TREORCHY MALE CHOIR
2011

Conductor Emeritus:
JOHN CYNAN JONES, M.Mus., B.A., A.T.C.L.

President:
BRIAN BATES, Esq.

Vice Presidents:

HAYDN ERASMUS BEM, NORMAN MARTIN, ISLWYN MORGAN

MUSIC STAFF

Conductor:
JANICE BALL, B.Mus., A.R.C.O.

Accompanist:
HELEN ROBERTS, B.Mus.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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DAVID BEBB

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FREDERICK O'BRIEN

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Honorary Members—Sir Tom Jones, Jon Schoffield, John Tucker, Brian Bates, Harold Woody, **Douglas Firstbrook**, John Reid, James Kelso, Edward Fraser, John Jenkins, Mel Absolam, Andrew Kay, Lester McGrath, Nigel Chivers, Max Boyce, Andrew Badham, Roy Noble, Dr Malcolm Williams, Dr Alwyn Humphreys, Dr Haydn James, **Bryan Davies**, Stuart Burrows, Richard Dinnen, David Lang, Robert Harris, David Geoffrey Thomas, Philip Grey, David Green, Paul Young

Honorary Lady Members—Janice Ball, Helen Roberts, Jeanette Lawrence, Jennifer Jones, Iris Williams, Linde McPherson, Fran Wheat, Val Dix, Judy Chivers, Marion Williams, Helen May, Heather James, Ros Evans, Iris Williams, Kate Woolveridge, Mair Roberts, Rhiannon Williams, Toni Rudov, Sue Gannon, Pia di Paolo, Iona Jones, Jeanne Grey, Marcelle Berry

First Tenor	Second Tenor	First Bass	Second Bass
Arthur Miles	Derek Langley	Paul Evans	David Williams
Philip Evans	Andrew Costin	Ron Evans	Alun Davies
	ABOVE—Committee members of each section		
Cyril Bevan	Jack Bean	David Bebb	David Birch
Ernald Brooks	Keith Bevan	Tom Belmont	Nigel Carney
Graham Cox	Joe Harris	Alan Bowen	Gareth Davies
Wynne Davies	Gary Horgan	Norman Cox	Tony Davies
Phillip Evans	Nick Jenkins	Ray Daniels	David Evans
Stuart Hill	Norman Martin	Philip Edmunds	Gareth Evans
Keith Hopkins	Mark Milsom	Gerald Emmanuel	Alun Iles
Keith Husband	Fred O'Brien	**Len Gale**	George Jacob
Paul Knight	David Powell	Ray Johnson	Bryn Jones
Gareth Lawrence	Haydn Powell	John Jones	Mark Jones
Stephen Lawrence	Jeff Priday	Selwyn Jones	Peter Jones
Alwyn Lewis	Ian Reynolds	Alan Lewis	Alun Morris
Dillwyn Llewellyn	Ken Simcox	Keith Newman	Peter Morris
Ivor Lock	Glyn Thomas	Keith Owens	Jeff Powell
Gwyn Morgan	Martin Wilkes	Daryl Stacey	John Radford
Islwyn Morgan	Michael Wood	Derek Thomas	Mike Russ
Roger Morse		William Thomas	David Stanton
Adrian Owen		Ceri Warren	Ken Waldin
Dean Powell		Phillip Warren	Dennis Young
Ceri Rees		William Watkin	
Reg Stephens		Roger Watkins	
Gareth Thomas		Brian Williams	
Philip Tucker		Ivor Williams	
Tony Vaughan			
John Weaver			

LIFE MEMBERS

Michael Gale, Ben Jackson, Islwyn Morgan, Norman Martin, Haydn Erasmus, Sam Griffiths, John Mallin, John Cynan Jones, Dean Powell, Reg Stephens, William Watkins, Peter Morris, Len Gale, David Powell, Frederick O'Brien, Peter Jones, Bryn Jones, Bryn Howells, Roger Morse, Ken Simcox, Alun Davies, Cyril Bevan,

FOREWORD

by NICHOLAS OWEN
BBC TV News & Classic FM Presenter

We really had to go. I had to be up before dawn the next day, an early newsreading shift to do. Never mind. We simply had to hang on and enjoy some more irresistible minutes of the marvellous Treorchy sound. Your tradition of just a few more songs in the bar after the scheduled performance is a splendid one.

It was a chilly November evening in Leatherhead, Surrey, at the Sybil Thorndike Theatre. For my wife Brenda and I it was the second time we had heard the Choir. The first was not far away a few years ago in Dorking. We went to Leatherhead with my good friend Peter Moxley and his wife Jenny. What a happy choice. Treorchy was performing to benefit the Wooden Spoon charity. That super organisation provided the money for a new playground at the centre in Surrey which caters for youngsters who have severe epilepsy. Peter is one of its leading volunteer fund raisers. Oh, and most important, his mother was Welsh!

The mighty Tom Jones wrote a decade ago, in his Foreword to a history of the Choir, that it was hard to sing alongside them "with a lump in your throat and a tear in your eye." Well, the lumps and the tears came over and over again at the Thorndike Theatre as Treorchy's males, conducted by Janice Ball, gave us their best.

When we gathered in the bar afterwards, several Choir members took pains to explain that if some Welsh singing can sound – especially to outsiders' ears – rather inaccessible, Treorchy has always had a simple mission: to entertain. Cue then the after-show entertainment, fortified by some appropriate refreshment. What a treat it was to be surrounded by choristers as they granted my request, the sublime hymn "Gwahoddiad". "Myfanwy" came next, for Brenda.

Mindful of the next morning's alarm clock, we started to leave. We got as far as the theatre's main exit when the classic opening words of "Delilah" echoed through the building. Of course, we turned back for one last song. Next time, we hope to hear Treorchy in Wales. And, please, come back our way just as soon as you can.

Carreg Cennen Castle, Llandeilo

EDITORIAL

by DEAN POWELL

Editors of periodicals the world over have one thing very much in common. On the one hand, while celebrating the publication of their most recent literary effort, there is the growing concern of what can be included in the next edition. However, while pondering this possibility every year, I am continually impressed not only by the quantity and quality of writers who contribute to "Excelsior", but also by the sheer volume of work undertaken by the Treorchy Male Choir which is recorded within these pages. This year is certainly no exception to the rule and as the magazine approaches its 65th anniversary it remains loyal to the mission of its founders – to celebrate the achievements of the Choir and allow a "voice" for members, admirers and those with whom we have been fortunate enough to work with during the year.

When we look back at 2011 we will once again recognise a year in which so much was achieved. With 34 engagements successfully undertaken in some truly magnificent venues, the Choir returned to many favourite halls and conquered new and impressive auditoriums. Surely no other male voice choir of our "amateur" status can enjoy such varied – and high-profile – concert venues which are often sold-out weeks or even months in advance of the performance. Very often we take these opportunities for granted, without realising that these locations continually elude many of our contemporaries.

The Anvil in Basingstoke allowed us once again to share the stage with the Hampshire County Youth Choir and it was a pleasure to enjoy the acoustically-perfect hall at St George's Church in Bristol. Few will ever forget the tumultuous applause from the packed China Street Chapel in Llanidloes in a concert arranged by the son of former Second Tenor Jack Moses, nor the opportunity to visit Hoddinott Hall at the Wales Millennium Centre for the first time to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Cantorion Creigiau. It was at Tewkesbury Abbey that we officially launched our new and critically acclaimed album "Timeless", made a welcomed return to Rhos for a first-class performance with Rhos Male Choir at the Stiwt and shared the stage once again with Iris Williams OBE at the St David's Hall in Cardiff. It was also a pleasure to return to the Assembly Rooms in Worthing, St Michael's Church in Somerton, No 8 Centre in Pershore and the Plymouth Pavilions

Choristers performed as part of the massed choir at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff prior to the Wales vs Barbarians games and the Wales vs Australia

Remembrance Sunday Concert

where they bid a fond farewell to international rugby star Shane Williams on his retirement. The Choir made welcomed return visits to Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury. Bedworth Civic Hall and Leatherhead Theatre before culminating in the final official concert of the year before HRH Princess Anne and the Archbishop of Wales at Llandaff Cathedral for cancer charity Tenovus.

It was also a year in which the Choir made several television recordings, the most memorable on the incredible vantage point afforded by Carreg Cennen Castle near Llandeilo with its breathtaking views and scenery. The Choir, filmed from a helicopter, appeared on a 'History of Britain' programme for Sky HD later in the year. They also made a television recording for Huw Edwards' groundbreaking BBC history programme, "The Story of Wales" and joined forces with Only Boys Aloud for a special guest appearance on "Songs of Praise". Similarly the Choir returned to the recording studio to provide the vocal music for a new album with the Welsh Guards Band called "A Royal Tribute".This was released to celebrate the marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

With so many landmark moments to celebrate in 2011 it is certainly not a concern of how to fill the growing pages of "Excelsior", but rather a case of what to leave out! That is why this edition once again marks the many achievements through the words of many prestigious individuals and we remain very grateful to them all for using their precious time by fulfilling the invitation to contribute articles. Following several months of correspondence, it was a delight to welcome BBC newsreader and Classic FM

presenter Nicholas Owen and his wife and friends to the concert in Leatherhead. His opening Foreword for "Excelsior" clearly illustrates his enjoyment of the performance as does the kind words of David Jackson, organiser of the event which was held in aid of our charity, Wooden Spoon. Also in the auditorium was the great-granddaughter and great-great-grandson of one of the Choir's most iconic Musical Directors, William Thomas who led them to the Royal Command Performance for Queen Victoria in 1895. It was a pleasure to be reunited once more with Eirion, (the daughter of long-time Choir Secretary Donna Griffiths) and her children and we are grateful to Simon Gould, her son, for his kind words in this edition.

During the year we enjoyed significant media coverage for the release of "Timeless" which was recorded in 2010 by Adrian Munsey's record label, Infinity. The many newspaper articles and radio coverage on national and local stations was exemplary and many of those articles have been reproduced in "Excelsior". For our Annual Autumn Concert we welcomed international Welsh tenor, Classic Album chart-topper and star of television advertisement's "Go Compare", Wynne Evans to the stage. As always he enhanced the evening and has also been kind enough to share his memories of the night with our readers in this edition. We are also grateful to the poetic charm of Honorary Lady Member Jean Lawrence's daughter Anne Barber for her contribution.

The Royal Concert at Llandaff Cathedral resulted in kind articles from the Archbishop of Wales and Lord Mayor of Cardiff along with the letter from the Private Secretary of HRH Princess Royal who appeared clearly overjoyed and on occasions deeply moved by the concert performance. As the evening was held in aid of Welsh cancer charity Tenovus, we are grateful to the words of its representative Dr Ian Lewis who is not only Rhondda-born, but the son of First Tenor Alwyn Lewis! Closer to home we are also grateful to Cllr Sylvia Jones, Mayor of Rhondda Cynon Taf, for her contribution to this year's edition.

The Treorchy Male Choir was formed due to the fusion of two easily discernible features of everyday Welsh valley life. On the one hand was the incredible accelerated growth of the coal mining industry, on the other was the growing strength of Non-Conformity as a religious force. No working mines exist in our Rhondda Valleys today and with their departure went the threat of injury or fatalities underground which had become such a trademark of heavy industry throughout Welsh history. Sadly we were not prepared for the impact the death of four miners at the Gleision Colliery in Swansea would have on us and it was with that in mind the Choir helped

raise £1,200 to the support fund within days of the tragedy. The letter of appreciation from MP Peter Hain has been included here to mark this occasion.

The Second Tenors and their new attire – claiming they can 'perform all night'.

Musically, the Choir continued to enhance its reputation with a growing repertoire of beautiful arrangements which are better described by our Musical Director in her "Conductor's Notes". However, one of those items has inspired a chorister to share his thoughts and feelings with us in "Excelsior". It was Second Tenor Nick Jenkins who had the deeply meaningful idea of commissioning a piece of music in memory of his late parents. The result is Jeffrey Howard's version of "In Memoriam" and we are grateful to Nick for having the foresight to commission the arrangement and explain its meaning by writing for "Excelsior".

This edition also includes another historical essay from the Editor who has spent almost twenty years researching the musical heritage of the Rhondda Valleys. The result is my contribution to the history of a Choir that stemmed from the original "Treorky" in the Royal Welsh Male Choir and made a huge impact on Welsh music making for decades.

Throughout the passing of so many years many individuals have touched our lives and the course of the Choir's history. In 2011 we were assisted greatly by the financial expertise of local accountant Paul Young and showed our appreciation by awarding him Honorary Membership of the Choir. It was also the year in which we celebrated the fiftieth year of membership for Second Tenor David Powell as a member of the Choir. However, it was also a year in which we sadly lost three individuals who contributed greatly in their own way to the success of the Choir. The passing of First Bass Len Gale and Honorary Members Bryan Davies and Doug Firstbrook affected us all and we pay tribute to them in these pages.

My gratitude to each and every one of you who contributed to this year's edition and my thanks to you, the reader, for taking the time to learn more about the illustrious achievements of our world-famous musical organisation.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

20th December, 2011

Dear Mr Powell,

The Princess Royal has asked me to thank you for your recent letter following the Tenovus Concert held at Llandaff Cathedral.

Her Royal Highness much enjoyed the evening and greatly appreciated the part played by the Treorchy Male Choir in making the event such a success.

Thank you again for your letter, and The Princess sends you, and all the members of the Choir, her best wishes for a very happy Christmas.

Yours sincerely
NR Wright

Captain Nick Wright CVO Royal Navy
Private Secretary to
HRH The Princess Royal

Dean Powell Esq

A NIGHT WITHOUT COMPARE

By WYNNE EVANS

Wynne Evans

During the past few years I have been very fortunate enough to travel extensively and work alongside some truly inspirational artists. The growing success of the humorous "Go Compare" advertising campaign provided a catalyst for me to follow a high-profile singing career which has been a hugely enjoyable and rewarding experience.

When looking back on 2011, I will remember many key moments, including the ability to travel to many exotic lands to film further advertisements, concert performances the length and breadth of the country and of course the release of a bestselling album of my favourite music.

Certainly one of the most enjoyable events of the year was the opportunity to join the world-famous Treorchy Male Choir on stage for the first time. Growing up in Carmarthenshire, I realised the power and impact of the sounds of male voice choirs from a very early age. I was also very much aware of the fact that Treorchy was – and still is – regarded as one of the finest Wales has ever produced.

Therefore it was a sheer delight and honour to combine forces with this mighty band of men at their Annual Autumn Concert in the Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy. The warm welcome from the choristers and audience alike made this an evening to remember.

The quality of performance by the Choir was second to none and it was a great pleasure to join them for the final item of Puccini's iconic "Nessun Dorma" to rapturous applause.

Also during 2011 I appeared on the album to celebrate the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton. Although we didn't meet in the recording studio, I was delighted to see that along with the Welsh Guards Band and actor Martin Sheen, the other participants of this successful album was none other than the men of Treorchy! I listen to the CD with immense pleasure and marvel at the power and pride such organisations have in their performance.

To the Choir may I wish you all the very best in your future endeavours. Continue to wave the flag of Welsh culture. I hope it isn't too long before we meet again.

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

By DAVID BEBB

It was another challenging, yet ultimately very rewarding year. My first full year as Chairman of Treorchy Male Choir has seen its fair share of drama and accolades. However, the performances of the Choir has continued to impress and we have been rewarded with extremely positive receptions from our range of concerts throughout 2011.

Once more, these concerts have seen us travel the length and breadth of the country, always with the same zeal and desire to perform to the best of our ability. The role of our musical staff in our progression is without question and the tireless hours Jan spends rehearsing and rehearsing new items, certainly pays off in the reception that we receive. To that end, new items have immediately been embraced by the Choir and public alike, not least the variation on "Calon Lan", Welsh version of "Hallelujah" and "This Is The Moment" being probably the favourites of these.

Hoddinott Hall, Cardiff

Certainly, our performances now contain several climactic endings to sections, with the likes of "Nessun Dorma", "My Way" and "Senzenina" all regularly appearing in repertoire. It is clear by the response of our audience that our mix of traditional, opera and new items is appealing with the number of standing

ovations at performances. Critical acclaim has been followed with the odd criticism of performance, content and attire. Therefore, it was heartening to see the response from our friends in other choirs and from members of the public, who voiced their disapproval of any criticism. Quite simply, the Treorchy Male Choir needs to adapt to changing attitudes and cultures over time and so it is essential that we provide as much of a varied programme as is possible.

