



Keith eases up

Maestro Keith Swallow has announced his intention to ease into semi-retirement in the coming months.

The 'Titan of the Keyboards' has reached agreement with the Choir's management that the Christmas concerts at the end of the year will be his final engagements as Principal Accompanist.

But readers will be pleased to learn his involvement with the Choir won't cease - just begin to wind down a bit.



Keith Swallow starts to wind down

From 2020 Keith will become '**Accompanist Emeritus**' playing in rehearsals and concerts, as required, when the soon to be appointed new pianist is unavailable.

Easter Sunday, April 21st 1957 was Keith's first formal appearance with the Choir, where he played both to accompany the Choir and to perform a solo slot. And he's been with us ever since. Throughout Keith's glittering career as a musician, he always arranged his engagement diary to make sure Colne Valley Male Voice Choir got the full benefit of his inestimable skills.



And the good news is he's not going away!

Readers with mental arithmetic skills will quickly calculate that by Christmas he will have been in continuous service with the Choir for **62 years 8 months and 25 days**.

That's quite something!

Fats Waller only managed a piano-playing career of a paltry 37 years.

Dr John (who died the other day) is lauded for having a long career. But he only just managed 62 years.

Remind yourself of his skills here.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCRrXZP8b0I>

Best not to mention **Artur Rubinstein**; whose keyboard career took off in 1904 and whose last gig was 72 years later, when he was 89.

But Keith is remarkable and he isn't planning to give up yet - 63 years so far and only beginning to ease back a bit.

We all hope he'll still be playing with the Choir till he betters Rubinstein's achievement.



Simon Says...

Members will have noted that the Choir held its **97th Annual General Meeting** the other day.

In the capable hands of our wonderful secretary, **Jenny Baxter**, the meeting was business-like but unspectacular. There were a couple of highlights mentioned in articles below but noteworthy elements included the inaugural report by our incoming Treasure, **Simon Durrans**.

Simon, (ably assisted by wife Lynn) has picked up the threads so capably held by outgoing Treasurer, **Keith Fielding** for the last 29 years. No easy job and Simon rose to the task magnificently.



"We've made a loss this year." he told the meeting, "Mainly down to our subsidy of the Cornwall tour. It's not serious - our reserves are good but it's something we need to keep an eye on."

Subs to rise by a risible amount

He went on to propose just a very modest increase in subscriptions. "We can do this." he said "Because our underlying financial state remains healthy."

"But I've noticed." he added, "That our 200 Club is under-subscribed - too many numbers unsold at present. This, Gentlemen, is something we've got to rectify. Or next year, we'll have to look closely at a substantial hike in our ridiculously low level of subs."

Get your 200 Club numbers.

Get your neighbours, partners, family and friends onboard. Each number costs just £50 a year. Half of that goes to income, half goes straight back to people with numbers as prizes. - two £1,000 big prizes, ten of £185 and every remaining week a 'not to be sniffed at' £45 prize."

	<p>Just one pound a week buys you one of the 200 Club numbers.</p> <p>There's a good chance of winning: £45 in prize money weekly, £185 in the monthly draw and two whopping £1,000 draws each year.</p> <p>Even if you don't win, you win - because half of the fund supports Choir concerts and performances.</p> <p>Contact Choir Secretary, Jenny, on 01484 645192</p>
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Musical Director's Report



Dear Men,

Apologies that I can't attend the AGM tonight, but I would like to make a couple of brief comments about this year - and beyond!

Cornwall

Taking recent events first: Cornwall. If the competition results were all that important, we should really look back on Cornwall with disappointment. However, that really isn't the case! The way the choir prepared so thoroughly (both with me and with our very able visiting conductors) was admirable and the singing at the competition on the day was excellent. I was delighted and couldn't have asked for more from anyone. The adjudicators also noticed our superb accompanist - which actually isn't that hard to do as we notice it every week!

The whole weekend was both musically satisfying and also very enjoyable and a huge debt of gratitude goes to Jenny and the whole team who put together such an excellent trip.

