

TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



BRIEF HISTORY 2002

By Norman Martin
Registrar & Honorary Archivist

FEBRUARY

Tuesday February 12th

At the rehearsal room the Choir was introduced to Edgar Taylor, a new member of the music staff as Deputy Conductor.

MARCH

Saturday March 9th

Codall Community High School, Wolverhampton

This was the Choir's first visit to Codall, a suburb of Wolverhampton, and for the first time the artist Laura Styler performed with the Choir. The performance brought a blissful. Joyous response from the capacity audience which included an Appreciation Society Member from Kersey. This pleasing concert, part of the Codsall Arts Festival was followed by a buffer in the refectory while the later bus went to Walsall Rugby Club following arrangements by Honorary Member John Tucker. Edgar Taylor made his first appearance on stage – as a page turner!

Thursday March 21st

The funeral took place of Ieuan Lawrence today. Ieuan joined the Choir in 1947 and was totally committed to it. He was a Long Service Member, Life Member and had been presented with a suitable inscribed wristwatch to make his 50 years of unbroken service. Many choristers and former choristers filed into the funeral in Blaencwm Chapel where “Gwahoddiad” was conductor in memory of him by John Cynan Jones. At Treorchy Cemetery the choristers paid their last respects to him with sadness in their hearts, but with a feeling of gratitude of having known such a gentle gentleman.

Friday March 29th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The 36th Good Friday Concert was again a very successful one. This was especially so for Trefor Jones (2T) on his first concert appearance. The conductor welcomed Clib Willis and Richard Mills, former choristers, who were in the audience.

APRIL

Saturday April 20th

Alban Arena, St Albans

The first visit to St Albans near London saw the Choir perform in the Albans Arena. The concert started at 7.30pm and making her first appearance with the Choir was Samantha Cole, winner of the Vale of Glamorgan Young Singer of the Year 2001. in the audience was Stanley Hood who appeared on the Cilla Black show last Christmas. Also in the audience was the daughter and family of W.J. “Donna” Griffiths and in memory of his huge contribution to the Choir “Myfanwy” was sung for them. Despite being unpleasantly hot under the battery of stage lights, the performance of artist and Choir brought tremendous applause, stamping of feet at the end of the concert.

Tuesday April 30th

At the AGM voting took place for the new Committee. The changes were Gwyn Morgan as Assistant Secretary and the welcomed return of Dean Powell as PRO.

MAY

Tuesday May 14th

Dennis Lethbridge was presented with his 21 years Long Service Certificate. He was not presented with it at the AGM as he was in hospital at that time undergoing major surgery.

Friday May 17th

The Cathedral, Hereford

The concert was before a capacity audience and from the first item it became clear that this would be something very special. The response from the audience was one of thunderous reception after each item sung and to show their complete enjoyment of the performance a standing ovation came at the end. The performances of Helen May and guitarist Gareth Rees-Roberts receiving similar acclaim that made this a truly memorable night. The success was made more remarkable as the guest accompanist, Janice Ball, had only one rehearsal with the Choir last Tuesday. The concert was organised by the Lions Club and a cheque of £8,000 was presented to Hereford County Hospital.

Saturday May 25th

William Aston Hall, Wrexham

The Choir made its first visit to Wrexham with a performance in the William Aston Hall which was a fine acoustical venue. The guest accompanist was none other than Jennifer Jones, the Choir's former accompanist. Despite a slight mistake in "Myfanwy", the performance was exemplary. Justine Platts and the Choir brought a resounding laudation from the delighted audience. The concert was in aid of the Bistre Methodist Church. There was quiet satisfaction among the choristers that the first visit to Wrexham was a great success and many new admirers were recruited.

JUNE

Monday June 17th

Pop Factory, Porth

Returning to the recording studio the Choir assembled once again in the Pop Factory in Porth. This was not a commercial, but a promotional recording of a new number called "The Millennium Hymn" which was a dedication to the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The composer was Vernon Hopkins, former band member with Tom Jones' group The Senators, and he will be taking it to various promoters over the country with the view of making the recording a successful venture.

