

TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



BRIEF HISTORY 1992

By Norman Martin
Registrar & Honorary Archivist

JANUARY

Sunday January 26th

The first engagement of the year saw the Choir travel to Swansea at 5.30pm and appear at the BBC Studios. The Choir made a sound recording for a new animated version of “Under Milk Wood”. Using the voice of Richard Burton, the film would pay tribute to the work of Dylan Thomas who used to broadcast from the very same studio. The music was composed by Trevor Herbert and as there were no lyrics (only humming), the recording of “Hymn” and “Lullaby” was easily undertaken. It was the first time for the Choir to appear in these studios and also saw the first performance of Wayne Phillips (1T), Cyril Goodfield (2T) and David Bailey (1B).

FEBRUARY

Sunday February 2nd

Andrew Badham took his first full rehearsal. The first “100 Club” draw took place with William Watkin as winner (£50) and Roger Arundell coming second (£18).

Thursday February 20th

The Choir welcomed the famous film and TV actor Brian Blessed to rehearsals this evening. He addressed the Choir stating his pleasure at being in Wales, especially the Rhonda where he felt quite at home as his mother was Welsh and he is of mining background. His two uncles were killed in mining accidents and his father died of the pneumoconiosis. His purpose at being in the rehearsal was the sound recording of an education programme for Radio 5 called “Up and Away”.

Tuesday February 25th

At tonight’s rehearsal voting for a Committeeman took place. It was a sad occasion for Ben Griffith (2T) who served on the Committee for the last 24 years, but felt that due to illness he would not stand this time. Expressions of thanks and gratitude were made to him and show their appreciation the choristers applauded him. The results were Bryn Howells and Gwyn Morgan (1T), Idris John and Frederick O’Brien (2T), Bert Stephens and Michael Jones (1B) and Alun Hughes and Gareth Evans (2B).

Saturday February 29th

Dorchester Abbey

It was a return visit to the Abbey in Dorchester after a period of 10 years. As with the first visit the Abbey was full which was gratifying for the organisers, The Cholsey and Wallington Preservation Society. The proceeds were for the maintenance of that line as it was the Thames Valley’s oldest surviving GWR Steam Branch Line. In such a venue, with a capacity audience and one of our earlier soloists, Gillian Petherham Davies singing as well as ever, the concert was most enjoyable.

MARCH

Sunday March 1st

St David’s Hall, Cardiff

The Choir appeared in a St David’s Day Concert in St David’s Hall, Cardiff with the Llanelli and Morryston Male Choirs, a childrens’ choir, artists and the BBC Welsh

Symphony Orchestra (Conductor Gareth Jones), making it a truly splendid affair. On such a day, in this venue and with an array of great performers, it was a thrilling experience for the audience. It was a long day with a rehearsal at 2pm and a concert at 7.30pm, but the end product made it all worthwhile.

Tuesday March 3rd

The Choir's AGM took place this evening. The only voting of the meeting saw Mr John Davies re-elected as Chairman against Alun Hughes and Frederick O'Brien. All other posts were unopposed. Six choristers received their 21 Year Long Service Certificates – Tom Pate, Bryn Howells, Ken Simcox, Rhys Thomas, Alun Hughes and John Callaghan.

Saturday March 14th

Victoria Hall, Hanley

The Choir returned to one of their favourite venues this evening. Although the Choir was reduced in numbers, those that were there responded with the challenge with a magnificent endeavour. This was matched with the ever ebullient contribution of John Jenkins and wonderfully aided and abetted by Marion whose playing, as always, was superb. Contributing to this infectious response were two splendid artists, Miss Susan Thomson (contralto) and Miss Rachel Thomas (harp) who made her first appearance with the Choir in Llantwit Major. The reward for these efforts was a rapped attention to the performances and thunderous applause at the end of them from an exceedingly responsive audience which resulted in encores

Thursday March 19th

Today the burial of Mr David Pritchard took place. David joined the Choir as a junior member, under 18, in 1954 and unfortunately had to resign in 1990 owing to ill health. It must have been gratifying to his family that so many choristers and former choristers were present. The service took place at St Peter's Church and the Choir's contribution of "Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi" was conducted by John Cynan Jones.

