

TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



BRIEF HISTORY 1981

By Norman Martin
Registrar & Honorary Archivist

JANUARY

Sunday January 4th

Brangwyn Hall, Swansea

It was the 'record run' once again. The Choir attended the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea to cut yet another record for the EMI Company, under the same recording team of Bob Barratt and Stuart Elham. There was a change in the organist as Mrs Hazel Davies accompanied the Choir for the first time. As arranged of several items, Mr Bryan Davies was present and he accompanied the Choir in the song "I Believe". The Choir gave their first performance of "Dashenka", "Annie's Song", "En Route", "Taking Names", "Psalm 150" and "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind".

Thanks were expressed to all those taking part, especially Sam Griffiths who, although suffering from shingles, attended the recording for his solo items with the Choir. The Choir left Treorchy at 12.15pm and arrived at Brangwyn Hall at 1.15pm. A meal (soup, beef dinner, fruit and custard, tea) was taken at 5pm and the recording finished at 8.45pm. Emlyn Clarke (1T) made his first appearance.

Friday January 30th

Blackwood Methodist Church

After a period of two years the Choir returned to Blackwood, with a concert in the Methodist Central Church. Despite the dank, foggy weather, 500 people turned up to the concert, which with Mrs Jean Pearce (soprano), a local person, as one of the soloists and 82 choristers staging, the engagement proved to be a very successful one. It was organised by the Islwyn Borough Council. After the concert a convivial evening was held at the Pontllanfraith Social Club in the Sports Centre.

FEBRUARY

Sunday February 22nd

The Annual General Meeting was held at the rehearsal room at 3pm. This coincided with the first snowfall of the season, but despite this the meeting was well attended. There were no changes in the officers or committeemen, with Mr W.J. Griffiths being elected as Chairman and Mr Cliburn Willis elected as Vice Chairman. Long Service Scrolls were awarded to Reg Stephens (1T), Gwyn Jones, Harry Price and Vernon Thomas (2B).

MARCH

Monday March 2nd

Today was indeed a very sad day for the Treorchy Male Choir as the "doyen" of the organisation, Mr W. J. "Donna" Griffiths died. The tragedy has shocked the members by its sadness. Mr Griffiths, who was spending the weekend with his daughter and family in Reading was brought home as he was not feeling well. Mrs Griffiths took him a cup of tea in the morning and when she returned to collect the empty cup he had passed away. What can anyone say about the qualities of Donna that has not already been said? It is suffice for the writer of this not to say that "He was a gracious, dignified, unassuming and truly Christian gentleman."

Thursday March 5th

Today the funeral of Mr W. J. Griffiths took place. A very sad, yet in some ways, a proud day. Such was the popularity of Donna that, in order to ease the parking problem, Brewers kindly sent three buses for use by the mourners. These included many ex-choristers. The crematorium was so full that both chapels had to be used. The magnificent turn out of the Choir, their sincere singing of “Llan Baglan” and “Close Thine Eyes” left no doubt of the admiration, respect and loyalty felt by Mr W.J. Griffiths who had taken care of their interested as members of the Choir for so long. So from a sad farewell to the joy of knowing such a person; he will never be forgotten as long as the Treorchy Male Choir exists.

Saturday March 7th

De Valence Pavilion, Tenby

The Choir returned to the De Valence Pavilion, Tenby for their second engagement in aid of the Tenby Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. The Mayor of Tenby introduced the Choir to the packed audience, and during the evening messages of sympathy were expressed on the sudden death of Mr W. J. Griffiths, who was the Secretary at our last visit here. The concert closed with the presentation of a bouquet to Jenny and a scroll to the Choir expressing the thanks of the Guide Dogs’ Association to the Choir, on their contribution in raising funds for the association. A genial evening was then spent in Tenby Rugby Club.

