



## Daddy, my Daddy

50 years have now passed since that iconic moment in **'The Railway Children'** when the train came in to their country station and brave daughter, Bobbie, (played so well by Jenny Agutter) saw her long-absent father and rushed to welcome him home.

The Choir's stage manager, baritone, **Barry Slater** has long had an interest both in steam trains and in the historic **Keighley and Worth Valley Railway**, where the original footage was created.

But he was somewhat surprised to find himself with a leading role in a celebratory video recreation of that tear-jerking culmination of the film. He plays the unjustly-imprisoned father, finally freed, being reunited with his loyal family.







Click here to enjoy their K&WVR recreation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F3TF0PRb1K4&feature=youtu.be>

## Barry Tells VotV...

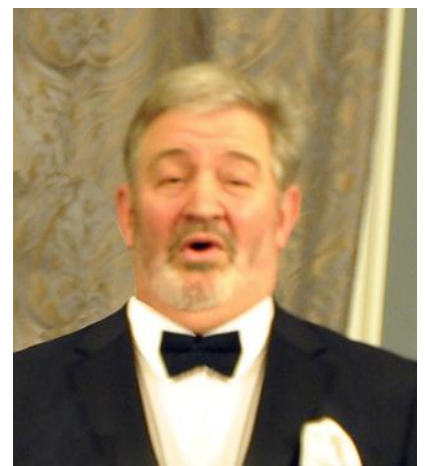
‘The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway had made considerable preparations to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the making of the film ‘The Railway Children’ at Oakworth Station.

Sadly, because of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, all the live events had to be cancelled. So, like the Choir, we did the next best thing. The video is a compilation of scenes, which were put together a few years ago, and released to try and make up for the loss of the special live performance.

On several occasions in the past I had played the ‘Old Gentleman’ part. (Ian Cuthbertson was the father-figure in the original). On this occasion the original NE Saloon, which was used in the film, was on tour with Railway Children productions at London’s Waterloo Station and later at the National Railway Museum at York. We settled instead for using the vintage trains with one of the original engines and the ‘home-coming’ scenes were arranged around a normal scheduled train service with very scant rehearsal.

My instructions were to be at the back of the train and on arrival to step onto the platform and stand there. (It was a most unnerving experience when the young girl ran up to me shouting ‘Daddy, my daddy’ and then threw her arms around me. I’d never seen her before). The resultant reaction of the audience at the station was quite emotional and very well received. The rest as they say is history.’

Kind regards  
Barry



**Well done, Barry**

Anyone hankering to watch the original scene from the 1970 film can click here:

This short clip shows the fathers return. We see Roberta 'Bobbie' Waterbury at Oakworth Station, the train arrives with no sign of her dad, then through a cloud of steam and smoke as the train departs she spots her father, Charles Waterbury. Roberta runs down the platform to greet him.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkHTT3dJL9E>

This is the charming Jenny Agutter with the friendly porter played so well by **Bernard Cribbins**





# Keith reaches another milestone

Maestro Keith Swallow, the extraordinary pianist, who was the Choir's main accompanist for a mind-boggling number of years is reaching another milestone.

**It will be his birthday on February 4<sup>th</sup>. And he will be 90.**



Keith started playing for Colne Valley Male Voice Choir in April 1957, only stepping down to 'Accompanist Emeritus' at the end of 2019, after close on **63 years** of continuous service.

VotV asked Keith about his upcoming birthday. He acknowledged that it was probably right that his birthday was imminent but said, "Nobody wants to hear about that - not even me."

As to how was he coping with the long Covid lockdown?... *"I'm more or less alright."* He chuckled. *"I'm mobile, marbles are still there - just. Part of my being alright, I'm sure, is **not** watching the news too much!"*

*I keep in touch with people on the phone and I'm coping well with the day to day stuff. I did manage to knock the wing mirror off my new car the other day. That's my big news - not much is happening is it? I get out to the village shop, drive down to 'Marks & Sparks and do the Sainsbury's run still. And of course, I'm very fortunate, I've got my piano.*

*I had a trip the other day down to Holmfirth Memorial Hospital to get the 'jab'. I gather that rescheduling the second dose had the result that **John Wimpenny** got his in the next tier down."*

A big celebration concert in honour of Keith, our oldest member, was the first casualty of the Covid lockdown. But it is still the Number One Priority in the Choir's post-corona schedule.

Our fingers are tightly crossed that it can happen in the early autumn.



