

THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION FOR ALL CHORISTERS

NEWS & VIEWS

215

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHOIRS

SPRING 2018

NEW YEAR HONOURS

Doris Williams BEM & Jean Holmes BEM

John Larke MBE

DUMFRIES MALE VOICE CHOIR

The Menin Gate After The Ceremony



CONFERENCE 2018

Booking Forms Inside





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Crawford's Corner



Since this is the first opportunity I have had to do this, may I wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Better late than never.

I began the New Year with my usual cold which comes the moment I relax from all the musical activities that I am involved in over the Christmas period. I suppose I should be grateful that it doesn't come earlier.

Now, what does the New Year bring? It brings a great deal of time spent over the computer putting together this issue of News & Views. It's a bumper issue with sixteen choirs contributing. One of those choirs, Jewel Tones, has only recently become a member so it's really rather good to hear from them.

Colne Orpheus Glee Union claim to be the oldest choir in Britain since they were founded in 1886. I think they will have to have a conversation with Dunfermline Choral Union who say they were formed in 1874. Let battle commence.

I am rather pleased with the picture on the front cover this time. I am amazed at the number of choirs who visit and sing at the Menin Gate and was so grateful that Dumfries Male Voice Choir sent me the

wonderful photograph of the gate lit up in the evening after their performance, how glorious. I am always nervous when waiting for the images that choirs send me, worrying that there won't be one that's the right shape to fit on the front cover. So far it's been fine. Keep those wonderful images coming.

It has been a privilege to publish stories and pictures of members of our choirs who have received awards for their achievement in life and in music. It is, therefore, marvellous to be able to announce three awards in the same issue of News & Views. One of our own Vice Presidents, Doris Williams has been honoured with the BEM for all her fantastic work in music in the North East. Well done Doris. John Larke of Truro Male Voice Choir has been honoured for his work in music in Cornwall. He receives the MBE. Jean Holmes of Take Note (Tibshelf) has received the BEM for services to choral singing in Nottinghamshire. So members of the NAC at both ends of the country and in the middle have been recognised for their work for our choirs.

You may remember that a while ago I wrote about a book that one of our members had written, filled with information about Male Voice Choirs. Jeff has written to tell me that he has nearly sold every copy and is looking for someone else to take up the task of finding and recording any choirs he may have missed out of his book. You may find his contact details on page 8.

Chairman's Chat



Welcome to 2018 and the calm following the heavy workload leading up to Christmas. I hope this year will lead to more successes and enjoyable concerts and tours for all our choirs.

I would like to add my congratulations to Doris Williams, Jean Holmes and John Larke, three of our members who were honoured in the New Year's Honours list. It is gratifying to see that dedication to choral music receives the rewards it deserves.

I always enjoy reading the achievements and experiences of our member choirs,

they are so varied and memorable for the participants and audiences. One common theme within many of them is the significant amount of money raised for local charities; how wonderful that we can enjoy our hobby, give enjoyment to many and raise many thousands for charity at the same time.

We now look forward to our conference in Norwich in April. Full details can be found in the centre pages together with a booking form. Bookings are quite healthy already but there is always room for more so why not give it a try this year for what will be an informative, friendly and very enjoyable event. I hope to meet as many as possible of you in Norwich.

John Croft

I keep having to find space near the end of News & Views to add information about the new choirs who join the NAC during the year and whose information is not yet in the Yearbook. Oh, that reminds me, after I finish this issue I will have to start thinking about putting together the Yearbook for 2018. I bet Brenda is beavering away collating the information to send me, even as I write. It never ends does it?

Crawford

Officers' Meetings

13 April
Maids Head Hotel, Norwich
15 April
Maids Head Hotel, Norwich
5 June
Twin Oaks Hotel, Palterton
11 September
Twin Oaks Hotel, Palterton
13 November
Twin Oaks Hotel, Palterton
15 January 2019
Twin Oaks Hotel, Palterton

Members' Open Forums

15 April
Maids Head Hotel, Norwich
30 June
TBC (South?)
6 October
TBC (Halifax area?)
26 January 2019
Twin Oaks Hotel, Palterton

All meetings except those 13 & 15 April are 11.00-15.00



CONT

ISSUE 215

- 7** **Alfreton Male Voice Choir**
*A busy year for Alfreton
Introducing our accompanist*
- 8** **Basingstoke Ladies Choir**
*A challenging few months rewarded with a new MD,
Robert T Elliott*
- 10** **Thanet Male Voice Choir**
Happy Birthday TMVC
- 11** **Tamar Valley Male Voice Choir**
Successful joint concerts on Midlands tour
- Bestwood Male Voice Choir**
£1,000 cheque for charity from Anniversary Concert
- Stevenage Male Voice Choir**
Diamond Jubilee of 'New Town' choir
- 19** **Bournemouth Male Voice Choir**
*Celebrating victory at the Brighton International Male
Choir Festival*
- 20** **Jewel Tones**
New members introduce themselves
- 21** **Orpheus Male Voice Choir**
Grimsby & Cleethorpes
Joint concert with Tonna Male Voice Choir
- 21** **St Stythians Male Voice Choir**
70th Anniversary Dinner
- 23** **Colne Orpheus Glee Union**
Formed in 1886, are they the oldest choir in Britain?
- Corby Male Voice Choir**
Andrew Torbell, 251 concerts as Musical Director
- The Lynmore Singers**
Chosen charity, MacMillan Cancer Support
- 24** **Dorset Police Male Voice Choir**
*'Where Poppies Grow' Remembrance Day special
concert of music and prose*
- 26** **Dumfries Male Voice Choir**
Visit to Germany and singing at the Menin Gate
- 27** **The Glasgow Phoenix Choir**
*Casual start to our 2017-18 season, a mini-tour to
Carlisle and Gretna.*
- Dunfermline Choral Union**
Still going strong after 140 years

REGULARS

- 3** **Crawford's Corner**
- Chairman's Chat**
- 12** **Puzzle Pages**
- 30** **New Members' Directory**
- 31** **Puzzle Solutions**
- 32** **Officer Information**
- How To Send Stuff In**

CONFERENCE

- 14** **Conference 2018**
Maids Head Hotel, Norwich
- 15/16** **Booking Forms**
- 17** **Provisional Timetable**



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EVENTS



ADVERTISING

- 20 Banks Music Publications
- 6/18 Barbershop
- 9/25 Fred. Olsen Cruises
- 2 Jelf Insurance
- 22 John Trent Wallace
- 10 Lyn Oakes
- 29 Majestic Publications
- 28 Rayburn Tours
- 13 Slaters

**Last date for submissions for Issue 216
SUMMER 2018 - 30 April**

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Doris Williams one of our Vice Presidents awarded BEM

We are absolutely delighted to announce that Doris Williams, one of the NAC's longest serving members and a respected Vice President, has been awarded the British Empire Medal for her Services to Choral Singing in the North East.

We send her congratulations from the National Officers, and I am sure from all member choirs as well. Doris is an incredibly hard-working lady, the mover and shaker behind many of the massed choir concerts at Newcastle City Hall and The Sage in Gateshead, as well as being the Musical Director of both Newcastle Male Chorus and the Gibside Singers. This is an honour which is very well deserved indeed.



NEW YEAR HONOURS

John Larke Truro MVC is awarded MBE

Another piece of information from the New Year's Honours list, and again we are delighted that one of our own has received a well-deserved honour.

As well as being the Chairman of Truro MVC, John was a founding father of Cornwall's International Male Choral Festival, and receives his honour for Services to Music in Cornwall.

Many congratulations, John.



Jean Holmes Take Note (Tibshelf) is awarded BEM

We discovered at our Members' Open Forum meeting that Jean Holmes, Musical Director at Take Note, Tibshelf, was another recipient of the British Empire Medal in the New Year Honours List, for Services to choral music in Nottinghamshire. Congratulations were offered to Jean from all those present at the meeting, but of course we wanted to let the wider world of the NAC know as well.

In a long career in choral music Jean has been MD of a number of choirs, at one point three choirs at the same time. She says, 'The important thing is picking up the right bag each week.'



3rd
Year

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Barbershop Harmony Mixed Voice Chorus Contest

Sunday 27th May 2018
Harrogate International Centre

MIXED VOICE
BARBERSHOP
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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.

Closing Date: 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
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Alfreton Male Voice Choir Midlands East

Another busy year for the choir starting at Christ the King Catholic Church in Alfreton. This was an afternoon concert with proceeds to the Church. It was held on Sunday 7 May 2017 and was greatly enjoyed by the audience and choir alike.

