

# TREORCHY MALE CHOIR



## BRIEF HISTORY 1983

By Norman Martin  
Registrar & Honorary Archivist

## JANUARY

### Sunday January 9<sup>th</sup>

#### BBC TV Studio, Shepherd's Bush, London

The year's engagement programme commenced with the Choir appearing on another top-line artist's television programme. This time the artist was Leo Sayer and to fulfil the engagement the Choir had to travel to the BBC TV Studio in Shepherd's Bush, London. The buses left Treorchy at noon arriving a BBC TV Centre at 3.45pm to be met by Miss Powell, who was our guide and mentor for the day. At the centre the changing into dress suits was carried out and at 4.15pm the Choir left for the Shepherd's Bush Studio. On arrival the Choir was privileged to see and hear Richard Clayderman, the popular pianist, and one of the artists, rehearsing. After he had finished and gracefully acknowledged the applause, the set was rearranged. The Conductor held a rehearsal and John Junkin, the well known character actor circulated amongst the members looking for his spectacles. When the stage was set the Choir assembled and Leo Sayer, an effervescent personality, shook hands with and signed many autographs for the choristers. The rehearsal of the Choir's contribution continued until 6.15pm when Miss Powell took the choristers for a buffet meal in the restaurant. Reporting back to the studio at 7.30pm the Choir performed their contribution which included their first performance of "Sound of Silence" by Paul Simon and "Send in the Clowns", leaving for home at 8.29pm. Owing to the tacograph (the spy in the cab!), both buses returned home together, much to the regret of the late buses – arriving home at midnight. A memorable first engagement for Michael Jones (1B).

## FEBRUARY

### Tuesday February 8<sup>th</sup>

#### HTV Studio, Bristol

The Choir was privileged to be chosen to appear on another television programme. This was the "Sing to the Lord" series and to record this the Choir travelled to appear (after a period of 13 years) in the HTV West Bristol Studio. The buses left at 6pm, arriving at 7.45pm. The Choir remained on stage throughout the recording and during the singing of the last song Paul Cockburn (1T) was overcome by the heat and taken to the dressing room. The recording ended at 9.40pm when the early bus left for home while the late bus boys enjoyed the hospitality of the HTV Staff Club.

### Saturday February 12<sup>th</sup>

#### Royal Albert Hall, London

For the second time this year the Choir travelled to London to fulfil an engagement. This was the Royal Albert Hall where the Choir last performed for the Royal Concert in 1966. The proceeds were in aid of the South Wales Spina Bifida Fund. This engagement gave the opportunity for wives, friends and supporters to make a weekend trip to London and six Brewers buses were booked to allow a Friday and Saturday night trip. A rehearsal was held from 4.30pm to 5.30pm and then left for tea in the canteen at the Imperial College.

The choristers reported back to the hall at 6.45pm and John Francis (1T) released he had left his jacket, frill and bow tie on the bus. As this could not be reached he sadly

was unable to stage. The concert commenced at 7pm and it turned out to be one of the best. As always the choristers sensed the importance of the appearance of the Choir in such a famous venue and rose to its challenge with a magnificent performance. This was matched by Josephine Jones (soprano), who superbly accompanied by Jenny, evoked the most appreciative applause from the 2,000 people present. Huw Tregellys Williams, the organist, contributed in no small measure to the evening's musical delights and Sam Griffiths – despite a throat infection – was in excellent form as Choir soloist. The continuity of the evening was served by the MC Iwan Thomas (BBC). The concert ended with the presentation of bouquets and the singing of the National Anthem at 10pm.

After the concert only three buses were available so while they filled up with people staying in the Cunard International Hotel, the choristers who were travelled straight home waited for their return and reached home at 3am. The party that stayed in the hotel had quite an eventful night. After an enjoyable evening they retired to be only to be woken by a fire alarm. The fire had broken out in the room occupied by Ken Elliott and David Roberts and they were fortunate not to suffer more serious injuries. Both lost some personal belongings and their Choir dress suits.

### **Sunday February 27<sup>th</sup>**

The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was held in the rehearsal room in Treorchy Junior School today. Because of the death of Mr W.J."Donna" Griffiths, Mr Cliburn Willis took his second AGM as Chairman and presented Cyril Howard (2T) and Bryn Jones (2B) with their 21 Year Long Service Scrolls. Mr David Brown took over as Chairman and presented Mr Willis with the Chairman's plaque. There was a contest of the post for Vice Chairman between Roger Morse (1T) and Alun Hughes (2B). Mr Hughes was elected. With only 60 members attending the Annual General Meeting proved to be a quiet, but interesting one.

