



The Quarterly Newsletter for Friends of KPMVC

On the Beat!

Who Are We?

The Choir was formed in 1978. It performs around fifteen concerts a year, singing at fund raising charity events around the County of Kent.

In its history, the Choir has appeared in Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium as well as in the UK, appeared on national television in the UK and Canada and has helped numerous local charities to raise significant amounts of money.

The Choir is open to serving and retired police officers, civilian staff, those with links to the service and also members of the community. It is an ambassador for Kent Police and is supported by them, although it is self-financing.

The Choir rehearses weekly at Kent Police Headquarters, Sutton Road, Maidstone. Members meet at 7.15 p.m. on Thursday evenings and rehearsals conclude at 9.30 p.m. Please contact us through these pages for information about joining the Choir; you can be assured of a warm welcome.

Something in the Air



On Saturday 22nd June the choir took part in a very special concert at St Martin's Church in Maidstone. Chris Town sings with the first tenors and has done so for 23 years. In 2018 he began to plan a concert which would mark 50 years of his worshipping at St Martin's and put together a full and varied programme. On the bill were the KPMVC (of course), Shari Rabbani who opened the concert with two solo pieces on piano, guest soprano Hannah Kirk, soloist George Rogers and Bert Butler's Jazz Pilgrims. Chris introduced the evening explaining the reason for the celebration:

“One Friday evening in July 1969 an eight-year-old boy attended his first choir practice in this church. The said young boy was encouraged by his mother to join the choir after something like two years of listening on a Sunday evening to Alan Freeman’s “Pick of the Pops” and also because he was constantly playing “My Old Man’s a Dustman” by Lonnie Donegan, one of the few records his parents owned, on the radiogramme (a long wooden cabinet on legs



that had a record player that stacked up to five '45s, a radio that had a bandwidth marker that slid along behind marked pieces of glass with the exotic names (to me) like Hilversum and Luxembourg marked on it and cupboard space – if anyone remembers those). “Something in the Air” by Thunderclap Newman was at number one in the Pop charts for the second of three weeks. I was that said boy and as I celebrate fifty years at this church my answer to why I am still here would be that there must be “something in the air” that makes this such a special place to me. This concert is a celebration of that fact.”



Later, we were to learn that Chris nearly didn't sing with the choir on the evening... " the first item on my checklist on the Saturday morning was my choir shirt and I put it on the ainer before doing anything else. What with raffle prizes, food and drink for the choir, band, guests and the audience to organise, I left home with eight bags plus with choir jacket and trousers in their holdall. On the evening, the drum kit was not really put in place until about 6.25pm so I wasn't sure how much space the Jazz band would need. This didn't turn out to be a problem, but imagine my horror

when at 7.05pm I opened the bag I thought the shirt was in to find it wasn't there!! Fortunately, St Martin's Church Warden, also a Chris by the way, came to my rescue by providing a shirt which proved to be exactly the right size. I am delighted to say that the concert raised £1000 for church funds and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. I think I forgot to thank the performers for their part in the concert in my closing thanks on the night, and therefore do so now."



Bert Butler's Jazz Pilgrims and Kent Police Male Voice Choir lead the audience in a rousing rendition of "The Old Rugged Cross" to close the concert.

 Four circular icons representing CDs, each with a colorful musical note (yellow, pink, blue) on top. They are arranged in a row within a rectangular frame.

RECORDING FOR A NEW CHOIR CD SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER – WATCH THIS SPACE

Young Artists Programme



All Saints Church, Frindsbury on 11th May to raise money for “Holding on Letting Go” the choir’s Charity of the Year. Guest Young Artist Holly Wray. Holly sang ‘Per La Gloria’ a 17th Century Aria and ‘In his eyes’ from Jekyll and Hyde. She is currently studying A-level music at Simon Langton Grammar School and sings with the National Youth Training Choir, Canterbury Girls Choir and her school chamber choir. The concert raised just over £200 for the charity.