Saturday March 14th

The Annual Dinner & Dance was held in the Penrhys Community Centre. The Chief Guest being Rt. Hon. T. Alec Jones P.C. M.P. On arrival at the centre every person had a glass of sherry and later proceeded to the main hall, where they were served with a splendid meal. Each of the after-dinner speakers spoke of the admirable qualities of the late Mr W.J. Griffiths, and voiced their views that the Choir should maintain the standard set by him.

One of the highlights of the evening was the award of Honorary Membership to the Choir to Mr John Tucker. Mr Cliburn Willis (Vice Chairman) thanked him for his wonderful effort in assisting the Choir to finance the Canadian Tour. He presented Mr Tucket with a scroll, the first one that has been presented to an Honorary Member, and the Choir’s membership tie. After the formalities the rest of the evening was enjoyed in the convivial atmosphere of dancing and refreshment. The buses (Brewers, of course) left at 12.15am and so ended a most pleasant and enjoyable Dinner and Dance.

Saturday March 21st

Colston Hall, Bristol

The Choir returned to the Colston Hall, Bristol with a concert in aid of the same charity – Parkinson’s Disease. In a rain-swept night the Choir arrived at Colston Hall to find that a part of it was prepared for a television performance by Sir Geraint Evans, to be recorded tomorrow. This restricted the capacity of the hall by there was still 1,000 people present. The Master of Ceremonies was Mr Alan Taylor, host of the television programme “Mr and Mrs” and several amusing incidents took place during the evening.

On two occasions he asked for the house lights to be “put up” and for the Polpero Fisherman’s Choir to stand up – on each occasion no one stood up! Again he announced that the oldest chorister, 83-year-old Will Roberts (2B0, had his grandson singing close to him. This was highly improbable as Will is a bachelor, so when he asked the grandson to stand, most of the members spontaneously stood up. These incidents added to what was a splendid evening, as the audience, which included the Mayor of Bristol, enjoyed the Choir’s first public performance of “Takin Names” and “En Route”. The late buses enjoyed again the hospitality of the RNVR Club, The Flying Fox.

Thursday March 26th

Community Centre, Abercarn

The Choir gave another successful concert in the Community Centre, Abercarn. Owing to Jenny’s commitment to the Cardiff show, Bryan accompanied the Choir. The packed audience heard of the Canadian visitors. Father John and his wife, who were in the audience and “Oh Canada” was sung for them. The late buses were welcomed at the Nant Penmar Club after the concert.

Tuesday March 31st

City Hall, Cardiff

With an appearance at the City Hall, Cardiff, the Choir gave their concert in the Cardiff Festival of Choirs Week. It was held in the Assembly Rooms and 450 people attended it. Owing to illness Mr Dewi Thomas, the tenor soloist, was unable to appear, and the Choir renewed its acquaintance with Miss Mair Roberts (soprano) who last appeared with the Choir in 1979 in the Llandaff Cathedral Concert in aid of the Fire Service. Because of the late finish both buses left immediately after the performance.

APRIL

Thursday April 2nd

St Paul’s Church, Newport

With an engagement in St Paul’s Church, the Choir returned to Newport. The proceeds were in aid of the Gwent Leukaemia Fund. Despite one bus turning up late, with an audience of 500 people, the organisers (Newport Round Table) must have been pleased with the donation they would be making to the fund. One unusual artist was the Bel Conto Handball Ringers – one lady and two men 0 which delighted everyone with their playing.

Friday April 17th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The Choir and the Parc & Dare Band gave their 16th consecutive Good Friday concert in the Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy. Again the guest speaker was Mr Alec Jones M.P. who was introduced as usual by Mr Clifford Taylor, the Choir’s president, to the usual “full house” audience. The Choir sang “Llan Baglan”, in memory of Mr W.J. Griffiths and Mr Gwyn Hopkins, and also the first public performance of “Annie’s Song”. Alwyn Evans (1T) made his first concert appearance.

