

Rob's Review



St Edmundsbury
Male Voice Choir

Issue 3
August 2018

Wales Tour 2018, F 27 - Tu 31 July Concert Reviews



Friday 27 July

Our first concert was a very informal one at the Beacon Centre for the Blind, Wolverhampton. The Centre aims to support those blind and visually impaired people who live in the Dudley area and to maximise independence and support residents to make their own lifestyle choices. It is also the present home of our musical director Mark Jefferson's mum. We have followed Sarah's life via Mark over the last few years and so it was a pleasure to meet her at last. The concert was a success and enjoyed by the residents and visitors alike. It was really relaxed with the audience sitting around tables drinking wine. The programme suited old and young alike, ranging from *Morte Criste* to *Kings of Swing* and a new one I hadn't heard before, *Shenandoah*, which I really loved.

At the end of the concert Sarah was presented with a vase from the choir and I think mum was suitably proud of her son!
Lol Farr



The morning of **Saturday 28 July** was spent on a trip to RAF Cosford museum, Wyevale Garden Centre or taking it easy in Telford. Later in the afternoon, we set off for Llanfyllin High School, about an hour's drive from Telford, through beautiful countryside. The chaps rehearsed, and the ladies had very welcome cups of tea and coffee. The Theatre Llwyn, part of the High School, was most impressive with a large stage and plenty of seating, including a raised area, so that there was a very good view of everything going on. More and more seats were put down at the front and I worried that Mark might have ended up conducting the choir whilst sitting on someone's knee! The hall was full to bursting and there was an eager buzz of anticipation. The concert was a type of variety show with the introducer telling lots of jokes, which went down well with the audience. SEMVC were one of three acts with the Moeldrehearn Trio and Penybontfawr MVC. We started the ball rolling with an excellent rendering of 

John D Thomas (Bass) 28 October 1928 - 8 August 2018

We were all sad at the passing of John D Thomas who over the last year had not enjoyed good health. He always had an endless supply of cough sweets, loved the choir and was unique.



From John's daughter, 'Gez' Scott:

This is to send my heartfelt thanks to the Choir for your support and friendship over the years to my Dad, which as you know he valued greatly. As for those who were able to sing for him at his funeral, I must pass on to you how everyone who attended commented on how magnificent you all were, and how you made the day into an uplifting and joyous memorial to him. My family, friends and I are so grateful to you all. In returning to The Dove for his 'Afterglow' you helped to fulfil his final wish, which was:

*"(After my days) hopefully there will be enough in the kitty to buy 'my choral mates a pint in the Dove pub where they can meet some of my other friends.
God bless you all! Love you all!
Keep singing and have a good one!!"*

Amen, the beautiful *Shenandoah* and *Seal Lullaby*. The trio, three lovely girls with equally lovely voices, then took to the stage accompanied by their mother. What inspirational voices! The Welsh choir followed with three songs in Welsh before a short interval and the raffle was drawn.

The second half started with the Welsh choir and included *An African Prayer*, which had tones of SEMVC's *African Trilogy*. The Trio came back with some more lovely songs and SEMVC sang their final section, all of which went down well with the audience. Then we were treated to a lovely rendering of *American Trilogy* sung by both choirs to wonderful applause. The concert closed with a very spirited singing of the Welsh National Anthem – I think we all knew the tune but singing in Welsh is not an easy thing. An excellent evening's entertainment.
Helen Bray

Footnote: A number of ladies discovered St Myllin's Church, Llanfyllin where a very kind churchwarden opened up the church and treated them to an explanation of the beautiful Charter tapestry, created in 1993 to commemorate the 700th anniversary of Llanfyllin being granted town status. There were also some beautiful stained glass windows. The visit concluded with the romantic tale in the Napoleonic Wars between a French prisoner of war Lieutenant Pierre Augeraud and Mary Williams, the daughter of the Rector. A most enjoyable visit which enhanced the whole day out.

St Edmundsbury Male Voice Choir (Registered Charity No. 1028123)

Patron: The Rt. Hon The Earl of Iveagh. President: Paul Deane, Vice Presidents: John Balaam, Dr John Meers

Wales Tour 2018 - report continued

Sunday 29 July

Travelling aboard the Rheidol Railway steam train, the gentlemen of the choir and their supporters were in good voice and renditions of some well known songs could be heard resounding from the carriages.

Torrential rain appeared to dampen spirits at the evening concert with Aberystwyth MVC and unfortunately SEMVC sang at a level below their best, failing to demonstrate the level of singing of which they are truly capable.



The available space within the Morfa Chapel for the choristers of the choirs to stand was quite restricted and this resulted in

SEMVC musical director Mark Jefferson conducting whilst standing on a pew. Mark was clearly uncomfortable with the performance of the SEMVC choir and was understandably disappointed; his usual jovial banter was missing. However, his decision to alter the programme during the performance and include the piece *Aberystwyth* was a stroke of brilliance and the inclusion of the number was well received. The two choirs performed a wide ranging programme of traditional and not so traditional pieces and together they sang *With a voice of singing*, *Morte Criste* and *American Trilogy*.