Recruitment is always a key issue and the efforts of many within the Choir ranks do not go unnoticed here. New members have joined (most of them younger than me!) which is a very positive move towards ensuring the longevity of the Choir. Not only have these new members embraced the ethos of Treorchy Male Choir but their enthusiasm and commitment to its success has been evidenced with their levels of attendance and performances in rehearsal and on stage. This definitely bodes well for the future and I can see no reason why these 'new recruits' will not become 'elder statesmen' over the years and the Treorchy Male Choir will definitely profit as a result.

Whilst on the subject of elder statesmen (and I hope they don't mind me calling them that), the continued presence of the likes of Islwyn Morgan, Norman Martin, Reg Stephens and William Watkin (to name a few) has ensured that the quality of our performances remains. These men can sing and know their part as well as any other, and probably better than most of us. Once again their attendance is admirable and they are also always ready to instruct/guide other members. For the record Norman maintained his 100% rehearsal/concert record throughout 2011 and the sprightly Reg recently reached the age of 90 years old. How did he celebrate? A sing-along with the boys! It was also a year in which we collectively celebrated the fiftieth year of membership of Second Tenor David Powell and it was a pleasure to present him with his suitable engraved gold watch to mark the occasion.

There were many highlights of 2011 that included the release of our new CD 'Timeless'. The decision to record another CD was based on the number of new items learned and pressure from our audiences for an album which contained these new songs. Sales have been very positive and songs have also appeared on mainstream radio, most notably BBC Radio 2 and BBC Radio Wales.

In April the Choir travelled to Carreg Cennen Castle in Llandeilo to film a section of a Sky HD programme and we used the opportunity to photograph the Choir to promote the new CD and the stunning scenery can also be seen on our new concert advertisings.

Furthermore, in March we returned to the studio to record several items for A Royal Tribute CD to commemorate the Royal Wedding. This CD saw us

join forces with Wynne Evans (he of Go Compare fame, who also the guest artist at our Autumn concert) and the Band of Welsh Guards providing a sensory experience which was befitting of the occasion. In keeping with the Royal performances, The Princess Royal attended our joint concert with Howells Junior School and Tenovus Choir for Life at Llandaff Cathedral in November, which was a truly inspirational experience for all.

The year 2011 allowed us also to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Cantorian Creigiau and many choristers were warmed to be reunited with former soloist Mair Roberts. Additionally, the Choir was invited to perform on the hallowed ground of the Millennium Stadium when Wales played the Barbarians and once again in a Massed Choir Concert to celebrate the last International cap of Shane Williams, when Wales played Australia in December. These events are always enjoyed by the Treorchy faithful.

Our charity work continued throughout the year with proceeds from various concerts going to the Rotary Club, Wooden Spoon, Royal British Legion, Tenovus and Ty Hafan to name but a few. The choristers were thankful that they could finally attend the Ty Hafan Memorial Service and show their respect through the medium of song, as for the past three years our ability to attend had been blighted by snow. The musical staff and gentlemen of the Choir are always keen to support as many charities as possible and do whatever is in our capacity musically to raise such important funds. This year we also took it upon ourselves to ensure that those families who lost their loved ones in the Gleision Colliery tragedy received our financial support.

Once more my thanks, on behalf of the Choir, go as ever to our soloists Kate Woolveridge and Iona Jones, who between them attend all of our official Choir performances and sing so beautifully. Their input has a huge impact on the performance of the Choir as a whole and they are warmly recognised by our public. Add to that the talents of our Choir soloists Dean Powell and Ray Daniels and we are certainly blessed with the quality of people who can provide these solo items. Also it is fitting that all return on stage for the climactic Les Miserables medley, which serves to round-off the evening's performance well. Also Dean will segue the various items together with a mix of information and humour, ensuring the audience remain entertained during the ends of various sections and introducing our soloists to the stage. There were also a few new jokes thrown in as well! And to Gareth Evans who has stood in for Dean to MC a few concerts in his own inimitable style. It is recognised that this is no easy task and whilst the rest of us only need to concentrate on the singing, these two also need to think about what they are going to say in between.

As always the Choir would be little without the undoubted talents of Jan and

Helen. Always striving for the perfect performance Jan will rehearse and revisit many items until she is satisfied with the quality of the work. Jan is always keen to teach new items and many of these were introduced during 2011, with a large number still in pre-performance as we speak. Jan is one of the main drivers behind the 'face' of Treorchy Male Choir and the choristers respond to her driving enthusiasm and glaring eye! Helen will deputise for Jan on occasion and is also very adept as accompanying our performances, as well as those of Kate and Iona. Certainly, both Jan and Helen play a huge role in ensuring that the Treorchy Male Choir maintains its highly respected status and performances only continue to grow and grow.

A nod also to the management committee of the Choir, who's behind the scenes work throughout 2011 has been nothing short of admirable, ensuring that the Choir is in a fit and able state to meet many of its challenges. The new systems in place and greater constitutional strength can only improve the workings of the choir, who as a Charity Commissions organisation, are responsible for so much good work that is done in the community. I do not wish to single anyone out here, suffice to say that these changes were essential and required a lot of personal time and effort. Often castigated by the members (what committee isn't!), the result of its efforts will hopefully go unnoticed, as this means the structure is a secure one.

The future for Treorchy remains a rosy one, the response to our concerts in 2011 coupled with the sheer number of concerts in 2012 proves that despite a difficult financial climate, the Choir continues to thrive and entertain. Whilst 2012 will bring its own unique challenges, the continuing development of the Choir as a whole (under the steady guidance of Jan), bodes well for a prosperous new year.

Finally, thanks to you our audience, whose continued attendance and support underpins all that the Treorchy Male Choir does.

'What would I do without my music' indeed.

LLANDAFF RECALLED

The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Cardiff,
Councillor Professor Delme Bowen

During my very busy and rewarding year as Lord Mayor of Cardiff I have enjoyed the distinct pleasure of attending some truly unforgettable events and meeting the most remarkable of people. When I look back at 2011, I will certainly recall the concert in our splendid cathedral at Llandaff as one of the many highlights of the calendar year.

The very ingredients for the evening couldn't have been more suitable. Three splendid choirs performing inspirational songs to the very highest of standards, a cathedral full to the rafters and the presence of HRH The Princess Royal and the Archbishop of Wales. What better way to celebrate the coming of Christmas, but in doing so raise essential funds for Tenovus, that remarkable cancer charity that does so much for the people of Wales.

The Tenovus Sing for Life Choir is in itself a marvel as it uses music and the power of song for those facing treatment for Cancer, or being the friend or relative of a sufferer. Similarly, the Howells Junior School Choir brought an air of Christmas magic to the proceedings with a beautiful sound produced by such a talented group of young people.

Cllr. Professor Delme Bowen

Then of course came the Treorchy Male Choir. This is a first-class Welsh institution in its own right and who in this country, and indeed in all parts of the globe, have not heard of "the Treorchy"? On a personal level I have a connection with the Choir in their soloist and compere, who caused plenty of smiles and laughter from the Princess Royal, let alone the remainder of the congregation. My memories of Dean Powell go as far back as his fourth birthday when he first befriended my sons and they have remained close all of their lives.

Treorchy Male Choir creates a sound I first heard at around the same age on the radio and their performances never fail to impress and deeply move me. The melodies, the varied repertoire and that over all wave of sound washes over an audience and leaves them breathless. I dont think there was a dry eye in the house when they combined with the children's choir to conclude the concert with "You Raise Me Up" - an uplifting and deeply moving occasion.

I applaud all of those performers that night not only for giving us a concert to remember, but for raising money for such an important cause. I wish each and every one of you the very best in the year ahead. Diolch!

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

by BRIAN BATES

It is hard to believe that 2011 has passed so quickly and you will shortly be moving into your extensive concert programme for 2012. A time therefore to reflect on the past year through the pages of "Excelsior" the record for Treorchy Male Choir.

As your President I am disappointed that I have not been able to be with you quite so much this year. I am finding it much harder to drive the long journeys back to Cheltenham after each concert! Despite this I was able to enjoy your company and singing on some half dozen occasions.

It was a true pleasure to be with you at Wrexham when you joined forces with the Rhosllannerchrugog Male Choir. What a wonderful evening with the well balanced items chosen by both choirs who then combined for the two magnificent Welsh closing pieces of "Gwahoddiad" by John Tudor Davies (who was in the audience) and Arwel Hughes's "Tydi a Roddaist". It was a night to live long in the memory for us all. I must thank the Rhos President, David Ethelston, and Chairman, Norman Davies, for their warm words of welcome.

Thanks must go to everyone for the hard work put in during the year both in the practice room and the concert stage. Only in this way, with your own personal dedication to music and singing, can the highest standards of male choral singing be maintained for which Treorchy is envied around the world.

It was with much sadness that I heard of the death of Life Member Leonard Gale. Much has been written about Len, a faithful chorister in the first bass section for over fifty years. I am happy to have known and had his friendship for most of that time. We have all lost a wonderful chorister and friend.

Praise should go to Tony Davies and his hard working team for their commitment to the Junior Musician of the Year Competition which is expanding each year with ever more Rhondda schools and children taking part. I was pleased to be present for the finals at Treorchy Comprehensive School to witness the unbelievable talents of such a young group of instrumentalists and singers. The musical traditions of the Rhondda seem to be in safe hands.

Congratulations to all the schools taking part and best wishes to the winning competitors, instrumentalist Rachel Bonner and singer Ffion Jones, both pupils of Treorchy Primary School. I take this opportunity of thanking all our generous sponsors. Without them this very worthwhile event could not take place.

It was forty years ago this year that I came to my first well remembered concert, to listen to you sing at St Andrew's Parish Church, Chippenham, arranged by Toc H Member Reg Coates in aid of Great House, the local Cheshire Home. Reg became a wonderful friend to the Choir and to everyone that he came in contact with. Sadly he died far too soon. For me it has been a wonderful forty year journey being with you on so many magnificent occasions, making many lifelong friendships.

It has been a great pleasure for me to be your President for yet another year, I trust that the spirit of our great Choir will continue from strength to strength bringing much pleasure to people around the world to go, coupled with your support for good causes when ever help is needed.

I finish by wishing the Choir a successful 2012 and good health to all our readers and supporters.

AN ENTHRALLING SOUND

by Cllr. SYLVIA J. JONES, JP
Mayor of Rhondda Cynon Taff

When I was asked by Dean Powell if I would write something for Treorchy Male Voice Choir Magazine "Excelsior", without hesitation I said "YES" but at the same time I was wondering what I was going to write. I therefore asked if there were any past copies that I could look at to give me an idea of what was expected of me.

I received on my e- mail Past Copies from 1948 - 2010. Modern technology is wonderful and I was able to look at them on my iPad2 thus saving me having to download them all. I would not be saying the truth if I said I have read every one of them. However, I will refer to one and that is 2005 when Clive Thomas, Vice President wrote an article.

After marrying my late husband Gwyn I always thought that Clive was older

than me because my husband was friendly with him and Gwyn was 9 years older than myself. I discovered I am about 3 years older than Clive. I link up with Clive as another born and bred resident of Rhondda, a place which is dear to my heart. Although born in Dinas, Rhondda I went to Sunday School in the Methodist Central Hall, Tonypandy which in the War Years was the hub of activity. Giving hope to everyone. There were activities for young and old every night of the week.

In those days there was an abundance of choirs, male, female and children together with the Choral Societies. Regularly on a Wednesday there would be concerts at the Central Hall and after Sunday Evening Service. Music played a big part in my life through the chapel and I became the youngest member of the chapel choir at the age of 15. Every choir member seemed ancient to me, but they encouraged me. I also belonged to a group who sang chamber music and the Conductor was a person named Otto Ernst and as you tell by the name he wasn't Welsh, but he played a very active part in the musical life of the Rhondda.

I have grown up with Treorchy Male Voice Choir always being there and it is good to know they are as strong now as they ever were. Like all organisations they have seen many changes and they appear to have been able to adapt to the changes that have taken place. I have heard them performing in many places and on many occasions but I am still enthralled with their singing.

I also have a number of their CD's and there is nothing that I like better than playing one of them when I am travelling in the car, especially when travelling over the mountains and I can play them as loud as I want to.

It is pleasing to see young people joining the Choir as they are the future and the encouragement the Choir gives to the schools is second to none and I commend them for it. Rhondda is a Valley of Song and I hope and pray that it will always stay that way, as it is more important in these difficult times than ever. When we are able to sing and give pleasure to others it helps to fill their lives with hope for the future.

Thank you for the invitation to contribute to your magazine, it has been both a privilege and an honour for me to do so. May I wish you continued success in everything you set out to do in the future.

CONDUCTOR'S NOTES

Another hectic year of engagements, thirty four in total, varied, stimulating and some times challenging. We had first appearances at China Street Capel,

Llanidloes, Hoddinott Hall as guests of Cantorion Creigiau, Tewkesbury Abbey and Leatherhead Theatre during the year. We were privileged once again share the stage with Iris Williams at St David's Hall and Wynne Evans at our Annual Concert in the Park & Dare Theatre. The pinnacle of course as the royal concert for HRH Princess Anne at Llandaff Cathedral for Tenovus.

Our CD "Timeless" was finally release in the summer to critical acclaim and we also recorded "A Royal Tribute" with the Band of the Welsh Guards for the royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton. Our performance for the Sky HD programme "History of Britain" which included a dramatic landscape at Carreg Cennen Castle, complete with hair-raising helictoper was another memorable event as was appearing on Huw Edwards's "The Story of Wales", along with the combined performance with Only Boys Aloud for 'Songs of Praise'.

True to our philosophy over the last few years we have included new music and resurrected old in the past twelve months. "In Memoriam", which was commissioned by Nick Jenkins in memory of his parents is a very apt and poignant humn of remembrance. Also "Hallellujah", "This is the Moment" and "When I Fall In Love" have all been warmly received. Some pieces have also been lifted from our vast library of music. This progression helps not only develop the concert repertoire but keeps the sight reading skills of the choristers in good form.

New choristers, all beow the average age of the existing Choir, have all proved loyal, hardworking and committed to our organisation. We were pleased to hold our 6th Junior Musician of the Year Competition this year. Standards continue to rise and it's a great joy for all concerned to see so many young people aspiring to great heights. Thanks to Tony Davies and his committee for the administration of the competition. We congratulated David Powell for fifty years of hard work with the Choir, but mourn the loss of two very good friends in Len Gale, a loyal chorister for fifty years and Bryan Davies who contributed greatly to every aspect of the Choir.

Reviewing the activities of the Choir over the past year it is indeed a privilege to be involved with a group who contribute so much to the culture of Wales.

Mark Williams, Robert Taylor, Andrew Jones and Stuart Smith.

We take the breath of our performances for granted but on reflection the number and quality of our concerts and concert halls are outstanding.

My thanks as always go to Helen for her enormous contribution as accompanist over the course of another year. Our soloists Kate Woolveridge, Iona Jones and David Geoffrey Thomas always enhance our performance and support the Choir and myself with advice and enthusiasm at all times. Gratitude to the Committee for their help and support and in particular to Fred, always all encompassing with his advice and ideas. Where would we be without Dean and Ray, as our soloists, called upon often and complying without a murmur. Dean's ability as compere cannot go without comment as he creates the perfect atmosphere for the Choir to perform to their best. Last, but certainly, by no means least, my thanks go to the choristers themselves for their dedication, good humour and determination to uphold the high musical standards for the Choir.

We look forward to the year ahead with a continuation of the growth and development of the Choir in the coming year.

TIMELESS

The New Album by Treorchy Male Choir

"Timeless" celebrates Treorchy Male Choir's mastery of diverse musical genres which has helped make them a household name for generations.

It marks a "new" Treorchy Male Choir as you've never heard them before, with fresh new arrangements and breathtaking harmonies. This is the reason

why they receive ovations from sell-out audiences the world over.

From glorious operatic arias to much loved showtunes and African chants, to the haunting music of their homeland, "Timeless" showcases the very best of the Treorchy Male Choir and reinforces its reputation as the "master choir of them all". Featuring highlights such as "Nessun Dorma" and "The Pearlfisher's Duet", to "You Raise Me Up" and "Bring Him Home", the album also has plenty of surprises on offer, including the Zulu warrior chant "Senzenina" and contemporary Welsh composer Karl Jenkins' mesmerising "Adiemus".