Saturday April 25th

Central Hall, Chatham

Like Olaf Trygvason the Choir set forth to lands new when they gave their first concert in Chatham, Kent. Leaving Treorchy at 9.45am and with an hour's break (12.30-1.30pm) at Newbury, the coaches arrived in Chatham at 4.15pm. Tea (meat salad) was taken at the Masonic Hall where the Mayor of Cullingham welcomed us. Leaving the Hall for a seating rehearsal in the Central Hall, the choristers found the doors to the Central Hall locked. This caused comments from several members before the manager arrived to open them! The hall, a renovated church, proved to be an excellent one, both artistically and acoustically. The Choir had to change in the room at the back of the hall which was not to say the least – cold!!! The concert turned out to be most successful with a full and appreciative audience which contained no less than three mayors. At the end of the concert the Chairman announced that of the last seven concerts organised by the Medway Joint Welsh Society, this on was the only complete sell-out; in fact the demand for tickets could not be met and many people were disappointed. He presented plaques to Anita Williams, Sam Griffiths, John Cynan Jones and Cli Willis, with the usual bouquet to Jenny presented by a little girl dressed in Welsh costume. After the concert a convivial evening was spent in the Masonic Hall where many new friendships were made when the choristers met their hosts.

Saturday April 25th

At the assembly point in the morning the Choir sang “The Soldier’s Farewell” in appreciation of the hospitality they had received, then boarded the buses and started the return trip at 10.15am. This turned out to be quite eventful as a very heavy fall of snow made driving on parts of the M4 difficult, Both coaches were welcomed to RAF Lyneham where food was provided, the first bus leaving at 2.45pm and the other bus leaving at 4pm.

MAY

Saturday May 2nd

Whitstone School Hall, Shepton Mallet

The Choir continued the old Trygvason trail with their first visit to Shepton Mallet. The concert was held in the Whitstone School Hall and the proceeds were in aid of the parish church restoration fund. At the end of the concert the oldest chorister Will (the oil) Roberts (2T) was introduced to the appreciative audience. Silver spoons were presented to Jenny, Sam and Gillian Petherham Davies (soloist). After the concert the choristers were entertained to a buffet meal in the Shepton Mallet Centre which brought us to the end of a very successful visit to this very old market town.

Tuesday May 12th

The Choir members were delighted to see at tonight’s rehearsal, Brad, one of our Canadian bus drivers. He is visiting the country and staying with Eddie Rowe (1T). As a mark of our gratitude to him and Bob (the other one) he was presented with two of the Choir’s new sweat-shirts.

Thursday May 14th

A small, but possibly and important occurrence happened in the rehearsal room. Mr Bryan Davies took the tenor section in their early rehearsal.

Saturday May 16th

Tewkesbury Abbey

It was “debut time” again for the Choir when it made its first appearance in Tewkesbury. It could not have been in a better place as the concert was held in the magnificent 12th Century Tewkesbury Abbey. The engagement was organised by the Fiftyone International (Cheltenham Branch), a charitable organisation. With 550 people – a most appreciative audience. An enjoyable soprano, Josephine Jones and the Choir sang so well in this wonderful setting the concert was indeed a successful – if cold – one. After the concert the members were entertained to a splendid Ploughman’s Lunch at the Swan Hotel. After the seating rehearsal this evening the Secretary called a special committee meeting, which was held in the rear of the Abbey. A possible visit to Strasbourg in September was discussed.

Tuesday May 19th

On the Brian Matthew’s BBC Show around midnight tonight, Mr John Davies (Publicity Officer) was interviewed regarding the Treorchy Male Choir. Mr Matthew’s interest was aroused by the publication of the article about the Choir in the magazine “Choral” as it was the first time an amateur organisation had been featured in the magazine. John Davies handled the interview extremely well and was a credit to the Choir and the community, but mainly to himself. “Dafydd y Garreg Wen” and Bruckner’s “Ave Maria” were played to display the Choir’s versatility, and these brought excellent comments from Mr Matthews.

