



In Harmony

Newsletter of the Adelaide Male Voice Choir
Number 49
Summer 2014

PATRON:

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

VICE PATRONS:

Peter Goers OAM
Jeffrey Kong

PRESIDENT:

Colin Styles

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Terry Helbig

COMMITTEE:

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Neville Roach
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ALMONER:

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LIFE MEMBERS:

Myfanwy James
Margaret Lambert
Robert McLeay
Genty Stevens
Len Turner
Denis West

Choir practices are held every
Monday from 7.30 pm to 9.45 pm
at Immanuel Lutheran Church,
139 Archer St, North Adelaide

WEB ADDRESS:

amvc.org.au

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to 2014—our 130th year.
What a wonderful achievement that is!

Recently I was thinking about how much planning and preparation the fellows faced in the 1880s and 90s as they set out to perform a concert in the far-out reaches of the Adelaide Hills to places like Stirling or Aldgate, particularly in the heat of summer. Certainly it would not just be a matter of collecting your music, allowing a set time to get there, turning on the air-conditioner and setting off. It could well have been a day trip and all that implied. But at the same time, what exciting fun it would have been, venturing into the new and developing settlements. What a great chance it would have been to really get to know your fellow choristers and to develop a real sense of companionship.

That characteristic of friendship that was developed then has continued through the years and continues to this day. The AMVC is a group of men who come from all walks of life and from different suburbs of Adelaide and who might normally not even meet one another, but who are united by a love of music. They have had hours of enjoyment creating music for a wide range of audiences in places far more distant than those even contemplated by our founders, and in addition have developed some very deep bonds of support and friendship. They are there for one another in happy and sad times. This care for one another is like the mortar that holds the group together.

Unfortunately, over the latter months of 2013, this need for support for one another was very evident. A number of our members and families faced either serious long term health issues or the loss of loved ones. We were saddened by the death of one of our members Bill Gough, whilst visiting family overseas, and by the death of one of our greatest supporters, Ivy Fisher. Both of these people will be greatly missed. Our most

sincere and heartfelt sympathy goes out to Pearl Gough and Kevin Fisher. We were also saddened to hear of the deaths in December 2013 of George Sweetapple and Phil Priest, former members of the Choir, who had retired some years ago. We extend our deepest sympathy to their families.

Our final two concerts for 2013 were at the Glynde Lutheran Home and the Hope Valley Lutheran Home. Both concerts were a happy celebration of the Christmas season, and the events were greatly enjoyed by the audiences and Choir alike. David Hokin from our first tenor section delighted us with some solo pieces, John Wilksch gave a splendid rendition on the organ of Bach's *Sleepers Awake* and our guest soloist, soprano Natalie Tate, joined us in the performance of some Christmas music. These were warm and happy events, which also involved some excellent community singing of many loved and treasured Christmas carols.

The final social event for 2013 was the annual Christmas Dinner at the Glenelg Golf Club. This was a great night of fun and socializing. The food was very good, the raffle prizes were many and varied and the fellows were in good voice. It was good, too, to have some of our Friends of the Choir join us for the evening.

We are looking forward now to a fine year of music making in 2014. Please note the Dates for your Diary on page 4. Further events will appear as details are finalised. We look forward to your company as we celebrate our 130th year, and we encourage you to invite your friends to join us.

Colin Styles

INTRODUCING DAVID TURNER, a valued member of the Baritone Section of the AMVC:

The basic information is that I am the eldest of four children of Cliff and Pauline, born in Adelaide in August 1950. I grew up in Camden Park and attended Plympton Primary School and Mitchell Park Boys Technical High School. On leaving school I was apprenticed as a Fitter and Turner in January 1968 to the Engineering & Water Supply Department (now South Australian Water Corporation). During my apprenticeship I was offered the chance of subsidised further study of the Mechanical Technician's Certificate and in 1970 changed career course and became a Mechanical Draughtsman – still with E&WS – and then became a Technical Officer. In 1989 I won a position as a Senior Technical Officer, responsible for organising and conducting hydraulic testing of pumping plant along the pipelines from the River Murray and throughout South Australia. I retired from this position in November 2012.

