

TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



BRIEF HISTORY 2010

By Dean Powell, Publicity Officer
& Honorary Archivist

January

Saturday January 17th

The Anvil, Basingstoke

“A Glorious Parade of Music” is how our return concert at the Anvil Theatre in Basingstoke was advertised. Treorchy Male Choir joined The Band Of Her Majesty’s Royal Marines CTCRM for this combined concert in aid of The Rotary Club Of Basingstoke Deane before a packed audience of 2,300 people. The first concert of the new year was indeed another memorable event for all concerned and the rapturous and thunderous applause of the audience clearly displayed the over all success of the evening.

Following introductions by Dr Chris Davis OBE, the Royal Marines Band opened the concert under the direction of Captain C. A. Burns, complete with the Crops of Drums for dramatic effect.

Under the baton of Janice Ball and accompanied by Helen Roberts, the Choir gave a rousing selection of items to open its section of the Choir, including *With A Voice Of Singing*, *Tydi A Roddaist*, *Y Darlun* and *Battle Hymn Of The Republic*. It was clear from the first item that it was the Choir’s performance that seemed to receive the loudest and most enthusiastic applause from the many hundreds before us. Dean Powell performed his duties of compere for the Choir itself.

In the second half the Choir again performed one section including *Divine Brahma*, *From Far Inside The Shrine* and *Speed Your Journey*. A change of mood came with *What Would I Do Without My Music*, *Senzenina* and *Men of Harlech* before concluding with *Nessun Dorma*.

Although the Choir’s role was somewhat restricted, nonetheless its performance was quite superb and earned the respect and admiration of all concerned.

Saturday January 30th

Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa

A return concert to the Royal Spa Centre in Leamington Spa was organised by regular concert organiser Jeanne Gray. A total of 550 tickets were sold for the concert which was held in aid of Choir Funds. Janice Ball conducted the concert, with Helen Roberts as accompanist, Kate Woolveridge performed as soloist and Dean Powell carried out his duties of compere. It was also a special night for Second Bass chorister David Stanton who made his debut performance in the ranks of the Choir.

The Choir opened in its usual style, *With A Voice Of Singing* followed by *Y Darlun* and *Tydi a Roddaist*. One of the highlights of the first half was the introduction of *Battle Hymn Of The Republic* which seems to be gaining in confidence each and every time. Once again we ended the first half in classic fashion with the *Les Miserables* medley.

The second half opened with *Cwm Rhondda*, complete with its “amen” section, *Divine Brahma* and the *Duet from the Pearlfishers*. Following the *Abba Medley*, the

final section so the introduction of a beautiful new song called *Let It Be Me* which is already well-loved by the choristers, let alone the audience! *What Would I Do Without My Music* is also becoming recognised as something of a classic in its own right and following the *Men of Harlech* finale, we sang *Nessun Dorma* and *We'll Keep a Welcome* – bringing another memorable concert to a close.

February

Saturday February 20th

Fairfield Hall, Croydon

Our performance at the magnificent Fairfield Hall, Croydon was akin to “returning home” again after 16 long years. The concert hall was once a regular venue for the Choir due to engagements being booked by record producer Bob Barratt throughout the 1980s and early 90s. Many choristers well recall the evenings when composer Mike Sammes used to visit and come on stage to receive applause for his magical arrangements.

Tonight the concert was in aid of British Rugby Charity Wooden Spoon which donates all of its money for the benefit of disadvantaged children. Janice Ball conducted the concert with Helen as accompanist, David Geoffrey Thomas as organist and Kate Woolveridge appeared as soloist. This evening Dean Powell presented the concert and Ray Daniels performed as baritone soloist. The concert was opened by Television Sports Commentator John Inverdale, the President of the Surrey Region of Wooden Spoon.

There were very many highlights during the concert, not least of which was David’s solo performance of Vidor’s *Toccata from the 5th Symphony* on the large concert organ. Ray Daniels also performed the haunting *Music of the Night*. As always Kate gave a simply superb performance, winning the hearts of all in the concert hall.

The Choir clearly were the stars of the night with some simply magical moments including *Llef*, *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *Cwm Rhondda* and of course the *Les Miserable* medley. During the second half they opened with *Finlandia* followed by *Speed Your Journey* and the *Pearlfishers Duet*. The final section included *You Raise Me Up*, *What Would I Do Without My Music* and *Senzenina / Men of Harlech* before the usual encores. Another spectacular evening indeed.

March

Wednesday March 3rd

St Peter’s Church, Pentre

Choristers attended the funeral of Carole Harris, the wife of Robert Harris from the Wooden Spoon charity. St Peter’s Church in Pentre was doubly full to overflowing with mourners for this deeply emotional service in which the choristers performed *Gwahoddiad*.

