



Super Concert at Stones

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir gave a terrific concert in conjunction with Stones Methodist Church the other Saturday. The small church was half full with the 50 odd men of the Choir and an enthusiastic audience filled up the rest, with an overflow in the balcony above.

Small, friendly and intimate, it provided an excellent opportunity for the choir to give a subtler performance as we came to the last of our 'summer season' engagements. That's not to say that we didn't almost lift the roof off with the forte passages in 'Last words of David'.



VotV has to acknowledge a degree of misrepresentation in the promotion of this event. The Editor had billed it as 'the Choir on its own with our in-house talent providing the solo spots'.

Well, that was to neglect the star of the show, **Lauren Rosborough**. She was almost 'in-house talent' in that she is the daughter of Choir Chairman, **Rob Rosborough** and since girlhood has been known to the Stones congregation.

She played dazzlingly on the xylophone in each half of the concert and played drums to add an extra quality to several Choir numbers.

Young Tom - **Tom Lawton** - did a solo spot - including **Ed Sheeran**'s number, 'Supermarket Flowers' and the other Tom, **Thom Meredith**, reprised, **Schumannn**'s, 'Ich grolle nicht' from Dichterliebe as part of his set. A very fine accompaniment was provided by the inestimable **Keith Swallow** at the keyboard.

Perhaps the audience favourite was when the Stones' organist, **Graham Cockcroft** joined in with Keith at the piano and the Choir in a subtle yet sometimes mighty rendition of Doris Arnold's classic arrangement of **The Lost Chord**.

New Music Arrives

The latest new piece for the Choir is 'Let the River Run' in a new male voice choir arrangement.

The song may be 30 years old but the new arrangement for male voices is bang up to date. **Carly Simon**'s song, in its original form, provided the musical backdrop to the 1998 film by **Mike Nicoll**, 'Working Girl'. Our 2016 version is by **Craig Hella Johnson** and edited by **Emily Crocker**.

*Let the river run,
Let all the dreamers
Wake the nation.
Come, the New Jerusalem*

*Silver cities rise
The morning lights
The streets that meet them
Sirens call them on with a song*

*It's asking for the taking,
Trembling, shaking
Oh, my heart is aching.*

*We're coming to the edge,
Running on the water,
Coming through the fog,
Your sons and daughters.*

*Let the river run,
Let all the dreamers
Wake the nation.
Come, the New Jerusalem*



This feel-good movie shows a working-class woman (**Melanie Griffith**) who, after struggles, finds an outlet for her potential and - in the face of opposition by the privileged, mainly male workplace establishment - 'breaks through the 'glass ceiling'. She is helped by **Harrison Ford** as the love interest and thwarted by a delightfully hateful, '**Sigourney Weaver**'. Finally she is backed by a benign old capitalist mogul.

Click here for the trailer <https://youtu.be/XelaYPKU150>

But it is mainly her own efforts and determination to succeed that makes the difference. It's inspiring in that all of us who been over looked and put down can rejoice in her being noticed and accepted. There's a sense that there could be a better, fairer society.

Simon has said she "found inspiration for the lyrics by first reading the original film script. Musically, I wanted to write a hymn to New York with a contemporary jungle beat under it, so as to juxtapose those opposites in a compelling way."



Because the song is so bound up with the setting and the key themes and of the film, you can't help but see it as being her positive take on New York, 'where a river of dreams is manifested in the people, great and small, who flow into that silver city each morning.



New York's sons and daughters, from all corners of the globe create the new capital city of the world, where they can dare to dream, grab opportunities, freely ask questions and pursue their longings'.

English listeners however will hear in references to the 'New Jerusalem' not so much a geographical entity like New York but rather the metaphorical and aspirational '**Jerusalem**' of **William Blake** when he has us sing: 'We shall nor cease from mental strife, nor shall our swords sleep in our hands till we have built Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land'.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2hhg1U09kKo>

This video version - albeit for mixed voices - is in the Editor's view the most appealing one on the web. Have a listen and see if you agree. It's by **Burnside School Choir** from Christchurch, New Zealand,

What I particularly like is the drumming.

This will be a great addition to the Choir's repertoire - and surely we'll find the bongo talents in our midst.

Can't wait!