## **MARCH**

### **Tuesday March 1<sup>st</sup>**

#### **Temple of Peace, Cardiff**

In fulfilling the St David's Day Concert the Choir returned to a venue in which they last appeared in 1956. This was the Temple of Peace in Cardiff. The proceeds of the concert were in aid of Research into the Diseases of the Elderly (RIDE). The concert proved to be an interesting one as Jenny was called upon to fill a solo spot as Sam was unable to attend. This she did with flare and panache as she gave her first pianoforte solo items. They were well received with rapturous applause, as indeed were the Choir items. The pleasure given to the audience by the evening's performances by the soloists Mair Roberts, Jenny and the Choir was shown as the applause continued when the Choir left the stage at the end of the concert.

### **Saturday March 19<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Cheltenham Town Hall**

The Choir returned to Cheltenham with a concert in the Town Hall, home of the famous Cheltenham Festival. The buses left Treorchy at 4.30pm which allowed choristers to see the France vs Wales international game which Wales lost 16-9. The buses arrived at 7pm and in half an hour the concert began. The hall is a very fine building with superb acoustics to which both artist and Choir used to full advantage.

Owing to the illness of Sam, Josephine sang extra items, all being greatly received by the capacity audience – which included the Mayor and Mayoress of Cheltenham and also Arthur Negus the famous authority on furniture as he displays on many television and radio broadcasts.

The concert was organised by a great fan and friend of the Choir, Brian Bates and proceeds were in aid of Choir funds. This amounted to £2,500 and for this magnificent effort the Choir gave one of its finest performances to a full house of 1,000 people. Bouquets were presented to Jenny, Josephine and Mary Cynan Jones by two men well known to the Choir – Reg Coates (Greathouse) and Norman Berry (Bishop Cleeve). After the concert members were entertained at the Whitbread Sports Club where many new friends were made. There in celebration of their 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, John Davies presented Mrs Brian Bates with a basket of flowers and in celebration of his 65<sup>th</sup> birthday “Happy Birthday” was sung to Edmond Evans (1T), Life Member.

#### **Thursday March 24<sup>th</sup>**

##### **Abercarn Community Centre**

The Choir paid its first visit to the Abercarn Community Centre. All the ingredients were as previous visits, a concert, a capacity audience and a friendly and appreciative atmosphere. Two new soloists, Enid Sian Jones (soprano) and Jason Jones (baritone) appeared with the Choir. The Choir gave their first public performance of “Crimmond”. Also “Happy Birthday” was performed for Enid much to her delight. The late busers were entertained at the Cwm Carn RFC.

## **APRIL**

#### **Friday April 1<sup>st</sup>**

##### **Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy**

This was the 18<sup>th</sup> consecutive annual Good Friday concert with the Parc & Dare Band. However the same team were not there because of the untimely death of Mr Alec Jones MP. At the end of the first half Mr Cliff Taylor (Choir President) moved a short and sincere tribute to Mr Jones and the Choir sang “Arglwydd Mae Yn Nosi” in his memory. Another change this year was the staging arrangement. The band were immediately in front of the stage and the Choir was brought to the edge of it. Again the full house audience appeared to enjoy the concert, although the rapport between the Choir and Conductor left a lot to be desired. David Foulkes (2T) and Ivor Williams (1B) made their first concert appearance.

#### **Saturday April 16<sup>th</sup>**

##### **Moriah Chapel, Llanelli**

After a period of nine years the Choir paid a visit to Llanelli with a concert in Moriah Chapel. Although it was a long concert, because there were four artists appearing, the atmosphere engendered was a happy one and all who were present enjoyed all the contributions given by each artist.

#### **Monday April 25<sup>th</sup>**

##### **St David's Hall, Cardiff**

The Choir was privileged again to appear in a centenary celebration. This time it was the centenary of the Boys Brigade. The celebration concert saw Josephine Jones join

the Choir for the first half while the second half was given by Sir Harry Secombe. The concert was an extremely popular one with a capacity audience which showed in no uncertain manner their appreciation. The evening was marred by the sudden illness of Cyril Howard (2T) during the last item, "Easter Hymn" and was taken to Cardiff Royal Infirmary.

