

AWMC NEWS

Newsletter of the Australian Welsh Male Choir



The Paramount Theatre at Echuca where the choir sang on March 8th
as the final event of the Echuca Moama Celtic Festival

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March 2009 Issue

* * * A Busy Start to a New Year * * *

Welcome to our first issue for 2009. The New Year is off to a busy start for us with some good concerts and exciting events on the near horizon. We have been busy learning new music, playing our part in the effort to help bush-fire victims and sharing with other Welsh choirs. More about those events inside.

* * * Helping the Bush-fire Victims * * *

Like many other people in Victoria a number of the choir knew people who were badly affected by the recent bush-fires. One chorister lost relatives in the fire. Most seemed to know someone who had been badly impacted. We had a concert planned for Shoreham on Sunday February 15th which was originally planned to assist the local CFA, with a share of the income coming to ourselves. A joint decision was made that both parties would forgo all profits from the concert with the net proceeds going to the bush-fire appeal. We were delighted that over \$3,000 was raised from this event.

Our president, Neil Kinsey, had a scare when a bush-fire in Langwarrin burned scrub area right opposite their house. Fortunately no damage was done to their home.

* * * A "Gymanfa Ganu" * * *



Not familiar with that term? The encyclopaedia includes this description of the event. "A Cymanfa Canu is a Welsh festival of sacred hymns, sung with four part harmony by a congregation, usually under the direction of a choral director. It is sometimes referred to as "Gymanfa Ganu" because of the complexities of consonant mutation in the Welsh language, which leads to the initial "C" being mutated to a "G" when preceded by the Welsh word for "the".

On Sunday March 1st (St. David's Day) we had the privilege of sharing with three other Welsh choirs in a "Gymanfa Ganu" at St. Michael's Uniting Church in the City of Melbourne. The other Welsh choirs were the Geelong Welsh Ladies Choir, the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir and the Victoria Welsh Male Choir. It was the first time the four choirs had sung together. Geraint Roberts who conducted the event was brought out from Wales. We had a rehearsal on the previous Sunday. On the day the four choirs almost filled the large balcony and the main auditorium was packed with an audience keen to sing along with many favourite hymns. It was a truly exciting day and choristers are keenly looking forward to another opportunity to share together.



We will be sharing a concert with the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir on Sunday June 21st at the Robert Blackwood Hall. That should be a wonderful event with all songs sung by the combined choirs.

* * * The Echuca Moama Celtic Festival * * *



The choir was invited to sing at the Echuca Moama Celtic Festival. The festival ran from February 27th through to March 8th and involved a number of bands - (Claymore, Dalriada, Pipe Band), dancers etc and culminated with our choir performing at the Paramount Theatre on the final Sunday. It was a sell-out! The beautiful 400 seat theatre was packed with an appreciative audience and already there is talk of us going back for a future festival. Some of the choristers made a weekend of it while others made the journey up and back on the day in a comfortable bus (pictured).



* * * Featuring our Choir Soloists * * *

The concert at Shoreham featured a new choir soloist. Barry Tucker, one of our first tenors sang a solo which was very well received by the audience. Since then Barry has featured in another concert and we expect that we will hear from him on a regular basis in the future. This photo which shows Barry along with his wife Margaret was taken by Christine Manktelow who has been very helpful in providing photos for our magazine. Thanks indeed Christine.



A regular soloist for the choir has been Kristian Kupsch, another first tenor. Kristian is shown here with his mother Sue and step-father Tony (this pic also taken during the New Zealand tour). Kristian may be heard on some of our CDs. In addition to singing Kristian has also played violin solo at concerts.

* * * Ladies Auxiliary Formed * * *

Margaret Tucker (seen above) has been instrumental in encouraging the wives of choristers to establish a Ladies Auxiliary with a view to organising social events for the choir and assisting with fund-raising for special events, like overseas tours. The first activity was a picnic lunch at the George Pentland Gardens in Frankston on Sunday February 1st. The next event planned is a "Round Robin Dinner" which will be held on Anzac Day, April 25th. What a great initiative.

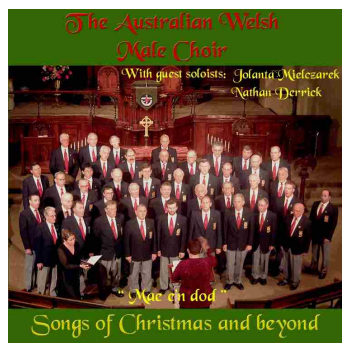
* * * * Concerts Coming Up * * * *

Here is a list of the concerts coming up soon. For more information please contact our secretary as detailed below. You are also invited to check our web-site from time to time to catch up on current news or changes in concert information.

- March 29th, 2 pm We will feature in the Lion's Club Celtic Festival at the Frankston Cultural Centre
- May 3rd We will take part in the music festival at Montsalvat along with a number of other choirs.
- June 21st, 2 pm This is the date of the combined concert with the Melbourne Welsh Male Choir at the Robert Blackwood Hall in the Monash University Clayton campus at Wellington Road, Clayton.
- July 5th We will be at Cowes (Phillip Island). Mid-winter concert.

* * * Our Choir CDs * * *

Remember that "Friends of the Choir" are entitled to a discount on our CDs. Current CDs are "Far Away a Voice is Calling" (the latest), "Songs of Christmas and Beyond", "Showtime to Opera" and "Heart and Soul".



* * * **To Purchase Concert Tickets or CDs** * * *

For tickets for coming events or to purchase CDs please contact our new Secretary Tim Andrew on 0425 725 525 or write to PO Box 42, Frankston 3199. For more information check our web-site at www.auswelshmalechoir.org.au.

Thanks again for your interest in our choir