With guest soloists Kate Woolveridge and Iona Jones, both favourites of the Welsh National Opera, "Timeless" is testimony to the Choir's continued success. Produced by composer Adrian Munsey of Infinity Records, "Timeless" marks the Choir's 90th release, making it undoubtedly the most recorded male choir in the world.

Treorchy Male Choir is a pioneer in the Welsh choral tradition by being the first to embrace popular music into its repertoire in a radical approach to reach wider audiences through combining both contemporary and classical melodies. Timeless is a celebration of the diverse mixture of music currently performed by the Choir in such settings world-wide. It once more exemplifies the sheer talent of this musical ensemble and underlines its incredible versatility as the choir displays a supreme ability to perfect a diverse selection of compositions.

List of Tracks:

1. Adiemus
2. You Raise Me Up
3. Divine Brahma
4. From Far Inside The Shrine (Duet from The Pearl Firshers)
5. Nessun Dorma
6. Faraway Place
7. Hymn from Finlandia
8. Y Darlun
9. Let It Be Me
10. Over The Rainbow
11. Bring Him Home
12. I Dreamed A Dream
13. Stars

14. Do You Hear The People Sing
15. Senzenina
16. What Would I Do Without My Music

TIMELESS CLASSIC

A Review
by DARREN GRIFFITHS-WARNER
Plugged in Magazine

The Treorchy Male Choir, one of the best male voice choirs in the world, has had to take a sideline of late with choirs like The Fron and Only Men Aloud standing the limelight. But that's about the change with the release of this exceptional body of work.

They have pressed hard on the accelerator and "Timeless" is the result. From the opener of Karl Jenkins' Adiemus, the beautiful, "Far from Inside the Shrine" and the stunning performing of Dean Powell and Ray Daniels duetting to songs, along with the medley of "Les Miserables".

The Choir shows the power and versatility of their voices. This isn't just a collection of songs, this is a statement about their love of music proving it on every level, even introducing an African element with the inclusion of Senzenina.

This is a brave move for Treorchy as they have been regarded as the traditionalists for so long, but that bas been suprassed by miles. Simply this album is brilliant and should be winning classical awards by the truck load.

REMARKABLE HARMONIES

A Review of "Timeless"

By THE DAILY EXPRESS

The first recording of new music in ten years from this celebrated male choir is an interesting blend of classical and contemporary songs, all beautifully arranged and topped off with the choir's remarkable harmonies.

Recordings include such established favourites as "Nessun Dorma" and "Over the Rainbow", and also featured are Karl Jenkins' "Adiemus", "I Dreamed A Dream " and "Bring Him Home" as well as the Zulu warrior chant "Senzenina".

The 100-strong choir was formed more than 100 years ago in the heart of the Rhondda Valley and has played in some of the most prestigious concert halls in the world, sharing the stages with the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, Burt Bacharach and Tom Jones.

WHAT WOULD I DO WITHOUT MY MUSIC?

PAUL KNIGHT and THE TREORCHY MALE CHOIR

By DIVA GUPTA, Multiple Sclerosis Magazine

Paul Knight, aged 52, was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis 14 years ago. He lives in an adapted house in the Rhondda Valley while his wife Jennifer and daughter Nadia live in the family home nearby.

For Paul Knight, a lifelong engagement with rugby led him to give his voice to one of the greatest male choral ensembles in the UK, the Treorchy Male Choir in the Welsh industrial Rhondda Valley. Joining the choir has brought choral singing, companionship and camaraderie into Paul's life.

"My close friend and rugby companion Adrian Owen was a tenor in the choir and he encouraged me to join last year," said Paul. "It's been a wonderful year. The boys are very accepting and it has really helped me to have friends in the Choir."

Paul had a first-class international rugby career that started when he was just 20 years old. Drafted into the Welsh rugby squad in 1982, he continued to chase his boyhood dream of playing or his country until he was capped five times in 1990, playing against Nambia, England, Scotland and elite rugby union team the Barbarians. But at the age of 38, the first symptoms of MS appeared.

Paul Knight and his fellow Choristers

"It was a very difficult time," remembers Paul. "I lost sight in my left eye for a couple of months, a common symptom of MS." For years he fought hard to live with the condition, using a fold down stick to disguise his need for walking support. "I was embarrassed to show that I needed help," he recalled.

Then in 2008, on Christmas Eve, he had a pain in his shoulder. He put it down to "another old rugby injury". However after breathing difficulties and chest pains, he was taken to hospital, where doctors discovered he had a clot in his left leg and it had travelled to his lung, causing a pulmonary embolism.

Paul returned to hospital with the determination and fight of a seasoned rugby player. He stopped playing in 1995, but now used rugby to help campaign for people with MS, becoming chairman of the Rhondda Cynon Taff MS Society. As well as giving advice and support, Paul organised charity matches to raise funds. With the progression of his illness, Paul gave up driving and when general mobility became an issue, he gave up the post of chairman.

But a new period in his life began at the Treorchy Male Choir where singing is paramount despite illnesses and disability. Life member Dean Powell believes that this is indicative of the Choir as a whole. "Over the years many men have suffered various degrees of ill health in one form or another. The Choir is a wonderful source of support for each of them," he affirms. "This is a way of life for us and the Choir is like an extension of your own family.

Dean thinks that there is a close connection between playing rugby and singing. "Singing is a part of the Welsh rugby club culture – though not all of

their songs are polite! Rugby supporters sing hymns in large congregations on the rugby terraces."

Dean also reveals the long tradition of former rugby players who now sing in the Choir. "We consider choirs the next step for a rugby player who still likes to "train" twice a week and enjoy "away games" on the weekend – only they don't get injured in concerts as they do on the field! The choir is all about the love of performing among a team of friends – very similar to rugby!"

Paul clearly feels the same way. "I now sing as a tenor with rugby players whom I have known for over 35 years. Singing with them comes naturally to me. And the MS hasn't affected my voice, which has in fact become stronger."

As a tenor, Paul is able to join in all the Choir's songs. "Every song brings in its wake a different emotion," he smiled. "But I do have a few personal favourites." "You Raise Me Up", "Bring Him Home" and "What Would I Do Without My Music" top his list. All three songs form part of the Choir's latest album 'Timeless'. This is the Choir's new CD which marks the Choir's 90th release, making it the most recorded male choir in the world. Their first album of new recordings in ten years, the album features highlights such as "Nessun Dorma" and "The Pearlfishers Duet". It also includes more unusual compositions, the Zulu warrior chant "Senzenina" and contemporary Welsh composer Karl Jenkins's "Adiemus".

As he uses a wheelchair, Paul can't go everywhere with the Choir as many venues both home and abroad are not accessible. "I was a rugby prop – I needed to be burly, muscular and broad! Together with the wheelchair's weight, I would be a good 30 stone. I don't want the boys to lift that up."

But he is happy to sing with "the boys" more locally, at St David's Hall in Cardiff and nearby churches and attend practice sessions every Tuesday and Thursday. Paul thinks he's a lucky man.

Y FRON AND TREORCHY MALE VOICE CHOIRS SET FOR CHRISTMAS SALES TUSSLE

By DAVID OWENS, Western Mail

Two of Wales' mightiest choirs are going head-to-head for the affections of the music buying public this autumn as they release their new albums. The choral tradition has been revolutionised in recent years thanks to television programmes such as "Last Choir Standing" and the stellar success of the likes of Only Men Aloud. However, two Welsh choirs with a rich tradition are aim-

Janice Ball and Treorchy Male Choir.

ing to show the young guns how it's done by releasing albums in time for the lucrative Christmas market. Fron Male Voice Choir and Treorchy Male Choir are set to battle it out for choral supremacy with their new collections.

Fron, who became unlikely chart stars in 2006 with their top 10 album Voices Of The Valley, are setting their sights high again with their "Ultimate Collection album".

The world famous Treorchy Male Choir is set to release its most contemporary album to date which blends classical and contemporary songs on a new 16-track album entitled "Timeless". The 100-strong amateur choir, formed way back in 1883 in the heart of the industrial Rhondda, are aiming to update their image, and create a new Treorchy Male Choir. They're doing this with fresh new arrangements and those trademark spine-tingling harmonies. It's also the first release of new recordings from the Choir in 10 years.

Timeless showcases operatic arias to much loved show tunes and African chants, to the haunting music of Wales. It features such highlights such as "Nessun Dorma" and The Pearlfishers Duet", to "You Raise Me Up" and "Bring Him Home". The album also has plenty of surprises on offer, including the Zulu warrior chant "Senzenina" and contemporary Welsh composer Karl Jenkins' mesmerising "Adiemus".

Produced by composer Adrian Munsey and Gareth Williams of Music Infinity, Timeless marks the choir's 90th release, making it undoubtedly the most recorded male choir in the world.

The choir, which is a charitable organisation has entertained audiences at some of the most famous and prestigious venues all over the world such as the Sydney Opera House and Washington National Cathedral. The choir has also shared the stage with some of the world's best-loved entertainers, from Ella Fitzgerald, Julie Andrews and Burt Bacharach to Wales' very own Sir Tom Jones and Dame Shirley Bassey.

A VERY SPECIAL CHOIR

By CHARLOTTE KIRKHAM
Independent Catholic News

From the depths of the South Wales valleys hail a very special Choir. They have brought joy to many audiences from many backgrounds with their enthralling harmonies, stunning showcase songs, operatic renditions, classical interpretations and the alluring traditional music of their homeland.

Treorchy Male Choir's spokesperson Dean Powell gives me an insight into

what makes them so well loved and followed. Dean, first tenor, has been a member since he was 16. At his audition, he lied about his age as you have to be over 18 get in. Now, at 39, he's a mainstay of this famous institution which has toured all over the world with performances from clubs to cathedrals and many famous theatres in between including, back home, Royal Command performances.

"I never thought I'd get in," Dean recalls. "But I did. I was looking for a new hobby. I guess that means I was a bit of a geek as joining a Choir isn't perhaps the thing that's uppermost in lads' minds at the age of 16."

An iconic symbol of the mining communities of the valleys of South Wales, the choir has a history that goes back to 1883. "In the late 19th Century," says Dean, "a large proportion of the Choir were miners. After being under ground all day, it was a good release to get together and sing. There was a strong camaraderie and that's still true today.

"I feel great after I've sung in the Choir. There aren't any mines any more, but the Choir is as important as ever to the community. We do a lot of charity work and it brings us together." Indeed, singing proves to be good for the spirit and wellbeing. Dean tells me: "There's a cancer charity that we support called Tenovus. They have formed a 78-strong community choir of people affected by cancer. It has been realised that there are significant health benefits from singing in a choir."

Norman Cox, first bass, would agree that singing in a choir has a tremendous impact on well-being and ability to overcome adversity. A life changing – and also life re-affirming – moment for Norman was a motorcycle accident in 1983 at the age of 25. "I was in hospital for over two months," he says, "and at first, they thought I'd lose my legs."

Norman's wife, whom he married when she was just 18 and he was 21, was his all-important support through those tough times. But the Choir also played their part. "They kept my spirits up," he says. "They'd always be vis-

iting and as soon as I was out of hospital and in a wheelchair, they'd wheel me to rehearsals and up on to the stage to perform with them. Mind you, at the interval, they wouldn't wheel me off the stage. I'd have to wait there for my cup of tea."

Having seen the Treorchy Choir perform at St David's Cathedral in Pembrokeshire, Norman decided at the age of 12 that he wanted to be part of it. "My brother Stephen was already a member. I can remember watching them perform on television, on the Tom Jones show," he says.

Although the Welsh valleys have a strong Chapel tradition, Norman is a Catholic. "South Wales became quite multicultural in the 19th and 20th centuries," he says. "My great grandmother married an Irish labourer who was Catholic and he took the family to mass every weekend."

Norman explains what Catholicism means to him. "It's being part of something universal," he says.

The Choir has recorded an album of Queen covers, a tribute, at Abbey Road and I ask Dean if they walked across the famous pedestrian crossing. He laughs: "Yes, we held the traffic up for a bit. There's quite a few Beatles fans in the choir." Norman filmed it and I reckon the footage would get a lot of hits on You Tube.

In fact, there are more than 100 people in the Choir. How on earth do they make decisions about what they are going to sing, what to call their album and so on? Says Dean: "We elect a committee. The Welsh are good at forming committees."

I ask Dean how the Treorchy women feel about their men's commitment to the choir. "They are very patient," he concedes. "We can be away touring or recording for a month at a time. We've joked that they should change the marriage vows: Do you take this man and the Treorchy Choir…."

"Music and singing is a big part of Welsh heritage," says Dean. "Singing in school, in competitions: you could be in the pub and suddenly someone will burst into song. Wales is the land of song, you could say that there's something in the water….or the beer!"

The Treorchy Choir has a diverse backlog of recordings and has collaborated with, among others, Ella Fitzgerald, Dame Julie Andrews, Dame Shirley Bassey, and Bon Jovi. They have an equally diverse fan base including Prince Charles, Sir Michael Caine, Joanna Lumley – and now me! I'd love to go and see the choir perform on their own turf and experience the after-show concert in the pub.

I ask Norman who else he would like the Choir to work with if he had a choice. "Ian Anderson and Jethro Tull," is the immediate response. I hope they do, because, from what I've heard, whatever the Treorchy Male Choir do seems to work so well. They are a group of amateurs who have had no professional training and yet deliver a first class performance. I think it is because they are so passionate and engaging and take great pride in what they do.

Once you've experienced the Treorchy Male Choir you can't help but want to hear more. And indeed you can, as they are about to release Timeless, their first new recording in 10 years. The album features two female favourites from the Welsh National Opera: sopranos Kate Woolveridge and Iona Jenkins. Timeless is an eclectic mix of classical and contemporary songs including show tunes and even a Zulu warrior chant.

'BRYAN': PRINCE OF ACCOMPANISTS

By JOHN CYNAN JONES
Conductor Emeritus

Bryan Arthur Davies passed away on Saturday, April 2nd, 2011, at the age of 76. His memorial service was held at a packed Rhondda Fach Sports Centre in Tylorstown on Tuesday, April 12th, prior to the committal at Glyntaff later that day. This unusual choice of venue was dictated by the need to accommodate two male voice choirs (Pendyrus and Côr Meibion De Cymru) together with a huge gathering of mourners and fellow musicians who had come to pay homage to this most talented and lovable of men. Tributes, both spoken and musical, poured unendingly from orators, singers, instrumentalists, choristers and administrators, indicating the high esteem in which Bryan had been held. These emotions were encapsulated in the poignant news that his great friend, Bryn Terfel, had made a telephone call from New York to Bryan in his hospital bed – and had sung to him shortly before his death.

Little did I realise that, following my appreciation of Bryan's work which marked his award of Honorary Membership of Treorchy Male Choir – and which appeared in the "Excelsior" of 2007 under the title of "Why has it taken so long?" – I would be called upon to write his obituary notice. Rather than regurgitate what I composed at that time I decided to write, very informally, about OUR Bryan, the Bryan Davies whom WE

knew and cherished, but whose latter years had been devastated by the death of his dear, wife, Eirwen.

I have already set out elsewhere the bare facts of his family background, education and career as one of the most accomplished musicians and accompanists of our age in Wales; these may be viewed online at the Treorchy Male Choir Website. What is much more difficult to convey is his complete control of the piano keyboard, his instinctive reaction to the performance of those whom he was accompanying and his supreme musicianship. We remember, with a certain amount of "hiraeth", his flawless feeling for line and phrase, his subtle and instinctive command of "rubato", the masterful "word-painting" in his accompaniment of "Lieder", the breadth of dynamic range of which he was capable – and, not least, his Puckish sense of humour. One former member of the Pendyrus Male Choir has described him as 'The Peter Pan of Welsh Music', and I can think of few more appropriate titles. He could hold his own in the most exalted or lowly company, but loved to join in the repartee as "one of the boys" when in the company of our choristers at Treorchy. One incident springs readily to mind, for, at one time, the baritone section of our choir included a chorister who favoured staff notation (which contained the piano accompaniment) in preference to the normal tonic solfa (which did not). During the interval at one rehearsal this young man approached us and asked Bryan 'why he was not playing what's on the copy?' We had been working on the "Pilgrims' Chorus" from Wagner's opera "Tannhauser", with its fiendishly difficult piano accompaniment. Bryan's reply was short and very much to the point – 'it may not be on YOUR copy, but it's what Wagner wrote!' This, of course, referred to Bryan's custom of filling out the piano part with much more detail from the actual orchestral score.