### **Saturday April 30<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Victoria Hall, Bolton**

The Choir travelled to regions unknown. On a gloriously sunny day it sallied forth to give concerts in Bolton and Warrington, an area where it had not previously appeared. Leaving Treorchy at 11am the journey saw the Choir travelling along a road and near a canal, close to the Walton Hall Golf Club. There the buses encountered a narrow bridge and after an attempt to cross it damaged the bus and had to find another way. Eventually the buses arrived at the Lord Daresbury Hotel at 4.15pm. This was a splendid hotel and the choristers changed into their dress suits and headed to Bolton for food in Leigh before arriving at the Bolton Hall at 7.15pm

The Victoria Hall proved to be one of the finest acoustical halls the Choir has performed in. Although the audience number was disappointing they showed their appreciation of the artist (Josephine Jones) and the Choir's performance in no uncertain manner. With such a fine hall, Josephine in splendid voice the Choir giving a first class performance, it was a most enjoyable evening. The last item, "Myfanwy" was sung for a couple celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary. An interesting feature of the evening was that because of a previous engagement Jennifer was unable to attend and Bryan Davies was the accompanist. His daughter performed alongside him with "Hava Nagila". After the concert the choristers returned to the hotel for a convivial evening

## **MAY**

### **Sunday May 1<sup>st</sup>**

#### **Parr Hall, Warrington**

The breakfast was excellent and the choristers were free for the day, with a section of them visiting the Rugby Union Club in Lymm, arranged by Huw Williams (2T) and spent a few pleasant hours in a most happy atmosphere. The members boarded the bus at 6.30pm and travelled to the Parr Hall in Warrington for the evening concert. This hall again turned out to be a fine one and was practically full for the concert. The performance was a repeat of the Bolton Concert and Choir received rapturous applause from the audience which included the Mayor. The last item, "Myfanwy" was sung for Mr and Mrs Mel Absolam, very good friends of the Choir. The evening concert was broadcast to local hospitals and Mr John Cynan Jones cited to them the example of Norman Cox (1B) who had a serious motorbike accident before Christmas and had attended the last four concerts on crutches. Tonight was the first appearance for Ian Thomas (1B) and Alan Iles (2B) After the concert the members stayed in the Parr Hall where new friends were made until 11.30pm, then returned to the hotel to continue the evening's relaxations which were made more enjoyable by the contribution of Roger Morse (1T). On the following day the Choir arrived home at 1.30pm, travelling 475 miles in total.

### **Friday May 13<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Civic Hall, Camberley**

The Choir travelled to Camberley Civic Hall to perform for one of the most prestigious institutions in the country – the Royal Academy, Sandhurst. Leaving Treorchy at 2pm they arrived at the Victory College, Sandhurst at 5.30pm where they were provided with a light tea. The members staying the night settled into their rooms in the Salamanca Wing. On arriving at the Hall, which was relatively small with its capacity of 500 people and featuring some heavy drapes, the Choir had a rehearsal but it was clear this was going to be a difficult place to sing. Despite this the capacity audience enjoyed the evening concert featuring the Choir with Sam Griffiths and Josephine Jones. Afterwards a convivial evening was spent in the Warrant Officer / Sergeant's Mess where supper was provided. On the following morning the choristers enjoyed breakfast and were treated to a site which certainly brought back memories of the war years – a Spitfire flew overhead. Thus ended a pleasant engagement. The dedication of some choristers was shown as Geoffrey Howard (1B), Wyn Davies, Ieuan Davies and Dennis Lethbridge (all 1T) travelled up by car and returned home after the concert.

### **Wednesday May 25<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Robinson David Timber & Builder's Merchants, Cardiff**

The Choir travelled to East Tyndall Street, Cardiff for the performance. On arrival they were invited to the canteen for drinks and sandwiches and were soon away that this was going to be “one of those engagements”! The premises as a large builders yard and an exhibition of the Sabah Celebration Evening products were being held in the main building. In this building were hundreds of people drinking, eating, talking and laughing whilst milling around the exhibitions. When the Choir was due to perform they made their way haphazardly through the crowd and onto the stage in the corner of the building only to discover the piano was missing. Some frantic efforts by choristers found it on the floor of the building and after clearing all the empty beer bottles, glasses, bits of pork pie and sandwiches, were able to get it on the stage. The MC. Mr Powell then called on Dickie Henderson, the well known TV star to take part in the evening's raffle for a Sherpa drop side truck. After this was done the Choir began to perform at around 9.30pm. by now the drinks were free and the audience's noise level was increasing and did not diminish. The shouting, whistling and cheering after each item was more in keeping with a pop music festival. The Conductor left no doubt of his displeasure of the evening's arrangements. At least it can be aid that it was a new type of concert for many choristers. The mood of the evening was shown by Sam Griffiths when he said “They asked me to sing “Trees” but I ‘wooden’ do it.”

