



Noel's Concert

Bass, Noel Clarke, couldn't think of a better way to celebrate his 80th birthday than to have a concert in the church where he is organist - so he did! And what a lovely afternoon it was!

Noel played to accompany the final piece, 'Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones' - one of Noel's favourite hymns - arranged by Thom with a super, specially written, piccolo-trumpet obligato for Noel's pal, **Derek Ruffle**.

The Choir was terrific and with Choir favourite, Sarah Ogden and Thom doing the solo slots it was a fine lovely occasion.





Choir favourite, **Sarah Ogden**, sang wonderfully; perhaps the most endearing was Elgar's, '**Where Corals Lie**'.

Later, her duet with Thom, '**Benedictus**' brought fresh pleasure. It is an anthem that was in the Choir's repertoire for many years.

Hear Dame Janet Baker give her definitive version of 'Corals' on this link:

<https://youtu.be/vBckxpC7W9w>



COLNE VALLEY SummerFest

Fun in the sun at Marsden

Sunday afternoon saw a community event taking place that Colne Valley Male Voice Choir was proud and pleased to be part of.

For the men it was just for fun. The proceeds of the day are to be split between Saint Bartholomew's Church, the ever-charming Colne Valley Boys and the superb Marsden Silver Prize Band.



Ian, Brian, Peter, John and Trevor enjoying the shade

Typical audience feedback: 'What a fun day in Marsden. I do hope it becomes an annual event'.



The men of the Colne Valley are undaunted by the heat

Thanks to Chris Wilson for the pictures



A few of the boys do a super impromptu performance outside the church.

The afternoon was a joy.

Matt and Linda Houston had worked like Trojans - you see Matt here, slipping away from the sweltering heat of the Barbecue provided by our long-time sponsors at **Bolster Moor Farmshop** to help out as usual with the Colne Valley Boys. Though many boys couldn't make it, those that did gave a terrific performance both outside and in the concert in the church.

Adult singers weren't able to have a beer from a barrel donated by Empire Brewery and Milltown Brewery beforehand, of course, but after the concert many were pleased to sample a drop or two. And very pleasant it was - big thank you to our bar sponsors.



Marsden Silver Prize Band has been living up to its name recently - winning prizes all over the local competitions.

Under their conductor, **Andrew Lofthouse**, they have regained the quality that has marked them out over their 25 year history. Their version of Schostakovich's **Festival Overture** was simply a terrific demonstration of their musical skills.



Thom does 'Rule Britannia' in the finale with the excellent Band and Choir.

Invictus recording

VotV is grateful to Colne Valley Stalwart, **Stuart Baxter**. He tells VotV that our new piece, 'Invictus' isn't new to the Choir at all. He remembers us performing it in a version by Daniel Protheroe. Better still, Stuart has rediscovered a recording of it.



It comes from an LP by neighbours **Honley Male Voice Choir**.

It was entitled '**Deep Harmony**' - after the song they sang then to end each rehearsal - and was probably made in the 1970's.



This fine anthem for male voice choirs was apparently also a part of the Colne Valley Male Voice Choir repertoire for many years. We hope the men of Honley won't mind VotV quoting their work.

Music Committee Chairman, David Hirst has been keeping meticulous records of Choir repertoire since 1960. He tells Voice of the Valley that the Protheroe version of 'Invictus' was regularly performed by Colne Valley Male Voice Choir. 'We last sang it in concert in 1976 and we were accompanied by Slaithwaite Band. The song and the band parts should still be in our library'.

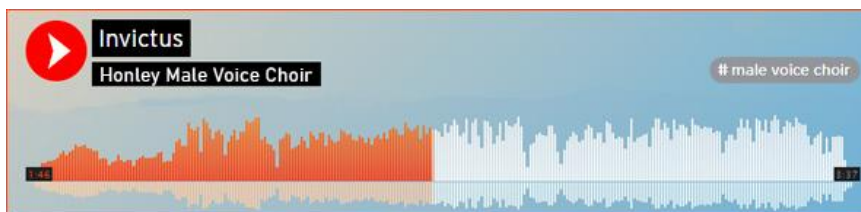
Maybe we could dig it out says VotV.