Saturday March 6th

No. 8 Centre, Pershore

The return performance at the No. 8 Centre once more saw the Choir welcomed by a capacity audience. In fact the concert was sold out some two months in advance. As always the welcome from the enthusiastic local crowd was second to none and ensured a great evening for all who attended. Sadly, due to illness, Kate Woolveridge was unable to perform and so Iona Jones undertook the duties of soprano soloist superbly. Janice Ball conducted, with Helen Roberts as accompanist and Dean Powell as compere.

Once again the Choir gave a first-class concert with some of the highlights including *With A Voice Of Singing*, *Battle Hymn Of The Republic* and the *Les Miserables* medley. Poor Iona won't forget the night in a hurry either as she lost her memory in the middle of the *I Dreamed A Dream* section, but with sheer professionalism, carried it out with her "la la la"!

In the second half with had even further exceptional moments including *Cwm Rhondda*, *What Would I Do Without My Music* and *Let It Be Me*. However, the choristers themselves were anxious about one item in particular. Tonight the Choir introduced the *Take A Chance On Me* section in the *Abba Medley* for the first time. Despite the fast-moving pace of the piece, the excitement and determination to succeed was evident. In fact one member of the audience who sat in the front row was incredibly enthusiastic throughout the second half with her whistling and shouting!

It was with the sound of shouting and clapping in the ears that the Choir embraced the final section of songs, completed by *Nessun Dorma* which saw them reward us with two standing ovations. Another great evening indeed.

Wednesday March 10th

Porth County Comprehensive School

Treorchy Male Choir Junior Musician of the Year Competition Semi Final was held this evening at Porth County Comprehensive School. The adjudicators were Kate Woolveridge, Janice Ball and Tony Davies. Members of the Choir attended the event that saw 20 young children perform on stage.

Tuesday March 16th

Treorchy Primary School

The Annual General Meeting of the Treorchy Male Choir was held this evening. Life Membership for 35 years service was presented to Cyril Bevan and Alun Davies. Long Service Membership for 21 years service was presented to Paul Evans and Dean Powell.

Wednesday March 17th

Tonypandy Community College

Treorchy Male Choir Junior Musician of the Year Competition Semi Final was held this evening at Tonypandy Community College. The adjudicators were Iona Jones,

Janice Ball and Tony Davies. Members of the Choir attended the event that saw 20 young children perform on stage.

Sunday March 21st

Llantrisant Parish Church

Today was a special occasion for chorister Dean Powell because it marked the Ruby Anniversary of his parents, Carole and David. In celebration of forty years together, they decided to hold a Renewal of Wedding Vows ceremony at Llantrisant Parish Church. This deeply emotional service will live long in the memory of all who attended. Janice Ball agreed to conduct the Choir with David Geoffrey Thomas as organist. Almost half of the Choir also attended and provided a magical and inspiring sound. They performed *Gwahoddiad* as Mrs Powell walked down the aisle on the arm of her nephew. Following a moving speech by Dean, soprano Ros Evans sang *O Mio Babino Caro* before the Choir concluded with *Love Could I Only Tell Thee*.

Wednesday March 24th

Treorchy Comprehensive School

Talented schoolchildren throughout the Rhondda gave the performance of their young lives at the Grand Final of the Treorchy Male Choir Junior Musician of the Year Competition 2010.

A total of 20 children took to the stage at Treorchy Comprehensive School hall, which had been magically transformed into an atmospheric theatre, before a packed audience of 600 parents, teachers and supporters for the major event.

The winner of the Singing Category was Katie Leigh Jones of Alaw Primary School for her performance *Part Of Your World*. The winner of the Instrumentalist Category was Charlotte Lewis of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Ynyswen who performed *Solitaire* on the cornet. Young Charlotte also won the Grand Final in 2009.

Now celebrating its fifth year, a total of 22 primary and junior schools in the two valleys entered the competition whose patron is Welsh bass-baritone Bryn Terfel MBE.

BBC Broadcaster Roy Noble opened the evening's proceedings and Welsh icon Max Boyce presented the prizes. Both gentlemen are Honorary Members of the Treorchy Male Choir.

Over the past three months hundreds of schoolchildren have auditioned in a series of preliminary heats, judged by members of the Treorchy Male Choir. Two further Semi Finals were held in Porth County Comprehensive School and Tonypany Community College.

The finalists received a certificate, trophy and tickets for themselves and an adult to a day out in London to see "Oliver" in the West End. The two winning finalists of one singer and one instrumentalist each received £200 prize money, a trophy and the Treorchy Male Choir Trophy to be retained by their school for one year. As a special prize they will also enjoy an all-expenses paid trip to Euro Disney, Paris for

themselves and two adults. They will also have the opportunity to share the stage with the Treorchy Male Choir at the Park & Dare Theatre on Good Friday, April 2nd.

The Grand Final had an impressive list of adjudicators, including Joy Amman Davies, Conductor of Morriston Orpheus Male Choir, “Only Men Aloud” arranger and accompanist Jeffrey Howard, Conductor of the Four Counties Youth Choir Derek Holvey, Janice Ball, the Conductor of the Treorchy Male Choir and Dr Haydn James, retired Conductor of London Welsh Male Choir and the man who leads the singing at the Royal Albert Hall and on the pitch at the Millennium Stadium prior to every Welsh international match.