APRIL

Friday April 17th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The success of this engagement continues with yet another full house at the 27th consecutive concert. This engagement was notable as it was the first Good Friday Concert for John Jenkins as Conductor of the Choir and Laurence Harris as Conductor of the Band. Also for Bert Stephens who made his debut as soloist in "Recognition of Land". There were two unforgettable occurrences preventing two choristers from staging in the second half. Ben Griffiths made a gallant attempt to reappear on stage but arthritis prevented him from doing so.

MAY

Saturday May 14th

Bingham Hall, Cirencester

The Choir made a return visit to Bingham Hall this evening. It was "sing it again boys" – a repeat of the first visit with the most appreciative of audiences, giving a

warm reception to each item and in response to this enthusiasm two encores were performed. One unusual feature was that no National Anthem was sung! Unfortunately there was once again a problem with the piano which made a worthy entry into a “piano smashing contest”. As always Marion kept playing away regardless to good effect of Choir and artist. Mr Jenkins added to the amusement of the evening by introducing the artist, Susan Thompson and the songs she was going to sing – by they were the wrong songs!

Tuesday May 19th

At a special AGM held after rehearsal the motion, proposed by Robert Griffiths and seconded by Reg Stephens that “The voting procedure for election of Committee Members be changed”. This was defeated. Before the meeting Mr Davies, Chairman, thanked Roberts for his tremendous contribution as Choir Marshall.

Saturday May 23rd

Cardiff Arms Park

Today was the day! The World Choir Concert at Cardiff Arms Park. The concert was promoted by David Wyndham Lewis, together with the Welsh Rugby Union and the Lord’s Taverners, with all of the stars giving their services free resulting in many charities benefiting from the proceeds. Leaving Treorchy at 11am, the Choir reached the stadium amid all the hustle and bustle of buses, cars, police, stewards and thousands of choristers milling around, similar to a National Eisteddfod day. Eventually the rehearsals began at 1.20pm and it was clear that the sound equipment was of the highest order and the music reproduction was excellent. Despite the large number of 8,000 choristers involved and four brass bands performing together for the first time, the rehearsal went smoothly under the guidance of Owain Arwel Hughes. Unfortunately Dennis Lethbridge was taken ill and left for Cardiff Royal Infirmary.

Re-assembly time was 6.30pm for choristers and within the hour a considerable number of audience was present. After a lovely sunny day it began to rain together with thunder and lightning. This left everyone cold, wet and miserable. Suddenly some of the choristers struck up “Singing in the Rain” and soon the whole Choir joined in. This brought cheers and applause from the audience. The rain still poured and the thunder clapped, but the atmosphere was bright and cheerful. From now on Owain Arwel would be known as the “lightning conductor”! When the singing stopped another fun-raiser began as the Mexican wave started and went through the audience and it started an unforgettable night.

The concert was a tremendous success with everyone in the best of spirits from start to finish. Tom Jones, Gwyneth Jones, Dennis O’Neill and Oliver Sammons performed as soloists on this night of nights. Such an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment, tremendous singing and performing all provided a memorable concert event which will certainly live long in the memory. The concert was televised by S4C to celebrate its 20th anniversary and EMI will make a CD of it for general sale.

JUNE

Monday June 1st

Today saw the passing of one of the true-blue choristers, Roy Bobbett. Roy, over the last two years, had been in and out of hospital many times. Roy had knocked on the

Gates of Heaven many times but no one answered, but this time the Lord bade him "Enter thou loyal chorister". Roy joined the Choir in 1947 and had an unbroken service. He was a Long Service and Life Member and a founder of the Life Membership Committee. At the rehearsal on Tuesday night, Vice Chairman Meurig Hughes, Secretary Islwyn Morgan and Conductor John Jenkins paid tribute to the qualities of Roy as a chorister, family man and member of the locality. All who knew him sadly miss him and will keep treasured memories of him. After a short silence "Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi" was sung in his memory.

