

# TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



## BRIEF HISTORY 2006

By Dean Powell, Publicity Officer  
& Honorary Archivist

# **JANUARY**

## **Monday January 2**

The death occurred of Life Member Edmund "Eddie Ike" Evans. Eddie joined the choir in 1947 and only in recent years did ill health prevent him from attending rehearsals and concerts.

# **MARCH**

## **Saturday March 4**

Millennium Stadium

The choir was honoured to be invited by Dr Haydn James to perform once more at the magnificent Millennium Stadium. The performance was held on the day of the Powergen Cup Semi-Final which saw the London Wasps against the Leicester Tigers, followed by Bath Rugby playing against the Llanelli Scarlets. Once more the choir joined forces with the Bedwas Trethomas Machen Band. With rehearsals undertaken at the Dragons Mouth, the choristers marched on the pitch to perform for the Leicester Tigers on one side of the stadium, and the London Wasps on the other. The choir sang Cwm Rhondda, Delilah, Ole Time Religion and Impossible Dream. Following rapturous applause by the Wasps in particular, the choristers were allowed the opportunity to watch both matches from their seats.

## **Tuesday March 7**

Rehearsal Room

The Choir gave a performance of Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau for S4C's Newyddion programme this evening. The broadcast was held to promote the concert on Friday evening. Both Jan Ball and a representative of the Buy as You View Cory Band were interviewed for the programme.

## **Friday March 10**

Wales Millennium Centre

The choir's second performance in the impressive Wales Millennium Centre came just a few months following their debut there with the Royal Variety Performance. This time the choir accompanied the Buy As You View (Cory) Band (Conductor Bob Childs) in a concert organised by entrepreneur Lawton Phillips. Also present were the Blues and Royals Corps of Drums. The concert was held on the eve of the Wales vs Italy clash at the Millennium Stadium and the performance had a certain Italian feel about it with a number of songs reflecting the culture of the "other" Land of Song! Although the choir was set far back on stage, and the auditorium was far from full, the choristers gave a first class performance under the baton of Jan Ball. What made the evening all the more special was the fact that the choir's new musical director, Meuryn Hughes, was in the audience with his family. The choir and band excelled themselves and enjoyed a number of combined performances, much to the admiration of the audience present.

## **Friday March 25**

Treorchy Comprehensive School

The final of the Treorchy Male Choir Young Singer and Instrumentalist of the Year

Competition was organised by choristers Ian Reynolds and Tony Davies. Following months and months of painstaking preparations, the competition has involved seven primary schools in the upper Rhondda Fawr. The response to the competition was been quite superb and as a last-minute gift, Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council pledged to send the winning pair on an all-expenses paid trip to New Hampshire, USA. Many choristers, suitably dressed in choir blazer and greys, attended the grand final in the main hall of the comprehensive school. Fifteen competitors performed for the audience of 300 friends and families, while adjudicators Bethan Guilfoyle (Headteacher, Treorchy Comprehensive School), Craig Roberts (Conductor, Parc & Dare Band), Derek Holvie (Conductor Three Counties Youth Orchestra, Jan Ball (Accompanist Treorchy Male Choir and Dewi Griffiths (BBC Radio Wales) looked on. Dean Powell was master of ceremonies and ensured a cool running of the proceedings. Also present was Vice President Clive Thomas, President Brian Bates and Assembly Member for the Rhondda Leighton Andrews. The competition was outstandingly successful, and in true Oscar-winning style the winners of Bryony White and Shona Evans – both pupils at Penyreglyn Primary School – were announced. It was a first-class evening enjoyed by all who attended.

### **Tuesday March 14**

Meuyn Hughes, the fifth musical director of the Treorchy Male Choir, conducted his first rehearsal

