



## Rejuvenation?

### LAMS men set to revitalise the main Colne Valley Choir

Several men, who signed up for the **Let All Men Sing** community choir, have been welcome guests at Monday rehearsals of the main Colne Valley Male Voice Choir over recent weeks. It's clear, that many of those, who found their voices through the LAMS Project, want to continue singing with other men.



Many of them say it's been a bit of a challenge, suddenly finding themselves with lots of new music but they also say that it's very rewarding - and clearly more than a handful are committed to continuing. A voice assessment remains to be done over coming weeks and some of our visitors may decide in any case that it's not for them, but the Choir has good reason to think that we shall soon formally welcome a substantial influx of new members.

And won't that be great!



# Golcar's 'Concert for Spring



Your next chance to see **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir** performing will come at the end of the month - April 30<sup>th</sup> to be exact - when the Choir with special guests, the '**Let All Men Sing Ensemble**', will offer a performance for Spring; part of our renewed partnership with friends, **Lindley Brass Band**.

The venue is Golcar's Parish Church.

You'll know it but should you want to use your satnav put in this postcode:-

HD7 4PX.

## It'll be a good do.

The band is a fine one with great musical quality. We know this from years of performing with them at '**Concert on the Hill**'. We also know well the calibre of their new conductor, **Alan Widdop** from the many times he led the **Marsden Silver Prize band** in joint concerts with the Choir.

Look forward to a very pleasant Sunday afternoon.



# Spring competition: name this place.



Your Editor and his wife recently returned from a very pleasant holiday near this spot - so renowned it's a **'World Heritage'** site.

**Here's your chance to win this Spring!**

The first reader to identify where this fine picture was taken will win a decent bottle of wine.

The Editor's decision is final

Contact me at this email address:

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





# &Piano returns

VotV readers will know that the '**&Piano**' Music Festival has, in a few short years since its inauguration, become a highlight in the cultural calendar of the Choir's home village of Slaithwaite.

Set up by Colne Valley Male Voice Choir's wonderful accompanist, **Chris Pulleyn**, backed by baritone, **Kieran Chadha** and supported by musical talent from across Chris's wide network of friends and colleagues, the **&Piano Festival** has drawn on and extended the wide range of musical endeavour for which our small village is renowned.

VotV is delighted to tell you that **& piano** is back and with a programme of events that matches anything the Festival has brought forward in previous years and, indeed, it breaks new ground in terms of the programme's variety and scope.

For the many, who have known **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**, there is one event, in particular, that you will be thrilled to hear about.



Chris has persuaded **Maestro, Keith Swallow**, to join him in an event in the evening of **Sunday 21st May** at **St James Church**. (6.30 pm)



*"On **Sunday 21st May**, in the afternoon," writes Chris, "We welcome eight talented local young musicians to perform. And then in the evening, it will be my great pleasure to introduce our special guest - the legendary pianist **Keith Swallow** - 63 years as accompanist to CVMVC and a superb*

*musician - whose professional career saw him touring around the country playing for some of the biggest names in the music world."*

VotV quotes the &piano publicity to mark your card but recommends that you link to them direct - not least so you can book your tickets on the website

*"The weather is getting brighter, the leaves are starting to grow again on the trees, and that means that Spring has sprung and May isn't far off - which means &Piano 2023 isn't far off either!*

## *A new venue*

*This is going to be our most exciting festival yet - from a tiny concept in 2018, this year's festival will feature more excellent musicians than ever before, and lots of new elements - a new venue: just down the road at **St James' Church**, with a new grand piano, better visibility for our audience with a riser for our artists to perform on, and some fancy lighting to help make some great ambiance and atmosphere. It's all very exciting and we can't wait for you to join us to see it all come together...*

## *One of the biggest West End stars comes home to West Yorkshire*



**&Piano**  
2023

Event 1 | Musical Theatre:

**An Afternoon with Emma Williams**  
Four-time Laurence Olivier award-nominated West End actress

Featuring songs from *Waitress*, *South Pacific*,  
*Come from Away*, *There's Something About Jamie* & more

Sunday 14th May 2023 | 3pm | St James' Church, Slaithwaite

*Fancy seeing a west-end leading actress perform live and up close without having to go all the way down to London?*

*Well, now's your chance as we welcome **Emma Williams** to perform on **Sunday May 14th, 3.00pm, at St James' Church in Slaithwaite.***

*Emma grew up in Halifax, and at the age of 18, she landed the leading role of **Truly Scrumptious** in **Chitty Chitty Bang Bang**, starring alongside **Michael Ball** - since then she's starred in many West End shows and professional productions around the world.*

*This is a unique experience to hear and watch a leading West End actress perform live in Yorkshire!*

*Emma is thrilled to be returning to perform professionally - she'll be singing songs from some of the shows she's starred in, as well as songs that mean something to her, - accompanied by Chris Pulleyn on piano. In between, she'll be sharing stories and her experiences throughout her career along the way.*

*Get your tickets booked for what will be an inspiring and amazing Sunday afternoon!*



You can get your tickets online. Click on this link

<https://andpiano.co.uk/whats-on/>

## Not two, not three, not four, but FIVE exciting musicians

**Friday 19th May 7:30pm** will feature an **&Piano first** - the most instruments we've had in any festival so far performing altogether!