## **JUNE**

### **Saturday June 11<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Eton College**

The Choir returned to the hallowed halls of Eton College with a concert in aid of the Slough Mentally Handicapped Children. Leaving Treorchy at 3pm arriving at Eton at 6.30pm, the Choir passed Heathrow en route and had the exciting and thrilling sight of Concorde soar into the air. Food was served in the Eton Church Hall and the concert commenced at 7pm. With such a fine hall and a full house the concert was a very successful one, with the Choir giving its first full public performance of “The Sound of Silence”. A touching moment in the evening's proceedings was when two

disabled children presented bouquets to Mair, Jenny and Mary. After the concert one bus of choristers experienced the hospitality of the Victoria Hotel on Farnham Green, arriving home at 3.30am. During the evening a cheque of £2,575 was presented to John Mallin by Brian Bates for the concert in Cheltenham – a magnificent sum raised for the Choir funds.

### **Thursday June 16<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Workmen's Hall, Ynyshir**

After a period of 22 years the Choir returned to the Workmen's Hall in Ynyshir. The proceeds of the concert were in aid of the other organisation taking part, the Ynyshir and Tymawr Colliery Band. The hall was full and when the Choir was introduced Jenny, resplendent in a red dress, walked gracefully to the piano. On striking the first chord it was obvious that this was going to be "one of those pianos" – possibly one of the worst Jenny has ever had to suffer. The concert ran smoothly until the interval and until the penultimate items – because then the presentations started! Firstly the Life Membership of the South East Wales Band Association was presented to Stan Williams, a further two presentations to local residents, a speech by Mr Hicks, presentation to Mr Davies of the Band which caused confusion as when the call came for the conductor John Cynan stepped forward! Finally a presentation of £50 to the funds. The presentation time compared to the total running of the concert. Despite all of this ceremony it was an enjoyable evening.

### **Thursday June 30<sup>th</sup>**

#### **St Peter's Church, Pentre**

The concert was held in the Cathedral of the Rhondda which is urgently in need of repairs and renovation. To assist in raising money the Choir gave the concert. The choristers rallied around and 89 of them staged but unfortunately the audience could have been larger. Contributing to the evening's entertainment were the Castle Singers, a group of five young ladies, all students of the College of Music and Drama in Cardiff. Their mentor was Miss Susan Howley, who accompanied them on the organ and piano. Incidentally Susan's father is David Howley in the 1<sup>st</sup> Tenor section. It was a very satisfying concert, especially for Anthony Pool (1B) who made his first appearance.

## **JULY**

### **Saturday July 9<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Civic Hall, Bedworth**

The Choir renewed its acquaintance with one of its favourite venues in Bedworth. The buses left Treorchy at 2pm on a hot, sultry day and met in the picnic area at Monmouth. While travelling along the M6 there was a loud noise from the back of Elwyn's bus and on inspection it was found the back inside tyre had punctured. Fortunately it was close to Bedworth and the choristers crowded onto another bus. The Conductor called for an immediate rehearsal and it was decided to discard the bow, frill and jacket for the performance. The concert was first class with the Choir enjoying the wonderful acoustics. Jenny, resplendent in a blue dress and an excellent piano; Josephine Jones in outstanding form, John Cynan Jones in full regalia and a most appreciative audience – all helped make this a first-class concert. After the first group in the second half the conductor announced it was Rhydian Hunt (2B) birthday and "Happy Birthday" was sung. After her first song Josephine gave Rhydian a kiss!

At the end of the concert one bus stayed in the bar while the Rodneys sampled the hospitality of Nuneaton Rugby Club.