John Morrison has something to celebrate

John, august member of the Bass Section and Choir member for close on thirty years tells me that he and his wife, Pat, have been wed since 1958.



1958 - that's a long time ago

The year when the '**Comet**', the World's first transatlantic passenger jet, started flights from London to New York



The year when **Cliff Richard** brought out Britain's first **Rock & Roll** single, '**Move it**', (with 'The Drifters', who later became better known as '**The Shadows**').

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvOU9ZvGXR0>



The 1958 model **Vauxhall Victor** was the car to have. It may have needed servicing every 1,000 miles, but petrol was four shillings and sixpence a gallon (about 5p per litre). 1958 was the year when the **Preston Bypass** - the UK's first motorway - was opened by 'Supermac', Prime minister, **Harold MacMillan**.



And, locally, it was the year when four railway carriages ran away on the **Meltham Branch Line** and crashed into the booking office at **Lockwood station**. Luckily the office was empty at the time.



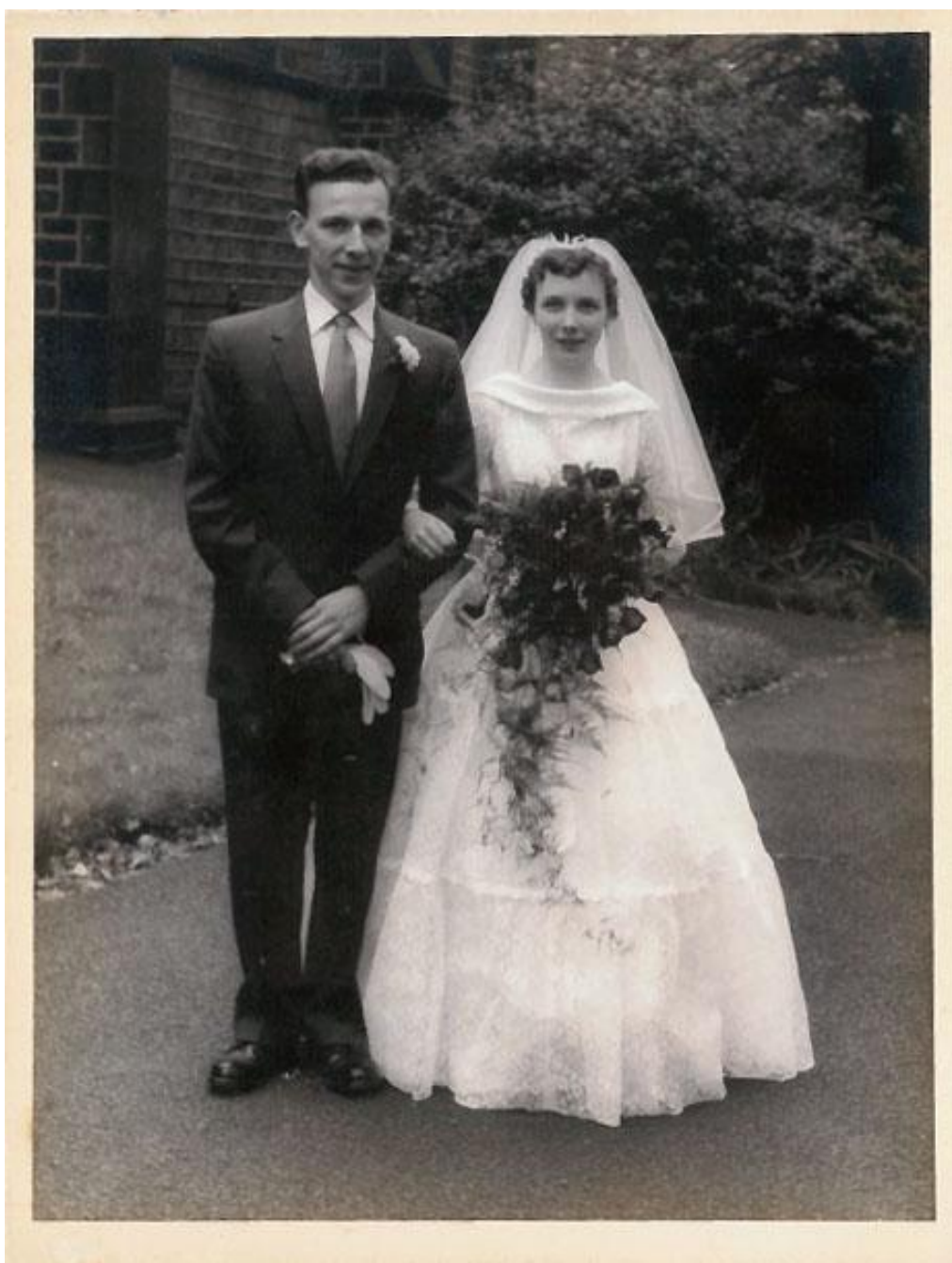
The big film of the year was '**Ice Cold in Alex**' a desert, war-time thriller with John Mills, Sylvia Simms, Anthony Quirke and **Harry Andrews** as grizzled Sergeant Major Pugh.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gaJ5UBi4z2c>

