



CHOIRLINK

*The Prayer and Praise bulletin of the
Festivals of Male Voice Praise*

No. 4

**JANUARY
2019**

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HIGHLAND GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR *Sam Macdonald*

The last few months of our choir year has seen us performing at eight events, ranging from support for church charities (some involving a round trip of over 130 miles), local festivals, support for charitable causes, our annual visit to our local prison where our accompanist (Eileen MacKintosh, operatic soprano) held the usually noisy audience in silence with her singing of “I’d rather have Jesus”, several old folks homes and our annual Christmas service in the Auction market in Dingwall. Here over 350 attended, many of whom do not

darken a church door throughout the year. They were enthralled by the preaching of our speaker Angus Jamieson on the theme of release from the realms of darkness by Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, on that same hill where Abraham offered his only son Isaac, showing the pattern of God’s great plan of redemption from our sinful nature. Just as the seal on the stone over Christ’s tomb was split to release our Lord, so access to God was opened to all who would believe.

We were privileged to listen to a powerful rendition by Eileen of “O Holy Night”. The collection of over £1300 was gathered for Scottish Cot Death Trust.

As we prepare to enter the New Year, we are greatly encouraged by the progress of our new team of Conductors and the way the spirit of worship and choir attendance, even at practice, has improved. We look forward to a fairly full programme of events in the months ahead, some 14 confirmed at the time of writing this report and up to the end of June. These will include our singing to visitors to the port of Invergordon from cruise ships calling there. Although over 120 ships will call, we will only be able to visit 4-6 times, when we can conveniently fit these into our usual programming. We are so privileged to have these opportunities to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord's Salvation to all who come to listen as we sing.

BOLTON MALE VOICE PRAISE

Mike Dewhurst

Greetings from Bolton!

We welcome 2019 as a special year in the choir's history. On Saturday 27th April we shall be holding the 40th Bolton Festival of Male Voice Praise and cele-

brating a milestone in our work and witness in the town and North West area.

We look back over many years when we have experienced the Lord's hand of blessing upon us, and look forward once more to sharing fellowship with friends old and new.

Our speaker once again will be our friend, evangelist Roger Carswell, and our guest soloist this year will be John Buchanan. We also look forward to welcoming members of the Moray choir who are planning to come down for the week-end. The event is to take place in the Victoria Hall Bolton (the venue for the last ABF) with a rehearsal in the afternoon at 2.45pm and the Festival commencing at 6.30pm.

The programme has been arranged to include many "favourite" pieces that have been used over the years and should be familiar to those who have been in FMVP a long time, but very easy to learn for newer choirmen.

Please pray for us as we make

the necessary arrangements, pray for travelling mercies for those coming, and most importantly that we give the Lord all the Praise and Glory, trusting that as we witness together His kingdom will be extended.

If you want further details please drop me a line on: dewhurst810@btinternet.com

Every Blessing to you all as you also plan meetings and Festivals this coming year.

PURLEY GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

Allan Turner

We, at Purley, have had a tough year as a choir with the loss of three choirmen. Two, Dennis Grew and Pat Cooling, would have been known to many choirs around Britain and the third, Tom Beattie, also now sings in the heavenly choir.

Alan Riches is now too poorly mentally and physically to continue, so we wish him and his wife Muriel all the best.

Meanwhile the choir soldiers on with one of each of the tenor

parts but a big bass line. We met all our commitments last year and hope to be able to continue our outreach with the enthusiasm we have always had.

BRISTOL EVANGEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

Paul Davies

Since the last edition of Choir-link we have had a steady set of engagements starting with our attendance at the Cheltenham Rally on 20th October. This was an enjoyable time of blessing when we met up again with Mike Dewhurst and David Casse as co-conductors alongside Cheltenham's Mark Mulley and myself, plus stirring work by organist Vaughan Reynolds and pianist Dr. David Tingley.