Wednesday May 20th

Llandaff Cathedral

It was a return visit to Llandaff Cathedral with a concert in aid of the National Association of Mental Health (MIND) Wales Fund. For a change the Choir’s items were introduced by Nia Rhosier, a member of the committee, from notes supplied by Mr John Cynan Jones. These she delivered with charm and dignity. The full house audience enjoyed a fine concert as well as giving a financial boost to the fund. The Choir gave its first performance of “Lander Kennung” by Grief. Sympathy is extended to Ken Simcox (2T) who was late on arriving and was unfortunately locked in one of the Cathedral Rooms for two hours and missed the performance!

JUNE

Saturday June 6th

Ebenezer Chapel, Gorseinon

It was “into the lions’ den” with a concert in Ebenezer Chapel, Gorseinon. The concert was at the invitation of the Pontarddulais Male Choir who were celebrating their 1st Anniversary. The Chairman, Professor Ieuan Williams, who was the President of the Choir, spoke of the value of friendship which greatly assists a Choir on the road to success, and illustrated this with the example of close continuing friendship of the two choirs which has existed over many years. With the church full to capacity the Choir gave a most impressive concert at its debut in Gorseinon. The proceeds of the concert were donated to the Gorseinon Branch of the mentally handicapped. After the concert the late buses were entertained by members of the “Bont” Choir in the local nightclub. When leaving the club, the bus was manouevering to get out when a most

earth-shattering noise occurred. The reason for this was obvious when the branch of a tree shattered a window on the bus. It was truly a “fresh-air” ride home.

Saturday June 13th

The Abbey, Dorchester

“And it was Treorchy Male Choir bussing along the motorway wide”, to paraphrase Greig, when the Choir made its first visit to Dorchester in Oxfordshire. Leaving Treorchy at 3.45pm on a warm sunny day and travelling merrily along the motorway when suddenly a warning sound in Elwyn’s bus showed that everything was not well. This was diagnosed as “water trouble” and the period of time to put it right made the arrival at Dorchester a little late, with the concert starting at 7.45pm instead of 7.30pm. This was held in the beautiful Dorchester Abbey and was organised by the Wallingford and District Round Table.

With a capacity audience of 550 the concert rose £1,000 plus for local charities and they enjoyed a splendid concert. The Choir gave its first public performance of “Psalm 150”, In contrast to this Sam Griffiths was giving his 250th performance as soloist in the Choir engagements. At the end of the evening’s concert a pennant embossed with the Round Table emblem was presented to Mr John Cynan Jones. After the concert the members were entertained to a chicken buffet in the church hall, one bus leaving at 11.15pm and the other at 12.30pm, arriving home in the early hours of Sunday morning.

Saturday June 27th

Alpha Presbyterian Church, Builth Wells

It was “into regions unknown” again when the Choir made its first appearance in Builth Wells. The concert was held in the splendid Alpha Presbyterian Church and the proceeds were in aid of the local cricket club. It had to happen some time or other....one chorister forgot his bow tie and frill! This doubtful honour fell on Haydn Erasmus (1B). After the concert, which proved a successful debut, a convivial evening was spent in the cricket club.

Sunday June 28th

St George’s Church, Cwmparc

The Choir was privileged to be invited to appear at the Civic Sunday Service in St George’s Church, Cwmparc for the Mayor of the Rhondda, Cllr Miss Alice M. Boxall.

JULY

Saturday July 4th

Bishops Cleeve School

On Wimbledon Mens’ Singles Championship, when McEnroe beat Borg four sets to one, the Choir travelled to give their third concert in Bishops Cleeve. The arrangements were as previous visits. A concert in the school, food and refreshments after the concert at the Hotel De La Bere. A pleasant engagement where members met many old friends. It also marked the first appearance of R. Griffiths (2T) since his illness. At the invitation of the organisers of the concert, Marcelle and Norman, a lady from Bruges, Belgium came just to hear the Choir. Some supporter!!!

