

Tone's Tidings

October 2015 Issue: 3



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



As a change from my usual mixed musical terms, I thought that the literary buffs amongst us may like to try their hand at this:- to write a short story using only the titles of the pieces in our repertoire, eg. The Soldier enquired of Rachie whether, having crossed the Bridge Over Troubled Water she would like to go Down by the Sally Gardens. There is no prize for this but it may help to pass the time during a Bleak House winter and it may be possible, using some Sense and Sensibility. I have Great Expectations of you all.

With the sad news of the death of Chris Fielder (bass), I asked Ian Robertson (bass) to write a piece on Chris. I didn't know Chris as well as Ian and, as I always linked the two of them together in working for the Choir, felt it more fitting to come from someone who knew Chris better than myself.



Chris Fielder
(18 January 1943 – 9 October 2015)

Chris and I met in the early '90s at an Elveden School Fete where he was helping Margaret as Head Teacher. He suggested I should join SEMVC and I sang with Chris in the second row of the basses.

His ability to learn the words of songs so much more easily than I amazed me and I have always been in awe of his depth of range. Once accused of 'swooping' by Richard Spaul, his response was to kiss him on his bald pate!

Chris was responsible for the design and production of the choir's staging which is so versatile in its construction to adapt anywhere we sing. He was the staging manager, responsible for the erection of a suitable platform, which then also seated the choir.

Despite his professed dislike of anything 'technical', he used to sell some very complex machines used on factory production lines. With time on his hands in retirement, he became the Choir's chairman (2006-9); of particular note, the 'Colours' CD and the Baltic Trip were during his 'watch'. Public speaking came freely to him, coping admirably during the exchange of gifts with 'The Ladies in Red'! Chris just enjoyed 'doing things' for the Choir and I fear that I and the Choir have lost a true friend.

Ian Robertson

Report from Jill and Paul Davis (Bass)

On Friday 25th September we gathered at St Giles Church, Cambridge to experience two amazing musical groups. TUBE (The Unusual Brass Ensemble), a group of five accomplished brass musicians from Haverhill, Suffolk kicked off the evening with two pieces from their classical repertoire. The overture from the Marriage of Figaro by Mozart got us off to a good start. This was followed by a piece written by the trombonist's brother when he was 16 years of age. Both pieces have stood the test of time.



TUBE was followed by the first set of pieces by the Melody Girls; a group of twelve young ladies plus their musical director, pianist, cellist and saxophonist from Ukraine. They took us on a tour of British and American music from the 1960s to present day. During the concert the Girls were joined by St Edmundsbury Male Voice Choir's very own, Ross Van de Zande for two pieces including their cover of Leonard Cohen's 'Hallelujah'. This is a striking piece of music and the arrangement showed Ross' voice and the Girls' harmonies at their best.



After the interval, TUBE treated us to some pieces from their contemporary catalogue including, from the Jungle Book, 'Bare Necessities' which gave the tuba a rare solo. The Girls second half included a superb version of Simon and Garfunkel's 'Mrs Robinson' along with songs by U2, Brandon Flowers and James Blunt. The Melody Girls sang the song they claimed was their favourite - '10,000 Reasons' by Matt Redman.

Not all the singers speak English so it was especially impressive that they sang all the songs in English. The concert concluded with a set of familiar, joint pieces - 'I only want to be with you' by Hawker and Raymond and 'What the world needs now' by Bacharach and David. We were treated to a reprise of the latter; a fitting end to an eclectic and well executed concert by two groups of young musicians.

I have not written a report of the Melody Girls concert as I think that the letter sent by Steve Cook (ex. First Tenor and ticket seller) puts it a lot more eloquently than I could. Here is an edited highlight version:

Just to say I thought last Saturday's concert was wonderful, and my guest, who had never attended a choir concert of any description before, was equally impressed. I thought that your sound was nicely balanced, good diction and dynamics, no 'stray' voices and even one or two smiles. Even more impressive when you consider how early in the season this was (just two or three rehearsals). Very special congrats to Ross and David, who had very little rehearsal time, but what a lovely sound they made with the Girls accompaniment.

And weren't the Melody Girls lovely? I really enjoyed their repertoire, their arrangements and their tuneful singing.

What an inspired idea to have the cello and sax accompaniment. I do hope the two choirs keep in contact and if you get an invite back to Kiev take it, it's a beautiful city.

Thanks also for the afterglow, which demonstrated that the SEMVC has not forgotten how to party, and for letting me sing with you all again.

Well done all of you.

