



## Football Success adds extra fun to 'Concert on the Hill'

The hot weather and the joy of England getting through to a semi-finals in the World Cup, while we were rehearsing on the rugby ground at Salendine Nook, added an extra element of fun to preparations for that evening's **'Concert on the Hill'**.



Extreme warmth and strong solidarity with **'Gareth Southgate's Boys'** led the Choir to sport our waistcoats for this annual shindig.

It was a great night for the audience, who basked in the heat and in the fine singing - as always - from the **Lindley Junior School Choir** and in the fine playing from **Lindley Brass Band**.

This year much of the male voice singing was done in concert - the two choirs; **Colne Valley** and **Honley** men - singing together. Sometimes we sang under the guidance of **Thom Meredith** and sometimes under CVMVC's occasional and much-liked Guest Conductor, **Steven Roberts**.





As the sun went down, with the '**Abba**' favourites resounding all over the district and the '**Last Night of the Proms**' stuff about to start, the audience was both relaxed and enthusiastic.

Football was apparently 'coming home' and probably a few glasses of wine had been enjoyed in the deepening twilight.

## David Roebuck says goodbye

Veteran compère, **David Roebuck** - one of the driving forces behind this event for the 19 years of the feature, announced with a genuinely emotional catch in his voice that this was to be his last concert as compère.

He thanked all the many people for their contributions. But the feeling in the audience was that the thanks were due to David, for doing so much to get the show on the road all these years. The event will miss him, greatly.



The audience gave him a further round of applause and then we were off with '**Land of Hope and Glory**' etc, the flag-waving and the fireworks. (Readers should note that Choir members never get to see the fireworks display which goes off behind the roof of the stand - but we appreciate the fun.)

Then came an emotional finale with '**We'll Meet Again**' and everyone drifted off home happy. One of the best 'Concerts on the Hill' in years.



## A Great Contrast: sophisticated singing in a medieval church

The following Saturday, the Choir presented a concert in the delightful medieval church of St Mary's, Clifton in Nottinghamshire.

We were providing the highlight event to a weekend of music-making in the biennial **Clifton Music Festival** - and what a contrast to the amplified shenanigans at Salendine Nook.



Some things were the same - once again the weather was brilliant so we performed in '**Waistcoat Wednesday**' mode. (Didn't England do well!)



Robert Dickinson did an excellent job, standing in for Barry Slater as Stage Manager.



But in other respects what a contrast. The church's ancient interior provided a fine acoustic for the Choir, who relished singing some of our more challenging repertoire, revelling in the changes of dynamic and exacting harmonies. Our '**Last Words of David**' echoed fabulously in that vibrant space.

This was one of those concerts where the Choir provided all the talent. Solo performance interspersed Choral singing. **Thom** sang. **Raymond Ellis** (and **Keith Swallow**) entertained us with the 'Sterndale Bennett song cycle. And then Keith, the maestro, returned to give us a stunning display of keyboard virtuosity as soloist. But perhaps most noteworthy was a striking solo performance from **Eric Cooper** on the cello.

## Eric and Keith resume partnership – after 60 years

Eric told Voice of the Valley, “I played the pieces that were played at the Royal Wedding of Meghan and Harry. - or two of them to be precise - including **Gabriel Fauré’s ‘Après un Rêve’**”.

It’s true; many people remarked that that the recital by talented young player, 19-year-old **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** was one of the stand-out parts of the ceremony at Windsor - and they are fine pieces.



**“This was the first time I’ve played with Keith Swallow for 60 years.**



It was in the **1958 Mrs Sunderland Music Festival and Competition** that I won the ‘Open Cello’ Class, when last I played with **Keith** accompanying. I must have been just twenty and Keith would hardly have been any older.

But when we rehearsed together at St Mary’s just before the concert, everything was fine - just like before.

The winners’ medals, then, were silver and cost £3 pounds 10 shillings - so expensive that you were only allowed to win one, however many times you might have entered.”



Eric and Keith rehearse before the Clifton Concert





## Llangollen Memories

A few weeks ago, **Stuart Iles**, approached the VotV Editor. "I've been having a bit of a clear out recently and wondered if you can do anything with this" he said and produced a VHS video tape cassette, the like of which I probably hadn't seen for a decade or more.

(Remember them?)



Well, I wrestled with this tape and it turned out to be a rare - maybe unique - recording of the Choir performing at the **Llangollen Eisteddfod**, dating back to 1998 - exactly 20 years ago.

**It shows Colne Valley Male Voice Choir winning the MVC class for the 5<sup>th</sup> time.**

Putting a **Yorkshire** choir on top of the World - and better still on top of the Welsh - made our victory newsworthy to local TV.

The rest of the tape shows Choir Vice Presidents, **Norman Dearnley** and **Norman Brown**, talking with **Crista Ackroyd** and **Mike Morris** on Yorkshire TV's 'Calendar' news programme.