Music in my life began with a mother who sang, an aunt who sang professionally, and a maternal grandfather who sang and played the violin. While I was growing up it was common for our family to get together weekly at my maternal grandparents' house and have a sing-along around the piano. In 1962 I was a member – as were so many others – of the "1000 Voice Choir", formed each year by the Education Department from students in grade 7. I also remember in the same year singing with a group of boys during the Festival of Arts while standing on a pontoon in the middle of the Torrens Lake. These performances did involve part singing but I must have learned it by rote as I had no other music training. Although there were music lessons during my high school years, these concentrated more on music appreciation and there were no performances or assessments.

A fellow apprentice, with whom I became good friends (he was best man at our wedding), was interested in amateur musical comedy. I tagged along to an end-of-year party and in 1971 became involved with the LeFevre Musical Comedy Society, based at LeFevre Boys Technical High School and organised by the music teacher at the school. Here I met my future wife, Judy. My first on stage role was a few words dressed as a Chinaman in "Flower Drum Song". As members of the chorus we both went on to "star?" in various productions, eventually leaving LeFevre when we married in 1975, and becoming members of the Galaxy Musical Comedy Society, which was based at the O'Halloran Hill TAFE College. After a few productions with them, we decided to fill our lives with other things, such as our son Matthew.

I joined the Army Reserve in 1983 and music took a back seat, until our local church formed a choir in

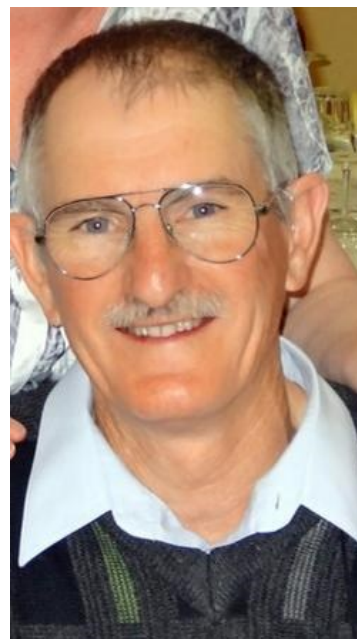
1993 to present a Christmas *cantata* written by two local musicians. The choir stayed together and I attempted part singing of hymns and "praise and wor-

ship" songs as a lone tenor for them until we left that church in 2009. I was fortunate in that the musician used computer generated music and he was able to provide a recording of each piece with the tenor part emphasized. I learned the part by listening to it on a portable CD player while "reading" the music as I travelled to and from work on the bus.

Now as to how I came to join the AMVC? Way back when I was a draughtsman with the E&WS Department, I was located at Bolivar Treatment Works during the 1970s. It was there that I met a lanky Welshman by the name of David Evans! Each time we met, after David left the Department, he would 'casually' mention his involvement with the AMVC, suggesting that it might be something to think about.

While discussing my impending retirement, Judy declared that I needed to find "something" with which to be involved and that maybe David's choir might be worth a visit. And so my fate was sealed when I joined the AMVC in February 2011! Bill decreed that I was a baritone, and the rest is history.

Over this past year I have been fortunate to be involved with the Choir at Committee level and it has certainly given me a new appreciation for the work that is done behind the scenes. Bill and Colin and the rest of the team work really hard to find music, venues and soloists etc to enhance our experience. The camaraderie we experience within the Choir, the sense of family and belonging is a tribute to everyone involved at any level within the Choir and I am very pleased to be a part of it.





EARLY DAYS

(Notes by Bill Shaw, Director of Music)

As AMVC members and Friends may be aware, I have spent many fascinating hours researching the Choir's history through various sources, including archival materials held by the Mortlock Library, newspapers, the net, and the Choir's own files. In celebration of our 130th year, I thought you might be interested during this year in reading some snippets about the Choir, starting in this Newsletter with its establishment.

The 1905 photograph above shows the splendid Adelaide Glee Club at the time of its 21st birthday — a fine achievement and well worthy of celebration. However, the successful establishment of the choir in 1884 did not come about without quite a bit of careful negotiation and tactful handling of some prickly personalities.

