

# TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



## BRIEF HISTORY 1987

By Norman Martin  
Registrar & Honorary Archivist

## **JANUARY**

### **Tuesday January 5<sup>th</sup>**

At the first rehearsal of the year tonight, the entitled choristers were each presented with a plaque with their name on it, and suitable inscribed to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reforming of the Treorchy Male Choir.

## **FEBRUARY**

### **Thursday February 12<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Bethany Chapel, Treherbert**

For the first engagement of 1987 the Choir appeared in Treherbert in a concert organised by Geraint Davies, son of the esteemed Mr John Davies MBE, the initial conductor of the Choir. The proceeds were in aid of the Abbeyfield Fund which provides homes for the lonely, aged people and one is to be opened in Treherbert. The staging of the Choir took some time as the room at the rear of the chapel was limited and 100 choristers had to be accommodated. The artists were Della James (contralto) and Jim Davies (cornet) and in accompanying them Jenny used her professional training as the music was lively and difficult to play and she had not seen it before. As always she rose magnificently to the challenge and came through with flying colours and won the admiration of everyone present. The running order of the evening was in the capable hands of S4C personality Robin Jones who carried out his duties with aplomb, panache and humour. It was also the return of Wyn Davies as a soloist and he sang "Kalinka" accompanied by the Choir. The audience showed their pleasure at his return in no uncertain manner. As Wyn made his return, two choristers made their first concert appearance in Geoffrey Kynaston (1B) and Michael Bloxsome (2B). The audience, including the Mayor and Mayoress, reaction proved it was a successful engagement. For two people in the audience who were on holiday the Choir sang "A Valley Called The Rhondda" and "We'll Keep A Welcome".

### **Sunday February 28<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Roman Catholic Church, Burnham-on-Sea**

The Choir made their first visit to Burnham on Sea for a concert in the Roman Catholic Church. Tea was served in the church hall. The church is a modern designed circular building and represented a small cathedral. Arranging choristers around the altar needed some patience but the wonderful acoustics of the church were much loved by all present. The capacity audience were close to the Choir and with a harp and dragon signs on the walls alongside "Croeso", a very friendly and intimate atmosphere prevailed. In the audience was Mr Clifford Taylor who presented £300 to the Mother Theresa of Calcutta Fund. The enjoyment of the singing was portrayed by the enthusiastic applause. After the concert the late bus enjoyed the delights of Weston Super Mare RFC.

## **MARCH**

### **Tuesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>**

The AGM was held in the rehearsal room which saw Mr Cli Willis installed for his two-year-period and the presentation of a Long Service 21 years scroll to Alun John (1B). Mr John Davies (PRO) made it known to the general body that Sam Griffiths

had decided to stop performing as a soloist. He thanked Sam for his faithfulness, dependability and dedication over the last 39 years as soloist of the Choir. Sam made a most eloquent reply, when he finished the choristers gave him a standing ovation.

### **Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup>**

#### **University of Warwick**

The Choir paid their second visit to the University of Warwick with a concert in the Arts Centre organised once again by the Kenilworth Round Table. The proceeds were in aid of the St John School to assist in the teaching of children with a hearing impairment. On entering the Arts Centre something was wrong – no chairs and the staging was all wrong! So it was “coats off” time and soon everything was in place. After a short rehearsal the choristers had a relaxing half hour before the concert. One chorister, Geoff Kynaston, missed the bus and drove up to appear in the second half! With such a splendid hall, Jenny playing her piano and harp and Mair as always her competent self, the concert opened with the highest musical standard. Wyn gave the first public performance of “Bugeilio’r Gwenith Gwyn” and the Choir sang magnificently, making for a first-class concert. This was evident by the thunderous applause and the stamping of feet from the 1,000 audience at the end of the concert.

### **Friday March 27<sup>th</sup>**

#### **St David’s Hall, Cardiff**

Tonight the Choir attained another “Royal Crown” when they performed in the presence of HRH Princess Diana. The engagement at St David’s Hall was a double honour as it was also a gala concert for Barnados Cymru. The entrance of Princess Diana, dressed in black, was met with spontaneous applause from the capacity audience. As always on this occasion the 101 choristers rose to the challenge and gave a performance of the highest standard. The engagement was indeed a memorable one for Wayne Eldridge (2T) and Dennis Taylor (1B) who made their concert debut. One bus left for Pentyrch RFC while the other left for home at 10pm after Mr John Cynan Jones attended the special after-concert buffet.