### **Saturday April 8**

Cheltenham Town Hall

One of the choir's most regular concert venues during the past thirty years has been Cheltenham Town Hall and it was a great pleasure to return to this venue at the request of the Lions Club of Cheltenham. Their given charity which benefited from the proceeds of the concert, was the Acorn Children's Hospice for life-limited youngsters in the three counties of Worcester, Gloucester and Hereford. Leaving Treorchy at 3.45pm the choir coaches reached the venue by 6pm for a rehearsal with mezzo-soprano soloist Kate Woolveridge. The evening concert began at 7.30pm with Helen Roberts as Accompanist and Janice Ball appearing for the final time as guest conductor before the new Musical Director, Meuyn Hughes, took the helm the following week. This thoroughly enjoying performance began with Cwm Rhondda and included a selection of traditional choral favourites including Llef, Unwaith Eto'n Nghymru Annwyl, Lord's Prayer along with Gilbert & Sullivan compositions March of the Peers and With Cat Like Tread. The second half saw a performance of Easter Hymn with Kate as soloist and also the first performance on a concert stage of Haydn James's arrangement of Delilah, which had previously only been performed at the Millennium Stadium in 2005. Once again the Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Dean Powell. The reaction of the audience made it clear that this had indeed been a successful concert performance and the choir culminated in a performance of A Valley Called the Rhondda which was dedicated to David Green, the organiser, on his 70th birthday. Following the concert the choir retired to a local cricket club for supper.

## APRIL

### Friday, April 14

Parc & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

Tonight marked the first public performance of the choir under the baton of its new musical director, Meuryn Hughes. It also marked the fortieth anniversary of the first Good Friday Concert held with the choir and their friends of the Parc and Dare Band. Unfortunately the band did perform rather too long, which certainly did nothing to secure a firm friendship between the conductors of both musical organization. However, despite this slight handicap, the concert was heralded a tremendous success. As part of the performance the winners of the Treorchy Male Choir Young Singer and Instrumentalist of the Year Competition, Bryony White and Shona Evans, took to the stage and performed their winning numbers. Combined items between choir and band included Gwahoddiad, Ar Hyd Y Nos and Morte Christe. Much of the choir's repertoire included Welsh hymns and what was particularly touching was Meuryn Hughes's performance of his grandfather's most famous hymn, Tydi a Roddaist. The choir also gave rousing performances of Easter Hymn, Comrades in Arms, Fantasia and Llef, making for a memorable and enjoyable evening.

### Saturday April 29

St Mary's Church, Woburn

The choir's first performance in Woburn was held in aid of the Mid-Beds District Council Chairman's Charity, which was the Keech Cottage Children's Hospice. The soloist for the evening was mezzo soprano Kate Woolveride, with Jan Ball as pianist and organist, Meuryn Hughes as musical director and Dean Powell carried out his duties as master of ceremonies. The concert was a major success given the rapturous applause of the capacity audience. With such a beautiful acoustic to perform in, given the lovely surroundings of this parish church, it was indeed a great pleasure to perform in such a venue. The first half was largely dominated by Welsh hymns, followed by operatic choruses such as the Anvil Chorus and Easter Hymn, Once again, it was Tydi a Roddaist that roused the senses, which obviously impressed the conductor. The performance of Music of the Night was given despite a lack of a full rehearsal and the outcome was most enjoyable. The finale of Memory, Cavatina and My Way clearly displayed the choir's "rebirth" under the new musical director and following Cwm Rhondda as an encore, the choir left the stage with the sound of applause ringing in the ears.

## MAY

### Thursday May 4

Cwmparc Primary School, Cwmparc

Members of the choir were invited to attend a very special ceremony at Cwmparc Primary School this afternoon. It was held in remembrance of the 28 innocent victims of the Cwmparc bombing which decimated a street of houses in 1941. The choristers performed a number of unaccompanied hymns,

### **Saturday May 13**

The Pavilion, Weymouth

This was certainly a most memorable concert for the choir this evening as they made their debut performance of Meuryn Hughes's fantastic new arrangement of Nessun Dorma. It proved the pinnacle moment in tonight's concert. The choir reached The Pavilion on the Weymouth seafront at 5.30pm to be greeted by concert organizer Peter Hughes and the soloist for the evening, David Kidd. He proved to be a most able singer, although he performed with the use of backing tracks rather than live accompaniment which was somewhat different to the norm. The choir gave yet another first-class performance of its traditional repertoire of Welsh hymns, operatic choruses and light arrangements. The audience seemed overjoyed by the concert and with the rousing applause following My Way slowly dying away, the conductor launched straight into Nessun Dorma, causing a near-riot of applause from the obviously impressed crowd. Following the concert the choir retired to a local yacht club for refreshments.

