



The Choir visited the Phillip Island Cultural Centre on 10th October, to sing a concert for World Vision. An audience of around 200 people turned out, ensuring a good bottom line for a worthwhile cause.



Bern Carroll, whose international career as a singer spans more than 20 years, donated her services as a guest artist; the Shire of Bass donated the Hall free of charge, and the free afternoon tea was also provided by volunteers. A fantastic community effort all round.



Phillip Island photos: Lyn Brown

Great to see Simon Loveless back at the piano, too. He was principal choir accompanist for a decade.

The TOM award – the competition for the section of the month - is generally decided by setting all four sections of the choir to learn their parts in a new song. It went to the basses in October for *Working Man*.

The first tenors struck back in November, though, by mastering their demanding part in the Nigerian Christmas Carol, *Betelehemu*.

And now to the undoubted high point of this year.

Tom Buchanan, our Musical Director, had an idea to lift the profile of the choir, and to raise public awareness of Welsh Culture in our fair city.



google image

To this end, he proposed a free concert at St Paul's Cathedral, to be accompanied by a brass band (another Welsh touch), and to be

followed up by a traditional “afterglow” event (lots of informal singing, audience participation and optional alcohol).

Young and Jackson’s pub was chosen as the venue for the afterglow.

It is one thing to have a good idea, and quite another to bring it to fruition.

First step – get the Committee on board. It is the kind of event where there are large risks as well as gains.

Some years ago, the Greater City of Dandenong Brass Band helped the choir to celebrate forty years of singing at the Frankston Cultural Centre. Mark Carter, events organiser approached them, and they were keen to be involved here as well. He was also responsible for lots of the groundwork with the Cathedral. The wonderful Michelle Nguyen, our principal accompanist, also hit the ground running.

The Welsh Church in Melbourne was approached, and they threw their own considerable influence behind the event, and our magnificent patrons, especially Mrs. Tamie Fraser (who attended), weighed in as well. This was not an event that just happened. A great many people worked very hard.

Tom needed to rearrange and redistribute music for the band, or

have it done for them, as well as handling the myriad questions inevitably addressed to the ‘point man’. Mark Carter, our events organizer handled a stream of issues too, and made sure that venues prior to St Paul’s were able to be utilized as practice. Mark’s is a job that demands a great deal, and is largely taken for granted as long as it goes right!

Snap Printing in Dandenong South weighed in with lots of colourful posters, pamphlets and programs. Choir members used them for letterbox drops, coffee shop distribution and so on.

Geoff Selby, Ian Mackie and Greg Shoemark did wonders with the message on Facebook.

Bernie Rumble and Tony Dickinson, our foundation members, somehow appeared on Daniel Andrews’ Facebook page.



Most people found themselves going the extra few yards - maybe even the extra mile. And that's why it all worked. Because we all worked!

Phil Young, our Secretary had his usual heavy workload considerably bulked out, and choristers worked hard to master the music – City Chapter choristers even added repertoire for a spot of their own.

Here's a letter from Maurie Richardson mentioning some other input: -

"ABOVE AND BEYOND" AWARDS
When I had to pull out of pulling the trailer this last weekend because of a break down, Dom Xuereb had to chase around organising someone else to pull the trailer - from Bali. (Well done Dom. Absolutely "Above and Beyond")

Greg Penniciuk, fresh out of hospital had to get permission from his doctor to drive to be able to step in at the last minute and "save our bacon". (Well done Greg - also "Above and Beyond")

Mike McCormack rode in with us to help with the heavy lifting and he also got the keyboard and other equipment back from Young and

Jacksons while Greg and I enjoyed a well-earned meal. (Also "Above and Beyond")

Lew Wilson set up and packed up the sound system in the church on the day. (Also "Above and Beyond")

John Annable provided and set up his own speakers at Young and Jackson's. (Also "Above and Beyond")

Special mention to Phil Young who does so much in the background: like advertising and programs, etc., but is always one of the first to volunteer when something needs doing. (Also "Above and Beyond")

And to all those other members who always "roll up their sleeves" and help. Too many to name them all without forgetting someone. (Also "Above and Beyond")

I'm sure there are others to thank and to celebrate. Recording technicians, both audio and video were organized by real people, not by some mysterious outside force. Choristers personally invited other choirs, family, workmates and friends to attend. Choristers were polled and asked for a commitment

to attend some months ago. Fifty-six were on the risers!