### **Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Brangwyn Hall, Swansea**

After a period of three years the Choir returned to the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea to make a new record. It was recorded by the same team of Bob Barrett and Stuart Eltham (who incidentally came out of retirement to do the record) and will be on the MFP label. The buses left Treorchy at 12.50pm and travelling along the Glynneath Road Jack Knapgate rose from his seat and collapsed. He was violently ill but when he came around he appeared no worse for wear and continued the journey. The recording day is always a long and busy one, but the bone home of the members made the time more bearable. This was a fine “baptism of work” for members making their first enjoyable appearances – Alwyn Lewis (1T), Meurig Hughes (1B0), Mal Morris (2B), Gareth Evans (2B) and Keith Williams (2B).

## **APRIL**

### **Thursday April 9<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Community Centre, Abercarn**

The Choir paid a fifth visit to the Abercarn Community Centre. Leaving Treorchy at 6pm and arriving at 7.20pm, the concert started ten minutes later to a full house! In

the audience, once again, was Gerald Davies, now a music teacher. His pupil, the artist, was ample proof of his ability as Gareth Davies has a magnificently trained bass voice. Indeed he was one of the finest singers the Choir has appeared with for many years. With Jenny, 89 choristers, John Cynan and a full house, the concert was another successful one.

### **Friday April 17<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy.**

It was the “old firm” of the Choir and Band that appeared at the 22<sup>nd</sup> consecutive Good Friday Concert in our hometown theatre. This concert marked the first appearance of the new bandmaster, Nigel Seaman. Again the concert was given to a capacity audience and a memorable one for Bert John (2T) as “Happy Birthday” was sung to him.

## **MAY**

### **Tuesday May 26<sup>th</sup>**

At tonight’s rehearsal it was announced that Life Member Cas Powell had died. In his tribute to him Chairman Cliburn Willis extolled the virtues of Cas both as a chorister and a person. Cas was a chorister before the war and was one of the first to become involved in reforming the present Treorchy Male Choir. Had had all the attributes of a good chorister – dedication, commitment and enthusiasm. He was a “pillar of strength” to the second tenors and many of them owe their basic knowledge of tonic solfa to him. Over the years, as a musician in his own right, he conducted the Choir in rehearsals and concerts. He was a Founder Member, Life Member and former Chairman of the Choir. Amid all this activity he also found time to conduct the Ton Boys’ Choir. Cas was an unassuming, quiet, sincere person who will be greatly missed but never forgotten by all those who knew him. Mr John Cynan Jones endorsed the Chairman’s remarks and stated that every performance of “Rock of Ages” will be in respect, admiration and memory of Cas.

## **JUNE**

### **Monday June 1<sup>st</sup>**

The funeral of Caswallon (Cas) Powell took place today in Hebron Chapel at 1pm. With an excellent number of choristers in attendance, four bearers from the Choir in D. Williams, D. Trembath, A. Davies and A. Iles (all 2B) were chosen. At Glyntaff Crematorium “Llan Baglan” was sung in the final tribute to his memory. So the page was closed on a sincere chorister and a Christian gentleman.

### **Tuesday June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

#### **Newport Leisure Centre**

After a six week absence from the concert stage, the Choir returned with an engagement in Newport Leisure Centre. The experience here was the same as most leisure centres – a fine hall but poor acoustics! The proceeds were in aid of Family Care and in the audience was a multiplicity of mayors and civic dignitaries. Appearing for the first time with the Choir was Beverley Humphreys and although her singing was first class, the hall was captivated by the different outfits she wore for all four solo spots! Arfon Haines Davies, the HTV personality, was compere and stated

the audience didn't just have an excellent musical evening, but also a fashion show! With Jenny, 93 choristers (including four new 'stagers' in Alwyn Lewis (1T), Christopher Walker (1T), Keith Williams (2B) and Gareth Evans (2B), a full hall and John Cynan his usual competent self, the concert was a great success despite the acoustics! The enthusiastic appreciation of the audience displayed their enjoyment of the night.

