

NEWS & VIEWS

214

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHOIRS

AUTUMN 2017

CONFERENCE 2018

Booking Forms inside

MANSFIELD & DISTRICT MVC

Zing, vecht, huil, bid en bewonder

FAIRBURN SINGERS

On Tour

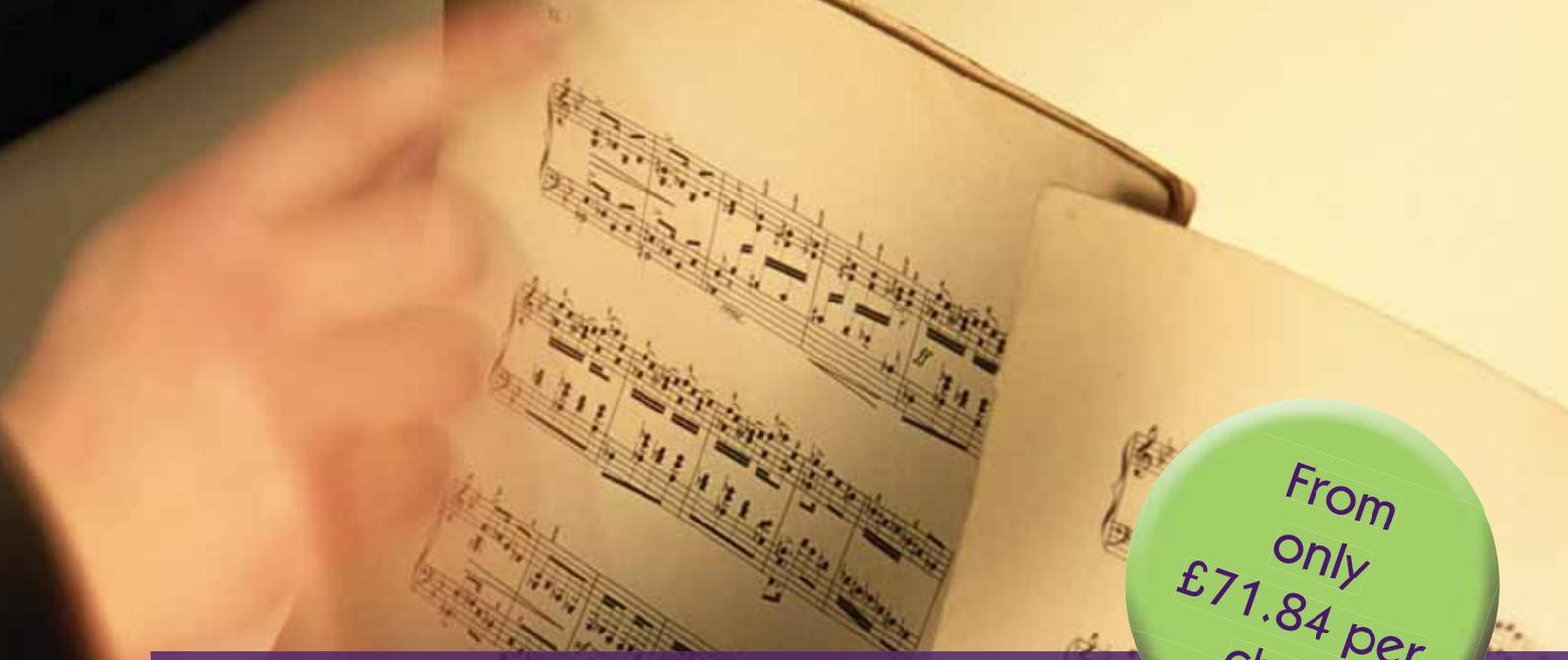
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

There must be a blue moon

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Crawford's Corner



*'SEASON of mists
and mellow fruit-
fulness!*

*Close bosom-friend
of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him
how to load and bless*

*With fruit the vines that
round the thatch-eaves run.'*

*That quotation reminds me of the old joke
about the Sergeant addressing the lads.*

*'Right you lot, this afternoon a very clever
gentleman will give you a talk about Keats,
but I don't suppose any of you silly beggars
knows what a Keat is.'*

Well, here we are in Autumn. I know we are in Autumn because my wife has just asked if we could have the heating on as it's a miserable day and she's trying to get the washing dry after our few days away in the caravan.

Most of you will have started your new season and will be working hard to polish up your performances for your next concert. Please don't forget to write to me after the concert to tell me how it all went. Don't forget to send me lots of pictures. Now that reminds me, when you send me photos, please send the originals rather than the ones you have used Picasa on or cropped for your website. Don't think that they need to be prepared for attaching to emails, you can send quite large attach-

ments nowadays. If you are confused by this, please give me a call 01472 500130 and I'll try to explain it better than I am managing to do here.

You might have noticed a blue moon recently. I have had a 'Letter to the Editor'. I don't get them often so I like to mention them when I do, even when they are taking me to task over something I have, or haven't, done.

All the information you need for booking for next year's conference in Norwich, is within these pages, so do get on with it as soon as you can. We are looking forward to seeing you at the Maids Head Hotel next April and there will be lots to see and do. All the information you need is on pages 12-15. There is also an opportunity to stay an extra couple of days and make a mini-holiday of it if you are like me a senior citizen.

Why not try the crossword puzzle this time. I work hard to make it the best I can using a compiler to create the grid but making all the clues myself. I know some will say that you can't try it because you will be spoiling someone else's chance but that's not true. As soon as this magazine is delivered to choirs I have a copy put onto the website. If you go and find it there you can find the Puzzle Page and print your own copy, it's easy. Here, I'll get you started.

22 Brand new state? (8)

If the basses, in my choir, said that the tenors would reply, 'Brand new state' and

away we'd go into a Rodgers and Hammerstein classic. You know the title.

I was in the supermarket the other day when I overheard a gentleman ask one of the assistants, 'Do you have any tins of Christmas chocolates yet?' The assistant looked rather surprised and said, 'No.' I think I was surprised as well knowing how the supermarkets get ahead of the seasons to maximise their selling opportunities. As a retired Primary School teacher I well remember going into the shops at the beginning of the Summer to be greeted by the 'Back To School' displays. So, it does seem rather strange reading our Chairman's Chat and realising that this is the only opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year before I write again in January 2018. Season's Greetings to you all and happy reading.

Crawford



Sat 20 January 2018

11:00

Twin Oaks Hotel

Church Lane, Palterton

Chesterfield

Chairman's Chat



*Another summer has
passed and the nights
draw in as we prepare
for our busiest season
of choral singing.*

It is very interesting to read about the varied activities of our members during the last year, in particular the cruising experience of The Fairburn Singers and the two new choirs in Cwmdare. There is a lot of doom and gloom and uncertainty in the news these days so it is welcoming to read positive articles about successful ventures. Many pundits have talked about the demise of traditional choirs but the reports of our members indicate the opposite.

We are making the final preparations for our next conference in Norwich which

promises to be a very exciting and enjoyable event with top class speakers and a gala concert in Norwich cathedral. Full details and a booking form are in this issue. Why not make it your New Year resolution to attend conference next year for what will be an informative, friendly and very enjoyable event. It will give you the opportunity to make new friends and contacts in other choirs in a relaxing and inspiring environment.

This will be the last issue in 2017 so may I wish you all a very early Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Please keep sending in reports of your choir's activities and achievements, and enjoy your concerts throughout the festive season.

John Croft



- 6 The Appledore Singers**
A welcome in the hillside
Abertillery Ladies' Orpheus host return visit

The Glasgow Phoenix Choir
An opportunity to sing with Aled Jones in the beautiful surroundings of Paisley Abbey

- 7 Cornwall International Male Choral Festival**
The excitement settles on Cornwall's hugely successful 2017 International Male Choral Festival

- 8 Amici Singers**
A Conducting Day... unlike others

- 16 Cwmdare Voices**
You'd be hard pressed to find it on any map
'Only Drunks Allowed'?