A week or two later, **BBC's 'Look North'** followed up by visiting the Choir in Slaithwaite. (also on the tape). See the choir rehearsing and an interview with - a very young looking - **Thom Meredith**.



The two Normans on YTV



VotV has grappled with these obsolete formats and has rescued most of this valuable archive material.

Sadly some of the singers are no longer with us but there are plenty of current members to pick out.

Readers can now enjoy it, simply by clicking on this link. It's well worth a viewing!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQImWS-QG9k>

# Christopher Pulleyn plans unmissable music events

We all follow Chris's career with interest - a formidable talent - not only the CV Boys accompanist but also much admired stand-in conductor of the main Choir in Thom's absence and cover pianist for Keith Swallow. And that's only the start of it. He's a very busy man. He writes.....



*Hi everyone,*



*I don't contact **Voice of the Valley** very often but I have some exciting news that I'd like to tell you about! I'm putting on some concerts in September. Not just one, but three!*

*Recently I happened to find a decent space with a grand piano in it, in a nice location, and thought I'd try and set up something myself.*

*As everyone knows, Huddersfield is the musical centre of the world, with choirs galore, a crazy amount of orchestras, and as someone who's been defined by this local culture, I want to contribute in my own way to its musical identity.*

*I want it to be an opportunity to play things I want to play, and give myself the time to study them too (instead of a week, or an hour, or now...) and I also figured I've built up a nice network of people I've worked with over the years who would be up for joining me to help out on this project.*

*With my fairly minor celebrity status in the area, I think (and hope) I should be able to drum up a decent audience for these gigs too, and I'm recruiting some local star power to help me with that goal.*

*The wonderful **Rhianydd Helen Beaumont** will join me for what will be a fantastic afternoon of Musical Theatre.*







*Violinist & leader of Slaithwaite Philharmonic Orchestra, **Michele Northam** (right) will join me the weekend after to perform **César Franck**’s wonderful **Violin Sonata**.*

*We’ll be with my ‘partner in crime’ at Opera North, **Jenny Martins**, who’ll perform some piano duets with me.*



*And then we get to the final evening and the one I’m most looking forward to, when another partner-in-crime **Thom Meredith** and I perform **Schubert**’s **Dichterliebe** - my first full song cycle.*

*We’ll be joined by **Sarah Ogden** (another favourite visiting conductor of CVMVC) singing a selection of amazing songs by **Copland** and a selection of female composers.*

*I’m pretty excited about all these performers and performances.*

*I’ll chat a bit about the pieces, and there should be a bar there so you can enjoy a drink while you listen!*

*The playing should be easy, but organising doesn’t come very naturally to me, and this feels like quite an ambitious project, so I really hope friends and supporters will come to at least one performance, and I’m offering discounts if you want to come to more!*

*Wish me luck!*



Thom says,  
“I’ve started practising already !”

Tickets from Chris, Kieran at choir or online at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/amppiano-17497846491>



# Scarborough - our next concert venue



The Choir is gearing up to our next performance - stick it in your diary. On **Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>** we shall be once again at the **Scarborough Music Festival**. There will be the wonderful **Simon Lindley** on organ and piano and compèring this annual feast of fine music.

Simon was helping us prepare on Monday last in Thom's absence. It's always great for us men to have Dr Lindley visit. He so obviously knows his music intimately and he always has a few illustrative anecdotes from his long experience to bring forward for our education and amusement. This year onstage, he'll be joined once again by that fantastic cornet player, **Phillip McCann** and brilliant 'Opera North' soprano, **Victoria Sharp**, who will have some wonderful arias to add to the entertainment.



VotV hears that **Britney Spears** will be in Scarborough that weekend - but fear not - our concert will provide a terrific alternative.

Perhaps our most popular video - of Thom and the Choir singing '**You Raise Me Up**' - was recorded at this concert a few years back. It's been enjoyed by **over 63,000 viewers** - not quite in Britney's league - but not bad.

Click here or on the TV to have a look.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6e3nDCw-Ck>

The concert starts at 7:45pm at the **Queens Hall**, on Queen Street. Put **YO11 1HQ** into your Satnav and come and enjoy a wonderful evening. (Sorry, 'You raise me up' is not on this year's programme but there'll be plenty of new items to enjoy.)





# National Park for the Colne Valley?

There's noise again about creating a new national Park between the **Yorkshire Dales** and **The Peak District**. If it were to happen, the home of our great Yorkshire Choir, Slaithwaite, would be included.

Here's a view from just a couple of miles away from our rehearsal room, that suggests that, in terms of natural beauty, there's some merit to the idea.



And don't forget to check out our website to get the full picture:-

[colnevalleymvc.org.uk](http://colnevalleymvc.org.uk)

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