### **Wednesday July 20<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Bethlehem Chapel, Treorchy**

After a period of 20 years the Choir returned to the Bethlehem Chapel with a contribution to a television recording of "Songs of Praise". It was in Noddfa in 1971 that the Choir last appeared in this programme. Also taking part were Penyreglyn Junior School Choir (Conductor Nan Llewellyn), the Upper Rhondda Comprehensive School Brass Band Ensemble (Conductor Ieuan Morgan) and Jonathan Gulliford (organ). Because of the hot, humid weather and after the experience of the rehearsals on the previous night, towels, cushions and handkerchiefs were brought by the participants to avoid their clothes sticking to the varnish on the seats. The programme was conducted by John Cynan Jones and because of lighting troubles took three hours to complete. It was a long, hot session for everybody concerned and it was a "baptism of fire" for Colin Rogers, Ivor Llewellyn (2T), K. Davies, A. Lewis (1B) who made their first appearances. Dress suits were not worn on this occasion. The hymn sung by the Choir was chosen by Mr Cas Powell who has been singing with the pre and post war Choir for sixty years.

## **AUGUST**

### **Tuesday August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

The funeral took place today of Richard Byron Evans, the driver of many of our bus trips. On August 18<sup>th</sup> he was taking miners to Cymdu Colliery and was taken to the colliery ambulance station on feeling ill. Despite all efforts, he died. More than 30 choristers attended the funeral and sang "Old Rugged Cross" at the Cymmer Cemetery. Byron was one of the regular Brewers drivers for the Choir for thirty years and together we travelled thousands of miles. His last journey with us was to Camberley for the Royal Academy, Sandhurst. He was an excellence driver and will be sadly missed and for many bus trips to come many choristers will give audible and silent thoughts to Byron.

## **SEPTEMBER**

### **Thursday September 1<sup>st</sup>**

Another very special occasion for one of the most faithful and respect choristers, Cas Powell (2T) who celebrated his Golden Wedding Anniversary. To mark the occasion a party was held in Hebron Chapel Vestry. After the rehearsal thirty concerts went along and no one was more delighted than the happy couple. The choristers sang a few items to add to the very pleasant and satisfying end to a very special day for Cas and Mary Powell.

### **Sunday September 11<sup>th</sup>**

#### **St David's Hall, Cardiff**

After a period of 12 years the Choir appeared on stage with Tom Jones. The Choir was honoured and privileged not only to appear with such an international star, but also be association with such a Gala Charity Concert under the patronage of Viscount Tonypany held in aid of three Welsh charities – Welsh Centre for International

Affairs, South Wales Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus and Ysgol y Bond Adrian Cefni, Llangefni. The Choir of 99 men, left at 5pm arriving at Cardiff behind the scheduled time, the Choir hurried to the stage to rehearse with Tom Jones. The Choir backed the song "Green Green Grass of Home".

### **Saturday September 17<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Llanidloes Community Centre**

Nothing runs smoothly all of the time. So it was for the Choir's concert in Llanidloes. For the first time one bus had to go via Talbot Green without a steward to pick up Dennis Wells but unbeknownst to the bus he wasn't going. Elwyn waited half an hour and then proceeded back up the valley when the bus developed engine trouble. Denzil Brewer appeared some time later to fix the bus and finally the Choir reached Llanidloes with half an hour to spare. The concert was organised by the RAFA and owing to finger injury Jennifer was unable to attend and the ever faithful Bryan Davies was accompanist. Owing to illness Sam Griffiths did not attend and Mair Roberts sang extra items, including the solo in "Battle Hymn of the Republic". The concert commenced at 7.30pm and after the Choir group Ieuan Lawrence (2B) was taken ill and had to leave the stage. Despite all these tribulations the full house audience enjoyed the concert and choristers enjoyed the hospitality of the United Services Club.

### **Tuesday September 27<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Colston Hall, Bristol**

The Choir returned to the Colston Hall for a concert by the Licensed Victuellers in aid of their National Homes. The Choir arrived at 8.20pm as the first half of the concert was still in progress with a performance by the H.M Royal Marines Band. The Choir staged first and then the band staged in a strange format but it was soon clear they played in a "big band" sound magnificently! The Choir responded with some fine singing and Jenny accompanied with her usual high standard. With such a wonderful band and their extrovert conductor, the fine singing of the Choir and an excellent hall, the audience of 2,000 showed their enjoyment with loud and prolonged applause.