One of his visits to 1 Hermon Street stands out very clearly in our memory. Early one morning during the August school holidays we heard a knock at the front door. Standing there on the doorstep was none other than Bryan, wilting under the weight of an enormous plastic bag bulging with bound volumes which he had borrowed from the splendid music section at Treorchy Library. He had travelled by bus from Ferndale and had decided to take up our offer to call by for a cup of coffee whenever he passed our home. The remainder of the morning was taken up with the usual male voice choir gossip and accounts of recent concerts. As lunchtime approached, Mary appeared with a plate of sandwiches and home-baked cake, bringing a glint to Bryan's eyes, for he was a great admirer of her culinary skills. The afternoon flew by while we discussed our mutual love of great orchestral music, beginning with

Sibelius and Rachmaninov before moving on to Mahler. I was surprised to discover that Bryan was unfamiliar with the symphonies of Anton Bruckner and set about rectifying this. Meanwhile, Mary had prepared a "high tea", served with a glass or two of wine. With tongue suitably loosened, Bryan's conversation turned inevitably to Wagner and his beloved Richard Strauss. We enthused over opera after opera, enjoying countless anecdotes (not always flattering!) describing some of Bryan's encounters with professional operatic singers. Our discussion was interrupted only by a polite telephone enquiry asking whether Bryan was with us. 'Oh I thought so', replied a remarkably composed Eirwen; 'he told me that he was going to Treorchy this morning, and I knew that he'd be quite safe with you!' Bryan's horrified reaction was to exclaim that he hadn't realised that it was so late – and that he had missed the last 'bus to the Rhondda Fach. Needless to say, I took him home by car and delivered him safely to Morris Terrace. I did not wait to gauge Eirwen's reaction!

Whenever I bought a new recording that I thought he would like to listen to I would lend it to Bryan. However, like most true musicians, Bryan would prefer to enjoy new music by playing it at the piano or by studying the score from the comfort of his armchair. His command of sight-reading was phenomenal, but it masked years and years of dedicated practice. On one occasion, when Bryan was deputizing for Jennifer as our accompanist, we arrived at a hall in a small village in the Monmouthshire valleys only to be told by a shame-faced chairman, 'Sorry, but the piano's out of tune'. Fortunately it was a full semitone flat, and Bryan was able to remedy the situation by transposing the entire programme up half a tone, 'so that nobody would notice the difference!' Genuine "Bryanisms" are to be found in abundance. One of our favourites concerns his being criticised for his habit of carrying his music about in a 'Tesco' plastic bag. At the next concert he told his critics that he had decided to improve his image, whereupon he again brandished a plastic bag, but this time bearing the 'Marks & Spencer' logo!

Bryan was a great writer of letters, and I have often chastised myself for not hoarding more of his correspondence than those examples which appear in my scrapbooks. They were embellished by his unique copper-plate handwriting and often adorned with an equally fine hand-written musical quotation from a classical masterpiece. Among his favourites were the "Four Last Songs" by Richard Strauss and THAT famous chord (the great 'Leitmotif') from Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde" which was to change the history of music. Bryan was invited to attend all our recording sessions at the Brangwyn Hall in Swansea which featured his arrangements for male choir. I

valued his comments on the performance of every item but was determined that our interpretation of his own pieces should receive his seal of approval; this was usually accompanied by a broad smile and a prolonged exclamation: "GREAT!" In February, 1977, he wrote: "May I take this opportunity to thank you, Jennifer and your peerless choir most deeply for all the brilliant musicianship and outstandingly-productive patience exercised during the recording session last Sunday. I shall never forget the experience. Thank you for each and every kindness, but especially for those wonderful moments of suspended Time."

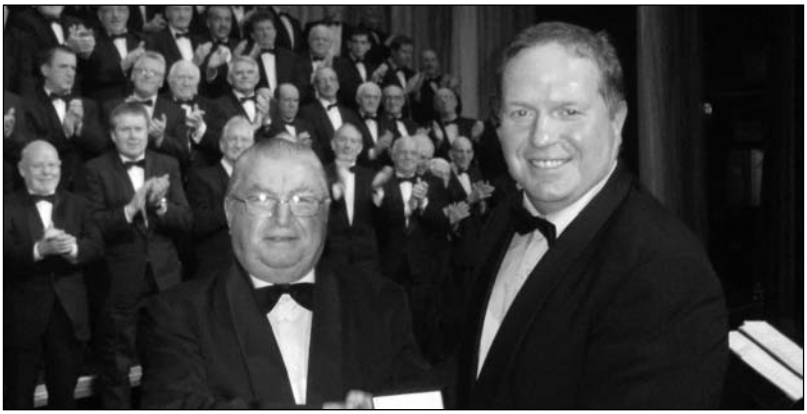
Bryan was always eager to assist during Jennifer's absences through illness. On one such occasion, at the Colston Hall in Bristol in March, 1979, I had included a trio of his arrangements in our programme. Some days later I received a letter which concluded as follows: "Rare indeed is the 'razor-edge' performance where each exquisite moment becomes intensified until it almost glimpses eternity. Your singing of 'Maria wanders through the thorn' was one such experience. Thank you for including my own pieces, my 'little confections'. You have endowed them with that special patina which only a truly great ensemble can provide. Be assured that I am very grateful for the help and encouragement I have received from the 'other side of the mountain.'"

Besides being a close friend, Bryan was a joy to work with, in rehearsal, concert or recording studio. During rehearsals it was obvious that he had prepared his work meticulously, for he was own greatest critic. At the conclusion of a piece I was always aware of that beaming face, with those sparkling eyes, looking up eagerly from the keyboard – accompanied by that querulous question, 'Was it alright?' It was rarely anything less than perfect!

GOLDEN CHORISTER CELEBRATED

Treorchy Male Choir has honoured a "golden" chorister for fifty years unbroken service. David Powell was presented with a suitable inscribed gold wristwatch on stage with the Choir during their Annual Concert at the Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy.

Since the 1880s, his family has been associated with the world-famous male voice choir. David joined the Second Tenor section of the Choir in 1961 and spent the next half a century in the ranks. Since then he has appeared in over



David Powell receiving his gold watch from the Chairman.

1,500 concerts and toured Canada, USA and Australia where he appeared at the Sydney Opera House.

"The Treorchy Male Choir has always been a massive part of my life," he explained. "I've met some great friends, performed in incredible venues and travelled around the world. It's all because I'm a chorister with a world-famous choir."

Chairman of the Choir, David Bebb, who presented the watch, explained, "David is one of eleven choristers who have reached their fifty-year milestone and they have all been honoured with the presentation of a gold watch as a token of our respect and admiration for such incredible service."

ROYAL WELSH MALE CHOIR

A HISTORY

By DEAN POWELL

Treorchy has maintained its international reputation as the birthplace of a rich musical culture that continues to this day. Treorchy Male Choir has been at the very forefront of this tradition for well over 125 years, but many other musical organisations have contributed greatly to the image of the valley of music, of which Treorchy is undoubtedly a jewel in the proverbial crown.

For almost a century a second male voice choir existed in Treorchy and during its heyday, spearheaded Wales's universal image of the Land of Song. The Royal Welsh Male Choir dominated the musical headlines with its outstanding concert performances for royalty and heads of state while undertaking

First Tenor Section.

Second Bass Section.

Second Tenor Section.

First Bass Section.

pioneering overseas tours the likes of which had never been seen before, or for that matter, since. The "Royal Welsh" as they became known, certainly left an indelible mark on audiences the world over with its awe-inspiring concert performances.

Yet their origins were unequivocally linked with the Treorchy Male Choir which was formed back in 1883. The history of the Treorchy, or "Treorky" Choir of the late Victorian period is already well documented and provided the very foundation from which the Royal Welsh was able to grow and flourish. With two Royal National Eisteddfod wins (Brecon 1888, Llanelli 1895) to their name, the original Treorky, under the baton of maestro William Thomas, had long-since been favourites of the Countess of Dunraven. In turn she introduced them to the House of Saxe Coburg Gothe and ensured the royal seal of approval was granted with a command performance for Queen Victoria and the Royal Family at Windsor Castle on November 29th 1895.

Such an illustrious early history catapulted the Treorky Male Choir's grandeur and success onto the international stage. It also proved the death-knell of the Choir in its original guise. With continual offers of celebrity concerts and possible overseas visits on the horizon, the sharp, business-like mind of their Secretary, W. P. Thomas, the Manager of the Ocean Coal Company, foresaw a bright future and profitable for the singers. However, it would come at a price. Supported by their conductor, William Thomas, an agreement was made within a matter of weeks following a celebratory banquet at the Drill Hall, Pentre. It was clearly impossible to take advantage of the celebrity status and opportunities afforded them with such a large choir of men. Modes of transport were limited, many singers had wives and children dependant on them and full-time employment at the local colliery to consider.

Those clearly were the reasons behind the difficult decision, following much soul-searching by the musical director, to re-invent the Choir as a professional outfit of twenty or so first-class singers. Carefully choosing his choristers, dependant on their musical ability (while also ensuring positions for his own sons), along with acclaimed soloists in baritone Aneurin Edwards and tenor William Todd-Jones, a new Choir was moulded which could embark on an exciting future together. With their royal seal of approval already granted following the Windsor concert and with Thomas himself becoming the recipient of a bejewelled baton, his new ensemble, the Royal Welsh Male Choir was formed in the early months of 1896.

Clearly, tensions ran high between the new and the old. Although the Treorky Male Choir continued for a short while under the baton of chorister John Bebb of Cwmparc, its key personnel, musical staff and management had

departed the ranks for the new Choir, leaving them ill-equipped to continue. Within a year they were defunct, not to rise again until the latter part of World War I. In the meantime, however, the Royal Welsh reached the very pinnacle of their ability, flying the musical flag for Treorchy, Rhondda and the Principality.

William Thomas on the 1909 Colonial Tour

No longer did they compete for prizes, but instead concentrated solely on concert repertoire and performance. Undoubtedly the separation of the two choirs had been a difficult one to overcome, animosity ran deep and many would say continued for several generations, never truly coming to an amicable conclusion. It was a separation that would continue to cause waves of "cythraul y canu" during the first half of the 20th century, particularly when both choirs were under the direction of the same conductor and on occasions performed together. They also rehearsed on the same evenings – Tuesday and Thursday – in the adjoining schools off Glyncoli Road!

For the early days however, the offers of concert engagements were received in great number. One season of concerts in 1897 saw net profits of £2,500 alone. They conducted highly successful performances at the Crystal Palace, Queen's Hall and other London centres of music, also visiting the chief halls of Scotland, Ireland and every part of Wales. Continually they appeared in many notable functions, including a special reception at Edinburgh Castle for His Royal Highness Prince George, the second Duke of Cambridge, who died just a few short years later without legitimate issue.

This was also an organisation that reaped the reward of performances for all manner of royalty, both British and foreign. They sang for the Imperial Majesties when they visited Wales on King George V's acceptance of the Chancellorship of the University of Wales and during those early days the veteran statesman Gladstone "gratefully acknowledged the valuable services of the Choir in a highly-prized letter".

Before the turning of the century they were engaged to perform at the 64th Annual Festival Dinner of the Linen and Woollen Drapers Institution at St James's Hall, London, being described as an organisation "composed of Welsh miners and the most successful male choir in England!" The Choir appeared in the Lord Mayor's Banquet at Manchester in one year, the Trades

Congress when at Pontypridd, the Complimentary Banquet by the Cardiff Town Council to the 41st Regiment when on their march through Wales and the Incorporated Society of Musicians.

The country's chief music critics admired them, wrote eulogistically as the best performances they had ever heard and in no small measure contributed greatly towards philanthropic causes while also building up impressive financial reserves of their own. Acting as Secretary and Manager, W.P.Thomas proved a forthright, dominant force in the Choir as he was in the Ocean Colliery. With William Abraham (Mabon) M.P. as the President of the Choir, they welcomed the dawning of the 20th century with confidence in their abilities and enthusiasm for the future. William Thomas was becoming recognised as a national hero and the recipient of shoals of congratulatory letters in his time. Alberto Randegger, the Professor of Singing at the Royal Academy of Music, was so overwhelmed with one particular performance that he wrote, "I have never heard better voices in England or on the Continent. The tenors were especially magnificent".

Tour of USA

By 1900 they charged an average 40 guineas per concert, plus overnight accommodation and travelling costs. One of their undertakings was a performance in Pentre of Dr Ebenezer Prout's opera "Damon and Phintias", with Todd Jones in the lead role. As the local press exclaimed, "no praise too flattering could be bestowed on the Choir upon this magnificent undertaking".

A visit to Ireland in 1901 received many moving letters and news items of congratulations. None more so than the words of R. Sample:

"Farewell"

We bid you farewell, noble sons of the mountains
And dank rocky valleys of home little Wales
Your songs are as pure as the trill of the
And wild as the rush of your own winter gales

Farwell loving friends, you blessed sons remind us
That heaven, after all is not far away
Come back to old Ireland our friends
With voices as bright as the blossoms of May.

Continuing their close association with the Dunraven family, they made one particular visit to the Castle in 1906 that received local newspaper coverage. "The Choir, although numerically but a shadow of its former self, fully maintains its high reputation" and greatly impressed the special guest at the banquet dinner. Joseph Hodge Choate was the American Ambassador to England from 1899 to 1905 and forged a new era in Anglo-American relations. Dedicated to public service, he was a founder of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the American Museum of Natural History and an active participant in charitable enterprises. So impressed was he by the Royal Welsh Male Choir that he exclaimed, "I am highly pleased with the excellence of the singing, Come to American where you will create a great sensation". With his support the seed was planted and blossomed – an overseas tour was soon underway.

On October 5th 1906 sixteen choristers boarded the 2,900-passenger White Star Liner Cedric for an extensive tour of the United States of America. Organised by their American agents, J.B. Pind Lyceum Bureau of New York, the tour opened in Brooklyn. With William Thomas as Conductor and Hugh Hughes as Accompanist, the choristers who undertook the tour were: William Jones, Todd Jones, Tom Felix Evans, Gomer Jones, Thomas Jones, Ben Evans, David Powell (grandfather of current second tenor David Powell), Evan Davies, David White (Tenors), Gwilym Thomas, Aneurin Edwards, Evan Thomas, Idris Thomas, William Thomas, Jones Jones and E.T.Jones (bass).

Their performances across the country were recognised as pioneering by any musical organisation's standards, let alone one from the dark, coal-mining valleys of the Rhondda. One can only imagine, the reaction of those young Welsh miners when they first stepped foot on foreign soil and were faced by the many fascinating people and cultures across the Atlantic. The tour, which lasted until early 1907, was a sensation, resulting in a special audience with none other than one of the United States of America's most progressive Presidents in its history, Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt.

Their first visit to South Africa followed later in 1907, this time with a soprano joining the ensemble in Alicia Maud Cove who performed several solo items with choristers Todd Jones, Felix Evans and Aneurin Edwards. Once again, their pre-eminence on the concert stage, particularly in Johannesburg and Pretoria resulted in tumultuous ovations. Organised by Arthur De Jong, a theatre agent based in present-day Zimbabwe, the Choir became comrades in song with the Matabeland Cambrian Society. The highlights of the tour included not only meeting its indigenous people and experiencing the fruits, trees and wildlife of this wondrous land, but also a

very special performance at the grave of Cecil Rhodes and the Shangani Memorial.

However, it was their well-documented Colonial Tour of 1908 and 1909 that firmly established them as international artistes. They left Treorchy by train on July 9th at 6.25am with hundreds of well-wishers at the station. Boarding the DSS Pericles at Plymouth, a three mastered sailing ship originally launched to transport wool for the Aberdeen Line, the choristers spent 14 months away from their homeland. The Choir was specially honoured by Earl Crewe, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, with letters of introduction to the governors of the Colonies visited, each of whom attended the concerts in state.