Friday June 5th

Today Roy Bobbett was laid to rest. The funeral service was at Carmel Chapel, Treherbert and it was gratifying to see so many old choristers turn up to show their last respects. Mr John Cynan Jones was there. John Jenkins sang "Speed Your Journey" and "Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi" while "Crimmond" was performed at the Cemetery. The bearers were Idris John, Fred O'Brien, Paul Evans and Bert Stephens.

Saturday June 6th

All Saints Church, Ammanford

It was certainly "down memory lane" time for the longer serving choristers as the Choir return to Ammanford for the first time since 1959. Leaving Treorchy at 4.15pm, arriving at the venue at 5.30pm, a short rehearsal was held and it was obvious the Church was not only beautiful but also a fine acoustical one. After the rehearsal a splendid buffet was served in the Church Hall and concert started at 7.30pm. The artists included Mair Roberts and an excellent tenor, Timothy Evans. The ease of singing in such a venue, resulted in a first-class concert which was shown by the response of the capacity audience.

It was a memorable engagement for two choristers. Firstly for Dean Powell who sang the solo part for the first time of "Unwaith Eto'n Nghymru Annwyl" which brought a thunderous applause from audience and Choir. Also Ron Waldron who made his concert venue. This act was announced by the Conductor to the audience. Mair and Timothy performed the duet from "Blodwen" which was a showstopper! Marion was at her superb best and John Jenkins oversaw it all with his professional efficiency. The concert finished at 10pm with the late bus enjoying the pleasures of Ammanford Cricket Club.

Sunday June 13th

Brangwyn Hall, Swansea

It was record-making time again as the Choir travelled to Brangwyn Hall for 10.20am on this gloriously sunny day. This was a combined record with the Morryston Orpheus Male Choir and Welsh Guards Band (Conductor Lt Col Peter Hannam). It was quite a week for the band as they appeared in the "Trooping of the Colour" yesterday and Lt Col Hannam was awarded the MBE in the Queen's Honours List. The day followed the usual pattern of takes, retakes, musical changes, packed lunch etc. The singing finished at 4.30pm and the choristers left with the band doing their solo contribution. The production unit was the Gordon Lorenz Team. It was a disappointment for the Choir as only 62 choristers were present. This meant a rearrangement with the band of "Sospan Fach" which was altered to "Ar Hyd Y Nos".

Tuesday June 16th

At the Special Meeting called by at least 20 choristers, under the constitution, the recommendation that “Mr J. C. Jones be appointed Vice President of the Choir” was passed.

Saturday June 20th

Albert Hall, Bolton

On a gloriously sunny day the Choir made a second visit to Bolton for a weekend engagement. Leaving home at 10.30am, the Conductor travelled on the late bus! With a short stop in Worcester the buses reached Bolton at 5pm. A short rehearsal was held at the Albert Hall which is a first class venue. The Choir walked to the Pack Horse Hotel, one of the De Vere Hotel chain. With a shower and quick change the concert began at 7.30pm.

With Marion playing superbly as always, but this time on a piano which displayed her talent to the full. There was Mair, singing with all her talent and raising to the challenge of a new venue and audience. All were under the influence of the effervescent John Jenkins! The thoughts are always how will it go! The response from the capacity audience, which must rank with the best the Choir has performed to, left no possible doubt of the success of the entertainment. The intensive listening and tremendous applause had a deeply satisfying feeling on everyone.

It was a memorable occasion for Dean Powell (1T) as it was his 20th birthday and the Conductor invited the audience to join with the Choir to sing “Happy Birthday” to him. The proceeds of the concert were for the Bryan Robson Scanner Appeal for the Royal Manchester Childrens Hospital. With the presentation of bouquets the concert finished at 10.40pm then back to the hotel for a relaxing time. On the following morning one bus headed for home while the other stopped at Walsall Rugby Club.