### **Saturday June 6<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Brangwyn Hall, Swansea**

The concert in Swansea for the RNLI proved to be a very eventful one. Leaving Treorchy at 5.50pm the buses approached Neath when there stood Jenny and Alun Hughes (2B) flagging down the bus! They were travelling by car as she had her harp, but she had forgotten her dress! She informed John Cynan of the situation and said she would go back for the dress but would make it to the concert. Consequently the concert started at 7.40pm when suddenly fate took a hand again. After being introduced, John Cynan walked on stage and invited the audience to sing "God Save The Queen". But where was Jenny? Thankfully Mary Cynan was sat at the piano and she struck the required note! John Cynan gave an informative chat and some unaccompanied songs! The first song was "Cyfri'r Geifr" with the Conductor playing the chord. At the end of the song on walked Jenny to relieved applause at 7.50pm! Owing to the circumstances Jenny was unable to give the conductor her programme of music for the harp. For the first time she spoke to the audience, apologising and explaining no woman should keep 100 men waiting! The stage was festooned with microphones and recording equipment to broadcast the concert to the local hospital service and as the Choir were returning to the Brangwyn Hall the following day for a record, the sound engineers were using the concert as a sound balance exercise. Despite all the trials and tribulations, this was an excellent concert as demonstrated by the enthusiastic applause.

### **Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Brangwyn Hall, Swansea**

The Choir returned to the Brangwyn Hall at 9am the following morning – and without a mishap this time! The record was a result of a competition run by the Western Mail to find the most popular hymns and a competition run by Central TV for the writing of the new hymn. The Central TV competition was won by Simon Morley, aged 11, and he was present in the afternoon session to hear the recording of his hymn. The choristers gave him a war welcome and Mr John Cynan Jones took him under his gentle wing! Huw Tregellys Williams was organist for the first time and there was a new producer called Gordon Lorenz who was quite a character. The session ended at 8pm and this was particularly long as it involved making a digital recording to cover the new compact disc market.

### **Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup>**

#### **East Moors Estate, Cardiff**

Owing to sound problems on the "Scan / Corau Mawr" film taken in the New Inn, Ton Pentre, 21 choristers travelled to the East Moors Estate in Cardiff to solve the problems. The solution lay in the singing of "Myfanwy" and while watching the lip movement of the choristers the group tried many times to perform Myfanwy to sync! Not an easy task, but soon resolved.

### **Saturday June 20<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Parish Church, Crediton**

Leaving Treorchy at 2.15pm the Choir sallied forth to challenge of the battle by giving their first concert in Crediton, Devon. The picturesque road was also a difficult and narrow one and the Choir didn't arrive until 5.40pm. After a short rehearsal and tea, the concert was introduced by Rev Derwent Davies, born and bred in Treorchy and a cousin to Cli Willis, the Choir Chairman. The church, what had cathedral status, is a magnificent Norman structure, with additions and renovations throughout the centuries, proving to be an excellent acoustical venue. The success of the concert was displayed by the enthusiastic appreciation of the capacity audience, which included several mayors. The size of the audience could have been doubled, such was the demand for tickets. The proceeds were in aid of the building of the St Boniface Centre. Choristers enjoyed the hospitality of the Crediton Railway Club.

## **JULY**

### **Friday July 3<sup>rd</sup>**

#### **Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy**

The Choir was again privileged to share the stage with a famous musical organisation in the Band of the Welsh Guards. The concert was held in our hometown theatre on the warmest of summer's evenings. Despite the heat, the hall was full, with a huge demand for tickets and the bandsmen looking regal, played up to their expected standards. The Director of Music, Major Peter Hannam, proved to be quite a character and was a "dead ringer" for Benny Hill! This fact he wittingly brought home to the audience. Mr John Cynan Jones was bitten by the fashion bug as he looked resplendent in a modern "Lloyd George" collar with a red bow, matching handkerchief with a white jacket. Not to be outdone, Jenny also dressed in red! The reaction and response from the audience proved that the musical performances of the band and choir was first class, and the enjoyment of the evening was reflected in the warm and friendly atmosphere of the theatre. Of the many amusing incidents during the evening, one worth recording was that one of the members of the band was the grandson of Mansel Thomas. When he was called to be introduced to the audience it was stated he had "reported for duty".....in the Red Cow!