- 17 Exeter Police and Community Choir**
The choir's oldest member has just been awarded France's highest decoration, the Légion d'Honneur

Howarden Singers
The Howarden Singers were enthusiastically welcomed to Toulouse by members of Chorale d'Auzeville

- 18 Churchdown Male Voice Choir**
Barry Woods - The music world is poorer for his loss

- 20 The Fairburn Singers**
'On Tour' – Norwegian Fjord Cruise (25–30 May 2017)

- 22 Mansfield & District Male Voice Choir**
Zing, vecht, huil, bid en bewonder

CONT

ISSUE 214

REGULARS

- 3 Crawford's Corner**
- Chairman's Chat**
- 9 Letter To The Editor**
- 11 Puzzle Pages**
- 23 New Members' Directory**
- 23 Puzzle Solutions**
- 24 Officer Information**
- How To Send Stuff In**

CONFERENCE

- 12 Conference 2018**
Maids Head Hotel, Norwich
- 13/14 Booking Forms**
- 15 Provisional Timetable**

ADVERTISING

- 18 Alan Simmons Music**
- 9 Banks Music Publications**
- 19 Barbershop**
- 2 Jelf Insurance**
- 22 Lyn Oakes**
- 10 Majestic Publications**
- 21 Slaters**



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EVENTS



**Last date for submissions for Issue 215
SPRING 2018 - 31 December**

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A 'WELCOME IN THE HILLSIDES' FOR THE APPLEDORE SINGERS



The Appledore Singers Devon

Last year the Abertillery Ladies' Orpheus Choir from South Wales came to Bideford to sing with us in our 'Super Summer Concert'. So successful was the collaboration, that they invited us back to sing with them in their own home town.

So, on Friday 9 June this year, some thirty-five choir members, plus partners and friends, set off for the 'valleys' for a two-night stay. We'd all been watching the weather forecast back in Devon and, as we crossed the Severn Bridge, the promised grey, lowering clouds gathered overhead. By the time we reached our destination it was distinctly 'mizzly'.

Sadly, the rain didn't let up all weekend, so we couldn't really appreciate the beautiful, rugged surroundings of the old mining village of Abertillery, but, apart from that, everything else about our visit was hugely enjoyable. Our venue was St Michael's Church, whose grand interior speaks of days gone by in the history of the village.

The Saturday evening concert was ably compered by Ross Leadbeater (formerly of 'Only Men Allowed'), who entertained the audience with witticisms and jokes – such a professional. The Abertillery Ladies Orpheus Choir, under their Musical Director,

Steve Bard, and accompanied by Penny Hughes, performed songs old and new in both Welsh and English, which were very warmly received. They were followed by the senior section of the Abertillery Youth Drama & Music Society, who enthralled the audience with their lively rendition of songs from the shows.

Then it was our turn. Anthony Chambers introduced our pieces and his dry wit certainly charmed the audience. We had practised long and hard for this concert and as soon as we started singing all that effort was rewarded. This was undoubtedly a real triumph for us and our Musical Director, Pam Beechey, and our accompanist, her husband Chris, and the audience reaction confirmed it.

The evening finished with both choirs singing ABBA's *Thank You For The Music* and John Rutter's arrangement of *The Lord Bless You and Keep You*, and both National Anthems, which the audience was invited to join in with.

We all then adjourned to a local pub for a sumptuous buffet, provided by our generous hosts. A splendid end to a great evening. We returned to Devon the following afternoon, tired, but very happy.

**Viv Zussman
Publicity**



Appledore Ladies board the bus for Abertillery

The Glasgow Phoenix Choir Scotland West

Sponsored by Co-op Funeralcare

Conductor and Director of Music – Marilyn J Smith, MBE, LRAM

The final two months of our 2016-17 season were very busy for the choir. A major event for us was the opportunity to sing with Aled Jones in the beautiful surroundings of Paisley Abbey. The whole experience was very enjoyable. Aled was a gentleman, the audience warm and appreciative and choir members will long remember the delight of singing John Rutter's A Gaelic Blessing with Aled.

Our next concert took place in Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall in aid of Legion Scotland and Poppyscotland. We were privileged to be joined by the lovely Isla St Clair, who is a strong supporter of military charities. Her participation was much appreciated by all and she really is a very lovely woman. Our other guests were the wonderful piper, Rich Gordon, who added a real sense of occasion to the event and who was most enthusiastic about the experience; the amazing Salvation Army West of Scotland Youth Band, who had the audience enraptured with their lively playing; and The Mackintosh Choir, who joined us in several songs, but who, sadly, were unable to perform on their own as their conductor was unable to attend because of a bereavement just before the concert. We hope to do more with them at a later and happier date.

A most successful and enjoyable five-concert tour in the Argyll area saw us sing: 1 in a heatwave; 2 in freezing cold; 3 & 4 two concerts in one day; and, 5 in a hail of midges – the curse of the Scottish countryside. Various songs were interspersed by the thwacking of midges against flesh. Final result: Midges 0, Glasgow Phoenix Choir 9,682 of the wee so-and-sos. In total, we managed to raise nearly £1,000 for the Carers' Trust in our concert in Lochgilphead. The charity was nominated by Scottish artist and supporter of the choir, John Lowrie Morrison, who had allowed us to use two of his paintings as covers in some of our previous recordings. The other concerts in the tour raised about £2,000 for local Argyll charities including the Hope Kitchen in Oban, the Iona Community and the preservation of the amazing St Conan's Kirk at Loch Awe. If you have never managed to visit Argyll, it is well worthwhile – a beautiful area, with plenty of things to see and do.

In June, to end the singing part of our year, we had a series of three concerts in and around Glasgow, with our guest choir – the Oban Gaelic Choir, one of the oldest competition choirs in Gaeldom, who have competed regularly in Mòds for many years. Under the conductorship of Sileas Sinclair, a talented arranger of Gaelic songs, the choir is going from strength to strength, and in 2015 they won the Royal National Mòd, an experience they particularly enjoyed as the competition took place in their home town that year. The programme of music they sang in our concerts was truly beautiful and inspiring. In one of the concerts we were also joined by our old friends, the Govan Gaelic Choir and, although we are NOT a Gaelic choir, we did join all our guests in singing a Gaelic hymn – we hummed gently in the background and they did the hard work!



Angus Leitch - Choir President

Sadly, for these June concerts, we were without our conductor, Marilyn Smith, as she had fallen prey to a dreadful chest infection. Our Deputy Conductor and Accompanist, Cameron 'Fingers' Murdoch, stepped into the breach and did a splendid job of conducting, accompanying the choir and bantering with the audience. Well done and thank you so much, Cam. All three concerts were very special.

Finally, some other thanks to retiring members of the choir's council. Lady Jan Bonomy stepped down as choir president and was replaced by Angus Leitch; Angus had been vice-president and his place has been taken by Elizabeth Dingwall; choir secretary Anne MacDonald was replaced by Joyce Patrick; and finally, alto steward Mary Wylie was replaced by Sheila Mac-

Naughton. On behalf of the choir, I would like to thank those stepping down for all their hard work and service in their years on council and to welcome the new members. It will be great...you will enjoy it.

By the time *News and Views* goes to print, we'll be hard at work on our new season as we start back on 26 August. I, for one, am very much looking forward to all that lies ahead.

Anne Kay
Publicity Officer

Cornwall International Male Choral Festival. Corporate Member

As the excitement settles on Cornwall's hugely successful 2017 International Male Choral Festival - the largest event of its kind in the world - choirs from home and abroad are already signing up for 2019s biennial event.

The Festival was covered extensively on both BBC Radio 3 and BBC Cornwall, plus BBC and ITV television News programmes over the period, and was rated as the best Festival to date.

With 60 choirs and their entourages – from as far afield as Australia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the USA involved in 50 events in 40 venues.

Organisers of the five-day Festival revealed that enthusiastic audiences of almost 50,000 watched performances over the May bank holiday weekend – around half of those for major concerts and competitions in Truro and half for

sell-out regional events right across Cornwall.