We know that in the 1880s several letters were written to the newspapers deploring the fact that the only male choral music performed in Adelaide at that time was sung in the German language. Mr C Reimers was a particularly forceful correspondent, who expressed in a letter to the *South Australian Register* of 6 June 1884 his "astonishment to find in this city three German glee clubs (Liedertafel) and none such of English members ... I learn that some attempts have been made formerly, but that petty discords soon dissolved the enterprise". Although he found this "want of unity or harmony" rather discouraging, he refused to give in. He appeared to attribute much of the discord to the greed of solo singers for applause and stardom: "I know, as an old hand in this game, very well the difficulty of keeping the solo singers in good tune, as their prominence before the audience gives rise to undue self-esteem and jealousy".

Mr Reimers exhorted the community to persevere in attempts to form an English glee club, because "a well-conducted glee club seems to be the necessary outcome of a refined moral status of a town, which rests not satisfied with pride in athletic sports only. Where no ambition for self-improvement guides people in the choice of amusements there is no chance for glee clubs proper, for the glory of such enterprises rests not only in the momentary pleasure of a good performance but in the elevating stimulants to social, religious and patriotic sentiments by the magic power of music, and this means work, perseverance and sacrifice, which, however, turn into enjoyment richly after the first struggles". Well, you can't say fairer than that!

(continued on page 4)

Dates for Your Diary

February Monday 3	7.30 pm	Rehearsals resume	Immanuel Lutheran Church 139 Archer St, Nth Adelaide
March Sunday 30	2.00 pm	Concert	St Joseph's Church 484 Magill Rd, Kensington Gdns
April Sunday 6	2.00 pm	Celebration Concert [G&S for all!]	Wyatt Hall, Pulteney Grammar School, South Tce, Adelaide
Friday 25	10.30 am	Anzac Day Service	Cross of Sacrifice North Adelaide

These dates are accurate at the time of printing, but sometimes concert dates have to be changed because of unavoidable circumstances. Please check with 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.

Please Note

The concert previously advertised for 18 May has been re-scheduled to take place in June. Please check our website or the next edition of *In Harmony* for details, once they have been finalised.

While you have your diary open, mark in our Celebration Concert with the Band of the South Australian Police to be held in The Forge, Marryatville High School, Kensington Rd, Marryatville on Sunday afternoon, 12 October, at 2.00 pm. More details later in the year.

(continued from page 3)

Other correspondents entered into the fray, including a gentleman under the nom de plume of 'Inkstand', who queried Mr Reimers' presumption that all good quality music performance took place within glee clubs, and pointed to the good music being performed by church choirs of all denominations. He attributed the successes of the German glee clubs less to the quality of their music, as claimed by Mr Reimers, and more to their "sociality consisting of smoking and drinking, as well as singing".

There was some vigorous debate also about the merits of English versus German music and even about the habits of the two nations, but we'll put that aside! Suffice it to say that after a meeting of interested men held in the rooms of a Mr Niesche, photographer, at 97A Rundle Street, near where the Regent Arcade now stands, it was decided to form a men's glee society to sing in the English language. It was initially called the *Adelaide English Glee Society*, but not long afterwards the name was changed to the *Adelaide Glee Club*. It was changed again in 1986 to the *Adelaide Male Voice Choir* because the musical term "glee" was no longer well understood.

CONCERT to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Tranmere Parish of St Joseph

2.00pm Sunday 30 March

St Joseph's Church
484 Magill Rd, Kensington Gardens
Afternoon tea available; Tickets at door

GILBERT and SULLIVAN HIGHLIGHTS (with a touch of *Les Miserables*)

Selections for soloists and chorus from the best-loved comic operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, and a medley from *Les Miserables* to follow.

Featuring soloists Deborah Caddy (soprano), Adam Goodburn (tenor) and Andrew Turner (baritone)

2.00pm Sunday 6 April

Wyatt Hall, Pulteney Grammar School
South Terrace, Adelaide
(level floor seating)
Afternoon tea available

Tickets: Neville (8332 1895); amvc.org.au; at door
\$25 adult/ \$20 concession/ \$15 Financial Friends