Music making across the community

We have enjoyed many other successful events over the year – both formal (such as the ever-popular Christmas Concert at the Town Hall) and informal (for example performing as part of our community for the Colne Valley Lions). Each event is hugely important to ensure that our reputation is upheld and our enjoyment of music making is shared across our community. I hope that every choir member feels that your contribution is valued and your presence is important – because it certainly is.

100 Up



1922 Ford Model T Roadster Pick-up

That brings me to the last thing I'm going to mention and apologies if this has been mentioned by others, or if I'm jumping the gun. However, in a few short years we will be **celebrating 100 years of CVMVC** - quite an amazing achievement.

Although it seems a few years away yet, 2022 will soon be upon us and there are already plans being hatched to enable us all to enjoy a very special year. Let's all seize every opportunity to work together towards this event and beyond. We could even set ourselves some targets: how about 100 members by the time we are 100 years old?

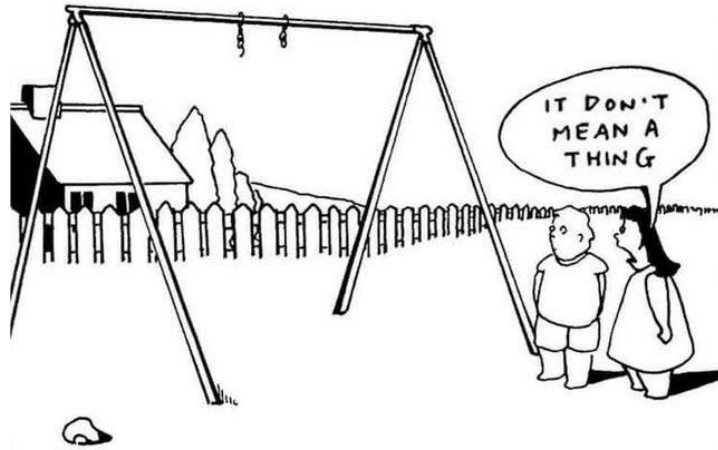
If we all share the vision, we can achieve anything!

Big Up

Thank you to the wonderful **Keith Swallow**, to **David Hirst and the Music Committee** for making my life so much easier and to everyone who sings in, or works for the choir. We've had an excellent year of music making – long may it continue!

Thom Meredith

Proud MD – Colne Valley Male Voice Choir



It don't mean a thing....

It's true - getting the offbeat rhythms right, on many a piece in our repertoire for the Golcar concert on Saturday, is crucial.

'**Let the river Run**', '**Don't Rain on my parade**', '**Luck be a lady**' all hang on 'getting the swing'. Even our jazzy version of '**Joshua fit the battle of Jericho**' don't mean a thing without the swing.

VotV erroneously reported in the last issue that we'll be doing our new '**Queen**' numbers at Golcar - sadly not true – we are still working on these. The premieres will come later.

No matter, there will be plenty for our audience to enjoy at Golcar - tickets are still available via James Cooke or online - and you can get 'em on the door of course on Saturday night.

In the meantime enjoy the swing, as exemplified by **Duke Ellington**.



<https://youtu.be/qDQpZT3GhDg>

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, GOLCAR
PROUDLY PRESENTS

15TH JUNE 2019
7:30PM

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir

• *In Concert* •

Musical Director: Thom Meredith
Accompaniast: Keith Swallow

Bring your friends and family to hear this award winning choir
Bar and refreshments available

TICKETS ONLY

£10

Get your seats early - They will sell fast
St John's Church, Church Street, Golcar.

For tickets please contact the Church Office
on 01484 647400 or buy online at
www.stjohnschurchgolcar.org

Music Committee Report - presented by David Hirst: Edited Extracts



The Music Committee: Keith Holland, James Blagbrough, David Hirst (Chairman), Thom Meredith and James Cooke.

