



In Harmony

Newsletter of the Adelaide Male Voice Choir
Number 45 Summer 2013

PATRON:

His Excellency
Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce
AC, CSC, RANR
Governor of South Australia

VICE PATRON:

Peter Goers OAM

PRESIDENT:

Colin Styles

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:

William Shaw OAM

ACCOMPANIST:

Edward Kriek

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Ian Milbank
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TREASURER:

Denis Harper

COMMITTEE:

John Agnew
John Dick (*Librarian*)
Neville Roach
George Willcox
John Wear

CONCERT MANAGER:

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ALMONER:

Bruce Risby
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LIFE MEMBERS:

Robert McLeay
Myfanwy James
Margaret Lambert
Genty Stevens
Len Turner

Choir practices are held every
Monday from 7.45 pm to 9.45 pm
at Immanuel Lutheran Church,
139 Archer St, North Adelaide

WEB ADDRESS:

amvc.org.au

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A warm, or should I say hot welcome to 2013! I recently noticed a line from the works of Michael Gale "This summer's heat can impel a song", which sounds a positive way of dealing with the extreme heat South Australia has suffered this year. If you've written a song, we'd like to hear from you!

While looking towards this year, I thought back on the full programme we had in the final months of 2012. Here are a few of the events in which the Choir was involved since the last edition of *In Harmony*:

In November we had the pleasure of presenting our *Nostalgia* programme to the appreciative members of the Adelaide Music Club. On this occasion we were joined by the talented young jazz singer Michael Bates, who is a student of Luke Thompson. You will recall that Luke was featured in our *Nostalgia* concert at the Wyatt Hall, Pulteney Grammar School in September.

We were pleased to accept the invitation to lead the singing at the Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Military Cemetery, West Terrace. This was a very moving occasion and we felt privileged to join those gathered to honour the men and women who lost their lives in the service of our country.

Over a number of years we have joined with the folk from the Glynde Lutheran Homes for their end of year gathering and we did so again in 2012. We do enjoy this evening of music and good fellowship.

In December 2012 we participated in the Brighton Secondary School's Annual Festival of Lessons and Carols at St Peter's Cathedral. This was indeed a very inspiring way to celebrate the

Christmas season. We have enjoyed working with the music staff and students from the school and thank Jeffrey Kong for the opportunities he has given us to perform with these talented students in 2012.

Luke Thompson kindly joined us for our lunch time concert at the Flinders Street Baptist Church on 11 December. We included some modern as well as traditional Christmas Carols in the programme.

Our final official performance for the year was a Christmas Concert at the Hope Valley Lutheran Homes on 17 December. It was a most friendly and enjoyable evening, and we were delighted that one of our Choir members, John Wilksch, who was a former Pastor at the Homes, played a Bach organ solo as part of the evening's entertainment.

Our Christmas dinner held at the Glenelg Golf Club was indeed a fitting climax to another busy year. It is really rewarding for all of us involved with the more administrative areas of the Choir to see how the members and their partners and friends relax and enjoy one another's company at social events.

Forward planning for 2013 is well under way and with it come some changes. One of the initiatives this year is to hold a Bonus Concert for Friends of the AMVC on Monday 8 April. The \$10-per-family admission charge for this concert will entitle audience members to their Financial Friends Card. However, inability to attend this concert does not prevent our Friends from gaining their Cards in the usual way by contacting us through AMVC members. We look forward to your continued support as we provide opportunities during 2013 for *Celebrating Choral Excellence*.

Colin Styles

TONY HULL sings in the Second Tenor Section of the Choir. Here are his evocative reflections on a life of music and romance:

The move to join the Adelaide Male Voices Choir had its genesis in a chance meeting with George Willcox. Until then, I'd had a vague idea of joining a singing group, but I had no idea how to go about it. George talked about the Choir and it gave me food for thought. I mulled it over until one day I thought, "What the heck, I'll give it a go." I came along to rehearsal to observe the Choir and listen to its music. I was impressed with the Choir's easy-going camaraderie and Bill's leadership as Choir Master.

Bill said he would give me an audition when I came back. I lived in trepidation for the next seven days, unsure of what form the audition would take. What would I be required to sing? Would it be in front of everyone? I thought, if Bill asks me to sing a song of my own choosing, I'll sing one of my favourite Neil Young numbers – like "Old Man" or "Vampire Blues". Of course, my angst was unfounded – Bill simply played an ascending scale on the piano and asked me to follow it.

