



Pontnewydd Male Choir

CHOIR NEWSLETTER

Year 24 OCTOBER 2020

This month's birthdays.

Alun Wilmot (T1) Friday 2nd

John Counsell (T2) Thursday 8th

Bernard Morgan (B2) Thursday 22nd

Martyn Jones (MD) Tuesday 6th

Martin Jones (T2) Thursday 15th

Peter Binding (B1) Friday 23rd

Choir news.

John Brown (T2) is still having regular medical treatment. He's missing our practices and sends his best wishes to everyone. **Keith Jones** (B2) is now back home. Naturally he is not yet ready to resume his regular daily five mile jogs and Sue is having to gradually reintroduce his usual smoked salmon diet. Keith claims that the Neville Hall fish paste sandwiches come a poor second to the Royal Gwent Russian caviar. **Barry Page** (T1) is recovering and looking forward to several pints of milk when we all meet up. **Lyndon Birch** (T2) has been assured that he is now on the priority list. **Alan Dunn** (T1) should soon be able to see other choristers in our zoom sessions.

Our sincere best wishes go out to them all.

YOUR CHOIR NEEDS YOUR HELP

Peter Davies (B2) has recently been appointed as the choir's Marketing Manager and one of his main objectives is to raise the public profile and image of PMC. Central to this task is the requirement to create a *Contact List* of existing and potential supporters, sponsors, advertisers etc, and to compile this list *we need your help*.

Our request to all choristers is to try to provide as many of the following contact details as possible:

SECTOR; ORGANISATION; SURNAME; FORENAME; EMAIL; PHONE; WEBSITE

A couple of examples would be:

SECTOR	Sponsor	Supplier
ORGANISATION	CJCH Solicitors	Exton's
SURNAME	Davies	Exton
FORENAME	Graeme	Dave
EMAIL		extons@hotmail.com
PHONE	014952237128	01291690484
WEBSITE	cjchsolicitors.co.uk	

This is a vital part of progressing the profile of the choir. It doesn't matter if you can't supply all the information required – names and contact details would be a good start. SO THINKING CAPS ON!

Can you please send the information to Peter Davies via email to brightd Davies@gmail.com or phone or text him on 07811 441155.

Thanks.

Cheers,
Ian.

Did you know?

There are some historical events that were so important that they seem to stick in your minds and the fact that the following three events all occurred on the same date (in different years) is rather interesting.

The earliest of them was in 1533 – *Pope Clement VII excommunicated Henry VIII*. How exciting, I'd forgotten that.

The second occurred more recently in 1988 when *Mike Tyson hired Donald Trump as his advisor*. Surely you knew that!

The third, far more important, event was on July 11th 1970 when **Graham Roberts** (PMC bottom bass) married his sweetheart **Evelyn**. *Everybody should know that!!!!*



Let's repeat that.
Graham and Evelyn Roberts
celebrated their
Golden Wedding on July 11th 2020.
Many belated congratulations to both.



Unfortunately assumptions are not always true and earlier choir newsletters demonstrate that not everyone knew the details of the last event. Now, no names, no pack drill – such an important event would have been rightly given prominent publicity in the PMC newsletter if someone had sent a reminder. Well, if **you** knew why didn't you do so? Having said that, it was good of Graham to send me a reminder about the Mike Tyson event – there was no room to mention it in the July. newsletter.

New music

Those of us who are able to join the Zoom practices will have realised that September saw the introduction of another new piece of music, "*Higher and Higher*". A certain baritone living north of Pontypool is probably wondering why he doesn't have a copy. PDF copies of the new piece can be downloaded from our web site.

Who did it?

Lockdown is back for many and perhaps some are asking “Why me?”
Your editor wonders how many readers of this newsletter know that they have been “involved in” (not “responsible for”) the increase of relevant Covid statistics.

The effect of lockdown upon the very existence of Pontnewydd Male Choir is the sole reason for what follows and you may well consider it a load of waffle. The questions asked are only a selection of what is being aired in the media and should not be considered to reflect editorial views – I’m sure there will be variation in our answers.

Is it now a case that government measures are an understandable reaction to statistics rather than causes?

The restrictions affect different areas of national life - for example, costs to the economy, ‘national health’ effects, personal inconvenience and the “arts”. Where does choral singing come in the order of priorities?

Do our experts really know “who / what” is responsible for the increase? Is the increase in statistics the result of contact with individuals, physical or airborne, or by other means? Do we know (or just estimate) the proportions?

How does anyone know they are asymptomatic if they haven’t been tested? Doesn’t this mean that there are untold numbers of unknown “carriers”.

Much more could be said and, as said previously, widely different opinions will be held. The simple fact is that rules are being made elsewhere and individual reactions to restrictions will also differ and even change.