### **Saturday May 20**

Millennium Stadium

Yet another return performance at the magnificent Millennium Stadium was due to Dr Haydn James and Rupert Moon. Today's big game was the Heineken Cup Final and with a capacity audience of more than 74,000, the choir, accompanied by the Bedwas Trethomas and Machen Band, gave a first class performance. For once, the choristers and players did not have to march around the pitch. Instead they sang on the one spot in the center of the pitch, while a host of other entertainers, including guitarists, singers and Can Can Dancers, performed alongside them. With performances of Cwm Rhondda and Delilah, the choir left the field to enjoy their seats in the Munstr crowd. A wonderful party-atmosphere pervaded the afternoon.

### **Thursday May 25**

Bethlehem Chapel, Treorchy

The choir, under the baton of Meuryn Hughes and accompanied by Jonathan Jones, made a TV broadcast of Gwahoddiad with singer Huw Priday.

## **JUNE**

### **Thursday June 15**

Rehearsal Room, Treorchy

On the approach to the Choir's Diamond Jubilee Concert, it performed Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau on BBC TV's Wales Today programme to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Welsh National Anthem.

### **Friday June 16**

Mansion House, London

Choristers left Treorchy at 9am for the journey to London. Arriving at the magnificent Mansion House in the heart of the city, they were welcomed by the organizers of the evening banquet, held to commemorate the tireless work undertaken by the British Red Cross for more than a century. The banquet was attended by the Lord Mayor and a host of VIP dignitaries with the choir supplying part of the evening's entertainment which also included a soprano, a violinist, pianist and dancers. However, the choir's

performance was intended to provoke a surprise reaction with the capacity audience – and it succeeded in doing just that. Following an afternoon of rehearsals with West End star Michael Ball, the choir quietly made their way to their seats along the upper balcony of the main hall. Hidden behind pillars and a make-shift barrier, they awaited their cue. As newsreader Carole Barnes spoke of the work undertaken by the British Red Cross in 1966 following the disaster at Aberfan, the choir dramatically appeared above the audience and burst into song. The reaction, as one would expect, was breathtaking. Their performance of Llanfair was first-class, but it was the performance of the sensational Nessun Dorma that proved the most memorable of all. For the first time at these gala dinners, the Lord Mayor demanded an encore. It was quite an occasion. As the grand finale number Michael Ball took to the stage and the choir re-appeared once more to support him in his performance of Love Changes Everything, before departing for home.

### **Sunday June 18**

Wales Millennium Centre

The Treorchy Male Choir Diamond Jubilee Concert, held to celebrate its sixtieth anniversary since reformation following the Second World War, was organized by Dean Powell. The venue was the magnificent Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay. The concert was sold out within just a few short weeks of going on sale. The reason was obvious – it was the marvelous combination of the two great musical institutions that took to the stage this evening – the choir and Welsh icon Max Boyce. This celebrated “Max Live With Treorchy” concert proved the most financially rewarding in the history of the choir. It also proved that under the baton of Meuryn Hughes, Treorchy was reborn, claiming once more its proper title as the world’s greatest male choir. Earlier in the afternoon choristers lined up outside the theatre for a publicity photograph and following a brief rehearsal with Max and alone, they prepared for the evening concert. At 7.30pm they marched on stage to rapturous applause and proved to the capacity audience how legendary the Treorchy name deserved to be. The first half of the concert was dominated totally by the choir with Dean Powell as master of ceremonies – resulting in plenty of laughter and good humour throughout the spellbinding auditorium. Some of the most magical moments included Tydi a Roddaist, Memory, Unwaith Eto’n Nghymru Annwyl, My Way, and then the most breathtaking of all – Nessun Dorma. The audience was ecstatic. With a short interval, the choir was able to enjoy the surroundings of the Arwen Bar to watch Max Boyce take to the stage. Dean Powell introduced him and the second half of the concert was performed totally by Max and his musicians. As could be expected, the audience was overjoyed with his absolutely hilarious anecdotes and songs. With the finale growing near, the choir joined Max on stage for a performance of Myfanwy and Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau, causing a riotous applause from the delighted 2,000 or more onlookers, With the concert concluded, choristers joined the VIP guests and other members of the audience for a few hours of social drinking and singing in one of the many bars in the WMC. The concert had indeed been an outstanding success. Happy Birthday Treorchy.