Our next trip was to Willersley Castle on the 13 May. This has become a regular venue being visited several times a year. The construction of Willersley Castle began in 1790, commissioned by Sir Richard Arkwright, the great industrialist who developed the Water Frame, which revolutionised the cotton milling industry in this country and all around the world. In 1791 a fire broke out causing severe damage to part of the interior of the Castle, a major setback in construction. The damage was repaired, but sadly Arkwright died in 1792 before completion of the building. His son, also named Richard, moved into Willersley Castle with his family in 1796 and the family continued to live there until 1922.



Many of the original features can still be seen today. The most striking of these is the Well Gallery, an oval gallery with a glass dome situated in the centre of the building, with cantilevered galleries on the first and second floors. An Adam archway leads through the building towards the Well Gallery, whilst the Music Room, Drawing Room and Dining Rooms all contain their original Adam fireplaces. In 1927 a group of Methodist businessmen bought Willersley Castle as a Methodist Guild Holiday Centre, and opened its doors on the 5 May 1928. It became a popular location for young Methodists, with its tennis courts, bowling green, games field and organised excursions in the Peak District proving a real success. Christian Guild is a trading name of Methodist Guild Holidays Limited, which has developed into a multi-denominational holiday organisation. The guests come from all sections of the Christian family to share the fun, faith and fellowship of a holiday or short break with a truly Christian flavour.

Our next concert on the 9 June 2017 was in Alfreton Church Hall, an evening concert that was very well received by all who attended. Then on the 14 June back to Willersley Castle for another evening concert. We then attended a wedding in Swanwick on the 1 June.

We then held a concert at Belper River Gardens, which is a listed garden situated in the World Heritage site of Belper Mills. This is an open-air event and takes place on the bandstand in the centre of the park. We have this concert every year and it sometimes presents us with real problems such as torrential rain or very gusty high winds. Due to its proximity to the river it can also be inclined to suffer from flooding, however, the choir always completes its task; come rain, wind or shine we have always completed a concert and have always had an audience at the end.

We followed with three more visits to Willersley castle on 6, 26 July and 5 August. These concerts are always held as an after-dinner event starting at 8.00 and normally end between 10.00 or 10.30. We followed this by a couple of concerts in local churches to help raise funds for the churches involved.

Then came our annual concert which this year we named 'Autumn Showcase' and was held on Saturday 14 October starting at 7.30, this was held in the concert hall newly built at the usual venue which used to be called Grange School but has now been renamed the David Nieper Academy. Our guests this year were the Rolls Royce Ladies Choir who are also a member of the National Association of Choirs. Rolls Royce Ladies' Choir (RRLC) prides itself on its professionalism and versatility. Christine Hunt, the Musical Director for over twelve years, ensures the range of music is varied to meet everyone's taste. Their pianist, John Lord, has been with the choir for over thirty years.

We managed to make enough profit to donate £1,000 to our chosen charity the Ashgate Hospice, an independent registered charity covering North Derbyshire that provides specialist palliative care to terminally ill adults and their families, maintaining best quality of life throughout illness. All services are provided free of charge. £6 million must be raised annually from voluntary giving. The concert included *Autumn Leaves* (AMVC), *All you need is love* (RRLC), *The Mulligan Musketeers* (AMVC), *Bohemian Rhapsody* (RRLC), Soloist Colin Smith (AMVC) sang *Song of the Toreador*, The (AMVC) Sagalouts had feet tapping with a fine singalong including such items as *My Ole Man's a Dustman*.

We then had a finale of both choirs together with rousing songs *You Raise Me Up* and *You'll Never Walk Alone*.

We ended our year singing Christmas carols in public to give some festive cheer and of course to receive some donations. Our main venues for this were the Co-operative Store in Ripley and in Tesco, Alfreton.

I would like to end this article with a brief history of our highly regarded accompanist. Lisa Smith grew up in Chesterfield, the third of four daughters, all of whom were musical. She began her musical education aged 8, learning violin and electronic organ before also taking up the oboe and progressing on to church organ, taking lessons with Robert Girdler at Wingerworth Church.

Having achieved a thorough grounding in all these instruments she went to study oboe at Huddersfield University under Valerie Taylor. Whilst at university she also took organ lessons from Keith Jarvis and held the position of organ scholar at Huddersfield Parish Church.

Upon graduating from university she returned to Chesterfield and began to forge a career in music, holding the position of organist first at Alfreton Parish Church, then at Rotherham Minster. She also played the oboe in local bands and orchestras. During this time Lisa also studied for a maths degree with the Open University, gaining first class honours before proceeding to postgraduate study, also with the Open University.



Following the arrival of her family she returned to playing the organ at local churches and currently plays regularly for several churches in the Alfreton and Chesterfield areas. Lisa also plays the oboe in Chesterfield Symphony Orchestra and for local drama productions. Lisa began accompanying Alfreton Male Voice Choir in 2003 and is delighted to still enjoy the challenges 14 years later.

Les Dorey

Basingstoke Ladies Choir Southern Counties

The Search was on for a new Music Director for Basingstoke Ladies Choir.

Well what a challenging few months we have had since hearing at the AGM that, Margaret Brackenborough our Music Director of fifteen years, was to retire in July.

We quickly embraced the task ahead and advertised the fact that 'We are an outstanding ladies choir who Just love to sing'. We invited applicants who could lead us forward to even greater things. The successful applicant also had to love music of all genres, have a good sense of humour and the talent to nurture both experienced singers and newcomers.

Who would step up to the task? Amazingly we had nine initial applicants and six who sent in their statements of genuine interest. We had to see them all and were delighted at the standard and varied expertise of the prospective candidates. We were grateful to the choir members for their patience, support and positive comments during the process to find the right person.

Finally, we came to a positive conclusion that there really only was one who 'shone' above all the rest. I made the telephone call that evening and after several nail-biting hours into the next day we finally managed to speak him, and he agreed to be our next Music Director. Phew, what a relief! None of us want to go through that again in a hurry. So, we were delighted to welcome Robert T Elliott as our new Musical Director in September of this year.



Our last rehearsal with Margaret was in true Ladies Choir style, joined by husbands, partners and friends. We surprised Margaret as she arrived with some of the

pieces we knew that she loved. A party atmosphere followed and as the evening closed we knew that Margaret would never leave us completely but always be there in the wings supporting in whatever way she could. Thank you, Margaret, for fifteen wonderful years.



Robert T Elliott

Rob grew up in South Wales as part of a musical family. He conducted the Massed Male Choirs at the Welsh National Eisteddfod at the age of only 21, and the English National Symphony Orchestra at the Wiltshire Music Festival in 1999. Rob is a former Trombonist of the Band of the 3rd Battalion Royal Regiment of Wales, and former Musical Director of four Male Choirs in England and Wales.

He was Founder and Musical Director of Britain's most successful Male Choir of the 21st Century – Wessex Male Choir, which he developed to win over 20 prizes in Competition over his twelve year tenure, until his retirement in 2013.

Rob has performed in a host of venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Cardiff Castle, The NEC and Wembley, as well as the Cathedrals of Llandaff, Westminster, and Southwark. Rob has also conducted the community singing and the National Anthems on several occasions at Twickenham, and his own Male Chorus performed at all the Games there in 2016 for the Rugby World Cup.

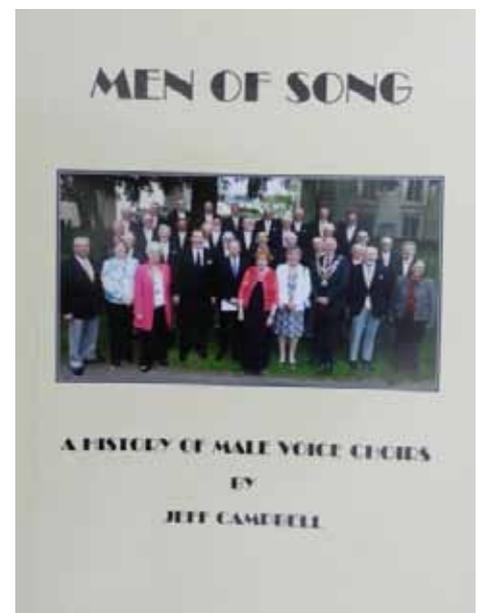
He has adjudicated at many festivals and competitions, including The National Choral Festival in Ireland, Isle of Man Festival of Choirs, in Northern Ireland, The Cornwall International Male Choral Competition, The North Wales Choral Festival, Barnardo's National School Choir Competition at The Barbican, and Royal Festival Hall in London, and the Manchester Amateur Choral Competition at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Rob is currently Festival Director of the World's largest Male Choir Festival (over

60 Male Choirs taking part this year), which is held in Cornwall, and also continues to expand on his choral workshops, adjudicating and Choir coaching roles.

