



The Worcester Warbler

The newsletter of Worcester Male Voice Choir
Charity no. 1141309



Edition 1
October 2021

Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of the new WMVC newsletter. We hope that this will become an invaluable source of information about your choir now that we're "back in the game" as well as a stimulating read. As with its predecessor publications, we welcome contributions from Friends and Members be they concert reports, golfing news or just something you feel we should share. I look forward to the flood of exciting articles. In particular, any photographs of our performances would be most welcome.

So here we go with the first edition!

A message from our Chairman:

As we slowly recover from extended Lock downs and begin to rebuild for the future there is much going on at Worcester Male Voice Choir. Progress is good.

Scott and James are now in full "Xmas" flow to make sure we are fully prepared for our 2 big Pershore Abbey concerts plus several local performances in November and December.

For my part, I am working closely with our Hon. Secretary and Warbler Editor as well as others, to ensure we are progressing with our development plans.

Our 3-year development plans and associated review of job roles, job descriptions and general administrative 'tidying up' processes are all going very well.

Our Vice Chairman and the Music Sub Committee are working well as a team. They are offering good support to me and to everyone involved in the musical aspect of WMVC.

We report later in this edition about the public performances that we have already successfully undertaken. I think we are all tremendously relieved to be back singing together and in front of live audiences. We cannot wait for the Friday and Saturday Pershore Abbey extravaganzas to arrive.

Les Janes

Concert Reports

18th September 2021 – The Whitehouse.

Les Janes writes: Our very first public performance after 2 years of inactivity was at a family party on September 18th at The Whitehouse Hotel.

There were approximately 60 guests at the party, which was celebrating joint birthdays of my Mother & Sister – 95 years and 70 years respectively. WMVC produced 30 members to sing a selection of Welsh songs and a grand finale of "When I'm 64", although the final line of the song saw the "When I'm 64" line changed to "When I'm 95". It did not rhyme but the audience loved it.

The Welsh National Anthem opened the programme, followed by Myfanwy (which the choir sing better than they realise), then Cwm Rhonda followed by Calon lân. It was an amazing comeback for the Choir and an incredibly successful evening.

The 'Wow' factor was clearly evident and my family are still talking enthusiastically about the choir's performance.

I believe the reason for this being so successful was simple: we knew the make-up of the audience; we knew what they wanted to hear; we knew how to perform it; and we performed it with confidence and vigour.

An obvious formula for the future!

2nd October 2021 – Tewkesbury Abbey

On a rainy Saturday evening WMVC joined with Hereford Police Choir and Churchdown Choir in Tewkesbury Abbey to perform a varied programme for the audience of 200. The choirs were supported by Curzon Brass, a quintet made up of past students from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. The choirs performed some pieces individually and joined together for others. 100 voices belting out Morte Christe was magical!

The accounts are yet to be finalised but there will be a surplus to add to the bucket collection of more than £500 for the Air Ambulance. So, the audience enjoyed it, the choirs enjoyed it and money was raised for a good cause. That sounds like success!

2021 Awards Lunch

Sunday 10th October saw some 70 Members and Friends, old and new, gather at the Whitehouse Hotel, Worcester, for the annual awards lunch. The hotel staff "did us proud" and the event was enjoyed by all. Our President, Dave Bradley, ably assisted by Les Janes and Mark Membery made the following awards:

5 years' service - Bill Nicholson, Peter Scaiff

10 years' service - Adrian Hutt, Stan Hubbard, Les Janes, Vince Marshall, Alan Simmonds

15 years' service - Mark Membery

20 years' service - Michael Jeeves, Ken Fyfe

25 years' service - David Baker, David Cartwright, Ivor Cook, Robert Harkins

30 years' service - Martin Smith

Chairman's Awards (Mark Membery) - John and Joy Hadley, Barry and Sheila Leatherland

Chairman's Awards (Les Janes) - David Peters, Nicolas Wright, Mark Membery, Ann Rees

Dates for your diary:

