

Rob's Review

Welcome to the first edition of 'Rob's Review'. We plan to publish a monthly newsletter that tries to cover and hold the interest of all of our members and Friends. Please send your articles, photographs and any event details, together with reports or notice of forthcoming items for inclusion. At last you have a first edition in your library!



St Edmundsbury
Male Voice Choir

Issue 1
June 2018



The AGM saw our President, Paul Deane, present **Ernie Broom** with **Honorary Life Membership** of the SEMVC. Ernie, a loyal member of the choir for nearly thirty years had to retire with failing health. He found standing for long periods was difficult. Ernie is a fantastic person who has worked endlessly for the choir and its members and we will miss him. Sadly, since then Ernie had a fall in his garden and ended up with a broken hip and split femur. I saw Ernie in hospital last Sunday and he hopes to be home around Thursday 21 June. He now requires replacement knees, which I can recommend!
Rob B

Annual General Meeting, Thursday 17 May 2018

The new Chairman (Rob Bream) and Vice Chairman (Barry Cole) were elected. Other committee members were willing to stand again and were elected en bloc. It was very good to see that five members were willing to be put forward as Vice Chairman and shows that the choir has a lot of support from its members.

Chairman	Vice Chairman	Treasurer	Secretary
			
Rob Bream	Barry Cole	Andrew Conquest	Malcolm Lodge

Concert Secretary	Concert Manager	Membership Secretary
Ivor Thulborn	Ian Robertson	Nick Gane



Section Leaders

Top Tenor - Ed Wilson
Second Tenor - Den Cartwright
Baritone - Justin Ballam
Bass - Andrew Mackenzie

Saturday 9 June, concert with Men2sing

Situated in the centre of Newmarket, St Mary's Church was the venue for this concert, our second or even third visit. As is usually the case, with the stone pillars and wooden pews, the church had good acoustics. Although the pews were not too comfortable, the sound of the music was a recompense. SEMVC opened with *Amen*, raising audience awareness and interest in what this concert would be about. Followed by *Seal Lullaby* (so evocative of the sea and shoreline), *The Rose*, *Shenandoah*, the first set finished with the traditional Joseph Parry's *Aberystwyth*.

Men2Sing led with a more recent and popular selection starting with *Mr Blue Sky*, *Walking in Memphis*, *Love of my Life* and the more traditional *How can I keep from Singing*. The powerful music of Freddie Mercury and *Don't Stop me Now* was a good rendition considering the difficulty of the score and none of the backing that Queen have in their recordings. The calming music of *Bridge over Troubled Water* was a different arrangement to that which SEMVC sing, but suitable for the sound that makes this enthusiastic choir so different to that of the usual male voice choir sound.

After the interval Men2Sing sang more popular favourites, many of the arrangements by their musical director, John Trent Wallace. Sting's *Fields of Gold*, *Only You*, *Haven't Met you yet*, *Crazy little thing called Love* were rounded off by *Bui Doi* (from *Miss Saigon*) recalling the tragedy of the American/Vietnamese babies left behind by the American soldiers at the end of the Vietnamese War.

SEMVC followed this appropriately in their inimitable style, accompanied by Simon and Calvin, singing *Angels*. MD Mark Jefferson gave an informative introduction to *Cantique de Jean Racine*. After two Burt Bacharach numbers, *Mustang Sally* was sung with SEMVC's usual gusto.



Both choirs singing together, *The Lord's Prayer* had subtle differences to the arrangement SEMVC usually sing, and finally *What would I do Without my Music?*. This last says it all for male voice choirs. The expertise of the SEMVC and the enthusiasm of Men2Sing produced a very interesting evening of music for those of us lucky enough to attend.
Dianne F

Congratulations to **Suffolk Constabulary Male Voice Choir** who recently presented EACH with a cheque for £2,500 as a result of their 50th Anniversary concert in April.

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

Suffolk Show, Thursday 31 May



SEMVC made their second foray into the Suffolk Show on the last day of May. Last year our patron, Lord Iveagh, asked us to sing, and on the strength of that performance we were invited back and appeared in the official programme! Singing outdoors is not something I particularly enjoy; the sound doesn't travel and it's hard to hear other parts but Mark chose a lively programme which went down well with those that listened. Amid the hustle and bustle of the crowds, it is a fun day and a fun sing. Ivor T

Celebratory Concert, The Square Methodist Church

We all agree that Dunstable is not the most exciting town but on Saturday 16 June Vauxhall MVC from Luton lifted it to another level. It really was a very enjoyable day and concert. With Vauxhall celebrating 75 years since their formation it meant that they first got together in 1943 when Vauxhall Motors were making tanks for the war. The commitment to their choir was strong then and remains so today.