St Peter and St Paul’s Church, Ospringe on 25th May. Affectionately dubbed “the Rendle twins” by Chairman George Rogers, Charlotte Rendle performs “Bring Him Home” with her dad Martin Rendle (our Musical Director). Charlotte also performed a solo piece “The Ashokan Farewell”. Charlotte is no stranger to choir concerts being the regular page turner for accompanist Karen Barton-Holman and has performed on the cello and sung as a Young Artist in her own right. She has studied cello since the age of seven, she currently holds grade 8 cello and is working towards her Associate Diploma. She also plays the piano and is working towards her grade 8 singing exam. Charlotte has just finished her GCSEs. She plays with the Kent County Youth Orchestra, Revelation Strings and attends play throughs of musicals with the London Music Theatre Orchestra.



Kent Volunteer Police Cadets often assist the choir at concerts with duties such as managing car parking and welcoming. Four cadets came along to All Saints, Frindsbury on 11th May. Left to right – Paige Watts, Kathryn Scruton, Zack Hall and Matt Williams.



Young Artists Programme



St Bartholomew's Church, Herne Bay 15th July. Hannah Baker gives a mesmerising performance of "Monti's Zardas" on the xylophone followed by, what can only be described as xylophone gymnastics, performing the Two Imps with her teacher Lorraine Baker (no relation). Hannah has Grade 8 in percussion and Grade 8 piano. She is currently studying 'A' level music at Chatham House Grammar School in Ramsgate. She will be playing for the Kent County Youth Orchestra in the summer. She hopes to go on to study music at either Trinity Laban or at Royal Holloway.



Embarrassing or What!



One Monday morning in May 1967 I was working in an Office in Maidstone where the Branch Manager was a Season Ticket holder and staunch Chelsea F.C. fan. Mine was the very first desk he passed on his way into the Office. I looked up as he came past and having watched Chelsea lose to Tottenham in the F. A. Cup Final on the previous Saturday and spotting that he was wearing a black tie, I looked at said tie and in my attempt at a smart remark said "poor old Chelsea". He glared at me and merely said "my Mother died yesterday". How I wanted the ground to open up! But I kept my job!



Jeff Jeffries

2019 AGM

20th June at Police Headquarters



42 members attended this year together with Martin Rendle (Musical Director) and Karen Barton-Holman (accompanist). In his annual report, Chairman George Rogers highlighted some of the notable events and achievements of the past year:

- The 40th anniversary celebrations completed after rigorous planning was a worthwhile series of events. The choir has represented Kent Constabulary for over 40 years and raised in excess of £400,000 for charity. We should be rightly proud of what we have achieved and our continued ambassadorship.
- We now have a total of 53 active members and the most recent recruitment drive brought in a wave of new members driving down the average age of the choir. Over the years we have seen over 150 separate members come and go yet we have always managed to maintain a high standard of singing.
 - The Young Musicians Programme has been a success with 8 musicians on our books to date.
- Our Charity of the Year initiative has been an outstanding success. This year “Holding On Letting Go” has touched many people and this shows in the funds that have been collected. Everyone was encouraged to give some thought to a charity that may be worthy of support and submit a proposal next year.
- Committee Members continue to work hard on behalf of the Choir. Each member has a designated role and has performed that role with enthusiasm and professionalism. Specific contributions were mentioned to ensure none of us loses sight of the tremendous amount of work involved. Mention was also made of the work other people who are not members of the choir also put in to make all that we do a great success. Thanks were also expressed to Martin and Karen for all that they do on behalf of the choir, often going beyond their pay-grade.

George introduced our President, Deputy Chief Constable Tony Blaker, to present certificates of recognition to Choir Members. Founder Members currently have served 328 years in total (41 years each!) The Members are: Chris Cole, Geoff Cornelius, Peter Harwood, Mick Pepper, George Rogers, Norman Sells, Roy Waller and Tony Wheatley. A new Life Member, Mark Lucky, was also presented with a certificate of recognition. Tony Blaker responded with a vote of thanks for all we do in the community as a choir and for his full support of us as a charity.

Treasurer, Mike Clayton, reported that choir funds were looking healthy and there was every reason to believe that this would continue into next year.

Musical Director, Martin Rendle reported a successful year musically and highlighted the success of the trip to Ypres and the joint concert with Thanet Male Voice Choir and Snowdown Colliery Welfare Male Voice Choir. Plans to produce a new Choir CD during October this year were progressing well. This should be something which we can be proud of and we need to apply some effort to getting the selected pieces right. Thanks were expressed to Mick Williams and Chris Cole to the effort they both put in to both procuring the music and making part learning more accessible on the website. As ever, thanks are due to those who set up both for rehearsals and concerts.