### **Friday June 23**

Royal Theatre, Kings Lynn

Following a very long and arduous journey to Skegness, the choristers were furious to discover that their accommodation was unready. With a quick change of plan they

were diverted to various hotels in the seaside resort before boarding the coaches to Kings Lynn. Sadly, owing to the chaotic arrangements of the day, they arrived 40 minutes late at the venue. Although soloist David Kidd had kindly performed the entire first-half of the concert, when the choir walked on stage it did not receive the happiest of welcomes. Compere Dean Powell was heckled as soon as he walked on stage, but ignoring those annoyed members of the audience, the concert continued. The choir performed for more than an hour non-stop, singing through its entire repertoire of concert music and concluding with Nessun Dorma. Despite the initial upset, the audience was clearly overwhelmed with the performance and the choir left the stage to rapturous applause.

### **Saturday June 24**

The Embassy Theatre, Skegness

Tonight's concert at The Embassy Theatre – its third performance in this venue – proved beyond all doubt that Treorchy Male Choir had a new musical director at the helm. This was undoubtedly the most outstanding concert so far under the helm of the Meuryn Hughes. After months of rehearsals and concert engagements, the choir and conductor are finally beginning to gel to create a first class team of music makers. Once again David Kidd was the soloist for the evening concert before a large audience. Dean Powell as master of ceremonies. The choir gave a first-class performance once more, winning the admiration of all those present. The selection of Welsh hymns, spirituals, folk tunes, operatic choruses and light arrangements, proved a real hit with everyone present. The final number of Nessun Dorma rose the roof! With a successful concert behind them they returned to the (unfinished) Royal Renaissance Hotel for a celebratory night of song.

### **Tuesday June 27**

Porth County Community School

To mark Veterans Day, choristers were invited to attend a special ceremony organized by Rhondda MP Chris Bryant. While Mr Bryant pinned badges to the many Second World War Veterans from the Rhondda who attended the evening, choristers performed a selection of unaccompanied items. They also combined with the audience for a performance of Cwm Rhondda.

### **Thursday June 29**

BBC Studios, Llandaff, Cardiff

Following weeks of rehearsals, the choir traveled to the BBC Studios, Llandaff to record the backing track of Katherine Jenkins's latest CD recording. The choir sang a special arrangement, written by Meuryn Hughes, of Green Green Grass of Home for the forthcoming release.

## **JULY**

### **Saturday July 15**

Victoria Hall, Stoke on Trent

The return visit to the Victoria Hall in Hanley saw the choir once more perform with soloist David Kidd in a concert organized by Peter Hughes. Sadly, the hall was not full, but the audience who were present were more than appreciative of the evening performance. Tonight marked the first performance of the Westlife hit, You Raise Me

Up, arranged especially for us by Meuryn Hughes. It is an incredibly emotional song, with a really strong meaning behind it. While singing the words it is hard not to think that it is meant to be sung to the Treorchy Male Choir itself for raising up the hearts and souls of so many people during the past sixty years. The choir performed Memory for one of the audience this evening, Nancy Wood, who originally came from Treorchy, was overjoyed with the dedication, but sadly she returned home following the concert and suddenly passed away. Over all the choir certainly made its mark on the audience, with plenty of applause and a rousing encore of Nessun Dorma and Cwm Rhondda – much to the delight of everyone present.

### **Sunday July 17**

The death of John Hopkins (1T) occurred today. John, who joined the choir in 1959, served on the management committee for more than twenty years. He was also a Life Member and served on the Life Membership Committee during the latter years

### **Friday July 28**

Malborough College

The Choir was invited to take part in the Malborough College Summer School Festival by performance at its beautiful Georgian college assembly hall. Prior to the concert every chorister was treated to a three-course meal in an adjoining marquee, before returning to the college for the evening performance. Despite the insufferable heat, the concert proved an outstanding success with no less than two standing ovations from the packed audience. Soloist Kate Woolveridge certainly charmed the crowd, along with compere Dean Powell, but it was of course the choir that shone through. Tonight marked yet another “first” – this time the first performance of Meuryn Hughes’s new arrangement, Over the Rainbow. That, coupled with You Raise Me Up and Nessun Dorma, resulted in the shouting, screaming, clapping of hands and stamping of feet from the appreciative audience. The choir left the stage victorious as they had once again “conquered” new venue and audience. A superb conclusion to the summer season of concerts.