'It was a fantastic event which gave vast amounts of pleasure to so many people', says Festival Director, Rob Elliott – who has already been accepting applications from choirs wishing to join the 2019 festivities.

'It was a choral, operational and financial success, and we are particularly indebted to the many people and wonderful choirs of Cornwall who provided invaluable assistance. The great news is that we are already well under way in planning our 9th festival in 2019 and our doors are now 'open' for Choir Applications.'

'Also exciting for us, is that our 2018 Composers' Competition now has an additional Class for Cambiata Choirs. We are delighted to be continuing to support the work of young singers in this way, and are always so encouraged by all the Boys and Youth Choirs that have taken part in the festival over the years. We had 7 Boys and Youth Choirs take part this year.'

Choirs and composers wishing to find out more about the next Cornwall International Male Choral Festival and competitions, can visit www.cimcf.uk and watch a superb short film and gain details of both the Festival and the Composers' Competitions.

Application forms for choirs wishing to register are available from the website, or by contacting Festival Director Rob Elliott - rob@cimcf.uk

Rob Elliott



Media coverage of the Choral Festival

Amici Singers Thames North

A Conducting Day... unlike others

I have been to a number of conducting workshops. There's always much to learn and experiences to share, but the way the Amici Singers Conducting Day Concert is run is rather unusual.

It's a three-part day. The morning was just for the participants, who gathered, clutching the music they've been allocated (and studied carefully) for a masterclass from Douglas. On this occasion, because several of those taking part were actually conducting for the first time, we went right back to basics - beat patterns etc. The exercise of 'Pass the Beat' where one person started beating in a particular time, then indicated to another in the group that they should take over, keeping the beat, was surprisingly challenging - bringing someone in while you are conducting is not as easy as it looks, let alone maintaining a steady pulse. Another aspect of the morning was the chance to look at all of the pieces to be conducted and explore the places where there might be a problem. As the choir would know all of the music extremely well, the job of the conductor should be to add to the performance and there were some really interesting discussions about techniques for starting, pausing, ending, working with the accompanist, creating dynamics and interpretation. The morn-



Douglas lends a hand



Douglas Combs with the choir on Conducting Day

ing flew and soon it was time to grab some lunch before moving on to the middle part of the day.

This was 'Meet the Choir' time. Each participant had drawn lots to see in which order they would go, both for the rehearsal time and the concert in the evening. With half an hour to work on two pieces it was up to each conductor to decide how to spend the time. I opted for a 'warts and all' run through to see how things went and then, with encouragement and gentle criticism from Douglas, worked on a number of aspects which were both exciting and somewhat scary. The choir was great, they did as they'd been asked - to sing exactly as I was conducting, even though they are so used to the way Douglas does things. The effect of this was really interesting. The sound changes and a well-known piece can become less confident. Conductors really do make a difference. It was quite a marathon sing for the choir, as each participant took their turn, but there was enormous good-will and desire to do their best from everyone. We were extremely fortunate to have professional pianist, Jill Morton, accompanying; she was most supportive and made really helpful comments about the way conductors can work with a pianist.

A visit from the Amici's President, the distinguished viola player, Brian Mack, was a delightful treat. Brian had heard about the event and came over to see what was happening. As a professional musician, he's played under world-famous conductors and regaled us with a few tales of their idiosyncratic behaviours. He was greatly impressed by the way the choir so quickly adapted to the very different styles and gestures of the five conductors.

The Bring and Share tea after the rehearsal was a great opportunity for choir and conductors to relax and chat. Then it was time to get ready for the third part of the day; the concert.

At most of the conducting workshops I've been on, you get a chance to conduct your fellow participants and are critiqued by the course tutor. That's helpful, of course, but there is certainly a difference when you know there's an audience and you have to perform under concert conditions.

Douglas introduced each conductor in turn. Then they, if they wished, said a little about the pieces they were performing - this is also a valuable skill for a conductor as it's an important way to communicate with your audience.

It was very interesting to see how each conductor acquitted themselves. After all the help from Douglas during the morning and at the rehearsal, it was really nice to see how tricky moments were dealt with and the look of delight on someone's face when they managed to conduct competently.

After a refreshment break the choir and audience came back to discuss aspects of conducting. Each participant had the opportunity to answer the question, "What's the most difficult thing about conducting?" And everyone had a different answer, depending on where they were coming from, but the overall conclusion was clearly that there's a great deal more to this fascinating, sometimes highly frustrating, but always rewarding discipline, than most people realise. It might look easy... but underneath is so much to work at and you never stop learning.

The choir, accompanist and conductors parted company with considerable feelings of satisfaction; they'd spent almost twelve hours together and had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

Many thanks to Douglas for his insights and patience and to the Amici Singers for being such delightful guinea-pigs for the trainee conductors to work with.

Elizabeth Gammell



Dear Crawford,

Having just read the Summer edition of News and Views I feel more credit has to be given to those who worked hard to entertain the 2017 NAC conference delegates and audience in the Gloucester Cathedral concert.

Setting the tone for the evening the ladies of Churchdown resplendent in their outfits welcomed all to our magnificent cathedral. Following the opening prayer by Churchdown Male Voice Choir's Chaplain Reverend Canon Marilyn Sharland, their Vice President, Sue

Wilson linked together, with great professionalism, the concert items.

Mention has to be made of the Wide Valley Singers, Drybrook and District Ladies Choir, Blue Moon Harmony, the MVCs of Forest of Dean, Cirencester, Dursley and Churchdown together with all their MDs and accompanists not forgetting Jules Addison on the cathedral organ. Incidentally, Crawford, the ladies preferred not to be on the staging, but I'm glad you enjoyed the bacon butties.

Working with the NAC's hard-working conference co-ordinator Clive Lawton on the pre-concert arrangements paved the way to the successful evening resulting in £3,166.26 being raised for the chosen charities.

Adrian Law.

Churchdown Male Voice Choir.
South West.

Dear Adrian



In reply to your comments about a lack of credit for those people who worked so hard to present a wonderful concert for delegates and audience, I take your point.

My problem is trying to write a report on the whole of conference, not just the concert.

I intend to ask those attending conference in Norwich to send their own reviews of the concert to News & Views.

I am pleased that such a good total was raised by the efforts of everyone concerned. Well done to you all!

