



## 'Let All Men Sing' peaks with a great concert

LAMS - 'A community choir project for men that sing and men that would like to give it a try' - culminated last Sunday with a glorious one-off performance in Colne Valley Male Voice Choir's home village of Slaithwaite.

It was both joyful and deeply moving. A group of men, who had put in just eight rehearsals, having come together from scratch, sang with both vigour and subtlety to their delighted friends and family in a packed Saint James's Church in the heart of the village.

Many of the 'LAMS' men were nervous, having never got up onstage before but if they were, it didn't show. Maybe this was because the first number was performed jointly with the men of the Colne Valley Male Voice Choir. This was the rousing fanfare - the song which had given our project its name - 'Let All Men Sing' by Keith Christopher.



VotV is fortunate that its reporter, **Chris Wilson**, recorded this performance, so you can watch again the big start to the concert, which 'wowed' our new audience and gave all the singers confidence to 'smash it' through the rest of the show.

Watch us do our starting song here. It'll give you a flavour of the 'real thing':-

[https://youtu.be/vlash\\_Sd1Jw](https://youtu.be/vlash_Sd1Jw)





It was the start of a varied programme, featuring the LAMS Men, CVMVC and Colne Valley Boys performing separately and in combination.

The Choir had put a lot of effort into launching the LAMS project - not least our man, **Kieran Chadha**.



So we were overjoyed that the LAMS project had gone so well.

**Thom Meredith**, had let it be known that if we managed to recruit eight men we could go ahead. So we were more than pleased when 37 men signed up. (There has been a steady stream of

others making enquiries but we felt it was right to close the list soon after start-up. But the strong interest has helped us decide to run the project again early in 2024 - so don't be shy about coming forward. You can register an interest now.)

**2023 Celebration Concert**  
2:30pm Sunday 26th March 2023  
St James' Church, Slaithwaite

With  
Colne Valley Male Voice Choir  
& Colne Valley Boys  
MUSICAL SUPPORT: Thom Meredith Chris Pulleyn

**Concert Programme**

Let All Men Sing! & Colne Valley Male Voice Choir  
Colne Valley Male Voice Choir  
Colne Valley Boys (Youth Choir)  
Let All Men Sing! & Colne Valley Boys (Senior Choir)  
Let All Men Sing! & Colne Valley Boys  
Colne Valley Male Voice Choir  
Colne Valley Boys (Senior Choir)  
Let All Men Sing! & Colne Valley Boys

Let All Men Sing  
Invictus  
Always on my Mind  
Ruby  
When I Grow Up  
Hallelujah  
Viva la Vida  
Luck be a Lady  
I Dreamed of Rain  
Blue Moon  
Pompeii  
Here, There and Everywhere  
Someone to You  
Sound of Silence  
Best Day of My Life  
Let There be Peace on Earth  
The Walleman

There will be no interval during today's concert, but you are very welcome to join us for refreshments following the performance.

Let All Men Sing! will return in January 2024. Find out more and register your interest at [www.letallmensing.co.uk](http://www.letallmensing.co.uk) or email [LAMS@colnevalleymvc.org.uk](mailto:LAMS@colnevalleymvc.org.uk)

A PROJECT SUPPORTED BY  
Colne Valley Male Voice Choir  
IN THEIR CENTENARY YEAR

One of the targets set by the Choir in its Centenary Year was to have 100 singers for 100 years - well we very nearly made it. Add in a couple of Colne Valley singers in the audience, who didn't make it onstage and Thom and the very wonderful **Chris Pulleyn** on the piano and we can just about claim to have done it.





But nobody was bothered by the head-count. It was a big sound with male singers from 8 years to 90, feeling the joy of singing and communicating it to our enthusiastic audience. What a great day!



Thom dubbed '**Kirklees** Mr Music' by LAMS men, held it all together.

Not only did he conduct all the performances by the LAMS choir, Colne Valley Boys and CVMVC - singing as individual groups and in every combination - but he also compered the programme, most genially setting the tone for a audience that maybe didn't always know what to expect.

He made everyone feel at home and left all of us, singers and concert-goers alike, feeling they were part of a great occasion.

He explained how the LAMs Choir had come together and how thrilled he was that they and the rest of the team - men & boys - had come together to enjoy making music.



Hear about the coming together of the LAMS project in this excellent radio feature compiled by **Abi Bliss**, for **Radio Leeds**, which was broadcast on '**The Richard Stead Afternoon Show**' a couple of days before the concert.

