

Voice

of the

Valley



Colne Valley Male Voice Choir Newsletter

August 2015

Choir goes to Scarborough

Colne Valley men, wives and sweethearts return to Scarborough on **August 22nd** for our special concert by the seaside at Queen Street Methodist Mission – once again – in the company of the inestimable Dr Simon Lindley.



See our website for details:

colnevalleymvc.org.uk



Thom and Keith with cornet virtuoso, Phillip McCann and Simon. They will be joined, once more, by soprano, Victoria Sharp.

Barry Fearnley: RIP

Another choir-member, the well-liked and much-respected, Barry Fearnley, passed away recently. Barry died, with his family by his side, in Huddersfield Royal Infirmary on July 3rd having been taken ill whilst on holiday in Spain.

The funeral service took place on Wednesday 15th at St. John's Church in Golcar. The Choir gathered there to say their farewells and to sing to his memory, together with a large congregation of friends and colleagues from Golcar, where he lived, and from all around the district.

Barry was a keen member of the Choir, singing with us for several years. **(Seen front left with fellow Choir members in Slaithwaite last summer)** Recently, together with his wife, Margaret, he joined our 2015 Competition tour to Cornwall.



Margaret, a former mayor of Kirklees, presided over the formalities during the Choir's visit to Huddersfield's twin town, Besancon, in May 2006. That was one of Barry's first trips with the Choir, after joining us the previous December.

Many members will know that he and his Margaret were key figures behind the success of the Haydn Wood Music Festival, which attracted many thousands of young musicians from the Colne Valley over the years. Margaret said: "Barry was very much in his element at the Festival, being very supportive of all the young people."

Maybe they won't know that Barry worked for 30 years at the former Woods Music Shop in Market Street. His musical roots stretched back to his schooldays when he learned to play the piano accordion. He went on to teach the instrument to many young players and also taught the organ. He must have helped hundreds of Huddersfield musical careers.

Barry, brought up in Lockwood and Dalton, attended Rawthorpe Secondary Modern School and later, Huddersfield Technical College, where he studied TV engineering. He worked at Wigfalls, at the Schofields department store in Leeds and at Whitfields in Huddersfield before being approached to start at Woods.

Barry became a councillor with the former Colne Valley Urban District Council and Kirklees Council between 1966 and 1990, serving as a Liberal. He served as chairman of the Colne Valley Council in 1972. He was also heavily involved with Colne Valley's twinning agreements with Overath and was a long-serving president of Golcar Liberal Club.

Barry and Margaret met while students at the former Studio 58 Coffee Bar in Huddersfield and were married for 51 years. They had three children: Deborah, Richard and David, and four grandchildren - David, Thomas, Sarah and Enzo.

Our thoughts are with Margaret and family.



Shenandoah

One of the loveliest songs in the Choir's summer repertoire is **Shenandoah**. It's one of America's most recognisable folk tunes but its origins are not so easily discovered. As with many folksongs, you can't tell exactly when it was composed. It probably does not go back much before the American Civil War. In any case, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, Shenandoah had achieved widespread popularity, both on land and at sea.

