



CHOIRLINK

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

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Editor: Vaughan Reynolds, 4 Homefield Close,
Seaford, East Sussex BN25 3DQ, UK

☎ 01323 325387

✉ vaughan.reynolds@talktalk.net

COUNCIL REPORT: MARCH 2019

Ian Stangoe, Chairman

Council met again at Bothwell on 13 March. In attendance were Mike Dewhurst, Alfred Tarring, Houston Ogilby, Gordon Wells, Rowland Bugden, John Buchanan and Ian Stangoe with apologies received from Paul Davies and Kenny Dykes. Colin Carbert was welcomed to his first Council meeting as new representative for Yorkshire Area.

Roland Bugden led devotions reading from Psalm 46 reminding us of tensions between being ready to go or being still to listen to God; thinking of the needs of people we minister to and address them in ways they understand; what we believe as

God's truth against what society expects. Are we ready to stand up for the truth?

Paul had issued a current financial statement and although there was a deficit mainly due to the purchase of the music memory sticks, the bank balance is still healthy so it was agreed to maintain the choirmen contribution at £4 per man.

Work is underway by Alfred to produce the rest of FMVP music into electronic format similar to the KS and VC already issued on memory sticks. It was agreed that the training tracks have been invaluable in learning new pieces quicker and we

recommend that choirs utilise this media to improve quality of presentation.

A new website is under construction which will provide easier access to information such as CD purchase, Choirlink, music so keep logging onto www.fmvp.org for updates. Choirlink has been well received and Vaughan Reynolds reports that contributions are coming in well so keep up the good work in submitting articles in plenty of time before publication.

A future All Britain Festival

was considered but it is felt that with choirs diminishing and an aging membership that is was not feasible to hold another presently. It was agreed that with a core of 70+ choirmen in Scotland a Festival would be held in the home of FMVP, Glasgow in 2021 with an invitation issued to all choirmen to attend if desired.

As a closing thought we read James 1:2-8 considering the patience, wisdom and faith that is required to fulfil God's plan which He has for each one of us, especially as we go through trials. He is still in control.

United Kingdom

HIGHLAND GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR *Sam Macdonald*

We have been able to fulfil 7 engagements in the first 3 months of the year, including afternoon meetings to church clubs, support for our local Street Pastors which raised a sum of £830, and our annual support for the Easter Ross branch of The Gideons in Tain

at which we heard of the great work which is being done all over the world by them, in the distribution of bibles in so many languages. It is pleasing to be able to report that we have nine firm bookings to fulfil before our months holiday at the end of June. These will include our annual festival on Saturday 1st June, (to which all are cordially invited). It will include a period of Singing in the city during the

afternoon. Other local Festivals at Peterhead on 13th April which requires a minimum round trip of 220 miles and at Glasgow 13th of May entailing 340 miles and attending to sing at the Port of Invergordon when cruise liners are berthed there. It has been a difficult exercise to arrange these Cruise engagements as we have to ensure that ships are in port, choirmen will be present and balanced, Our Conductor is available, and accompanist can be present. All of these can require to be altered if the cruise is delayed by bad weather. Prayers are needed that our Lord will take charge of all our arrangements and for the Sailors Society, who have invited us to sing to the passengers and crew of these ships, are most anxious that the Gospel should be heard by those who visit. We were pleased to be called on to take part in the Inverness Musical Festival at which we represented Male Voice gospel singing among various standards of choral works. At the end of our performance we received praise that every word we sang was audible.

WHITE ROSE MALE VOICE PRAISE *Ewart North*

Ewart has provided an interesting and witty overview of the choir this time instead of the latest news. Read on...

Formed in 2010, based in Castleford, West Yorkshire and led by the erstwhile recording artist, Trevor Jones, the White Rose MVP is a motley collection of individuals — including three retired pastors, a vicar (not sure of the theological distinction there), a couple of carpenters, some computer “experts”, a painter/decorator, a school-teacher, accountants, a paramedic, a football referee (only juniors these days), a couple of prison officers and a master brewer. But regardless of background, we all not only love our Saviour, the Lord Jesus but are keen to share the good news about him with others, hence our singing. Where do we sing? Basically anywhere that asks us. Our singing takes us to community centres, churches and chapels of all kinds, prisons and residential

homes. We also sing at choir festivals, weddings, funerals and a variety of social occasions, and we have recorded the backing track for a commercial CD. Geographically, invitations to sing have taken us from Duffield (nr Derby) in the south, to Scarborough in the north-east and to Calder Vale (nr Garstang) in the north-west and all points in-between. The most difficult to find was Dalwiggill Methodist Church: leave Ripon on the road to Kirkby Malzeard, keep on driving, when you reach the perceived end of civilisation, keep going for another couple of miles, turn left down a smaller country lane and arrive at a farm yard with four houses and a church, you've reached your destination. Not sure where the congregation came from but the place was packed for both our visits. As a contrast we have been the 'warm-up act' to the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu at Bridlington Spa centre and also for the TV personality Bobby Ball at Ilkley and then Boston Spa.