Saturday March 27th

Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury

Tonight marked the Choir’s debut performance at the new and impressive Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury which is situated on the banks of the river itself. This debut performance was certainly well received by the sold-out crowd of 650 admirers who clearly enjoyed every moment of the evening.

Soprano soloist this evening was Iona Jones, with Janice Ball as Conductor, Helen Roberts at the piano and Dean Powell as compere. The relatively large Choir was certainly filled with enthusiasm and with the opening bars of *With A Voice Of Singing*, they were assured of another great evening’s performance.

The entertainment value offered by such concerts was obvious as the audience rewarded each item with thunderous applause. *Battle Hymn of the Republic* was certainly one of the highlights of the night followed shortly afterwards by *Les Miserables* which almost brought the crowd to their feet as the first half concluded.

During the second half the Choir once again enthusiastically performed the *Take A Chance On Me* section of the Abba medley to rousing applause. Other highlights included *Cwm Rhondda*, *Pearlfishers*, *Let It Be Me* and *What Would I Do Without My Music* before the usual encore items.

Following the concert the choristers combined with the audience in the theatre bar, which was once a local chapel but had been incorporated into the design of the new building. Such acoustics certainly helped with the splendid post-concert performance!

April

Friday April 2nd

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

Once again the annual Good Friday Concert at the Park and Dare Theatre with the Parc and Dare Band drew in a capacity audience to our hometown venue. The 45th combined concert proved another outstanding success for the Choir with plenty of new musical items performed for the local audience.

Janice Ball conducted the Choir, accompanied by Helen Roberts and the compere for the evening was Dean Powell. The two musical organisations opened with a

combined performance of *Llef* under the baton of the band's new musical director, David Griffiths. The Choir then began their programme with firm favourites *With a Voice of Singing*, *Y Darlun* and *Bryn Myrddin* – noticeable that not everyone knew the words to the final hymn. With a selection of band items, the *Les Miserables* medley followed to rapturous applause and the final combined item of the first half was *Morte Christe*.

The second half allowed the Choir to indulge in its relatively new operatic repertoire with *Divine Brahma*, *Pearlfishers* and of course *Nessun Dorma*. There was also plenty of room for the light items in *What Would I Do Without My Music*, *Let It Be Me* and *You Raise Me Up*.

Also in the second half of the concert the Choir welcomed the two winners of the Junior Musician Competition to the stage. Charlotte Lewis and Katie Leigh Jones both gave splendid performances to the Rhondda audiences and were left dumfounded to receive standing ovations.

The finale item came in the form of a combined performance of *Battle Hymn of the Republic* which brought the evening to a dramatic climax.

Saturday April 17th

The Pavilion, Wolverhampton

The Choir's performance at Wolverhampton took place in the most peculiar of circumstances. The name "The Pavilion" for this venue has never been further from the truth for it was, in fact, a glorified workingmen's club! The concert, organised by supporter Jean Wright was in aid of the Wolverhampton Friendship Centre and logistically proved a nightmare to stage such a large Choir in a rather limited space. Also on the bill for the evening was the Woolverhampton Orpheus Male Choir, a small group of elderly gentlemen who clearly enjoyed the opportunity of sharing the stage with the might of Treorchy. Janice Ball conducted, with Helen Roberts as accompanist, Kate Woolveridge was the mezzo soprano soloist and compere for the evening was the inimitable Mel Thomas.

However, despite the shortcomings of the auditorium and setting of the evening concert, what couldn't be faltered was the unfailing support and enthusiasm of the capacity audience. As Treorchy burst into *With a Voice of Singing*, faces were aghast at the quality and splendour of the sound and so the thrilling applause began. Tonight also welcomed *Ave Verum* into the programme for the first time and was the first concert for tenor Keith Husband.

The first half concluded with the *Les Miserables* medley which brought much of the audience to its feet. With the second half opening with the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, the outstanding standard of performance was firmly set and the concluding section of *What Would I Do Without My Music*, *Let It Be Me*, *You Raise Me Up*, *Senzenina* (soloist, Dean Powell), *Men of Harlech* and *Nessun Dorma*, resulted in the most overwhelming standing ovation. The two choirs combined for a finale performance of *Morte Christe*, bringing this delightful evening to a close.

May

Saturday May 15th

St John's Church, Clevedon

Treorchy Male Choir's debut performance in St John's Church, Clevedon, welcomed a packed audience into this beautiful gothic building. Proceeds from the evening went to the Elton Hall Restoration Fund and the musical line-up included mezzo soprano Kate Woolveridge, conductor Janice Ball, accompanist Helen Roberts, organist David Geoffrey Thomas and Dean Powell as compere for the evening. It was also the first concert for first bass member Ceri Warren.