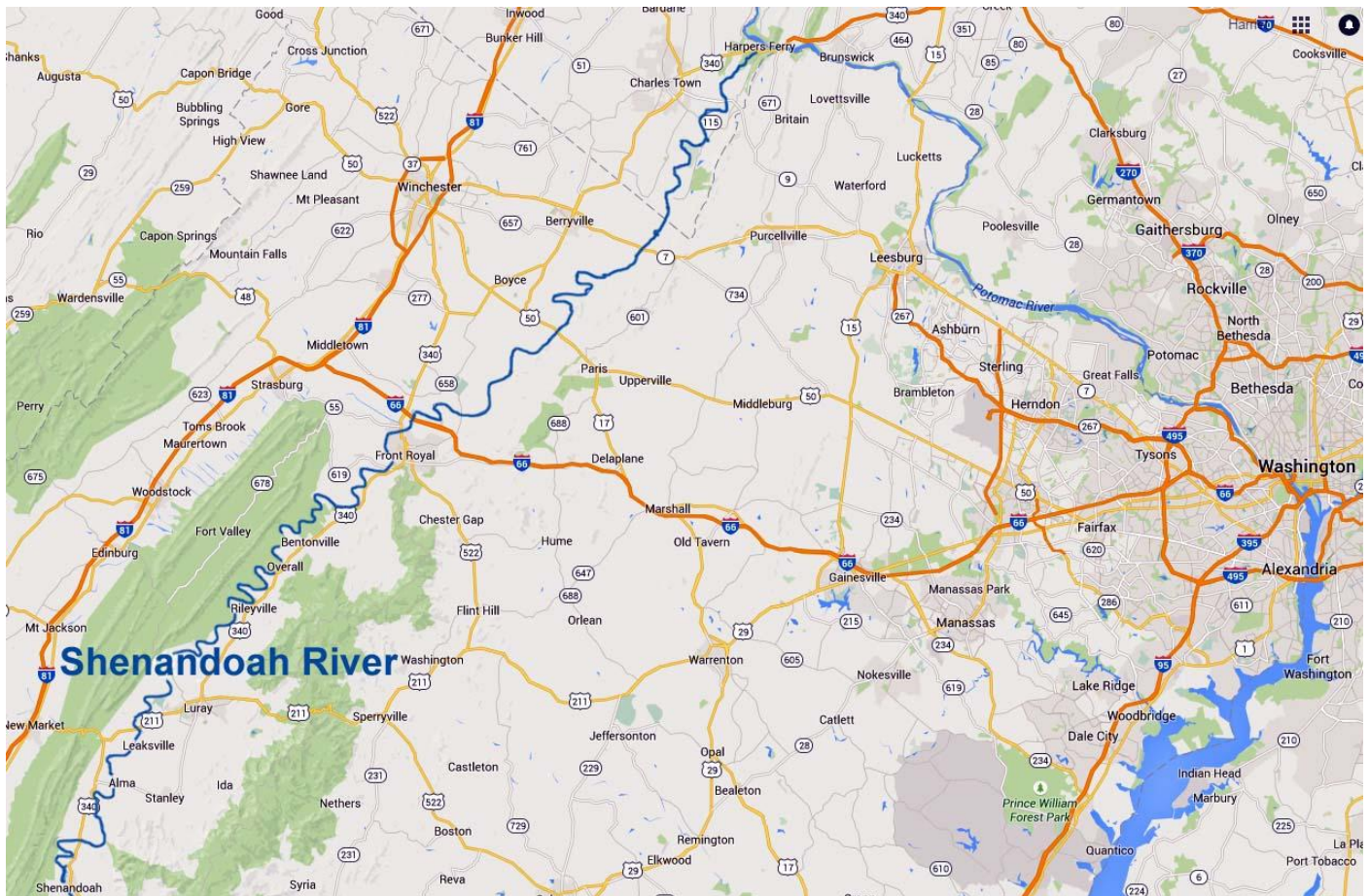


The song appears to have originated with Canadian and American '**voyageurs**' or fur traders travelling down the Missouri River in canoes, and has developed several different sets of lyrics. The Missouri River is far to the west of the Shenandoah River, which rises in Virginia and empties 127 miles later into the Potomac River at **Harpers Ferry**, West Virginia.