JULY

Saturday July 13th

New Victoria Theatre, Woking

On arrival it was announced that Jack Moses had fallen on the bus and was taken to hospital. It was found he had suffered a hairline fracture of the pelvis. Fortunately he was able to return home with the Choir. The theatre was a part of an entertainment centre, and had the appearance of a mini St David's Hall. In such a fine hall the

engagement – a civic concert or Mayoress Mrs Mehala Gosling – was an outstanding success. The response from the ecstatic audience confirmed that the initial visit to Woking was a gratifying conquest. The success of the concert was due in no small measure to the soloist Fflur Wyn, a young soprano whose performance delighted the audience and Choir. There was a personal touch to the proceedings as the Mayoress was born in Pentre and her cousin, Peter Morris is a member of the second bass section. At the end of the concert the Mayoress presented the Woking plaque to the Choir. The Chairman presented a Choir plaque to the Mayoress.

Sunday July 14th

Brecon Beacons / Rehearsal Room

Choristers reported to the rehearsal room at 10am to make a sound recording of the Orange Telephone Company commercial, “Three Little Birds” by Bob Marley. The recording included soloist Dean Powell. At 1pm buses transported the Choir to the Brecon Beacons to film the advert at the Storey Arms. This took place in glorious sunny weather and here the new choristers experienced all the “ups and downs” of filming!

Thursday July 18th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The Choir was privileged and honoured to perform in a celebration concert with the Treorchy Comprehensive School Band, augmented with past players of the band, in Treorchy. The concert was to mark the retirement of Ieuan Morgan MBE who has been associated with the band for 49 years. The evening was a happy, enjoyable one with music abounding and tributes paid by Bethan Guilfoyle (Headmistress), Prof. Trevor Herbert (former player), Roger Morse (Chairman TMC). Presentation were made to Ieuan including the Choir plaque and the performance of “My Way” was dedicated to him. After the concert the stage was cleared and publicity photographs were taken for the Scotland Tour. The choristers sympathy, respect and admiration went to Stuart Hill who attended the concert although his father died early today. His attendance was on the insistence of his mother as it was his father’s wish he attended the concert.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday September 13th

Parc Way Hotel, Cwmbran

For the first concert after the break the Choir returned to Cwmbran for a performance in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Gwent Epilepsy Group.

Saturday September 21st

The Abbey, Sherbourne

The Choir travelled to Sherborne Abbey where they shared the stage with students from HM Royal Marines School of Music, Portsmouth, soprano Kim Williams and tenor Ray Gilley. The large audience enjoyed the various types of music from the power and pomp of the band in full dress uniform, to the crisp soloists and the four-part harmony of the Choir. The proceeds were in aid of the Motor Neurone Disease and St Osmund Church, Evershot.

OCTOBER

Thursday October 10th

Royal College of Forest of Dean, Coleford

The concert was held before a capacity audience and their satisfaction and enjoyment were abundantly clear by their response to the items. This was especially so to Ros Evans and Bryan Davies during the solo items. The high standard of musical commitment coupled with the sense of fun they engendered left the audience and choristers weak at the knees with laughter. After the concert a buffet was served in the Conservative Club. The concert was organised by the Lydbrook Silver Band as a fundraising effort for their tour of Hungary in May 2003.

Thursday October 10th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The 21st Annual Concert was held with artists Richard William Singers who once again proved to be a most enjoyable comrade in song! It was a very successful concert and a memorable one for George Jacob as "Happy Birthday" was sung to him (75).

Tuesday October 15th

This was the first rehearsal for Janice Ball as the new Accompanist of the Treorchy Male Choir.

NOVEMBER

Saturday November 9th

Guild Hall, Southampton

The concert was in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the creation of Hampshire Youth County Band. The Choir and Band has a long association and it was gratifying to be part of the celebrations, particularly as the Conductor of the Band is Leighton Rich, originally from Treherbert. In such a fine venue, in such a happy atmosphere, the performances of the prize-winning combination were met with glorious ovations.

Saturday November 23rd

Town Hall, Dudley

The Choir returned to another favourite venue. With two soprano soloists of Justine Platts and Hannah Perins along with a full Choir in an excellent hall before a capacity audience. It had all the makings of a successful engagement. This was confirmed by the rapturous applause, physically and orally from the delighted audience. It was pleasing to see a former chorister, Geoff Kynaston, in the concert. The evening was organised by Dudley Rotary Club with the proceeds for the Ashwood Park Primary School for deaf children.

DECEMBER

Saturday December 7th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The final concert of the year was held by the Rhondda Appeals Committee for the Boys and Girls Club. Although the Choir has appeared in eight of these concerts this one was something special as they were conducted by Edgar Taylor