Keith commented: *"I know what they're thinking - we've already sold the tickets. Better get it in quickly before he goes. Otherwise it'll be a perfect memorial with a free glass of wine."*

But VotV notes this rather grim and downbeat remark was said with a giggle!

## Happy Birthday, Keith

# Away from the roll of the sea...

That's the name of the lovely tune, new to CVMVC, which now figures in the online rehearsal schedule, we have just embarked on.



As **David Morrison's** picture shows we've got a lot of pieces in rehearsal: work to form our 2021 concert repertoire.

David was going through his music case, getting ready to resume online rehearsing and thinking, 'Well, we can't sing **all** this' and hoping that Thom, Chris and our Music Committee will sort out what we'll focus most closely on.

Actually nothing was dropped at that New Year rehearsal. Rather, Thom added **three further new pieces** - and what terrific ones they are. One of them, '**Away from the roll of the sea**' by Canadian, **Alistair McGillivray**, evokes gentle seascapes and could be ideal for our seaside trip to Scarborough, if we are fortunate enough to be able to return there later this year. We are optimistic!

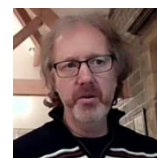


*'Small craft in a harbour that's still and serene  
They rock at their moorings all nestled in dreams  
Away from the roll of the sea...'*



There's a fine version by a Taiwanese Male Voice Choir- if you are online. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9simlLeikU>

We can't wait to get back on stage but Thom warns us to be realistic. So, meanwhile we sing on Zoom. '*Our Christmas Online Concert turned out to be an enormous success.*' said Thom. '*So, I suggest, maybe a Spring online performance should be our immediate goal, as we work towards a performance **in real life** later in the year.*'





# Every choir needs a good conductor

Winner of the first **200 Club** prize of 2021, bass, **John Garner**, has been in contact with VotV. He stated what seemed to be the obvious when he told me that 'Every choir needs a good conductor'.



Well, what lay behind that truism, was a charming video he had come across.

He thought it might interest our readers.

I think he might be right!  
Have a look:-



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvMTIDr7jw>

## Simon was the next 200 club winner ...



Shortly after John Garner, the 200 Club prize was won by baritone, **Simon Durrans**.

Simon also reckons it's never too early to start your grandchildren on music lessons.

It's a great scheme the 200 Club.

I wonder if he's bought **Baby Jessica** a number?

Grandchildren or none, VotV recommends everyone get in touch with Jenny and buy another number!



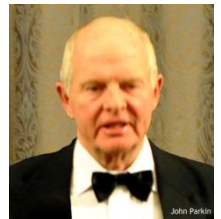
# New VotV reader gets in touch - not such a new guy after all

A new VotV reader in France has been in touch. It turns out his links to the Colne Valley are many and various. He writes:-

*I have just joined your **200 Club** following the watching of your delightful Christmas concert and have moved on to reading back issues of 'Voice of the Valley'. The final section inviting readers to share their stories kept catching my eye. "Let the VotV Editor know if there's something of interest and has some connection - even if it's a bit tenuous - to the Choir".*

*So here goes with 'tenuousity', if there is such a word.*

1. *I was born in the **Colne Valley** . . . Marsden in fact, lived just 20 yards from the house of **Ronnie Hirst** brother of **David Hirst**, famed CVMVC member.*
2. *I lived on the street above **Jack Muskett**, CVMVC member who, when I was around 16 or 17 years old kept asking me to join CVMVC - sadly I never did!*
3. *I went to **Colne Valley** High School and was in the same year as **Raymond Ellis** and **John Parkin**.*
4. ***Roger Fielding**, who incidentally is a 4<sup>th</sup> cousin, (He probably doesn't know that) was a year ahead and of course his father, Edward, was deputy head. His brother **Keith** was also a friend of my brother at Royds Hall Grammar school and married **Janine** Gartery, the sister of Robert Gartery who was also in the same form as me at CVHS . . . complicated?*



*Photo shows CVHS boys choir circa 1960 with Raymond, Robert, John Parkin and me.*



*Back Row Raymond Ellis 2nd from left, 3<sup>rd</sup> from right Malcolm Swift, 2<sup>nd</sup> from right John Parkin. Middle Row 4<sup>th</sup> from right Robert Gartery. Front Row 2<sup>nd</sup> from left me, Michael Shaw.*



4. In the same picture is Malcolm Swift, son of **Willie Swift** CVMVC member. In September 1960 at the first **Haydn Wood Music Festival** I came second to Malcolm Swift in the Boy Soprano class followed by Raymond in 3<sup>rd</sup> place singing '**On wings of Song**'.