With the grand opening of *With a Voice of Singing*, the Choir excelled in the religious items which were befitting of such a quality setting. *Ave Verum* was exquisite along with *Lord's Prayer*. In Kate's solo section, her *Habanera* proved quite an event as she sat on the lap of the local vicar, much to his amusement and embarrassment! The evening also gave Ray Daniels the opportunity to perform *Music of the Night* and David gave another majestic performance of the *Toccata* from Vidor's 5th Symphony.

Some of the more memorable items included the *Les Miserables* medley, Abba (complete with its lively *Take A Chance On Me* section!), *Divine Brahma* and *What Would I Do Without My Music*. As a gripping finale the Choir performed *Men of Harlech*, *Nessun Dorma* and *We'll Keep A Welcome* to a rousing standing ovation.

Thursday May 20th

Parc Primary School, Cwmparc

A small selection of choristers met at Parc Primary School, Cwmparc to perform in the annual Memorial Service to those who died in the horrific Nazi bombing of 1941. With a large crowd of villagers in attendance, the service included performances by the schoolchildren themselves before a selection of items by members of the Choir.

June

Saturday June 12th

Amey Theatre, Abingdon

The Choir travelled to fulfil a concert in Abingdon which was a new venue for many choristers as the last time we performed here was 39 years ago in 1971. The travelling to and from the venue was filled with incidents. There were traffic problems on the M4 owing to road works which delayed the journey by 45minutes and on arrival difficulty was faced in finding the venue. The stage was compact and the time taken to seat the Choir left no time for rehearsal. Shortly into the concert the stage became unbearably hot which also affected some of the members.

It was a special night for Stephen Lawrence who was making his debut performance in the ranks. It was also a special evening for Jan Ball as unknown to her she was serenaded with *Happy Birthday* – a year since Australia! The song *One* was performed for the first time and owing to the unavailability of Dean Powell, the Chairman, Gareth Evans, fulfilled the role of Master of Ceremonies. The concert was held in aid of Rotary Charities.

Despite all the difficulties, the concert was extremely successful, as demonstrated by the overwhelming ovation from the audience. The travel problems continued in finding the afterglow venue, but the buffet was first-class. The greatest disaster of the day came when the coach broke down and a relief bus was sent from Pontypridd. This resulted in some choristers not reaching home until 7.30am!

Tuesday June 22nd

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

Tonight's concert in our hometown venue was held to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Ynyswen. It was an important occasion for the children and staff involved in the celebratory evening – and equally, was close to the hearts of many choristers whose children and grandchildren had attended the school. It was especially significant for Alun Davies (2B) as he is a past pupil.

A packed audience of proud parents and supporters filled the auditorium for the concert which heavily featured choirs, soloists (both singers and instrumentalists) and glee parties from the school itself. The opening performance was given by Charlotte Lewis, the cornetist who won the TMC Junior Musician of the Year Competition two consecutive years and recently won the Urdd National Eisteddfod. The comperes for the evening were Dean Powell (TMC) and Eurof James, headteacher of Ynyswen, who had taught Dean 30 years earlier in school

The Choir opened with rousing renditions of *Llef*, *Gwahoddiad* and delicate *Y Darlun*. There was also a selection of operatic items in *Divine Brahma*, *Pearlfishers Duet* and to conclude the first half, *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. In the second half the Choir raised the roof with *You Raise Me Up* and received rapturous applause for *What Would I Do With My Music*. To conclude, the Choir combined forces with more than 150 children to sing *Cwm Rhondda*, *Finlandia* and *Calon Lan* – resulting in a tumultuous standing ovation.

Saturday June 27th

Parc & Dare Ex-Servicemen's Club. Cwmparc

A small Choir was invited to appear in the main hall of the club to help raise funds for the Ty Hafan Children's Hospice in Wales appeal. Organised by Vice Chairman, David Bebb, the conductor for the evening was Helen Roberts and the accompanist was David Geoffrey Thomas. A fun-filled social evening took place with the Choir performing a selection of items and assisting in the fundraising activities of the organisation.

July

Saturday July 3rd

The Guildhall, Axminster

The Choir's return visit to the Guildhall in Axminster saw them once more perform in rather cramped surroundings on a one-level stage in intense summer heat! Despite the obvious set-backs the choristers soon settled into their surroundings and gave another outstanding performance to the delighted crowd of supporters.

The concert was held in aid of the Cloakham Lawn Sports Centre and featured the Choir along with soprano Iona Jones. Jan Ball conducted with Helen Roberts as accompanist and Dean Powell as MC. The Choir opened in its usual majestic manner with a performance of *With A Voice of Singing* and Iona joined the choristers on stage for *Y Nefoedd*. Other highlights in the first-half included *Battle Hymn of the Republic* and the *Les Miserables* medley.

During the second half the Choir performed *Nessun Dorma* as part of the opening set for the first time, along with the two items from Bizet's *Pearlfishers*. In the final section, other outstanding moments came in *Men of Harlech*, the beautiful *Let it Be Me* and our latest showstopper in *What Would I Do Without My Music*.

