



# CHOIRLINK

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

No. 6

**JULY  
2019**

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

☎ 01323 325387

✉ [vaughan.reynolds@talktalk.net](mailto:vaughan.reynolds@talktalk.net)

## United Kingdom

### HIGHLAND GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR *Sam Macdonald*

This has been a busy period for the choir as we attended 8 events including our own annual Festival of praise, which was held in the East Church, Inverness on 1<sup>st</sup> June, when around 60 choirmen gathered from various choirs and £963 was collected for Street Pastors and Youth for Christ. We heard a good Gospel message from our Speaker, Pastor Kenny Wilson from Northern Ireland, telling that eternity had only two ends, Heaven and Hell. We come to the end of our year on 24<sup>th</sup> June and start our new session on 12<sup>th</sup> August with 8 firm bookings confirmed, so it looks like another busy year ahead of us.

On 4<sup>th</sup> June we attended the fu-

neral of one of our previous Chairmen Bill Cowie, who went Home to be with his Lord. He served our choir for 20 years and we remember his earnest leading in prayer whenever we met.

As we remember that our brother, Conductor George Henderson, passed to Glory on 2<sup>nd</sup> July last year, we are saddened that one of his replacements, Peter Hooker, is leaving us to move to the south of England due to recurring illness of his son Jeremy. We thank the Lord for how he led us through various engagements, and we know that our loss will be Cheltenham's gain. We would ask for prayer for our choir as we seek another conductor to share duties at about 26 to 30 engagements over each year.

We would like to hear from a choir member from the South who was

present at the Bolton Festival this year and who was to be moving to our area but did not know our contact. If he contacts me at: sam.macdonald@live.co.uk, I can welcome him to our Highland Gospel MV Choir.

Our plans to visit the port of Invergordon to sing to passengers from cruise liners turned out to be more difficult than was envisaged at first. None the less we got one visit done, although our choir numbered only 10, barely balanced, and passengers were mostly German and French. The next planned visit had to be cancelled as no 2<sup>nd</sup> tenors could attend. We seek to organise a last visit in September before the Cruise season ends. It has now been confirmed for 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

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## EXETER MALE VOICE PRAISE

*Alfred Tarring*

*Maurice Harrison has contributed a report on the 67<sup>th</sup> Exeter Festival held on 13<sup>th</sup> April.*

‘One of the best ever’ - this was the opinion of several of those present at our recent Festival and I am inclined to agree with them. It was certainly a very special evening. What then made it so outstanding?

To begin with, there was the venue. We changed last year from

our long-standing former venue to St Thomas’ Methodist Church in Exeter and this has proved a great success. Nothing is more dispiriting than singing to vacant seats, even if many others are occupied. But we were able to comfortably fill St Thomas’ Church, including the balcony, and this is so important for the dynamics of the whole programme.

Almost half the pieces were by Valerie Collison of Torquay. It is a privilege to have someone who could almost be called our author/composer in residence, and who has provided such a varied output over so many years. The Exeter men were joined by reinforcements from Saltash, St Ives, Bristol, Bridgwater, London and Swansea. Special mention should be made of the Swansea men, who every year send a large contingent including swelling the congregation with family and friends. In fact, the South Walian presence brought a definite hwy! to our prayer time before the evening programme.

Then there was the singing! Both the united choir and the congregation together lifted their hearts and voices to the Lord in a great swell of praise the like of which we do not always enjoy in our individual churches on a Sunday morning. It was very inspiring to join in two old favourites, “O For a Thousand

Tongues” and “Who is on the Lord’s Side?”, together with a modern favourite, “The Price is Paid”. The singing was led by three inspiring conductors: Colin Reynolds (Torquay), Alfred Tarring (Exeter), the main organiser of the event, and Andrew Kimber (Exeter). Our two musicians, Phil Taylor (Saltash) at the organ and pianist Maureen Bibey (Exeter) also gave both choir and congregation a great lead.

Maggie Holden, our guest soloist, entranced the congregation with her sensitively rendered presentation of the gospel in song. Our chairman/speaker, Rev. Steve Wild, brought an unconventional touch to the evening. Arriving dressed in multicoloured and garish style, he changed into a more decorous ecclesiastical outfit and led the proceedings with humour. His gospel presentation was informal, original and powerful.

It was good while we were enjoying so many blessings to think of others less privileged, and over £1000 was collected for the work of Barnabas Fund.

So... all in all, a very memorable evening which moves us to give thanks to God for the presence of his Spirit among us and the blessing we enjoyed on that occasion.

‘The best yet’? Perhaps the jury is still out, but certainly a Festival which will keep us rejoicing for some time - perhaps till next time.

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## CHELTENHAM MALE VOICE PRAISE CHOIR

*David Kendrick*

2019 is proving to be a very busy and exciting year for the Cheltenham Male Voice Praise Choir. Although we have not had quite as many engagements as we normally do, (one or two Residential Homes cancelled, and one was closed down last autumn), nevertheless the ones at which we have performed have gone down well. We have received some very positive comments about our singing and it has been evident to us that some residents have been deeply affected by the words of the hymns sung. We are due to sing at our final engagement, prior to our August vacation, on Monday evening 29<sup>th</sup> July. This is a new venue for us and the Activities Co-ordinator is a keen Christian lady, hence our eager anticipation that the Lord will really go before and bless us in our service for Him.