5. **Royal Albert Hall, 1000 Yorkshire Voices** - I sang at two of these concerts whilst being a member of Gledholt MVC. At the time CVMVC tenor, **Brian Craven** was in Gledholt, too.



6. An amazing **Royal Albert Hall Coincidence** occurred at one concert I did not sing in. I had sneaked in for the afternoon rehearsals and was sat right at the back of the auditorium. There was just one other person sat there. Blow me down it was **Ronnie Hirst**. He was reckoning to sing that evening but had decided to rest that afternoon having just had both knees replaced. Amazing - two people in the Albert Hall auditorium, 190 miles from home, and we lived just 20 yards from each other!



7. Later on in 2017 in France where I now live, I organised a **Marsh Ladies Choir** Concert trip to our area to perform 3 concerts, the last one being with our French choir Can't 'on chant. The last concert was in the old Priory at Rauzet just 5 miles from where we live and the choirs jointly sang "Old Hundredth". For this we were assisted male voice-wise (as our small choir only had 4 male voices) by 4 men from **CVMVC** - husbands of Marsh Ladies. See the video - who can you spot?

<https://1drv.ms/v/s!Aq1fpIAAtE6qb9EqURrH4BBPJYsmr?e=NuOJME>

8. Last year 2019 I organised a one-man show in our local church entitled, '**Sur les landes d'Ikley sans chapeau**'. It included musical excerpts that had had an influence on my life and concluded with a concert by our choir. There were many MVC pieces from the Royal Albert Hall concerts and as examples of the many musical influences provided by being brought up in the Colne Valley and Huddersfield - The Hallelujah Chorus by Huddersfield Choral (Malcolm Sargent version), B & R Band accompanying the choirs and **Keith Swallow's** rendition of Litolff's Scherzo.



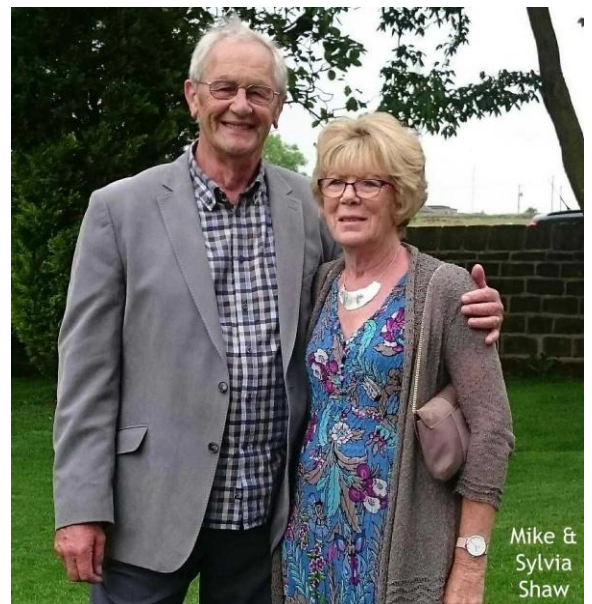
9. When I looked at your website and started looking at the archive pictures and film clips. I spotted a gentleman in your Cornish clip, who came to a party in Leeds when Sylvia and I celebrated our Silver Wedding. He came with his lovely late wife and he is **Trevor Bowers**, (CVMVC Second tenor).

I don't really know why I am writing this other than the phrase "tenuous links" and the hope that some of your readers may find something of interest.

I would like to thank you for many happy hours spent listening to your CDs and wish everyone a safe and healthy 2021 and beyond.

**Michael Shaw**

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# So farewell then, Gerry



Gerry and the Pacemakers', **Gerry Marsden**, is another whose recent death has been sadly noted. Of course his biggest hit and the anthem of Liverpool Football Club, '**You'll never walk alone**' will remain his abiding legacy.



Colne Valley has performed this song close on 50 times, so Music Committee', **David Hirst** tells VotV, often in the arrangement by the late and still much-missed, **Philip R Baxter**.

Fittingly, the Choir also first sang it at a football ground - ahead of Huddersfield Town's match against Charlton Athletic just before the Millennium. Our last performance of the piece was at the **Huddersfield Town Hall** with **Colne Valley Boys** and **Brighouse and Rastrick Band** and it was magnificent.