### **Sunday July 5<sup>th</sup>**

#### **City Hall, Cardiff**

The Choir was engaged to appear in the Variety Club of Great Britain (Wales Branch) tribute to the famous Rhondda personality, Mr Cliff Morgan CVO, CBE. After having the organiser of the event in the rehearsal room to discuss the involvement in the proceedings, all was set. The Choir was to appear between 10pm and 11pm but again...the best laid plans of mice and men! The Choir eventually staged at 12.30am! the Choir sang four songs to a dis-interested audience. Although the applause was appreciative, their conduct was not. The buses left at 12.50am. Statistically it was the longest concert ever – it started on Sunday and finished on Monday!

### **Saturday July 11<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Comprehensive School, Bedworth**

The Choir made its sixth visit to Bedworth, but this time it wasn't to sing in the Civic Hall. It was a glorious sunny day and on arrival a buffet lunch was served, followed by a short rehearsal, during which the death and funeral arrangements of Eddie Davies

(Life Member) were announced. Mr John Cynan Jones extolled the virtues of Eddie as a person, friend and chorister. To his family, Choir and community, he will be sadly missed. The concert started at 7pm and the capacity audience again demonstrated their enjoyment of the evening's performance by their attention during the singing and the warmth of their applause. The Secretary acted as a locum page turner for the soloist, although he did turn one page too soon! A most satisfactory concert for Stephen Belmont (2B) making his first appearance.

### **Tuesday July 14<sup>th</sup>**

The funeral of Eddie Davies, Life Member, took place today. He died at his daughter's home in Bridgend and was cremated in Coity. Because of the location, a bus was made available and 40 choristers attended where "Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi" was performed. So we said a fond farewell to a faithful chorister, a respected member of the community and a gentle person.

## **AUGUST**

### **Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup>**

This rehearsal was held to facilitate the visit of James Kelso and his family. There are spending holidays in the country and requested to attend a rehearsal. The Chairman welcomed them and 99 choristers were there to greet them. An "Australian Tour Tie" was presented to him and each of the other Australian Honorary Members. Mr Kelso responded by expressing his thanks for the evening's events. He stated the pleasure and satisfaction of James Hardie Company on the outstanding success of the Choir's Australian Tour and his firm conviction it was the best PR the company had ever done. At the end of his address he was serenaded with "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow".

## **SEPTEMBER**

### **Thursday September 24<sup>th</sup>**

#### **St Peter's Church, Dinas Powys**

The Choir made its debut to St Peter's Church in Dinas Powys by arriving 15 minutes late! The church proved to be a fine building with good acoustics. The church was built in the 1920s with stone obtained for a disused stack from the iron-days of Merthyr and burn marks could be seen on the stone. It was filled to capacity, which was pleasing for the St Michael's Church Restoration Fund. The audience soon showed their appreciation for the 94 choristers, Mair, John Cynan and Jenny (who played magnificently despite struggling with a sub-standard piano!). There was no interval and after the presentations were made the Choir was welcomed at the Cross Keys Inn.

## **OCTOBER**

### **Saturday October 3<sup>rd</sup>**

#### **St David's Hall, Cardiff**

The Choir added another famous band to their impressive list when they appeared with the Central Band of the Royal Air Force. The proceeds were in aid of the local RAFA Associations. Rehearsals were held at 6.15pm where choristers found the

bandmaster Wing Commander Eric Banks, a most pleasant and sympathetic conductor. The concert started at 7.30pm and with the band playing to their expected standards and the Choir equally respondent. The event was a very enjoyable one, as amply demonstrated by the warm response from the audience. Jenny received a special ovation as did Wyn Davies for his magnificent solo singing. It was pleasing to see Mair Roberts in the audience also. The concert finished at 10.30pm and “happy birthday” was sung to Gareth Evans (2B).

