

TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



BRIEF HISTORY 1984

By Norman Martin
Registrar & Honorary Archivist

JANUARY

Saturday January 28th

Jerusalem Chapel, Burryport

After a period of three years the Choir returned to Jerusalem Chapel under the same organisers, Cefn Sidon Rotary Club of Burryport. The concert opened with the Choir and audience singing a hymn and this excellent singing set the seal on the evening's performances. All the artists were "on form", with the Ladies Choir – Cor Telyn Teila - being particularly enjoyable. The singing of the Choir on the first engagement of the year augured well for the rest of the year as it was first class. The proceeds of the concert was in aid of Llanelli Hospital, and the total raised, together with the proceeds of two other concerts was around £10,000. The concert ended once again with all taking part to the same excellent standard. Sandwiches, tea and cakes were provided after the concert and the late buses enjoyed the hospitality of the Ashburton Hotel.

FEBRUARY

Thursday February 2nd

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The Choir made its first appearance of the season at the Park & Dare Hall, Treorchy with a concert in aid of kidney research. With a Choir of 92 staging, a large audience and Mair Roberts in excellent form, along with the first appearance with the Choir of tenor soloist Hugh Evans, the charity benefited by a considerable amount. A cheque of £2,000 was presented to the fund at the concert. Another pleasing aspect was the singing of Sam and Wyn as Choir soloists. Unfortunately during the concert John Newman (2T) suffered a slight heart attack on stage and was taken home by Bob Griffiths. It was later diagnosed as Plurosy.

Wednesday February 6th

The sudden death occurred today of Myrddin "Myl" Lewis (1T). He was in Tonypany when he collapsed and died. Last night he was in the rehearsal room and the quite turn of events left a gloom over Thursday's rehearsal. "Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi" was sung in his memory at the rehearsal.

Saturday February 11th & Sunday February 12th

Redcar Bowl, Redcar

At 8am the Choir left Treorchy to embark on the longest bus journey in this country to fulfil an engagement. This was in Redcar, Clevedon, and was organised by the Langborough Borough Council. The Brewers buses made their usual routes down the valley and rendezvoured at the Franklyn Services in Birmingham at 11am and stopped for lunch in Loughborough at 12.45pm. Leaving at 1.45pm and at Wilton with dusk approaching, choristers saw the huge ICI Petro Chemical Works – the largest in Europe – in all its glory. The industrial pall that surrounded the area was an all-too familiar sight to many older members.

The buses arrived outside Redcar Bowl where the concert was held at 5pm. This was part of the leisure centre with a low ceiling, and the acoustics were tested by a short rehearsal. After this some choristers met their hosts while the rest made their way to the Royal York Hotel where they were staying. The concert commenced at 7.30pm to

a capacity audience – reported to be the best attended concert held in the bowl – and this concert welcomed the return of Sam Griffiths as a soloist. During the concert the Mayor of Langbaurch Borough Council presented a plaque of their coat of arms to the Choir. The enthusiastic applause at the end left no doubt about its success.

On Sunday the buses left the Royal York Hotel at 9.30am and before they left a metal lapel badge of the Redcar International Friendship Association was given to each chorister. Both business made their way to Warrington and the late bus went to the Lymm Rugby Club. The early bus arrived home at 5pm, thus ended a pleasant weekend to Redcar with 752 miles covered in fulfilling this engagement.

Monday February 13th

The funeral of Myrddin Lewis took place today. Between 30 and 40 choristers were present in Glyntaff Crematorium and “Llef” and “Blaenwern” were sung.

Thursday February 16th

Hope Chapel, Gelli

Tonight’s engagement was unique for the number of “firsts”. It was the first concert by the Choir in Gelli where they sang “Aberystwyth” for the first time and proceeds from the evening went to the assistance of a Basketball Club – the first time for such an organisation to benefit from the Choir! It took 38 years for the Choir to make its first appearance in Hope Chapel. The occasion was in aid of the Ton Pentre and Treorchy Basketball Club and with 87 choristers staging, an acoustical chapel and appreciative audience, the concert was a very enjoyable one.