## **SEPTEMBER**

### **Saturday September 9**

Malvern College Big School

At the invitation of the Malvern Branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, the choir made its first visit to the impressive main hall of the Big School at Malvern College. This magnificent auditorium, where some believed scenes from the Harry Potter series were filmed, provided a first-class backdrop to our evening performance. A large choir assembled at the back of the hall before walking down the main aisle to loud applause and mount the stage for the beginning of the concert. Opening with a rousing selection of Welsh songs, the breathtaking “amen” section of each of the hymns proved stirring to say the least. Our soloist this evening was firm favourite Kate Woolveridge who also joined us in the solo section of the Easter Hymn from Cavalleria Rusticana to open the second half. Despite a slight error in My Way, the remainder of the concert couldn’t be faulted, with You Raise Me Up and the tremendous finale of Nessun Dorma, raising the rafters in this fine building. To tumultuous applause the choir gave an encore of Cwm Rhondda before leaving the stage and a very happy audience behind

### **Saturday September 23**

National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

Gathering on the marble steps in the main foyer of the National Museum in Cathays Park, the choir performed at a special birthday party for one of its followers. Phillip Radcliffe, a planning officer for the local authority – Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council – who was celebrating his birthday. To mark his half-century milestone, Mr Radcliffe and his wife hired the choir and mezzo soprano Kate Woolveridge to perform a selection of items for them and their large banquet of guests. The superb acoustics in this fine building made the performance all the more memorable for audience and choir alike

## **OCTOBER**

### **Saturday October 7**

Royal College of the Forest of Dean, Coleford

The frequent performances in Coleford still attract packed audiences time after time and this evening's concert was certainly no exception to the rule. The large choir filed onto the stage at the college theatre to tumultuous applause. What followed was another thoroughly enjoyable evening amongst an appreciate audience. The concert was in aid of the Lydbrook Band and our guests artists these evening were the Lydbrook Brass Quintet who did a sterling job at entertaining the crowd. It was a night that marked the return of Martin Shaw's With a Voice of Singing after many years of gathering dust in the choir library. Laudamus was another highlight of the first half, while typically Tydi a Roddaist proved a successful climax before the interval. In the second half we gave a rather good performance of Easter Hymn, followed by Comrades in Arms and Speed your Journey. The light selection of music concluded with My Way, which inevitably required the magnificent encore of Nessun Dorma.

### **October Thursday 12**

Parc & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

Tonight would mark the choir's second Diamond Jubilee Anniversary Concert. In June we held the first, with Max Boyce at the Wales Millennium Centre. This evening would be that extra bit special. On the first hand it was held in our hometown. Secondly, we had invited a world-class performer to join us on stage. Her outstanding performance was our gift of thanks to the Treorchy audience who had supported us through all the trials and tribulations of the past sixty years. Dean Powell compered the proceedings as always and walking in front of the main curtain to set the scene for the night ahead. He explained that it was a scratch notice that appeared on the screen in that very theatre that helped re-form the choir, and with his loud welcome of "Happy Birthday Treorchy!", the curtain rose in the most dramatic fashion and the concert began. Choristers were quick to agree that the performance in Treorchy that night signaled one of the most magnificent and memorable in the sixty years history of the choir. The audience was totally enthralled and began applauding wildly after the very first item performed. What followed was an unforgettable night of song and laughter. It was also a night to celebrate those who made this choir great. Norman Martin and Islwyn Morgan were asked to stand for a rousing applause and during the concert Chairman Gareth Evans presented a gold watch to Peter Morris to mark his

fiftieth anniversary in the ranks. The choir filled the first half of the concert with time-honoured favourites including With a Voice of Singing, Llanfair, Tydi a Roddaist, Steal Away, Easter Hymn and Speed Your Journey. The light arrangements were sublime and when Nessun Dorma hit the final crescendo, many of the crowd leapt to their feet to applaud. Sixty years on and this choir can still conquer Treorchy. The second half was an unparalleled triumph. The choir's guest artists had flown all the way from New York for this very performance. Iris Williams has been known around the world for more than thirty years. Originally from Tonyrefail, her hit He Was Beautiful (Cavatina) made her an overnight success. Decades on and she remains in huge demand as a cabaret and jazz club singer while also becoming a firm favourite on the P & O luxury cruise liners. The Treorchy audience loved her and she had them in the palm of her hand from the very start. The entire second half was filled with laughter and music combined and as a finale number the curtains rose once more to show the choir ready and waiting for a performance of Bless This House. Then the most magnificent thing happened. The audience called out "We want to sing to you!" and suddenly an impromptu rendition of We'll Keep a Welcome moved the star – and many of the choir and audience alike – to tears. This gesture will live long in the memory of all who attended that special anniversary concert – one that would go down in history in the annals of the Treorchy Male Choir.