Crawford



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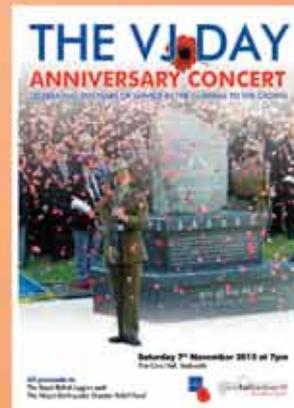
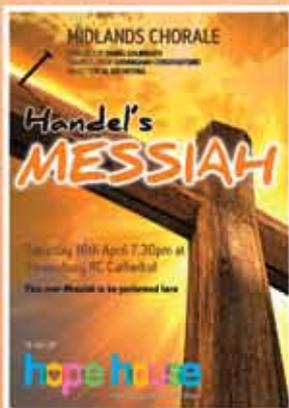
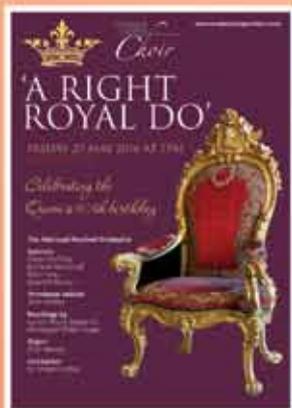
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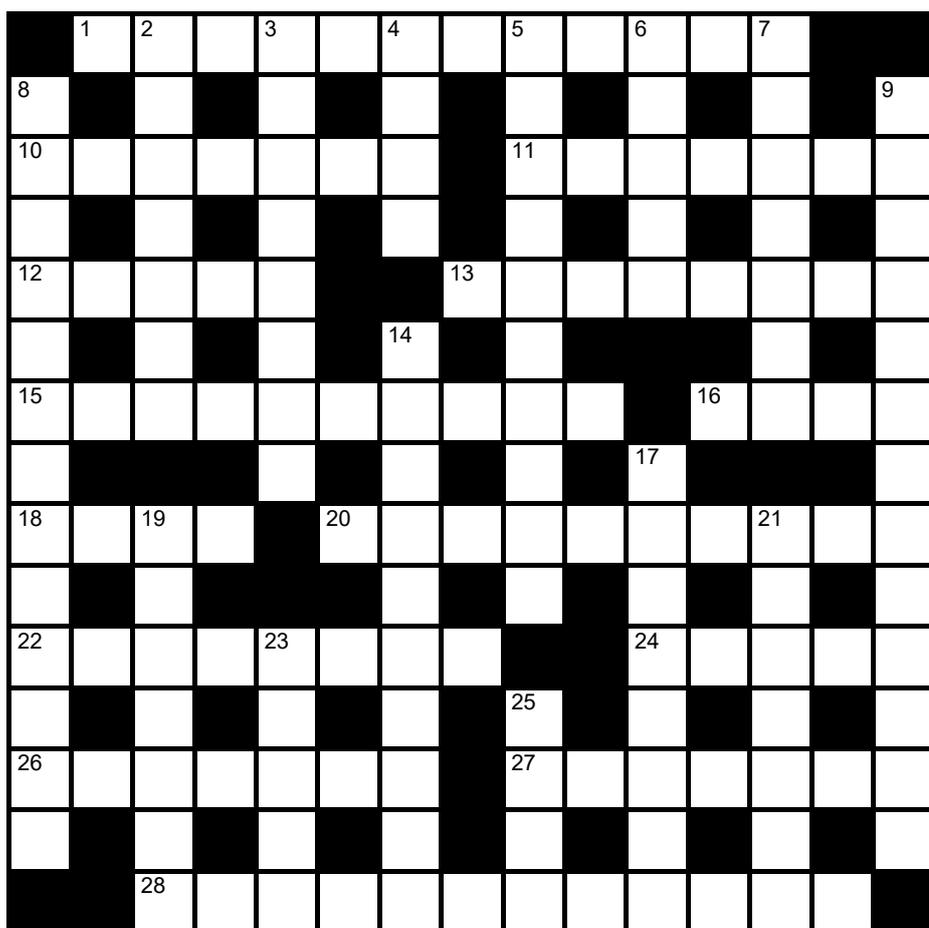


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PUZZLE PAGES



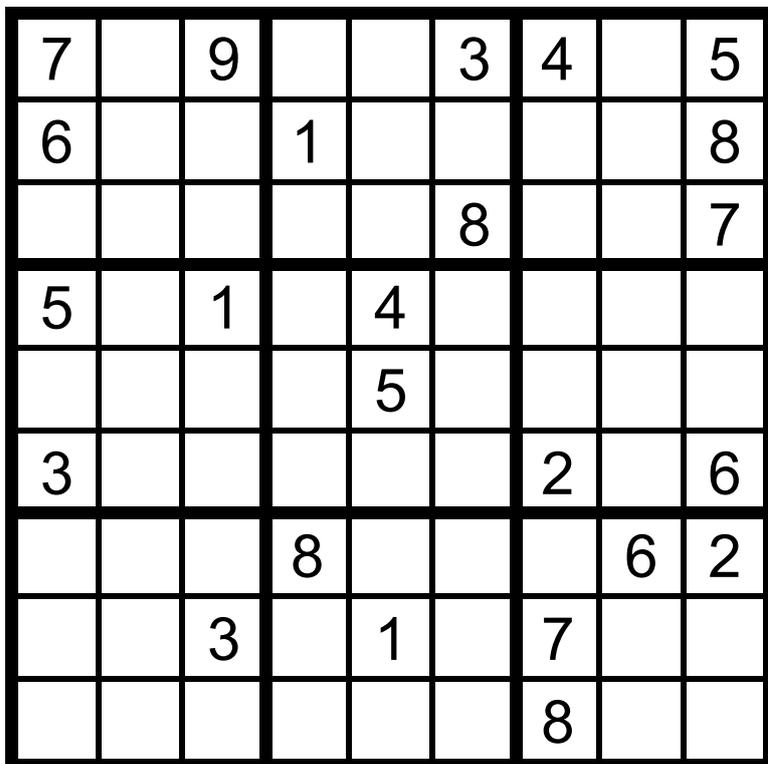
Across

- 1 Bowl where he met the pariah by arrangement (12)
- 10 Franklin's note (7)
- 11 Mish-mash motley (7)
- 12 Contains correct indicators of straight muscles (5)
- 13 Take or give us horribly severe pain (8)
- 15 Duncan Able could be mad (10)
- 16 Little bird designed large nests (4)
- 18 Catch a voiceless glottal fricative viper (4)
- 20 Carelessly exude tacit precision (10)
- 22 Brand new state? (8)
- 24 Firmly fixed and mean (5)
- 26 Instinctive not artificial (7)
- 27 Alongside a comical bat's ear (7)
- 28 Break builder? (12)

Down

- 2 ICBM in a redesigned transport (7)
- 3 Grisly and gruesome (8)
- 4 We hear the rising sea was fastened (4)
- 5 Excite froth (10)
- 6 The other grotesque spasm (5)
- 7 Mean our way out entrance (7)
- 8 Let loose gung ho Goth or I am complete (13)
- 9 Stone Age hut is demolished to make a residential area (7,6)
- 14 International organisation's former copious note is unprecedented (10)
- 17 The plum in the Seychelles (8)
- 19 Small quiet time in the lake hits the spot (7)
- 21 Advance ascent (7)
- 23 Headless choir songs for an hour (5)
- 25 All at sea (4)

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To have your own copy of this page to work on go to www.nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk and look for the latest copy of News & Views then print the page Easy!

SOLUTIONS ON PAGE 27

90th Annual General Meeting 30th Annual Conference Weekend 13-15 April 2018

Conference Coordinator.



I have been busy with the preliminary setup for conference 2018 in Norwich. This began immediately following the close of this year's excellent conference in Gloucester.

Our 2017 conference contained new ideas with regard to content including Celia and Karl's 'Come and Sing' spot on Friday and the 'Speed presentations' from several trade stands on Saturday. The concert in Gloucester Cathedral was a resounding success with choirs from the group performing to a very high standard. The organisation of the concert was excellent which is to be credited to Adrian Law and his team who managed a very large event so well.



Norwich, next year, is a conference I am looking forward to immensely. We have a renowned speaker in Bob Chilcott and also Paul Whittaker. They will talk about their own disciplines as well as coming together in a presentation specifically concerned with the enjoyment of music for people with hearing defects of partial or complete hearing loss. I hope to have Erica Crump, our legal advisor providing she has a space in her busy diary to accommodate us. Confirmation is awaited at this time.

The conference will be held in the Maids Head Hotel in the centre of Norwich. It is a hotel with quite a history. Rooms are comfortable as you would expect of a four-star establishment. The food is excellent

and well presented. Conference facilities are within the same large room together with trade stand and coffee station areas. For those extending their stay, the centre of Norwich has a large permanent market and many interesting shops just a short walk from the hotel. There are walks by the river and through several parks close by.



As I have stated before, when negotiating prices for conference, one of my first priorities is to ensure the hotel doesn't charge a 'single room' supplement. Everyone coming to conference is charged the same rate whether single or dual occupancy as I feel that an excess charge for single rooms would perhaps put people off attending due to excess cost. I am pleased to tell you that I have been able to negotiate the same rates for 2018 Norwich as for Gloucester 2017. These are set out within this publication together with a booking form.

Extra night stays are available at the hotel but must be booked at the time of booking for conference to benefit from our special costings for an extra stay. You can add on nights before or after the conference or both if you prefer. Let me know on your booking form which must be sent to me at:

Clive Lawton, Conference Coordinator 20 Arthur's Court, Stretton, Burton on Trent, Staffordshire DE13 0GS.