JULY

Tuesday July 7th

The Chairman welcomed Owain Arwel Hughes to the rehearsal room. He was there to conduct the Choir in “Kullervo” by Sibelius, the Finnish work which he will be conducting with the Choir and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Welsh proms in St David’s Hall on July 21st. After the rehearsal was completed Mr Davies made the announcement that Mr John Cynan Jones had gracefully and respectfully declined the offer of Vice President of the Choir. He was extremely pleased, and honoured with his appointment as Conductor Emeritus, and that this office was ample recognition for his service to the Choir.

Sunday July 19th

Henry Wood Hall, London

The Choir travelled to the Henry Wood Hall, Trinity Church Square in London for a rehearsal of “Kullervo” with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Leaving home at 12.30pm the Choir reached the hall for 5pm. The Henry Wood Hall was not all that big, but wonderfully acoustic, with a splendid organ. At the restaurant a buffet was provided for choristers, followed by the rehearsal which finished at 8.15pm. the wonderful Orchestra and Choir were conducted by Owain Arwel Hughes with John Jenkins keeping his ever watchful eye and listening ear to the proceedings. The

soloists Helen Field and Jason Howard were also present. Andrew Badham, the new Deputy Conductor, made his first appearance by singing in the Second Bass section! The buses left at 9pm with the late bus wetting their whistles in the wondrous Palace Hotel.

Tuesday July 21st

St David's Hall, Cardiff

Tonight's the night! All the hard work, dedication and pride was put to the test with the first performance of "Kullervo" in its native tongue by a British Choir at St David's Hall, Cardiff. Reaching the venue at 7.30pm the concert commenced before a large audience, which included Mr and Mrs John Cynan Jones along with Mr and Mrs Clifford Taylor. This was the first time for the Choir to sing with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and with artists Helen Field (soprano) and Jason Howard (baritone) singing in the Finnish language, there was an air of "relaxed tension". At the end of the performance it was made clear by the tremendous reception that the test was passed with distinction. The concert finished at 9.40pm and a relaxing period was spent in the theatre bar. It was a memorable first engagement for Huw Wade (2T) and Brian Evans (1B). A welcome return to the concert platform for Sam Griffiths also while Andrew Badham once again sang in the Second Bass section.

AUGUST

Friday August 14th

Today was the funeral of Evan McCarter who died so tragically last week. John Jenkins attended along with very many choristers. They sang "Old Rugged Cross" at the house and "Llef" at Penrhys Cemetery. There were four bearers, Wyn Davies, Fred O'Brian, Bert Stephens and Gareth Evans. The service at the graveside was shared by two ministers, Rev Handel Bowen and Mrs Adele Jones. So another faithful chorister was laid to rest.

Saturday August 15th

Grosvenor House Hotel, London

Leaving Treorchy at 3pm, the Choir stopped at Leigh Delamere Service Station where each chorister was presented with £5.00 from John Mallin. Before reaching London a "gold medal" was won by our driver who asked where we were actually going! The Choir arrived at the Grosvenor House at 7.25pm and changed before returning at 9.15pm for the performance. Following liquid refreshment at a nearby establishment the choristers gathered in this splendid building. The Choir's entrance on the stage (which in fact was a dance floor with small platforms for the live music) was quite effective. The Choir formed two rows and walked down two separate staircases, singing the chorus of "We'll Keep a Welcome" twice before reforming in their places on the stage.

The audience, all ambassadorial staff who gather each year for a reunion, were mostly American. When the Conductor was satisfied with the silence from the audience the Choir performed a 40minute programme with Bryan Davies at the piano, assisted by Wendy Jenkins. There was an early entry by the baritone section in "March of the Peers" and a little bit of confusion with the sudden repeat of the last chorus of "Waltzing Matilda" which Wyn sang the solo piece as confidently as ever. The reason for this item was a request by the organisers as next year's reunion will take place in

Australia. The performance ended at 10.55pm and the Choir left a local hostelry at midnight, reaching Treorchy at 3.45am.