I play Neil Young and other songs on my guitar when I'm at a loose end, or feeling low. I have always found solace in music. My guitar was a refuge and the songs I sang were a form of catharsis. When I was going through a difficult time about six years ago, I used to sit on the verandah of my rented Beulah Park stone-fronted cottage and play blues and folk/rock ballads.

Music can take you out of yourself and make you forget your problems. It can extricate you from bad places and shine a light into the darkness. It can fill you with happiness. It can make you glad to be alive. It was like this in the late seventies when I was living in Morocco. I taught English in a private language school and indulged in the kind of hedonistic life a lot of young blokes would envy - sex, drugs and rock and roll. Well, not much sex.

I had returned to this exotic, North African country after a visit a year earlier. During that time, I met a young woman. She was holidaying with her family on a small farm about 50 kilometres east of Fes. I was invited to stay at this farm by a Moroccan lad I had met at a campsite on the Mediterranean. He did not tell me he had a sister, nor warn me that she was a raven-haired beauty with flashing eyes.

It was the blazing summer of '76. There was little refuge from the daily heat, except in an underground room. There, I stole a kiss - and a Moroccan girl stole my heart.

The farmhouse was an island in a sea of burning gold. Wheat fields and olive groves were defined by donkey tracks and lines of Aloe Vera, a weird cactus-like tree that grew in a tangled barrier of sword-like leaves and upturned branches.

At night, the sky was clear and the moon was large. The only sound was the low groan of domestic animals or the distant drone of a car on the road to Algeria.

The men sat around smoking a throat-scorching mixture of marijuana and black tobacco through a narrow pipe. They spoke a guttural language I did not understand.

I would seek out my beauty in the darkness of a doorway for a quick and furtive embrace. But alas those strange and exhilarating Arabian Nights were short-lived. They ended abruptly when my friend found out about his sister and me. We were a scandal. He had to put an end to it. Our only sin was naivety, but I was sent packing and his sister received the stinging rebuke of his open hand.

Back in Australia, I couldn't stop thinking about this girl. The summer was over and she and her family had returned to live in Casablanca. For me, the lure of a faraway, romantic country was too much.

Against all advice, I made my return to Morocco. In an austere, one-bedroom flat off the Avenue 2 Mars, I taught myself to play electric guitar. I joined an amateur rock and roll outfit of expatriate Poms and Aussies. We played Steely Dan, Van Morrison and Bob Dylan.

It was great. We'd get together and practise for two or three hours at a stretch. The time would flash by. We used to play to small audiences in a little venue called the Churchill Club in the ritzy coastal suburb of Anfa – in front of expat teachers, diplomats and their Moroccan friends.

Thinking about those nights so long ago, I can still hear the sound of our voices and the music we played. When we sang, the sum was greater than its parts. Just like the Choir.

Oh, I should mention, my raven-haired girl and I saw each other in secret for three years, before I returned to Australia in 1980. A few months later she escaped Casablanca and joined me in Sydney. She became my wife. We were married for 25 years.



Tony and Viv—both born in 1955

Songs of Love and Travel

Traditional music treats many themes, but two of the most common and lasting ideas are to do with love and travel. In its first major concert this year, scheduled for Sunday, May 26 in Wyatt Hall at Pulteney Grammar School, the Choir will present a selection of songs based on these themes, and drawn from the music of many countries around the world. Here's a quick look at the background of folk and traditional music which I came across while selecting the songs we would sing.

For many people, folk music begins and ends with the songs of the 20th Century folk revival period, which featured the music of performers such as Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and the group Peter, Paul and Mary. You may perhaps have heard the songs of Odette, the Seegers and Woodie Guthrie. But there was an earlier interest in true folk traditions and music, dating from the end of the 19th century.

Traditional folk music was generally performed by singers who were not professional performers, who were singing music that had been passed to them by listening to others and memorising words and melodies, usually unaccompanied by instruments, and also usually from the humbler classes of society. In the early 20th century there was a feeling among serious musicians that much of the traditional music of country origin would be lost if it were not recorded in some way for future generations. In response to this, a number of musicians and composers in various countries took to the towns and villages of their countries, armed with basic recording machines, paper and pencils and began the task of setting down the songs and dances they heard. Among the most famous of these were Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly in Hungary, Krisjanis Barons in Latvia, Cecil Sharp in Great Britain and Alan Lomax in USA. Of course, over a long period of musical history, dozens of classical composers used folk melodies as bases for their compositions.