A little less magnificent, perhaps, is this videoed performance by **Michael** (not that one) **Parkinson**. He filmed **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**, with guest soloists **Victoria Sharp** and **Campbell Russell** in concert at the **Scarborough Music Festival** in August 2019.

The sound quality isn't exceptional but the sense of performance still shines through.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1pIE9A5E44>



**Phillip McCann** played the cornet, the organist was **Dr Simon Lindley** and **Keith Swallow** was at the piano. Musical Director, **Thom Meredith**, was in charge of the whole thing and it made a fitting finale to another concert organised by the irrepressible **Christine Cox**.



## Nancy

*Hi John*, writes bass singer and Choir Assistant Librarian, **Peter Meadows**...



My Mum was very grateful to get a printed copy of *VotV* delivered to her house. Now I know how to print them, I can do that for her. \*\*\*

She told me a few things of how many years her ties to the Choir go back. My Mum, Nancy, turns 90 this year. She has been a good soprano all her life and still loves singing. My dad was a good deep bass but unfortunately never had time to join CVMVC and my sister is a good alto, so we are a musical family.

My mum was born in Slaithwaite and brought up at **Hill Top** in the next house to **Leslie Stones** (first Tenor). Both my grandad and Leslie's father played cricket together at Slaithwaite. She worked with **Clive Shaw** and also **John Radcliffe**'s late wife Enid. She also knows **Raymond Ellis** well, as he was brought up at Golcar Providence Methodists where my mum has worshipped for the last 60 years or so.

However the oldest connection to the Choir and definitely the most interesting is that mum had singing lessons from the great **George Stead**.

Her mum had been to school with George Stead and in the late 1940s managed to persuade him to give my mum singing lessons.



He was a very busy man and so the only time he was available was Monday evenings after the Male Voice Choir rehearsal. So every Monday my mum went from Hill Top to **Varley Road** (where Mr Stead lived) for her lesson. This went on for a few years until 1951 when she got married and moved to Longwood which was (in those days) too far to travel for the lesson.

*Best wishes, Peter*

\*\*\* If you go to the **Newsletters** section of the website you'll find a '**printable**' version of *VotV* ready to download and run off for your friends and relatives who might not have easy access to the main online version.



In the newsletter section, just click on the little square image and a printable version will appear - in PDF format - ready to print out as you wish.

Or, for now, you can just click on this link... <http://colnevalleymvc.org.uk/newsletter/>



# A story of Huddersfield

**John Lees**, first tenor and sometime Choir Chairman, has been in touch to tell *VotV* he has just been re-reading Roy Brook's, "The story of Huddersfield". He includes a paragraph which, he thinks illustrates that local musical organisations had some tough rules for their members to adhere to. He doesn't make open parallels between the **Huddersfield Choral Society of 1836** and any of today's choirs but you suspect he has some comparisons in mind.



*The Choral society founded in 1836 had some tough rules re **commitment** ...*



*"The Huddersfield Choral Society, though not the oldest of its kind, was founded as far back as June 1836 following a meeting at the **Plough Inn, Westgate**. Sixteen founder members decided to meet for practice in Spring Street Infants School every month on or before the full moon.*

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The Plough Inn was roughly where The Crown is on today's Westgate

(Annual subscription, then, is 10 shillings - roughly equivalent to £58.00 in today's money, which seems very reasonable. You might also assume that coming in late, half \*\*\*\*\* , and telling your fellow choristers they're a bunch of \*\*\*\*\*s who should go and get \*\*\*\*\* might just be worth it at 9d. or £4.31 a go. Or would that count as four offenses? Ed.)



# Rain – it was touch and go in the Colne Valley



We kept our fingers crossed - no floods in Marsden but **Folly Dolly Falls** looked great in Meltham.





# Have you had your jab yet? Do tell!



## Send me a picture.

## Tell me your news

At this time of continuing distancing and social isolation, VotV readers, whether singers or audience-members, can no longer meet up.

## But we can keep in touch.



Let the VotV Editor know if something happens to you that might be of interest and has some connection - even if it's a bit tenuous - to the Choir. Doesn't matter if you are not very confident writing, I'll help you put into publishable shape.

**Voice of the Valley Editor: John C Clark**

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Ring Choir Secretary, Jenny, on 01484 645192  
to join us or join our Readers' List or for other queries