### **Saturday October 21**

#### Sherborne Abbey

A return visit to Sherborne Abbey occurred on the fortieth anniversary of the devastating Aberfan Disaster which claimed the lives of 116 children at Pantglas Junior School when the local coal tip slid down the mountain and engulfed them all. It was foremost in the minds of many choristers and the performance in the over-filled Abbey of Lord's Prayer, followed by a minute's silence, was one of the most emotional moments in any chorister's living memory. The concert itself was another tremendous success and one which resulted in an unforgettable standing ovation from the eight hundred or more who filled this beautiful place of worship. It was also the night in which the choir debuted their new arrangement from Les Miserables of I Dreamed a Dream. Mezzo soprano Kate Woolveridge was up to her usual high standards and delighted one and all. The concert, organized by Appreciation Society Member Ian Glasby, was held in aid of the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance Appeal who made a staggering £10,000 profit from the venture. The choir certainly had a memorable evening and left Sherborne as musical heroes of the valleys.

### **Friday October 27**

#### Diamond Jubilee Dinner and Dance

More than two hundred guests dined at the Millennium Suite in the Millennium Stadium to celebrate the Choir's Diamond Jubilee. This anniversary dinner and dance was organized by the Choir's Sub-Committee and proved an outstanding success for all concerned. The Master of Ceremonies was Dean Powell, who in his own inimitable manner introduced each of the guest speakers. Chairman Gareth Evans, Conductor Emeritus John Cynan Jones, Conductor Meuryn Hughes, President Brian Bates, Vice President Clive Thomas and Lord Lieutenant of Glamorgan Kate Thomas all gave short speeches to the appreciative crowd. They were followed by the comic genius of Mel Thomas, a long-time friend of the choirs who moved then to tears and laughter in an instant. His magnificent poems were a real treat and the crowd loved

every moment of his performance. The entertainment for the evening was provided by Jeff Hooper, the famous Big Band Singer and cousin to Dean Powell. With carriages leaving at 12.30am, this dinner will long be remembered as a happy occasion in the history of the choir.

### **Tuesday Oct 31**

National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

The choir was invited to perform three short sections of music at the private function in the marble foyer of the National Museum in Cathays Park. Held by the Enterprise Council for Wales, First Minister Rhodri Morgan was invited to give a few words in between the performance. The choir gave a memorable engagement to a largely appreciative crowd of onlookers. This was the first performance on stage for Nicholas Jenkins (2T).

## **NOVEMBER**

### **Monday November 6**

Katherine Jenkins's new album, Serenade was released in the shops and featured the Choir's performance in Green Green Grass of Home.

### **Saturday November 11**

Walsall Town Hall

A return visit to Walsall Town Hall was organized by Walsall Council and featured Canadian soprano Diana Gilchrist who performed at the Mansion House earlier in the year. A near-packed audience were thrilled by the choir's performance. Although they appeared reserved in the first half of the concert, they certainly showed their enthusiasm following the interval. The choir gave all the firm favourites, including With a Voice of Singing, Laudamus, Myfanwy, Tydi, Easter Hymn and Speed Your Journey. As always, the finale numbers of You Raise Me Up, Over the Rainbow and Nessun Dorma, raised the roof. It also marked the first performance for John Bowen (1T).. Following the performance the choir retired to Walsall Rugby Club for another memorable evening.

### **Wednesday November 15**

Savoy Hotel, London

Following on from the success of the choir's performance at the Mansion House earlier in the year, they were invited to make a return visit to London to perform at the luxurious Savoy Hotel. The evening was organized by the Variety Club of Great Britain and held to honour the world's greatest rugby legends. Before a packed crowd in the main ballroom, the choir marched on stage by 9pm to perform a varied programme including Nessun Dorma, You Raise Me Up and the newly entitled Savoy Medley of Swing Low Sweet Chariot, Molly Malone, Flower of Scotland and Cwm Rhondda so the audience could join in too. Following an incredible charity auction, which raised in excess of £50,000, HRH Prince Phillip, The Duke of Edinburgh came on stage to present the trophies. The compere for the evening was the unforgettable Times sports reporter Ian Robertson, who gave an outstanding comic performance. Gareth Edwards, Lawrence Delallio, Gaving Hastings and Willie John McBride were just some of the legends to join us on stage and celebrate their magnificent contribution to the world of rugby football. It was indeed a hugely prestigious event

and one which heralded another success for the Treorchy Male Choir.