Sunday February 26th

The Choir’s Annual General Meeting was held in the Junior School. Alun Hughes was installed as Chairman and Bert John was elected Vice Chairman. The new rules and constitution of the Choir was discussed and accepted and these will be operative from the next AGM. The officers were unopposed, but three new committeemen will be taking their place on next year’s committee – they are Daryl Stacey, Michael Peachy and Rhyddian Hunt.

MARCH

Saturday March 3rd & Sunday March 4th

Marine Centre, Great Yarmouth

It was discovery time again for the Choir as it travelled to Great Yarmouth for the first time. Leaving Treorchy at 8am the buses met at the Le Delamere Services and arrived in Bedford at 12.45pm for lunch. They reached the Marine Centre in Great Yarmouth at 4.45pm. An immediate rehearsal was held and adjustments were made for the staging of the Choir. Food (steak and kidney piece, beans, roast potatoes and ice cream for dessert) was taken in the restaurant before the choristers left for their hotels – the Imperial and Burlington which were next door to one another and really first class!

The concert started at 8pm to a capacity audience of 1,200. Despite the injury to his arm with the lower part in plaster, John Cynan Jones was on the rostrum. Jenny, elegantly dressed in a long off-the shoulder puice coloured dress, was at an excellent piano. Sam was soloist and the Choir as always raising to the occasion gave a first-

class concert. Before the final group the Mayor and Mayoress came on stage and expressed their thanks and admiration of the Choir for coming such a long way to appear. The enjoyment of all was clearly shown with a standing ovation. The members returned to their hotels where new friendships were forged in the convivial atmosphere of the hotel bars.

On Sunday an excellent English breakfast was served and the buses left at 9.35am, stopping in Bedford at 12noon and arriving home at 5.35pm. thus ended an enjoyable first weekend appearance at Great Yarmouth.

Thursday March 8th

St David's Church, Tonyrefail

The Choir made its first appearance in St David's Church, Tonyrefail with a concert in aid of the church funds. With 80 choristers staging, Mr John Cynan Jones in his red jacket, Jenny in a black dress, Sam and Mair singing well up to standard and a full church – the concert proved to be a very pleasant one. The concert started at 7.30pm and with no interval finished at 9.40pm, with one buss arriving home at 10pm as the other spent the evening in the confines of Tonyrefaail Rugby Club.

Saturday March 10th

At the 21st anniversary of the Festival of 1,000 Voices organised by the Association of Male Choirs, a member and former member of the Choir were honoured. Cliburn Willis was the first secretary of the association and Mr M. Davies (former member) was the first treasurer. This face was remembered and they were introduced on the stage of the Royal Albert Hall, London. This was further proof, if any is needed of the deep involvement of the Treorchy Male Choir in the betterment of the conditions for male choirs.

Tuesday March 13th

A meeting of the Choir was held during the rehearsal to receive the members confirmation to the recommendation of the Committee that Life Membership be confirmed upon John Mallin (2B), Treasurer. This was passed unanimously. Owing to domestic pressure, Bert John who was elected Vice Chairman at the AGM resigned from that office. An election to the office took place of two candidates, Michael Wade (2T) and Robert Griffiths (2B). Mr Griffiths was elected.

Thursday March 22nd

The Pavilion, Porthcawl

The Choir returned to The Pavilion, Porthcawl for a concert in aid of the local Lions Club. This engagement will be remembered as the first time for Brewers to use their new Continental Coach and it was driven by Dave. As Jenny was still engaged in the school's musical show, Bryan Davies was the accompanist. Owing to the illness of Sam Griffiths, Mair Roberts carried the extra load with her usual efficiency. Unfortunately the Pavilion is not one of the best halls and the piano not adequate, plus a limited audience which meant the concert fell below the normal standard.

