



CHOIR NEWSLETTER

April issue

Year 28 April 2023

Welcome to our April newsletter as we celebrate the arrival of Easter and British Summertime



Did you know:

Following on from last month's newsletter and the theme of the naming of the months of the year, because it was the Romans who first introduced the calendar to Britain, April (Aprilis) is thought to stem from Latin word "aperio", meaning "to open"—a reference to the opening buds of springtime.

One of the most well-known dates of the month is **April Fools' Day**.. No one is sure where this originated, but some historians speculate that April Fools' Day dates back to 1582, when France switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar and which moved the new year from April to January. People who were slow to get the news or failed to recognize that the start of the new year had moved to January 1 and continued to celebrate it during the last week of March through April 1 became the butt of jokes and hoaxes and were called "April fools."

April also sees the celebration of **St George's Day** on 23rd April. St George is truly an international saint as England is not the only country or region to claim him as its patron saint. England shares St George with Venice, Genoa, Portugal, Bulgaria, Georgia, Ethiopia and Catalonia among others as their patron saint. According to tradition he was born around 280 AD in what is now modern-day Turkey, of Greek descent, and was an officer in the Roman army, who was sentenced to death for refusing to recant his Christian faith.

The legend of Saint George and the Dragon first appears in the 11th-century when tradition tells that a fierce dragon was causing panic at the city of Silene, Libya, at the time George arrived there. To prevent the dragon from devastating people from the city, they gave two sheep each day to the dragon, but when the sheep were not enough, they were forced to sacrifice humans instead. On one occasion the king's daughter was chosen to be sacrificed but George saved the girl by slaying the dragon with a lance. The king was so grateful that he offered him treasures as a reward for saving his daughter's life, but George refused it and instead he gave these to the poor. The people of the city were so amazed at what they had witnessed that they became Christians..





April birthdays.

Paul Reynolds (B2) Thursday 6th John Walding (T1) Sunday 9th Martin W Jones (B2) Thursday 13th
Graham Davies (T2) Saturday 15th Mark Homan (T2) Tuesday 18th Mike Phillips (B1) Thursday 27th

Chorister updates.

After an extended absence the choir were delighted to welcome back second tenor Lyn Birch to the practice room. Welcome back, Lyn!

Although we appear to have seen the worse of Covid, choristers are still succumbing to various other infections that affect attendance at practice. Whilst most absences are limited to a week or so, others frustratingly linger. Top tenor **John Walding** may be absent for a few weeks after a short visit to hospital but otherwise remains in good health. In the Bottom bass section **Keith Jones** has returned to practice as his nursing duties ease as wife Sue continues her recovery. **Graham Roberts** however is taking leave of absence as his treatment continues.

However, generally, choristers have had a good month health wise and attendance at practice has responded accordingly.

To all those sick and suffering choristers we extend our best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery and look forward to welcoming them back into the fold.

Engagements.

Now that the choir are firmly back in concert mode, you can see that we are in for a very busy summer at some new and interesting venues. Here's the latest list of what is already arranged:

Item	Date	Arrival Time	Venue	Address
Rehearsals for St David's Hall	Sun 02/04/23	13:00	St Julian's School	Heather Rd, Newport NP19 7XU
Age Connects	Thu 13/04/23	10:45	Widdershins	East Ave, Griffithstown NP4 5AB
Cystic Fibrosis Fundraiser	Thu 04/05/23	18:30	Parkway Hotel	Cwmbran Dr, Cwmbran NP44 3UW
WAMS Final Rehearsal	Sun 14/05/23	12.30	Coleg Y Dderwen, Tondy	Tondy Bridgend CF32 9EU
Annual Concert	Sat 20/05/23	18:30	Rougemont School Auditorium	Malpas Rd, Newport NP20 6QB
Holy Cross Church Fundraiser	Sat 10/06/23	19:00	Holy Cross Church	Church St., Mark TA9 4NF
Joint Concert Pontnewydd Ladies	Fi 16/06/23	TBA	TBA	
Make Music Day	Fri 23/06/23	19:30	Nant Bran Centre	Upper Cwmbran Road, NP44 1SN
WAMC St David's Hall	Sat 24/06/23	TBC	St David's Hall	The Hayes, Cardiff CF10 1AH
Wedding	Thu 20/07/23	12:30	St. Gabriel's Church	Clomendy Rd, Old Cwmbran NP44 3LR
Music Festival	Sat 22/07/23	19.00	Mansel Lacey	Hereford
Charity concert for Great Ormond St Hospital	Sat 29/07/23	19.00	St John's Church	Penywain Rd. Wainfelin NP4 6DY



PMC Ladies Committee

The next fund-raising event organised by our hard-working Ladies Committee is a concert with Pashy Pops on Saturday 15th April at :

Cwmbran RAFA club
Greenhill Road
Forgehammer
Cwmbran
NP44 3DQ

Tickets are £10 each and includes a buffet.

Notes from our Musical Director

Sarah writes.