Rob said, 'I am delighted to take on the mantle of Musical Director of Basingstoke Ladies Choir and I am relishing the prospect of working with the choir on its next exciting stage of development'.

Alwyn Brenchley
Chairman



Jeff Campbell has written to tell me that his book 'Men Of Song' is almost sold out.

(See News & Views 212 Spring 2017 page 6)

He is looking for someone who might be interested in doing a sequel to include all the Male Voice Choirs that were not included in his book and maybe approach the subject in their own individual manner.

He would be willing to assist. You may contact him on 01548831559 or by email at

enidcampbell@hotmail.co.uk



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Thanet Male Voice Choir Thames South

Happy Birthday TMVC

Celebrating 40 years since its formation, Thanet MVC embarked upon an ambitious concert programme throughout the course of the year. The month of May saw it host an International Choral Festival with visitors from Italy and Germany in addition to Thanet's own Harmony Ladies Choir. Every concert in 2018 was designated an Anniversary event culminating in the Bumper Ruby Anniversary Gala Concert on 7 October.

Preceded on the previous Friday evening by a Gala Dinner, the Saturday afternoon saw the lads on parade at 16.00 for a final line-up and practice. 'Surely they rehearsed well in advance for this important event?' I hear you ask. Yes we did but we invited four previous MDs to join us with the baton and they needed to rehearse on the day.

What a great evening it was: the house was full, the audience was on our side, every guest conductor was on top form and our current one quite exceptional. Each number was given huge applause, well earned we thought, and by half time we were quite



Thanet Male Voice Choir

exhausted. The second half exceeded the first and when the concert ended we knew we'd celebrated in true MVC style and had repaid the debt owed by the current choir to its founders and predecessors. In addition, from a thrilled audience two new men were added to our numbers.

We look to the future assured that Thanet Male Voice Choir will continue to thrive.

Located in Broadstairs, East Kent, just forty minutes drive from the Dover ferries, Thanet MVC welcomes visiting choirs, many of whom break their journey to sing on the

Continent, for a final full concert sing to a very appreciative Thanet audience.

For enquiries contact

andybrown25@hotmail.co.uk

The choir photo shows, in addition to our current conductor and accompanist, our 4 previous MDs.

Roger Palmer



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Tamar Valley Male Voice Choir Cornwall

The Choir has recently returned from their tour of the Midlands where it shared successful joint concerts with Rugby Male Voice Choir and City of Coventry Male Voice Choir, as well as giving a concert at Burton Dassett in Warwickshire.



Tamar Valley Male Voice Choir

A large and appreciative audience attended the concert at St. Andrew's Church, Rugby for a joint concert with Rugby Male Voice Choir. Horrendous travel conditions meant that the choir arrived late but were still able to give their half of the concert and some joint items with RMVC. The choir was warmly received by RMVC and the audience.

At the concert at Queens Road Baptist Church in Coventry with City of Coventry Male Voice Choir, both choirs received a great response from a delighted audience for a very varied programme of great male voice singing.

On the Saturday morning City of Coventry MVC kindly provided TVMVC with most interesting guided tours of the City of Coventry and its beautiful Cathedral.

The lunchtime concert at Burton Dassett in the heart of the Warwickshire countryside was a charming and most enjoyable experience. The ancient and beautiful All Saints Church is located in a country park high in the hills and required quite a hike to reach it. The choir gave a great performance and enjoyed the excellent acoustics. A most welcome lunch was provided for the choir and the large audience.

Having given three major concerts in three days and enjoyed great hospitality, Tamar Valley Male Voice Choir returned home a little fatigued but elated, well satisfied with the Autumn 2017 Choir Tour and already looking forward to the next.

Geoff Gunning

Bestwood Male Voice Choir Midlands East

The choir was delighted to hand over a £1,000 cheque to each of two very worthy charities, Emmanuel House and The Springs, Nottingham at a recent rehearsal. The money was the proceeds from Bestwood MVC's 65th Gala Concert, held at the Albert Hall, Nottingham in September this year.

The Gala Concert was compered by Colin Slater MBE and the choir subsequently agreed to donate the proceeds to a charity/charities of Colin's choice. Emmanuel House exists to support homeless, vulnerable or isolated adults in and around Nottingham. It provides diverse and accessible services that meet basic needs and empower individuals to make positive changes in their lives.



Bestwood Male Voice Choir

The Springs, Nottingham Resource Centre, based in Brinsley, is available for the use of adults and young people who have a learning disability or who are on the autistic spectrum. Visitors attend sessions with their own carers, family members, friends or paid carers.

The photograph shows from left to right: Colin Pursglove (Chair BMVC), Clive Sillito (Chair Trustees Emmanuel House), Denis Tully (CEO Emmanuel House), Sally Hodges (Joint-owner Springs), Peter Fletcher (Vice Chair BMVC), John Pritchard (President BMVC), Colin Slater MBE.

Peter Fletcher

Stevenage Male Voice Choir Thames North

2018 marks the diamond jubilee of the choir that was formed in 1958 by employees of the English Electric Company (these days known as MBDA) in Stevenage. On 1 August 1946, Stevenage was designated the United Kingdom's first New Town under the New Towns Act and the choir was formed only twelve years later. At that time the town was growing rapidly and gradually acquiring the Arts and Leisure facilities that the newly arrived population required. The choir proved popular and soon became an established fixture on the local scene. The choir is now open to all, and has a current active membership of 33. Our primary aim is to raise money for charitable causes and all have a good time in the process.

There is an exciting programme of events planned to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary all under the banner '60 Years of Harmony'. In addition to our normal range of fund raising concerts we will be attending Stevenage Day in June, an annual outdoor festival, offering members of the public a chance to sing with the choir. We will be recording a new CD, and hosting a gala dinner dance for the members and their partners. The culmination of the celebrations will be a Festival Concert to be held at Stevenage's Gordon Craig Theatre in October with our guests the Stevenage Ladies Choir, the Hitchin Symphony Orchestra, and choirs from the local John Henry Newman School representing the next generation of singers - all under the musical direction of Paul Adrian Rooke, the choir's MD.

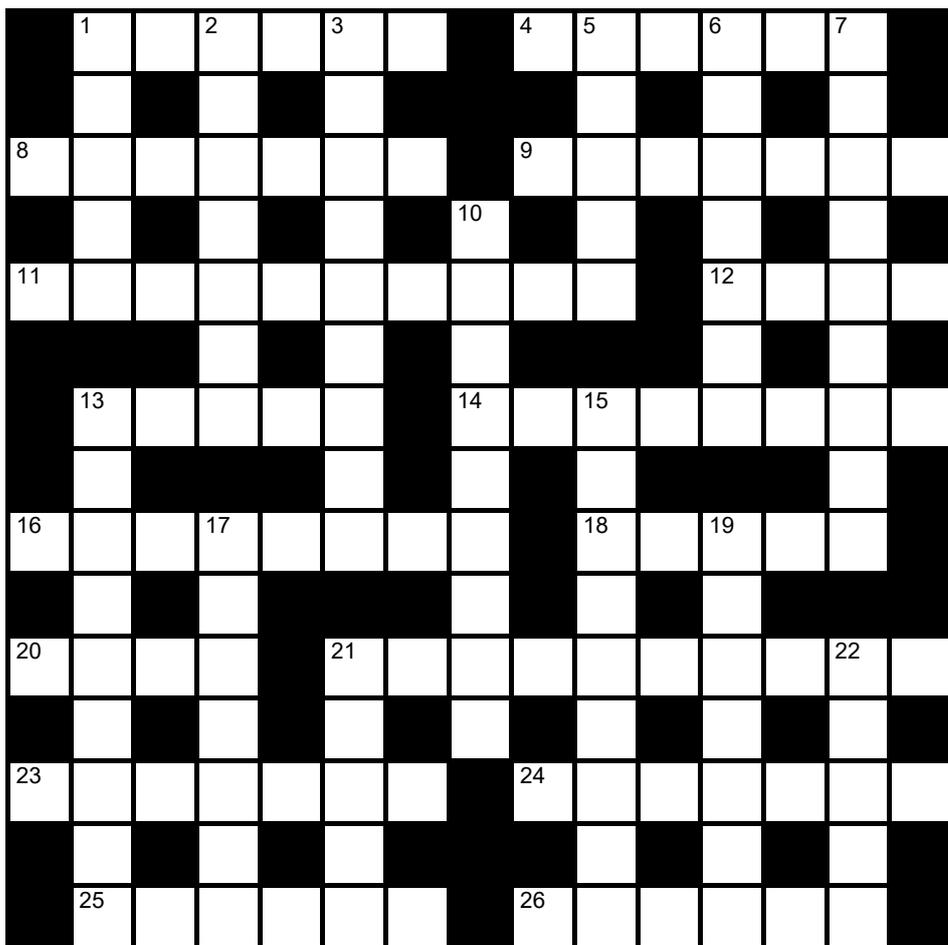
We are always on the lookout for new members and can guarantee a friendly welcome on Friday evenings at the Stevenage Community Arts Centre at 19.30. See our Facebook page or web site www.smv.org for details.