SEPTEMBER

Thursday September 10th

Libanus Chapel, Treherbert

Another moment in the annals of the Treorchy Male Choir when Andrew Badham conducted the Choir for the first time in an engagement at Libanus Chapel. He conducted “Gwahoddiad”, “Ar Hyd Y Nos”, “Fantasia on Famous Welsh Airs” and “Comrades in Arms”. The Choir shared the programme with the Treherbert Silver Band with proceeds going to the band. It was gratifying to see such a large audience in support of the local band.

Saturday September 12th

Brighton Racecourse

The Choir made its first visit to Brighton with a performance at the Race Course in celebration of 25 years of American Express in Brighton. The buses left Treorchy at 8.30am and reached Brighton at 1.50pm, taking half an hour to find the actual venue. A short rehearsal took place before the Choir left for the Oak Hotel for 4.30pm. There was plenty of tight security there as once again the Conservative Party Conference will be held here. Remembering the bombing of the hotels during Thatcher’s Government, the security was evident. Choristers had two hours to relax in this excellent hotel before returning to the racecourse after a trip along the promenade.

This was a family open-air concert, where a covered stage was erected for the artists and excellent audio equipment in place to relay the concert. The stage was set up opposite the “finishing” stand of the course and people could come and go as they pleased during the entertainment. Under these very different conditions from a normal concert, the choristers gave of their best and the performance was well received. The grand finale of the evening was a breath-taking and magnificent fire-work display with laser beams and full theatrical effects as the Choir sang “Battle Hymn”.

After the concert food and a free bar was provided and a good time was had by all. On Sunday, after a hearty breakfast, the Choir buses left at 10.50am with one bus stopping at RAF Lyneham for the afternoon.

Friday September 18th

Gloucester Cathedral

The Choir travelled to Gloucester Cathedral for a concert. In such excellent acoustical conditions and with a large audience, the concert was a memorable one. Mair Roberts was back in the fold this evening and the Choir responded magnificently to the acoustics of the building. As the proceeds were in aid of the Sue Ryder Home in Lechampton it was gratifying when President of the Rotary Club Alan Williams announced the Home would benefit from £5,000 thanks to the performance. With the presentation of bouquets to Marion and Mair the concert concluded at 9.45pm and one bus headed to Gloucester Rugby Club where Glan Williams presented the Choir with a rugby club plaque in recognition of their excellent concert.

OCTOBER

Thursday October 8th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The Choir performed the 11th Annual Concert at the Park & Dare Theatre with guest artists Elisabeta Ghitescu who not only captured the hearts of the audience with her glorious singing, but also with her keen sense of fun. In the audience were the Penarth Male Choir and many overseas visitors. A memorable night for Jack Knapgate (1T) who celebrated his 72nd birthday. The names of Roy Bobbett, Evan McCarter and Sir Geraint Evans were given in the tribute performed by the Choir. John Jenkins paid tribute to John Cynan Jones who was in the audience for his considerable contribution to the widespread promotion and enjoyment of music.

Saturday October 17th

Town Hall, Dudley

It was “dashing” to Dudley time as the Choir left Treorchy at 3.55pm, arriving at the Town Hall for 7pm where tea was served before the 7.30pm start! It seems that in the Midlands the Choir can do no wrong as once again the splendid Town Hall was filled to capacity, which included the Mayor and Mayoress of Dudley and the warmth of their appreciation inspired the Choir to greater efforts. A very memorable concert for Dean Powell as he took four bows to the audience and one to the Choir! The artist, Susan Thomson, who has appeared previously, was on top form and the evening was a successful one. The concert was organised by Dudley Rotary Club and the proceeds were in aid of local handicapped people and poverty-stricken of India. The money will be used to provide homes for Leprosy Sufferers. Once again the Choir went to the “Lodge” for a splendid hot meal and the first bus left at 11.35pm.

Tuesday October 20th

Tonight’s rehearsal was taken by Andrew Badham and not only did he conduct but he also played the piano. The general consensus of opinion from the choristers was one of respect, admiration and expectation for Mr Badham.