Click on the image above to hear the broadcast.

[https://soundcloud.com/john-clark-124140241/lams-on-radio-leeds?si=71a72fc49af14030aa019fd526290efb&utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/john-clark-124140241/lams-on-radio-leeds?si=71a72fc49af14030aa019fd526290efb&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)



Colne Valley Male Voice Choir in solidarity with the LAMS men – and perhaps for the first time – also adopted 'smart casual' attire for a performance. Uniform or not, the verdict was that the Colne Valley Men sang brilliantly.

Their offering included their first concert performance of the dramatic poem, 'Invictus'.



## Colne Valley Boys were charming



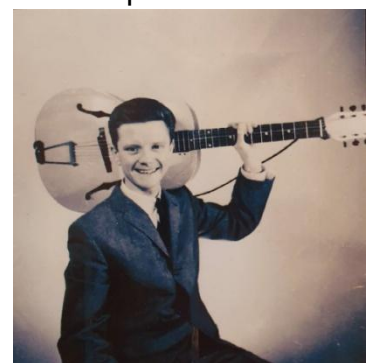
It was no surprise that the Colne Valley Boys were charming, when their solo slot came up. Here you see some of them. Not only did they sing well but they even accompanied themselves on kazoos. One of their number is just eight years old - a point Thom mentioned with some pride when he called a veteran first tenor to the front so we could all sing 'Happy Birthday' to him. That's **Ken Farr** who's just turned **ninety**.



And just in case you don't recognise him from the picture above, some helpful Colne Valley Men took the trouble to make sure you can spot him.

Welshman, Ken cut his first single in New Zealand in 1963.

**Happy Birthday, Ken**







The LAMS Choir – undoubted stars of the show





# Mrs Parkin wins again

There was an audible groan, when the winner of the 200 Club draw was announced last week - the groans coming from those, such as **Matt Houston** (who claim never to have won on the 200 Club) as **Jenny Baxter** revealed that the winner was once again Mrs Parkin.

This was a bit of mischief on Jenny's part. The winner, she added, was indeed **Mrs Margaret Parkin**, again, but this time it was Margaret, wife of first tenor **Ken Parkin**, who had won £185.00 **not** Margaret, wife of baritone, **John Parkin**, who won the bumper £1,000 prize only a couple of weeks before.



Not your Margaret this week, John;

- this time it's Ken who's smiling.

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|  | <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 <b>Peter Kelly</b> at <a href="mailto:peter.kelly10@btinternet.com">peter.kelly10@btinternet.com</a> or phone him on 07802 544717.</p> |
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And take no notice the groaners - your chances of winning a prize on the 200 Club are really good; streets ahead of the national lottery, for example. And, of course, even if your number doesn't come up for a while you still win in that the Choir gets funding to keep the show on the road.

# BBC Singers



## RADIO TIMES LETTER OF THE WEEK

“I strongly support Norman Jacobs letter demanding the BBC does not disband the BBC Singers – as do (at least) 144,000 licence-payers, who signed a petition 700 composers, 150 Musical Directors of cathedral, collegiate and university choirs, most chamber choirs, 22 former BBC Young Musicians, and amateur choirs from all over the country. (You can include many a Colne Valley Male Voice Choir member, too. (ed.)

If this isn't proof of 'audience needs', I don't know what is.

As for the 'need to modernise' the BBC singers perform more new music than any other choral group. How musically qualified are these faceless BBC managers to make this appalling decision against overwhelming expert opposition?"

**Christopher Johnson. Leeds**

Such was the outcry that the BBC has stepped back from the brink and has agreed to look at other ways of meeting the costs.

Rerieved, for now at least, The BBC Singers get to sing another day.

Let us hope the BBC finds a way to hang onto a choir - which like Colne Valley Male Voice Choir - has been making music for 100 years since 1923.

Private Eye remains sceptical.





# Morecambe Winter Gardens

A seaside theatre - Morecambe Winter Gardens - has been in the news recently. That's because this fine old concert room, once known as the **Albert Hall of the North** is set for a remarkable restoration.



Once one of the country's most popular theatres, drawing tourists from across the UK, it has been awarded a grant of £2.78 million from the Cultural Development Fund to help it, once again, be one of the best music venues in the North of England.