Tuesday July 7th

At tonight's rehearsal, the Choir showed tangible evidence of their appreciation of Sam Griffiths' wonderful record of 250 appearances as solo artists, achieved in the Dorchester Concert. Also his very many appearances as Choir soloist in concerts, broadcasts, television and on records by making a presentation to him. Mr Cly Willis (Vice Chairman) called firstly upon Mr John Haydn Davies. Mr Davies spoke of the early days of Sam as a singer and expressed his appreciation of him as a person and a singer. Mr John Cynan Jones equated Sam to G. Boycott, Yorkshire and England batsman, for his tenacity and single mindedness of purpose to enhance his quality of singing and the enjoyment of a Treorchy Male Choir concert. Mr Willis, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Sam for his readiness to perform as a soloist, which made the work of the Secretary, Mr Islwyn Morgan, a lot easier.

Mr Cliff Taylor (President) spoke of the pleasure Sam had given to very many people, not only in this country, but across the world. He then presented Sam with a cut glass set, decanter and four glasses. Sam responded by stating that he was proud to be a member of the Choir, for without it he would never have performed in so many places. He expressed his thanks to all the people that had helped and encouraged him, Mr John Haydn Davies, Mr Tom Jones, Mr John Cynan Jones, Miss Jennifer Jones and the later Mr W.J.Griffiths. He also stated that without the co-operation of his wife and family this night would not have been possible. He sat down to the Choir singing "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow". With his family present in the rehearsal room it was indeed a night to remember for Sam.

Thursday July 9th

Brecon Cathedral

The Choir paid a return visit to Brecon to perform at Brecon Cathedral's July Festival. The capacity audience heard for the first time the singing of the "Psalm 150" with organ and piano accompaniment, and very effective it proved to be.

Saturday July 18th

Civic Hall, Bedworth

The Choir returned to the Civic Hall in Bedworth. Despite a small Choir the concert was a successful one with soprano Josephine Jones being an outstanding success.

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday September 8th

A dedication service was held in the rehearsal room in memory of Mr W.J. "Donna" Griffiths, Mr Gwynne Williams and Mr Tom Jones. The Choir showcase was dedicated to their memory and Mr John Haydn Davies, Mr Cliff Taylor and Mr John Cynan Jones each spoke of their dignity and emotion on the value of them to the Choir. The service was discreetly run by Mr C Willis (Vice Chairman). Many members of the public and former choristers were present to share this most moving service. Indeed it was a credit to their memory and will live in the minds of the choristers as being a touching tribute to these very fine people.

Saturday September 12th

Tabernacle Chapel, Aberavon

The Choir re-appeared in Aberavon with a repeat concert in the Tabernacle Chapel in aid of the RNLI as in 1976. Owing to illness Sam Griffiths was unable to attend, so Josephine Jones carried the flag by performing extra items. The concert started with Mr John Cynan Jones facing the Choir, so when he decided to face the audience after the first group, the Choir had to change its position – this being done with the minimum of disturbance and time. Lansom John (1B) and John Broom (2B) made their initial concert appearance.

Tuesday September 15th

Last Sunday (September 13th), Mr Venon Thomas (2T) passed away. He was a Long Service member of the Choir and his loss will be sadly felt. Mr John Cynan Jones spoke of the qualities of Vernon, of his faithfulness to the Choir; in his attendance of rehearsals and concerts, indeed not to stop at the Merlin Bridge will seem strange for some time to come. His dedication to the Choir, was an inspiration to us all and he will be remembered with affection and respect.

Thursday September 17th

The funeral of Mr Vernon Thomas took place today. The funeral service was held in Coedpenmaen Baptist Church. At the service the choristers sang “Rhys” and “Close Thine Eyes” and at the Crematorium “Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi” was performed in memory, respect and admiration to a very fine person and faithful chorister. In the evening the Choir returned to Neath after a period of 11 years to sing in St David’s Church. This concert was not one of the best given by there Choir and will be remembered for the mistake in “Psalm 150”. The “Battle Hymn” was sung in memory of Vernon Thomas. The proceeds were in aid of the Childrens’ Society, Church of Wales.