As for **Daniel Protheroe** - he was born in Wales in 1866 and emigrated to the USA as a young man. He retained his links to Wales and often returned for the Eisteddfod. His setting of Invictus was originally published in 1915 but editions were still in print in the 1980's

It is this famous poem about stoical dominance over pain and suffering that has been recently set to music afresh by **Daniel J Hall**.

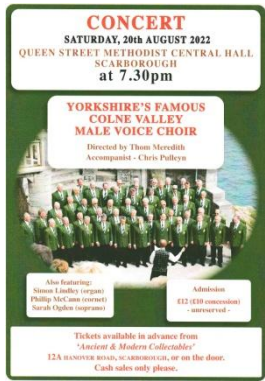
In 2022 CVMVC is preparing the new version for performance.

Hear the older version here:-



<https://soundcloud.com/john-clark-124140241/invictus>





Scarborough concert coming up soon

The poster image might be of Cornwall rather than North Yorkshire and the picture might be 15 years old. And a good handful of the performers now are 'echoing supernal anthems in the heavenly choir'.

But patron, **Christine Cox's** poster conveys the essential information - that **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir** is going to be performing again in Scarborough.



That's right, we'll be at the seaside again on **Saturday, August 20th** - the mainstay of the **Scarborough Music Festival**.

Thom will be conducting and - in his first Scarborough performance - the accompanist will be **Christopher Pulleyn**.

This all takes place in the terrific concert hall at **Queen Street Methodist Church** in Scarborough. (Put YO11 1HQ into the satnav.)



Solo vocalists will be our very own **Sarah Ogden** and **Thom Meredith**.



Once again, **Simon Lindley** will be Master of Ceremonies and, no doubt, playing both piano and organ. You can also expect him to be accompanying the virtuoso talents of cornet player, **Philip McCann**.



One of the songs we'll be singing in **Scarborough** is Rogers and Hammerstein's, '**Some Enchanted Evening**' from the musical, **South Pacific**.

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir recorded this - with the technical wizardry of **Chris Pulleyn** drawing all the strands together - for a lock-down online concert we released in Spring 2021.

At that time, you'll remember, all performances were banned and we couldn't even meet to rehearse except through Zoom sessions on our computers.

Chris has recently recompiled the performance videos we all individually sent in to make a fresh and slightly improved version (with added Dave and Selwyn).

No doubt, many of our members and friends will be pleased to see it.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weLo03GjDbA>



More Centenary thoughts

Readers have been in touch with the Editor, occasionally saying they enjoyed the way VotV made links between the birthday of Colne Valley Male Voice Choir one hundred years ago and other notable events in 1922 - such as the beginning of the BBC, the finding of Tutenkhamun's tomb etc.

Mostly they told me, I'd missed a trick. Didn't I realise that 1922 was the year that the **Wimbledon Centre Court** was opened? Well I did, but I find tennis unutterably tedious. 1922 turned out to be the wettest Wimbledon on record - which is mildly interesting!



Surely I should have mentioned the **1922 Committee** - so influential in finding a new PM to lead an all-new government with none of the faults of the previous one?

Well, the 1922 Committee wasn't founded until 1923 and I couldn't bring myself to even mention our PM. This is **Sir Gervais Rentoul** who was the Committee's inaugurating chairman.

And didn't I realise that 2022 is also the centenary year for local chemical manufacturer, **Thornton & Ross**, makers of superior cough medicine, **Covonia**?



Well I did realise there were several common strands between CVMVC and 'Strada Group'. I am pleased to discover that Chairman, **Joe Stones**, has written to them, inviting them to recognise our common community interests. VotV will keep you in touch if there are any developments.

And baritone, **Raymond Ellis** sends VotV this gem of a story of musical success for Colne Valley school kids from 100 years ago in **1922**.



He writes:-

'Hi Mr Editor,

*Something you might find interesting.
Some members of CVMVC attended
Knowl Bank School as my father did. He
had only just started there in 1922 so
wasn't a member of this eisteddfod
winning choir but always reminded me of
this achievement by his primary school
whenever CVMVC had success in Wales.'*

It's somewhat difficult to make out but it's worth it – a lovely tale of times long gone by. It's from a local paper and, from the context, likely dates from 1982.

Does anybody remember **Elsie Whittaker**? She's in the school photo from 1922. (see photo overleaf second row back to the left of conductor, **Mr Griffiths**.)