#### **Thursday October 8<sup>th</sup>**

##### **Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy**

To a “full house” the Choir performed their sixth annual concert with artist Gareth Glyndwr Davies who sang with the Choir in Abercan. With his friendly, relaxed manner and magnificent voice he had the audience “eating out of his hands”. With an impressive 99 choristers on stage, maintaining the concert performance standard, Jenny, John Cynan etc., it was a most enjoyable concert. During the evening “Happy Birthday” was sung to Jack Knapgate (1T) and “Gwahoddiad” was performed in memory of Cas Powell and Eddie Davies. Dan Williams (2B) displayed his dedication for although he’s going into hospital tomorrow, he was on stage tonight!

#### **Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup>**

##### **Hereford Cathedral**

The Choir gave its third performance in Hereford Cathedral with a concert in aid of the Independent Order of Forresters. Amazingly there were too many people and too few seats at the start of the concert, which was delayed until all 1,500 were sat comfortably! Finally at 7.45pm it was “off the starting notes” when the Choir was introduced by Honorary Member John Tucker who organised the concert. In such a magnificent cathedral Jenny, Mair, 96 choristers gave a first-class concert under the direction of Mr John Cynan Jones. The high standard was well and truly upheld throughout. This was demonstrated by the response from the over-capacity audience which included the Lord Mayor and Lord Bishop of Hereford. The proceeds were in aid of the Cheshire Home and the Cathedral Restoration Fund – the proceeds being in excess of £4,000. with the presentation of bouquets to the ladies the choristers enjoyed an excellent buffet in the Inc Alloys International Club.

#### **Tuesday October 27<sup>th</sup>**

On the first anniversary of the Australian Tour, choristers were issued with a tie to commemorate the visit. The tie is dark blue emblazoned with the Choir badge, James Hardie Logo and South Australia 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary insignia and the appropriate wording.

#### **Thursday October 29<sup>th</sup>**

##### **Tonyrefail Comprehensive School**

It was television time again as the Choir made an ITV recording about the changing face of the Rhondda. The engagement was accepted at short notice. It began at 3pm and 73 choristers were present. The school hall was small but admirably suited for the recording of “We’ll Keep A Welcome” and “All Through the Night”. The recording was completed by 4.20pm.

# NOVEMBER

## **Saturday October 31<sup>st</sup> & Sunday November 1<sup>st</sup>**

### **The Pavilion, Weymouth**

On this Hallowe'en the Choir travelled down memory lane after 19 years to Weymouth's Pavilion for a concert in aid of Cancer Research. The venue is typical of small theatres with the stage heavily curtained and a large open area. This is not conducive with a good acoustics and everyone had to pull out a bit of extra effort to sustain the quality of the concert performance. With Jenny playing harp and piano, Mair, 91 choristers and the ever competent John Cynan, the audience displayed their enjoyment of the evening with a standing ovation. All of them applauded until the last choristers left the stage. It was then back to the hotels for a relaxing hour. On the following morning, after a good breakfast, the choristers left Weymouth at 10am. It was a glorious day for the journey home with the late bus sampling the delights of the Army Apprentice School.

## **Thursday November 12<sup>th</sup>**

### **Rhondda Sports Centre, Ystrad**

The Cory Band and the Choir united to help another well deserving organisation – Rhondda Boys Club. The concert was held in the Rhondda Sports Centre and despite dreadful weather conditions, every seat in the hall was occupied. The staging arrangements were not conducive to the Choir as the tenor and bass sections were split by the band. Things were made difficult for Jenny as the light for the piano was limited. With the magnificent performance from the band, reflected by the 100 choristers present, the audience displayed their enjoyment of the concert by sustained applause and vocal inducements at the end of the performance. With the presentation of the bouquet to Jenny and a speech from the Boys Club, the event was concluded. The concert was unusual as John Cynan Jones only introduced the group of three hymns.