You can call me for extra information if required on 07939012458 or Email the NAC website.

Clive Lawton

SUPPORT FOR NAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Churchdown Male Voice Choir South West

Clive has referred to the traditional weekend reserved for conferences. This year it was changed to suit a suggestion made but I noted at the 2017 open forum that those who made the suggestion and those who normally attend the traditional weekend were not in attendance.

Together with my wife, I have attended many conferences throughout the country and I can highly recommend these well organised events. Membership doesn't stop with your News and Views articles together with advertising your sponsors.

So, come on guys and gals support your hard-working committee members with your attendance. Norwich is in our diary.

Finally, thank you Brenda for your stint in the chair, I hope you now have a more relaxed lifestyle.

Adrian Law

STAY AN EXTRA NIGHT OR TWO

This year why not come to conference a day early and use the extra time to explore Norwich and its surrounding area.

Or stay for Sunday night rather than rushing home.

Double room (2 people) B&B £115

Single room B&B £95

Book with Clive when you book for conference



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National Association of Choirs

Joining the Nation in Choral Singing

National Conference Booking Form 1 13-15 April 2018

Maids Head Hotel 20 Tombland NR3 1LB Norwich

Conference Costs

Full Conference Stay

The price quoted is **per person for the whole conference**

There are no single room supplements

Price per person for whole conference includes admission to all lectures

two nights bed breakfast and evening meal

refreshments and free admission to Saturday evening concert

per person **£230**

Stay an extra night - Single £95 BB - Double/Twin (two persons) £115 BB

Day Delegate (Saturday)

Please circle requirements

Refreshments and lunch included £40.00

Evening meal Saturday add £25.00

Concert ticket Saturday add £10.00

Gala Dinner add £35.00

Payments

Full Conference Stay

Deposit of £70 [non refundable] by 30 November 2017, balance by 28 February 2017

Final payment reminders will be sent

Day delegates

Payment in full when booking [non refundable]

Amount Submitted £ _____

Please return your completed forms and deposits to the address below

You must inform us in writing of any cancellation by 1 March 2018

(Cancellations after this date will incur a charge of 50% of the total fee payable)

Substitute guests will be welcome

Cheques should be made payable to the National Association of Choirs

THE PERSONAL DETAILS OF EACH DELEGATE MUST BE ENTERED ON FORM 2

Please return your completed forms and deposits to

Clive Lawton - Conference Coordinator, 20 Arthur's Court, Stretton, Burton upon Trent Staffordshire DE13 0GS

01283 569677 or 07939012458

conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk



National Association of Choirs

Joining the Nation in Choral Singing

National Conference Booking Form 2 13-15 April 2018

Maids Head Hotel 20 Tombland NR3 1LB Norwich

The event is open to all who wish to attend on payment of the appropriate charges

Guest 1

Title Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

First Name.....

Surname.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone Home.....Mobile.....

Email Address.....

Special Requirements

Diet [type].....

Disability [wheelchair user/handrails required etc.].....

NAC group.....

Choir Name.....

Guest 2

Title Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

First Name.....

Surname.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone Home.....Mobile.....

Email Address.....

Special Requirements

Diet [type].....

Disability [wheelchair user/handrails required etc.].....

NAC group.....

Choir Name.....

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01283 569677 or 07939012458 conference.coordinator@nationalassociationofchoirs.org.uk



National Association of Choirs

Joining the Nation in Choral Singing

National Conference Provisional Timetable 13-15 April 2018

Maids Head Hotel 20 Tombland NR3 1LB Norwich

Friday 21 April

On arrival at the hotel carpark, find a vacant spot and then proceed to book in at reception

They will give you a slip to display on your dashboard which gives you free parking

Please check that the correct dates have been entered for your whole stay including any extra nights

2.00	Delegates arrive and register. Free Car Park - Coffee on arrival
4.00	National Officers' meeting
4.30-6.00	Come and Sing with Celia Johns and Karl Harper
7.30	Delegates and guests assemble for dinner
7.30	Reception National Officers and guests
8.00	Dinner is served
9.30	After dinner entertainment provided (TBA)
12.00	Bar closes

Saturday 22 April

7.00	Access to trade stands to set up
7.30-10.00	Breakfast in main dining room
9.30-10.30	Seminar 1 Bob Chilcott - content in next News & Views
10.30-11.00	Coffee and trade stand viewing
11.00-12.00	Seminar 2 Bob Chilcott - content in next News & Views
12.00-1.00	Trade stand presentations (Five 10 minute presentations from trade stands present at conference)
1.00	Lunch and trade stand viewing (Lunch included in full delegate package)
2.00-3.00	Seminar 3 Bob Chilcott - content in next News & Views
3.00-3.30	Coffee and trade stand viewing
3.30-4.30	Seminar 4 Paul Whittaker - Paul is profoundly deaf. He will work with Bob Chilcott to explain and illustrate signing for the deaf and its relevance to choral singing
5.00	Buffet meal before concert (included in full delegate Package)
7.30	Concert at Norwich Cathedral. Choirs from Norwich and surrounding areas
10.00 approx	Light refreshments will be provided. (Bacon rolls)
12.00	Bar closes

Sunday 23 April

7.30-10.00	Breakfast For those delegates wishing to attend local churches, details will be available at hotel reception
9.30-10.30	Seminar 5 Erica Crump - Legal advisor to the NAC TBC
10.30-11.00	Coffee and trade stand viewing
11.00-11.30	Annual General Meeting
11.30-1.00	Members Open Forum
1.00	Conference closes (Lunch available in dining room at members' own expense)
1.00	National Officers' debrief meeting (guillotined after one hour)

Cwmdare Voices Wales South

Cwmdare. You'd be hard pressed to find it on any map. It's just a small ex mining village situated in a small blind end valley in South Wales surrounded by high grass covered mountains. The village once had a thriving community based around a couple of collieries; however, those days are now long gone together with a lot of the spirit that once held the community together. Today the village has one pub, the Ton-Glwyd-Fawr, a village shop, a small zinc covered church, one remaining chapel and a thriving miners' welfare club that sports a compact concert hall.

The valley is part of the wider community of the town of Aberdare which sits pleasantly in its own valley between the better-known valleys of Rhondda and Merthyr.

Aberdare has a claim to quite an extraordinary choral past. In the year 1872 a local musician by the name of Griffith Rees Jones or 'Caradog' as he was more widely known, assembled together colliers and working-class men of the valley to form a male voice choir comprising of four hundred and sixty voices. He took the entire assemblage to London by train to compete in the most prestigious British choral competition of the time at the Crystal Palace, and won first prize. That's not all! The following year he did the same thing again and again won first prize.

It was such an extraordinary accomplishment that the Townspeople of Aberdare erected a statue of him which, still stands proudly today as the centre-piece of the Town's square.

Anyway, back to the village of Cwmdare. Something is stirring in this quite backwater of the land of song, for in the last few years the Village has spawned not one but two new choirs. One a male voice and another for ladies. 'Nothing unusual in that', I hear you say? But in this traditional heart-land of song many choirs are struggling to maintain membership and some are just closing their doors altogether. So, two new choirs in one small village is surely a truly amazing occurrence.

First came the men's choir when after one particularly noisy sing-song in the back room of the 'Ton' pub the consensus was that they certainly enjoyed the singing but with a little practice they could do a lot better. So, a practice night was established and soon the lads were entertaining the pub's customers on a regular basis. The next step



was a name; and as a bit of fun they agreed that the new group of songsters should be called 'Only Drunks Allowed'. Of course, this was great as a laugh but as the boys improved and the word got round they began to perform in a number of other hostleries in the locality. This only became a problem when they eventually were invited to sing in a local church, how could they be introduced as 'Only Drunks Allowed' in a place of worship and therefore Cwmdare Voices was born.