Incidentally, Raymond tells VotV, while the Knowl Bank building remains - it's residential now - the school itself relocated to **Manor Road J&I**. Choir members will know it as a regular venue on our schools tours.



Manor Road School, Golcar

THE first 10 days of August have a special significance for Huddersfield exile Miss Elspeth Whitaker and her classmates of 60 years ago from the old Knowl Bank Council School, Golcar.

Miss Whitaker, now 73, turns the clock back to describe the events of August 1922.

Although she has lived away from Huddersfield for much of her life she has many happy memories of the town. A former teacher and retired drama adviser, Miss Whitaker lives in Papplewick, Nottinghamshire.

A welcome in the Valleys

THIS is a true story about Yorkshire children, a Welshman and singing. And when it comes to singing, could you find a better combination?

It begins in a village school three miles from Huddersfield in the 1920s. The headmaster was a Welshman and his passion was his school choir.

Over the years, with patience and love, he fashioned an instrument of rare beauty. He tested it at the Huddersfield Annual Festival. The judges gave it glowing praise and a first prize.

Then the exiled Welshman decided to aim at the top.

In 1922 the Welsh National Eisteddfod was to be held at Ammanford, 20 miles from his birthplace. He entered his school choir in the appropriate class to compete against 32 Welsh choirs, many of them famous.

When the decision to enter was announced to the children and their parents, the village was in an uproar.

These were the days before universal travel. Humble hard-working folk seldom left their homes.

The choir could not go to South Wales for the day. They would have to stay. They could not go alone, so arrangements were made for 40 children and their mothers—fathers had to work—to leave the village on the August Sunday evening—the competition was on Tuesday—and stay in the headmaster's native village until the following Saturday.

Choir practices and intensive saving went on all through that spring and summer.

The day came at last, and the mail train which hurtled nightly through the village made an unheard-of stop at the station to take aboard the party of excited children and anxious mothers.

Monday morning found them further from home than they had ever been before, in a country with a foreign language and unpronounceable place names.

Tuesday was the wettest day of that whole year. The rain turned the field in which the huge pavilion was built into a

quagmire, to be crossed on quaking duckboards.

The children's feet were damp, the girls' carefully curled hair grew straight, the mothers' feelings were indescribable.

A preliminary round in the local theatre had reduced the large class of competing choirs to six—the village school among them.

"At least," said the headmaster, "they will sing in that great pavilion before an audience of thousands. They'll remember that all their lives."

The Welsh choirs rose to sing. They wore uniforms. They marched on to the platform to the strains of "Men of Harlech." They sang like angels and the audience of 9,000 roared their applause.

Next came the turn of the Yorkshire school choir. They scrambled untidily on to the platform. They looked bedraggled, crumpled, left-out-in-the-rain.

Their conductor raised his baton and they forgot their discomfort and their strange surroundings, and they sang for him as he had taught them to sing in the village schoolroom at home.

There was a moment of stunned silence.

Then that vast audience of music-lovers rose and acclaimed them, and the judges gave them first prize.

Their return home was dramatically in keeping with the rest of the story. The village put out the flags and hired a brass band which met them at the station and led them through the streets between the cheering ranks of their relatives and friends. A most fitting end to a Yorkshire victory came with a huge and satisfying tea in the schoolroom.

Well, it was all a long time ago. The Welsh headmaster, his ambition achieved, died in the fullness of his years. The children of the choir have brought up their own children to a changing world.

South Wales is no longer a far country, and the television brings great singing into the remotest village home.

But "they will remember it all their lives," he said. And every year when Eisteddfod time comes round, this member of the choir, who was 10 at the time, remembers.



FIRST PRIZE WINNERS, NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD OF WALES, 1922.

KNOWL BANK SCHOOL CHOIR.

"One of the 'most charming performances we have ever heard.'"—*Adjudicator.*

Welcome back, Richard

Second tenor, Richard Pryor returned to Choir this week after many weeks of absence.



It was never any lack of enthusiasm for singing, which kept him away. Quite the contrary - Richard has been recovering from a nasty accident involving his Achilles tendon.

It was my 'clutch foot' affected, so driving was out for a good long while, explains Richard.

"I'm still some way off getting back to rights", he said. "But I can now get to rehearsals again, thank goodness!"