On Friday evening we welcome Leeds-based **Avenue Ensemble** - consisting of **violin, viola, cello and double bass** - a fantastic group of talented musicians who between them play with Opera North, Hallé, Manchester Camerata & more - for a fun evening of exciting music.



**&Piano**  
2023

Event 2 | Instrumental

### Something Old, Something New

Franz Schubert's 'Trout' Piano Quintet

& iconic film music by John Williams, Hans Zimmer & more

Friday 19th May 2023 | 7:30pm | St James' Church, Slaithwaite

We kick off with something old - an iconic work from the romantic period - **Schubert's** uplifting and light-hearted '**Trout** Piano Quintet, a beautiful work of music that doesn't fail to make anyone feel better after hearing it. Then, in the 2nd half, **Avenue Ensemble** take over, with a selection of **fantastic film music**.

**Avenue Ensemble**, similar to **&Piano**, are all about helping more people to experience classical music. They typically perform relaxed and informal gigs in spaces like pubs, bars, shops, warehouses....just like an **&Piano** gig, there will be chat, but there might also be an interactive element....you might want to be prepared for a quiz on some of the film music you'll hear...!

This is sure to be a great way to spend a Friday night - something a little bit different, but good fun! We'll have a licensed bar open so you'll be able to enjoy a drink while listening to some excellent music.

**&Piano**  
2023

Event 3 | Song

**From Knoxville to New York**  
A Journey through American Song

Music by Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Florence Price, Rodgers & Hammerstein & more

Saturday 20th May 2023  
7:30pm | St James' Church, Slaithwaite



## Come and listen to the lullaby of Broadway

On **Saturday 20th May 7:30pm** we head over to the other side of the pond, where the bright lights and bold sounds of America come to Slaithwaite for one night only!

We're delighted that song-pianist-extraordinaire **Jonathan Fisher** will be joining us with two fantastic Manchester-based singers, **Soprano Hayley Swanton** and **Baritone, Sam Jackson**.

*Jonathan Fisher, also from Manchester, now teaches and plays at the University of Huddersfield - where he once studied. He's since played for some of the biggest names in the classical world including Roderick Williams, Jess Gillam, Sir John Tomlinson & many more.*

*Hayley and Sam will share with you an exciting selection of songs by American composers that explore themes around the American Dream, describe the vast, dramatic landscapes of the country, and the rapid rise of a young country into the world's great superpower.*

*From profound and beautiful songs by **Samuel Barber** and **Florence Price**, to jazzy, catchy Broadway songs by superstar composers like **Leonard Bernstein** and **Rodgers & Hammerstein***

## *Take a look at our & piano Programme:-*

*We hope you can join us for as much of it all as possible! Just as with past festivals, the more events you attend, the less you pay per event - if you attend all four of our evening events at St James' Church, you only **pay £7.50 per event!** And if you're one of our 88 Keys Supporter, then don't forget your **15% discount** on all our evening events!"*

Thinking about becoming an 88 Keys Supporter wonders VotV; click on this link:-  
<https://andpiano.co.uk/88-keys/>



# & Piano

Many performers, one piano, amazing music.  
A festival celebrating live music & performance.



Announcing the new  
Musical Director of the  
Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir

**THOM MEREDITH**



## ♪ NEW MUSICAL DIRECTOR ♪

*"We are delighted to announce,"* says a spokesperson from this fine, Wakefield--based, mixed voice choir, *"That **Thom Meredith** has been appointed as **Musical Director of the Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir**.*

*Thom studied singing at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama while reading Music at Brasenose College, Oxford, where he was awarded an Exhibition as conductor of the Chapel Choir (1985-87). Following his graduation he gained a PGCE qualification from the University of Leeds and taught music in schools in North and West Yorkshire including seven years as Head of Music and then Head of Year at Colne Valley High School, Huddersfield.*

*His involvement with young musicians continued when he joined the staff of Kirklees Music School (now Musica Kirklees) in 1999 as Assistant Principal and appointed as Principal in 2004; a role he has cherished for twenty years.*