Since that time the choir has gone from strength to strength and now has a 40-strong membership under the tutelage and guidance of their musical director Doctor Michael Thomas. They have sung in a number of quite prestigious concerts, had several short tours within this country and are presently looking forward to a short tour of Germany in September this year.

The Cwmdare Ladies Choir were formed a year or so later. Denise Manning, the Choir's chairperson and the wife of one of the male choristers had long envied the fun, wellbeing and satisfaction her husband got by being part of a choir. However not believing she had a good enough voice she had never plucked up the courage to join any structured singing group. Surely, she thought 'there must be lots of ladies like her with the ambition to sing out there'?

So what to do?

A chance meeting with an old friend brought forth a name of a lady musical director who was currently looking after another South Wales Male Choir but who could be up for a challenge.

So a phone call to her brought about the following conversation:

Denise; Hello is that Llenos Davies, I'm

thinking of starting a women's choir for ladies who can't sing.

Llenos; I think you're missing the point here, choirs by their very nature require people to sing.

Denise; I don't mean can't sing. I mean ladies like me who want to sing but have never had the confidence to do so.

Llenos; Have you got any of those ladies on board?

Denise; No, but I know loads.

Llenos; Do you have a practice venue?

Denise: No, but I know a pub that has a room.

Llenos; Do you have a piano and someone who can play it?

Denise; No, perhaps I could borrow one.

Llenos; So, let's get this straight, you want me to be the musical director for a choir with no members, for people who can't sing. You have no practice hall, you don't have a piano and you've not got an accompanist? Count me in!

Have you thought of a name?

Denise; Since we're all from Aberdare and Cwmdare and we will all be up for the challenge, how about 'Dare To Sing'?

Llenos; Perfect.

On the first practice night in the upstairs room of a local pub with a borrowed piano 27 ladies turned up.

That was two years ago, now 'Dare To Sing' has 76 members with an ever growing repertoire and concert list. Just recently the ladies have been invited by the long estab-



Only Drunks Allowed - Cwmdare Voices

lished Treharris Male Voice Choir to tour Canada with them next year.

So, despite signs to the contrary, choral singing, both male and female is alive and thriving in the South Wales Valleys. Additionally, both choirs have helped rejuvenate the community spirit in the village, they have helped raise funds for local charities and have each provided a purpose in life for their ever-growing membership.

Both Choirs practice in the Cwmdare Miners' Welfare Hall, Cwmdare, the ladies on a Monday evening and the men on a Tuesday evening. Both choirs are keen to maintain their progress and would welcome the chance of concerts further afield either singularly or as a joint venture.

Dave Manning

Exeter Police and Community Choir Devon

The choir's oldest member, Harry Rossiter, has just been awarded France's highest decoration, the Légion d'Honneur.

Harry, at 94 one of the choir's second tenors, believes the honour has been bestowed for his part in Lancaster bomber raids on V1 'doodlebug' bomb sites near Paris. At one time 100 a day were being targeted at the UK, mainly London.



Harry Rossiter Legion d'Honneur

'We are all very proud of him and delighted he has received this high honour,' said Graham Bulford, Chairman of the Choir. Harry is also a member of the City of Exeter Railway Band.

Harry was a wireless operator on Lancasters between August 1944 and January 1945 and survived an amazing 30 operations - serving with 115 Squadron, based near Ely, Cambridgeshire, which is reputed to have suffered the heaviest losses of any RAF squadron during the Second World War.

In 2011 Harry, of Regent's Park, Heavitree, and a former policeman, featured in a documentary produced to highlight the sacrifice of the Bomber Boys, nearly 50 per cent of whom were killed in action. He feels it is important to ensure that those who did not come home are not forgotten nor the reason why they made the supreme sacrifice for their country and for world peace.

The Légion d'Honneur was established in 1802 by Napoléon Bonaparte. At the time of the 70th anniversary of D-Day in June 2014, President François Hollande pledged to honour all those British veterans who had served to help France during the war.

Bruce Pell

Hawarden Singers Wales North and Cheshire West

Brexit may be on the horizon but as far as North East Wales and Southern France is concerned there is certainly no sign of any weakening of co-operation and entente cordiale. On 22 June, the Hawarden Singers were enthusiastically welcomed to Toulouse by members of Chorale d'Auzeville for an extended weekend of varied activities and quality choral singing.

The Hawarden Singers and Chorale d'Auzeville have built up a strong relationship since our first visit there in 2000. Since then their hospitality has been returned and long-lasting

friendships have been established. On this most recent visit many members of the French choir welcomed our members into their homes and a good time was had by all.

Upon our arrival, we were invited to a reception hosted by the mayor of Auzeville-Tolosane, a small town on the outskirts of Toulouse.



Hawarden & d'Auzeville in concert

On the Friday evening The Hawarden Singers joined forces with Chorale d'Auzeville for a concert in a local church. Each choir performed music from its own repertoire and then the two choirs combined to sing four pieces together, two in French and two in English. This event was followed on the Saturday evening when both choirs contributed to a 'Fête de la Musique' in the neighbourhood which culminated in an impressive display of fireworks.



Relaxing outdoors

Over the next few days various excursions had been arranged by different members of the French choir including a visit to an art gallery in the city; a boat trip on the Canal du Midi; a visit to a vineyard for wine sampling and a trip to the ancient abbey of Fontfroide where the two choirs were invited to sing together - it was a wonderful experience to sing in such a beautiful setting.

When the time came to finally say 'au revoir' we all agreed that it mustn't be too long before Chorale d'Auzeville are invited back to Hawarden for another memorable get together.

Richard Steventon
Publicity & Marketing officer

Churchdown Male Voice Choir. South West.

Churchdown Male Voice Choir is sad to announce the death of Barry Woods, shown here, who was their Publicity Officer. Those regular readers of News and Views will recall his fluent presentation of the activities of our choir together with varied photos. Barry was also a past choir secretary and recent secretary of our music sub-committee together with designing and running our website.

However, his greatest claim to fame within the choir's activities was being our Master of Ceremonies for all our concerts. Being tall with a shock of white hair and a northern accent ensured where ever he went he commanded attention and was a constant success. Allied to this was his ability to write his own monologues together with a constant supply of jokes and anecdotes. When on local radio to promote our next concert, he was regularly requested to recite his latest monologue.

His duets at our Christmas concerts with Charlie Roberts, another of our tenor choristers who died before his time, were written by himself incorporating the news of that year. They will go down in the annals of history for those who were fortunate to see their performances. Together they would also entertain local organisations with Barry's tenor voice and strumming his guitar.



There was no end to his talents, indeed, he produced on his own computer all the choir's concert posters/flyers, programmes

and tickets and then he would deliver them. His last task was to arrange with Majestic Publications the posters/flyers and programmes for the NAC 2017 Conference Concert in Gloucester Cathedral.

He also sang tenor in the local choral society and as is usually the case was involved with his beloved church and parish activities organising their magazines and fetes. He even had time for the Magic Circle and stewarding at Cheltenham Music Festival.

This busy and talented man still had time for his beloved wife Susie, children and grand-children to whom the choir have already shown their appreciation for all the hard work he did on behalf of our choir.

The music world is poorer for his loss.

Adrian Law



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3rd
Year

British Association of Barbershop Singers

Barbershop Harmony Mixed Voice Chorus Contest

Sunday 27th May 2018

Harrogate International Centre

MIXED VOICE
BARBERSHOP
CHORUS
CONTEST



44th Annual Convention
25th - 28th May 2018
Harrogate

The British Association of Barbershop Singers are inviting groups to enter the 3rd UK Mixed Voice Barbershop Chorus Contest, which will be held as part of their 44th Annual Barbershop Convention in Harrogate.

Entries are welcome from choruses and choirs of between 18 and 80 mixed voice singers (min age 14). The open contest will start at 12.00 noon on Sunday 27th May 2018. Entrants to perform two barbershop songs judged under normal barbershop judging rules.

The winning chorus will receive a £500 bursary from BABS Harmony Foundation. Please get entries in as early as possible, as the contest will be limited to 8 competitors.