Warning: Don’t assume that you’ll get up to date decisions from the evening government briefings on the telly. You also need to check, preferably in the following 12 hours, the latest definition of words like “close” and “open” – your editor and treasurer know from experience.

The memories of a chorister.

As an appendix to this newsletter you’ll find the concluding part of the item published in September newsletter by our webmaster **Doug Hopkins**. The accompanying pictures are beautiful (and copyright).

How many similar items by other choristers have you read? What’s the matter with you? There is a danger that the archives of one of the oldest male choirs in Wales will contain **virtually nothing** contributed by choristers. Surely memories of characters, individual events, choir concerts and/or tours abroad are worth recording? Do you think that 24 years of newsletters does justice to the last 50 years?

This is not just an appeal for something to fill a newsletter, it’s far more important than that. Please sit down and do something – produce

even one page of your memories. Don't worry about grammar or spelling, they can be easily dealt with without altering the important parts of the memory. If you want to include a photograph or two please do so. Any digital contribution should be sent to our P.R. email address: info@pontnewyddmalechoir.com and, if you particularly would like it to be included in a newsletter feel free to send it to royfisher30@gmail.com. If you don't have internet access how are you reading this newsletter?

Are you there?

The last sentence made your editor think of retired choristers, who eagerly await the monthly newsletter, and one in particular – **Frank Gardner**. His postal address intrigued me because the name “Langar” rang no bells in my mind. A bit of online searching revealed that Frank lives in an area that I once visited and found very interesting. Grantham is quite near where enough said on that. The home of the best pork pie I ever tasted is also nearby – Melton Mowbray. Is the meat substitute, Quorn, named after another nearby place not far from Loughborough, a university that produces talented sportswomen and sportsmen? As a teenager my barber's surname was Bingham – another place just around the corner. The vale of Belvoir (do you know how to pronounce that?) is in the area – tasty drinks come from there. To cap it all, Frank lives about half-an-hour's drive from Nottingham, the home of Robin Hood! So, Frankie boy, you live in an interesting area – but I bet you still miss the view of the picturesque river Usk from Newport bridge and the buzz in Fairhill Methodist Church on a Friday night (don't we all)?

Best wishes to retirees Frank Gardner, Dave Wilks, John Davies, Alan Dunn, Reg Palmer, Graham Parry and Ernst van Eijkern.

For relaxation

Here are a few school exam howlers:

Another Greek myth was Jason And The Golden Fleas.

Joan of Arc was Noah's sister.

When Caesar was assassinated he is reported to have said “Me too, Brutus”.

Al Chemy was the man who invented chemistry.

People were running all over the place, the boys in shorts and the girls in hysterics.

Here's a pretty easy cryptic clue from a Times crossword.
Singer in church getting nothing right tries afresh. (9 letters)

Roy Fisher.....Editor

Appendix

Ramblings of a Landscape Photographer (Part 2)

By now the temperature was increasing and I was dripping by the time I'd arrived at the lake. There's no shelter until the small bothy by the lake so it was a welcome time to cool off and have a drink before taking any photos.

Sure enough the sun was just rising over the shoulder of Picws Du; enough to create long shadows and good contrast and tonal range. I like making panoramas as I feel this is the best way to show the extent of the vista before you, rather than single shots. Panoramas can take a large number of shots to produce depending on the techniques I'm using such as high dynamic range or focus stacking. File sizes are consequently large. The full version of this image of the Waun Lefrith to Picws Du ridge is a whopping 240 MB !!



Time's getting on and the temperature's climbing steadily so time for some lunch, a few more photos and head back to the car. At least it's all downhill.

The number of visitors become more frequent on the way back. Two blokes with a young lad. The boy clearly struggling so one of the guys piggy-backs him up the slope. I wonder if he'll make it all the way. It was a hot climb at 08:00 and now it's mid-day.

The number of people in T shirts, shorts, trainers heading up to the lake was surprising. No water with them and it was forecast thundery showers in a few hours !!

I pass a family with youngsters about a quarter of the way up from the car park. The elderly lady already looked worn out. "Is it cooler up at the lake?" she asks. "Yes" I answered. "There's a cool breeze picking up. It's a hot slog up to get there though". "How long will it take?" "Around an hour" I replied. "Oh, that's ok, that's what we'd planned for" she panted.

“Can you drink from the lake or the river” ? “Maybe the lake” was my reply, “but not from the river with the sheep and horses”. Oh dear, I thought, no wonder Mountain Rescue complain of unprepared visitors.

Back to the car park and the waterfalls looked too inviting in the heat. Off came the boots. I just sat there enjoying the cool water and reflecting on the morning. Some good photos.

Glad I'd got up early ..'ish !!



Doug Hopkins.
