



A treat for the Choir and our audiences

We just got a new piece of music. It's a luscious new arrangement of that traditional hymn, '**How Great Thou Art**'.



It's early days yet, we just got it into rehearsal the other day - but we do know it enough to be confident it's going to be fabulous when we've got it performance-ready.

The Music-Committee picked this piece for its stunning arrangement by American, **Dan Forrest**. **Keith Swallow** will be in his element - the piano part is, by turns, hauntingly lovely and strikingly dramatic.

The piece has been bought for the Choir by First Tenor, **Leslie Stones** and his lovely (but camera-shy) wife, **Joan**. They tell me that they have known this hymn all their lives and have sung it countless times in church and in the many choirs they have been part of over their 60 years of marriage.

"The old hymn means a lot to us," said Joan, "And when we listened to the new arrangement, we really liked it. That's why it was the piece we picked to sponsor".

A special treat for VotV Readers

The American publishers of the new arrangement, JW Pepper Inc. have released a sound version of this new song.

VotV has put it together with some fantastic video clips of the beauties of Yorkshire (God's own county, after all).

Choir members can use it to help study the harmonies and learn the words. The rest of our readers can just revel in the melodies and enjoy the stunning images that a Yorkshire enthusiast, **Paul Drury**, took with his aerial camera.

VotV is very grateful to Paul for letting us use excerpts.



New member of the basses, David Clarke, tells his story....

*"My mother was a member of the **Horton-in-Ribblesdale Church Choir** and maybe that's where I get my love of music from. I would say music has always been a big part of my life. I would regularly be listening and singing along to music on the radio and as a young nipper would request records by **Buddy Holly, Mario Lanza & Paul Robeson** for my Birthday.*



*I've always had an eclectic taste in music, going to local clubs such as the **Catacombs, The Bin, Johnnies, the Black Cat** and the **Plebeians**. Also the Soul and Motown all-nighter, over in Lancashire, dancing the night away. The only thing that's changed is the amount of time spent dancing. Great times.*

I do regret that I have never learnt to play an instrument, however I've had a guitar propped up in the corner of the room for years waiting to be played - so never say never! I was more an artist than musician attending Art college until I started work at W&E Crowther's in Slaithwaite as a trainee textile designer.

So what made me actually join a choir?



*Well, in a nutshell, **Frank Littlewood**. I have always fancied singing in a choir, talked about it after going to events, was encouraged by others to do so, but never had the confidence or the push to try until I met Frank Littlewood, a long-term member of a male voice choir, who was in the same Residential Home as, my partner, Chris's, mother.*

We hit it off straightaway after participating in impromptu singing sessions with the residents. He suggested that I should contact CVMVC as they were recruiting. Frank then nagged me on a couple more occasions (in the nicest possible way) to go and see about joining. Then he brought out all his memorabilia from the choir and told me of their numerous national & international achievements. His final words of wisdom as he sent me on my way were, "You join the choir and you'll extend your family with a band of brothers. You can do it".

*Finally, he told me he had arranged for me to attend and **I decided to get a backbone** and go. To say I entered the practice rooms with a great deal of trepidation would be an understatement.*



***I LOVED IT.** Everyone was friendly; members came to welcome me and virtually mirrored Frank's words saying I was gaining seventy friends, which was good to hear. The subsequent practices definitely helped build up my confidence.*

*The audition came and Chris (my better half), asked me what I'd be singing. She was surprised at my response and sensibly asked whether I'd be better doing a song practiced with the choir. I must also have surprised the panel on the day not bringing any music, and singing unaccompanied, '**On Ilkley Moor bah't'at.**' However it was a **'thumbs up'** and it was **one of the proudest moments of my life**, (cheesy but true), becoming an official member of the CVMVC. The learning continues....*

No matter what a bad day I might have had, when I return home after these evening practice sessions with the Choir, I feel great. Chris tells me I bounce into the house like 'Tigger'; all happy and smiling.