Not all our members read music so our practices are very impor-

tant. Officially, we practice Wednesday evening but we also have another practice on Thursday mornings. These Thursday practices were started in order to help less confident singers learn their parts but most people now turn up for both practices. The practices themselves have been described as a choral version of "Dad's Army" though a realist might feel "chaotic anarchy" should be a more apt description. Practices start with a short devotion led by one of the members to encourage us to remember our calling as Christians. Then we're into singing. What about vocal exercises? At our ages, we either sing or do exercises, you can't have both!

Our esteemed leader Trevor Jones (Sankey, to Dick Saunders' Moody) then starts us off on one of the songs we would like to perfect. That's when the fun and games start. Trevor's sight isn't what it was and so we have to prepare large versions of the music for him. "We'll start half-way down page 4," he says. Except the rest of the choir only has two (normal sized) pages for the whole song. Thank goodness

for bar-numbers. His eye-sight might not be 100% but there's nothing wrong with his hearing. Any wrong notes, rhythms or expressions from just one voice and he picks it up and corrects it. Other favourite expressions include "Get yer heads out of your books", or "keep your eyes on the conductor", "Watch me for expression", "I'll decide when we slow down, not you, so WATCH ME!" etc.

In practices with Trevor (and Fred, his deputy) we take songs apart and really learn not just the notes for each part but how to sing them expressively and musically to the glory of our Redeemer. From the comments we get when we sing at an engagement, the hard work seems to pay off. And it is hard work: we once sang a well-known song from our repertoire as a warm up exercise. Thirty minutes later we moved on to the next song. I guess if it's worth doing, it's worth doing well, 1 Cor 14:40 applies to music too.

Are we successful in what we do? That's not for us to judge but if the number of return visits are anything to go by, then

we must be doing something right. We have between twenty and thirty engagements a year.

If you're ever lost for something to do on a Wednesday evening and you're in the area, then just come along to a practice. I guarantee it's an experience you'll never forget (hard though you might try). Full contact details on the website: www.whiterosemvp.org.uk

YORKSHIRE EAST MALE VOICE PRAISE

David Lindsay

David has written with a personal testimony for our interest and encouragement.

I started singing with the Male Voice Praise choir in 1968 so at the end of last year I had completed 50 years of singing with the FMVP. I started with the Dumfries MVP under the leadership of Bobby Orr. When that choir ceased to operate I made arrangements with the Carlisle MVP choir to make me practice tapes for all the Festivals they were going to. I couldn't join them for practice because of my

work; their practice night was on my busiest day and night of the week. However, later I was able to join the Carlisle lads and remained there until I moved to Yorkshire to Scarborough where I joined York GMVP. Later on, because no members came from York, we moved choir base to Bridlington where the choir continues, though small in number, to the present day. At the end of the last ABF at Bolton after we had sung the King and I, I felt it needed another verse (I don't like hymns with just 2 verses). Here is verse 3:

*The King one day will lead
me up to glo-ry,
Where we will dwell e-ter-
nal-ly,
And round His throne I'll
sing His praise for e-ver,
Be-cause He saved a wretch
like me.*

We use this now every time we sing the King and I. The verse 2 ending becomes the verse 3 ending, with verses 1 and 2 having the same ending. I thought I would send this as maybe some of the other choirs could use it as well.

BRISTOL EVANGEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

Paul Davies

After a relatively quiet period we are now approaching a busier time for which rehearsals are in full swing. On the 28th April we take the evening service at Backwell Baptist Church. We always get a good welcome here, with folk from around having been invited to come and hear the Gospel.

On Monday 29th April we are the special guests of the Emmaus Christian Choir at their Easter presentation at Whitehill Evangelical Church, Hambrook where both choirs hold their weekly practice sessions, and where Council held their last Area Leaders' Conference in 2018. We will be singing four pieces during the evening and then combining in two joint pieces with the Emmaus.