We will not have any more engagements until late November, when we shall commence our Christmas programme, DV. Once we return in September, we shall

be practicing seriously for both the Bristol Festival on 28<sup>th</sup> September and the Diamond Jubilee Cheltenham Rally on 19<sup>th</sup> October. If any Choirmen fancy a weekend away in Gloucestershire in October, you would be very welcome to come and join us. Just let me know and I shall be happy to supply copies of any music required, together with a copy of the Programme.

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## BRISTOL EVANGEL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Paul Davies*

Since the last edition, the choir has kept comfortably busy taking evening services at various churches in a large circular area encompassing Gloucestershire (Hawkesbury Upton Chapel), Bristol (North Common Methodist) and Somerset (Churchill Methodist, near Weston-Super-Mare). Additionally on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June we had our annual invitation to take an evangelistic meeting at Pinehurst Gospel Hall in Swindon which again turned out a great success.

Pinehurst Gospel Hall was for some time at a very low ebb and was only kept open by the hard work of David and Prissie Penman. They felt that the Lord had spoken to them to keep the Hall open and that they should try to encourage local people to come in and hear the Gospel Message.

They started organising various Saturday events at the Hall with various meetings aimed not only at “entertainment” but by simply introducing the Gospel. Four years ago, we were invited to provide a “Choir evening” and we have been going every year. Several members of the Chippenham Male Voice came along to give us a big helping hand with a very successful evening. A choir of around 25 men sang the Gospel to a full hall – a great encouragement to the folk at Pinehurst which has now seen an increase in their Sunday attendances.

As mentioned in *Choirlink 5*, on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May we took part with the Exeter and Chippenham contingents in “An evening of Gospel Male Voice Singing” at St George’s Parish Church, Wembdon, where Fred Boulton, a former member of the Bristol Evangel MVC, is a member. Fred had the vision of showing his church people what the Festivals of Male Voice Praise was all about, and organised the whole lot including the programme. He was rewarded with a full church including a good number of visitors from the area and a choir of around 40 men. St George’s is in a lovely tree lined setting away from the built-up area and overlooking the cricket green. The whole evening was a typical FMVP Gospel presentation in

song. There wasn't a specific message/epilogue but chairman Rev Peter Bannister expanded on his introductions to the songs with "mini sermonettes". The conducting was shared by Alfred Tarring and Andrew Kimber from Exeter and Paul Davies and William Zerk from Bristol. It was also a delight that Fred was able to conduct the opening piece, "Let the whole world know" and close the evening by conducting "We'll all be there". "In House" solos were provided by William Zerk, Robert Powell and Lynne Davies from Bristol with Robert and Arthur Pengelly providing solo verses in two songs. The accompanist was Bristol's Rosemary Raybould. Adrian McInnes, a Bristol Top tenor, pro-

vided some light organ music before and after the programme. Reports were received of spiritual encouragement, and blessing from the presence of so many men prepared to witness to their Saviour.

We are now well into planning our Bristol Festival which takes place at St Michael's Church Centre, Stoke Gifford on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September at 6:45pm. Please pray for us as we prepare for this Festival. Having moved from the Colston Hall three years ago we are now seeing a different audience and we trust and pray that our singing and message will strike the hearts of those who do not know the Lord but have been encouraged to come along by Christian friends.

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## COPYRIGHT REMINDER FOR ALL BUDDING POETS!

Do you think that some of the pieces we sing could be improved? Perhaps you think that the words could be enhanced, or an extra verse should be added. That is fine, but please remember that if the piece is under copyright control you must obtain the permission of the copyright holder to do so before you sing it in public. This copyright permission should also be stated on the music.

I know that sometimes we find copyright regulations irksome, but as Christian choirs we must follow the law, and we must not do anything that might bring dishonour to the Lord's name, or to our witness for Him.

If the copyright belongs to FMVP, or if you wish to continue using the piece quoting our publication number (e.g. KS10), please contact the Secretary, Mike Dewhurst, for permission.

Alfred Tarring

## Worldwide

### BRISBANE FESTIVAL MALE VOICE CHOIR

*Neil Moss*

Brisbane Choir's AGM was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> March with the same members and officers being elected apart from Trevor Bowler who has shifted and now linked up with the Bundaberg Choir.

The past year started off in good Australian fashion with the Acacia Ridge Christian Assembly holding a Barbeque on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March with the choir presentation following. We visit here every two years. The programme was well received with time to greet folks before and afterwards. We made our first visit to Burleigh Uniting Church on the Gold Coast where the pastor called us an awesome choir, with our presentation being the most "Christ Centred" they had heard. Our committee agreed that this is why we must continue singing.