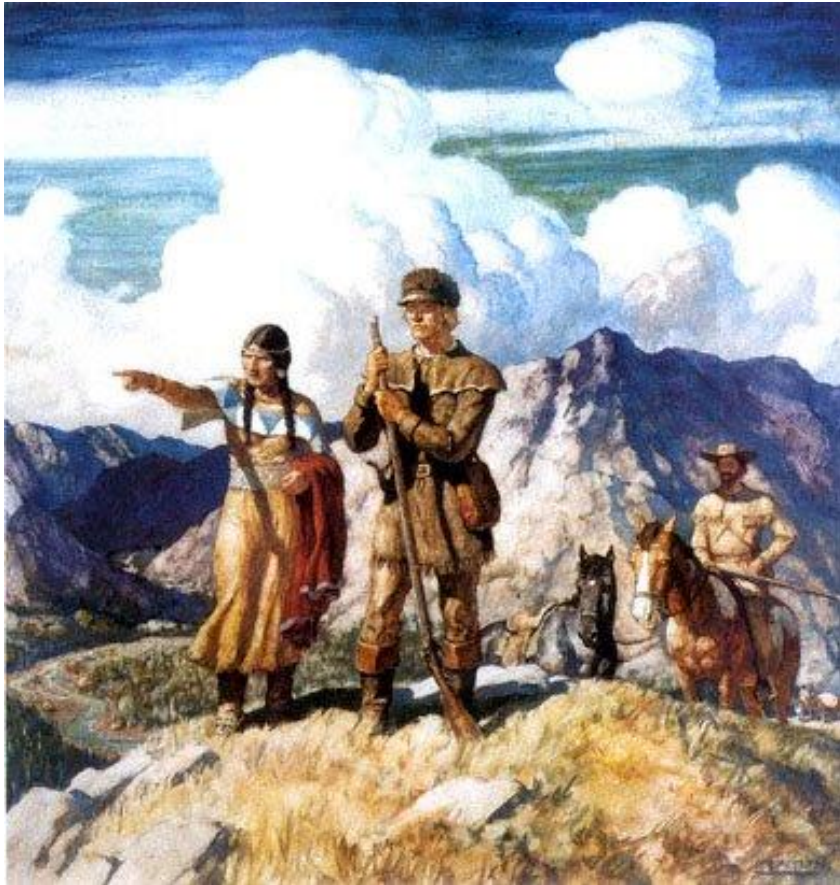
It became a sea-shanty - a work song with a solo lead that alternates with a boisterous chorus. Sailors heading down the Mississippi River took up the song and made it a '**Capstan Shanty**' that they sang while hauling up the anchor.

This boatmen's song found its way down-river to American clipper ships, eventually to the **Cutty Sark** on its Australia runs and thus all around the world

The song's first appearance in print was in an article, titled "Sailor Songs," published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in 1882.



If the song's origin is unclear so is any definitive interpretation of its lyrics. Some believe that the song refers to the river of the same name. In this interpretation, **Shenandoah's daughter** is a tributary of the Shenandoah River – an unlikely hypothesis.



Most believe that the tale is of Native American origin, about, the daughter of the Iroquois Indian Chief, Shenandoah, ('Oskanondonha')



She is said to have been courted for seven years by a white Missouri River trader.

It was common for **Voyageurs** to take up with local indigenous women and in some cases to marry for love.

Regardless of these ambiguities, **Shenandoah** is an American classic and - particularly in the arrangement we sing to Keith Swallow's beautiful accompaniment - a song the Choir loves to perform.

Click here for an American version by the **Mormon Tabernacle Choir** <https://youtu.be/-GtwNJf3EK4>