On 11th May at 6.45pm we look forward to "An evening of Gospel Male Voice Singing" arranged by former member Fred Boulton. Fred now lives in Bridgwater and is very active in the local St George's Church in

Wembdon. This will be an informal Gospel presentation by the Bristol Evangel Male Voice Choir and the Exeter Male Voice Praise. Fred is very hopeful this will attract a large attendance from the immediate locality and is ensuring it is being widely publicised. The village and church are in a lovely quiet and peaceful Somerset location and we are looking forward to a fruitful day.

Please pray for us as we in turn pray for all of you that our Lord will be glorified and honoured by our singing.

CHELTENHAM MALE VOICE PRAISE CHOIR

David Kendrick

We continue as an active choir, although we struggle in the 1st Bass section and sometimes have to sing in 3-part harmony. However, our mission remains 'to present Gospel in word and song' and we are usually commended by our audiences.

We have lost two Residential Homes from our List of Venues, however, as one door closes another opens in the

Lord's work, and 'yes' we have gained two new ones.

The highlight of our year, we trust, will be our Diamond Jubilee Rally on Saturday 19th October. We have a good line-up of guests, and would welcome other FMVP choirmen to join us. Please put the date in your diary. More details next time!

Snippets from here and there...

*Andy Webb of the **Whitstable** Choir underwent heart surgery last year and has been doing well, having returned to singing with the choir. However, he recently began experiencing problems (which may be related to his surgery) and has been signed off work for 2 weeks. He has been referred for tests locally and is also due to go to London during this time for further investigations. Please could we pray for Andy, that the doctors will find the cause of his problems and be able to treat them successfully. May he, Gabi and the family know the Lord's peace at this time.*

*The 40th **Bolton** Festival on 27th April has evangelist Roger Carswell as speaker, with guest choirs from Moray and Peterhead with John Buchanan as soloist. Not to be missed!*

Calendar of Events: April - June 2019

APRIL

13	<i>Peterhead Festival</i>	<i>Congregational Church, Queen St, P'head</i>
13	<i>Exeter Festival</i>	<i>St Thomas Methodist, Cowick St, Exeter</i>
14	<i>Chesterfield Choir</i>	<i>Winster URC nr Darley Dale</i>
15	<i>Purley Choir</i>	<i>Whitgift House, South Croydon</i>
17	<i>Uxbridge Choir</i>	<i>Rayner's Lane Baptist Church</i>
19	<i>Exeter Choir</i>	<i>Whiddon Down Methodist: Good Friday Svce</i>
20	<i>Highland Choir</i>	<i>Culloden Baptist Easter Service</i>
20	<i>White Rose Choir</i>	<i>Beacon Community Church, Wibsey</i>
23	<i>Highland Choir</i>	<i>Invergordon Cruise AIDaura</i>
27	<i>Bolton Festival</i>	<i>Victoria Hall, Knowsley St, Bolton</i>
30	<i>Uxbridge Choir</i>	<i>SRCF Deane Avenue, South Ruislip</i>

MAY

2	<i>Whitstable Choir</i>	<i>Bradbury Grange, Whitstable</i>
8	<i>White Rose Choir</i>	<i>Mapplewell Manor & Aukley Methodist</i>
9	<i>Hertford Choir</i>	<i>Grange Baptist Church, Letchworth</i>
11	<i>Exeter/Bristol Chrs</i>	<i>Gospel Singing Evening, Wembdon Parish Ch</i>
16	<i>White Rose Choir</i>	<i>Rawcliffe Gospel Hall</i>
17	<i>White Rose Choir</i>	<i>Carthorpe Methodist nr Bedale</i>
18	<i>Glasgow Festival</i>	<i>Harper Ch, Craigiehall St, Glasgow G51</i>
21	<i>Whitstable Choir</i>	<i>Sunnyhill Fellowship</i>
31	<i>Highland Choir</i>	<i>Culduthel Christian Centre</i>

JUNE

1	<i>Inverness Festival</i>	<i>East Church, Academy Street, Inverness</i>
8	<i>Swansea Festival</i>	<i>Waterfront Community Church, Swansea</i>
9	<i>Chesterfield Choir</i>	<i>Windley Baptist Fellowship nr Ashbourne</i>
13	<i>Highland Choir</i>	<i>Invergordon Cruise Nautica</i>
14	<i>White Rose Choir</i>	<i>Faith Mission Rally, Catterick Garrison</i>

Another full Choirlink this time. Can I commend the new FMVP Website, which is now up and running? It's a good way to keep in touch!

Please send your items for the next Choirlink by Saturday 6th July for the next edition. May I wish all choirmen and their families a blessed Easter.

Yours in Christ, Vaughan