Thursday March 29th

Bethany Chapel, Treherbert

The Choir's concert raised funds for the Treherbert Boys Club. In the audience was Mr John Haydn Davies and a group, arranged by him, was sung as a belated birthday

present from the Choir. Mr John Cynan Jones thanked him for his musical contribution to the community and to male voice singing generally. After the singing of the group Mr Davies rose from his seat and thanked the Choir for their kindness to him. This was greeted with generous applause from the audience and Choir members. With a large audience, such a fine chapel for singing, the Choir reaching high standards, soloists, Jenny (dressed in black with a matching choker), this was a most enjoyable concert.

APRIL

Saturday April 7th

Town Hall, Oxford

On the day Wales played the Welsh President's XV (27-17) and after a lapse of four years, the Choir returned to Oxford. Leaving Treorchy at 3.40pm the choristers travelled by Brewers new buses, one of which has a toilet which makes "rabbits extinct". They arrived at the Town Hall at 6.25pm. After a quick seating arrangement the members enjoyed a buffet tea.

The concert commenced at 7.15pm and was organised by the 8th Oxford (Highfield) Scout Group with the proceeds in aid of their funds. The MC for the evening was Ronald Tandy of Radio Oxford and he stated that recordings of the Choir would be played on a religious programme on Radio Oxford in the morning. With such an acoustically fine hall, Mair, Sam and the Choir on "fine form" the concert was a most enjoyable one.

After singing "Crossing the Plain", the Conductor stated that during the interval he as a guest of the Sheriff of Oxford and in the room was a commemoration to the Lone Ranger and Tonto who are buried in Oxford, USA – an apt choice of musical item to perform! At the end of the concert a presentation was made to Mr Jones and bouquets to Mair, Jenny and...wait for it...Sam! This was the first time in his long association as soloist that he ever received a bouquet, but he accepted it gracefully and stated that his wife would be thrilled with it. A pleasant time was spent in the bar of the Town Hall and the first bus left at 11.15pm, arriving home at 2am.

Friday April 13th

Opera House / Winter Gardens, Blackpool

On this supposed "unlucky" day the Choir travelled to Blackpool to fulfil two concert engagements on the occasion of the Annual Conference of Rotary International (Britain and Northern Ireland). Leaving Treorchy at 1pm on his sunny day, the busses met at Franklyn Services in Birmingham and arrived at the Georgian Hotel on Albert Road in Blackpool at 6.30pm. Unfortunately this was not opened then so the buses went to the Opera House for a rehearsal. The choristers then booked in and changed, returning to the Opera House at 8.30pm. The Choir staged at 9.05pm and completed their contribution at 9.30pm. This was enthusiastically received by the capacity audience. This ended the first half of the show, the second half being taken up by the noted showbiz personality, Ken Dodd.

For the second engagement the Choir performed in the Winter Garden Ballroom. At 10.30pm members made their way to the floor of the ballroom in front of the stage. This in itself was quite an experience as the ballroom is a massive structure and full of

people. Unfortunately the organisers had overlooked the fact that a piano was required; but Jenny, with her usual “unflappability” coped with an Hammond organ of limited musical capabilities. Despite its size the ballroom is a fine hall to sing in and throughout the concert – which included Mair Roberts, who never sang better – the attention was such that the proverbial “dropped pin” could be heard. At the end of the performance the capacity crowd left no doubt of their enjoyment as they applauded until the last chorister left the floor.

A convivial evening was enjoyed back in the hotel. On Sunday morning, after an excellent breakfast, the Choir left at 10.10am. On bus full went to enjoy the hospitality of the RAF Cosford Military Base while the other left after an hour’s stay in Worcester and returned home by 4.15pm. Thus a most enjoyable engagement came to an end.

Friday April 20th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

It was once again time for the 19th consecutive Good Friday Concert with the Parc & Dare Band. Before the Choir’s contribution to the evening’s concert, Mr J.C. Jones thanked the persons concerned for the installation of sounding boards, which improved the quality of the concert and the enjoyment of the audience. The Choir’s programme contained the first performance of “Unwaith Eto’n Nghymru Annwyl” with soloist Wyn Davies. The reception from the capacity audience displayed their enjoyment of the concert as a whole.