Other visits were to South Pine Community Church, Eatons Hill, and Peninsula Palms Retirement Village Rothwell where a few choir members live.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> June the first of our Regional Festivals was held at Warwick, about two hours travel SW of Brisbane. 29 men made the

trip from Brisbane and 11 from Toowoomba for a presentation at Town Hall. An audience of about 220 attended, and one lady was in tears because the Gospel was sung publicly in her town.

On 13<sup>th</sup> October we sang with the Toowoomba Festival with a combined group of about 55 voices. Despite a cold, damp evening a good number attended and seemed to respond very well to the presentation. At the end of the year we did four Christmas presentations. Our Choir Christmas celebration dinner with our wives was held on 18<sup>th</sup> November.

This year we plan presentations at Churches, Retirement Homes, and three Regional Festivals at Warwick, Ipswich and Bundaberg.

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### BAY OF PLENTY MEN'S CHOIR

*David Cantwell*

We have had a usual start to the year recommencing in February after a summer break and holding our 1<sup>st</sup> concert in March. All of our concerts help raise funds for the Bible Society and Gideon's International. 4 members passed away in the last 6 months reflecting our aging group, but are glad to have some younger men in our ranks

also. The traditional music style doesn't suit many of the younger generation, so one of our older members has made some choir arrangements of traditional tunes, which we have had pleasure singing. We have enjoyed singing Valerie Collison's arrangements and have for a number of years now joined with the Brisbane Men's Choir in performing many of them.

This year our numbers have not been large at 15, but the balance of parts has been good and it has surprised us how well our sound has filled the halls.

Let's continue to exalt the name of the Lord together.

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## BUNDABERG FESTIVAL OF MALE VOICE PRAISE

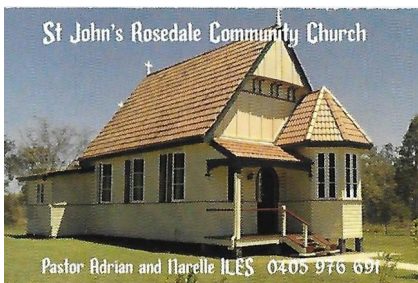
*Elaine Stephens*

We are currently working on a suite of music provided by Brisbane Choir from which the biennial Bundaberg festival programme will be chosen. This presentation will be held in the Moncrieff Entertainment Centre, Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Brisbane choir joins us on this occasion plus Toowoomba and maybe others.

On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> the choirs sing at St. John's Lutheran Church, then Ann Street Gospel Chapel, our

home base, followed by lunch and farewell to the visiting choirmen.

Other commitments this year have been to; Salvation Army Home League; Gin Gin Baptist Church; Rosedale Community Church, a restored Anglican building in a country village. We try to visit annually to support the Pastor (an ex member of our choir who is fighting cancer); also Bolton-Clarke Fairways retirement village and Gracie-Dixon Day Care Centre .



We visit Childers Anglican Church Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> for a special Christmas carol service. There are several more venues whose dates have not yet been confirmed.

We have also participated at the funeral services for our members who have been taken home and a sister in law of two of our choir members earlier this year.

We send our greetings to our fellow songsters in the UK and pray that we will continue to serve Our Saviour in prayer and song.

## Snippets from here and there...

Sad news this time around. **Alec Worthington** of the East Yorks choir passed away on 18<sup>th</sup> May after being unwell for some time. His funeral was held in Christ Church, Bridlington on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

**Eileen Kerr**, Purley choir's accompanist, passed away on 16<sup>th</sup> July; her funeral is on 26<sup>th</sup> July. Eileen endured various back and hip problems over the years and is surely now free from further pain.

**Tony Brookes** of the former Cardiff choir passed away in May. Tony was also editor of Interlink (in a sense, my predecessor). He was a minister on the Isle of Man and elsewhere, and got involved with Cardiff choir when he retired in 2004. Over the years he earned the deep respect of all who knew him, and although very ill for the last 3 years of his life he still worked tirelessly for the Lord as pastor of a church in Caerphilly where he had moved fairly recently. He was so very reliable and dependable in every way and will be greatly missed by all.

## Calendar of Events: July - October 2019

### JULY

27 Whitstable Choir Evening of Praise and Worship: Beltinge Bapt

### SEPTEMBER

13 Highland Choir Inverness Methodist: Street Pastors  
28 Bristol Evangel Ch Bristol Festival, St Michael's Ch Stoke Gifford  
28 Moray Choir Moray Festival, Buckie Methodist Church

### OCTOBER

18 Highland Choir Dyke Church, Moray: local charity  
19 Cheltenham Choir Diamond Jubilee Rally, Cambray Bapt Ch  
19 Bundaberg Choir Bundaberg Festival, Moncrieff Ent Centre

*Thank you to all who sent information and prayer items for this bulging edition. Once again I have had to hold items over, and use a lot of 'red pencil' on the contributions folk have sent. It's a nice problem to have, though!*

*Please send your items for the next Choirlink by Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October.*

*Yours in Christ, Vaughan*