This rich collection of traditional songs was used as a repertoire resource for a number of performers in the period between the wars, including the Deller family. It also served to provide material for many school music programmes. The post World War II folk revival, using the improved technology of sound recording available, and capitalising on the new freedoms of the 1960s, appealed to a large section of the population, especially young people, who, with money in their pockets, were happy to spend it attending folk performances and buying recordings of popular folk artists.

These recorded performances differed in at least two ways from the traditional folk music performances of the past. Firstly, many of the artists wrote their own

material, usually in the style of traditional music, but making a major departure from folk traditions where the composer or librettist was unknown. Secondly, the presentation of the music was increasingly driven by commercial requirements, and amplification and electronic instruments came into use (there was a famous incident over Bob Dylan using electric guitars



Bob Dylan in 1965

for some of his concerts, where enthusiasts of traditional music threatened to cut the leads to his instruments!). From this point the folk revival movement began to fade and was supplanted by the dominance of rock music, where everyone again became a "singer/songwriter".

The concert on May 26 will present some of the most popular and enduring songs from the traditional repertoire, especially dealing with the themes of Love and Travel.

WFS

Songs of Love and Travel

**The Adelaide Male Voice Choir
presents
a concert of music drawn from song
cultures around the world celebrating
Love and Travel**

**Sunday, 26 May 2013
2.00 pm**

**Wyatt Hall
Pulteney Grammar School
South Tce Adelaide**

**Conductor: William Shaw
Accompanist: Edward Kriek
Soloist: Blake Parham (Baritone)**

**Tickets \$20/ Concession \$18/ Financial Friends \$15
from Neville Roach (8332 1895), from the AMVC
website (amvc.org.au and follow the prompts) or at
the door**

Afternoon tea available at interval

**Dates for Your Diary
2013**

February

Monday 11 7.45 pm Rehearsals resume at Immanuel Lutheran Church
139 Archer St, North Adelaide

April

Monday 8 7.45 pm Bonus Concert for Friends Immanuel Lutheran Church
139 Archer St, North Adelaide

Thursday 25 10.30 am Anzac Day Service Cross of Sacrifice
North Adelaide

May

Sunday 26 2.00 pm *Songs of Love and Travel* Wyatt Hall, Pulteney Grammar
AMVC Concert 1 South Tce, Adelaide

These details are accurate at the time of printing, but sometimes dates or venues have to be changed because of unavoidable circumstances. Please check future editions of *In Harmony*, go to our website (amvc.org.au) or ask a member of the Choir. Further concerts and events through the year will be announced as arrangements are confirmed.

VALE JOHN LAWSON

We are saddened to announce that our immediate past President, John Douglas Lawson, passed away on 24 January 2013 at the age of 77 years, and we extend our deepest condolences to Rose-Ann and family.

John had a long association with the Choir, and was highly respected for his various contributions to the Choir community. In addition to singing in the Second Tenor section, he frequently sang solo items at various events. His love of fun and positive attitude endeared him to everyone he met. Who could ever forget that cheeky smile in the front row of the Choir? All eyes were drawn to him and all hearts were gladdened by his joy in singing.

John served as President for two periods and was also responsible for producing our *In Harmony* newsletter for several years. He was generous with his time and energy on behalf of the Choir, and we all enjoyed his ready wit and genial manner. He was ably supported by his wife Rose-Ann in all that he undertook for the Choir.

John has an honourable place in the history of the Choir and in the memories of those who knew him. He will not be forgotten.

PETER GOERS OAM

Congratulations to our Vice Patron Peter Goers, who was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the Australia Day Honours list this year. The award was for services to the community as a radio broadcaster.

Peter's influence in South Australia is wide-spread, and there are many people in all walks of life who can attest to the fact that he has brought humour and happiness into their lives. He is well-known for his support of community groups in their fund-raising activities.

The Choir, of course, is delighted at this public acknowledgement of its Vice Patron, whom it has long considered to be a "national treasure".

**BONUS CONCERT
FOR FRIENDS OF THE AMVC**

**Monday 8 April 2013 at 7.45pm
Immanuel Lutheran Church Hall
139 Archer Street, North Adelaide**

Start the AMVC concert year on the right note and come to the Bonus Concert for Friends of the AMVC. The \$10-per-family admission charge for this Concert will entitle audience members to their Financial Friends Card, which will provide discounted admission to the Choir's major concerts during 2013.

This will be an informal evening of choral singing and the opportunity to socialise over supper.