I have sung in two concerts to date. It's been a bit nerve-wracking but it's such a great experience I really enjoy it. My favourite pieces are 'The Rose' and 'Requiem for a Soldier' as they are both such very thought provoking and emotional pieces and I love singing them.

Watch her singing her greatest hit :-

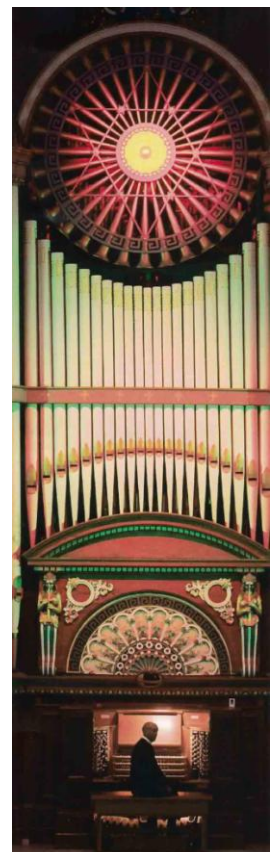
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oR6okRuOLc8>



My other pastime which continues to be a massive part of my life is cycling. I have in the past been a time-trial cyclist and I am a member of a number of local clubs. I love to get out on my bike when body and weather permits and also like to watch the professionals in action.

This year, for the first time, Chris and I travelled to Brittany to watch two stages of the Tour de France. The atmosphere was electric, it was truly magic."

As evidence, David produces this photograph, which, he concedes, may not be entirely recent.



What's the connection?

... asks VotV - between this story by new Colne Valley Bass, **David Clarke**, friend of the Choir, **Gordon Stewart**, and his latest Monday lunchtime organ recital at the Town Hall?

Click on this link to find out.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiSVASIO3ZQ>

Go on - it's worth it!

What can you get for a quid these days?

That's the question posed by **200 Club Supremo, Leslie Stones**.

He's urging VotV readers to spend that pound on a 200 Club Number.

Just £1.00 a week, says Les, and you may win £45.00 or £185.00 or even (in the twice yearly draw) a staggering £1,000.

Yes, you read it right - **ONE THOUSAND POUNDS**.



Ralph Munt, baritone and long-standing Choir member, was the last **BIG WINNER**.

He was there, in Slaithwaite, the other Monday, when his name was called amid shouts of acclamation to the effect, 'So, the drinks are on you, Ralph'

Unfortunately at the that point - and probably due to shock, Ralph suffered what appeared to be a sudden, temporary loss of hearing which didn't return to normal until after the hubbub had died down. VotV is happy to report that his recovery is complete.

VoTV asked him later about his BIG WIN, whether it would change his life and what about the begging letters?

"Don't worry." said Ralph. "I'll still keep sending them out."

Good on you, Ralph!

Other recent winners include:-

R. Neville	£45
L. Meredith	£45
C. Hey	£185
A. N. Other	£45
A. L. Fielding	£45
R.A. Bailey	£45
R.Munt	£1,000
G. Pinder	£45
S. Parkinson	£45

