

Tone's Tidings

March 2016 Issue 8



St Edmundsbury Male Voice Choir
Patron: The Rt. Hon The Earl of Iveagh; President: Paul Deane
Vice Presidents: John Balaam, Dr John Meers and
The Very Reverend Dr Frances Ward
Registered Charity No. 1028123



Words of Wisdom (not mine)

Accept the fact that some days you're the pigeon and on some days you're the statue.

It may be that your sole purpose in life is simply to serve as a warning to others.

Some mistakes are too much fun to make only once.

When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.

If you can't be kind, at least have the decency to be vague.

"A lovely concert, a wonderful evening and hopefully a lot of money for the Nordoff Robbins Charity."

What an evening! Those of us fortunate enough to be at this event on 20 February enjoyed a wonderful evening of music presented by SEMVC together with Laura Wright and the Downham Preparatory School Choir.

The MVC gave us a beautifully balanced programme which included powerful pieces such as *Amen* and *Do You Hear The People Sing*, the poignant *Bring Him Home*, the soft and gentle *Autumn Leaves* and *Embraceable You*. The second half included *Mustang Sally*, and the audience was both amazed and delighted by the very 'spirited' performance of one Ross Van de Zande, who gave it his all and a bit more.



On a sad note, during the second half we were told of the death of choir member Neville Rogers that morning. The MVC dedicated the singing of *Sure on This Shining Night*, one of the pieces he had liked, to his memory.

It was a real pleasure to see and hear the Downham Preparatory School Choir. The children sang songs by Elton John and Bob Dylan and also joined with SEMVC to sing four other pieces including *Anthem* (from *Chess*) and *Angels*. Their singing was lovely, clear and strong and sung with enjoyment. Those of us that looked across at the children when SEMVC was performing would have seen that the children were enjoying listening to the performance and certainly during the rendition of *This Little Light of Mine*, joining in. Perhaps a measure of their commitment that one girl appeared wearing a temporary plaster cast having broken her ankle the previous evening but insisting that she must be at the concert.

The icing on the cake for the evening was of course Laura Wright. This lovely young lady, with such a beautiful voice, was accompanied by the talented guitarist Andrew Moore and gave us a taste of the range of her repertoire performing classical pieces by a number of composers, traditional pieces including *The Last Rose of Summer* for her grandmother, who was in the audience, and more modern pieces such as *The Girl From Ipanema*. She also joined with SEMVC to sing the *Sanctus* from the St. Cecilia Mass by Gounod.

Laura, an Ambassador for the Nordoff Robbins charity, gave a brief presentation on the work of the charity and showed a short video illustrating one aspect of its work.

The evening finished with Laura and the MVC singing *The Rose*, and, it now being 11 p.m., a very happy but very tired group of children from Downham Preparatory School. Mike Driscoll

Charles Leonard Warren Bass known to all his friends as Len. 6 April 1927—11 January 2016

Len, a member of SEMVC for 18 years, supported all concerts and tours of Europe in our early years. He was always proud to have been one of the members who collected a candle from Kevelaer to take back to a church in Bury St Edmunds. Alas all the members who did this are no longer with us – Bernard Kime, Peter Whelan, Sid Wilkins and Len.

Len was very keen on his singing, a member of the Great Barton Church choir, also the Mead Singers in their very early days. He also sang in Tewkesbury Cathedral. As Chairman of Great Barton (Sat) FC 1984-1990 whilst I was a player and manager, he helped raise funds for the new dressing rooms and saved every cutting from the Bury Free Press. A member of the Barton Players appearing in the early pantomimes of the 80s – Oh yes he did!

Len was a keen cricketer and having been born in Clacton, was a great supporter of Essex CC and spent many a long summer's day with friends and family at Chelmsford.

Being a manager at Peatling and Cauldrons, part of Greene King, he had a great knowledge of wines and could give you a great deal of information from bottle labels to the type of wine and the region. In later years, he was still giving talks on wine at the West Suffolk College.

Len to everybody who knew and met him agreed that he was the original English Gentleman. Ken Sawyer



Neville Rogers (20 February 2016, aged 73)



During the pre-concert rehearsal at the Apex on 20 February, we were given the sad news that Neville Rogers, a long standing 2nd tenor, had passed away that morning. He had been diagnosed with cancer some months before, and despite an operation and intensive treatment, did not respond as well had been hoped.

Nev joined the choir in September 1990, and was always an enthusiastic supporter of all the choir activities, rarely missing a practice or a concert and he loved the foreign tours. For several years he received awards for attending every choir function, including all practices for the previous 12 months. In May 2015 he was presented with his choir cuff links for 25 years of service to the choir. Sadly, during the last year his attendance became more sporadic as his health deteriorated.

Nev was renowned for the flamboyant shirts that he always wore to practices and other non-uniform functions, and several times won the 'colourful shirt' competition held every July. He once confided that he owned over 150 such shirts! He will be sadly missed by all of the choir members, but I'm sure we will all hold fond memories of Nev and his ever smiling face and humorous remarks will remain with us for years to come. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jenny, his wife, and with his family at this time. Den Cartwright

Thank you

From Elaine McGregor, Nordoff Robbins Music Therapist

My congratulations to SEMVC members on a fantastic concert last night. Thanks also for making myself (and my mother) so very welcome.

