



Christmas Newsletter 2022



Firstly, may I, on behalf of Dare to Sing wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, (I was going to say a prosperous new year but given the current economic situation I don't think anyone is going to prosper, but don't let that stop you having a good time and maybe joining Dare to Sing for a concert or two).

I would like to tell you a little of the Choir's progress during the past year. In January we welcomed to our ranks several new members who have made a welcome addition with their enthusiasm and commitment. We have also had several very successful performances, a highlight being our annual concert held in St Elvan's Church in September. Cardiff Arms Male Choir joined us for this and Ruth Madoc, the Bafta award winning star of stage, screen and TV fame did a sterling job of hosting it. Ruth also agreed to become the Choir's honorary president and we look forward to a long and productive involvement with her.

Another wonderful event was our involvement in Aberdare's own Caradogfest where we took part in the opening night's concert and again on the following day as part of a 400 strong massed choir in the Town.

In July, we were at last able to celebrate our musical director Llinos Davies's prestigious award of a British Empire Medal with a great evening for her. Together with her male choir, Treharris MVC we treated her to a "This is Your Life" surprise.

There have been several more highlights during the year and consequently the Choir is going from strength to strength and are looking forward to a productive time next year where we are already working on some special performances. Watch this space!

Once again, seasonal greetings to you all and thank you for your support and commitment to Dare to Sing.

Denise Manning Chairperson

Caradogfest!

In July we were thrilled to take part in Aberdare's inaugural Caradogfest, an event that this year celebrated the 150th anniversary of the achievements of Griff Rhys Jones, 'Caradog', and the 400 strong Cor Mawr at the Crystal Palace, London in 1872. Along with a host of choirs, we sang at the Gala concert in St Elvan's on Friday night, and then in the scorching heat (who would have thought!) of the library square on Saturday. Being a part of the massed choir was the highlight. A great afterglow followed at Aberdare RFC! (Photo courtesy of St Elvan's)



Other highlights this year....

In March, we finally, after postponements in 2020 and 2021, got to visit Ross-on-Wye and sing with the Hereford Police Male Voice Choir. In June we had another hugely enjoyable visit to the Welsh Botanical Gardens. We also indulged in a lovely afternoon tea (photo courtesy of Joanna Hartley). In October we held another 'Colours' Fashion show at Cwmdare club, which was a great community social evening, as well as raising funds for the choir.



Annual Concert



In September, after a break due to the pandemic, we held our second annual concert at St Elvan's church. Supported by the fabulous Cardiff Arms Park Male Choir, it was a night for the choir to be proud of. We were honoured to have Ruth Madoc as compere, and also to hear the musical talents of our 2022 bursary winner Skye Dunning. With the proceeds we were able to donate to three local charities: Hope Rescue, the Cynon Valley Foodbank, and St Fagan's Company at Christmas.



Llinos Davies.... THIS IS YOUR LIFE!

What a night we had in July, finally after the past two years the two choirs were able to spring a fantastic surprise evening to celebrate Llinos' well deserved British Empire Medal. In Abercwmboi Rugby club, friends and family gathered to have a great evening of fun. It was certainly a night to remember! Great photos by Wayne Hankins of Mountain Ash Studios, who also photographed our annual concert.



A warm welcome to our new accompanist Anna

In July we were sad to say goodbye to Rebecca Rabjohns, our fabulous accompanist, who relocated to Devon. We wish her all the best for the future and am sure the choir will be paying her a visit for a tour sooner rather than later! We were very, very lucky however when Llinos' talented and trusty sidekick at Treharris MVC, Anna Bowden, agreed to also join the ladies. Accompanist for Treharris for twenty-five years, Anna is hugely talented and is already a fabulous part of the team. We are looking forward to many successful years together!



DARE TO SING 2022 BURSARY AWARD

We were extremely proud this year to award our fourth bursary to help a young, talented student in the valley at the start of their music studies and career. Skye Dunning was nominated by her music teacher Steven Powell (Head of Music, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School). Skye taught herself guitar and keyboard during lockdown and has started performing at many school and local charity events. At our annual concert, Skye, delighted us with her performance, beautifully singing and playing guitar. A well-deserved winner of the 2022 award and the choir wishes her every success for the future.



Finally, a big thanks, as always, to Llinos and Anna, we couldn't do any of it without you both. Thank you to everyone at St Elvan's, and a warm thank you to all our patrons, friends, and family. The help that you provide at our events means so much, and they would not be a success without our volunteers and supporters. Look out on our social media pages for even more events in 2023!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our Choristers, Patrons, Family and Friends.

See you all in 2023 and KEEP SINGING!