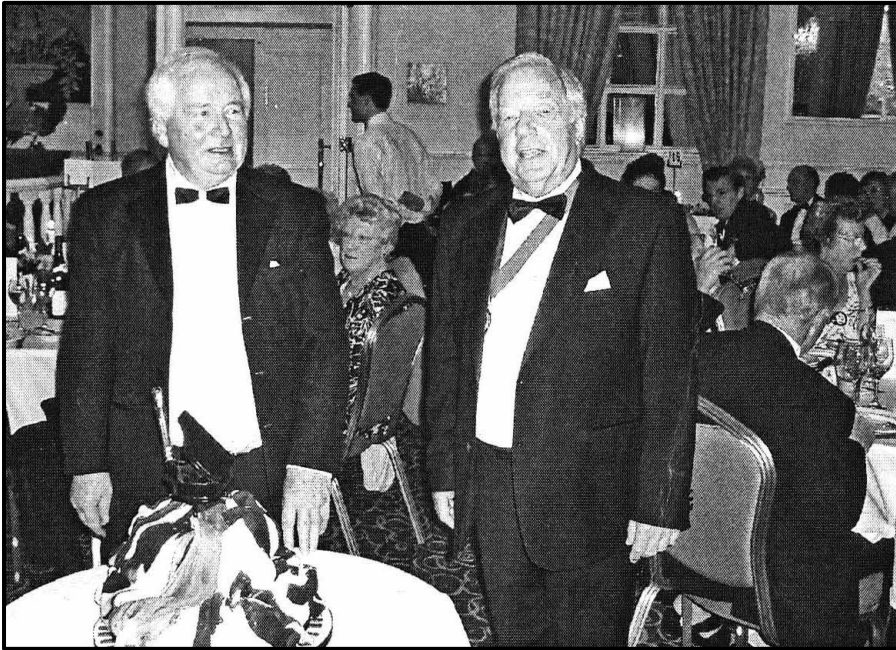


Change of Management: the Old Guard and the New Blood

The Choir recently elected its Chairman and Deputy Chairman for the next two years.

For Chairman, we opted for the wise head of former Chairman, Peter Denby. For Deputy we went for a 'New Boy', Rob Rosborough.

With any luck that gives us the benefits of experience and the fresh perspective of a newcomer to the Choir's Management.



Perhaps no-one has the depth of experience in representing and leading the Choir as Peter Denby.

Here, he is seen as our Chairman, back in summer 2007, congratulating our esteemed pianist, Keith Swallow, for achieving fifty years service as accompanist to the Choir at a celebration dinner at Bertie's Bistro in Elland.

His talent for diplomacy and clear-thinking has been admired and much valued over the years.

VotV understands that Peter was somewhat reluctant to take on, once more, the role of Chairman. He was only persuaded when there was a positive response to his suggestion that for Deputy, the Choir should select someone who could bring a new insight into the Choir's management: that would stand us in good stead for whatever the future might bring. Here he is with Rob, following their election.

VotV welcomes their appointment and wishes them the best of luck in their endeavours.



Rob Rosborough: 'new blood' perhaps but no novice!

Rob hails from Portstewart, on the North Coast of Northern Ireland. He left the Province and the family bakery business and came to Yorkshire in 1980, studying at Leeds Polytechnic for a degree in Quantity Surveying.

He also met his wife, Sue, at Leeds Poly, where they were members of the Poly choir. That was where he came into contact with the energetic Dr Simon Lindley, usually arriving at rehearsals in haste from a Yorkshire TV commitment.

Music has always been part of Rob's life. He sang most of the parts of Zadok the Priest in his school choir, was a 1st Bass in Halifax Choral Society for many years and - the icing on the cake - became a member of Colne Valley MVC about 5 years ago.



Rob & Sue, who live in Ripponden, have two beautiful, nearly grown-up daughters. Kate, who, after Nottingham University, is following the graduate scheme for Tesco and Lauren who has just completed the second year of her BMus in percussion at the Royal Welsh College of Music in Cardiff.



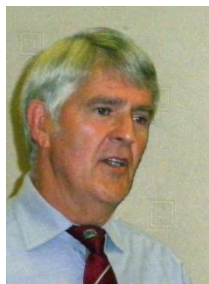
Rob, after qualifying as a Chartered Surveyor, has followed a 30 year career in a variety of businesses in construction, facilities management, rail & nuclear industries and in partnerships with local authorities. He is currently the Group Commercial Manager of Beck & Pollitzer Ltd, an engineering company which helps manufacturing companies set up their production equipment and move machinery across the world.