VotV says, we're glad you're back, Richard



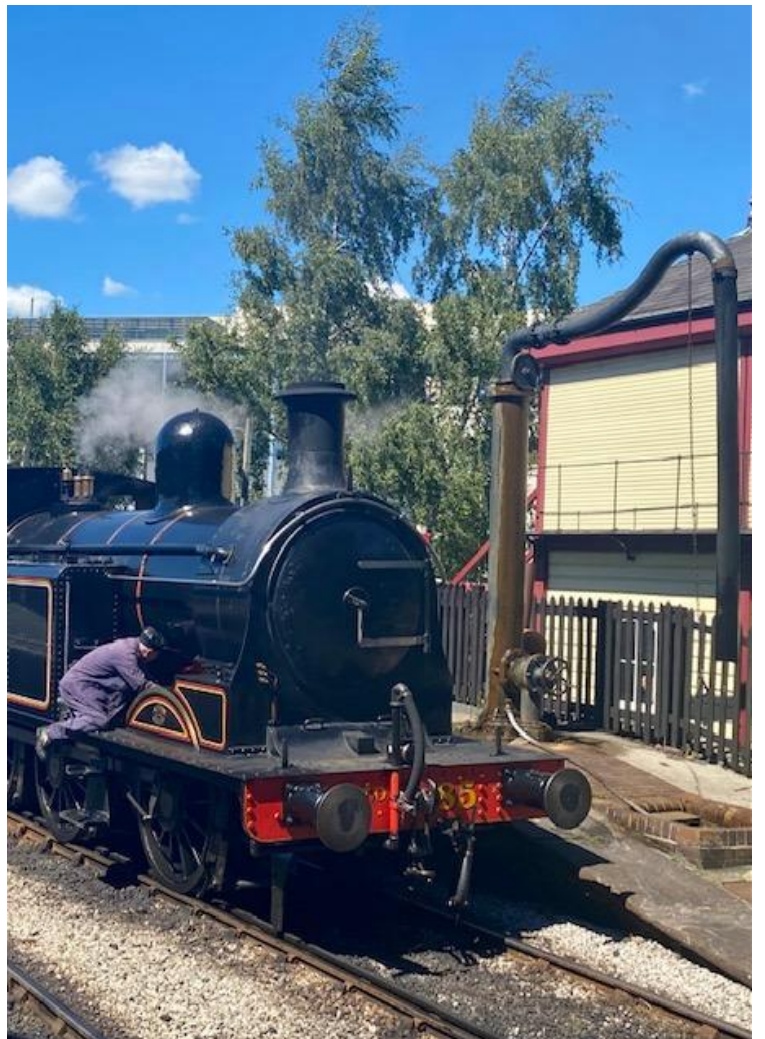


K&WVR jolly

Baritone, **Barry Slater**, can't get enough of steam trains. He's been associated with the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway for many years. So Barry, sharing his enthusiasm, kindly invited Colne Valley Male Voice Choir members to join him on a recent special outing of historic locomotives and rolling stock. Sadly, notice was short but a handful of Choir people were able to join in and experience the pleasures that still thrill watchers of '**The Railway Children**' and its recent movie sequel.