Jon Huxtable

SMVC 60th Anniversary Committee



PUZZLE PAGES



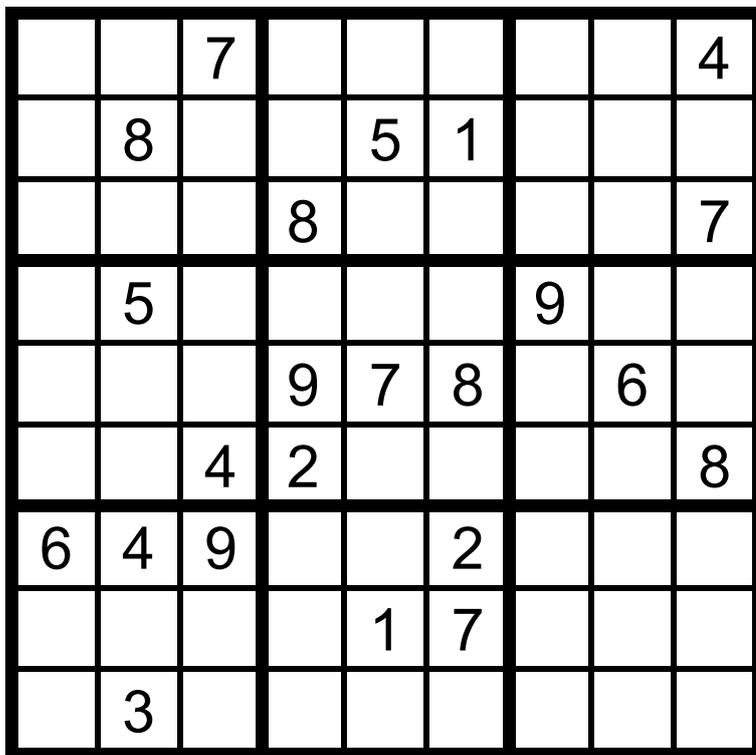
Across

- 1 Amazing technicolour virgin's husband (6)
- 4 Calypso shepherds swiftly rise from grogginess (6)
- 8 at temptations hidden effort (7)
- 9 Anger aroused our gate went to pieces (7)
- 11 Fashioning tiny chests by chemical reactions (10)
- 12 An American idyl let loose lazily (4)
- 13 Among mixed tropical fruit (5)
- 14 Generating two safer computer packages (8)
- 16 Coaching and cultivating (8)
- 18 Bad jokes about wheat and maize (5)
- 20 Pleasantly intoxicated or smelling spoiled (4)
- 21 Translate Chelsea inn to direct travel (10)
- 23 A testimonial I rebut it carelessly (7)
- 24 Stonewall (7)
- 25 Shows visit upside down makes a firm stomach (3-3)
- 26 Look at tool up and down (6)

Down

- 1 Mole in jet tyres (5)
- 2 Erratic ewe sent to be more pleasing (7)
- 3 Mixed meat sausage contains pepper on it (9)
- 5 Bind your beam or bird. It will help your hernia (5)
- 6 No happy cat sound seen on the horizon (7)
- 7 Strange rally urge happens often (9)
- 10 Osculate nothing light weight delivering message (9)
- 13 Carnival for greasy Tuesday (5,4)
- 15 faced tune awkwardly after the down and dirty deed (9)
- 17 In a turmoil I hit bin limit (7)
- 19 foundations that might smell nice (4-3)
- 21 Distressed hack (3-2)
- 22 Pole may come from stubble (5)

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

Conference Coordinator Conference update Norwich



Hello to you all and may I wish one and all a happy New Year, if it's not too late as I noticed Tesco have Easter eggs on their shelves already. I have the 't's crossed and the 'i's almost

dotted for conference 2018 in Norwich.

I have sampled the cuisine and tested the rooms out in preparation for your arrival at the Maids Head Hotel. If you haven't booked your place yet, now is the time for action. Come for the whole weekend or if you don't have that much time, come as a day delegate on Saturday, add on a Saturday night only stay and leave on Sunday morning after a good breakfast.

There will be much singing as Karl and Celia will greet you on Friday with a 'Come and Sing' hour to loosen the vocals before Bob Chilcott gets to work on Saturday. With Paul Whittaker taking a seminar in which he explains how 'signing for the deaf' works with music. Then we have Erica Crump or one of her colleagues to talk about legal issues related to our discipline.

Trade stands will be in abundance and several will be taking part in our 'speed dating' idea of having them present their wares in a 10 minute spot each which proved most successful last year.

Our Gala dinner will be in the main dining room where the Maids Head will present their cuisine for us to enjoy. I am in consultation with the hotel to hire entertainment suitable for our after dinner relaxation on Friday evening.

Saturday evening is taken up with our visit to the majestic building over the road. I refer of course to Norwich Cathedral which we have hired for the day to be the setting for our Conference Concert. I would like to thank the choirs who are taking part in this presentation for the hard work they will be putting into making the evening one to remember.

So before you turn to the next page

STOP

pick up your pen and write out your booking form and send it to me, pronto, with your deposit.

Hope to see you in Norwich this year.

Clive Lawton

The Maids Hotel, Norwich

The Maids Head Hotel is known to be the oldest hotel in the UK dating back over 800 years. Situated in the historical centre of Norwich, in the Cathedral Quarter, this independent 4 star hotel boasts charm and individual character and is the Jewel in Norwich's crown.

Walk through its doors and embrace the welcoming splendour of a traditional and historical hotel which today boasts elegant contemporary charm. Providing excellent service the hotel is an ideal place to stay when visiting the Norwich or the Norfolk area.

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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



Reg'd. Charity No. 1014630

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 2018

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



Reg'd. Charity No. 1014630

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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Please return your completed forms and deposits to

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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 13 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 |
| 12.00 | Bar closes |

Saturday 14 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 |
| 10.30-11.00 | Coffee and trade stand viewing |
| 11.00-12.00 | Seminar 2 Bob Chilcott |
| 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 |
| 3.00-3.30 | Coffee and trade stand viewing |
| 3.30-4.30 | Seminar 4 Paul Whittaker |
| 5.00 | Buffet meal before concert (included in full delegate Package) |
| 7.30 | Concert at Norwich Cathedral |
| 10.00 approx | Following concert light refreshments will be provided back at the hotel |
| 12.00 | Bar closes |

Sunday 15 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 |
| 10.30-11.00 | Coffee and trade stand viewing |
| 11.00-11.10 | Extraordinary General Meeting |
| 11.10-11.30 | 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) |

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www.sing2018.com

Bournemouth Male Voice Choir Southern Counties

Brighton International Male Choir Festival

Bournemouth Male Voice Choir have topped the list at the Brighton International Male Choir Festival, coming away with First Prize, a silver trophy and £500 in prize money.

The Bournemouth Men defeated choirs from all over the United Kingdom and from as far afield as Canada to bring the trophy back to Dorset. The victory has topped the choir's most successful year since its foundation in 1922 with concert, recording and recruitment more successful than ever before. 2017 has seen the release of the choir's fourth commercial recording, a record-breaking gig at the Lighthouse Concert Hall in Poole which raised £10,000 for the Bournemouth Hospital Charity. On top of these achievements, its unprecedented Learn2Sing Programme offered free singing lessons for over 60 men. The choir also saw the addition of 14 new members to the ranks after the summer auditions. A report from an anonymous member follows...

Despite the Musical Director's whining about having flu (Man up!), On Friday 6 October, we piled into the finest Laguna Coaches Double Decker and headed eastward for our first competition in some time. The plan for the weekend was to give the members some time together after a hec-



Mark Burstow



Bournemouth Male Voice Choir

tic year so far. Relaxations was the plan with a little gentle singing in between... Mmmmm... of course the aforementioned Musical Director needed some time to rehearse and the chance of a concert as part of the Rottingdean Arts Festival was too tempting so the weekend was a whirlwind of music briefly interspersed with beer, some lovely food and even better company. The choir arrived at our base in Newhaven mid-afternoon on Friday, after an uneventful journey. Hotel prices in Brighton would have stretched our prudent pockets further than we would have liked and the Premier Inn was clean, comfortable and had a pub attached... job done. Appetites satisfied we travelled the eight miles to Our Lady of Lourdes Church at Rottingdean for our first concert. We were delighted to share the stage with St Stythian's Male Voice Choir from Cornwall and our new friends of the German Canadian Male Chorus of Calgary who we hosted in Bournemouth just a week before. The German Canadian Chorus have also provided us with our very own ear-worm which travelled around with us all weekend. The concert, to a full house, was a great success and we are indebted to Dr Roy Wales, a very distinguished choirmaster and conductor for setting the gig up and providing the refreshments afterwards – always very welcome.