Contest Entry Opens 1st October 2017
Closes 28th February 2018



For full details, conditions of entry and guidance on song choice, please email:
mixedchoralcontest@singbarbershop.com

www.singbarbershop.com

The British Association of Barbershop Singers

Registered Office: 6 Corunna Court, Corunna Road, Warwick CV34 5HQ
Registered Charity No: 1080930

The Fairburn Singers Yorkshire North and East

'ON TOUR' – NORWEGIAN FJORD CRUISE
(25 – 30 May 2017)

On Thursday 25 May, 31 members of Fairburn Singers, along with 60 family and friends gathered in Fairburn to begin a trip which had been 10 months in the planning. We were going on a cruise to the Norwegian Fjords on the MS Balmoral, pride of the Fred. Olsen fleet, and not only that, we were going to be performing on board, as part of the entertainment, not once but twice. To say we were excited was an understatement.



We arrived at the Port of Tyne to join our ship and quickly acclimatised ourselves with our cabins, the decks, the restaurants and, most importantly, the Neptune Lounge, our concert arena. After the obligatory muster and emergency evacuation procedure, there was just time for a quick pre-dinner drink before we assembled in the Ballindalloch Restaurant on Deck 6 to be shown to our table and meet our fellow diners for the next 5 days.



All of our group had been allocated adjacent tables and so began our first meal on board. The dinner menu was extensive with a potential 5 courses to choose from, an endless supply of wine (courtesy of the All-inclusive package most of us had pre-purchased), and some friendly banter between the tables. Throughout the cruise, the food was superb. Beautifully presented meals, a huge variety of choice at both breakfast and lunch and the bonus of a Supper Club in the Palm

Café at 11.00 (which several of us made use of on more than one occasion – nothing like macaroni cheese and chips at 11.30 to aid sleep.)

Our first concert was scheduled for 3.45 on Friday (day 2), so, following a short rehearsal earlier in the day, we assembled in the Neptune Lounge to entertain not only our own 60 followers, but approximately another 200 passengers, along with several members of the on-board entertainment team, who came along to check out the competition.

We sang our hearts out, we did ourselves proud and the sheer adrenalin rush we got from performing in such an amazing setting, set us up nicely for 'formal night' later that evening. We re-assembled in the restaurant, dolled up to the nines in our formal attire, for an extra special dinner (posher dinner plates and all.), accompanied by our first glimpse of the fjords. We sailed serenely down the Lysefjord, to the end, where we were confronted by majestic mountains and beautiful scenery. Everyone was on deck, cameras were clicking all around as we took in the sheer beauty of our surroundings. The sun shone brightly the whole time and it was still light at 10.45; absolutely stunning.

Saturday (day 3) found us docking at Bergen at six in the morning, one of five cruise liners lined up along the quayside. There were a number of options for tours in and around Bergen, and whilst some people took advantage of these, others just left the ship to explore Bergen for themselves. One of the main attractions in the town was the Floibanen funicular railway. A trip up here promised panoramic views across Bergen and way into the distance on a 360° vista of the beauty which surrounds the place. At the top there were plenty of photo opportunities, the option to walk back down to the town through beautiful woodland paths or just a chance to sit and enjoy our surroundings. Once again the sun shone brightly and the temperature reached 22°C Fabulous.

Back on board, we left Bergen and travelled up the fjords en route to Eidfjord, passing yet more spectacular scenery. By Saturday, most of our group had found the nightly 10.00 quiz in the Observatory Lounge, a quick half hour foray into general knowledge, with the promise of a bottle of Cava for the winning team. This was always a loud and noisy half hour with much banter between the teams, and generally at least one of the Fairburn teams claiming the prize.

Sunday morning (day 4) found us docking at the very beautiful, and very tiny town of Ei-

dfjord, at the very head of Hardangerfjord. This time we were the only ship there, and we awoke to being completely surrounded by snow-capped mountains with waterfalls streaming down the hillsides. A short step onto shore brought us to the Tourist Information centre where they had, joy of joys, FREE wifi. Much uploading of photos and a quick catch up with family and friends via Facebook and Whatsapp, before setting off to explore the area. Once again there were tours on offer and I later learnt that one such tour headed up to the mountain tops where a snowball fight ensued, while the rest of us basked in 21°C sunshine at sea level. Several of our group also took a ride on the 'Trolltrain' which wound its way up the hillside onto the grassy plateaux above the town and back, giving us yet more photo opportunities.

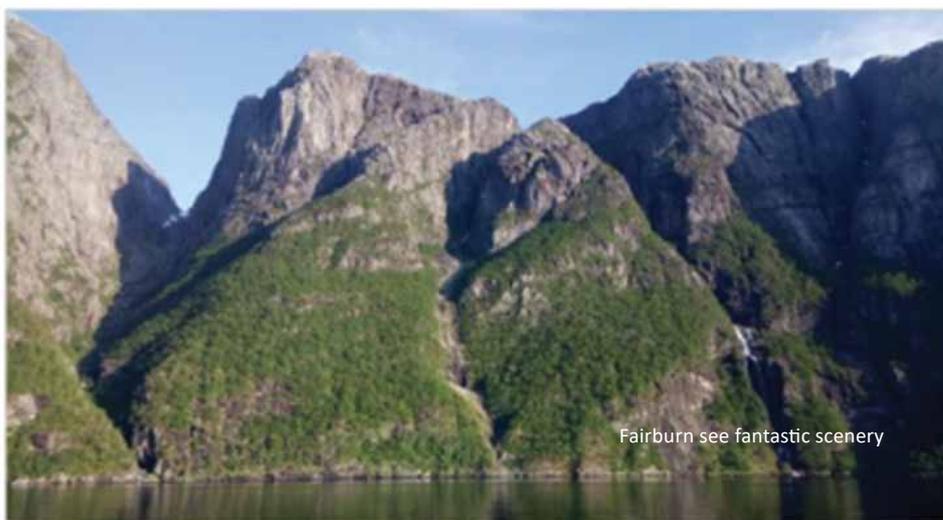


Back on board once again we left Eidfjord to begin our journey back up the Hardangerfjord to the promised spectacle of the Fureberg Waterfall on Maurangerfjord. And what a spectacular sight it was too. Once again, everyone was out on deck as we sailed as close as our Captain dared so that we could all get the best shots to add to our photo albums. All this still in beautiful sunshine and daylight until 10.45, magnificent.

As we started our return to Newcastle that evening, we had another day at sea to look forward to. The weather was not quite so kind to us as we awoke on Monday morning and the sea had taken on a bit of a swell and you definitely knew you were at sea. People were walking a little more carefully around the decks and whilst we had no sun, the temperature was still clement enough to sit outside.



Waterfalls at Eidfjord



Fairburn see fantastic scenery

The icing on the cake has been an email from the Cruise Director of the MS Balmoral which said:

'A well-polished and professional sounding choir. The Fairburn Singers were a lively, enthusiastic group who performed two varied sets of songs from films and musicals. They were well presented and well organised, performance plans and rehearsals all ran very smoothly'.

The Fairburn Singers 'on tour' has been a resounding success. Goodbye Norwegian Fjords, goodbye MS Balmoral, you were amazing, fantastic, majestic, brilliant...

But the highlight of Day 4 (Monday) was our second concert, scheduled to take place at 7.45. We appeared in the 'Daily News' as a 'Highlight of the Day' so, after another short rehearsal, we once again donned our 'uniform' and presented our second concert. This time, word had obviously got round our fellow passengers, as our audience had swelled to at least 350. I could feel the slight nervousness of the

choir as we began singing to our largest audience ever. But once again we nailed it. Note perfect, timing spot on and a standing ovation. It was a perfect and fitting end to what was an absolutely fabulous trip. The evening ended once again in the Palm Café for supper, which was, it's fair to say, dominated mostly by the Fairburn Singers and our group, and the overwhelming thought that we must do this again.