Steve Cook



15 years under our Musical Director's leadership

TOP TWENTY CHOIR ITEMS SUNG SINCE MARK JOINED US 15 YEARS AGO

5th column - number of times performed at 115 concerts prior to Mark's arrival

League	No	Title	Times sung		First Performance		Concert No.
			under Mark	pre-Mark	Date	Location	
1	17	Morte Criste	94	40	08/04/1989	County Upper School	4
2	34	Deus Salutis	77	22	02/03/1991	Atheneum	20
3	102	You raise me up	70	0	08/06/2006	Woolpit	174
4	37	When the saints	68	61	17/11/1990	Wickhambrook	17
5	99	What would I do without my music	67	0	02/10/2005	Southend-on-Sea	164
6	45	Llanfair	64	21	17/10/1992	Wickhambrook	35
7	93	African Trilogy	64	0	13/11/2004	Martlesham Heath	155
8	14	Gwahoddaid	59	43	25/02/1989	Thurston	3
9	31	Angels watching over me	59	25	08/03/1990	Cockfield	12
10	105	American Trilogy	58	0	22/10/1996	Baltic Tour	179
11	1	Speed your journey	55	33	16/07/1988	County Upper School	1
12	67	Lord's Prayer	53	18	27/04/1996	Peterborough	72
13	61	Love, could I only tell thee	48	26	28/01/1995	King Edward School	57
14	43	Rhythm of Life	47	41	19/10/1992	Wickhambrook	35
15	40	The Water is wide	43	43	02/03/1991	Atheneum	20
16	57	My Lord, what a morning	43	34	23/04/1994	South Woodham Ferrers	48
17	90	Bring him Home	41	0	05/04/2003	Mendlesham	139
18	82	With a voice of singing	38	0	12/10/2002	Rougham	136
19	94	Give me that old time religion	36	0	26/02/2005	Hadleigh	159
20	36	Gospel Train	34	44	09/05/1991	All Saints Church	22

Up to Summer 2000 (column 5), When the Saints, sung 61 times, was the record.

Gospel Train was 2nd and Water is Wide with Gwahoddaid were equal third.

Clearly, the most popular and loved by all of us since the choir started 27 years ago are Morte Criste 134 times - When the Saints 129 - Gwahoddaid 102 - Deus Salutis 99

What will we pulverise by 2020? !

Alan M 27 September 2015

Alan 'Statto' Messem thought you might like to see our 'Top Twenty' from the last 15 Mark years and before, so here it is. Thank you Alan, it makes interesting reading.

'Singing for life'

On Sunday 31st January 2016 St Edmundsbury MVC are taking part in a 4 choir Festival at Cliffs Pavilion, Southend-on-Sea. This event is to raise money for Prostate Cancer UK.

Further details are available on the Leigh Orpheus choir website (www.lomvc.org) and our website (www.semvc.com).

We shall be travelling by coach to Southend on the morning of the 31st and it would be nice to take a lot of supporters and Friends to take part in this charity event. Tickets (£12.00 and £15.00) can be bought: -

at the Box office of the theatre 01702 3511 35 or <https://southendtheatres.org.uk>

Further details will be issued in early January but please could you put this date in your diary to support this worthwhile charity.

Dates for your diary

Gentlemen of SEMVC, listed below are all our known concerts and other events to date for the remainder of 2015 and for 2016. The theory being, that if you know these dates well in advance there should be no sudden panics regarding rehearsal attendance when the two rehearsal rule is applied, as these dates will be in your diary and on your calendar.

It would also greatly improve our concert attendance if the organisers of any other organizations that you belong to are also apprised of these dates so that there will not be any unfortunate clashes of interest.

These two simple measures are aimed at improving the attendance at and the quality of the Choir's performances, a subject which I know is close to all our hearts.

Fr 23 October – Sing at Mark Whitehead's 25th Wedding Anniversary, BSE Rugby Club

Sa 21 November – Concert with Suffolk Constabulary MVC, St Gregory's, Sudbury, CO10 1BA. Commemorate 75th anniversary of Battle of Britain. In aid of RAF Benevolent Fund.

Sa 28 November – BSE Christmas Fayre, Angel Hill, 10 a.m.

Fr 4 December – SEMVC Christmas Dinner, Golf Club, Tut Hill, BSE

Th 17 December – Carols & Chips, The Woolpack, Fornham St Martin

2016

Fr 22 January – Mayor's Charity concert as guests of Bury St Edmunds Concert Band, The Apex, BSE

Su 31 January, 4 p.m. – 'Singing for Life' Concert with Leigh Orpheus, Thurrock and Braintree MVCs, Cliffs Pavilion, Southend, SS0 7RA. In aid of Prostate Cancer UK. (www.lomvc.org)

Sa 20 February – Concert with Laura Wright and Downham Preparatory School choir, The Apex, BSE. In aid of Arthritis Research UK and Nordoff Robbins.

Sa 19 March – Concert, Trinity Methodist Church, Looms Lane, BSE IP33 1EB. Soloist, Clare Mellor (flute), Featuring Trio Sospirato (www.triosospirato.com)

Th 31 March – Mo 4 April – Proposed tour to Dublin and Belfast. *tbc*

Sa 21 May – Concert, St Nicholas Church, Rattlesden, IP30 0RG. Soloist, Ross Van de Zande.

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 22 October – Concert with The Orpheus Singers, Hadleigh, Essex (near Southend)

Sa 21 November – Concert with Wessex Male Choir, Lechlade, Glos (www.wessexmalechoir.co.uk)

2017

May – Wessex Male Choir to visit BSE