Repertoire

My contribution this month is the topic of repertoire. The definition of the word repertoire from 3 reputable sources is as follows:

- *all the music that you can or perform or that you know - Cambridge Dict*
- *A performer's repertoire is all the plays or pieces of music that he or she has learned and can perform - Collins*
- *All the songs that a performer or group of performers knows and can perform - Encyclopaedia Britannica*

Since PMC returned to singing in full choir format following Covid restrictions, we focussed on revising the standard MVC choral repertoire, the staple diet, as it were, in order to rebuild choristers' confidence. Since then, I realise that there has been much consternation and frustration amongst choristers regarding our rep and I have welcomed suggestions of new repertoire from choristers. Most recently I asked choristers to email me 1 song that they would like to learn that was not in the existing PMC rep, not many replied which suggests that most are happy and settled with our repertoire and some replied with multiple suggestions. So, for transparency, please find below the list of songs compiled from the emails I received, and please do get in touch with your song ideas because every source of inspiration is useful!

Yma o Hyd	Yfory	You'll Never Walk Alone
Vive la Compagnie	My Way	Softly As I Leave You
The Pilgrim's Chorus	Impossible Dream	The Prayer
The Sound of Silence	Skyfall	Another Day (Hafan Gobaith)
She	For Your Eyes Only	All the Time in the World
Thinking Out Loud	Perfect	You Only Live Twice
All of Me	Haven't Met You Yet	Fields of Gold
This Love	Ain't No Sunshine	Nobody Does It Better

Recruitment

We are relaunching a publicity and marketing drive to recruit new members and increase the choir's profile across the area, and our new posters and banner will be available early this month.

Equally, if you know of friends who may be interested in joining PMC, please encourage them to come along and sit in during practice. They'll be assured of a warm welcome.

Those silver surfers in our midst will also notice that we are actively advertising for an Assistant MD/Accompanist. To date we have received two expressions of interest and we will be inviting them to practice over the next few weeks.

Only Boys Aloud

You will have undoubtedly heard of this choir following their exploits on Britain's Got Talent in 2012 and their various other high-profile TV and concert appearances since then. PMC are delighted to announce that we will be working with them as they relaunch their choir following the Covid lockdown. Our new home at Nant Bran is one of the locations throughout Wales where Only Boys Aloud will be recruiting and practicing. We hope that this will lead to the sharing of repertoire and the prospect of joint performances, so watch this space!



So, if you have grandchildren or great grandchildren who may be interested in singing with Only Boys Aloud, spread the word! There's no audition and no fee.

AGM 2023

Martin Carey will be emailing the whole choir shortly giving notice of the AGM on Tuesday 23rd May, providing last year's minutes, inviting nominations for committee and informing them of the current incumbents and including a copy of our current accounts.

Last year's AGM minutes will be on the choir noticeboard shortly and again a few paper copies will be made available.

Paper nomination forms for committee positions will also be made available in practice for 2 weeks starting next week.

Roy Fisher

One of our most venerated and long-serving choristers, Roy Fisher, is now resident at Panteg Nursing Home and it was the choir's honour and privilege to visit him there on 15th March and perform a number of items from our repertoire that hopefully brought back happy memories of his many years as doyen of the Baritone section. It was a pleasure to see and speak with him and I have it on good authority that he enjoyed our visit and even joined in on some of our songs.

Do your bit for conservation

Following on from last month's item, Wendy Reynolds writes:

Hedgehogs Tip No 6

One of the reasons for a decreased hedgehog population is an increased use of pesticides and insecticides in the countryside and also in urban gardens. A hedgehog's natural diet consists mostly of beetles and insects, with a side order of earthworms and slugs.

Lawn treatments reduce worm populations while pesticides, insecticides and slug pellets are toxic and reduce a hedgehog's creepy crawly prey.

Try using natural methods to maintain your garden and reduce the use of chemicals.

Hedgehogs are currently coming out of hibernation so please keep any feeding stations topped up with meaty cat biscuits and fresh water. They will wake hungry and thirsty and will need to be fit and healthy for the breeding season!

I know a number of you take great pleasure in watching wild birds and recognise that they respond to different weather conditions. Recently we experienced a cold spell during December and January which drove many birds into our gardens attracted to our feeders as their natural food supply in the countryside became limited by hard frosts and impenetrable ground. So, you may have seen more Blackbirds, Thrushes, Robins and Dunnock than usual, but as temperatures rise, you may see the reverse happening as the greater abundance of wild food means they are less reliant on our gardens' resources.

You might also have noticed a reduction in the number of Jays and Nuthatches in your garden, but this is directly related to the large amount of acorns produced by oak trees in 2022. Both these birds cache acorns to help them through the worst of winter so they didn't need our gardens.

Cold weather also means that birds expend more energy to keep themselves warm and this particularly affects our smaller birds like Wrens, Long-tailed tits and Blackcaps and can delay their breeding season.

Please let me have your ideas on what we should include in future issues of our Newsletter.

**Pasg Hapus
Happy Easter**

Ian