Following weeks at sea they gave their first performance in the Antipodes, covering fifty thousand miles, fulfilling 310 engagements, the highlight being a grand performance before a colossal audience of 55 choirs in Sydney, Australia. Further concerts took place in New Zealand, Tasmania, British Columbia and Canada with particular highlights in Melbourne, New York, Boston and Philadelphia. It was also a known fact that some choristers never returned home to Wales, finding new opportunities – and occasionally wives – in foreign lands!

Slowly ill-health began to take its toll on William Thomas and by 1910 it was decided to appoint a Deputy Conductor to assist him in his role. The young, aspiring musician, Gwilym T. Jones of Cwmparc was appointed and remained faithful to the Choir for over thirty years. A new Deputy Accompanist, Cyril Jenkins, was also appointed and performed for them in 1912 when King George and Queen Mary visited Treherbert during their celebrated tour of Wales. Administratively changes took place with the appointment of John Davies of Gelli as Chairman, Edward Rees as Treasurer and Jos Williams as Secretary. Under their organisational skills, the Choir once more was set to return to Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania on the start of a world tour in the early part of 1914 but this was cancelled due to the growing hostilities.

The Great War of 1914-1918 clearly restricted the movement of the Choir, but their time was spent performing for the troops, raising funds for charitable causes such as the Red Cross and giving concerts in hospitals for wounded soldiers. By 1916 William Thomas himself relinquished the position of Conductor following twenty hugely successful years.

With Gwilym T. Jones at the helm and Richard Davies as accompanist, they toured South Africa for the second time, performing for the Duke of Athlone, Princess Alice, General Smuts and General Hertzog. During the next few years they also sang for the Duke of York, later King George VI, the Duke of Kent, Princess Beatrice, the Duke of Gloucester and the King and Queen of Greece. Between June 5 and 9 1920 the Royal Welsh Choir gave a series of concerts at the Cardiff Conference of Federation of Master Printers and Allied Trades of the United States, Great Britain and Ireland.

During the same year Gwilym T. Jones spread his musical wings still further, forming the 120-strong Treorchy Vocal Union at Noddfa Chapel and accepting the rather controversial invitation to become the new Conductor of the Treorchy & District Male Voice Party. Such an appointment clearly resulted in plenty of deep conversation over several pints of ale at local hostelries. Ironically the choirs themselves would occasionally combine under their new leader also, particularly at the various funerals and memorial services ahead

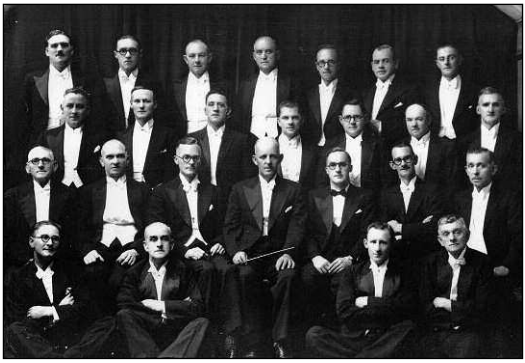
The combined choirs performed side-by-side to pay their respects to their founding father in Conductor William Thomas who passed away on April 10th 1920 and received many hundreds of mourners at Treorchy Cemetery. He left five sons and three daughters, one of whom was the accomplished soloist Cissie Thomas.

Five years later the combined voices paid a final tribute to one of Wales's foremost baritone soloists in Aneurin Edwards. Aneurin toured America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa as a soloist with the Choir and was best remembered for his heart-wrenching performance of "Thou Art Passing Hence". It was that item which moved 3,000 people to tears in Adelaide when he performed it in memory of the late Prime Minister of Australia. He was a popular singer throughout the country, his most famous item being "Make New Friends But Keep the Old". He had the distinction of possessing one of the largest amount of Eisteddfod trophies and won the most substantial prize money of any baritone in Wales.

Conductor Harry Evans, a well-known adjudicator during this period, spoke of him as the most careful and perfect soloists he had ever heard. His solo performances with tenor William Todd Jones produced some of the most

memorable concerts in the history of Rhondda music-making. Aneurin was a stalwart member of the Royal Order of Buffalos. He continued singing until August 1924 when his health began to fail him. He died in March 1925, aged 52 and his funeral procession of choristers from both the Treorchy & District and Royal Welsh Male Choirs performed on foot from his home to the graveside.

Not all encounters between the Royal Welsh and Treorchy & District Male Choirs were amicable. A problem arose during the late 1920s and early 1930s when the Treorchy & District enjoyed a renaissance of competition wins under Gwilym T. Jones. It had become apparent that members of the Royal Welsh Male Choir – a concert performance organisation, not a competitive one – made up the first two rows of the competition choir. Clearly, their expertise was welcomed. On the other it created a sense of animosity amongst the large-scale Treorchy & District Choir, whose members learned that the Royal Welsh singers were being paid to appear. During such economic hardships as experienced in the South Wales valleys of this period, this revelation was the cause of further disharmony and a contributing factor to the demise of the Treorchy & District Choir by 1943.



Conductor Gwilym T. Jones.

The Royal Welsh Male Choir made its second visit to Australia in 1922, again receiving the heroic musical welcome from thousands of supporters in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. By 1926 it was increasingly obvious that Gwilym T. Jones, who had been appointed organist and choirmaster of Bethlehem Chapel, was finding it difficult to remain dedicated to both the Treorchy & District and the Royal Welsh Male Choirs. On relinquishing his role in the Treorchy & District Male Choir, it was ironic that Royal Welsh Male Choir tenor soloist, John Isaac Jones, was appointed his successor!

In 1932 the Royal Welsh and Treorky & District choirs joined forces again to pay tribute to tenor soloist William Todd Jones. Born in Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Tydfil in March 1872, he came to River Row, Penyrenglyn as a baby and while still a boy began working as a miner in one of the Bute Collieries. From a

young age he started his singing career in the village's Royal Exchange where he sang in Penny Reading Concerts. Unable to read a single note of music, he refused any formal training from Madame Clara Novello Davies but rose to become one of the finest singers in Wales. The "Todyn" as he was affectionately known, gained prize after prize in the eisteddfod arena, claiming a first prize at the National Eisteddfod of Wales.

As a soloist he opened many music festivals throughout the United Kingdom. He enjoyed audiences with King Edward VII, King George V and David Lloyd George who called him the "God Sent Tenor." During a performance in New York he was even allegedly approached by international tenor Enrico Caruso and they exchanged tips on performance. According to reports, during the visit to New Zealand the gold magnate Llewellyn Williams rewarded him handsomely for a private concert. He spent his final years in Pencader, where he continued to perform locally until the week of his death in 1932. He left a wife, Maud, and nine children. His funeral in Treorchy was one of the largest ever seen in the history of the Rhondda.

The Royal Welsh Male Choir enjoyed their next royal performance in April, 1938 on the visit of Queen Mary to Cardiff. Gwilym T. Jones was taken to the royal box and presented to Her Majesty who proclaimed the Choir had been the "star turn". The Queen joined in the thunderous applause and said the singing was the "most heavenly" she had heard. During the same year they enjoyed their third tour of South Africa where they performed for General J.B.M. Hertzog, President of the Union of South Africa from 1924 to 1939 and General Jan Smuts, the prominent South African and Commonwealth statesman, military leader and philosopher. He served as Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa from 1919 until 1924 and again from 1939 to 1948.

Throughout the 1930s the Choir made a series of sound films for Pathe, Paramount, British Gaumount and Butchers Film Company. With the advent of World War II, some members were called to serve in distant lands, while the remainder of the Choir continued to hold fundraising concerts for the war effort (more specifically the Red Cross) and perform for the troops. During this period they also sang for Princess Beatrice, Duchess of Gloucester and the King and Queen of Greece.

Their fourth visit to South Africa was abandoned because of the outbreak of war and the lack of shipping space in the years afterwards prevented another trip overseas. In 1944 the Choir welcomed a new member of the musical team with the appointment of Mary Carpenter Edwards. A graduate of the Association of the London College of Music, she was an experienced pianist and organist. She also found love in the ranks of the Choir by marrying a member of the tenor section.

Administratively, further changes took place with the appointment of Roy Meredith as Treasurer while Evan H.Wiltshire of Tynybedw Street, Treorchy, was elected Secretary following the departure of Caradog Lodwig. The Choir also enjoyed an impressive list of Patrons during this time, including Colonel John Blandy Jenkins JP (Llanharan), Commander Claudius G.Pendill USN, Countess of Plymouth, Will John MP, Dick Wells, (President of Rotary America), William Davies (Pontypridd), Mr and Mrs F.R.Browning Jnr (Whitchurch), Dr and Mrs Fyner, (Pontypridd) Weisz Marcl, (Principal Soprano, Vienna and Beyreuth Opera House) and J. Thomas (Treorchy).

Royal Welsh Male Choir c.1960

In 1945 the Choir held its Golden Jubilee, announcing it had been formed in 1895 – the year of the Royal Command Performance. Previously, the Choir had used several dates indicating they were formed in 1883 or 1885 – the dates of the actual formation of Treorky Choir and secondly, the date in which William Thomas was appointed as Conductor. To celebrate their fiftieth year the Choir held a celebratory concert at Bethania Chapel, Treorchy.

Shortly afterwards, Gwilym T. Jones departed as Musical Director, and played a pivotal role in forming Cor Meibion Pontypridd, allowing the position of Conductor to become vacant and eventually filled by musician T.D.Griffiths. In 1947 the Royal Welsh Male Choir sang at the Reception of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers in Cardiff, again enjoying widespread acclaim.

ROYAL WELSH MALE CHOIR 1946

Conductor: T D Griffiths

Accompanist: Mary Carpenter Edwards

1st Tenors: Les Edwards, J.Jones, G.Thomas, Jack Evans, D.Parsons, C.Williams, Dan Jones, M.Phillips, W.Williams

2nd Tenors: T.Chapman, J.Hughes, C.Pratt, R.Davies, H.Morris, D.E.Williams

1st Bass: D. Bebb, O.Evans, R.Meredith, J.Davies. W.E.Lewis, I.Morgan

2nd Bass: B. Davies. Jack Jones, W. Thomas, D.Davies, H.Price, E.H.Wiltshire, I.Jones

On October 16th 1946 the rival Treorchy Male Choir was reformed under the baton of the eminent John Haydn Davies who transformed this group of raw musical recruits into an internationally famous musical organisation. While Treorchy Male Choir rose to become a household name, its colleagues at the Royal Welsh Male Choir undoubtedly viewed their success with envious eyes. In June 1948 the new Treorchy Male Choir entered their first competition at the Treorchy Eisteddod and it was pointed out that a group of Royal Welsh Choir members, who had also joined Treorchy were singing with Cor Meibion Pontypridd on the day of the competition – possibly because of the association with former conductor Gwilym T. Jones who was now their Conductor. It certainly sent alarm bells through the Treorchy camp for having a "choir within a choir" was clearly recipe for future disasters. Treorchy won the event by five clear points over Pontypridd.

Admittedly those Royal Welsh singers, all experienced voices, were of assistance to the early days of the Treorchy Choir, with the likes of Leslie Edwards and Tom Griffiths so readily helping out but this situation could not continue. However, it was a further two years before the subject was discussed in a Special General Meeting and the rule was passed not to accept choristers who were still members of other choirs. In truth, John Haydn Davies himself made it clear that the new Treorchy Choir would not experience the same level of disharmony he had witnessed first-hand while Deputy Conductor of the defunct Treorchy & District Choir during the late 1930's.

During the 1950s the Royal Welsh Male Choir continued to appear regularly in venues throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland while also making commercial recordings for Decca Records Ltd. One of the many highlights was a performance at the National Choral Festival in County Cork which was attended by their patron, the Countess of Plymouth. They also performed two operas by Welsh Conductor Arwel Hughes. The opportunity to tour overseas eluded them for some time until the latter part of 1960 when they boarded the RMS Queen Mary bound for the United States of America. On November 13th they performed in the First Class Lounge for the Remembrance Sunday concert. A new conductor was in place, in John Samuel, with Mary Carpenter Edwards as the faithful Accompanist.

Five years later and the Choir returned once more to the United States of American and Canada for another successful tour. Soloists for the tour were soprano Anita Williams, harpist Eleanor Dwryd and Master of Ceremonies, Barry Ashton of the Royal Shakespeare Company who narrated excerpts of the works of Dylan Thomas.

The Choir gave 36 concerts in six weeks, performing to a total of 67,000 people.

The tour included Ontario, Wisconsin, New York, Kentucky, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Louisiana, Indiana, California and Texas. During the visit to the City Of Winnipeg, John Samuel (who lost two stone in weight during the tour due to the exhaustive schedule) was presented with an Honorary Citizenship from the Mayor's Office. The highlight of the entire tour was a performance on NBC's famous Ed Sullivan Show with millions of regular viewers.

In 1965 the Choir had the distinct pleasure of returning to Windsor Castle seventy years since their forefathers had entertained the Queen Empress. On this occasion they sang at the nave of St George's Chapel. They also performed regularly at the St David's Day London Welsh Festival Concerts in the Royal Albert Hall, sharing the stage with artists including Stuart Burrows and Ryan Davies.

On board the Queen Mary.

Following the resignation of John Samuel, the well-known accompanist Bryan Davies of Ferndale, accepted the challenge as Conductor. Bryan, who later became known as the accompanist for Stuart Burrows, Bryn Terfel and Dennis O'Neill at his masterclasses in the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, maintained the high standards of the Choir during his tenure. He was succeeded by John Jones of Aberdare who led them on their last tour of the United States in 1975 where they performed in venues along the West Coast from Washington State to San Diego in California before flying to Canada and New York. One of the most prestigious concerts of the period was a performance at the Carl Allen Dance Awards before HRH The Prince of Wales and special guests.

Although the 1980s allowed choristers the opportunity to appear at further prestigious engagements, including London's Royal Albert Hall during the intermission of the World Brass Band Contest, the future looked more uncertain. With an aging membership and few new choristers joining the ranks of this esteemed organisation, the Royal Welsh Male Choir suddenly faced its gradual and sad demise. Quite simply, this once world-famous musical entity was literally "dying of old age", leading to their eventual decision to disband in the early 1990s.

It was indeed the end of a great era of choral singing, during which time the Royal Welsh Male Choir continually flew the flag of Welsh music throughout the United Kingdom, as well as its many ambitious and prestigious overseas tours to lands previously musically unconquered by Welsh performers, to its long list of royal command performances throughout this illustrious career. They had indeed represented the Land of Song and their music will continually resound throughout the valleys of their birth.

THE ROAD TO TREORCHY

Live at Treorchy, was the best-selling album that turned an unknown comedian and singer called Max Boyce into an international star, launching a career spanning 40 years and two million record sales.The album that changed Max Boyce's life also captured how Wales was changing in the early 1970s and still stands as an icon of Welsh identity four decades later.

In celebration of the album, Max Boyce, an Honorary Member of the Treorchy Male Choir, made a welcomed return to the town to perform a televised concert from the Parc & Dare Theatre.

Choristers packed the Upper Circle for another hilarious encounter with

Max, while choristers Roger Morse and Islwyn Morgan reminisced about the original concert in Treorchy RFC Clubhouse four decades earlier. Also appearing on the show was broadcaster Huw Edwards, comedian Jasper Carrott and rugby legend Gareth Edwards.

JUNIOR MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR 2011

The Treorchy Male Choir Junior Musician of the Year Competition is now celebrating its sixth year and well over a thousand children have taken part to date. In 2011 a further 19 primary and junior schools in the two valleys signed up to the competition whose patron is Welsh bass-baritone Bryn Terfel MBE.

The aim of the competition is to encourage children to participate in a musical activity and enjoy performing as soloists. It also allows schoolchildren an extra incentive to practise and improve their standards of singing or playing an instrument. Following a series of preliminary heats in each of the schools, the 38 competitors entered Semi Finals at Porth County Comprehensive

Junior Musician Finalists.

School or Tonypandy Community College before the final 20 appeared in a Grand Final at Treorchy Comprehensive School on Wednesday April 6th.

Each of the schools held their own "X-Factor" style auditions before members of the Treorchy Male Choir held a preliminary heat to decide which singer

and instrumentalist goes forward to the final. All entrants who performed in the heats received a certificate. The finalists received a certificate, trophy and tickets for themselves and an adult to attend a show at the Wales Millennium Centre.

Leighton Andrews AM and Roy Noble presented the awards.