- 4th December 2021 (Saturday) – 14:00 – 16:00, Victorian Fayre, Bell Square, Crowngate
- 10th December 2021 (Friday) 19:00 – Christmas Concert, Pershore Abbey
- 11th December 2021 (Saturday) 19:00 - Christmas Concert, Pershore Abbey
- 18th December 2021 (Saturday) 10:00 – 12:00, Bell Square, Crowngate

News from the Welsh Association of Male Choirs

I have received this update from Chris Evans:

Well it has been a while! The last time I circulated an update for choirs was on June 21st - my, that seems like a long time ago. Since that date a significant number of member choirs have begun to rehearse and perform again, albeit within a safe environment. However, there are still some choirs in the 'getting ready' category with a few deferring until next year. There is no 'right way' – we will continue to do what we should, not what we can.

I know that a number of choirs have lost colleagues to this dreadful disease in the last 20 months and I know that we will always remember them.

There have been new Secretary appointments in a few choirs and It has been good to speak to Secretaries new and old over the last year. To those who have just taken up the pen – enjoy it!!

Executive meeting

The Executive also met in Cowbridge in late September. Key headlines:

- Confirmed new arrangements for the concerts in Cardiff (2023) and London (2024). Full details of dates have been circulated to choir secretaries. Also confirmed that the Association will have a trade stand at the Tregaron National Eisteddfod in 2022
- A celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Association is being planned for 2022 – further details to follow
- A small working group working under Vice Chair Paul Reynolds (Burry Port) is working on a relaunch the Music Competitions in some form. The group are consulting with choirs who run competitions and will be linking with MDs to gather their views before bringing forward proposals
- Following the downtime brought about by Covid the Association are planning a number of initiatives which will improve the organisation going forward including:
 - Increasing membership/forming alliances
 - Improving networking and communication using Zoom/Teams
 - Improve marketing by better use of social media including the Association website, Facebook and Twitter (If your choir has a member who may be able to help us with this task please ask them to get in touch with Chris Evans)
 - Improve succession planning for key roles in the Association
 - Identify possible new products and services for member choirs

Post pandemic survey

A couple of months ago we launched a survey of member choirs based in Wales to assess the state of play as far as starting is concerned – thanks to those choirs who did respond. The majority of responding choirs are taking a cautious approach to restarting. Interesting (and surprising?) to see that a number of choirs have recruited new choristers after restart

Amazon Smile charity

The Association can be awarded charity funding via Amazon Smile. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price of customers' eligible purchases to the WAMC if the WAMC is the purchaser's nominated charity. Please ask any of your choristers who are Amazon prime members to consider nominating the Association as their chosen charity. Every little helps!

Singing at the Stadium

Over the years the selection of choirs to sing at Rugby internationals has been something of a mystery. Some say it depends on being a relative of Max Boyce, others say it is dependent on how long you can



manage between visits to the toilet. On the other hand, I have also heard that it is determined by an annual rotation of blood types or even, for one game in the 1970's on the basis of looking like one of the Viet Gwent!

The truth is that, for many years and over 130 games, the occasions have been organised by the Director of Music for the WRU Dr Haydn James. In advance of this year's Autumn internationals Haydn has sent the following message:

As you know, there has been no live singing since the Wales v France game in Feb 2020, so I wanted to bring you all up to date with where we are.

With regard to the Autumn games, the current Covid situation has involved the WRU in many meetings not only with the Welsh government, but also in discussions with the visiting teams and support staff to ensure that all possible Covid precautions are in place for each and every game, including those where the visitors will be playing elsewhere on their respective tours.

This afternoon, I received the news that 'live' music will not be possible for our four Autumn games, meaning that pre-recorded Anthems will be played at each game. In our case, as some of you will know, we recorded the Welsh Anthem a few years ago with the Cory Band and 250 singers - this has been played at all of our games, home and away since the first lockdown, and will again be used for the Autumn series.

We will therefore be looking forward to the return, hopefully, of live music in 2022.

Chris Evans (October 2021)

And a reminder

If you have something you'd like to see included in The Warbler, please email me at davepetershome@gmail.com (or even send me a letter)

Stay well

Dave Peters