Lucky's 25 Years

At the AGM on 20th June, Mark Lucky was presented with a *Certificate of Life Membership* marking 25 years in the choir. Here he reflects on those 25 years.

"They say you can judge the character of a man by the company he keeps. That says a lot about me but I am not so sure about you Gentlemen.

I joined the choir 25 years ago and you can blame the late and much respected Bill Chiswell for introducing me. He saw me acting a fool on stage in Maidstone with a group called County Towners and for some silly reason thought I could sing (WRONG) but I came along and was lucky (no pun) to sit next to the founder of the choir Gerry Hughes. I have so much to thank him for as he tried really hard to get me to sing in tune by bellowing down my ear. This impressed on me the need to have singing lessons. All singing teachers have their own way of teaching. I've had 4 but it wasn't until Martin had a go that I began to feel I was getting the hang of things (thanks Martin).

Now I am fully aware that I am somewhat of an extrovert but that has not stopped me from investing in choir activities and doing anything I can to help raise funds by instigating book club, foreign currency, gold and my latest watch repairs. (Come on fellers can't you think of some others). Also, I've tried and still try very hard to introduce new members I always carry our business cards with me and hand them out with pride to anyone I think might be interested and I feel very proud to look around the choir and see the members I have introduced. (Come on gents we still need new members).

I have such fond memories of the past 25 years: - The trips to sing with other choirs, the social events (race and quiz nights not now happening), our liaison with The Thanet boys; but most of all you gentlemen both past and present. On behalf of you all I would like to thank all the ladies as they are the real heroes for being our best supporters. I love seeing the pride on their faces as we occasionally hit the right note. So, thank you fellers for putting up with me and allowing me to be a member of this fantastic Choir."

*(Note from the Editor: after the presentation I asked for a picture and this is what I got. I don't believe even Mark would have turned up in shorts **and** choir uniform to the actual presentation!)*



In Loving Memory

The choir is sad to announce the death of Tony Wheatley, a founder member of the choir, on Saturday 22nd June 2019 aged 81 years. Tony became a member of the Police Choir as a full time Police Officer, when the choir started in 1978. He began his service in the Police as a Police Cadet in 1955 when he served at Folkestone. He joined the Regular Police Force in 1957 when he was 19. During his career he served at Faversham, Folkestone, Canterbury, Maidstone and Chartwell where for a period of time he looked after Sir Winston Churchill. Tony has always been a committed Bass singer in the choir, a far cry from when he was a young chorister at Canterbury Cathedral. Tony will be sorely missed by the choir and in particular the bass section. Our thoughts and best wishes at this time go out to his wife Sally and her family.



The Friends of KPMVC would also like to take this opportunity to extend condolences to the family of Barbara Burgoyne who died recently. Barbara had been a Friend since 2013 and joined us on our trip to Ypres in September 2018.



We continue to support our nominated charity for 2018-2019 until October.

Holding on Letting Go

With retiring collections after our concerts. Thank you for your continued support.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Saturday 14th September
St John the Baptist Church,
Wittersham

Saturday 2nd November
St Peter's (Upper) Church,
Pembury, Tunbridge Wells

CHRISTMAS CONCERTS



Sunday 1st December 3pm
Coxheath Village Hall,
Coxheath, Maidstone

Friday 6th December (Time: TBA)
Wurlitzer Academy,
Rye

Saturday 14th December
St Mildred's Church,
Tenterden

All concerts at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated
For more information and tickets visit kpmvc.co.uk



ON 6TH DECEMBER KPMVC WILL BE
PERFORMING IN THE WURLITZER
CHRISTMAS SHOW AT THE RYE
WURLITZER ACADEMY

The Rye Wurlitzer Academy (RWA) based at Rye College, is part of the Rye Academy Trust, which has housed a 1925 2-manual 6-rank Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ since the late 1950's; this instrument is now Britain's second oldest Wurlitzer organ. The Academy was founded in 2009 and offers young students free tuition in how to play the Wurlitzer organ.

www.ryewurlitzeracademy.co.uk

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**
RIGHT THERE WITH YOU

**Nominated Charity of the Year
2019 – 2020
(from October 2019)**