There was great interest and support from both performers and audience and we are grateful. Laura does a fantastic job as ambassador for Nordoff Robbins.

I hope to be able to make another of your concerts soon. Have a fantastic time on your Irish tour.

From Mike Mason (ex Chairman 2003-06, Bass section)

Thank you for a splendid concert on 20 February. The children were delightful, Laura entertaining as ever with her super accompanist and the MVC as good as it gets. Balance was perfect, the dynamics, especially the quiet bits were awesome. Paul Deane (SEMVC President) and I agreed that, considering we are no longer singing, you did very well.

Comings and goings

It was very remiss of me not to mention in the last Tidings the sudden influx of new faces/voices.

At the start of the year, five, yes five possible new members appeared and I am very happy to announce that they have all signed up, so it's hello to: Ian Snelling, Andrew Conquest, Tim Eagle, Phil Kemp, and Andrew Castle. I also forgot to welcome Richard Preece who joined us last year.

Our joy was shortened though as Donald Campbell and Dennis Heath have sung their last concert with us. Donald is off to Scotland and Dennis is moving to High Wycombe. We wish them both well in their new surroundings and look forward to a Highland jaunt and High Wycombe is not that far away. TF



Planes and boats and trains, sorry coaches, take us away; they mean a trip to Dublin and Belfast at the end of this month. For us on the

coach, it also means a 5:30 a.m. start on Thursday 31 March. To be sure it does! We know the words and the notes, all we've got to do now is put them together in the right order and hope that the Guinness doesn't affect the brain too much.

Dates for your diary

Th 31 March – M 4 April – Irish tour to Dublin and Belfast

Sa 23 April – 'Sing for your Supper', All Saints, BSE

Sa 21 May – Concert, St Nicholas Church, Rattlesden, IP30 0RG. Soloist, Ross Van de Zande. In aid of church funds.

Sa 18 June – Concert, St Mary Church, Ixworth, IP31 2HH. In aid of church funds.

Th 14 July – Mini concert for Over 55's Club, Blackbourne Centre, Elmswell, IP30 9UH.

Sa 27 August - 'One Good Turn', The Apex, BSE, 7 p.m.

Sa 24 September - Concert with Haverhill Silver Band, St Mary's Church, BSE IP33 1RT

Sa 22 October - Concert with The Orpheus Singers, Salvation Army Temple, Hadleigh, Essex (nr Southend) SS7 2PF

Sa 19 November – Concert, St Lawrence's Church, Little Waldingfield CO10 0SP

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Sun 14 May - Concert with Amersfoort MVC (from Holland)



Campbell Abbott (March 2016)

More sad news - I'm sorry to have to report that Campbell Abbott has passed away. Campbell joined the Choir in 1989 and for health reasons, he left us in 2011. 22 years of faithful service in the 2nd tenors (that's where I remember him). Campbell's funeral is on **Friday 8 April** at Bury St Edmunds Crematorium at **10:30 a.m.** We will not be singing as the Choir but all are welcome to attend the service with refreshments later at the Priory Hotel. Tony F

From Mike Mason (ex Chairman 2003-06)

We were deeply upset to hear of Neville's death at the concert in The Apex. Having been out of touch with the Choir family things for a while, we are not up to date. He was a very nice chap and will be missed. Our acquaintance must go back to the earliest of days. Nev loved the Choir, one of the most regular attenders.

Concert, 19 March 2016, BSE

When we sing in Trinity Methodist Church, I tend to liken it to putting on that comfy pair of slippers as we are so used to the building and its acoustic (either rehearsing or performing).

Saturday's concert raised funds for the recently repaired organ which has had a new stop added. This was demonstrated by James Recknell, who was standing in for John Ottley (unwell) and Calvin (unavailable). I am biased, but, I think that we sung well. We watched Mark, our pianos were piano and our fortes were forte. In all, a good work out for the forthcoming Irish tour. The repaired organ also had a work out when James played it for: *St Clement, Aberystwyth, American Trilogy* and for his solo piece.

Clare Mellor, our soloist, treated us to Telemann's flute sonata in G minor and 3 Morceaux from Fauré, Massenet and Delibes in the first half. Clare followed this with Mozart's Adagio arr. Boehm and Debussy's *Girl with the Flaxen Hair* and *Cake walk*. I am no expert but I thoroughly enjoyed Clare's selection of music.

Sadly at the end we said goodbye to two of our members - Donald Campbell who is moving back to Scotland and Dennis Heath who is heading for High Wycombe. Both have been loyal members of the Choir and will be greatly missed. TF

Choir Uniform - Ken Sawyer has Len Bass's uniform and is open to offers for it. Please contact Ken.



Sing for your Supper

April 23rd is not only St George's Day, it is the day when the Choir come out to play and we sometimes see a different side to our members, like Peter giving a monologue with an arrow in his eye or Simon C in ruff and hose singing 'Let flow my tears' or Arsène Wenger explaining his football strategy; you may even meet a panto Dame. What will happen this year is anyone's guess but it will be fun!

Reports and pictures for Tidings are welcome. Please contact Chairman Tony Farr, 01440 704179, lolandtony@talktalk.net