*Last year, unusually, we convened a Meeting with the sole purpose of considering new items of music. By the end of the evening, we agreed that five items should be recommended for purchase and two or three more be kept in mind, for future consideration. The outcome was, we ordered:- **'How Great Thou Art', 'And Can It Be', 'Let the River Run', 'Classic Queen' and 'Manly Men'.***

*It was most gratifying to find that subsequently four Choir members had individually offered to purchase four of these five items. This reminds me to thank also, all the other members who have in the past kindly donated money for new music and to mention that **we are always interested in hearing from potential music sponsors!***

The items of new music I have just mentioned, well illustrate the direction the Committee is taking. If we are to interest possible new members, and indeed younger members in joining us, then we must continue with diversity of music genre. This doesn't mean that we are abandoning traditional Male Voice repertoire, but rather that we aim to provide a varied overall programme of music.

*In 2018 year, 43 different items were performed. Five of these were new items:- **'It's A Grand Night For Singing', 'Luck Be A Lady', 'This Is The Moment', 'How Great Thou Art' and 'A Merry Christmas'.** The latter, though based on the traditional 'We Wish You A Merry Christmas', was a new version by our own, **James Blagbrough.***

In selecting programmes for 're-engagement concerts', we continue to 'ring the changes'. Just one example is the forthcoming August concert in Scarborough. There are to be 7 items which have not been performed previously there and that will bring the total number of different songs performed to 97 in the twelve annual concerts to date.

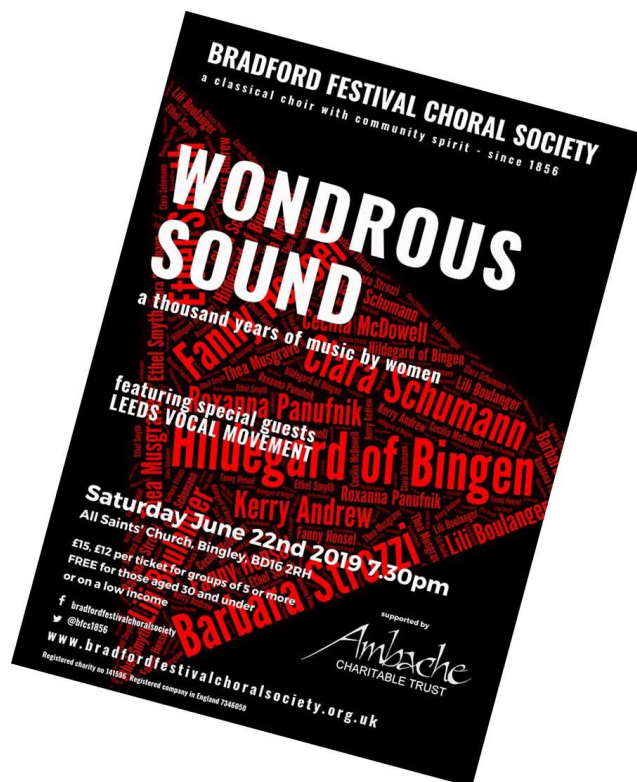
*And whilst on the subject of total number of different songs performed, the total number since **Thom Meredith** became conductor in 1989, albeit almost thirty years ago, has now risen to a staggering **326 different items.***

*To conclude this report may I take the opportunity to give special thanks to our Librarian **Keith Holland** for his outstanding work. Since last year 11 new items have been obtained, needing to be backed in folders. I would guesstimate that means that Keith and of course Barbara will have worked on approximately 750 to 800 pieces of music. Well done Keith and assistant **Peter Meadows.***

and another thing...

“This will be a lovely gig - fantastic music, lovely choir, an excellent guest group in ‘Leeds Vocal Movement’. Add in some top songs from Anna Prosser.”

So writes our very own, brilliant **Chris Pulleyn**, who’ll appear on keyboards at the concert. “Get your tickets in advance.” He advises “It’s not a big church”.



And while we're at it here's news of our sister choir, **Marsh Ladies**, performing at Lindley on the 29th.



Colne Valley, Yorkshire - not a bad place to live



Pictures - John Ellis



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