Over the Christmas period we had a new engagement at a St. Margaret's Trust venue known as Sandford Station. This complex of retirement apartments is built on an old railway station at Sandford near Weston-super-Mare, a lovely setting where we received a very warm welcome. I say "warm" but as we were set up in an indoor atrium with a glass roof, it was freezing!

However, the choir did well, aided by Barbara Watkins' recitation, Lynne Davies' solo and Rosemary Raybould's piano medley. Our speaker Royston Cann conveyed the Christmas Gospel message to our audience who were suitably wrapped up in overcoats and blankets. They have asked us back but have promised that it will be warmer next time! It was good to meet up again with Roy Horsnell, now a resident. Roy led the Luton Choir for many years before moving to the Bristol Area. He then founded the Weston Choir, now unfortunately disbanded. Sadly, Roy now suffers with dementia and, although he thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon, he was a little hazy about the identity of the individuals in the choir. Way back, I remember with affection how Roy looked after me when I first stepped onto a Festival platform as a rookie conductor at the Colston Hall. He was such a steady and comforting influence.

The Lord willing, we plan to recommence on 9th January. We thank God for answered prayer as we slowly put together a list of engagements including some

new venues. Fred Boulton, a former BEMVC member now living in Bridgwater, is organising an Evening of Gospel Singing with the combined choirs from Exeter and Bristol, on 11th May at Wembdon Parish Church, Bridgwater.

May I take the opportunity to wish you all a very Happy 2019 and a truly rewarding year.

**CHELTENHAM MALE
VOICE PRAISE CHOIR**
David Kendrick

Good news! We had a new 2nd Tenor join us in September with another man expressing an interest in joining.

As regards our programme, in October we had a great Rally with some good guests. This was followed by a full Christmas programme in some eight venues. These were well-attended, and appreciated.

We hold our AGM on 4th March and are already planning for our special Diamond Jubilee Rally on 19th October. We would appreciate prayer for finding the right speaker and guests.

POOLE MALE VOICE PRAISE

Marilyn Davies

God has been so gracious to us as a small singing group in Poole. Two men have joined us since July and so we enjoyed being able to sing on 9th December at Parkstone Gospel Church and again at Rossmore Church on Sunday 16th December. Fellowship together on Friday nights is good and we give God the Glory - Amen.

UXBRIDGE GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

Gerald Durrant

We had five engagements, six if you include a Luton engagement. We only have nine in the choir including me, and two of us were ill. Richard Swallow spent much of December and all of Christmas in hospital with severe asthma and Ronald Elliott had a heart attack. Not all of the remaining seven could make all the engagements so in effect the church events ended up by being the Luton choir supported by Uxbridge! Needless to say we were extremely thankful to our Luton brethren.

For the Care Homes we had just four so we sung a few of our pieces as a quartet and for the rest we just sang familiar carols in unison. However we were very encouraged by the response at each venue so we are convinced that whatever we are able to do in our weakness, the Lord honours it and it is appreciated by all.

CHESTERFIELD CHRISTIAN MEN'S CHOIR

Alan Smith

I am pleased to report we had a good year of appointments in and around Chesterfield, finishing off just before Christmas taking three Sunday services!

A well earned break is now in view and we start up rehearsals again on Sunday 6th January 2019, with six appointments already in the book. We just pray the snow keeps away for the two in February!

Looking further ahead, plans are in hand for the choir plus friends (about 40 in all) to share fellowship for a week in Llandudno, having had a great success in 2018!

Worldwide

BRISBANE FESTIVAL MALE VOICE CHOIR

Ken Pitcher / Neil Moss

The year 2018 was a busy one for the Brisbane Choir, following our 2017 season during which 10 men also attended the ABF in Bolton, England. We offer our apologies for not having sent a report sooner.

Our major Festival was held on 8th September. This was a combined presentation of about seventy voices. Three made the trip over from New Zealand, three from Melbourne, one from Tasmania, nine from Sydney, seven from Bundaberg and three from Toowoomba. The presentation was very well received with approximately 800 in the audience, and we pray that some of those present may have been touched by the Holy Spirit.



