

Tone's Tidings

July 2016 Issue 12



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



When I became your Chairman last year I asked just one thing of you all, namely

'Do not ask what my Choir can do for me, ask what I can do for my Choir'.

Saturday 27 August is a case in point, 'Uptown Funk' may not be your idea of what the Choir should be singing, but, if we want to attract younger members then we need to perform it and perform it well.

Our rehearsal base

So, the curtain has now been closed on the SEMVC's long association with Howard Middle School. When we sang at the school's final assembly it was a morning of mixed emotions not just for the staff and pupils, but for the Choir as this signified the end of an era spanning nearly 30 years of music making at HMS.

The plan is that we return to the building in September to carry on rehearsing but it will then be Howard Primary School. Thank you to those of us who sang on July 21st.

Don't worry, I have the lectern safely stowed away here in Kedington, ready to re-appear in September.

LOUD SHIRTS

Our traditional 'Loud Shirt' night on the last rehearsal evening was as usual enjoyed by us all and the Friends who came along. It was lovely to see the Rogers family - Jenny, Debs and Andy on July 21st at what is now known as 'Neville's Night'. The trio picked

the section winners: Keith *Top Tenor* Skinner, Barclay *Second Tenor* Dutson, Doug *Baritone* Wayman and Tony *Bass* Heaton.

Tony was judged to be 'Best in Show'.



Downham Preparatory School Summer Show

Tuesday 5 July

I don't know how Mark manages it, but like last year it was a warm summer's evening for the School Show. This time it was 110 years of song interspersed with news items and facts relevant to the decades. The children and us 'old un's' played to a packed sports field, in front of very enthusiastic families and supporters. From the youngest 'Nellie the elephant' to the oldest 'Amarillo-ite' they gave their all and were a credit to the school and the staff. Well done and thank you to all of the MVC who found time to support the School, some of us going twice - to the dress rehearsal and the performance, and that goes to the Hare Arms as well!

Reminder

There are two extra rehearsals on **Tuesday 23** and **Thursday 25 August** at 7.30 pm in Trinity Methodist Church, BSE.

Normal rehearsals resume on **Thursday 1 September** at 7.30 pm in Trinity Methodist Church, BSE.
From **Thursday 8 September** they will be at 7.30 pm in Howard Primary School.

St Mary's Church, Ixworth, Saturday, 18 June 2016

Concert review by Ed Wilson, Top tenor:-

I recently received cufflinks in recognition of my membership of SEMVC over the last 25 years, however, Saturday was the very first time that I have heard the choir in concert!

The opening song, *Every Time I feel the Spirit* set the tone, joyously sung and creating a good atmosphere. The choir showed off its whole repertoire in the first set, from the solemn warmth of *The Lord's Prayer* to a rousing climax in *Speed Your Journey* and a lively rendition of *When the Saints*.

The Vocalistics Choir, ten pupils from Ixworth Free School aged between 11 and 14 years, then sang their first selection, starting with a delightful medley of songs from 'The Glums' ('Le Miserables'), with solos impressively shared by five different singers. They finished their first set with a moving and very harmonious *Fields of Gold*.

SEMVC's second set started with the warm Gallic sound of *Autumn Leaves* followed by an ethereal rendition of *Sea Lullaby* which had a very strong sense of the swell of the sea. *The Rose* followed displaying the choir's fine range of dynamics ending in a rousing third verse and, for me, the highlight of the first half, the superb *What Would I do Without My Music*.

The second half opened with SEMVC joyously singing *There is Nothin' Like a Dame* which featured two solos of great fun by Nick Gane. After a swooning rendition of *Embraceable You*, great control was displayed in their version of Robbie Williams' *Angels* with excellent middle harmonies. Accompanists John Ottley and Calvin Goymer came to the fore with all hands on the keyboard setting a fine regular set pace for the rigorous, foot tapping *Rhythm of Life*, with the choir wrapping their tongues around the fast and furious lyrics really well.

The Vocalistics second set opened with a selection from *Into the Woods*, a major musical challenge that the pupils dealt with admirably. It involved four different soloists and some excellent group harmonies; no mean achievement considering the choir was only ten strong. They concluded their singing with a beautiful, five star performance of Joni Mitchell's, *Both Sides Now*.

For the evening's final set, SEMVC opened with a smooth rendition of *Anthem* from the musical *Chess* that gradually built up to a rousing finale. The following Burt Bacharach numbers *What the World Needs Now* and *I'll Never Fall in Love Again* were the second half highlights and proved Mark Jefferson's intuition to be spot on that Bacharach's work suits the choir. The evening was concluded with a reverent and moving rendition of the Welsh classic *Morte Criste*, for which Mark persuaded past and present choir members in the audience to step up and sing. *Mustang Sally* was duly sung as the audience requested the obligatory encore and it inevitably brought the house down with a deserved and prolonged applause.

I was very impressed by the quality of SEMVC at this, my first attendance at a concert in a non-performing role. The choir is much indebted to the fine musical team of John Ottley, Calvin Goymer and musical director Mark Jefferson in the training and leadership that they give. Over the years they have developed a most accomplished choir that sings an excellent and eclectic range of songs. There literally is "something for everyone".

Charity

On 29 July, Concert Manager Ian represented SEMVC at St Edmundsbury former mayor, Councillor Patrick Chung's final presentation of the £28k raised for charities during his mayoral year. The choir has received £100 from the Mayor's charities.

COMPLETELY FINISHED No English dictionary has been able to adequately explain the difference between these two words. In a recent linguistic competition held in London and attended by, supposedly, the best in the world, Samdar Balgobin, a Guyanese man, was the clear winner with a standing ovation which lasted over 5 minutes.