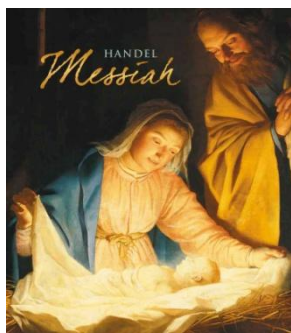
John and Pat's daughter sent VotV this lovely portrait of the happy couple outside **Marsden Parish Church**. "I'm a Moonraker." said John. "But Pat's a Cuckoo, so Saint Bartholomew's was the natural place for the ceremony."

It's quite something to go through thick and thin for sixty years. John tells VotV that he has many memories to treasure of their life together. "Not least," he says, 'We've produced two lovely children, **Beccy** and **Steven** and we enjoy having **five** grandchildren".

"Sadly," he adds, "Pat isn't so well now but we've had two diamond wedding parties already so it's been a really good celebration."



Well done John & Pat



Sing it yourself messiah

There's a 'Sing it yourself messiah' coming up for those who revel in that kind of thing. It's on Saturday December 8th at Trinity Methodist church in Mirfield. - rehearsals on the day and the evening before. **David Heathcote (07909 526072)** is your contact if you fancy singing in or just listening.

Christmas is coming



Last Monday rehearsal saw the Librarians scooting around, madly distributing Christmas music, in time for us to have a quick sing through. It gave Thom an idea about what, if anything, we remembered from previous Town Hall Christmas Concerts and what needed much more than just a 'brush up'

Fun though it was to have a quick reminder of the of the 'Christmas Spirit', VoTV reckons we've got a lot of work to do to be ready to give our Town Hall audience the 'top quality' Christmas concert they've come to expect.

We'll be ready! Look forward to the world-famous, **Brighouse & Rastrick Band**, our youth choir, **Colne Valley Boys** and the Colne Valley Men at our best at Huddersfield town Hall on December 16th at 7:15

Make sure your get your tickets before it's too late! **Roger Fielding** says to ring him quickly (**01484 84626**) because soon tickets will only be available from Kirklees. They will sell you tickets by phone (**01484 225755**) or online - here's the link:-

<https://tickets.kirklees.gov.uk/en-GB/shows/colne%20valley%20mvc%20christmas%20concert%202018/events>



Music Education

Last Saturday your VotV Editor enjoyed the Saint Saens Organ Symphony, played wonderfully by **Slaithwaite's own Symphony Orchestra**. Earlier he'd been at **Marsden Jazz Festival**, listening to a whole raft of street musicians, most of them from round here. And on Monday he was at Choir rehearsal in our **Colne Valley** home.

Once again he was struck by the wealth of musical talent round here and the depth of our musical heritage. But he couldn't help noticing that many of the players - never mind the audiences - were a '**bit long in the tooth**'. Where's the young talent going to come from?

Our very own **Thom Meredith** does fabulous work with younger generations at **Kirklees Music School** but VotV suspects it must be an uphill task in the face of cut after cut to music funding and education budgets.

Let's hope Kirklees will continue to do well. But, whether we are thinking locally or nationally, there are big challenges to face. Below, VotV quotes selectively from an analysis, extracted from September's issue of the **New Statesman** magazine.

NewStatesman

The decline of music education threatens to deprive Britain of future talent

A new National Plan is needed to stop cultural subjects being squeezed out of the curriculum.