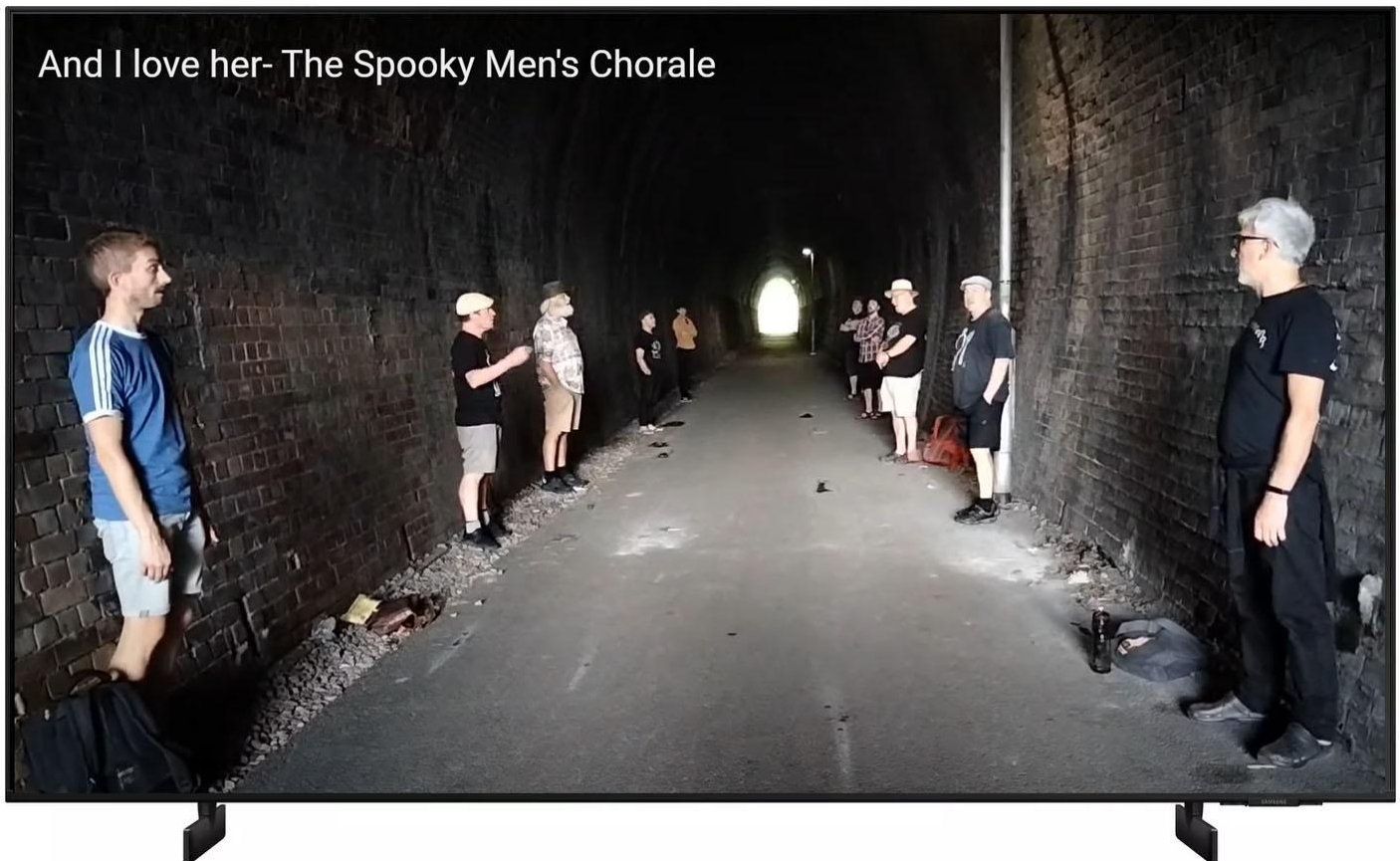
Those that did make it had a happy day.





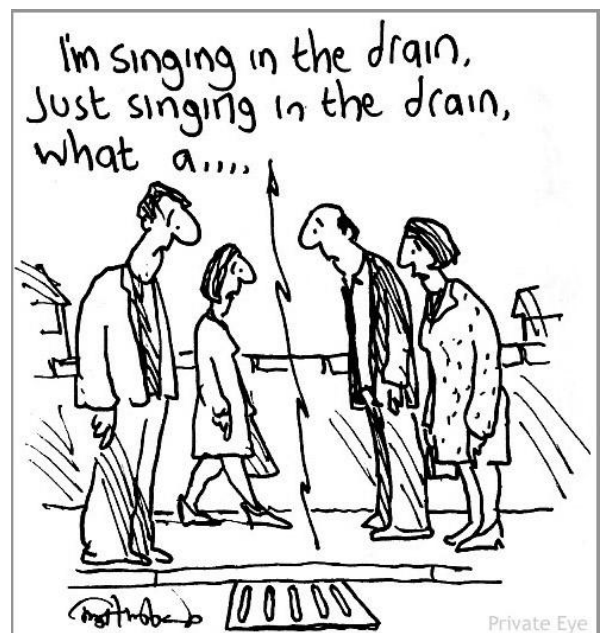
Thank you, Barry - a kind thought

...and here are 'The Spooky Men' singings in an old railway tunnel ...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yjEQrW921M>

Well, it made me smile ...



And remember VotV always welcomes reader contributions



colnevalleymvc.org.uk

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