Thursday September 24th – Sunday September 27th

Tour of Strasbourg

OCTOBER

Saturday October 3rd

Christ Church, Clevedon

The Choir made its first appearance in Clevedon with a concert in the very fine Christ Church. The proceeds were in aid of the Bible Translation into Modern Ethnic for people in a certain part of Nigeria. From the contribution of a “full house” audience the fund swelled to £2,500! Church Church was opposite the Clevedon Bowling Club, whose famous member is D.J. Bryant CBE, world champion. The choristers were entertained in the Liberal Club after the concert.

Thursday October 15th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The Choir was, once again, privileged to be invited to give a concert in celebration of the centenary of St David’s Church. Ton Pentre at the Park & Dare Hall tonight. This was the first time for many years that the Choir appeared in the Hall without a brass band. It was a splendid concert with Mr John Cynan Jones dedicating the hymns to Ieuan Davies (1T) who incidentally was in the audience. He has spent many months

in hospital and to William Jones (2B) who was taken to hospital this afternoon. Josephine Jones, the soprano, “brought the house down” with her comic song about the Choir.

Saturday October 31st

Cornwall Tour

The Choir set out to renew old acquaintances by spending another weekend in Cornwall under the protective wing of Mr Wilfred Cox. Leaving Treorchy at 8.30am, and after a good bus journey in pleasant weather, the buses pulled into the Lewdown Motel for a little refreshment for half an hour. They proceeded again and met Mr Cox on the outskirts of Launceston, where a stop of half hour was required to sort out the billeting arrangements.

The Choir arrived at the White Hart Hotel, Launceston at 1.15pm where the choristers staying in the hotel were allocated their rooms while the ones staying in billets enjoyed the hospitality of the lounge bar! At 2pm the Choir assembled at the Methodist schoolroom for a meal (meat stew, tart and cream) supplied by the NSPCC Committee. After lunch the choristers in billets met their hosts and the others dispersed all to meet outside the White Hart at 5pm for the bus journey to Plymouth.

Arrived at the Guild Hall at 6pm a short rehearsal was held and the concert started at 7.30pm. With a full audience, including the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, Arwel and Eleri Williams (artists), the local young musicians. Mr John Haydn Davies MBE conducted the audience and Choir in “Cwm Rhondda” and Mr Cox did his usual presentations of £70 to each of the five local organisations (including three choirs) and £10 to five people (including the children of the army officer, General Sir Steward Pringle, who was maimed in the latest car bomb attack in this country, and a picture print to Mr J.C.Jones. The concert finished at 10pm and the buses arrived back at Launceston at 11.15pm where a first-class buffet was provide in the White Hart Hotel, after which it was up to bed – and off to billets.

NOVEMBER

Sunday November 1st

After a free morning the choristers reported to the Central Church at 12noon for a rehearsal. At this rehearsal the Choir met Hefin Owen, the organist, who would be accompanying the Choir in several songs. After the rehearsal the members went to lunch and returned to the church at 2.45pm with the concert starting at 3pm. Again a full house audience, the Mayor and Mayoress of Launceston being present, Arwel and Eleri Williams, Hefin Owen (organist), John Davies MBE conducting the audience and Choir in “Cwm Rhondda” and Mr Cox doing his usual presentation fo Mr Davies of £50 for Blaen-y-Cwm Chapel, a Choir record to each of the three married couples; to Mr John Davies (headmaster), a present to each of the 20 Rhondda children who visited Launceston during “sunshine” week last year; to Jenny, Arwel and Eleri, a stool; to Islwyn Morgan a book; to Cly Willis a pottery and jug and to the Rhondda Gateway Club, £50. After the concert tea was provided at the church schoolroom, where thanks and goodbyes were said. Then it was back to the White Hart to change clothes and on the buses at 6.15pm headed for home. As a final touch each choristers on the buses received a surprise gift of a pottery jug. Arriving home at 10pm, the Choir travelled 415 miles on the Cornwall weekend.