PS Ask now about joining our 2018 cruise on 20 July to the Scottish Lochs, Highlands and Islands.

*Sally Whittingham
Choir Secretary*

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MENSWEAR AND FORMAL HIRE

Mansfield & District Male Voice Choir Midlands East

Zing, vecht, huil, bid en bewonder (Dutch Folk Song)

Midlands East Concert - Saturday 20 May 2017

I borrowed the title for this article from the title of a song performed by Amerfoort Mannenkoor, a men's choir from the Netherlands who had been guests of Mansfield & District Male Voice Choir at another concert on the previous evening.

Now that's a song that gets under your skin a bit and the title seemed appropriate on this occasion. At the NAC Concert we had five wonderfully different choirs creating a rich musical blend with plenty of singing and fighting (in a good way of course), a little bit of crying and praying and, certainly, no small amount of wonder.

The Concert was, to borrow some footballer's hyperbole, a fantastic, one million percent success and a very memorable evening held in such a wonderful venue, the United Reformed Church, Sutton-in-Ashfield.

The late, great Frank Zappa once famously remarked that 'writing about music was a bit like tap dancing about architecture'. I've certainly given up trying to describe these events in a way that can possibly describe the experience, either from a performers or audience point of view but some of our colleagues did share their views after the concert.

'Can I thank you all for a superb concert last night. It went so well due to the warm welcome, smooth organisation both on the night but also in preparation and of course the quality of singing from. A definite night to remember.' Said Liz Moulder, Musical Director of Sonara Singers and Chair of the NAC (Midlands East Region).

Geoff Mansfield is Events Manager of Mansfield & District Male Voice Choir. 'The evident effort and sheer quality of the singing we were all treated to yesterday evening delighted our audience and provided for a very cohesive and entertaining evening' said Geoff.

From the same choir, Ian Grice (Deputy Musical Director) expressed the thoughts of many, 'I thought the whole event was a perfect evening's entertain-

ment, so many different ways of singing and styles. Brilliant!'

All of the singing, fighting, crying, praying and wondering was all wrapped up in a wonderful massed choir performance of the modern spiritual *I'm Goin' Up A Yonder*. Singers and audience alike will, I'm sure, share my view - an amazing, indescribable finale.

Thanks are due to all who made it possible and especially to the members and supporters of Pye Hill & District MVC (conducted by Christine Buxton), Erwash Phoenix Choir (conducted by Christopher Knapp), Sonara Singers (conducted by Liz Moulder), Mansfield & District MVC (conducted by Meryl Chambers) and The GentleMen (these are a group of nine guys who sing in close harmony and are all members of the Mansfield choir).

Finally, special thanks to the Reverend Colin Bones and the members of the URC, Sutton-in-Ashfield for their hospitality and to Eric Curtis (concert compere).

Nick Shelley



LYN OAKES



LOOKING GOOD, SOUNDING GREAT.

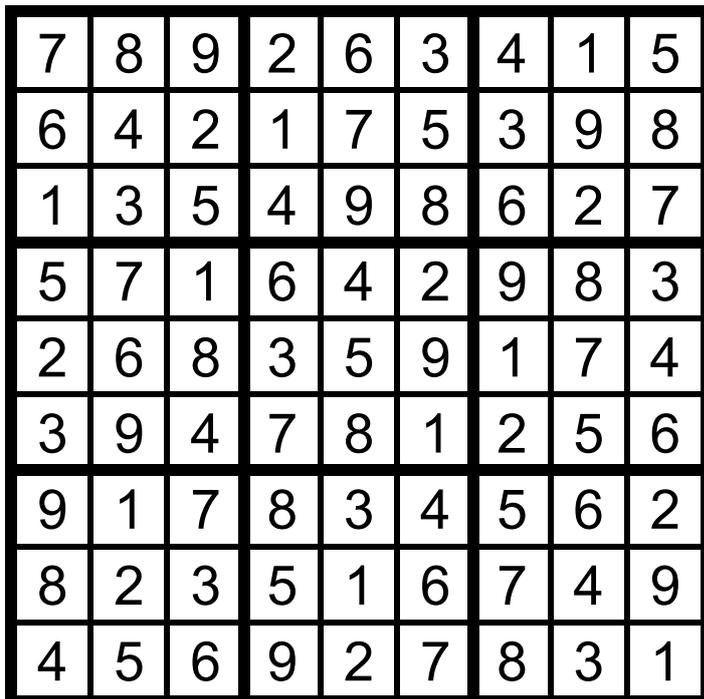
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CITIZENS OF THE WORLD CHOIR ThamesS Mixed voices 38 choristers
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 07984 162279 lav775@gmail.com

CORNWALL SYMPHONY CHORUS Cornwall Mixed voices 135 choristers
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 Redruth Cornwall TR15 1SA
 01209 210300 cscsecretary16@gmail.com www.cornwallsymphonychorus.co.uk

DALES COMMUNITY POP & SHOW CHOIR (The) YorksN 60 choristers
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 01223 233416 bridgethardy@hotmail.com www.impingtones.org.uk

OS ROCKS MidsN Mixed voices 35 choristers
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 07830 783783 osrocksadmin@btinternet.com

SCHOLA NOVA SILVANA Southern Counties Mixed voices 9 choristers
 Carol Knight West View, Pound Hill, Landford, Salisbury, Wilts SP5 2AA
 01794 390627 cannknight@gmail.com

SUNDAY BOYS (The) NW 60 choristers
 Ed Moss Hope Studios, 52 Newton Street, Manchester M1 1ED
 07801 580534 info@thesundayboys.com www.thesundayboys.com

TUESDAYS (The) Thames South Mixed voices 100 choristers
 Mrs Helen Walsh Pound Farm, Witlesham, Kent TN30 7EN
 07475 103230 hlnwish@gmail.com www.thetuesdays.co.uk

WALK THIS WAY CHOIR LancsN Mixed voices 59 choristers
 Mrs Eileen Walsh 13 Cranberry Close, Darwen, Lancs BB3 2HR
 07718 319364 walkthiswaychoir@hotmail.com www.walkthiswaychoir.co.uk

Prayer of Confession for Choir Members

Almighty and most merciful Conductor,
 We have erred and strayed from thy beat like lost sheep;
 We have followed too much the intonations and tempi of our own hearts
 We have offended against thy dynamic markings.
 We have left unsung those notes that we ought to have sung,
 And we have sung those notes that we ought not to have sung.
 And there is no support in us.

But thou, O Conductor, have mercy upon us, miserable singers;
 Succour the chorally challenged;
 Restore them that need sectionals;
 Spare thou them that have no pencils.
 Pardon our mistakes, and have faith hereafter we will follow
 Thy directions and sing together in perfect harmony.



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The first thing is to send your article **attached** to (not in the body of) an email to

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'Wow! that is a long email address', I hear you say. Yes it is but you will find that once it's in your computer you can just start to type it and your computer will offer to finish it for you.

Many of our contributors love to show their prowess by sending in wonderful finished articles with **coloured** headlines, five different fonts and many **underlinings**, *italics* and **bold** bits. Then, of course, I have to spend time taking them all out before I can set their article up the way you will see it in the magazine. **KEEP IT SIMPLE!**

HOUSE STYLE

We use Calibri 10pt in News & Views. (If you don't have this, don't worry I can soon change the one you use.)

Set your paragraphs to single space with no spacing before or after paragraphs.

Start with the name of your choir.

Then say the NAC group your choir is in.

Write your article.

Say who has written it.

Quotes use single speech marks (same key as @ but without the shift).

Dates do not include st nd rd or th

Abbreviations do not have full stops.

Song titles are shown in *italics*.

Do not put photos in the text.

Don't use am or pm in times.

Unless the word 'choir' is part of a title it should **NOT** have a capital letter.

Your choir is singular so 'the choir is' not 'the choir are'.

Send me pictures as high res .jpegs of between 1 and 5Mb or more, minimum 300 dpi.

Attach them to an email.

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