### **Saturday November 25**

The Pavilion, Rhyl

The choir journeyed north to Rhyl for the third consecutive year and were greeted once more by a capacity audience at The Pavilion on the seafront. Tonight's concert was rather special for our conductor as his brother and family were members of the audience. Joining the choir on stage once again was tenor Rhys Meirion, along with soprano Sian Wyn Gibson and accompanist John Hughes. As in previous years the concert was another triumph for the choir. Although rather low in numbers they certainly gave off their best in a rather difficult auditorium to perform given its poor acoustics. However, despite such shortcomings, they performed once more to their usual high standards, winning huge applause for favourites in Tydi a Roddaist, My Way and Nessun Dorma. Following the concert one bus-load of choristers stayed the night at the 16<sup>th</sup> century manor house, Faenol Fawr. On the following day they traveled home via Shrewsbury, where they stopped off to view the plaque commemorating Arwel Hughes's composition, Tydi a Roddaist on Platform 3 of the local railway station.

## **DECEMBER**

### **Thursday December 7**

The choir was informed of the resignation of Meuryn Hughes as conductor of the Treorchy Male Choir

### **Saturday December 9**

The Chapel, Lansing College

Despite the sad news given to the choir that week, choristers were incredibly upbeat about their final performance of the year. The actual setting of the concert couldn't have been more perfect. The Chapel at Lansing College accommodated the capacity audience of 500 people with ease. Its glorious gothic architecture, overpowering in its scale, made this glorious building an ideal venue for a choral concert. It's almost cathedral-like atmosphere and splendour allowed the choir to display the power and supremacy over each of the items performed. However, the ability to give such a memorable concert was also more than ably assisted by its conductor. Tonight the choir was honoured in securing the services of Dr Alwyn Humphres MBE, the Conductor Emeritus of Morryston Orpheus Male Choir. With a little over an hour to rehearse, Dr Humphreys took the choir through its paces and with the opening bar of the first piece performed, choristers were assured that this would indeed be an unforgettable concert. The soloist once more was soprano Diana Gilchrist while Jan Ball accompanied both her and the choir at the piano. Once again Dean Powell undertook the duties of MC. The concert was held in support of the Sussex-branch of Woodenspoon, the rugby charity that the choir has so often supported home in Wales. Chairman of the branch, Ian Braid welcomed them on stage and so began a most excellent concert. The choir performed brilliantly under the baton of this relative "newcomer" to the Treorchy family. Displaying their professionalism in being able to adapt at such short notice, it was obvious that Dr Humphreys was impressed with the instrument on which he could perform. In such fine surroundings the Welsh hymns were tremendous and the delicate performance of Myfanwy will be long-remembered

by those who were present. The second half allowed Dr Humphreys to perform two of his own arrangements, I Dreamed a Dream and You Raise Me Up. It was the first time for him to hear this second arrangement performed, and he certainly displayed his appreciation and admiration to the choir for its magnificent performance. My Way created a huge ovation from the audience, leaving them stunned as Nessun Dorma and then Cwm Rhondda were performed as encores. The choir left the stage relieved that everything had gone well and rather humbled at being able to perform in this magnificent chapel under the baton of a first-class conductor. Both coaches retired to a local hostelry, while the late coach returned to the overnight accommodation provided in the Chatsworth Hotel, Worthing.

#### **Thursday December 21**

All Nations Centre, Cardiff

Owing to the choir's partnership with Coca Cola Enterprises over the sponsorship of the Junior Musician of the Year competition, choristers readily agreed to participate in an event for the global company. The Coca Cola Annual Conference was held at the All Nations Centre in Cardiff where thirty choristers were invited to perform a mid-morning concert for the delegates. More than 200 members of staff readily awaited our arrival. With a quick rehearsal – recorded by BBC Radio Wales – the choir performed under the direction of Deputy Conductor Janice Ball, who also accompanied the choristers on the piano. Dean Powell acted as MC for the event and the choristers performed a handful of items concluding with the Coca Cola theme song, Holiday is Coming, much to the delight of all present.