Saturday November 7th

Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-on-Avon

With an engagement in Stratford-on-Avon, the Choir paid a return visit to the Holy Trinity Church, the burial place of William Shakespeare. The buses left Treorchy at 3.15pm and on the journey the members listened to the broadcast of the Ipswich vs Swansea football match which Swansea won 3-2. Also on the bus choristers were issued with poppies as it was Armistice remembrance time. Arriving at 6.40pm, the members assembled in church for the concert. As at the last visit the Church was full, and the organisers of the evening, the Rotary Club, expressed their appreciation of this fact and stated that the charities they were sponsoring would receive a worthwhile donation to their funds. Sam Griffiths also remembered the Armistice occasion by singing "The Trumpeter" and the audience left Sam in no doubt about their appreciation of his thoughtfulness. After the concert and a pleasant meal, the bus left at 9.30pm, arriving home at midnight, after a satisfying engagement.

Thursday November 26th

Ebenezer Chapel, Tonypany

For the long service members of the Choir it was a return visit to the Ebenezer Chapel, Tonypany as the Choir's only other appearance at this chapel was in 1960. The concert was organised by the Tonypany Branch of the Loyal Order of the Moose, with proceeds donated to the Rhondda Disabled Group. The Chairman was Mr Alec Jones MP who in his remarks stated that the chapel was now designated as being of architectural and historical importance. With a capacity audience and 87 choristers the engagement was a successful one, despite, probably the worst piano that Jenny has ever battled with. It was so bad that J.C. Jones explained to the audience that the state of the piano forced him to make changes to the piano.

Saturday November 28th

Conway Road Methodist Church, Cardiff

The Choir returned to the Conway Road Methodist Church, Cardiff to perform in the first of a new HTV series called "Sing to the Lord". Arriving at the church at 4pm and a quick cup of tea and biscuit, the Choir assembled for rehearsals. This was slightly delayed while certain choristers received the necessary "make up"! The rehearsal began on a pleasant note as unknown to one of the HTV staff the Choir struck up "Happy Birthday" followed by its natural sequence "Why Was He Born." The person, Basil, certainly appreciated the gesture. The recording went very well and it was all over by 6pm much to the delight of the choristers and the HTV staff.

DECEMBER

Friday December 4th

Fairfield Hall, Croydon

The Choir set out for a return engagement to the Fairfield Hall, Croydon, and was an eventful day it proved to be. Leaving Treorchy at 1pm, the journey progressed ordinarily along the motorway and Norman Martin (2T) standing on the steps of the bus, just stretching his legs, passing away the time of day with Elwyn, the driver, and looking at the busy traffic when suddenly a tremendous "bang" ear splitting crash and a shower of glass as half of the windscreen shattered. This sudden inrush of air forced open the fanlight windows in the roof of the bus and these had to be held down by

some of the choristers. Other choristers busily brushed the glass splinters from Norman and it was sent that he had suffered slight cuts to his face and hands which were soon treated. During all this excitement Elwyn "kept his cool" (as fortunately his part of the screen was undamaged) and kept the bus on its proper course. Soon he flashed Byron in the leading bus and when both stopped the drivers assessed the situation. All the choristers boarded Byron's bus and Mr J.C. Jones boarded the car driven by W. Wells (1B) who was taking his wife to the concert and spending the weekend in London. Elwyn drove this loaded bus while Byron set out on finding a place to repair the damaged windscreen. For the next two hours the members cheerfully suffered a rather uncomfortable journey, arriving at the Fairfield at 6.30pm.

After a cup of tea and some "postage sized" sandwiches the Choir held a rehearsal until 7.30pm. The concert started at 8pm, progressed until interval time. During the interval David Rosser (2B) was taken ill and admitted to hospital. The concert continued and this half was recorded and would be broadcast on December 12th at 9pm on BBC Radio Two. Because of a technical hitch the "Jimmy Brown Song" had to be performed again near the end of the programme. The concert was organised by Bob Barratt, our EMI Record producer and with 1,400 people present and the Choir and artists in such fine voice, it was an unqualified success. The buses left at 12.15pm and after a short break in Membury Services they arrived back at 4.30am. Truly and incident packed day!