## **Saturday November 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>**

### **Warrington / Stafford**

The Choir made a forage up-country for the Warrington and Stafford weekend engagement organised by Mel Absolum with the proceeds in aid of the Muscular Dystrophy fund. The buses left Treorchy at 10.45am and stopped on the M4 to pick up Alwyn Lewis (1T), the "paragon of commitment" who was on his way home from the airport following a holiday in Florida! The choristers arrived at Lymm Hotel, Warrington at 4.20pm and the facilities were first class. Choristers then travelled to the Parr Hall for a rehearsal which ultimately assured them of an acoustically superb hall. Afterwards they were taken to the Town Hall, passing through a magnificent set of iron gates that were originally designed for Buckingham Palace. The members strolled along the path to the illuminated hall and were pleasantly surprised and full of gratitude as the strains of "Men of Harlech" floated on the evening air. This was provided by the Warrington Youth Band and they combined with the Choir to sing "Myfanwy" and "Cwm Rhondda". The choristers showed their appreciation of the gesture and John Cynan thanked all of the young bandspeople. The concert started at 7.30pm and with the finest introduction of the Choir to any concert by Mel Absolum, which certainly set the seal for the splendid evening's entertainment, the performance began. Despite a shortage of choristers the quality was enhanced by this fine hall.

Jenny, Mair and John Cynan were at their very best, ensuring the concert was an outstanding success. It was “on Parr” with anything the Choir has done!

After a most satisfying breakfast on the following day there was some confusion over the room situation and the rest of the day was spent whileing away the time in Lymm by walking, eating, drinking, lounging around. The coaches left at 5pm to reach the Gatehouse Theatre in Stafford at 6.15pm. at the rehearsal it was clear this hall was very dissimilar to Parr Hall. It was heavily curtained, with open spaces above the stage and the Choir took time to find the best position to perform in. As always the greater the adversity, the greater the effort. The concert was a huge success. The audience’s response of each item was tremendous with sustained applause at the finale amply displaying their enjoyment. The concert finished at 9.55pm and left for home after a very satisfying weekend engagement.

### **Friday November 27<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Guild Hall, Portsmouth**

The Choir travelled to Portsmouth to appear for the fifth time in the Guild Hall, the concert was organised by Capt. Peter Heming (Music for You) and the Choir shared the stage with The Band of Her Majesty Royal Marines (Conductor: Captain E. P. Whealing) and Granville Whitcombe (tenor) who hails from Rhiwbina, Cardiff. The buses left at 12.30pm and on reaching Penygraig the late bus picked up Jenny for the first time! But she only travelled as far as the BBC! On reaching the Royal Sailors Home, Portsmouth, the choristers settled into the basic, but comfortable requirements of small single rooms, cosy lounge bar and a pleasant restaurant. After a buffet meal the buses left for rehearsals in the Guild Hall where choristers were met by bandmaster Captain E. P. Whealing, a very active and pleasing personality. The evening had all the ingredients of a fine concert with a magnificent hall, full house, famous band, ebullient conductor, pleasing tenor, Jenny, Choir and a relaxed John Cynan. The reaction of the audience displayed this was a rich and satisfying evening indeed. The evening’s amusing incidents included John Cynan starting a song only to find Jenny was sat in the dark; the bandmaster snapping his baton and twice John Cynan hit the microphone which left a magnified sound roar through the room. At the end of the last group of items the Choir was delighted as the audience AND the band gave them a thrilling standing ovation. On the following day the Choir left their accommodation at 9.35am, picking up the music staff at the Crest Hotel and singing “Happy Birthday” to Jenny on board.

### **Monday November 30<sup>th</sup>**

#### **HTV Culverhouse Studios, Cardiff**

The Choir was honoured to appear on another Tom Jones Christmas Show entitled “Born To Be Me”. The first “take” of the show was a sound recording at Culverhouse Cross and this was the first time the Choir had appeared there. A record 112 choristers staged there, including the entire Second Tenor section. The usual procedure took place with recording – balance, position, presentation etc. during all this activity in walked Tom Jones, dressed all in black. He was greeted with huge applause of the choristers because of their admiration of him and because he is an Honorary Member. The rehearsals continued with him and adjustments took place with professional ease by John Cynan Jones – and philosophically and humourously by the choristers.