The result was spectacular! More than 1000 people filled the Cathedral to capacity.



The audience at St Pauls from the choir risers

This was the largest audience the choir has sung for as an individual group, and most choristers were very energised by the occasion. The Band reported similar sentiments.



and here it is from the back! (Photo: Lyn Brown)

One bandswoman was heard to remark that we should all just pack and go tour United Kingdom. Jamie Lawson, the band's Musical Director, began by telling the audience that

this was the largest group he had ever played for.



Rehearsing - photo: C Manktelow

After the concert the choir headed over the road for the afterglow session. A minor glitch was corrected when Maurie Richardson finally got the piano placed – not an easy task given the dense crowd in the bar – and singing started, with many Melbourne Welsh members and the general audience joining in. It was loud, noisy, harmonious and a whole lot of fun.





Welsh culture indeed. And so home, after a remarkable day.

Wednesday 30th October saw the choir Singing in the Pub again, this time back at Kirks on the Esplanade.



Photo: Lindsay Richardson

We were joined this time by Cranbourne Chorale, now conducted by Lucas De Jong, a familiar face to Welsh music followers in Melbourne.



photo: Geoff Selby

The Conga line was a finale for Peter Allen's *I go to Rio!* As usual, Kirk's patrons joined in the singing heartily, and a good time was had by all. As can be seen below, there was a high degree of inter-choir co-operation. Tom Buchanan is leading *Senzenina*.



photo: Geoff Selby

It is the Australian Welsh opener for the night. A deal of help was evident.

And so to another of our traditions – a country weekend on November 9th and 10th, this time for return visits to Shepparton Lifestyle Village on the Saturday, and Swanpool Memorial Hall/Cinema on the Sunday. There was again a very good turn-out of choristers. (Twenty choristers and some partners opted to travel by coach, and to spend Saturday night at the Wangaratta Motor Inn. Michael Abernethy deserves a thank you for organising this bit)



Shepparton was welcoming as always. The choir sang to a full capacity audience of around two hundred people.



Afternoon tea was quite splendid, as indeed it was at Swanpool also.

For those of us with rural or semi-rural roots Swanpool brings a lot of memories to the fore. Most of our bus trips take us to provincial cities, or at least large towns. Swanpool is comprised of perhaps a kilometre-long strip of highway, with a general store/service station, a nursery, the Memorial Hall, the small cenotaph, a cluster of houses, some sports facilities, and a couple of churches.



The choir was fed at the nearby St Aidan's Anglican church.



Photo: Geoff Selby

Risers were placed before lunch, and the bus rolled in to a gathering audience which filled the hall almost to capacity. At Swanpool the choir was fortunate to have Jane Still sing as a guest between brackets of songs. She was accompanied by Heather Lloyd on piano.



As can be seen, the pleasant weather outside made lining up easy.



photo: Lyn Brown

And so to business!

After the concert, Tom Buchanan was asked to sign a memorial stool as a memento of the choir's visit.

He declared that the choir would be back. We hope so!



Photo: Geoff Selby

Singing in the Pub in November carried on the Welsh culture theme evident at St Pauls, since our guest choirs were Melbourne Welsh Male Choir and the Mornington Peninsula Welsh Ladies Choir.



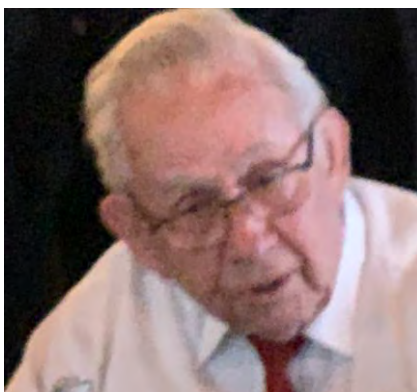
Melbourne Welsh.. Photo Lindsay Richardson

The two male choirs sang most of their items as a very large single entity, which made for a very powerful sound. The ladies made a very good counterfoil during their brackets.



