



# Pontnewydd Male Choir

## CHOIR NEWSLETTER

Year 25 SEPTEMBER 2021

### Old enough to remember?

Were you able to complete *Patience is a virtue.....?*

Proverbs have many different forms but the one that I remember is;

*Patience is a virtue, get it if you can;*

*Seldom found in woman ..... never in a man!*

I'm beginning to wonder whether this version was composed by my mother!

### September birthdays.

**Alan Hopkins** (B1) Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>

**Martin Carey** (T2) Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>

**Tony Carpenter** (T2) Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Alwyn Nutland** (T1) Wed 29<sup>th</sup>

**Peter Davies** (B1) Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>

**George Doherty** Friday 10<sup>th</sup>

**Graeme Jones (T1)** Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>

### Chorister updates.

Our Publicity Officer, **Peter Davies**, some weeks ago had another TIA but, remarkable man that he is, shrugged it off and is back to what seems to be his normal sanguine self. **Graeme Jones** also had a rather uncomfortable spell in The Grange A&E department. He was discharged after a short stay (in luxurious quarters) and is now making a quiet recovery at home. Our very best wishes to both.

No doubt someone will be able to give an explanation, but many can say that the waiting times and procedures at The Grange A&E are far from satisfactory, rather frustrating and somewhat puzzling. No doubt Covid will be mentioned.

### Sad news.

Older choristers and their wives / partners will be sad to hear that **Jean Robins**, (the widow of a former much respected bottom bass, **Carl Robins**) died recently. Jean was, for a number of years, an active member of our Ladies Committee and remained a regular supporter of choir activities after Carl's death. Jean died early in the week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> August. The funeral takes place on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September** and a family and friends restricted number service will be held at Siloam Baptist Church at 12:40 pm followed by the committal service at **Cwmbran Crematorium at 1:30 pm.**

## **Back to normal?**

Are you finding that life is back to normal? It seems that some people are now able to behave in the same way as in pre-lockdown days. Should we all be like them? Or are they 'chancers' - perhaps just thoughtless? It is a certainty that the virus is still active and its effects variable. No-one can be certain of exactly what lies ahead and individuals are reacting in a way that reflects their concerns (or lack of concerns). We can ask why there is not uniformity in the wearing of masks, the requirements for masks and for social distancing? Does behaviour depend on whether you are under 30 or over 70, or if you are able to take a morning jog, or if you struggle to walk unaided? What's (become) normal for you?

PMC choristers are also reacting in different ways and some have been questioning why other singing groups are able, apparently, to rehearse and plan activities that are almost the same as pre-lockdown. Perhaps we should remember that it's advisable to 'compare like with like'. For example, rehearsal facilities and membership numbers for choir A might be very different from those for choir B. Our hard-working committee are constantly looking at how / when we can get back to normality in our rehearsals and, bang up-to-date, chairman **Ian** has something to tell us:

*The Management Committee met on the evening of August 30<sup>th</sup> to review, amongst other things, our Coronavirus safety protocols which took into account the choristers responses to the survey that Martin, Derek and I had undertaken over the last week. The decision was made to amend our protocol as follows:*

- Temperature checks, hand sanitization and attendance register will remain.
- There will no longer be a requirement to wear face visors.
- However face coverings (masks) **must** be worn on entering the practice room and until choristers take their seats.
- Face coverings **must** also be worn if choristers move around the practice room, visit the toilet and when they leave the practice room at the end of practice.
- When singing face coverings can be removed.
- The social distancing requirement of 2 metres between seats will be reduced to 1 metre. Seats to be occupied will still be marked.
- We will return to full practice if the seating arrangements allow.

***Before these changes can be implemented our Risk Assessment document has to be amended to reflect these changes and then presented to the church's committee for their approval.***

***Until that happens the existing safety protocols remain.***

*We will keep the safety protocols under review on a regular basis.*

**Ian. Chairman PMC.**

## Normal?.....Nothing stays the same.

Compiling this newsletter always makes your editor very aware of how the technology has changed since the first edition. As one of the long-serving group of choristers it brings back memories of some of ways in which choir 'business' was conducted in, for example, the early seventies.

The choir secretary was (and had been for a number of years) **Charles Lippiatt** who eventually, in the years before his death, became the choir President. He was a great favourite with all choristers. The minutes of choir committee meetings were recorded by Charles who then went home and wrote them, in his very legible longhand, in exercise books possibly bought by himself.

As choir membership began to increase, as did choir income and expenditure, a new secretary, **Glan Pomeroy** if my memory serves me correctly, was elected and things started to change. Big money was spent on – get ready for this – a portable manual TYPEWRITER. This set the choir racing down the road to perdition and later users updated the technology (often for their own convenience and without cost to the choir) to desktop word-processors, personal computers, Windows and even Apples.

Yours truly has the use of spellchequers, lower and UPPERCASE, **bold print**, *italics*, underlining, ~~special features~~, ~~crossing-out~~, sub<sup>script</sup> and upper<sup>script</sup> and many other effects. Do you recall the claim that was made about the expected reduction in paper-work? At least this newsletter confirms that occasionally this does happen. But would committee members agree?.

Certainly there are other things that are different in the running of our choir. For example our very successful web-page gives details of the members of our management committee – now a much larger number than in 1970. Then without leaving home we can even practice new (and old) pieces by listening online - at least if we have the technology! So many things are now rather different for us all.

But please forgive me if I now leave you – I think there's an update that I have to download. Perhaps you should make sure that your tablet and / or laptop is up to date - and check that your smart phone battery is sufficiently charged. I wonder what Charles would think about it all?

## Down memory lane again.

Recent newsletters referred to a number of choristers who, sadly, are no longer with us. The photograph on the last page was taken in Caen in 1995 and many of us thought that we looked like a bunch of bus drivers. You'll see that there was rather more hair (of a different colour!) on view than is the case nowadays. Your editor can identify about fourteen choristers still (fairly) active in the choir but others may identify more.

Who can spot the Maori? He nearly missed the boat!

*The photograph has probably appeared before but I include it again because it shows both John Davies and Carl Robins.*



### Light relief.

In early 1940 a German spy was dropped by parachute in the Welsh hills with instructions to contact a Mr Jones in the small village of Llanfair. He was told that he should identify himself by giving Mr Jones the coded message: "Our welsh coal will keep us warm tonight."

Arriving at the village he asked a small boy where Mr Jones lived and was directed to a small cottage nearby. He knocked on the door, the owner emerged and the German asked:

"Are you Mr Jones?"

"I am." was the reply followed by the German saying:

"Our welsh coal will keep us warm tonight."

Mr Jones stared at him in puzzlement for a short time and then smiled:

"Ah, you've got the wrong house. It's Jones the Spy you want."

In the same village the plumber was recognised by the fact that he only had one tooth, located centrally in his bottom jaw.

He was known as "Dai, central eating."

*Just for some, here are two tricky cryptic crossword clues:*

TV show one's watching all the time? (3, 7).

Old priest's last letter discovered in time. (4)

*For the musical – an easy one to finish:*

Name something that you'll regularly see in practice and it doesn't matter if you spell it from right to left instead of left to right.