Saturday morning found us up and at it nice and early and the choir decamped close to the competition venue for a quick rehearsal at St Mary's Church, Kemptown. This fabulous building dates from the late 1870s and replaced a church of the same name which suddenly collapsed while being renovated. The red-brick building is in an Early English revival and French Gothic revival style and has Grade II listed status... just our sort of place. An hour long rehearsal, focussed

on just one or two areas got us warmed up and ready for the competition and the welcome cuppa provided by the church was gratefully received. The choir went on stage mid afternoon and sang *Non Nobis Domine* by Rosephanye Powell, *Beati Mortui* by Felix Mendelssohn and *Sing for your Life* by Alan Simmons as their competition set at the Brighton International Male Choir Festival. The music was well received by the audience and other choirs so we retired to the pub, safe in the knowledge that we had done all we could to perform to the best of our ability.

Brighton Marina was the place for a quick meal and then back to the venue, St George's Church Kempton for the results which declared Bournemouth Male Voice Choir the winners. But, despite the three pint rule having been rescinded, there was still work to do. The evening concert loomed and the choir sang some Gilbert Beaud, *Snow Patrol* and a little Charleston number to finish with a standing ovation from the assembled choristers and audience. We maintained decorum and propriety for at least fifteen minutes after the end of the concert until the trophy was filled with IPA and passed around the choristers, coming last to the Musical Director (remember the aforementioned flu). We had a terrific weekend, great for the choir's morale and for bonding between choristers and supporters alike; we met some lovely folk, evangelised a little about the things we think are important to us as a choir and just had fun. Not too bad at all...

Mark Burstow



Jewel Tones

Jewel Tones Thames North

Jewel Tones have recently joined the NAC. The choir is based near Reading and is for girls between the ages of 10 and 18. We

rehearse on Sunday evenings and sing a wide variety of music. This term we are working towards a concert to celebrate World Book Day and we will also be taking part in classes at Chichester Music Festival. In the summer term, we are sharing

a concert with the Reading Phoenix Choir and also taking a choir exam! We are looking forward to the possibility of sharing events with other members of the NAC. Our website is www.jeweltones.co.uk.

*Suzanne Newman
Musical Director*



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The Orpheus Male Voice Choir Grimsby & Cleethorpes Lincolnshire

A couple of years ago the Orpheus MVC were coming to terms in rehearsal with a piece of music called *Back to the Sixties* which joined together seven popular songs of that period. I am sure many of you reading this will have experienced singing it.

Having performed the whole piece at a concert a view was formed that singing the songs separately in groups of two or three may be a better way of presenting it.

Our Concert Secretary, Richard Wilson, set about contacting other choirs who had experience of the piece and getting their advice on the best way to go about singing it. One of the choirs who got in touch was Tonna MVC from Neath in South Wales and a friendship was formed. Tonna said that they were a choir who were happy to travel distances to sing mainly to raise funds for charity.

An arrangement was made for them to come to Grimsby in the autumn of 2016 but unfortunately unforeseen circumstances meant that it had to be cancelled.

It was then that Richard spoke to a local funeral service company called Sentiments, which we had helped by singing at their Christmas memorial services, and the idea of a charity concert to raise funds for Marie Curie was broached. Committee members went down to Cardiff to meet up with the Tonna secretary (and watch an international rugby match) and the decision was made. The date was fixed for October 14 2017 and Tonna were delighted to commit to a joint concert in Grimsby Minster. And what a commitment it was. They were prepared to make a round trip of 600 miles, pay for their own hotel rooms, and did not ask for any fee or travelling expenses.

Sentiments and The Orpheus put a lot of effort into the arrangements for the concert and the publicity surrounding it and by the time the day arrived all tickets had been sold.



Tonna MVC



The Orpheus Male Voice Choir

The Orpheus began the concert with a rousing rendition of Cole Porter's *Another Opening, Another Show* to get everyone in the mood and included in their first set a song called *Ebenezer*, a Welsh song which they sang in Welsh as a tribute to their visitors from the valleys,

The choir has always been keen to promote young musicians from the local area and some of these had been included in the programme to give musical variety for the audience. The first of these was a selection of pieces from a classical guitar group.



The Afterglow

Then Tonna took to the stage with a varied group of songs including the old male voice favourite *Stout-hearted Men*. The outstanding piece in the set was a *Fantasia on Welsh Airs* in which we heard the excellent tenor voice of John Eurof Humphries. A foot-tapping version of *Alexander's Ragtime Band* brought us to the interval.

The Orpheus opened the second half and included such contrasting pieces as the spiritual *Steal Away* and the show tune *Seventy Six Trombones*.

Then it was the turn of the youngsters again and this time we were treated to some classical pieces from a string group and an impressive unaccompanied alto saxophone solo.

Most of Tonna's second set concentrated on their Welsh heritage with John Eurof Humphries doing the solo on *Cymru Fach* and Wayne Hollister giving us the lovely *O Gymru*. Of course, a concert with a Welsh

male voice choir wouldn't be the same without a rendering of *Cwm Rhondda* and Tonna finished the set with a rousing version of the hymn.

To finish the concert the two choirs came together to sing first, *Morte Criste* and then *When the Saints Go Marching In*.

After the audience gave the choirs a tremendous round of applause a presentation of £1,600 was made to Sentiments for their charity Marie Curie and the Orpheus presented a gift to Tonna MVC as a memorial of their successful visit to Grimsby and a cheque for £500 to a local charity.

But the singing wasn't over yet. Over in the St James hotel, where the Tonna choir were staying, a hot buffet was served and the men of both choirs got together to sing the night away.

Everyone agreed it had been a great occasion and looked forward to getting together again.

Bill Threapleton

St Stythians Male Voice Choir Cornwall

On Saturday 25 November, St Stythians Male Voice Choir and friends enjoyed an excellent evening at the Penmorvah Manor Hotel (near Falmouth).

St Stythians 70th Anniversary Cake

Guests started to arrive at 6.15 for the formal dinner at 7.00 and were entertained with photographs showing the choir's many activities during the past few years. Close to one hundred people enjoyed a superb meal served most efficiently by the staff at the Penmorvah. Nothing was too much trouble. After the meal, guest speaker, Bruce Taylor, paid tribute to the choir's strength and consistency, with a very brief résumé of the choir's history. Dr Roy Wales, the choir's President, responded on behalf of the choir, emphasising the part played by Ken and Kathryn Downing in the choir's success. It's probably best not to repeat his 'shaggy dog' story. The choir chairman, John Houldsworth, thanked both guest speakers, sponsors, particularly J C Williams (Furnishers, Helston) and all the people who had given both time and prizes to raise money to cover the choir's running costs. Jackie Dunstan then thanked the staff at the Penmorvah for their excellent service before reading a poem dedicated to musical directors.

Entertainment was provided by the Ritzy Belles, a tight harmony trio, who started with a selection of songs from the 40s and in their subsequent 'sets' progressed to



President and Chairman cut the cake

more modern eras. In their intervals they changed into dress appropriate to reflect the fashion of the times. During their first break, a beautiful 3-tiered cake, which was kindly donated to the choir and made by Cara Dale, was cut by the choir's President and Chairman. The Grand Draw followed and the winner of the £250 first prize was Mike Paddon, a choir member. During their second break, the Dinner raffle was

drawn, again there was an array of prizes to choose from. The 'party' ended just after midnight, with some choristers staying the night. The rooms and breakfast were first class and enjoyed by all who stayed. Our thanks go to the management and staff of the Penmorvah Manor Hotel, who made everything run so smoothly.

If you feel that you would enjoy spending time with a very social group of people who enjoy singing and raising money for charity, then why not join us. Our practice night takes place every Tuesday 7.45-9.30 in the schoolroom at Stithians Methodist Church. There is plenty of parking. We look forward to seeing you there. Please check the choir website for further details or contact Secretary: Jackie Dunstan 01872 553276; Chairman: John Houldsworth 01326 250744 or any choir member. ststythiansmalechoir.org.uk You can also follow us on Facebook.

John Houldsworth

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Colne Orpheus Glee Union Lancashire North

Many choirs describe themselves as 'one of the oldest in England', 'one of the oldest in Wales' and so on, but who is actually the oldest in Britain?