Saturday July 17th

Garrison Theatre, Tidworth

Tonight the Choir travelled to Tidworth near Salisbury for their first performance in the Garrison Theatre in Tidworth Army Barracks. Armed soldiers welcomed the Choir onto the base and they were quickly ushered to the vintage theatre. A lengthy rehearsal ensued when the choristers were introduced to the Band of the Prince of Wales Division Band and its conductor Capt. Sean Riley. Logistically the set-up was problematic as the Choir was stood on one-level on stage and unable to see the band playing below. So both conductors had to synchronise their conducting to lead both organisations in the joint items.

The concert was opened by organiser Martyn Evans, the nephew of Ivor Lock (1T) and member of the Queens Head Charity Fundraising Committee who have often welcomed the Choir to the public house in Ludgershall. Once again it was a pleasure and honour to support the charity close to all our hearts, Help for Heroes for wounded British soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. The evening also had special significance for chorister David Hughes (2B), who made his debut performance.

It cannot be said that this was a musical highlight of the year for the choristers themselves didn't enjoy singing under such difficult circumstances and have the worry of not being able to see the Conductor very well. It was also overly warm on stage and the audience appeared a long distance away.

Some of the highlights included *Ave Verum*, *Lord's Prayer* and *Men of Harlech*. Dean Powell, who also compered the concert, sang the solo item in *Senzenina*. Other items which received lengthy and rapturous applause included *Nessun Dorma*, *Les Miserables Medley* and to conclude, a combined performance of *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Following the concert the Choir relaxed in the familiar surroundings of the Queens Head for a buffet reception.

Sunday July 25th

Brecon Beacons

Treorchy Male Choir received the unique honour of being invited by Sky Sports to appear as the main feature of their ongoing Ryder Cup television coverage. This global publicity is probably the greatest ever enjoyed by the Choir as Wales prepares

for the largest sporting event to ever come to its shores. Therefore the Choir was indeed privileged to have been asked to make the television advert and credits for all Sky Sports coverage of the golfing tournament to take place at Celtic Manor.

Early on Sunday morning a Choir of 81 men met at the Storey Arms car park on the Brecon Beacons and travelled to a field owned by a nearby farm. The outstanding panoramic views of the beautiful landscape, dominated by Penyfan, made this the ideal setting for the filming.

It was a day of many “firsts” with the first performance for Nigel Carney (2B), Gareth Thomas Davies (1B) and Tim Saunders (2B). For the first occasion the choristers wore their black dress suits with black shirts and cumberband.

At 10.30am the filming started with Janice Ball conductor a pre-recorded version of Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau which originally featured on the 1968 EMI album, *Pride of Wales*. As always events such as this result in many different camera angles and “takes”. Lunch was even provided as the filming continued until the early afternoon. However, by 1pm the Sky Sports film crew felt they had sufficient material and the product was “in the can”, Another outstanding occasion in the history of the Choir.

Monday July 26th

St German’s Church, Adamsdown. Cardiff

The Choir made its first visit to the glorious St German’s High Anglican Church in Adamsdown to make its latest multi-track CD album with Adrian Munsey of Infinity Media. Adrian has been a long-standing friend of the Choir’s since his single, *Faraway Place* was recorded by Treorchy Male Choir in 2007 and tipped for a Christmas Number One hit. It also appeared on his second album, *Requiem*.

A history scholar at King's College, Cambridge and graduate of the Royal College of Art, his career has included being an academic, putting on Elton John's first paid gig, releasing over 500 films, starting the two SKY television True Movies channels and making two feature films and 32 TV documentaries. This is the calibre of a remarkable man with whom the Choir is so proudly associated.

The Choir arrived at St German’s by 7pm and the first phase of the recording lasted until 10.35pm. With the multi-talented sound engineer Gareth Williams keeping a close ear on all of the performances, six songs were recorded in 47 takes throughout the evening. These were *With A Voice Of Singing*, *Divine Brahma*, *Senzenina*, *Let It Be Me*, *Y Darlun* and Dean Powell recorded his solo version of *Stars*.

Jan conducted the Choir throughout the evening, with Helen Roberts as accompanist and Honorary Member David Geoffrey Thomas performing sections on the organ. Experienced choristers were long-since used to the time-consuming pressures of recording albums, while the newest members learned more about the complexities of how a CD is pieced together – sometimes in sections of just a few bars to cover areas that didn’t record so well the first time around! The evening went swiftly and with the first selection of items “in the can” it was time to prepare for the second day of the album.

Tuesday July 27th

St German's Church, Adamsdown. Cardiff

The second day of the recording of the new album was another lengthy affair, but once again some superb pieces of music were recorded. Iona Jones and Kate Woolveridge visited the church this evening to record their solo sections in *Finlandia* and *I Dreamed A Dream* respectively. Other highlights included *What Would I Do Without My Music*, *Adiemus* (which Adrian Munsey thought was amazing!), *Do You Hear The People Sing* and *Bring Him Home*.