MAY

Saturday May 5th

Hereford Cathedral

After a lapse of four years the Choir returned to give a concert in the Cathedral in Hereford. The organisers were the same as last time – Cancer Research. Leaving Treorchy at 4pm on a pleasant sunny day the buses arrived at the Cathedral at 6.30pm. The concert commenced at 7.30pm and with a practically full cathedral and a splendid tenor, David Leyshon Williams making his first appearance with the Choir and Mair Roberts maintaining her high standard. John Howell, a first class MC, Jenny and John Cynan with Sam and Wyn contributing as soloists, the concert was superb. The Choir gave its first performance of “Cantique de Jean Racine” and with such surrounding the evening was a successful one, both musically and financially. After the concert choristers retired to the Farmers Club where a packed ploughman lunch was provided. The first bus left at 11.30pm and was delayed by a road accident, finally arriving home at 1am.

Tuesday May 8th

St David Church, Merthyr Tydfil

The Choir returned to Merthyr Tydfil with a concert in aid of St Tydfil Church Appeal. The church was large but the staging of the Choir took some time as the space was limited and the chairs were in short supply. During the first half the singing was not up to standard and a re-arranged staging took place. This proved a successful move as the performance improved. With a full house, the singing of the Cyfarthfa School Choir enjoyable, the contribution to the church appeal was satisfying.

Saturday May 12th

The Choir said a sad farewell to Alwyn Evans today. The service was held in Bethany Church, Treherbert and around 50 members were there. It was fitting that on duty outside the church was PC John Groom, a member of the 2B section. Cremation was at Llwydcoed Crematorium where the Choir, with Mr J.C. Jones sang “Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi” in memory, respect and admiration of a true gentleman, respected member of the community and faithful chorister. He will be sadly missed.

Sunday May 20th

Brangwyn Hall, Swansea

It was record time again and 91 members assembled at the Brangwyn Hall, Swansea to “cut” their 16th LP record. The team were Bob Barratt (producer), David Bell (organist) and Steward Eltham (recording engineer). A familiar one indeed. Owing to “pick up” problems the Choir arrived at 2.15pm and the recording began at 2.25pm. Tea at 5pm included soup, chicken and chips and despite the late start the session was over by 8.25pm. the programme included the first Choir performance of the Mansel Thomas suite of “Dacw Mam”, “Llwyn Onn”, “Hen Ferchetan” and “Diolch I Ti yr Hollalluog Dduw”. Alun Morris (2B) made his first appearance at the Choir’s performance. During the afternoon it was announced that Keith Thomas (2T) father had died. “Happy Birthday” was sung to D. Robert (1T) on his 53rd birthday.

JUNE

Wednesday June 6th

The Pavilion, Porthcawl

The Choir took part in a concert at the Pavilion to mark the opening of the £8million Callard and Bowser factory in Bridgend. The factory was officially opened by HRH Diana the Princess of Wales. In the afternoon, and although Her Royal Highness was not at the concert, members of 42 nationalities from around the world were! It was a cabaret type of evening with the artists entertaining the guests after they had finished their culinary delights.

The Choir arrived at the Pavilion at 8pm and due to delays in the arrangements did not appear on stage until 10.10pm. During this long wait, food and drink was enjoyed in the bar lounge. As Robert Griffiths was ill, Daryl Stacey took over the role of stage marshall for the first time. Another pleasing sight was the return of William Jones (2B) to the concert scene after his long illness. Huw Williams (2T) was also making his initial concert appearance since re-joining the Choir. The Choir gave a short programme which was well received, the early bus leaving at 11pm while the other members enjoyed the atmosphere of the lounge bar.