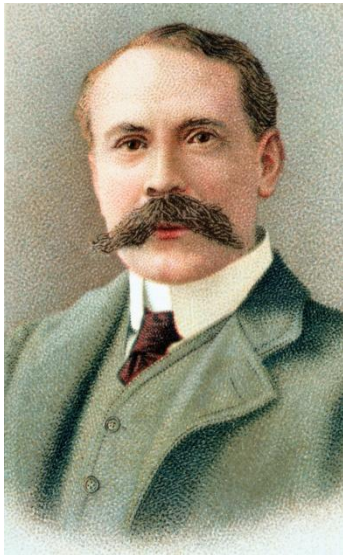
First opened in 1897, the theatre was one of the largest in the North West of England.

With lavish interiors and striking architectural features, it quickly became the heart of a thriving seaside resort and played host to some of the most famous stars of music and variety culture.

However, like Morecambe, it fell on hard times. But fortunately, a group of dedicated volunteers formed the Preservation Trust in 2006. They have pledged to restore it and, soon, they hope the theatre will, once again, be at the heart of the region's entertainment, culture and economy.



## Why does this Winter Gardens news figure in VotV?



Well, for many years the Winter gardens hosted a prestigious Music Festival. When one of its adjudicators, WG McNaught wrote to **Sir Edward Elgar** inviting him to attend and consider composing a piece for the competition, he was able to promise 3,000 competitors and a hall with a 5,000 capacity.

There was a whole week including speech, drama and dance as well as instrumental classes and singing for children and adults.

But maybe the biggest feature in its heyday was a choral competition for the **Festival Rose Bowl**. This was very keenly contested. Choirs competed regularly from all across the North West, together with choirs, that travelled from further afield. Partly it was the lure of competition and partly it provided choirs with a trip to the seaside.

Amongst those that joined the contest was **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**.

Our Choir - which in the 1930's already had a national reputation for excellence - entered the Winter Gardens choral contest twice.

We competed for the coveted Rose Bowl trophy in 1935 and came second. In 1938, we entered again. And again we didn't secure the Rose Bowl – close, but once more in Silver Medal position.

I think this must have grated, as we had won the even more prestigious 'Blackpool Music Festival' competition in 1936 and 1937 and won it again in 1938. We didn't compete again in Morecambe. World War II broke out in 1939 and everything changed.

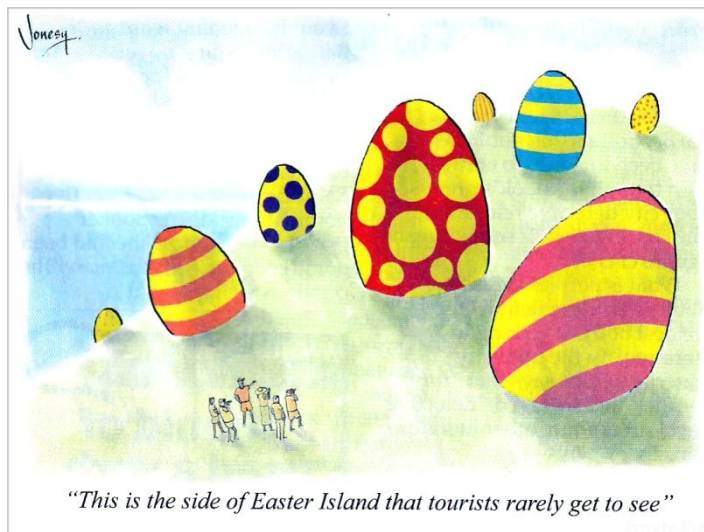
Some of the 1938 Blackpool victors happy to have restored their top-rank status, after a second place in the Winter Gardens Music Festival in Morecambe.

Choir Conductor, Mr George E Stead, is in the middle; the one with the hat.





Well it made me smile....



## Contributions always welcomed!

As spring really begins to get going, your Editor would like to wish VotV readers a very Happy Easter.

He still reckons you would enjoy spring even more, if you sent your story in to VotV.

If it's got some connection with the Choir and its members and activities, send me a draft and I'll help you get it ready for publication.

And, if you haven't signed up to the email version of VotV, just yet - I'm talking to you LAMS men and their families - sent me an email and I'll add you to the readers List . Then - and for as long as you care to receive it - VotV will land automatically into your email inbox every few weeks to keep you up to date with Colne Valley Male Voice choir and what it is up to.

Email: [cvmvc\\_newsletter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cvmvc_newsletter@yahoo.co.uk)

And do check out our website....

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir  
Est 1922

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