This year the winners were named as Ffion Jones who won the Singer Category and winner of the Instrumentalist Category was Rachel Bonner. Both of the winners were pupils at Treorchy Primary School and they each received £200 prize money each. They also received the Treorchy Male Choir Competition Trophy to be retained by their school for one year and had the

The Adjudicators.

opportunity to share the stage with the Treorchy Male Choir at the Good Friday Concert in the Park & Dare Theatre.

The Grand Final had an impressive list of adjudicators, including Professor Trevor Herbert of the Open University, Conductor of Cantorion Creigiau Mair Roberts, Conductor of Bridgend Male Choir John Jenkins, Conductor of the Four Counties Youth Choir Derek Holvey and Janice Ball, the Conductor of the Treorchy Male Choir. Special guest for the evening was BBC Broadcaster and Honorary Member of the Choir, Roy Noble.

A MASTER CHOIR

Review of the Concert at Leatherhead Theatre

Surrey Spoon hosted another excellent concert performance by the Treorchy Male Choir at The Theatre in Leatherhead on Saturday 12th November. Prior to the concert itself, the film narrated by Martin Johnson giving information about the charity was shown to the audience on the stage screen and this was followed by the Surrey Chairman, David Jackson, expanding on the work that Spoon have undertaken in Surrey.

The Choir have been referred to by none other than Sir Anthony Hopkins as "The Master Choir of Them All". Their varied programme and performers were thoroughly appreciated by everyone present - wonderful songs from the soprano Iona Jones and the Choir performing a wide variety of songs including selections from their home country (Wales - not that anyone was in any

Leatherhead Theatre.

doubt at all!), Les Miserables, and even a Zulu Chant (Senzenina) all under the leadership of their conductor Janice Ball and accompanied by a brilliant pianist, Helen Roberts. All there will also remember their compere, Dean Powell, who not only had the gift of the gab but a wonderful singing voice too!!

We recruited seven new members from the audience on the evening and as a result of a draw, the winner went home with a bottle of champagne as a thank you! All in all, a grand event followed by what has become known as "the afters", where the choir join the audience in the Mezz bar and carry on singing until the beer runs out!!! Those who did not come missed a truly memorable occasion and one which helped raise much needed funds for the disadvantaged children of Surrey.

WOODEN SPOON AND TREORCHY MALE CHOIR

TWO GREAT CHARITIES

By DAVID JACKSON

Chairman of Surrey Region of Wooden Spoon

It is a commonly held belief that the Welsh are passionate about two things in particular– singing and rugby. I think we can add to that a belief that by doing both well, they can benefit others.

As most will know, Wooden Spoon is the Children's Charity of Rugby. It is a national charity whose aim is to make a positive impact on the lives of disadvantaged children and young people through a commitment to quality charitable work. Its roots go back to 1983 when England "won" the Wooden Spoon and some Irish friends in Dublin (the scene of the final match of the tournament) presented their English supporters (who were drowning their sorrows in Guinness) with a large wooden spoon, symbolic of their defeat. They used this trophy to raise funds for disadvantaged children and rather than the few hundred pounds anticipated, collected £8,500 at a golf day in Farnham (the Club still remembers the occasion!). From that day, Spoon started to grow – last year we raised over £1.5 million pounds nationally for this worthwhile cause and we were delighted to be awarded the International Rugby Board's prestigious "Spirit of Rugby" Award at a meeting held in New Zealand immediately following the World Cup.

Treorchy Male Choir has been a superb supporter of Spoon's fund raising

activities throughout the UK. Bob Harris has been heavily involved in Spoon affairs for many years and was thrilled last year when he was awarded Honorary Membership of Treorchy Male Choir (see the 2010 edition of Excelsior). We in Surrey have been fortunate in hosting the Choir twice in

Leatherhead Theatre

recent years, firstly at The Fairfield Halls in Croydon and more recently at The Leatherhead Theatre. Not only did they perform superb concerts, helping us to raise much needed funds for projects we have been requested to support in Surrey, but "The Afters" in the bar attracted many members of the audience to join in with some singing (at various levels of competence, it must be said!) These concerts have become one of the most popular events in our fund raising calendar – we sincerely hope that we shall be seeing and hearing you again!

Since the first small beginnings, financial support has been provided for projects in Surrey which has aggregated over £650,000 and we have been honoured to have two of these projects opened by our Royal Patron, HRH The Princess Royal. Like many fund raising charities, the present economic climate is something of a "double whammy" – more projects need our help with a diminishing amount of finance coming from other sources, and even our generous supporters are feeling the pinch so it is likely that the funds we shall raise will not match up to previous levels. All these factors show how important the support of others such as Treorchy Male Choir is vital to our continuing determination to help those less fortunate than ourselves. We thank you very much for your ongoing contributions to Spoon – long may they continue!

TREORCHY GENERATIONS

By SIMON GOULD

Our appreciation for the wonderful concert we attended in Leatherhead last November; the Choir's performance was absolutely first class from start to finish and featured their perfect blend of warmth, drama and entertainment. Along with many others, my mum, sister and I were treated to several spontaneous encores in the bar after the concert, which were equally touching and special - obviously something of a tradition as we also enjoyed this treat in the British Legion following our last enjoyable concert at the St Albans Arena in 2002!

It's particularly special for us to see the Choir enjoy continued success as we have two separate family connections, one on each side of my mum's family. Her father "Donna" Griffiths was a long standing secretary of the current Choir and she remembers delivering cups of coffee to lots of "important people", amongst them record company directors and Jerold Wells, the late English actor, who would drop by for tea at the house on Glyncoli Road after rehearsals on Sundays! The other link was on her mother Tyd's side, whose

grandfather was William Thomas, one of the early conductors of the original "Treorky Choir" during the 19th century. He was fortunate enough to conduct the Choir in their Royal Command Performance in 1895.

Returning to the present day and leaving aside the magnificent music, two other things stood out clearly for us at Leatherhead; firstly, how willingly and generously the Choir continue to support countless worthwhile causes through their work (this particular concert was supporting the Wooden

Spoon charity for disadvantaged children) and secondly, what a marvellously strong bond of friendship and camaraderie still exists between the choristers and all involved in the Choir - a joy to witness. All the very best to all involved in the Choir and we look forward to our next "bar side" encore!

DAVID LEONARD GALE

Beloved brother of the late Mavis
Dearly loved uncle of Keith, Susan and the late Kevin
Much loved great-uncle of Lisa, James, Ceri and Jenny
And loving great-great uncle of Jorja, Taine, Rowan and Gwen

Life Member of the Treorchy Male Choir

Born 17th October 1924
Passed Away 17th June 2011
Aged 86 years

"Close Thine Eyes and Sleep Secure
Thy Soul is Safe Thy Boy Sure."

Treorchy Male Choir has lost one of its statesmen with the passing of Len Gale and the collective grief felt by everyone involved in the organisation is testament to the high esteem in which he was held. Len epitomised the archetypcal chorister, who devoted decades to the continued success of the Choir but did so without glory or attention. He was a quiet, unassuming man whose great enjoyment in life was to perform as part of the Choir and remain surrounded by his dear friends. Len possessed a beautiful baritone voice. This, coupled with his command of tonic solfa, made him an ideal mentor for many young choristers joining the ranks.

He lived his entire life in Ton Pentre and although remained a bachelor, was

part of a close-knit, loving family through his sister Mavis. Len found great joy, satisfaction, love and comfort in seeing her children, grandchildren and indeed great-grandchild grow and flourish.

Len's working life was spent in the coal industry and for more than forty years he was a finance clerk. On leaving school he joined the Ocean Colliery prior to nationalisation and remained in post with the NCB until his retirement.

Music and religious worship were a massive part of Len's life. A devoted Christian, Len was an integral part of the choir at St David's Church in Ton Pentre before joining St John the Baptist's when the former church was demolished. Between the two places of worship, Len's faithful service was astonishing. He spent more than 70 years singing in the choir and playing a significant role in the many activities taking place there.

At a young age he joined the Morgannwg Gleemen Choir and became their treasurer until they disbanded in the late 1950s. Len had felt very much at home as a member of a male voice choir and joined his good friend, Reg Stephens, in the ranks of the Treorchy Male Choir in 1959. For the next fifty years Len revelled in every activity the Choir had to offer. A dedicated and respected member of the First Bass section, Len enjoyed a wonderful life as a chorister, rarely missing a concert or rehearsal. He was a Long Service Member and received the accolade of Life Membership.

Len undertook many overseas tours to Switzerland, USA, Canada and Australia. He also enjoyed the three-week tour of Australia and New Zealand in 2009 and later that year was presented with a gold watch at the Choir's Annual Autumn Concert in recognition of fifty years of unbroken service. His love of travel was evident by the many holidays enjoyed abroad with his good friends Reg and brother Islwyn and Mal Morgan and over the years Portugal became a second home.

Len Gale will be long remembered by his many friends in the Treorchy Male Choir. We salute his memory and mourn his passing.

IN MEMORIAM

By NICK JENKINS

"Deep in the Llynfi Valley among the pine trees all forlorn, there one Easter Sunday Morning (in 1948) a baby boy was born!" Only his name wasn't Jimmy Brown, it was Nick Jenkins!

Eight years later (doesn't time fly!) my father Gwilym purchased a grama-

phone player and with it an E.P. record of the Treorchy Male Choir. The great hymns such as "Llef" and "Blaenwern" were on the E.P. as well as Mozart's "Oisis and Isiris" and "The Silver Birch", a Russian folk song set to Welsh words. At any rate I played and played this record, being totally fascinated by the power and clarity of the sound and of course the resounding "Amens"!

My parents thought it strange that an eight year old should want to spend his time listening to a male choir, instead of playing cowboys, rugby, cricket or even doctors and nurses! Gwilym explained in great detail that the "Treorci" (he always called them thus) were probably the most famous male choir on the planet and that their musical director, Mr. John Haydn Davies, was a veritable "musical magician."

He told me that one day I should apply to join the Treorchy Male Choir, but not before I did so, it as important to learn my choral music trade with other choirs. As he said, "if you go to the "Treorci" you will be joining the premier division"

Jeffrey Howard presenting his arrangement to Nick Jenkins

I started immediately by joining the church choir, various school choirs and my second tenor career began with Cor Meibion Maesteg A'r Cylch. My father was a bottom bass and we sang together for a number of years. I also joined Cor Meibion De Cymru under the baton of Dr Haydn James, who was also Musical Director for the London Welsh Male Voice Choir. During my five year stay with Cor Meibion De Cymru I sang several times in the Royal Albert Hall and twice in the Sydney Opera House.

I met Lyn Feldon whilst at Cor Meibion and he introduced me to Treorchy Male Choir. I was accepted into the Second Tenor Section under the baton of Meuryn Hughes, but only for a short period before "Maestro!" Janice Ball took over.

In order to thank and remember my dear parents in a tangible way for guiding me over the "Bwlch" to Treorchy, I commissioned Jeff Howard to arrange the hymn "In Memoriam" for male voice. Jan actually chose the hymn as the very title suited my purpose exactly – to pay tribute to my wonderful parents. "In Memoriam" is therefore a hymn by Caradog Roberts, arranged by Jeff Howard in Memory of Gwilym and Frances Jenkins of Maesteg, Lifelong Devotees of the Treorchy Male Choir

The debut performance of "In Memoriam" was in Pershore, Worcestershire on September 10th 2011 with my sister Ann, and my Aunt Enid (my father's 91-year-old sister) in the audience. My wife, Jane, children Rhys, Esther and Grace were also there, so it was very much a family occasion. Prior to the performance of the hymn Jan presented Ann and Enid with framed copies of the music, with suitable inscriptions attached, to mark the occasion. Needless to say, they were thrilled, both with the presentation and more importantly the first performance of the hymn. If memory serves there wasn't a dry eye in the house, at least not in the eyes of my family.

On behalf of my family, I would like to thank sincerely the Committee of Treorchy Male Choir for allowing me to commission Jeff Howard to arrange this wonderful music. To thank Jeff himself for a brilliant arrangement with even better "Amens" than "Tydi a Roddaist" (if that's possible!). Also to Jan Ball and Helen Roberts, our musical team extraordinaire for conducting and playing superbly, as always.

Finally heartfelt thanks to the gentlemen of the Choir for learning the music in a short period of time and for singing with their usual "Treorchy Gusto" and emotion. Diolch o Galon! In my humble opinion the Treorci is "simply the best", my friends in Morriston, De Cymru, Maesteg, Cardiff Arms Park, London Welsh and others would of course disagree – and rightly so – each to their own. I rest my case!

MY 'ACCOUNT' OF TREORCHY

By PAUL YOUNG
Honorary Member

I have lived in the Rhondda all my life, and have practiced as a Chartered Accountant in the Treorchy area for almost forty years.

During that time there has been huge changes,both financially and socially which have affected peoples lives everywhere in the country.

Treorchy, of course has not been exempt from these changes, and many jobs

have been lost in the area, with factories closing at E.M.I., Polikoffs, TC Jones and lately of couse at Burberrys.

Chairman David Bebb presenting Honorary Membership to Paul Young.

Most towns would have buckled under such changes, but Treorchy has maintained a social quality which is remarkable.

The shopping centre is still almost intact and thriving, and culturally the town is unique with its Theatre, drama groups and musical societies.

The cultural backbone throughout this time of immense change however ,has undoubtedly been the Treorchy Male Choir.

The history, quality and universal presentation of the choir throughout the media and the world, has been of the highest class. When therefore I had the opportunity to assist the choir professionally I was only too pleased to help. To be given honorary mrmbership as a reward for that help, was completely unexpected and better than any monetary reward.

I am very grateful to the choir and will cherish the honour for the rest of my life.

SWANSEA VALLEY MINERS APPEAL FUND

By PETER HAIN, MP for Neath

Thank you for your donation to the Swansea Valley Miners Appeal Fund in respect of the four miners who so tragically lost their lives.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated by the families who have been traumatised by events and it reflects the great and moving spirit of caring and support which has followed on from the tragedy.

The funds will be administered by three experienced and respected Trustees appointed by the South Wales Union of Mineworkers, the Most Reverend Barry Morgan Archbishop of Wales, Wayne Thomas Secretary of the NUM South Wales and Tyrone O'Sullivan the former leader of Tower Colliery.

The four families have been contacted and we remain in close touch with them. They are deeply grateful for your contribution.

My officer has been overpowered by the support. Thank you again.

NIGHT TO REMEMBER AS PERFORMERS EXCEL

A Review of the Concert at the Anvil, Basingstoke
By HANNAH WILLIAMS

Musically, this was probably one of the best concerts ever produced by The Rotary Club of Basingstoke Deane. If you take a choir from the valleys with a tradition of 125 years of singing behind it, couple them with "the pride of Hampshire", the Hampshire Youth County Youth Choir, sprinkle a little star-dust over it all by engaging 14-year-old harpist Benjamin Creighton Griffiths, and include several wonderful young soloists – what do you get? Well, certainly a concert to remember!

Just to be sure, add soprano Iona Jones, who sings like a nightingale and give compere Dean Powell, who has such a lovely gentle sense of humour, the job of introducing it all.

The Rotarians had all the right ideas. It was just the staging that let them down a little. There should have been professional lighting design on a concert like this to do it justice. Think of Gounod's "Ave Maria" with auditorium and choir stalls in semi-darkness and a follow-spot on singer and harpist. Magical.

There were several golden opportunities like that which were missed, and the HCYC should have stayed on stage when they were not singing. Visually, it would have helped and they could then at least have heard that young harpist

The Anvil, Basingstoke

tackle a Dave Brubeck jazz piece which delighted the audience so much. This is just me wanting perfection for Basingstoke!

I don't think I will ever forget the Treorchy boys walking on stage at the very beginning and bursting into song so passionately with "Bryn Calfaria" and ending this group of four Welsh songs with "Gwahoddiad". I was in my seventh heaven. The brilliant conductor Janice Ball and her accompanist Helen Roberts impressed me with the way they encouraged the choir to create such controlled "hwyl". Spellbinding.

In the same way, conductor Keith Clarke pulled every ounce of emotion out of the exciting arrangement by Michael Tippett of "Steal Away" and "Go Down Moses" that the HCYC gave us so movingly. They really are a joy, and there seemed to be more young men in the choir than ever before.