Thursday October 29th

How time flies. For the senior choristers will remember that in a concert in Trerhondha Chapel, Ferndale in February 1958 a young tenor named Stuart Burrows made his first appearance with the Choir. He went on to become a world renowned opera star. At tonight’s rehearsal another young tenor made his first appearance with the Choir and sang “Bring Him Home” for next Saturday’s concert in Cardiff. His name is Mark Stuart – the son of Stuart Burrows. Will he follow in his father’s illustrious musical achievements? Only time will tell!

Saturday October 31st

St David’s Hall, Cardiff

The Choir appeared at the Wales Festival of Remembrance at St David’s Hall. A rehearsal was held with a meal break at the Masonic Hall on Churchill Way. It was then back to rehearsals and the ranks swelled by the arrival of a bus provided for the workers who could not make the afternoon. There was a sense of occasion tonight with a splendid variety of artists, Royal Artillery Band, comedian Bryn Philips, trumpeter Joan Hinde, Stuart Burrows, radio personality Robin Boyle, all performing

wonderfully in the first half. The second half was dedicated to the memory of all the fallen victims of war and violence. It was a very moving and poignant experience with the introduction of members of the Armed and Civilian Forces with prayers by the Venerable Graham Roblin OBE. The singing and spoken of “The Exhortation” was by the Choir and Simon Weston OBE.

“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We Will Remember Them”.

Laurence Bynion

The sounding of the Last Post, the silence as thousands of poppies cascaded down, giving a crimson glow, the sounding the Reveille, the Choir and Mark Burrows singing “Bring Him Home”. A truly thrilling experience indeed. The service ended at 11pm and the buses left shortly afterwards, with one stopping at Tongwynlais.

NOVEMBER

Saturday November 7th

Cheltenham Town Hall

Leaving Treorchy at 3.30pm, the Choir travelled to Cheltenham for a performance at the Town Hall in aid of the Lions. After a short rehearsal the concert started and in this magnificent hall with its splendid acoustics and capacity audience, the event was a resounding success. Marion performed beautifully on the piano while Mair sang splendidly. The Choir responded and absorbed the atmosphere under the baton of John Jenkins. This was the first engagement where all three Choir soloists, Wyn Davies, Dean Powell and Bert Stephens all performed. Not only was it a musical success but a financial one, with proceeds in aid of the purchase of a wheelchair-friendly ambulance with a hydraulic lift for the use of local disabled people. After the concert an excellent buffet was served in the Victory Club. A comical quote of the evening was from an elderly lady who spoke to Dean Powell and said the hall has “wonderful autistics” to sing in!

Saturday November 14th

City Hall, Cardiff

Tonight’s engagement marked the first full concert for Andrew Badham as conductor. The event was held for the British Council of Shopping Centres and Mr Badham must have been proud and delighted with his first full engagement as the performance was rewarded with a standing ovation from the enthralled audience. This tremendous response provoked an encore with another standing ovation and the choristers left the stage to rousing applause which didn’t end until the last man left the stage. The confidence and respect for each other, Conductor, Choir and vice-versa, was certainly enhanced this evening. With the ever-efficient Marion, the future of the Choir with such talented music staff, will be equally illustrious as its glorious past.

Friday November 20th

St David’s Hall, Cardiff

The Choir returned to St David’s Hall for a performance in a special anniversary concert. It was to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the founding of Cantorion Creigiau

and the Choir was conducted by their founder and only Musical Director, Mair Roberts. Sharing the stage was the South Glamorgan Training Band, consisting of children aged 12 or under and it was a pleasant sight and sound to see fifty children in their red and white uniforms performing to such a high standard. The band was ably conducted by Keith Griffin. As today is “Children in Need” the proceeds were donated to the fund and the audience showed their appreciation to the many performances of all three musical organisations in no uncertain manner. Andrew Badham conducted the Choir and combined items with both choirs and Mair as soloist. The concert finished at 10.10pm and a pleasant time was spent in the theatre bar before retiring to the Angel Hotel. Tonight’s concert had a special moment for Marion as she was the first pianist to perform on the new piano at St David’s Hall. It had only arrived at 12noon today and cost £45,000!