BY MICHAEL DUGHER

Last month the talented young cellist, **Sheku Kanneh-Mason**, became the first artist to receive a 'BRIT' Breakthrough Award for his debut album '*Inspiration*'. His album is aptly named. He inspired a TV audience of hundreds of millions when he played at Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding. But it's worth remembering that he went to a comprehensive school in one of the less advantaged parts of Nottingham.



When I saw him at the Royal Albert Hall for the Brits, it wasn't just his talent that created an impression on the audience. It was also his stark warning about the decline of music in education.

"Having the opportunity - being supported from my school in my music is so special. Many children like me won't have even nearly those opportunities and that is one of the saddest things to see."

Take the recent GCSE results: they revealed a 7.4% drop in the number of pupils taking GCSE Music. This followed a drop of 8% the previous year. If GCSE Music teaching is diminished, there is a real risk that some schools will lose specialist music teachers and could even lose dedicated music spaces and equipment.

It is a similar story at A-Level. Some schools and colleges can't afford to keep the courses running. Four in ten have cut back on lesson time, staff or facilities for over the last two years.

Since the introduction in 2010 of the **EBacc**, which **excludes** creative subjects such as music, 59.7% of state schools say it has had a negative impact on music provision and uptake, according to a study conducted by the University of Sussex. One fifth of schools did not offer GCSE Music last year. Of those schools that do offer Music GCSE, 11% are taught outside curriculum time.

The decline of music education has a negative impact on social mobility. Top earners are four times more likely to pay for social-enrichment classes for their children. Half the children at independent schools receive sustained music tuition, but the figure for state schools is just 15%. This has an impact on our talent pipeline. 17% of music creators are educated at fee-paying schools, compared to around 7% for the population as a whole.

At a time when the creative industries are growing at twice the rate of the wider economy and are worth £92bn to the UK, allowing creative subjects like music to wither on the vine makes no sense.

The music industry contributes £4.4bn annually to the UK's economy. We are global leaders when it comes to music, but all of that is predicated on ensuring that as many kids as possible have access to music, to tuition, instruments and rehearsal rooms. If we are drawing water from a smaller well, our talent pipeline will be in serious jeopardy.

UK acts **Coldplay**, **Depeche Mode**, **Sir Paul McCartney**, **Ed Sheeran** and **The Rolling Stones** all featured in the **top ten worldwide tours** last year. But all bar one of these five acts released their debut single in the last century (for some their debut was over half a century ago).



The Rolling Stones were one of five British acts to feature in the top ten worldwide tours last year.

GETTY IMAGES

We cannot take our current success for granted. We must ensure that we have an environment that helps to nurture our talent pipeline. That work obviously needs to start in our schools.

But as well as there being a strong economic imperative to save music in our schools, there is also a solid education argument. Growing international evidence demonstrates children who are engaged in their education through music do better at Maths and English. In the London Borough of Newham, for example, pupils performing less well at Key Stage 2 showed marked improvements in their studies after joining the **Every Child a Musician** programme for schools.

As the body for the commercial music industry, UK Music is rising to the challenge.

We are launching a new report, “**Securing Our Talent Pipeline**”, which identifies the challenges facing music in education. It also sets out a number of possible solutions that the government and policy-makers could adopt to support creative talent and contribute to the development of our workforce. The government should commit to a new National Plan for Music Education. This should be based on access to a broad and balanced curriculum that prevents cultural subjects being squeezed out of state schools. (Further research - see <https://www.ukmusic.org/>)



The National Youth Choirs of Great Britain in concert – choirs only receive around 1% of Arts Council funding.

Funding should be available so that all young people benefit from opportunities no matter where they live, what music they play and what their financial background is.

If we fail to act, we risk the prospect that huge talents like Sheku Kanneh-Mason could be the last music stars of their generation rather than the first of the next generation.

Michael Dugher is the chief executive of UK Music. He was previously shadow culture secretary and was Labour MP for Barnsley from 2010-17.



It's the exception that proves the rule

It's the exception that proves the rule they say. Get somebody to put this link into a computer and enjoy a fabulous example of young musical talent - we still have lots - at **Marsden Jazz Festival** a couple of years ago - doing a super version of 'You know how I feel'.

<https://youtu.be/eqYqKeGSUe0>



Well It made me smile



Voice of the Valley

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