Saturday June 9th / Sunday June 10th

Wessex Hall, Poole

It was discovery time again with the first visit by the Choir to Poole in Dorset. The buses left Treorchy at 12noon on this glorious sunny day and met at the Gardano Services before arriving at the Royal Marines Establishment in Salisbury at 5pm. After the sorting out of sleeping arrangements the members queued in the canteen for their food, returned to their barracks to change and travelled to the Wessex Hall in Poole Arts Centre. After a rehearsal with the band the concert began at 8pm. With such a magnificent hall; a splendid combined massed brass band with each of the four

conductors contributing; Jenny in her red off the shoulder dress, a most appreciative 1,000 strong audience and the Choir on excellent form, the concert was a hugely enjoyable one. The concert was sponsored by the American Express Band and proceeds were in aid of Cancer Research. To mark the first appearance of the Choir in Poole the chairlady of Cancer Research presented a dolphin of Poole pottery to the Conductor and a bouquet to Jennifer. The concert did not finish until 11.15pm and after food returned to the barracks at midnight where the festivities began in the Sergeant's Mess. On the following morning a typical breakfast was served before departure at 9.30am with a stop in the Crown near Bath, arriving home at 4pm.

Thursday June 14th

Leisure Centre, Tredegar

The engagement was organised by the Tremayon Singers Ladies Choir. During the concert two unusual incidents occurred. Firstly the Choir started "March of the Peers" and after a few bars Mr J.C. Jones stopped the singing as things were not quite right in the piano area. Secondly when announcing the singing of the hymns it was discovered the piano copies were not at hand, so he had to continue his remarks until they arrived.

With Mair Roberts maintaining her high standard of performance, a satisfactory attendance by the public and the Choir in a relaxed mood, the concert was an enjoyable one. At the end of the Choir's performance, when bouquets were presented to Jenny and Mair the Conductor announced the singing of a surprise item – "Happy Birthday" to Mair Roberts! She was obviously delighted with his tribute! Refreshments were available at the Tredegar Male Choir's Clubhouse.

Thursday June 21st

Bethlehem Chapel, Treorchy

The Choir was honoured to give a concert in another centenary celebration, this time of St Matthews Church in Treorchy. It proved a pleasant engagement at Bethlehem Chapel and the popular songs group were dedicated to the unfortunate choristers who were ill – Cas Powell and Bryn Howells – who were in the audience. "Unwaith Eto" was sung especially for Glyn Dooland who was in the audience.

Saturday June 23rd

The York Festival

Leaving Treorchy at 9.15am the Choir travelled to fulfil an engagement in the most prestigious festival in the country – at York. At Cardiff, to the joy and delight of the choristers, Mair decided to travel in shorts! The journey was filled with drama. Approaching Warrington the "deacons bus" made a dreadful noise and broke down. Alun John and Huw Williams, both motor vehicle workers, tried to repair the damage but failed. While this was being done a man pulled up in a van who turned out to be a Choir fan and offered assistance. He sped along to inform the first bus of the troubles. Elwyn's bus returned to take the choristers for lunch and awaited the arrival of another bus hired from the local council. A double-decker bus arrived at 4pm but on travelling to the top of the Pennines it also broke down! There was nothing left to do but everyone climbed onto the one bus and despite the discomfort managed to reach the concert venue in York – the Royal Theatre – at 6.10pm. After tea they were taken to their accommodation. Another shock. This was a youth hostel and the most very

basic rooms which accommodated 24 men at a time in bunk beds with one small toilet!

The concert finally started at 8.05pm. at this point things turned out for the best. The Theatre Royal was excellent acoustically and there was a full house audience who were most appreciative of the Choir's performance. With generous applause, shouts of "magic" and a standing ovation, the Choir rose to the occasion despite the trials of the day! Jenny, dressed in black, maintained her usual high standard; Mair, in a black floral outfit then lemon for the second half, captivated the audience with her charm and performance. The concert, in the capable hands of Mr J.C. Jones was excellent. The choristers later enjoyed the hospitality of the Conservative Club until the wee small hours of the morning. After a heart breakfast, the choristers were delighted to see Brewers had sent another bus! The choristers arrived home at 5pm, with the late bus enjoying the hospitality of the RAF Base in Cosford. A most eventful visit to York and a memorable one for Lyn Feldon (1T) who made his first concert appearance.

JULY

Tuesday July 3rd

At rehearsals the Chairman, Alun Hughes, presented John Mallin (Treasurer / 2B) with his Life Membership Scroll. He spoke of the wonderful contribution John had made to the running of the Choir as a chorister, Publicity Officer and Treasurer. John responded with grateful thanks and expressed the honour and privilege for the award.