This was our last presentation with Ken Pitcher as our conductor, a position he has held for 12 years. Our new conductor, Mrs Robyn Geddes, has been helping with the choir for a number of years. After the presentation we held a dinner to formally recognize the service of Ken to the choir, who has stepped down following health issues.



On the Sunday morning we sang at the service at the Brisbane Baptist City Tabernacle with approximately 46 voices in the choir.

On 13th October we sang with the local choir at a Festival in Toowoomba with a combined group of about 55 voices. It was a cold, wet, drizzly night but a good number attended and seemed to respond very well to the presentation. The venue was the Toowoomba North Church

of Christ. At the end of the year we did four presentations of various Christmas programmes. Our Choir Christmas celebration dinner with our wives was held on 18th November.

Our planning for this year includes presentations at Churches, Retirement Homes, and three Regional Festivals at Warwick, Ipswich and Bundaberg.

SYDNEY FESTIVAL MALE VOICE CHOIR

David Gordon

A couple of our Choir members attend Windsor District Baptist Church, which has a couple of 'hymn fests' each year. The Choir was invited to present a couple of items at the first one in Feb. 2018 ... it so happened that the MC is the music director for Anglicare, the arm of the Anglican Church that operates many aged-care villages (offering retirement - self care and assisted living - accommodation) in the greater Sydney area. He let them know about the Choir, and we had many invitations from the various villages. The year turned out to be

quite busy: we proclaimed the gospel in song on 15 occasions, including a weekend in Jervis Bay (about 150 km south of Sydney), where we presented a programme on Saturday night at the Community Centre, and a second in the Baptist Church on Sunday morning.

Ten of our number were able to join the Brisbane choir for its Festival of Male Voice Praise in early September. It was a first-time experience for one, who thoroughly enjoyed the occasion, and the fellowship of jointly "proclaiming Jesus - no other name".

The photo below was taken at Jervis Bay by Edwin Thein, one of our members who will be singing with the Brisbane choir this year, as he now has a job in Brisbane.



Calendar of Events: January - April 2019

JANUARY

- | | | |
|----|----------------|---|
| 6 | Hertford Choir | Howlands Baptist Ch, Welwyn Garden City |
| 26 | Exeter Choir | Whipton Chapel, Exeter |

FEBRUARY

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|--|
| 3 | Exeter Choir | Tiverton Baptist Church |
| 10 | Chesterfield Choir | Lee Chapel near Matlock |
| 22 | Highland Choir | Street Pastors |
| 24 | Chesterfield Choir | Storrs Road Methodist Church nr Chesterfield |

MARCH

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| 3 | Chesterfield Choir | Holymoorside URC near Chesterfield |
| 3 | Hertford Choir | Barkway Chapel |
| 4 | Highland Choir | Inverness Music Festival |
| 15 | Highland Choir | Gideons Easter Ross branch |
| 17 | Hertford Choir | St. Paul's Walden Parish Church |
| 22 | Uxbridge Choir | Waterloo Road Fellowship |
| 29 | Exeter Choir | Buckfastleigh Methodist Church |
| 31 | Hertford Choir | Anstey Chapel |

APRIL

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|
| 7 | Exeter Choir | Newport Street Methodist Church, Barnstaple |
| 13 | <i>Peterhead Festival</i> | |
| 13 | <i>Exeter Festival</i> | <i>St Thomas Methodist, Cowick Street, Exeter</i> |
| 14 | Chesterfield Choir | Winster URC near Darley Dale |
| 20 | Highland Choir | Easter |
| 27 | <i>Bolton Festival</i> | <i>Victoria Hall, Bolton</i> |

Thank you to all who sent information and prayer requests for this bumper edition! In the end I have had to hold some over for next time, including an engaging piece from the White Rose Choir which you won't want to miss!

Please send your items for the next Choirlink by Saturday 6th April. May I wish you a blessed 2019 as you sing of God's wonderful love to all.

Yours in Christ, Vaughan