The grand finale with four pieces from "Les Miserables" by the Treorchy and both choirs singing "You Raise Me Up" arranged by Alwyn Humphreys was a great idea. Everyone then rallied for the two national anthems – English and Welsh - and the singing by all was amazing.

A ROYAL TRIBUTE

Treorchy Male Choir was invited to undertake a prestigious recording opportunity during the year when they joined forces once more with the Band of the Welsh Guards. Marking the 20th anniversary since both world-famous organisations had combined for a CD album, this occasion was to celebrate the forthcoming Royal Wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton. Record producer Nick Patrick and promoter Jeff Chegwin invited the Choir to perform a selection of well known Welsh items for the album, entitled "A Royal Tribute".

For the first time the Choir journeyed to the former Capel Horeb in Pentyrch, now a state-of-the—art recording studio and concert venue called Acapella where they were welcomed by the producer and the arranger of many of the tracks, Richard Cottle. During the evening the Choir recorded four songs, including a new arrangement which was only given to the choristers on the night called "Lift Me Up". The album, released in time for the Royal Wedding, received widespread media interest as it also featured tenor Wynne Evans, soprano Gwawr Edwards and Hollywood actor Martin Sheen

The tracks on the album are:

Fanfare Royale
Semper Fidelis
Prince Of Denmark's March
God Bless The Prince Of Wales (Treorchy Male Choir)
Men Of Harlech (Treorchy Male Choir)
A Welsh Rhapsody
Under Milkwood / All Through The Night (Michael Sheen)
Suo Gan (Gwawr Edwards)
Lift Me Up (Wynne Evans & Treorchy Male Choir)
Military March Medley
Royal Crown Medley
Love Divine, All Love Excelling (The Choir Of Westminster Abbey)
For The Love Of A Princess
Pomp and Circumstance
Land Of My Fathers (Treorchy Male Choir)
Royal Salute

SING WITH US

THE TENOVUS SING FOR LIFE CHOIR
By Dr. Ian Lewis

The Tenovus Sing For Life Choir is a remarkable organisation made up of people who have been affected by cancer whether as a patient, survivor, family member or carer. The Choir originally started as a small research project looking at the benefits of singing for cancer patients and their families but has since grown into choir of nearly 100 members who meet each week to make new friends, support each other and most importantly have fun!

Currently in Wales around 120,000 people are living with a diagnosis of cancer and in the next 20 years this is set to double. With the increasing number of people affected by the disease, Tenovus are always looking for new ways to

provide support bring people together and what better way than through song. The benefits of singing in a choir were actually proven by a team from Cardiff University who followed the members of the Sing for Life Choir for the first 3 months and showed that it alleviated depression and anxiety, made them more sociable and actually in some instances even reduced their levels of physical pain.

The choir is run in partnership with the team building and motivational company Sing And Inspire who provide the musical arrangements, take the rehearsals each week and conduct the choir at all of their regular live performances. In the last two years the Tenovus Sing For Life Choir has performed at the UKs largest cancer conference in Liverpool, been the subject of a BBC Wales documentary and sung for Princess Anne twice- once of course at our annual Tenovus Lovelight Concert in Llandaff Cathedral with the world famous Treorchy Male Voice Choir.

The success of the first choir has enabled us to secure nearly £1 million funding from the UK's National Lottery AdvantAGE grant scheme to roll out the choir programme all over Wales. This incredibly exciting project called Sing With Us will lead to the development of 15 more choirs over the next 4 years, each coming together every week to support each other, have fun and sing in perfect harmony.

If you would like to know more about the Tenovus Sing With Us Choir project please see our website at www.tenovus.org.uk or contact a member of the team on singwithus@tenovus.org.uk .

Tenovas Sing for Life Choir

FAITH AND BELIEF

BARRY MORGAN
Archbishop of Wales

To many people, the Christian faith is about "believing six impossible things before breakfast" (Alice in Wonderland). They think that to be a Christian, one has to believe that the Bible is literally true in every detail. Of course, Christians sometimes give credence to this assumption.

The Times recently had a headline about an American professor of theology who had been forced out of his job because he did not literally believe in the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis. 4 in 10 people in America believe the biblical account of the origins of the human race. (They forget, of course, that there are two different accounts in Genesis).

This approach – creationism, that God made the universe in 6 days and created all life on earth on the 6th day is, I suspect, not something most Christians would subscribe to, since we know from scientists that the universe began 14 billion years ago, and that life has evolved based on competition and natural selection. Darwin said all this in the 19th Century in his book on the "Origin of Species".

It seems astonishing then that all this is literally believed by two fifths of the population of America and that in Kentucky, there is a Creation Museum set up to show that Genesis is a factual account of the origins of the world. Professor Richard Dawkins, who constantly attacks Christianity, believes that all Christians accept the Bible's every word as being literally true.

Yet something does not have to be literally true to contain truth. It is possible to believe the world is billions of years old and that we are descended from apes without at the same time abandoning our belief in God. Science answers how the world evolved whereas theology asks why is there a world in the first place? It is possible to believe that God is the creator whilst also believing that this creation has been in existence for billions of years – because the theory of evolution does not begin to account for the existence of the basic stuff of the universe or for those basic properties, powers and laws and what they have it in them to evolve.

But then, say the critics, even to go that far is to make a leap of faith. There is no proof that God exists. Yet when you think about it, most things we do in life have an element of trust, of faith. Crossing the road, catching a plane, falling in love, assume faith and trust. Love cannot be proved but we each know what it is, how it makes us feel. Scientists affirm that the greatest leaps forward in scientific breakthroughs have relied, in the end, on an element of

faith and risk, and they've happened almost by accident.

So when John Humphries, Radio 4's 'Today' presenter, in a recent book entitled 'In God We Doubt', says that he has spent his life trying to believe in God but has come to the conclusion that for him, such a belief is impossible because it is unprovable, perhaps he was missing the point. Humphries wants provable certainty – a knockdown argument that can persuade him without a shadow of a doubt of God's existence.

"The trouble is", Humphries writes, "that if you say that there is order, beauty and love in the universe pointing to a creator, there are such things as hatred, destruction and violence which mitigate against a belief in God. That means" he says "that you have to decide on whether to believe on the balance of probabilities. You can't have absolute certainty". For him, that is not enough.

There is a play by the atheist philosopher, A. C. Grayling, called 'On Religion'. In that play one character says that "the night before he got married his brother sat him down in an Indian Restaurant and after too many beers got him to make a list on a table napkin of why this girl was the right person for him to marry. One side of the napkin had all the pros and the other side the cons". The playwright goes on, "what was fascinating about the list was that nothing I could write down - kind, beautiful, warm, sexy, could ever add up to 'I love her'".

Why? Because this character realised that you could never rationally and provably move from a list of strong attributes, without a leap of faith, to saying that you loved somebody.

And that's because there would always be negative things to be said about the person and that argument could also be advanced for love being a fiction, a function of human need, a function of biology and selfish genes – a kind of chemistry of the brain. There is no hard evidence you can produce to prove that you love another person. It is, in the end, a matter of the heart as well as the head.

Love entails an element of risk. That does not make it irrational or unreasonable, but it is an act of faith that is at the same time more profound than reason and simpler than reason. It is about the engagement of the heart. Without a degree of faith and trust, no one would fall in love, neither would any of us catch a bus or go for an operation or allow our children to walk to school. All these are undertaken in trust and contain an element of risk. Belief in God, faith, is very similar.

The writer and novelist A. N. Wilson once trained for the ordained ministry of the Anglican Church. He then lost his faith completely, so much so that

Llandaff Cathedral

he wrote articles railing against Christianity and a book on Jesus attempting to show that He was no more than a failed prophet. And yet, Wilson says, that gradually over the last few years, he has moved from being a knocker of the faith and totally anti-religious to being a believer again. "His reconversion", he says, "has surprised no-one more than himself" and he goes on to say that he ought not to have been surprised because, as he puts it, "we, as human beings, are more than the sum of our parts – we are spiritual beings".

So he says "every inner prompting of conscience, every glimmering sense of beauty, every response we make to music, every experience we have of love, be it physical, sexual, family or love of friends, reminds us of this fact. We are not just a collection of chemicals. How are we capable of love, heroism or poetry if we are simply animated pieces of meat? There is more to life than we can see or prove. Faith, like love, is to make more of a commitment than one can rationally explain".

And musicians appreciate that more than most people because they know that great music has that capacity to stir up our feelings, our emotions, and to engage us at the deepest levels of our being. Music has the capacity to move hearts and make us wonder.

Words and rational arguments do not always convince people that there is a God. Art and music often do so because there is more to life than we can comprehend and that often the only response to beauty and harmony is to fall down and worship.

IN MEMORIAM

DOUGLAS PARRY FIRSTBROOK

Born March 25th 1936 at Llwynypia, Rhondda

Died December 31st 2001 at Gawler Health Service, South Australia

Honorary Member, Treorchy Male Choir

Douglas Parry Firstbrook was born in Llwynypia Hospital, the first child of Roger and Sylvia. The family lived at Craig Villa in Miskin and shortly a

daughter was born named Pat. Doug attended Tonyrefail Grammar School and in 1951 he joined the Royal Navy as a boy seaman, enthusiastically embracing a career in the services and a passion for the Navy that remained all of his life.

Doug's father, Roger, a well known and colourful character renowned for drinking a biscuit tin full of beer at the Miskin Arms, passed away in 1951 and Doug assumed role of the head of the family.

His childhood sweetheart was Patricia Thomas of Gilfach Goch, known as Paddy and they remained in contact throughout his time in the forces. In 1957 Doug's mother passed away and Doug sought compassionate discharge to care for his 11-year-old sister. He married Paddy in 1958, on the day Wales played England at Cardiff's Arm Park.

Doug worked as a civil servant for the National Assistance Board, and spent much of his free time playing and socialising with Pontyclun RFC. The couple had two sons, Roger and Giles.

In 1968 the family emigrated to Australia on the Fairstar, settling in Elizabeth West where Doug worked at ATCO as Export Manager, travelling to the Middle East to establish settlements of transportable buildings for oil wells. In 1972 they settled in Gawler, a country town, and Doug moved into the irrigation products industry as Export Manager, travelling frequently to Asia and being recruited by Lightforce to promote their vehicle spotlights and special lighting equipment.

Doug continued to play and be involved in rugby, first as a player for Old Collegians Rugby Club, then Gawler Rugby Club where he was a player, captain and President of the Club and finally as a referee, possibly the only referee in South Australia to penalise his own son for a double movement and disregard the try and to threaten the other son with a send off if he called him "Dad" again.

Together with rugby, Doug's passion was male voice choirs, playing the stock market and staying connected with all things "Welsh". In 1986 Doug approached James Hardie Industries and was thus hugely instrumental in introducing the world-famous Treorchy Male Choir to Australia. He became an Honorary Member and also assisted with the 1999 Australian Tour, maintained a close connection with the Choir all of his life.

Doug also organised tours for the Sydney Welsh Choir and was an active participate in the Adelaide Plains Choir and the Leidertafel Choir. Doug lived and breathed music, he was a colourful character who has gone to play his favourite game in heaven. Cymru am Byth.

A BAND OF MEN

We are a hearty band of men
We love to sing a fiery song
We try our best to sing it well
And not to get it wrong

We are a joyful band of men
We sing our songs with smiles
And one thing we will guarantee
We'll go the extra mile

We are a tuneful band of men
With basses, tenors, baritones
We always sing our song in tune
And only in the purest tones.

We are a soulful band of men
We bring each song to life
And you could hear a pin drop
When we sing songs of strike

We are a close knit band of men
We help each other out
So if a member needs a hand
There's always somebody about

We are a humble band of men
We know we've to work
We never sit on laurels earned
We've never been known to shirk.

We are successful as a band
For many years we've travelled wide
But we've still got to prove ourselves
So we work hard side by side.

We are a Rhondda band of men
With Bwlch and Rhigos nearby
Our land drives us to sing with joy
And raise our voices to the sky.

We are Treorchy Male Voice Choir
For more than sixty years we've sung
We're proud to be the band of men
Who will sing on in years to come.

ANNE MARIE BARBER NEE LAWRENCE

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Ten Years Ago – 2001

The year opened in the recording studio where the Choir made its new CD for Grasmere Records called "Sweet Silver Song". The Choir made its first visit to Thornbury and returned to Swindon for the first time in 29 years. The concert in Winchester Cathedral marked the final engagement organised by Islwyn Morgan as Secretary prior to his retirement. The Choir made a CD featuring Kenny Ball and the Jazzmen entitled "Tribute to Wembley" and also performed at Wells Cathedral, Derby Cathedral, Maidenhead, Exeter and at the Grosvenor House in London for the Motor Trade Benevolent Fund.

Twenty Years Ago – 1991

The Choir joined forces with the Band of the Welsh Guards for a concert in Treorchy and spent four enjoyable days recording and filming "Highway" with Sir Harry Secombe and Cliff Morgan. This marked the first time for the programme to be dedicated to an organisation, rather than a place. The Choir combined with Pontarddulais and Morriston Orpheus Choirs to record the award-winning "Christmas from the Land of Song" and gave performances in Leek, Sherbourne Abbey, Winchester Cathedral, Burton on Trent, Derby Cathedral and the Rose Theatre in Tewkesbury. A tumultuous year in the history of the Choir which saw the sudden retirement of Conductor John Cynan Jones and the death of Founder Conductor John Haydn Davies. In July John Jenkins was appointed as the Choir's third Conductor and within a short period he led them on their first tour to the USA with concerts throughout the Mid Western States of Nebraska, Iowa and Minnesota before visiting Washington D.C. and visiting the White House.

Thirty Years Ago – 1981

During the year the Choir made the "David of the White Rock" L.P. for EMI Records at the Brangwyn Hall. In Blackwood W.J. "Donna" Griffiths made his last appearance on stage following an outstanding, dedicated history with the Choir, most notably as its long-time Secretary. Other venues included the Colston Hall in Bristol, Tewkesbury Abbey, Llandaff Cathedral, Dorchester Cathedral, Brecon Cathedral, Plymouth Guild Hall and Fairfield Hall in Croydon and a performance to mark the 21st Anniversary of Cor Meibion Pontarddulais. The Choir made its first visit to Shepton Mallet and at Dorchester celebrated Sam Griffiths' 250th solo performance with the Choir. In September 96 choristers made their first visit to Strasbourg with performances at the Kongresshalle and before a congregation of 6,000 at the Sunday Mass in Strasbourg Cathedral.

Forty Years Ago – 1971

In February a section of the Choir travelled to the Borenham Wood TV Studios in London to be reunited with Tom Jones for a television show. The choristers filmed "Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head" for a joint performance with Tom Jones and the composer of the song, Burt Bacharach for his show, which later won an Emmy Award. Following the death of Founder Accompanist Tom Jones, Jennifer Jones made her debut appearance at St David's Cathedral. The Choir made its annual visit to the Great House in Chippenham and in December were reunited with Tom Jones to appear on his third Christmas Show which was filmed at Shepherd's Bush Studios in London.

Fifty Years Ago – 1961

During the year the Choir filmed a T.W.W. programme called "Amser Te" to be broadcast on St David's Day and entertained VIP visitors from Imperial College, London at their rehearsal rooms. The Choir returned to the National Eisteddfod Arena and claimed another record first prize at Rhosllanerchrugog. They gave a performance at St Athan's RAF Station to mark the 21st Anniversary of the Battle of Britain and led the singing at Ninian Park prior to the Wales vs England football international. The Choir also made several more "All Together" radio shows with Alun Williams and made a new 45rpm recording for Qualiton at Noddfa Chapel, in Treorchy.

Sixty Years Ago – 1951

During the first four weeks of the year they recorded four consecutive editions of the "All Together" radio programme with compere Alun Williams and baritone John Morgan. They also appeared in a mass male choir concert to mark the Festival of Britain at Sophia Gardens in Cardiff and joined 10 other choirs at the Royal Albert Hall under Sir Adrian Boult to give the first public performance of "The Rainbow" composed to commemorate the evacuation of Dunkirk. A further massed choir performance was given to mark the Festival of Britain at the Pentre Colliery Site and the Choir enjoyed visits to Ipswich and Oxford where they sang with the Morris Motors Band. In October they gave the first of many performances at Birmingham Town Hall.