Saturday July 7th

Christ Church, Clevedon

On Ladies Final Day at Wimbledon, the Choir returned to Clevedon for a concert in the same venue. Following a reception at the Bowls Club, the glorious sunny evening was enjoyed prior to the concert which was well attended. The concert was an enjoyable one with the reappearance of Gillian Petherham Davies as soloist alongside Sam Griffiths. The proceeds were in aid of the Hull Branch of the Religious Order. Afterwards the choristers enjoyed refreshments at the Liberal Club.

Thursday July 12th

Abersychan Leisure Centre

In the morning Islwyn Morgan and John Davies appeared on BBC Radio Wales for Christ Steward. Also on the show was Rosemarie Swales who is going to Chile to complete a horse-riding marathon and is taking Choir recordings to listen to while riding! In the evening the Choir made the first visit to Abersychan which was full of incidents. An accident had occurred near Carter's Corner, meaning the buses couldn't pick up David Powell (2T) and the delay resulted in the buses arriving at Pontypool Leisure Centre at 7.15pm. But this was the wrong venue! With everyone back on the bus, they travelled to Abersychan and through the hustle and bustle of events entered the hall at 7.45pm to an ovation from the audience. The concert started at 8pm and the appreciation by the audience did not diminish throughout with the Choir leaving the hall as they had entered – applause all the way! The concert proceeds went to the Garndiffraith Male Choir. Sandra Watkins was the soloist. It was a most satisfying concert with the usual recognition of the female performers, Jenny, Sandra and her accompanist Pauline Knight along with Sam and Wyn as soloists. Gary Williams (2B)

made his first appearance. The comforts of the Leisure Centre bar, with delicious home made food, was enjoyed by all.

Wednesday July 18th

St David's Hall, Cardiff

It was prestige time again for the Choir when they were privileged to appear at St David's Hall, Cardiff with one of the finest orchestras in Europe – the Halle Orchestra – under the direction of Owain Arwel Hughes. The Choir was also joined by another Choir, Cwmbach. Under the pleasing personality of Owain Arwel, the rehearsals went without any undue problems and he spoke of the type of concert it would be – a “last night of the proms” atmosphere – and suggested the choirs appeared without coats. This was later changed! Mr J.C. Jones returned to the rank and file and joined the 2B section for the concert, looking resplendent in his white coat! The concert was a “fun one” with the orchestra displaying its musical comedy effects to some of the music, plenty of involvement from the capacity audience and the spontaneity of the contribution of the choirs under the genial guidance of Owain Arwel Hughes. Idris John (2T) made his first appearance. A happy concert to end the very busy first half of the year.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday September 15th

Bingham Hall, Cirencester

Following the summer break, the first concert was in Cirencester. The concert was in aid of Cancer Research and held in the Bingham Hall. This was a community hall and on first impression by many choristers not very good. The stage was curtained, the piano was a sure entry for a piano smashing contest and the hall manager was less than helpful. The concert started at 7.30pm and after the singing of the first group, all the fears were dissipated by the enthusiasm of the full house audience. The artists were Mair Roberts and Derek Walker who were equally we received.

The first half finished with the singing of “Nidaros” and such was the reception by the audience that the Choir took a curtain call. When this applause had ended a surprise item took place. The Conductor stated that in 1971 Jenny had joined us and did her debut appearance in St David's Cathedral and here tonight was her 350th concert, Jenny was taken completely by surprise and by the expression on her face could not believe it. The Chairman, Alun Hughes presented her with a basket of flowers.

The concert ended to the same tremendous applause and by special request “We'll Keep a Welcome” was sung. Then Mr J.C. Jones announced that Princess Diana of Wales had given birth to a son. In honour of the happy event “God Bless the Prince of Wales” was sung and “Myfanwy” by request. Bouquets were presented to Mair and Jenny and after the concert the choristers received a ploughman's lunch. Godfrey Morris made his first appearance since rejoining the Choir.