The final question was: How do you explain the difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED in a way that is easy to understand? Some people say there is no difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED.

Here is his astute answer: "When you marry the right woman, you are COMPLETE. When you marry the wrong woman, you are FINISHED and when the right one catches you with the wrong one, you are COMPLETELY FINISHED!!!"

He won a trip around the world and a case of 25 year old Scotch!

Help with Tidings

To make Tidings more readable for you, we like to break the text up with photographs. This edition contains two very comprehensive and interesting concert reports but very few pictures. We are delighted to have the reports but please could you make them more concise - some months we struggle to include all the news.

We would be most grateful if, in future, you could provide a picture from concerts/events, please (no guarantees for inclusion). Tidings is your newsletter.

Dates for your Diary

Sa 27 August – 'One Good Turn' charity concert in aid of Help Musicians UK, Apex, BSE

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 (near Southend) SS7 2PF

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

Fri 16 December – SEMVC Christmas Dinner, BSE Golf Club, Tut Hill

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Sa 18 March – Concert with Isleham Primary School Band, The Beeches, Mill Street, Isleham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5RY supporting community hall funding

M 17-Sun 23 April – French tour *tbc*

Su 14 May – Concert with Amersfoort MVC from Holland, St Peter and St Paul Church, Clare CO10 8NY

Sa 3 June – King's Lynn MVC 60th Anniversary Mass Choir, St Nicholas Chapel, King's Lynn PE301NH *tbc*

Sa 17 June – Woolpit Festival *tbc*

Sa 8 July – St Mary's Church, Churchway, Redgrave, Diss IP22 1RJ *tbc*

Sa 30 September – Concert at St Mary's Church, Stratford St Mary CO7 6LS in aid of church funds

Sa 14 October - Three Choirs Festival with The Dalesmen MVC and Mansfield and District MVC, Derby Cathedral Centre, 18-19 Iron Gate, Derby DE1 3GP

Sa 18 November - St Peter's Church, Market Hill, Sudbury CO10 2EA in aid of RAFA *tbc*

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Sa 14 April – Concert in Ipswich with Suffolk Constabulary MVC

SEMVC at Elmswell Over 55's Club, 14 July

Following a welcome by Diann from the Over 55's Club, the concert began with *Every Time I feel the Spirit* which would have woken up the listeners had they needed it. Mark Jefferson welcomed everyone too and explained that a concert on a Thursday was unusual for the choir as it was their usual rehearsal night. He apologised in advance if some of the items were sung rather fast due to the Baritones wanting to get to the bar where they usually end up on a Thursday!

You Raise Me Up included good use of dynamics and clear diction. At one point during the song the basses crossed into the baritones. The hall, having a high ceiling gave it the acoustic of a cathedral.

African Trilogy included a solo by David Sadler, recently returned from a two week tour of the USA with the punk band with whom he sings and plays bass guitar. The last song of this section was *When the Saints Go Marching In* with the false ending which catches out many an unsuspecting audience. However, the pause was shortened, which worked very well. In particular the chimes at the end of this song were very melodic and a fine climax to this part of the concert.

Calvin Goymier, assistant accompanist, played a medley of songs from musicals. He was an Elmswell boy and is a very talented musician and a huge support to the choir. The medley included *Anything Goes*, *Making Whoopee*, *I Got Rhythm* and *Edelweiss*. Persuaded to play an encore - *Lambeth Walk*, the choir and audience joined in with the "Oi's". The affection felt by both the choir and Elmswell was tangible in the following applause.

Autumn Leaves (my current favourite) was followed by *The Rose* from the film starring Bette Midler; "love is a rose and a razor". Mark mused about a future concert with Bette Midler as the guest soloist.....

What Would I Do Without My Music expresses the universal language of music and the choir did it justice. Without organ accompaniment for the last verse of *American Trilogy*, the choir brought power to the final phrases with their voices. Sadly, some of the phrases in this song were split by breathing.

Pace of the concert increased in the second half with *There Is Nothing Like A Dame*, soloist was Nick Gane. Mouth movements did not always match the words in this song. To celebrate the 90th birthday of Elmswell resident, John who enjoys male voice choir music *Morte Criste* was sung along with *Happy Birthday*.

Embraceable You slowed the mood down and where more good use of dynamics and a neat cut-off was heard. Robbie Williams' *Angels* included for the first time, guitarist Simon Shirm. The guitar added an additional and highly effective dimension to this popular piece.

Rhythm of Life, conducted by David Sadler enabled Mark to join Calvin on the keyboard. While Calvin is superb, not even he can play a four hand accompaniment on his own! The Denture-fix representative breathed a sigh of relief after the two fast pieces in the choir's repertoire were completed without any losses.

The interlude in the second half comprised SEMVC bass Ross Van de Zande, Simon on guitar and Calvin on keyboard. They performed *Guardian Angel*, *Mad World* and *Crocodile Rock*, with SEMVC and the audience providing backing for the latter piece. Additionally, two pieces from *Les Misérables* were performed – the very high, *Bring Him Home* and the rousing *Do You Hear The People Sing* both demonstrating the choir's beautiful dynamic range.

SEMVC are planning to record a fourth CD in the next few months which will include some specially arranged Burt Bacharach pieces. Although still being rehearsed, the choir ended the programme with *What The World Needs Now* and *I'll Never Fall In Love Again*. The Over 55's Club committee expressed their thanks to the choir, Mark, Calvin, Simon and Ross.

Following rousing applause, the choir performed *Mustang Sally* as an encore. SEMVC then adjourned to the bar to enjoy a most welcome buffet. Jill and Paul Davis (bass)

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