos (257). John Haydn's determination to ensure Rhos would come second the next time they met went beyond anything he'd predicted. It would in fact be his last performance in the competitive arena as conductor of the Choir. His friend Tom Jones stepped on the stage to receive the Welsh Guards Challenge Cup and the Ivor E Sims Memorial Medallion for the Winning Conductor from another old Treorchy friend, Alun Williams of the BBC.

SEPTEMBER

Thursday September 10th

Rehearsal Room, Treorchy

Owing to the ill health of John Haydn Davies, the Choir was conducted by James Williams for a performance on the "All Together" programme.

Sunday September 13th

Rehearsal Room, Treorchy

The Choir entertained a Soviet Delegation arranged by the British Council.

Wednesday September 16th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

Owing to the illness of John Haydn Davies, the Choir performed in its first full concert without him. Alwyn Jones of the BBC took up the baton. The concert was held for Battle of Britain Week.

Thursday September 24th

Central Hall, Abercarn

Cas Powell raised the baton for the concert in aid of the Cwmcarn OAP Fund which also featured soprano Grace Shaw and baritone Clement Scott.

OCTOBER

Saturday October 3rd

Ninian Park, Cardiff

John Haydn Davies returned to the podium to lead the congregational singing.

Tuesday October 27th

Noddfa Chapel, Ynysbwl

The Choir shared the stage with Sam Griffiths and Herbert Jones.

NOVEMBER

Sunday November 1st
The College, Caerleon

The Choir appeared in the Jubilee Celebrations of the College.

Saturday November 7th
Central Hall, Coventry

The Choir appeared with Coventry Brass Band.

Tuesday November 10th
Rehearsal Room, Treorchy

Choristers entertained a delegation from South Rhodesia and Jamaica.

Saturday November 14th
King's Hall, Aberystwith

The Choir appeared in the Aberystwyth Arts Festival with Owen Brannigan (bass).

Wednesday November 25th
Oak Tree Hall, Treorchy

The Choir shared the stage with Elvira Henry and Sam Griffiths.

Thursday November 26th
Wood Street Church, Cardiff

For a concert in Cardiff, the Choir appeared with Marilyn Hartnell and Sam Griffiths.

DECEMBER

Thursday December 3rd
Bethany Chapel, Treherbert

A concert was held in aid of Bethany Renovation Centre with Elvira Henry and Sam Griffiths.

Saturday December 12th
Alltwen Church, Pontardawe

The concert in Pontardawe was held to raise funds for the renovation of the church organ and again featured Elvira Henry and Sam Griffiths.