Sunday November 22nd

BBC Studios, Cardiff

After a period of 15 years the Choir returned to the BBC Studios at 2.15pm where they were addressed by David Wyndham Lewis, founder of the World Choir events. He told the Choir that the success of the first World Choir concert had resulted in the album coming 8th in the Virgin Record Chart. Owing to the strong connections of Mr John Jenkins and Atlanta, the Choir would be invited to tour there if possible as a future World Choir Concert will be held in Georgia. The purpose of the studio visit was to make a demonstration tape for the next World Choir Concert in 1993. The tape would be sent to all participating Choirs so they could learn their parts. Owain Arwel Hughes conducted the recording with Marion Williams as accompanist. The recording lasted three and a half hours and was followed by a splendid buffet and free bar at The Lodge in Sophia Gardens

Saturday November 28th

Fairfield Hall, Croydon

The Choir made their eighth appearance at the Fairfield Hall. Unfortunately the music staff got lost in London and arrived late at the hall, but after a short rehearsal and buffet, the concert commenced at 8pm. John Jenkins led the concert with Marion Williams as accompanist, Mair Roberts as Soloist, John Davies as Organist. The Choir performed magnificently. The exciting attacking forte-sound and the brilliant diminuendo was inspiring, and brought a tremendous response from the audience. The group of hymns were sung in memory of Sir Geraint Evans and after the singing of the last group Mike Sammes, who arranged the numbers, was invited on the stage.

DECEMBER

Tuesday December 1st

In the rehearsal room were members of the BBC recording team to make a sound recording for a television programme. Producer John Geraint Roberts explained the Choir’s role and “Llef” was sung unaccompanied.

Saturday December 3rd

Treorchy Cemetery

The Choir has appeared in a multiplicity of venues, but for the first time the Choir appeared in a cemetery. This was for the purpose of a television broadcast with Roy Noble as part of his “Noble Trail” for BBC Wales. This recording was on the subject

of mortality. On a cold, but dry morning, the choristers recorded several hymns for over an hour. Roy was present and during the lulls in the filming, had a satisfying rapore with the choristers.

Saturday December 12th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

After a busy three months of engagements the Choir reached the finishing note with a performance in Treorchy. It was a variety show and in the first half there were readings of Dylan Thomas, sketches by Frank Vickery, Gelli School children Choir etc. The headmaster of the school, Selwyn Jones, was also the evening's compere. The second half was taken by the Cory Band (Conductor Major Arthur Kenney) and the Choir. The engagement marked the first performance of "O Holy Night" by the Choir. The proceeds of the concert were for the Mayor's Appeal and Rhondda Boys Club. With the festive season prevailing and a capacity audience with everyone singing the carols, the engagement was a happy and joyous one.

Saturday December 19th

Tonight the Choir paid tribute to Mr John Cynan Jones with a Presentation Dinner and Dance at the Hillside Club in Tonyrefail. The Chief Guest was Gareth George, South Wales Regional Director of Barclays Bank, He was born in Gelli and knew many of the choristers, a factor which was reflected in his most light-hearted and amusing speech. The evening belonged to John Cynan and John Jenkins paid a moving tribute to him for his magnificent contribution to the musical welfare of the community. In his 27 years as Musical Director, John Cynan changed the image of the traditional male choir repertoire, courageously encompassing light entertaining which proved such an outstanding success and was soon followed by other choirs. Mr Jones received a £500 cheque for audio equipment he wished to purchase that would enhance his enjoyment of listening to music. Mr Jones replied with memories of ups and downs, laughter and tears, joys and sadness of his time. He expressed his pride and pleasure of being Conductor and thanked everyone for their support, kindness and encouragements. The evening was a complete success in every way.