## DECEMBER

### **Thursday December 3rd**

#### **St David's Hall, Cardiff**

It was off to Cardiff for a two-location filming exercise for the Tom Jones Show. Firstly in the foyer of St David's Hall and then in the Golden Cross Pub, a short distance from the hall. On this engagement choristers wives were "in on the act" and three buses transported them down. On arrival at St David's Hall, police were there to assist with keeping the huge crowds at bay. Choristers made their way through the crowds to the foyer where they were arranged around a Christmas Tree and the "switching on" of the lights took place with each bulb helping to raise funds for Viscount Tonypany. As Tom Jones entered the Choir performed "We'll Keep A Welcome" and after the introduction by Viscount Tonypany (who explained the value of the hospice and donors), Tom Jones suitably replied. The crowd's adoration lifted when his young grandson turned on the lights to rapturous applause! The Choir then sang "Jingle Bells" as they had with Tom on his 1969 Christmas Show. As the VIPs left the area the Choir continued to entertain the crowds with "O Come All Ye Faithful", "Hark The Herald Angels Sing", "Silent Night", "Myfanwy" and "Ar Hyd Y Nos". Also "Happy Birthday" was sung to Sam Griffiths! On the reappearance of the VIPs "Men of Harlech" was performed and at 6.45pm the Choir walked to the Golden Cross Hotel. With the arrival at the public house by such a large group of people, the inevitable queue was formed and such was the influx of bodies that around 20 choristers were unable to get in! Finally everyone was inside. The focal point of the filming was the bar and only 50 choristers were actually required, allowing some choristers to travel home. Finally after all the hustle and bustle of the filming with Wyn and Tom behind the bar, autographs, photographs etc. The buses finally left at 10.05pm

### **Sunday December 6<sup>th</sup>**

#### **St David's Hall, Cardiff**

For the final "take" of the Tom Jones Show the Choir travelled to Cardiff again, making their way to a "waiting studio" with a large screen so they could see the show. They were called for a rehearsal, staging etc. for the final take of clapping to a Tom Jones song. Then it was back to the ante-room to watch the show. A pleasant relief was the warm-up comedian Owen Money who had everyone's side's splitting with laughter. Tom Jones on the other hand was dancing an energetic number and split his trousers instead! He adlibbed the incident...red pants and all! The Grand Finale was filmed at 10pm, leaving within the hour for home. Today showed the other side of the glamour of television with 100 choristers waiting five and a half hours to appear on TV for three minutes and not making a single note – just clapping! But over the three days the recording, filming etc. was worth it. As one chorister stated, "even the bad times were good." Although not eligible to stage under normal circumstances, the following new members appeared on the sound recordings of the show – Stuart Hill (1T) and Brian Shillitoe (1T).

### **Wednesday December 9<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Memorial Hall, Barry**

The Choir returned to the Memorial Hall for a centenary concert in celebration of Barry Rugby Club. The buses left Treorchy at 6pm and one bus got lost, meaning the concert started slightly late. The staging of the Choir resulted in some rearranging as

two back rows were on the “blind side” of the conductor. He soon straightened the line out bu having the first row perform while sitting down! At the end of the first group the hall’s P.A. system began making noises and a Second Tenor had to hold the music stand to prevent it from collapsing. From there on the concert went serenely along, despite it being freezing cold on stage! Jenny, singer Heather Fryer and John Cynan coped competently with all the problems admirably. The audience’s reaction demonstrated its success with a sustained applause. With the presentation to the Choir President Mr Cliff Taylor of an inscribed plate to commemorate the centenary concert, the concert concluded at 10.20pm

### **Saturday December 12<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Town Hall, Walsall**

It was “all hands to the pumps” time again when the Choir returned to Walsall to perform in aid of the RNLI in a concert organised by Honorary Member John Tucker. The choristers enjoyed a buffet meal at the County Hotel, Walsall where “Happy Birthday” was sung to Fiona, the barmaid! A blushing barmaid is a rarity indeed! The reception from the capacity audience at the hall displayed their enjoyment of the evening. Pride of place must surely go to Jenny as she performed as an accompanist, soloist...and conductor! The reason for the latter being that John Cynan decided to sing a group of carols with audience participation and he played the organ while Jenny conducted.

### **Thursday December 17<sup>th</sup>**

At the rehearsal room the draw for the first Christmas Raffle took place. The Chairman thanked all those who helped make it such a successful venture. The privilege of the “first dip” was given to Jenny, followed by John Cynan and the principal officers had their moments of glory until all 20 prizes were drawn.

### **Friday December 19<sup>th</sup>**

With a buffet & dance social evening held in Ton Pentre Football Club and with everyone letting their hair down, the Choir’s activities for 1987 ended on a joyous high note.