Established in 1886, Colne Orpheus Glee Union from Lancashire must be in the running for that title, boasting a proud achievement of an unbroken 131 years of making music. Admittedly, other choirs were established earlier than the Orpheus, notably Filey Fishermen's Choir and the mighty Treorchy Male Choir but both choirs ceased operating at some point in their history and later re-formed, while the Colne choir has kept going without a break, even throughout two world wars.

With this in mind, Colne Orpheus cheekily borrowed the title of television's reality show *Last Choir Standing* and entitled a recent CD *First Choir Standing*.

Any claim to be the first, last, biggest, fastest – or oldest – is always debatable, but the Orpheus would love to get a definitive answer. Any offers?

The former cotton town of Colne was the birthplace of Wallace Hartley, violinist and bandmaster of the RMS Titanic, who bravely kept his little orchestra playing, while the ship was sinking, at the cost of his own life.

These days, Colne is best known for its annual Great British Rhythm and Blues Festival which attracts thousands of music fans every August Bank Holiday.

Back in the late 19th century, however, the town's music scene was centred on the many churches and chapels, and in 1886 the young men of George Street Wesleyan Reading Room Association founded a concert party named the Wesleyan Orpheus Glee Union. 'Wesleyan' was later dropped from the title to encourage men of all denominations to join.

Notching up its first competition win in Halifax in 1896, the Orpheus went from



Colne Orpheus Glee Union

strength to strength. Its heyday was under the baton of Luther Greenwood, a family textile company boss who conducted from 1909 to 1914 and again from 1919 to 1945. With dozens of festival trophy wins to his credit including the Royal National Eisteddfod. One newspaper (the Glasgow Daily Record) stated: 'Mr Luther Greenwood's Colne Orpheus Glee Union has the reputation of being the finest male voice choir in Europe.'

With the decline of competitive music festivals in recent years, and with singing membership now at around two dozen, the Orpheus concentrates on entertaining at public concerts at home and abroad.

In the last 25 years, the Orpheus men have enjoyed singing trips to the Black Forest, the Republic of Ireland, Malta, the Borough of Pendle's twin towns of Marl in Germany and Creil in France, and the Scottish Highlands. The choir's venues have ranged from village halls to the great cathedrals including Beverley, Cologne, Cork, Dublin, Freiburg, Munster, Strasbourg and York.

Pharmacist Matthew Leedam is the conductor, with Paul Simcock as his deputy and Margaret Allen as accompanist.

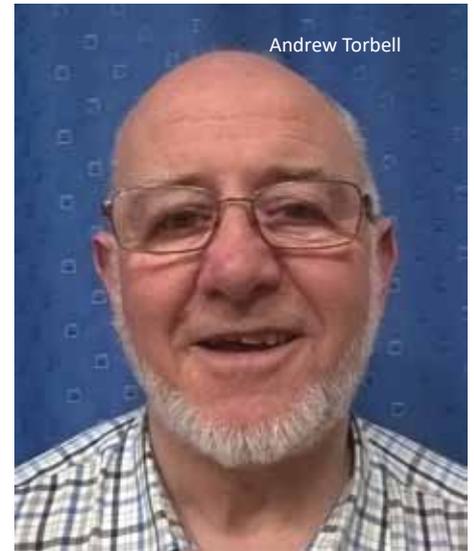
For details of the Orpheus, contact the choir secretary, Michael Timberlake, on 01282 868143, or see the choir's Facebook page.

Eric Beardsworth
Chairman and Press Officer

Corby Male Voice Choir Anglia

On 8 December 2017, Andrew Torbell will conduct his 251st concert as Musical Director of Corby Male Voice Choir. It will also be his last concert as MD, because he is retiring to spend more time with his wife and to enjoy time with a recent addition to the family – a grandson who lives in Brighton.

Andrew has been a member of Corby Male Voice Choir for 37 years, being MD for the last 19 years. His highlights were conducting the choir in 2009 and 2013 at the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate in Ypres, both very moving occasions. Many years prior to joining CMVC as a baritone, Andrew had previously been head chorister in Peterborough Cathedral Choir. He worked for Barclays Bank for 30 years and, in his spare time, was a local soccer league referee between 1980 and 1996.



Andrew Torbell

Andrew's place as Musical Director will be taken by Mrs Jan Williams, the choir's current accompanist. So, the choir will effectively take on a new look for 2018 at their concerts. The choir is delighted that Mike Latham, their deputy MD has agreed to continue in that role.

Since the choir's foundation in 1976, the choir's concerts have helped local organisations to raise in excess of £303,000 for their charitable causes.

Keith Gould

The Lynmore Singers Thames North

The Lynmore Singers are a ladies choir from Enfield. Lynmore have around 30 members and although our ages vary, our love of choral singing is a strong common thread between us. Our Musical Director is Mrs Tina Shepherd and we are accompanied on the piano by Mr Julien Clef. The music we sing is from a wide repertoire. Our programmes are broad and varied, with a mixture of sacred, classical and popular music, often taking us on a journey through time to include jazz numbers and songs from the great musical shows.

Each year we select a charity to support and this year our chosen charity was Macmillan Cancer Support. Our Christmas programme included a concert at a local care home, the Masonic Lodge in Cheshunt, and our main Christmas Concert which was held in The Barn at the De Vere Hotel (Theobalds Grove). We were delighted to welcome the Macmillan Cancer Support representative (Mr Liam De Roe) to our Christmas Concert, who addressed our audience on the importance of their work and commitment to patient cancer care.



The Lynmore Singers

We performed a varied program with plenty of Christmas music. For example, *Christmas Is* by Percy Faith, *Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree*, *Winter Wonderland* and *Song of Joy* by Greer and Dawson. Also some quieter pieces, for example, *Angels Carol* by Rutter and *Bethlehem Carol* by Humperdink. These were interlaced with non-Christmas music such as *Over the Rainbow* (Eva Cassidy arrangement) *Ain't Misbehavin'* by Waller and Brooks, *It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing!* by Ellington and many more.

We sang traditional carols along with the audience, together with a version of *While shepherds watched their flocks by night* to the tune of *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious* (it really works!)



Tina Shepherd

The concert also included a solo from our Musical Director Tina who sang *Oh Holy Night* together with two piano solos from Julien.

We are proud to have raised £2,000 through our Christmas fundraising program this year for Macmillan Cancer Support. This is just a taste of Christmas with the Lynmore Singers, which we wanted to share with other choirs around the country.

If you would like to learn more about our choir, we warmly invite you to visit our website: thelymoresingers.org.uk.

New members are always welcome - so if you live in the Enfield/Cheshunt area and are interested in coming along please feel free to contact us through our website, or by calling me on 020 8886 6762 for a chat.

Sue West
Treasurer and Publicity Team

Dorset Police Male Voice Choir Southern Counties

Where Poppies Grow

On the 11th day of the 11th month 2017 the choir commemorated Remembrance Day with a very special concert of music and prose at St Marks Church in Highcliffe, Dorset. Entitled 'Where Poppies Grow', we hoped the concert would be an opportunity to reflect on conflicts past and present and to remind ourselves of the consequences of such conflicts. The programme



Dorset Police Male Voice Choir

was designed and narrated by, our Musical Director, Dr Jane Oakland.

We opened the evening with the *Soldiers Chorus* from Gounod's *Faust*, an overt example of the glories of war and the rewards waiting for the victorious soldiers when they returned home. We then looked at some of the consequences of war, one such consequence being forced to live in exile as in the chorus of the Hebrew Slaves *Va Pensiero* sung in Italian by the choir. Modern day displacement was also highlighted in a moving poem written by a young Syrian refugee struggling to adapt to life in a new culture without his parents. We continued to look at how conflicts arise in the name of democracy *African Prayer* and the strength of patriotism *Anthem from Chess*.

After the interval there was time for personal reflection. We sang *Mansions of the Lord* and in between which, three choir members read moving verses that had particular relevance to themselves and their families. A selection from *Les Miserables* followed, reminding us always to dream of a better future during adversity and that tomorrow always comes. We ended the concert by singing *Rhythm of Life*. After all, life is why many conflicts are fought. The power of music to unite and heal was celebrated in our rendition by John Rutter *The Music's Always There* sung by the choir and our Musical Director.

The choir received a standing ovation from a packed church and everyone left either with a tear in their eye, or with food for thought on remembering not only our past but our present and the future.

Dr Jane Oakland



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Dumfries Male Voice Choir Scotland West

In 2015 Dumfries Male Voice Choir started planning a trip to Gifhorn, Germany, twin town of Dumfries. A variety of fund raising activities took place over the ensuing months and, with generous grant assistance from the local Council, and of course choir members' own contributions. The target was reached a date for the visit set.