Wednesday July 28th

St German's Church, Adamsdown. Cardiff

The final day of recording welcomed back soloist Dean Powell who had been taken ill the previous day. He was welcomed into the church with a rousing applause. Dean and Ray recorded the duet for *Pearlfishers* and other recordings that evening included *Faraway Place* and *Nessun Dorma*. Once all of the tracks were finally recorded to the standard set by Janice, Adrian and Gareth, the album was completed. Another superb recording no doubt!

Friday July 30th

Red Cow, Treorchy

A very special occasion took place in the history of the Choir with the unveiling of a Blue Plaque on its birthplace 127 years previously. In 2009 the Choir unveiled the Blue Plaque on Treorchy Primary School, but had been awarded a second plaque by Rhondda Cynon Taf Council through a Heritage Lottery Funded Scheme. The second plaque was to commemorate the Red Cow Hotel, where the original "Treorky Male Choir" first performed in 1883. To mark such an occasion a whole host of special guests joined the Choir for a celebratory evening of laughter and song.

S4C's news programme *Wedi Saith* was filmed live from the location with presenter Sian Thomas. Cllr Simon Lloyd, the Mayor of Rhondda Cynon Taf unveiled the Plaque on the exterior of the building and also opened the speeches later in the evening, followed by Dean Powell who gave the key note speech on the history of choral singing in the Rhondda.

Chairman Gareth Evans presented a framed montage of photographs of the Choir to the new proprietors of the pub, Zaina and Clive and other speeches were given by special guests Roy Noble and entertainer Wyn Calvin. Other guests of honour that evening included BBC's Dewi Griffiths and Elvira Henry, the Choir's soprano soloist almost fifty years ago.

Janice Ball conducted the Choir in TV performances of *Myfanwy* and other guests included Iona Jones, Kate Woolveridge, John Cynan & Mary Jones, Jennifer & Glyn Dooland, Robert Harris, Joy Humphreys, Ieuan and Shirley Morgan and local councillors. It was indeed another superb evening for the Treorchy family as we commemorated the very starting point of this world-famous choir.

September

Sunday, September 17th

Rhondda Heritage Park, Trehafod

To commemorate the centenary of the Tonypandy Riots, a Cordell Festival was held in the Rhondda Heritage Park over a two-day period. Cordell, whose book “This Sweet and Bitter Earth” was based on the famous events of 1910, was the centre of a literary festival in the Trehafod tourist attraction. On the second day of the Festival, members of the Choir were invited to perform two sets before a small, but hugely enthusiastic crowd.

Saturday, September 25th

Atrix Theatre, Bromsgrove

A return visit to Bromsgrove saw another packed auditorium of 300 people share in the delight of a memorable evening of laughter and song. The concert was organised by Jeanne and Philip Grey of Chord Theatrical Agency. Soloist for the evening was mezzo soprano Kate Woolveridge, with Janice Ball as Conductor, Helen Roberts as Accompanist and Dean Powell as Master of Ceremonies.

This small, warm and intimate venue provided the location for the first concert following the summer break and choristers were eager to return to the stage and perform to the very best of their ability.

The concert was another triumphant success, with highlights including *Pearlfishers*, *Les Miserables*, *Your Raise Me Up* and the breathtaking finale of *Let It Be Me*, *What Would I Do Without My Music* and *Nessun Dorma*. Once again the audience revelled in the fun-atmosphere of the *Abba Medley* and clearly were thrilled by Men of Harlech.

Tonight marked a special occasion for Phillip Evans (1T) as he performed on stage in the ranks for the first time. It was also an historic occasion for the Choir as a whole. In the second half of the concert, as the curtains opened, the audience witnessed a change of scene! For the first time, the choristers changed their outfits for the second half of the concert into a black suit and black open-neck shirt. A very welcomed applause greeted the “new look”!

Thursday, October 14th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

Treorchy Male Choir’s Annual Concert at the Park & Dare Theatre was yet another successful evening of song. Guest artists this year were the Maesteg Children’s Choir under the direction of Enid-Sian Hughes and accompanied by Ryan Wood. The Choir also welcomed a young soloist to the proceedings in Lauren Coates, who is the granddaughter of Treorchy Choir Secretary, Frederick O’Brien. Treorchy was Conductor by Janice Ball with Accompanist Helen Roberts and Master of Ceremonies, Dean Powell. Making a guest appearance during the *Les Miserables* section was Iona Jones.

The concert proved another memorable evening and many would say one of the best Annual Autumn Concerts in the Choir's history. The programme itself appealed to all generations and all tastes and the packed auditorium of 800 spectators was filled with the sound of rapturous applause throughout the concert.

The evening had many highlights, including *What Would I Do Without My Music*, *Let It Be Me* and the operatic section of *Divine Brahma*, *Pearlfishers Duet* and *Nessun Dorma*. The thrilling applause following the latter was proof that the Choir had indeed impressed the home audience once more.