Vauxhall together with Wycombe Orpheus and SEMVC performed a really good concert. We sang well with a reduced choir of 25 and our solo pieces, Cantique and Shenandoah were very well received. Vauxhall's guest soprano, Lynn Deacon, was a joy; perhaps we might find someone similar. Their accompanist, James Banville, made full use of the church's organ. Everyone smiled for Louise Langley the MD for

Orpheus, how could you not, a woman so full of energy! The afterglow provided by Vauxhall was very good indeed, I hope we get the chance to return their generosity soon. Rob B

Will there be croquet again?

Following the success of SEMVC's Summer Barbecue lunch last year, Tim Freathy has kindly invited us again.



More details will follow for this event which will be held on **Sunday 19 August** at Depden.

Dates for your Diary

Sa 7 July - Sing from 2-3 pm at Relay for Life, Nowton Park

Th 12 July - Elmswell Over 55s Club, Blackbourne Centre, Elmswell, IP30 9GY

F 27 - Tu 31 July - Welsh Tour

Su 19 August - SEMVC Barbecue lunch, Tim Freathy's, Depden

Sa 22 September - Concert, Kedington Community Centre, CB9 7QQ, in aid of Kedington Air Memorial Fund

Sa 13 October - Concert, Castle Manor Academy, Haverhill, CB9 9JE, with TUBE and Boys That Sing

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.

The Royal Albert Hall, Saturday 19 May

I experienced the joy of attending the Welsh Association of Male Choirs 'Festival of Massed Male Voice Choirs' (formerly known as 'Thousand Voices Festival') which is held every three years. New seating together with H & S regulations has required the number of performers to be reduced to 850 maximum. Formed in 1962, the Welsh Association of Male Choirs has arranged such festivals at the Royal Albert Hall since 1978. Current choir membership is 91 with 11 of those being from elsewhere in the UK. This includes our very good friends, the Mansfield & District Male Choir who were present at this event. Festival Conductor was Dr Alwyn Humphreys MBE, with guest artists Bella Voce, a 16-piece all female vocal group based in West Wales, soprano Ffion Edwards, tenor Rhydian Jenkins, and soprano Samantha Oxborough. Rhyader MVC participated; our one-time top tenor Peter Byron has joined them, though he was not there. I was most curious to read in the programme of Rhyader MVC that "like many choirs these days we are becoming quite 'senior' with an average age approaching 130!" I think somebody's mathematics is a little awry, don't you?



It was a wonderful evening of very varied music from everyone. Alwyn Humphreys maintained a tight hold on the massed voices with several examples of controlled singing. For me though, the passages of "ff"s that I was looking forward to were in danger of being drowned out by the over-enthusiastic ministrations of the Festival Organist, Huw Tregelles Williams OBE on the mighty Royal Albert Hall Grand Organ. It is the second largest organ in the world with 147 stops and 9,997 speaking pipes so not surprising that the choirs found it difficult to compete! While I experience more spine-tingling goose bumps when SEMVC sing on form than I received this evening, I am so glad I made the effort to attend. I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone for the future. Barry C

Barton Players

The Bury Festival provided us with some fantastic events over a period 10 days but if you failed to notice that the Barton Players were performing 'South Pacific', you will have missed a very good show. Phil Kemp (Second tenor) and his wife, Pam, together with their daughters, Pippa and Sophie, formed a major part of this popular musical. The sets and scenery complete with a working shower were designed and constructed by Ian (Bass) Robertson. A really good show, well done 'Luther Billis, Bloody Mary, the Nurses and Seabees'.



Don't miss 'Cinderella' their next production, 29 November to 1 December 2018.

(The Edmund Octet, all current and past members of SEMVC, were the only amateur group invited to perform as part of the Festival.)



Rob B

Reports and pictures are most welcome, please. Contact:- Chairman Rob Bream, robbream@btinternet.com 01284 702336 / 07881 046476