

# Voice of the Valley

Mid-May Special Edition



Baritone, Tony Dolan had a strange and majestic experience the other night – and he wasn't alone. Along with about 50 other men of the **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**, he was at Harrogate's Majestic Hotel, part of a corporate event. We'd been hired to provide the entertainment for a swanky dinner at a toy industry trade fair.

David Hirst, who coordinated the booking said, "It was all very hush-hush. Barry MacManus from Events Organisers, Arena, didn't want the guest of honour to get even the slightest hint of what was going to happen. So all he could say was that this senior executive was a fan of Welsh male voice choirs"



We were led secretly into the hotel and waited - very comfortably - in a posh ante-room until we were called to the stage.

Fronted by star of the musical theatre, **Michael Sterling**, we sang to a very appreciative audience of 350 diners in a short but exciting 20 minute spot; Cym Rhondda (some of which we sang in Welsh) and Gwahoddiad were among the pieces. The performance ended with a rip-roaring version - with all the audience joining in - of that big Tom Jones hit, '**Delilah**'.





## And the special guest?



He turned out to be **Roger Dyson**, (67), Managing Director of Toymaster and sometime Chairman of the British Toy and Hobby Association.

Toymaster is an association of independently-owned toyshops that acts as a buying group. They were meeting in Harrogate, as they do every year, to sort out what toys will be in the shops for Christmas.

Afterwards, 'Voice of the Valley' caught up with the man of the hour. "What was the occasion?" I asked, "Are you retiring?"

"Not really," he told me. "I'm standing down from some of my responsibilities but I'm still very much part of Toymaster.

It's just that this annual trade show dinner always has a theme and this year it was me they picked on and my enthusiasm for Wales.

It was a wonderful surprise when you came on. My heart swells up whenever I hear a male voice choir – and you were fabulous!

I know the Colne Valley. My father used to live in Huddersfield before he joined the RAF.



You were just great. You might not be from Wales but you're a proper male voice choir. I was nearly in tears."



It was a fun night for the Choir, too. We left clutching our soft toys -supposedly for the children and grandchildren.

It's good for the us to reach new audiences and it was pretty good, too, for the Choir's funds.



## Our next performance



**Hade Edge Band & Colne Valley MVC**  
present  
**GRAND SUMMER CONCERT**  
**Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**  
**Hade Edge Band**  
**Saturday June 13th, 2015**  
**Holmfirth Civic Hall, HD9 3AS**  
**Tickets £10 - Concessions £8**  
**7pm - Doors open 6.30pm**  
Tickets available by calling:  
**01484 361671(Band) or 01484 846262(Choir)**  
Local Outlets or at the door, subject to availability

Our next concert is a shared-platform event with the up-and-coming brass band, Hade Edge, and will be held at the Civic Hall in about four weeks time.

“This is a joint enterprise.” said Jenny. “We’ve not been booked by Hade Edge. We’re in this together, both organisations. We’re sharing the losses if it doesn’t work. Much better to be sharing the profits! That means every Choir member should be helping publicise this event and selling tickets, too.”

So get those marketing skills working, readers!



## Another member reaches another milestone

This week it was tenor, **Brian Craven**, who was presented with a lapel badge to celebrate him reaching a quarter-century with the Choir.

"I didn't know I'd done 25 years. I knew I'd joined a bit after Thom Meredith but I didn't realise I'd reached it until they called me out in Monday's rehearsal. It was a great surprise – and a great pleasure"

Amongst Brian's talents – he's always willing to stand in as conductor when the need arises.



## Soon to go up



Sometime sign-writer, **David Rodgers**, and engineer, **Stuart Baxter**, show the newly made sign they've been working on.

Soon it'll go up on the outside wall of the Slaithwaite Club on Britannia Road where the Choir rehearses.

Since the new ALDI store opened, there's more traffic and pedestrians. "Not that many people realise that we meet here," argues Stuart. "It'll help draw attention to the Choir - and you never know - it might draw in a few new members."



# Back from Cornwall – triumphant



It felt good - the first rehearsal after getting back from Cornwall - to remember that we've, once again, retained our title as the Overall Best UK Choir.



The cups were on display and Thom was reading out the minor criticisms and the very positive comments from the competition adjudicators.

Even the buses breaking down on the way home failed to dampen people's warm memories of a good and successful trip.

The good news had also reached our Patron, **Patricia, Countess of Harewood**.

We believe she keeps up with the Choir through Voice of the Valley.

And we were soon to receive a letter from her offering generous praise for our Cornish achievements.



Members are aware that successful trips don't just happen but need a lot of skilful organising. They knew just where the credit lay.

So, Choir Secretary, **Jenny Baxter**, was called out to be thanked for her sterling work and roundly applauded.

Jenny isn't one to take kindly to flattery. "Thank you very much. I'm very grateful." she said, "But most of it was down to the hotel in Newquay. It was great and the staff couldn't have been more helpful. I suppose if the hotel hadn't been so good you would have been giving me brickbats instead of flowers!"



But you could see she was genuinely pleased by the warm thanks of the men. (Sadly, we can't show you how pleased she looked – she's not keen on having her picture taken – so here's a picture of the bouquet we bought her instead.)

We all think she's doing a cracking job!



# **Voice** *of the* **Valley**

**Colne Valley Male Voice Choir Newsletter**

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