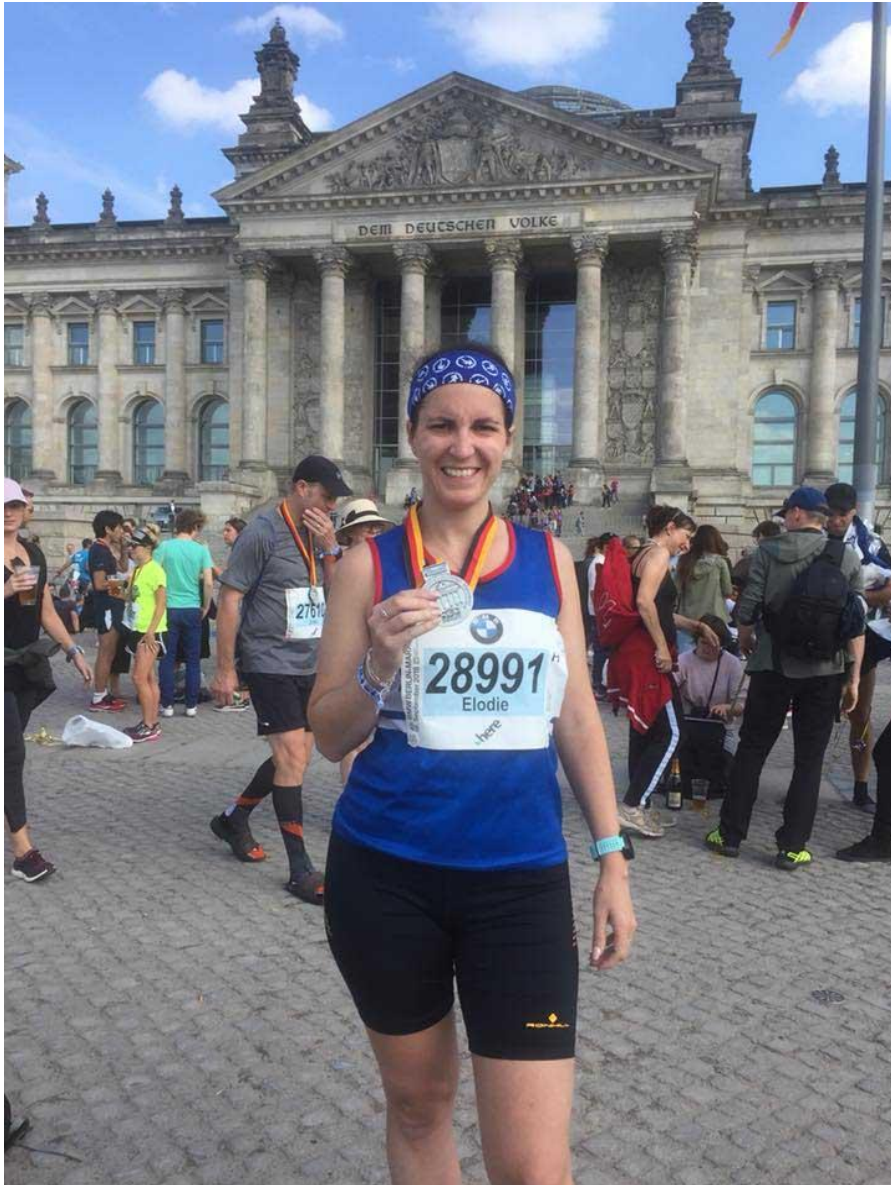


And, as is only right and proper, your humble editor, John Clark, got £45.00 in the 17th September draw. Hurrah!

Les asks, "Will you join us and support the Choir?"

VotV adds: - if you've got a 200 Club number, it doesn't mean you can't have another!

Friend of the Choir does something great



“That’s the Berlin marathon done!” writes **Elodie**, standing outside the Reichstag building in the centre of the German capital.

Many Choir members will remember **Ms. Minazzi** turning up on Mondays to help us pronounce French lyrics and coming back very frequently thereafter to lend her support.

“Really pleased with my result and a Personal Best of 4 hours 14 minutes and 49 seconds, considering how warm it got the last hour or so I was running.

And I even managed a sprint finish and a smile for the photographers. I really loved the experience”

The **VotV Editor** (who couldn’t run a hundred yards these days) says, ‘**Well done, Elodie and Good Luck**’

Concert at Stones

Yes, we’ll be performing again, soon.

And it promises to be a good evening – just **Thom Meredith**, the incomparable, **Keith Swallow** and the men of the **Colne Valley** in concert at Stones Methodist Church near Ripponden.

It’s one of those lovely concerts where all the solo performances between Choir items come from talent within the ranks of the Choir,

There’s a fine organ at Stones so we’ll be doing the ‘proper version’ of ‘**The Lost Chord**’.