Conductor and musical director of Aberystwyth MVC Alwyn Jones sang two beautiful duets with Tecwyn Jones whom he later revealed to be his uncle. Tecwyn performed several solos which added to the evening's programme. The concert concluded with the singing of two verses of *Guide Me, O Thou great Jehovah*, one in English and one in Welsh. Mayor of Aberystwyth, Councillor Dr Talat Chaudhri, looked resplendent in his chains of office (he is the youngest looking mayor I have seen!) and said that he had thoroughly enjoyed the concert, however he did look rather lonely sitting in a pew by himself. In fact, it was quite sad that the audience numbers for the concert were not greater! Liz Burnett

Some of Margaret Charlesworth's highlights of the Tour

Terrific cooked breakfasts and an evening paddle (2200) in the warm sea with a gallant chaperone in his DJ, bow tie and polished black shoes (JT-T). An enjoyable afternoon swim in the sea, watched over by Jane and Rob Bream.

Listening to the Choir singing the same numbers several times over yet enjoying them more each time of listening. Buying a pint of beer for the first time ever in my life! Ivor explained exactly what he wanted when asking for a Nukee Brown!

The most interesting conversation with Justin and the Mayor of Aberystwyth about languages and their origins.

RAF Cosford Museum - spontaneous breaking into song by the MVC. Lots of old planes and a particularly interesting Cold War Hangar.

Sharing the moment with blind and partially-sighted residents of the Beacon Centre where Mark's mother lives and he obviously has a great rapport with many of them.

Hearing an owl in the copse at night and seeing red kites; and hearing a lot of Welsh being spoken. A big THANK YOU.

Dates for your Diary

Sa 3 November - Concert, Castle Manor Academy, Haverhill, CB9 9JE, in aid of Stour Valley Explorer Scout Unit

Sa 17 November - Concert, St John's Church, BSE, IP33 1JY, in aid of 'Every Heart Matters' appeal, West Suffolk Hospital

Sa 24 November - BSE Christmas Fayre, Angel Hill, 10 a.m.

Th 20 December - Carols and Chips, BSE Rugby Club

Côr Meibion

CÔR Meibion were delighted to welcome St Edmondsbury Male Voice Choir from Bury St Edmonds to present a joint concert at Capel y Morfa, Aberystwyth on 29 July.

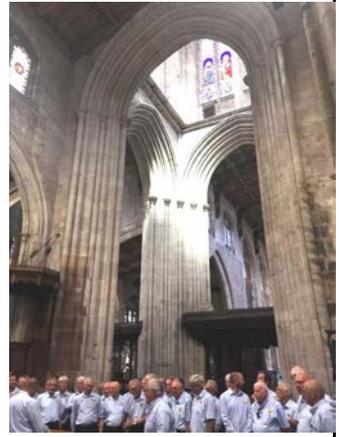
Together the choirs produced a formidable sound, evident in the ensemble singing of items such as *With the Voice of Singing* by Martin Shaw, *Morte Criste*, with music by Emrys Jones and words by Isaac Watts, and *American Trilogy* popularised by Elvis Presley.

The two choirs also presented their individual programmes, with St Edmondsbury being conducted by their director of music Mark Jefferson with accompanist Calvin Goumer and guitarist Simon Shirm. Aberystwyth were conducted by director of music Alwyn Evans with accompanist Elenid Thomas.

The soloist was Tecwyn Jones, bass-baritone who also came together with Alwyn Evans, tenor, to thrill the audience with a selection of solos and duets.

Cllr Talat Chaudri, mayor of Aberystwyth, presented the visitors with a civic shield to mark the occasion and in return the chairman of St Edmondsbury presented a specially inscribed glass vase.

The compère for the evening was Hywel Wyn Jones.



Concert Elmswell, Thursday 12 July

The Elmswell Over 55s Club welcomed us back to the Blackbourne Centre for a very relaxed and entertaining evening of singing, music and theatre. The Centre is a good venue and the programme was well received by a friendly and supportive audience which included Calvin's parents.



Calvin's Scott Joplin performance was exceptional and the 'urinal interlude' later in the programme was

only upstaged by the insecurity of the props and some members of the choir. Justin's quick reaction saved one of the liquid raffle prizes being stolen by one of the likely lads in the village. Mark, of course, was facing the choir and his expressive face indicated that he had no idea of what was happening. The Over 55s Club provided a very special afterglow with wonderful food. The whole evening proved to be one of the best and most relaxed concerts.



The first concert of the new season:-

Saturday 22 September, 7.30 pm, Kedington

Community Centre, CB9 7QQ. SEMVC will be joined by some of Cambridge's Pembroke College choir and Kedington Primary Academy Choir. The evening is in aid of the Kedington Air Memorial Group who aim to create a memorial to the 21 servicemen and one civilian who died as a result of air crashes in Kedington during World War Two. Tickets are £10 or £15 which includes an after-show supper of roast beef, ciabatta and salad.

Reports and pictures are most welcome, please.

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