Tonight's concert also marked the first performance of *The Wonder of You* arranged by Dr Alwyn Humphreys. The second new item on the programme seemed to appeal to everyone, in an arrangement of the Bette Midler hit, *The Rose* to the words of *Calon Lan*. Such a haunting melody with Welsh words was certainly enjoyed by all concerned. Another fun moment came at the opening of the second half when the curtains parted to reveal the 81-strong Choir in its new look "black shirt and suit" – the audience expressed their "ooooos!" very vocally!

It was a special night for Reg Stephens (1T) as he was presented with a gold watch from Acting Chairman David Bebb in celebration of his fifty years of unbroken service to the Choir. Reg received his watch amid loud applause and shouts of congratulations from the auditorium.

The concert concluded in thrilling fashion with a joint performance – totally unrehearsed – of *You Raise Me Up* between the Treorchy and Maesteg Choirs.

Saturday October 16th

The Royal Mint, Llantrisant

A small section of the Choir were invited to visit The Royal Mint to mark its first family open day. The event attracted over 2,500 people who gathered in a main public area at 3pm to take part in a Guinness Book of Records event. The crowd listened to the handful of choristers perform a selection of items before taking part in the world's biggest coin toss as they all threw a new 50p piece – minted to commemorate the 2012 Olympics – into the air!

Saturday October 23rd

Civic Hall, Bedworth

For the first time in seven years the Choir returned to Bedworth in a concert organised once more by Jeanne and Phil Grey of Chord Theatrical Company. A packed hall of 780 people welcomed the Choir on stage, conducted by Janice Ball, accompanied by Helen Roberts with Iona Jones as soprano soloist and Dean Powell as compere.

It marked a triumphant return to the Civic Hall as the concert was undoubtedly one of the best of 2010. The whole programme gelled beautifully, the singing was of the highest order and the over-all mood of the evening was second-to-none. As always the choristers sang to the best of their ability and some of the magic moments included the delicate pianissimos of *The Rose* (to the words of *Calon Lan*) and *Let It Be Me*. *Adiemus* returned to the concert programme followed by *Senzenina*. The rousing

conclusion of *Les Miserables* left the audience aghast and calling for “encores” at the end of the first half no less!

Two operatic items from Bizet’s *The Pearlfishers* followed at the start of the second half. *Abba* came next with plenty of applause and laughter from the audience. However, it was the gripping finale section that thrilled the audience and choristers in equal measure. *You Raise Me Up, What Would I Do Without My Music*, a welcomed return of *My Way*, followed by *Nessun Dorma* as the first encore and *We’ll Keep A Welcome*. All told, it was indeed a gripping finale.

Tonight was a special occasion for organisers Jeanne and Phil Grey as they were both presented with Honorary Membership by the Choir’s Acting Chairman David Bebb. A celebratory social evening followed at Nuneaton Rugby Football Club.

Thursday, November 4th

In a Choir by-election, the new Chairman of the Choir was elected. David Bebb and Tony Davies both stood for the position, with David Bebb successful at the election. David Bebb, aged 43, was elected the Choir’s youngest chairman since it reformed following the Second World War in 1946.

But his pedigree is unique in the Choir because his ancestor, Thomas Bebb, sang on the first night that the original Treorke Male Choir was formed in 1883. Mr Bebb’s family have remained synonymous with Rhondda music-making over the decades. His relatives also performed with the Choir before Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle in 1895.

His great-great-uncle, John Bebb conducted the Choir from 1895 to 1897. John Bebb’s son was the respected Haydn Bebb, who from the 1930s was the successful conductor of the Parc & Dare Band.

David, whose own father sang in the Royal Welsh Male Choir, joined the Treorchy Male Choir in 2005. An officer in the Wales Probation Trust, David spent two years as Vice Chairman before being elected into the new post.

Saturday November 6th

The Great Hall, Assembly Rooms, Derby

A return visit to the Assembly Rooms, Derby saw the Choir once again share the stage with the talented Derwent Brass Band for their Annual Concert. A packed audience of more than 500 people assembled in the Great Hall for another memorable evening of music and song. Comperes for the evening were Nigel Vardy and Dean Powell, with the Choir conducted as always by Janice Ball and accompanied by Helen Roberts. Although a relatively small Choir, the men performed magnificently and left in no doubt that they had once again made their mark on the Derby audience.

Despite being a combined concert, the Choir performed a lengthy repertoire of music, including *With a Voice of Singing*, *Y Darlun* and *Gwahoddiad* to open the evening. This was followed by the time-honoured operatic favourites of *Divine Brahma* and *From Far Inside The Shrine* from *The Pearlfishers*, followed by *Nessun Dorma* from *Turandot*.

During the second half of the evening, the Choir performed two joint items in *Morte Christe* and *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Other highlights for the Treorchy singers included *Let It Be Me, You Raise Me Up* and *What Would I Do Without My Music*. To conclude they sang the medley of items from *Les Miserables*.