Thursday September 20th

Jerusalem Chapel, Ton Pentre

The concert tonight was in aid of the new church to be built on the site of Ystradyfodwg Church and replaces St David, St Mark and St John's churches. One of the artists was Susan Bound, the daughter of the Chief Executive of Rhondda Council.

Gwyn Evans. It was an enjoyable evening with 87 choristers staging and David Lewis (2T) making his first public appearance.

Saturday September 29th

Civic Hall, Aylesbury

The Choir gave its debut performance in Aylesbury. Leaving Treorchy at 2pm they were stuck in a traffic jam over the Severn Bridge for 2 ½ hours and it was annoying to endure all this delay over a very short distance of motorway repair work. The bus arrived in Aylesbury at 8.15pm. Fortunately the soloist, David Gwesyn Smith entertained the audience until the Choir arrived and performed the whole of the second half of the concert. Despite all the frustrations Mr J.C. Jones was on sparkling form as a Conductor and Compere. The members rose to the occasion as always and the concert was a very enjoyable one. At one point Jenny struck a chord and the Choir burst into “Happy Birthday” to the Conductor to the obvious surprise of John Cynan. This was coupled to John Mallin as both were celebrating their birthday. At the end of the concert a young lady dressed in Welsh costume presented the bouquet. When retiring to the Civic Hall reception room members enjoyed a buffet and drinks, arriving home at 2.15am.

OCTOBER

Thursday October 11th

Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy

The Choir gave their third annual celebrity concert with artists Cor Telyn Teilo and conductor Noel John. They performed with the Choir in Burryport earlier in the year and everyone was so impressed that they were invited to sing at the annual concert also. This proved a very wise choice as they brought the house down by their excellent singing and presentation. Coupled with a 93-strong choir, Jenny playing to her usual high standard and John Cynan on sparkling form, the concert was a most satisfying one. This was verified by the warmth of the reception from the near capacity audience. During the concert Alun Hughes, the chairman, presented a cheque of £200 to the Miners Relief Fund which would be used to help alleviate the suffering of the miners families during the strike.

Sunday October 14th

The eighth official Choir Photograph was taken in the rehearsal room by Mr Cyril Batstone. John Haydn Davies, Clifford Taylor, John Cynan Jones, Jennifer Jones and 97 choristers made up the composition of the photograph. John Mallin made a tremendous effort in organising the hall at the school room to make this possible. The photograph session was excellent. Only 19 choristers were absent from it:

First Tenor – Walter Breeze, Mike Gale, Lyn Feldon, Dennis Lethbridge, David Roberts, John Francis, Wyn Davies

Second Tenor – Cas Powell, David Pritchard, John Newman, David Guy

First Bass 0 Edward Davies, L. John, Rhys Thomas

Second Bass – Ken Baldwin, Islwyn Jones, John Groom

Tuesday October 16th

Tonight the rehearsal room was abuzz with activity. Firstly there was a team making a sound recording. In charge was Ian Bradley, who explained it was due for broadcast on Radio 4 and included interviews with choristers. Secondly a TV crew were there to

record for an Esther Rantzen programme on certain families. In this case it was the family of Bryn Jones and especially that of his disabled son. For this programme the Choir sang "Climb Every Mountain".

Thursday October 18th

Oakdale Comprehensive School

The Choir paid its first visit to Oakdale with a performance in the local comprehensive school which was organised by the parents and friends of the school. For this engagement Brewers proved both its new buses and a video, entitled "First Blood" (very apt!) was shown on board the Deacons bus! Although school halls are not the best venues, the hall was full and there were 81 choristers on stage. The school band, Sam Griffiths, Bryan Davies (Jenny on holiday) and Mr J.C.Jones getting it all together, made for a very pleasant concert. It was a good start of Phil Edmunds (1B) on his first appearance along with Terry Hale (2T) who rejoined the Choir. The late bus enjoyed the hospitality of the Oakdale Rugby Club after the concert.