The business, which recently celebrated its 150th anniversary, also puts up the Christmas Tree in Trafalgar Square every year!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVW7axXEa9U&feature=youtu.be>



And another thing.....

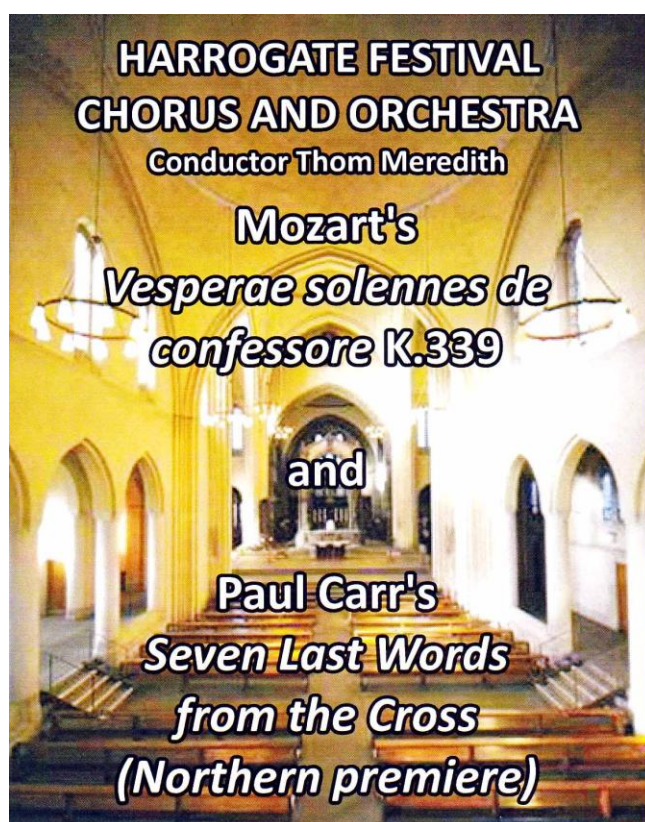


Ticket Secretary, Roger sends a reminder that he will be on holiday at the end of August, so the release of the Christmas concert tickets will not be until mid-September.

Demand for tickets for this most popular of events may be great but there's no need to panic. Send him a note or an email if you must - but better still -just 'hold your horses'

And one more thing.....

Thom recommends.....



Ampleforth Abbey
Thursday 27th August 7.30pm

Tickets £15 (£12 concessions) are available upon entrance, in advance from

- Elijah Todd Newsagents, Helmsley
 - Summit Bakery, Kirkbymoorside
- or by post (until August 14th) using the form overleaf.

Harrogate Festival
Choral Course



Harrogate Festival Chorus and Orchestra

Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore* K.339 and
Paul Carr's *Seven Last Words from the Cross* (Northern premiere)

Ampleforth Abbey – August 27th 2015 at 7.30pm

TICKET ORDER FORM

PLEASE RETURN TO THE ADDRESS BELOW BY 14th AUGUST

Name:

Phone Number:

Concessions are available to those in full time education or over 60

I require (insert number)

☐

Tickets at £15

☐

Concession tickets at £12

Attach a cheque, payable to Harrogate Festival Choral Course Ltd, for the full cost of the tickets, and send to:

12 Langley Terrace, Crosland Road, Oakes, Huddersfield,
West Yorkshire, HD3 3NZ.

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for the return of your tickets.

Tickets can also be purchased from:

Elijah Todd Newsagents
3 Bridge Street
Helmsley

Summit Bakery
2 Market Place
Kirkbymoorside

Harrogate Festival
Choral Course



And one final thing

Slaithwaite Brass Band has recently made a charming film about the band - and the community that has hosted it since 1892 - as it prepares for the National Finals in Cheltenham in September.



To see it, look up: <https://youtu.be/2plxqghJ7MM>

It's well worth it – especially if you know Slaithwaite

Voice of the *Valley*

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There are now online readers of Voice of the Valley all over the world.