Early on the morning of Wednesday 13 September 2017 28 members of the choir, accompanied by some 12 wives and supporters, set off by coach from Brooms Road, Dumfries to catch the overnight ferry from Hull to Zeebrugge.

All went according to plan and on the Thursday morning en route to Ypres the choir visited Tyne Cot Cemetery, where they sang songs of respect to the fallen. Lunch time was spent in the centre of Ypres where most visited St George's Memorial Church, built in 1927. This remarkable church contains hundreds of plaques and flags, dedicated to those who fell in the terrible 1914/18 conflict.

Continuing to pay respect the choir was honoured to be able to sing in the daily 8.00 ceremony at the Menin Gate, Ypres. The songs were *To fallen soldiers let us sing* and *Gaelic Blessing*. 93 year old choir member, and D-Day veteran Ian Greig, laid a wreath on behalf of the choir.

Friday morning dawned fair and as coach driver, Mark, had extensive knowledge of the area opportunities were taken to visit various cemeteries and memorials en route. These included the Airborne Memorial outside Arnhem, a busy place as the visit was just one day ahead of the anniversary of the landing on 17 September 1944.



Airborne Memorial outside Arnhem

After an overnight stop on the Dutch/German border the choir travelled on, reaching Gifhorn around 4.00 on Saturday. A brief stop to check into the hotel then it was off for a Civic Reception hosted by Gifhorn's Mayor, Matthias Nerlich. Choir Chairman, Jim Gordon, presented the Mayor with a magnificently turned wooden bowl, suitably inscribed. By way of a reciprocal gift the Mayor stated that he had an illustrated book showing the sights and highlights of Gifhorn, for every member of the Dumfries party.

The planned rest period thereafter wasn't to be; the German opposite number, Gifhorn Männerchor, had arranged a reception of their own. They invited everyone into their 'Sangerheim' or Singing House, a magnificent hall that they had built by themselves.

Trestle tables were set out for a meal and all were treated to portions from a whole Hog Roast, complemented by sauerkraut, the meal being washed down with drinks of choice, local lager, red and white wine and soft drinks for those who might have

to drive. The meal set the scene for what was a most convivial evening and it wasn't until much later that the Dumfries contingent returned to their hotel.

The sun shone on Sunday morning and the choir had been requested to be at the town's Windmill Museum for 10.00. This is a large area of parkland, dotted at intervals with full size windmills representing various countries. Although silent they are all in working order, with miniatures to be bought as souvenirs. Dumfries is represented by 'Lady Devorgilla', a mill where marriage ceremonies can take place.

A sandwich lunch was provided after which the choir went back to the hotel to don uniforms and go back into Gifhorn town to St Nikolai Church for a rehearsal with the host choir. Also rehearsing was the 'Highland Sound' duo who played the bagpipes, the German name for these being 'Dudelsack'.



Highland Duo with dudelsack

The concert itself was a great success, renditions by each choir interspersed with Scottish tunes on the 'Dudelsack', and concluding with joint singing in English of *Heaven is a Wonderful Place*. A standing ovation brought the concert to a close before both choirs and partners once again repaired to the 'Sangerheim' for yet another feast.

Gifts were exchanged by the respective choir Chairmen, songs in German and English were sung and although not all the words were understood the meaning was abundantly clear – singing is universal and encourages harmony and friendship amongst nations.

Only too soon it was time to think about sleep as an early rise was called for on the Tuesday morning. By 8.30 the choir bade farewell to their hosts and covered the kil-



Dumfries Male Voice Choir

ometres to Ijmuiden, by Antwerp, where they boarded the ferry for Newcastle. A mostly calm crossing brought the ferry into port around 10.30 and Brooms Road car park hove into sight by mid-afternoon.

Travel-weary the choir may have been but this was a most memorable trip, old friendships renewed, new ones made, with everyone looking forward to the time when Gifhorn Männerchor can come to Dumfries to allow a return of the welcome and generous German hospitality.

Jim Kelly

The Glasgow Phoenix Choir Scotland West

Sponsored by Co-op Funeralcare

A casual start to our 2017-18 season found us preparing for a mini-tour to Carlisle and Gretna. On the last evening of September, we had the great privilege of singing in Carlisle Cathedral with our new friends of the Carlisle Community Choir, conducted by Andrew Nunn. What a beautiful venue and what an amazing acoustic. The feedback received afterwards was most gratifying. The following afternoon found us heading for home via Gretna where we performed a concert to celebrate the Centenary of All Saints Episcopal Church. Phyllis, who acted as main organiser, had been concerned that we might not have a good-sized audience as many local people might have attended the Carlisle concert. I don't know if any of them did, but the hall was filled to capacity. I suspect the audience would still be there listening, if we could have managed to keep singing. Yes, even three months later. Hopefully, we'll be back soon.

These were followed by a most successful Open Rehearsal – good attendance, an enjoyable rehearsal and a lovely buffet afterwards. Oh, and we recruited quite a number of new singers, including some men. Hurray! Sadly, the night went ahead without the presence of our indefatigable conductor due to the death of her much-loved mother-in-law. Mrs Smith was well-known to the choir and very well liked. The excellent Cameron Murdoch stepped into the breach for the event.

For four Sundays in a row between mid-October and mid-November, we performed a series of Sunday afternoon concerts, which included two live recordings of Postcard CDs. The first concert/recording was performed in Govan Old Church,



which is home to the Govan Stones, a series of early medieval carved Stones. The stones have been dated back to the 9th-11th centuries when the Vikings raided the Clyde region and are thought to have been created to commemorate the power and wealth of the rulers of the lost Kingdom of Strathclyde. The remaining stones are a sarcophagus, five hogback stones and thirty-one recumbent gravestones. Each stone weighs half a ton and is carved with elaborate designs of carved crosses and cross shafts. Our second concert saw us heading down the Clyde estuary to Garelochhead, a most enjoyable trip and concert; the third was in home territory, raising funds for the restoration of the organ at St John's Renfield Church in Glasgow, where we occasionally rehearse and where our own Cameron Murdoch is organist and choir master; the final concert/recording will raise funds for Queen's Cross Church in Glasgow, the only church designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, and an architectural gem. The concert itself celebrated the life and work of Mackintosh as part of the celebration of the 150th anniversary of his birth. The choir enjoyed all of these events though it would be fair to say, with the exception of our visit to Garelochhead, quite a lot of the time was spent trying to keep warm. Yes, we were cold... very cold.

December saw us sing four very special Christmas concerts, two in the east (in Linlithgow and Edinburgh) and two in the west (in East Kilbride and Glasgow). The gents of the choir said they had gained considerable insight to the trials of the three wise men; the women of the choir weren't so sure about the comparison.

Our final concert of this series, and this part of the season, saw us in one of our

favourite venues, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, with our guests the choirs of St Aloysius College, Glasgow and the Co-op Funeralcare Band. And what a concert it was. The hall was packed, all of the choirs sang well and the band was wonderful. The reception and participation of the audience was much appreciated by everyone on stage. Particular mention must go to the school choirs' rendition of *Away in a Manger*, arranged by Ola Gjielo. Some of us are still hearing it.

The finale of the concert allowed us the opportunity to pay tribute to a young (so he tells me) man who is celebrating 30 years with the choir. Cameron Murdoch, our Accompanist and Deputy Conductor joined the choir as a callow youth in 1987. Earlier in the season we marked the actual date of Cameron's anniversary by presenting him with a glass wave, inscribed with the choir's motto, *In Honour of All who Believe that Life was made for Friendship* and a cake made by one of our choristers. In front of our Christmas audience, our conductor, Marilyn J Smith, and choir president, Angus Leitch, paid tribute to Cameron's years of service and to the excellence he brings to both roles. On behalf of choir members, Marilyn, Angus and Vice-president, Elizabeth Dingwall, presented Cameron with a Bose music system, a handsome leather case and a replica of *The Hand of a Pianist* by Auguste Rodin. On behalf of all involved, thank you for all that you do for the choir, Cameron, and congratulations on this achievement. We look forward to the future with your continued support.

Anne Kay
Publicity Officer

Dunfermline Choral Union Scotland East

Dunfermline Choral Union is a mixed choir of 120 members who come from Dunfermline and other areas of central Scotland to rehearse every Monday in the Vine Centre, Dunfermline. The choir was founded in 1874, so we are now over 140 years old!