## **OCTOBER**

### **Saturday October 1<sup>st</sup>**

#### **Rhondda Sports Centre, Ystrad**

In a gala evening in honour of the Rt Hon George Thomas P.C. Viscount Tonypany, the Choir was privileged to perform the second half of the concert. Many Rhondda musical organisations took part and for the first time for many years Pendyrus and Treorchy appeared together in concert. Like so many similar evenings it was late starting and the Choir didn't appear until 9.45pm. The concert concluded with the presentation of a Bible from Rhondda Council to Viscount Tonypany and the capacity audience of 1,000 gave him a standing ovation. MC for the evening was Cliff Morgan who read a telegram for the Viscount from Prince Charles. After the concert a splendid buffet was provided and a bar was available in the Lesser Hall of the Centre.

### **Saturday October 8<sup>th</sup> / Sunday October 9<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Mark Hall School, Harlow**

After a decade the Choir renewed its association with the Harlow Welsh Society with a weekend visit. The engagement was in celebration of its 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary. The buses

left Treorchy at 12.15pm, arriving at 5.15pm. here the billeted boys met their hosts while the motel mob were taken to the Saxon Hotel. The concert started at 7.30pm and featured Mair Roberts as soloist. The evening's performance of the soloist and Choir was much appreciated by the capacity audience. John Cynan was presented with an engraved tankard to commemorate the event. Afterwards a free pint was provided for each chorister. On the following day the coaches left at 10am, suffered the torturous traffic in the East End of London and returned home at 5.15pm.

### **Thursday October 13<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy**

To a full house in the Park & Dare Theatre the Choir performed their second annual celebrity concert. They introduced two new artists who were appearing for the first time in Treorchy. Firstly was our regular soloist Mair Roberts and second up and coming bass Robert Erenyl who made his debut. As it was a Choir night bouquets were presented by Alan Davies and Mark Rees (2B) to Jenny and Mair. To complete surprise Mr Cliff Taylor announced this was John Cynan Jones' 400<sup>th</sup> appearance as Conductor of the Treorchy Male Choir and he was presented with six Jacobean cut glass goblets. The programme included three spirituals arranged by John Davies, who was present, in respect and admiration for him.

Thursday October 20<sup>th</sup>

Municipal Hall, Pontypridd

After a period of 14 years the Choir appeared at this venue. The hall is in the process of alteration and it has improved for performers. The concert was organised by Lewis Merthyr Band which is now sponsored by the Cardiff Lift Company. A total of 85 choristers staged with Jenny, dressed in pink and silver skirt and black top. Although the concert was musically satisfying, the audience number was disappointing, especially as proceeds were for the band. The MC for the evening was Borris Owen, a well known musician. A very nice gesture was made buy Mr Nigel Seaman, conductor of the band, when he allowed Mr Owen to conduct the band and Choir in the final item, "Llanfair."

### **Thursday October 27<sup>th</sup>**

This evening a part of 20 female Russians came to the rehearsal room as part of the Welsh-Russian Peace Organisation. The second half of rehearsal commenced with the ladies singing two Russian folk songs. The Choir responded with "Fantasia on Famous Welsh Folk Song" and "Morte Christe". One lady, speaking with an interpreter, said Treorchy Choir was known in Russia. She presented two records of Russian music to the Conductor. A Party was conveyed in the RAFA Club and the LP "A Valley Called The Rhondda" was presented to them.

## **NOVEMBER**

### **Thursday November 10<sup>th</sup>**

#### **The Pavilion, Porthcawl**

The Choir returned to Porthcawl with a concert for the Wales Council for the Disabled. The Cory Band was the other organisation taking part. As always the members wore poppies and there was a major singalong section with the last section of items dedicated to the remembrance of the fallen. The Choir sang "Lest We

Forget”. Three church dignitaries performed the service as the trumpeter played the Last Post and the lights dimmed with a spotlight focused on the trumpeter. From the roof of the hall through a beam of the spotlight floated hundreds of poppy leaves. A serene moment. The Choir accompanist and Conductor along with the Choir endured another painful piano! Afterwards the Choir enjoyed the facilities in the hall bar and the generosity of the Welsh brewers saw each of the performers receive four beer checks.