Unfortunately the evening did have a certain solemnity about it also. *What Would I Do Without My Music* was dedicated to chorister Alan Lewis, a stalwart member of the First Bass section for 27 years. This was his last concert in the ranks as he was about to emigrate to Spain. It was certainly a poignant moment.

Sunday November 14th

Cenotaph, Blaencwm & Cenotaph, Treherbert

A section of the Choir was invited to perform at the Remembrance Sunday Services in both War Memorials at Blaencwm and Treherbert. Alongside members of the armed services, the choristers led the congregational singing while remembering those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Saturday November 20th

Subscription Rooms, Stroud

A return visit to the Subscription Rooms saw another packed audience of over 350 people thrilled by the Choir's first-class performance. Conductor by Janice Ball, with Helen Roberts as Accompanist, Kate Woolveridge as Mezzo Soprano and Dean Powell as compere, the concert was another success. Organised by David Green, all of the proceeds for the evening went towards the Acorn Hospice for terminally ill children.

The Choir opened the evening in majestic fashion, *With a Voice of Singing, The Rose* and *Llef* were followed by other such highlights as *Les Miserables, Pearlfishers* and the thrilling finale of *What Would I Do Without My Music, Senzenina, Men of Harlech* and *Nessun Dorma*.

One of the many highlights of the evening included the presentation of Honorary Membership to David Green, who organised the first concert in 1993 at Cheltenham in aid of the Cheltenham Lions. Since then he has presented nine concerts in total in aid of various charities. Honorary Lady Membership was also awarded to Marcelle Berry. She organised her first concert in 1976 in Bishop's Cleeve and since then has remained a firm supporter of the Choir, who actually introduced Brian Bates to the organisation.

Following the concert the Choir entertained a crowd at the nearby Stroud RFC where choristers performed until the early hours.

Saturday, November 27th

The Hayes, Cardiff

In support of the Wooden Spoon charity, a group of 25 choristers travelled to the Duke of Wellington pub in Cardiff. The charity was raising funds outside the pub on

The Hayes by launching a sponsored bike ride from John O'Groats to Lands End. The Choir sang two sets of items on The Hayes and crowds of over a hundred people came along to make donations. The event coincided with the Wales vs New Zealand rugby game which was taking place in the nearby Millennium Stadium.

Monday November 19th

The Cathedral, Llandaff

Once again the Choir supported the Welsh cancer charity Tenovus by participating in their annual Candlelit Service at Llandaff Cathedral. The concert also featured the Tenovus Inspiration Choir (made up of members of staff from the charity), the Howells Junior School Choir and mezzo soprano Kate Woolveridge. The evening was compered by the National Poet of Wales, Gillian Clarke and Dean Powell. Conducting the Choir was Janice Ball while both Helen Roberts and David Geoffrey Thomas accompanied.

The Choir performed three individual sections within the concert which saw a sell-out audience of more than 350 people. It was a special night for chorister Gareth Thomas Davies who gave his debut performance in the ranks. The concert was another major success, with the Choir excelling itself in so many items, including *When A Child Is Born*, *O Holy Night* and also the finale items of *Let It Be Me* and the awesome *What Would I Do Without My Music* which left the audience spellbound. For a finale number, the Choir combined with the Howells Junior School Choir to perform *You Raise Me Up* which was rewarded with a thrilling standing ovation.

Thursday December 9th

The Lion, Treorchy

A small section of the Choir performed on the High Street in Treorchy to the passing shoppers. Choristers were rewarded for their performance by a donation to the Choir's Junior Musician of the Year Competition.

Saturday, December 11th

Assembly Rooms, Ludlow

The final concert of the year was held in the Assembly Rooms, Ludlow. It was a special night for the Choir as this was their first performance in Ludlow. The intimate theatre venue, welcomed a sell-out audience for the first-class concert which featured Iona Jones as soprano, Janice Ball as conductor, Helen Roberts as accompanist and Dean Powell as compere. The Choir was positioned in an arch-shape on the stage due to limited space, allowing choristers the opportunity to hear individual parts for themselves, which added to the effect of the over all sound and performance.

The audience appeared spellbound from the very outset as the Choir gave one of its most outstanding performances of the entire year. A thrilling standing ovation was testament to the fact the Choir had indeed conquered Ludlow! Some of the many highlights of the evening included *Calon Lan* (to *The Rose*), *Lord's Prayer* and of course the *Les Miserables* medley.

During the second half of the concert the Choir opened with the operatic items of *Divine Brahma* and *Far From Inside The Shrine* followed by Iona's performance of *O Holy Night*. The momentum continued throughout the entire concert with a rousing response to the *Abba Medley* before the climatic finale of *Let It Be*, *Senzenina* and *Men of Harlech*. Once again the emotional *What Would I Do Without My Music* left many choristers tearful, before launching into *Nessun Dorma* and *We'll Keep A Welcome* prior to the final items of the National Anthems. This had indeed been a first-class performance to conclude 2010.