Seventy Years Ago – 1941

With the outbreak of World War II Conductor Arthur Davies made less frequent visits to the rehearsal room and the Choir was left in the hands of the young Deputy Conductor John Haydn Davies. In the Whitsun Eisteddfod of 1941 only Treorchy entered the male voice choir competition. When John

Haydn Davies received the £20 prize money he donated £10 to Pentwyn Hospital and the remainder to the Cwmparc distress fund "that recently suffered at the hands of the Nazi marauders of the air". In September 1941 the Accompanist Tom Knapgate of Glyncoli Road, Treorchy, died at the age of forty nine. Tom Jones succeeded him in the post.

Eighty Years Ago – 1931

The economic depression of the 1920s in the South Wales valleys did little to abate by the start of the 1930s with a huge percentage of men out of work. It was also a period when men left their homes for work elsewhere and this impacted on the musical organisations they often performed in, whether brass band or choir. The men of Treorchy, led by John Isaac Jones, the soloist with the Royal Welsh Male Choir, gave several local fundraising concerts but did not enter the National Eisteddfod of that year.

Ninety Years Ago – 1921

The four-year-old reformed "Treorchy & District Male Voice Party" competed in the Mountain Ash Welsh Musical Festival before a crowd of 8,000 people. The test piece was "War Songs of The Saracens" by E. Bantock and the adjudicator was Ernest Newman, probably the most famous music critic of his generation. The first prize of £100 was presented to Penywern and Dowlais Male Choir who scored 83 points, with the Treorchy coming a commendable third place out of seven choirs with 78 points – just behind Rhymney. On December 1st they gave a concert in St Matthews Hall, Treorchy where John Pugh was accompanied by Mr A. Tawe Thomas and the Choir was reported as being "particularly good", by the local press.

One Hundred and Twenty Years Ago – 1891

The original Treorky Male Choir, under the baton of William Thomas, entered the 1891 Royal National Eisteddfod in Swansea with the test pieces were "The Destruction of Gaza" by Laurent De Rille (with its remarkable eight-part harmony) and Dr Parry's "The Pilgrims." A total of twelve male choirs competed including the Port Talbot Male Party, Rhondda Glee Society, Pontycymmer Glee Party, Glantawe Glee Society, Cynon Glee Party, Myrddin Male Party, Treherbert Male Party, Rhondda Fach Glee Society, Cynon Valley United Glee, Brynaman United Glee and Llanelli Philharmonic Party. Treorky came a creditable second behind the Pontycymmer Male Choir who won "£30, a gold medal and books to the value of £5."

ATTENDANCES

"There remains the central core of the choir, those faithful ones, regular in attendance, attentive and alert in rehearsals, with the music in their heads and not with their heads in their music, singing at concerts with confidence and courage, cheerful at all times and ever patient and long suffering despite the idiosyncracies of the conductor. They in truth are THE Treorchy Male Choir."

John Haydn Davies
Founder Conductor, 1954

Rehearsals	Engagements
CENTURY CLUB (100% Attendance)	
Ernald Brooks	Ernald Brooks
Norman Martin	Norman Martin
	Arthur Miles
	Frederick O'Brien
	Gerald Emanuel
	Alun Davies
NIFTY NINETIES CLUB (90% Attendance)	
Graham Cox	Graham Cox
Alwyn Lewis	Alwyn Lewis
Nick Jenkins	Nick Jenkins
Evan Davies	Evan Davies
Tom Belmont	Tom Belmont
Alan Bowen	Alan Bowen
John Jones	John Jones
Daryl Stacey	Daryl Stacey
William Thomas	William Thomas
Tony Davies	Tony Davies
Dennis Young	Dennis Young
Cyril Bevan	Derek Thomas
Ivor Lock	Mark Williams
Keith Bevan	Norman Cox
Joe Harris	
Mark Milsom	
Frederick O'Brien	
David Powell	
Jeff Priday	
David Bebb	

Ray Daniels
Gerald Emmanuel
Keith Owens
William Watkin
David Birch
Alun Davies
George Jacob
Bryn Jones
John Radford
Robert Hopkins
Peter Jones

CHORISTERS BALANCE SHEET

IN	OUT
Stuart Smith	John Bowen
Robert Taylor	Wayne Dury
Mark Williams	Gareth T. Davies
Evan Davies	Glynne Nicholls
Martin Williams	Ian Dickson
Wayne Coles	
Cyril Bebb	
Robert Hopkins	
Andrew Jones	

NUMBER ON BOOKS – DECEMBER 2011

IT	2T	IB	2B	TOTAL
27	20	23	23	93

ENGAGEMENTS

January

Saturday 15th	The Anvil. Basingstoke – with the Hampshire Youth County Youth Choir in aid of the Rotary Club of Basingstoke Deane
Saturday 29th	St George's Church. Bristol

February

Thursday 3rd	The Vale Hotel, Hensol – A "Come Dine With Me" event for Wooden Spoon featuring the Welsh Rugby Team *

Wednesday 23rd	Acapella, Pentyrch – recording "A Royal Tribute" CD featuring the Band of the Welsh Guards, Wynne Evans. Aled Jones and Michael Sheen

March

Saturday 5th	China Street Chapel, Llanidloes – in aid of the Rotary Club of Llanidloes
Thursday 24th	Hoddinott Hall, Wales Millennium Centre – celebrating the 40th Anniversary of Cantorion Creigiau
Saturday 26th	Birmingham Town Hall – the Lord Mayor Birmingham Charity Gala Concert

April

Wednesday 6th	Treorchy Comprehensive School – Treorchy Male Choir Junior Musician of the Year 2011
Sunday 17th	Carreg Cennen Castle, Llandeilo – filming the History of Britain for Sky HD
Friday 22nd	Park & Dare Theatre, Treorchy – Good Friday Concert with the Parc & Dare Band

May

Saturday 7th	Tewkesbury Abbey – the official launch of "Timeless"
Thursday 19th	Parc Primary School. Cwmparc – the Cwmparc War Memorial Ceremony *
Saturday 21st	Assembly Rooms, Worthing
Wednesday 25th	St David's Hall, Cardiff with Iris Williams OBE

June

Saturday 4th	Millennium Stadium, Cardiff – performance prior to the Wales vs Barbarians
Tuesday 9th	Rehearsal Room, Treorchy – filming a documentary with Only Boys Aloud
Saturday 18th	The Stiwt, Rhos – second joint concert with Rhos Male Choir

July

Tuesday 12th	Rehearsal Room, Treorchy – filming "The Story of Wales" for BBC
Saturday 19th	St Michael's Church, Somerton

September

Saturday 20th	No 8 Centre, Pershore
Saturday 27th	The Pavilions, Plymouth – where £1,200 was raised for the Gleision Colliery Disaster Fund

October

Thursday 6th	Parc & Dare Theatre – Annual Concert with guest Wynne Evans
Saturday 8th	Soar Chapel, Penygraig – filming "Songs of Praise" with Only Boys Aloud
Saturday 15th	Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury
Saturday 29th	Civic Hall, Bedworth

November

Sunday 6th	Rhondda Sports Centre, Ystrad – Remembrance Concert in aid of the Royal British Legion
Saturday 11th	Leatherhead Theatre – in aid of Wooden Spoon (Surrey Branch)
Sunday 11th	Blaenrhondda & Treherbert War Memorials – Remembrance Sunday Service *
Friday 25th	Station Road, Treorchy – performance at the Treorchy Christmas Tree Lighting Parade *
Monday 28th	Llandaff Cathedral – a Tenovus Candlelit Service in the presence of the Archbishop of Wales and HRH Princess Anne

December

Saturday 3rd	Millennium Stadium, Cardiff – performance prior to the Wales vs Australia rugby international
Friday 16th	The Lion, Treorchy – outdoor performance for the Treorchy Chamber of Trade *
Wednesday 21st	Ty Hafan, Sully – performance at the Christmas Memorial Service *

* Denotes an engagement that did not require the full Choir attendance

Treorchy Male Choir Appreciation Society

Mrs. V. Dix (Cheltenham)
Mr. A. Dix (Cheltenham)
Mr. J. Cooper (N. Ireland)
Mr. S. Nicholas (Cheshire)
Mr. J. C. Wharton (Cardiff)
Mr.. D. Halstead (Treorchy)
Mr. C. Rowland (Cowbridge)
Jennifer Jones (Cornwall)
Mrs. M. Ball (Wolverhampton)
Mr. D. Downton (Porthcawl)
Mrs. C. Merriman (Ystradgynlais)
Mr. J. E. Little (Dorset)
Mrs. M. Windsor (Pencoed)
Mrs. N. Absalom (Warrington)
Mr. J. Gallacher (Glasgow)
Mr. M. Gleadall (Yorkshire)
Mrs. J. Jennings (Devon)
Mrs. I. Oak (Blaenrhondda)
Mr. B. C. Simpson (Hereford)
Mr. K. Alderson (Cumbria)
Mrs. T. A. Curl (Thrapston)
Mr. C. King (Haverfordwest)
Mrs. G. Graham (Carlisle)
Mrs. S. Knox-Lecky (Barton St. David)
Mrs. D. Cook (NSW. Australia)
Mr. N. Chivers (Cheltenham)
Mr. W. J. Clarke (Stafford)
Mrs. A. Childs (London)
Mr. G. Humphreys (N. Somerset)
Mr. S. Drummond (Pontyclun)
Mr. J. Lee (Essex)
Miss. K. Lawrence (Ton-Pentre)
Mr. G. Neighbour (Southampton)
Mr. J. Morgan (Bristol)
Mrs. J. Lawrence (Blanecwm)
Mrs. F. A. Colebourn (Chester)
Mrs. M. J. Webb (Abergavenny)
Mr. R. Hill (Cwmparc)
Mr. L. Hill (Cardiff)
Mrs. P. H. Roberts (Wilts.)
Mrs. P. Howells (Gelli)
Paul Lewis Evans (Hove)
Dr. R. Hinton (Andover)
Mr. K. Harries (Maesteg)
Mr. R. Middleton (Monmouth)
Mrs. O. Bobbett (Treorchy)
Mr. T. Davies (Staffs.)
Mr. L. Hall (Pencoed)
Ms. H. M. Vereker (Hereford)
Mrs. M. Gosling (Surrey)
Mr. J. Randall (Edinburgh)
Mrs. M. Coles (Somerset)
Mr. M. James (Cardiff)
Mr. R. Perry (Glasgow)
Mrs M. Baxter (South Africa)
Mr. R. S. Thompson (Glasgow)
Mr. V. Baxter (South Africa)
Mr. M. T. Edwards (Birmingham)
Miss. M. Lawrence (Blaenrhondda)
Mr. D. Fear (Cwmparc)
Mr. P. R. Orrells (Treorchy)
Mrs. T. Ricketts (Treherbert)
Mrs. C. H. Rogerson (Galashiels)
Mrs. J. Mann (Florida)
Miss. J. A. Wright (Staffs.)
Mrs. P. Goss (NSW Australia)
Mr. A. Smith (Crickhowell)
Mrs. H. Glasby (Dorset)
Mr. P. Phillips (Kent)
Ms. E. O'Neill (NJ. USA)
Mrs. D. M. Pugsley (Berkshire)
Mr. G. M. Vaughan-Edmunds (Poole)
Mrs. G. Baker (Treorchy)
Mr. G. D. Jones (Stratford-Upon-Avon)
Mrs. M. Kerridge (Bucks)
Mr. H. Den Hartog Sr. (Holland)
Ms. P. Barry (Monmouth)
Mr. A. R. Jones (Devon)
Mr. D. M. Rees (France)
Mr. G. Cox-Barber (Totnes)
Mrs. P Ilett (London)
Ms. Moya Monks (Waitakere, New Zealand)
Clare Jones (Florida)
Mr. T. Saunders (Cardiff)
Mr. C. Evans (Tetbury)
Mrs. S. Hollin (Bridgend)
Mr. A. Bunsell (Plymouth)
Mrs. K. Howe, (Thetford, Norfolk)
Mrs. M. E. Hall (Pencoed)
Mrs. G. Harty (Essex)
Mr. R. Smith (Tunbridge Wells)
Mrs. F. Apperly (Cambs.)
Mr. B. Jefford (Worthing)
Senator L. D'Allesandro (N.H. USA)
Mr. C. Griffiths (Halesowen)
Mr. P Kehoe (Sutton)
Mr. P. Shephard (L. Buzzard)
Mrs. R. Jeremiah (Treherbert)
Mr. J. J. Tucker (Walsall)
Mr. D. S. Poole (Dorking, Surrey)
Mrs. D. Lewis (Cambs.)
Mr. G. L. Garfield (Newent, Glos.)
Mrs. A. Upton (Treherbert)
Mr. P. Rowland (Cheshire)
Mr. G. Lewis (Chalfont St. Giles)
Mr. R. Abel (Bristol)
Mrs. M. Coughlan (Solihull)
Mr. M. B. Perry (Gloucester)
Mr. S. Gould (St. Albans)
Miss. I. E. Maidment (Cardiff)
Mr. R. E. Taylor (Northampton)
Mrs. H. Yates (Isle of Wight)
Mr. J. M. Thomas (Banbury)
Mr. P. M. Murphy (Treorchy)
Mr. A. Sadler (Berks.)
Mr. B. Boulton (Gt. Yarmouth)
Mr. R. G. Carr (Rhymney Gwent)
Mrs. S. H. Raulik (Brazil)
Mr. A. E. Morris (Sutton Coldfield)
Mr. C. Clare (Tonyrefail)
Mr. C. Price (Dorset)
Mr. D. Hillman (Porthcawl)
Mrs. L. Whitehead (Linslade, Beds.)
Miss. E. Osborne (Devon)
Mr. W. Fink (Chicago, USA)
Mr. I. R. Harris (Bristol)
Mrs. P. Berritta (Chesterfield)
Mr. D. Floyd (Birmingham)
Mrs. B. Berry (Worthing)
Mrs. I. Cartwright (Newent, Glos.)
Mr. R. Walton (Talbot Green)
Mr. A. Smith (Worthing)
Mr. E. Slade (Horsham)
Mr. E. Samuel (Rugeley)
Mr. R. M. Edmonds (Tyne & Wear)
Mr. K. Thomas (Weston-super-Mare)
Mr. T. Strickler (CA, USA)
Mr. A. Thompson (Bristol)
Mrs. K. Newington (Barry)
Mr. P. Partridge (Sutton Coldfield)
Mrs. M. C. Barry (Shoreham-by-Sea)
Mrs. L. Evans (Cwmparc)
Mr. A. Thomas (Birmingham)
Mr. P. I. West (Lancing)
Mr. D. Shingleton (Southampton)
Mr. N. Clawson (Penarth)
Mrs. R. Jones (Bettws)
Mrs. J. Organ (Merthyr Tydfil)
Mrs. M. Reynolds (Newton Abbott)
Mrs. P. Davies (Gillingham)
Mr. K. A. Rowlands (Wrexham)
Mr. B. Holden (Wrexham)
Mr. K. Allchin (Worthing)
Mr. A. R. Wateridge (Worthing)
Mr. R. C. Miles (Tuffley, Glos.)
Mrs. J. Smith (Telford)
Mr W.J. Kerslake (Llwynypia)
Mr P. Hickman (Chadlington)
Mr A.R. Watts (Newport)
Mrs C. Reaich (London)
Mrs J. Davies (Treorchy)
Mr J. T. Thomas (Bury St Edmunds)
Ellen Jones (Cardiff)
Mrs C. A. Hill (Monmouth)
Mr. T. E. Harris (Hurst, Berks)
Mrs D Smith (Armidale, Australia)
Dr I. Hall (Weymouth)
Mrs D Dunphy (Seven Oaks)
Mrs C. A. Davies (Orpington, Kent)
Mr M Palmer (Worcester)
Mrs J. M. Jenkins (Plymouth)
Mr D. J. Sinck (Plymouth)
Miss. S. Cox (Paignton)
Mr. M. Oakes (Leigh, Lancs)
Mr D. Jackson (Leatherhead)
Mr T. Guest (Much Wenlock)
Mrs. L. Leigh (Bridgwater)
Mrs. F. Lavis (Bridgwater)
Mrs. M. A. Tucker (Walsall)
Mr. G.E. Owen (Notts)
Mr. I. Llewellyn (Treherbert)
Mrs. C. A. Davies (Kent)