Peninsula Welsh Ladies Choir..Photo Geoff Selby

One of our longest serving members had an 87th birthday, too. Happy Birthday Bernie Rumble!



Bernie..Photo Lindsay Richardson

Each year, Frankston City runs the Festival of Light celebration, when the big municipal Christmas Tree is illuminated. It is a community fete and a showcase for local artists all rolled into one. The Choir sang a twenty minute bracket of Christmas Carols to help things along.



December 11th saw the last public performance of the year with a Christmas special singing in the pub at Kirks on the Esplanade. The Choir sang from its Christmas repertoire, and the audience joined in a number of traditional Carols. The voluntary collection for November was presented to the Pub staff as a much deserved thankyou for their support.

The annual breakup was held at the Frankston RSL on 13th December. Over dinner, many choristers were recognised for their service to the choir.

Life memberships were awarded to: -

Barry Tucker
Mike McCormack
Noel Moore
Gerald Freestone

Twenty Year Service award
Gordon Donaldson

Ten Year Service plaques: -
Terry Read
Cedric Howard
Leon Knoop.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to: -

John Annable
Ron Marshall
Peter Murray
Philip Manktelow
John Evans

Tony Dickinson and Bernie Rumble were presented with certificates commemorating 45 years with the choir.

At 7:30 am on Saturday 21st December, listeners to ABC774 were treated to live performances of *Betelehemu* and *Lo How a Rose*. Greg Shoemark from our City Chapter was able to organise this small window of great publicity for our choir. Thankyou to Greg and to those choristers who rose at such an unappealing hour on a Saturday.

Warming up at Southbank. Photo Geoff Nougher



and inside... photo: Michelle Nguyen 1

VALE



Rowley Morris was a longstanding member of our choir. He was for many years

responsible for keeping attendance records.

Rowley had enduring and serious medical problems that seemed only to make him more determined to overcome them. He was a pillar of our choir, and a pillar of his church. We will miss him, and we extend our sympathy to his family and loved ones.

VALE



Gordon Donaldson was a member of the Bass section for twenty years, and was for a time the section leader. He was a great source of encouragement to those of us who were beginners. He was a remarkably keen tourist to UK, and the choir history contains diary reminiscences of one of his trips. Gordon's kindness and his irreverent humour will be sadly missed! Again, we think of his family at this difficult time.

Many thanks to our Patrons and Sponsors. We are most grateful to all who help to cover the substantial costs for a choir of our size, especially to Mr Sidney Baillieu Myer AC, Mrs Tamie Fraser AO, and Dr Haydn James, our Patrons.

Our Sponsors:-



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N.B. Deadline for inclusion of articles is the last day of February, May, August, November. David Brown. Editor. All correspondence to Secretary AWMC

COMING EVENTS

Wednesday, 26th February, 2020

8.00 pm Singing in the Pub, Kirks, Mornington. (Note no Singing in the Pub for January.) This event often books out early. Ph. 5975 2007

Sunday 1st March 2020 3.00 pm. (St David's Day) Gymanfa Ganu (a musical thanksgiving celebration) St Michaels Church, Collins St Melbourne,

Wednesday 4th March 2020
Cranlana Concert, 62 Clendon Rd, Toorak.

Wednesday 25th March 2020, 8.00 pm, Singing in the Pub, Kirks, Mornington. This event often books out early. Ph. 5975 2007.

And a brief footnote in this season of charity and goodwill! One of our number – Ron Simpson – always sings *Prayer of the Children* with a particular relevance to his own experience. In 1993 Ron was a member of a team who delivered medical and other supplies to the refugee children about whom the song was written



As can be seen, it is a memory which will not soon be erased.

We wish all readers of this newsletter a very merry Christmas and an excellent new year