That’s October 6th at 7:30 Satnav users put in HX6 4LA



Triumph at new Slaithwaite Music Festival

Old adage does prove true: good things do come in threes

- **Three** fine concerts:- one on musicals, one of duets, and one of song and German Lieder
- **Three** fine instruments:- violin, voice and piano
- **Three** fine performers at each concert:

Christopher Pulleyn with musical theatre performers, **Rhiannyd Beaumont** and **Anthony Harris**

Chris with piano duettist, **Jenny Martins** and violinist, **Michele Northam**

and

Chris with the vocal talents of the delightful **Sarah Ogden** and our very own, **Thom Meredith**



- Three fine audiences; well done **Colne Valley** men for supporting our own, well done the **Civic Hall** and well done **the support team**, including our baritone, **Kieran Chadha**.

Amongst the many highlights was Schumann's song cycle, **Dichterliebe**, played so skilfully by Chris accompanying Thom, singing, **Heine's** passive-aggressive lament, '**I don't complain**'.

The attached version with **Vladimir Ashkenazy** on the piano won't match the magnificence of the live performance but will give those who didn't make it, a feel of a terrific event.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORUsW_2kT1A

One thing on which everybody seems agreed - there must be an **'&piano' Slathwaite Music Festival** next year. Votv has learnt that some spectacular plans are already being laid.



And to the
**one driving
force**
behind it all,
**Christopher
Pulleyn,**

Brilliant Job!

Dog gets new man

Voice of the Valley had the privilege of interviewing **Henry** the other night.

“Basically,” says Henry, “I’m a Black Labrador.

I’m young yet, just nineteen months old, but I’m fully grown and well able to hold down a demanding new job.

I’m training this new man, **Noel Clarke**, who’s doing great but, if truth be told, has a lot to learn. Here you see me watching him closely to make sure he doesn’t do anything silly. I’m too busy to pose for the press - maybe another day!

I myself had a very thorough education at ‘**Guide Dogs for the Blind**’ in Leeds and it was their people who allocated this new chap to me. We’re getting along just fine, though I did have to keep him out of the public eye for a couple of weeks until he’s got on top of the basics.

Noel says I’m a very friendly dog, who would probably welcome everybody who arrives at his door, even burglars. But, what does he know?



He’s getting the hang of living with me and I do check in with my old bosses at Guide Dogs for the Blind every couple of weeks to report on his progress. With luck, Noel and I will be together for many years.

Now that he’s trained I reckon Noel will be able to come back to Choir practice very soon. They tell me he’s got lots of musical talent and experience - quite enough for him to be a great asset to the basses even if he has to struggle a bit to read the music in rehearsals.

Here you see me taking him to one of **Gordon Stewart’s** Monday lunchtime organ recitals at Huddersfield Town Hall. I enjoyed it no end and so did my human. I reckon I’ll bring him to Gordon’s next concert at one o’clock on October 15th, too. It’s a great way to make an otherwise dull Monday afternoon special.

VotV says,

‘Well done, Henry and well done Noel.’

Simon's alter ego to be exercised in Marsden shortly



Which is the real Simon Durrans?

Member of Colne Valley Male Voice Choir, singing songs of praise in the baritone section - or hardened rocker, biting the heads off live chickens at drug-fuelled gigs?

Well VotV can't say - probably neither.

Whatever the case, Simon - seen here contemplating buying another guitar - tells VotV about his other life as rock musician.

"Dark side of the Moor, our tribute band is back again at the Marsden Jazz Festival weekend. This year, we are playing a full 2½ hour **Pink Floyd set!"**

"Tickets are cheaper if you buy in advance" says Simon.

See the poster for details....!"



And another thing.....



Well, it made me smile....

And one more thing.... Grandpa's Boast

The Editor, who's been having a bit of a hard time recently, includes this picture of his grandchildren for no good reason at all, except that he's very proud of them and they cheer him up.



Voice of the Valley

Editor: John C Clark Secretary, **Jenny Baxter**, is on 01484 645192.

Ring her to join our Readers' List or for other queries. Our fine website is at colnevalleymvc.org.uk