The 2017-18 season of Dunfermline Choral Union promises to be a very exciting one for both choir members and audiences. Our two Christmas concerts in December were very successful and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Many people in the Dunfermline area comment that when they come to DCU's Christmas concert, then 'Christmas has really begun'. The

programme consisted of a wide variety of Christmas music: traditional carols, popular Christmas songs, music written specifically for choirs in many different styles – something for everyone to enjoy. This year we also performed a number of carols arranged by Dan Forrest, *Glow* by Eric Whitacre and *The Ground* by Ola Gjielo, all of which were accompanied by string quartet and piano. The Junior and Senior Choirs of Dunfermline Junior Chorus were guests in both concerts.

Our spring concert takes place on Saturday 3 March 2018 in the Vine Centre, Dunfermline. This year we are thrilled to be performing the UK premier *Requiem for the Living* by Dan Forrest. A Requiem, at its core, is a prayer for rest- traditionally for the deceased. The five movements of Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*, (2013), however, form a narrative just as much for the living, and their own struggle with pain and sorrow, as for the dead. The music is beautiful and will be performed by the choir with soprano, Emily Mitchell, baritone, Jerome Knox, and orchestra. The other work in our spring concert is *Requiem for an Angel* by Paul Carr.



Mandy Miller

Our other very special news is that we are celebrating 25 years of Mandy Miller as Musical Director. Mandy is an inspirational musical director and under her care and dedication, the choir has grown, not only in size, but in ability as her expertise in choral education and conducting enable us to perform to a very high standard. Re-

hearsals with Mandy are fun, fast-paced, informative, full of wonderful music making and a great way to spend a Monday evening. Over the years, the choir has performed many of the major classic choral works as well as premiering some recently written choral works. We have invited audiences to 'An Evening at the Opera' and 'An Evening of Rutter'. As well as our main concert in the spring, and our Christmas concerts, we have a summer concert each year with a wide variety of songs for both choir members and audience to enjoy.

We are very grateful to Mandy for all her passion and commitment and the work she has done, and continues to do with Dunfermline Choral Union. We look forward to the next 25 years!

www.dunfermlinechoralunion.co.uk

Alison Baxter



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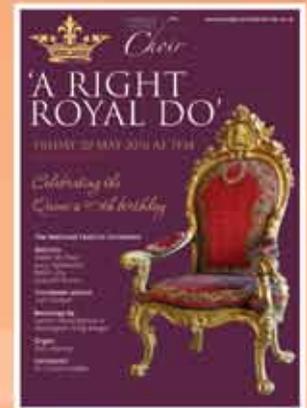
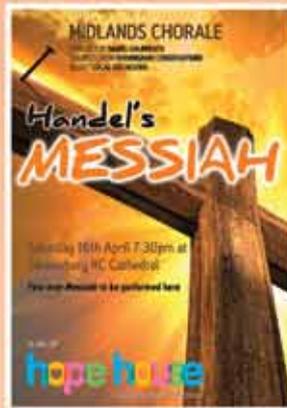
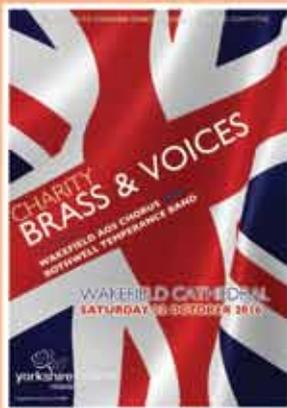


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Ladies voices 16 choristers
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01420 88721 lizgeorge99@yahoo.co.uk

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Male voices 34 choristers
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0191 422 4203 susanjones123@sky.com www.compassacapella.org.uk

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Mixed voices 76 choristers
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01492 518598 dilwyn.coro@googlemail.com

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01642 767524 ibcommunitychoir@gmail.com

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I could make you a Liszt.

Why didn't Handel go shopping?
Because he was Baroque.

Why did JS Bach have so many children?
Because he didn't have any organ stops.

How do you fix a broken brass instrument?
With a tuba glue.

What's the difference between a viola and an onion?
No one cries when you cut up a viola.

How do you get a trombonist off your doorstep?
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How does a soprano sing a scale?
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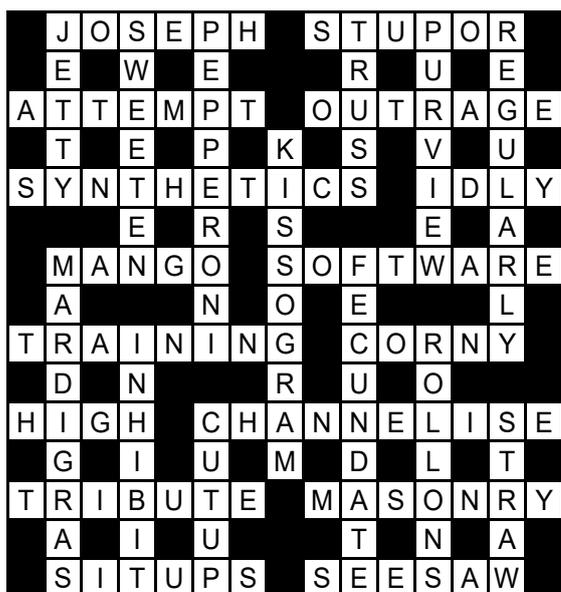
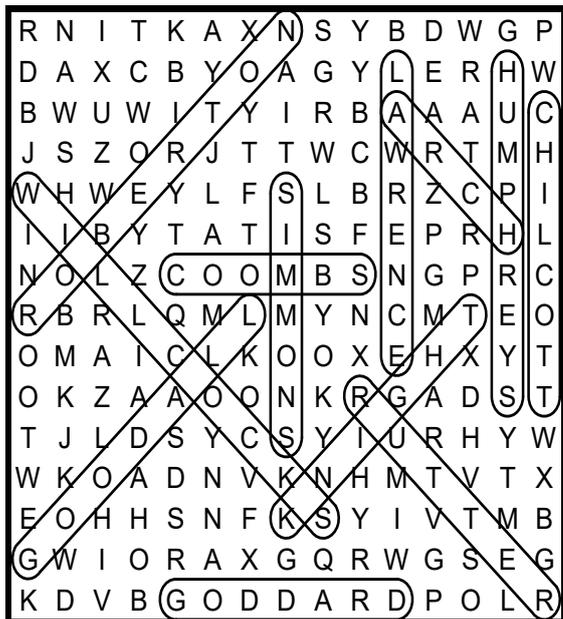
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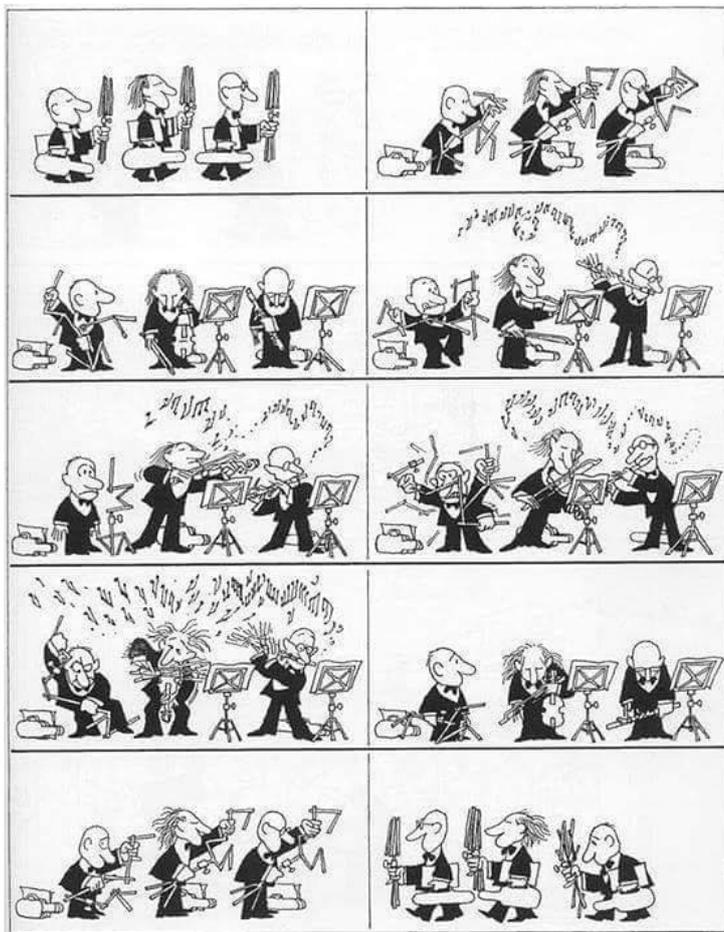
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We use Calibri 10pt in News & Views. (If you don't have this, don't worry I can soon change the one you use.)

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.

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

Dates do not include st nd rd or th

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

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