### **Saturday November 12<sup>th</sup>**

#### **University Concert Hall, Warwick**

It was pastures new for the Choir when they gave their first concert in Warwick. It was organised by the Kenilworth Round Table, sponsored by Peugeot Talbot. The buses left at 1.30pm, arriving at the Leamingtonians Rugby Football Club at 5.15pm for tea. The buses reached the concert hall at 6.15pm and it proved to be a magnificent place where a short rehearsal was held. The concert was one of the best, such a wonderful hall, outstandingly appreciative capacity audience of 1,329 people and Josephine Jones maintaining her high standard. The wonderful playing by Jenny and the Choir, brilliantly conducted by John Cynan Jones once again rose to produce the Treorchy Sound. Such was the satisfaction expressed by the audience that the stamping of feet – for the first time – saw the conductor chose two encores. The chairman of the Round Table announced the concert raised £3,00 for the minibus and presented the Choir will a pennant. The early bus left at 11pm with the late bus returning to the rugby club.

### **Saturday November 26<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Shire Hall, Hereford**

It was down memory lane time for the Choir as they returned after 17 years to Hereford. Once again the Choir had the privilege of appearing with TV personality (Sssh you know who!) William Franklyn. The Shire Hall was filled to its audience capacity which included the Mayor and Mayoress and was organised by the Royal National Institute for the Blind. The concert was first class with artist John Howell giving excellent readings from Dylan Thomas. The Choir was in good voice, Jenny playing to her usual high standard, John Cynan in his usual confident manner and the whole proceedings in the polished, professional hands of William Franklyn. During the performance a lady in the audience was taken ill and carried out of the hall as the Choir continued to sing. The concert was recorded to be broadcast on the local hospital network.

## **DECEMBER**

### **Saturday December 3<sup>rd</sup>**

The Choir held its 20<sup>th</sup> Dinner and Dance at the Rhondda Sports Centre. The Chief Guest was Rhondda boy Mr W.B. Cleaver, the former Welsh Rugby International and retired director of the National Coal Board. Unfortunately Chairman David Brown couldn't attend owing to illness and the job was carried out by Alun Hughes. The music was supplied by the Glenn Martin Band and unfortunately the evening was marred with the heating being inadequate. During the evening Brian Bates was made Honorary Member of the Choir and “Happy Birthday” was sung to Sam Griffiths on his 59<sup>th</sup> birthday. Best wishes were expressed to Josephine Jones who will shortly be getting married and emigrating to South Africa.

### **Friday December 9<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Fairfield Hall, Croydon**

The fourth consecutive concert in Fairfield Hall was organised by Bob Barratt. As the journey progressed the weather deteriorated and on arrival at the Severn Bridge Elwyn's bus was diverted onto a slip-road but fortunately back onto the bridge – possibly the last to cross it before the bridge was closed to traffic. The other bus was not so lucky. One bus arrived at 7.15pm and there was no sign of the other bus but a phone message was received to say they would arrive in an hour. By 8.45pm it had still not appeared. Luckily Josephine Jones and David Bell performed throughout the period. Bob asked if a part of the Choir would sing and a Committee Meeting was held which decided to hold an early interval with the hope the other bus would arrive. Fortunately it did at 9.05pm! This meant that those choristers spent seven hours on the bus in total. The Choir took to the stage at 9.15pm and performed the programme as printed which included for the first time “March of the Peers”, “Dear Lord and Father of Mankind” and “Aberystwyth”. Possibly because of the disorientation of the time schedule, the singing fell below the usual high standard, much to the concern of the conductor. However the audience showed their appreciation of the Choir's efforts with a standing ovation. The concert ended at 10.40pm and the early bus arrived home at 4.45am. it was an engagement that will be long remembered by A Lewis (1B) who made his first appearance.

### **Thursday December 15<sup>th</sup>**

#### **New Tabernacle Church, Merthyr Tydfil**

The last engagement of the year was in a very pleasant church which is in the process of renovation. The minister and MC, Rev D. J. Protheroe proved to be quite a character. Midway through the second half the lights were extinguished and on came a group of men in Victorian dress and carrying candles. They then proceeded to perform four seasonal songs in close harmony. They were called “The Life Guards” and were singing in the locality for a cancer charity. As they left the stage on walked Father Christmas who recited a poem mentioning all the performers who took part. John Cynan presented Josephine with two tape recordings of the Choir as it was her last appearance before leaving for South Africa. A pleasant evening was had by all, especially Mel Wilcox (1B) who made his first appearance.