NOVEMBER

Thursday November 1st

Town Hall, Walsall

The Choir paid a return visit to Walsall in a concert organised by our Honorary Member John Tucker on behalf of the Foresters. The proceeds were in aid of a cardiac rehabilitation unit and the intensive care unit for new babies in the locality. The buses left Treorchy at 12.4pm and arrived – after getting slightly lost – at the County Hotel where choristers were staying the night. Food was served in the lounge bar and left at 6.30pm for the Town Hall where they had a staging rehearsal before the commencement of the concert. Despite a local bus strike the hall was full. With such magnificent acoustics the artists Sam, Mair, John Cynan, Jenny and the Choir all in good form, it was a sparkling concert. Indeed during the interval a record amount of LPs was sold on a half-time basis. After the concert a convivial time was enjoyed by all.

Thursday November 29th

St Paul's Church, Newport

The Choir paid a return visit to St Paul's Church with a concert in aid of the Family Care Charity. The large audience, which included the Mayor and Mayoress, showed the enjoyment of the sing. Both of the artists, Sam Griffiths, Mair Roberts and the Choir were excellent as displayed by the warmth of the applause. In the audience were people from Yorkshire and in sympathy to the two young people killed in Yorkshire this week whilst digging for coal, Mr John Cynan Jones dedicated the singing of "Lily of the Valley" in memory of them.

DECEMBER

Saturday December 1st

Assembly Rooms, Bath

Once again the Choir was honoured to perform at a centenary concert. This time it was for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). The buses left Treorchy at 4.45pm and arrived at 7pm although Elwyn, the driver thought

the concert was in the Pump Rooms and left the choristers to walk to the other venue! This proved quite pleasant as the city was lit up for Christmas. The famous Silver Ring Choir of Bath also took part in the celebrations. The arrangements were such that the Choir opened the first half followed by Mair Roberts, then the Silver Ring Choir to conclude. The roles of the choirs were reversed in the second half. The whole proceedings were capably handled in his own inimitable style by Cliff Morgan, the famous Welsh rugby player and head of the BBC outside broadcasts. Also he is a member of the Centenary Committee. With the choirs and soloist along with Jenny coping with an average choir, along with John Cynan on top form, the capacity audience displayed their enjoyment of the performances with enthusiastic applause.

Tuesday December 11th

A representation of the Choir visited the Mayor's Parlour this evening. Thirty choristers attended and the Mayoress, Mrs Kate Rees, expressed her pleasure at being able to extend the warm welcome to the Council Officers. A buffet lunch took place. The Chairman, Alun Hughes, presented a Choir plaque to Mrs Rees and she stated it would be displayed in an appropriate place. A very pleasant evening was enjoyed by all.

Saturday December 15th

At the Seabank Hotel in Porthcawl the Choir held its 21st Dinner & Dance. The Brewers Buses transported the Choir, wives and friends to the hotel where in delightful surroundings an excellent meal was enjoyed by all. The Chief Guest was Sir Geraint Evans, who spoke of the value of music in the international field and he related some of the amusing incidents that had happened to him during his operatic career. The evening was governed by two presentations. Firstly, to obvious surprise and delight, Life Membership was bestowed on Mr John Cynan Jones, Conductor. The scroll was presented by the Chairmain and sighted by Mr John Haydn Davies, Conductor Emeritus, Similarly the effect on Miss Jennifer Jones, Accompanist, was the same when she was presented with a small crystal candelabra suitably inscribed to mark her 350th concert appearance with the Choir. The evening's festivities continued until 1am to the obvious pleasure of everyone present.

Thursday December 20th

On the last rehearsal of the year a New Zealand (Maori) school touring party visited the rehearsal room and listened to the Choir until the interval. At the restart they entertained the choristers by singing three songs in their native tongue and performed one of their hakka routines. After the rehearsal a get-together was organised in the Treorchy Conservative Club where a splendid buffet was provided for everyone present. More musical exchanges were performed and the most entertaining evening ended by the presentation of the Welsh Rugby Centenary School by John Davies, Publicity Officer, to the visitors from the Choir. The visitors left to the singing of "Now Is The Hour."