*In 2000 Thom formed and conducted the Musica Youth Orchestra with many prestigious performances. He will be stepping down from this role in the summer in order to concentrate on his work as a freelance musician.*



*With his wife, **Lynn Hudson**, Thom is a director of **Harrogate Festival Choral Course**, which has staged many major choral works and choral courses over many years for singers across the UK and abroad.*

*As the long-standing Musical Director of the renowned **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**, for many years Thom has led them to international competition wins as well as instigating innovative and successful programmes such as 'Let All Men Sing'.*



*He has established a reputation as a fine baritone soloist and therefore also brings a wealth of experience of singing professionally to the position.*

*Thom is thrilled and excited to have been successful and the choir shares that excitement, as we stand on the threshold of a new era."*

Their latest performance: Rossini's wonderful Petite Mess Solennelle

**YORKSHIRE PHILHARMONIC CHOIR** 70<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY 1952-2022

GIOACHINO ROSSINI  
**Petite Messe Solennelle**

Andrew Padmore - Conductor  
Thomas Moore - Piano  
Gareth Green - Harmonium

Sarah Fox - Soprano  
Gaynor Keeble - Alto  
Chris Why - Tenor  
Ben Davies - Bass

Saturday 1st April 2023  
Wakefield Cathedral 7pm

Tickets £19, Seniors £17, Students and u16s £5  
available online:  
yorkshirephilharmonicchoir.co.uk

making music ONEWORLD TRAVEL GROUP THE IZZ & TERRY BRAHALL FOUNDATION

## Colne Valley Male Voice Choir need have no worries

VotV is happy to pass on that his new job won't affect his ongoing commitment to CVMVC (as if we ever thought it would....) He writes in response to a VotV query :-

*Yes - please do reassure (readers of VotV) if you think it would be appropriate.*

*I was very lucky that the post as conductor of Yorkshire Philharmonic Choir came up after I had announced that I would be stepping down from my role as Principal of Musica Kirklees. I am due to start with YPC in September 2023 - just as my employment at Musica Kirklees comes to an end.*

*This is definitely in addition to my role with CVMVC!*

*The two choirs are very different and will allow me to explore contrasting repertoire.*

*Regards,  
Thom*

VotV wonders... wouldn't it be great to have a joint concert at some point?

# Schools Tour 2023



*'What a great day was had by all this week.'* writes Linda Houston. On Wednesday April 19<sup>th</sup> some of the Choir men took part in our yearly school visits to recruit for Colne Valley Boys. We started in Marsden at the Junior School at 8.50am.



*(One of our party, Nathaniel Stubbs, is an "old boy" of this school. He joined Colne Valley Boys in April 2010 aged 10 years old and remained a member till he left to go to university. On his return, he joined the adult choir along with his brother Benedict to sing with their father who is a member. A real family affair.)*

*Anyway, the visits consist of 20 minutes or so of interactive singing with the children, who all seem to love it. The oldest member of the group today was Ken Farr who was 90 recently. He amongst many others, have been supporting us over the 13 years we have been doing these mini concerts, at schools in the area, in all about 110 school visits!*





*Thom has the children (and men's) attention right away. They learn about different rhythms and how the men harmonise in their different sections, in a fun way that the children enjoy.*

*Our day went very well, the weather was kind, we had our usual little blips, a vanishing piano, (well done to Chris who improvised), last minute timetable adjustments and lost phones. It all turned out OK in the end and a good day was had by all.*

*We would like to thank everyone who took the time to come and help and hopefully recruit new members to Colne Valley Boys.*

*Linda  
(CVB Administrator)*

*PS, who knew the Wellermen liked Branston Pickle. ???*

VotV readers can get a hint of the fun that was had by checking out this brief video footage that **South Crosland Junior School** made when we were there. South Crosland was just one of six primary schools the Choir visited this year.

Click on this link to view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar0GvWV1wCs>



**Colne Valley Boys** organiser, alongside Linda is stalwart tenor, **Matt Houston**.

He reports that there has been a very positive response to the Schools Tour this year – in that a good handful of enquiries have come through from young males interested in joining our Colne Valley Boys Choir.

Let's hope the 'Boys' continue to thrive.



# Cherish our Curlews



You might not have noticed that April 21<sup>st</sup> was designated World Curlew Day.

World Curlew Day - a day to marvel at how lucky we are to have a handful of these hauntingly beautiful birds raising their nestlings right on our doorstep.

The Moors above Colne Valley MVC's home village of Slaithwaite still provide an increasingly rare and valuable habitat for nesting curlews. You'll always remember its distinctive call.



Please, says a local wildlife advocate and farmer, **Jill Falkingham**, be mindful of the desperate plight of the curlew especially when out walking on the hills.



She reminds us that it is the law to have your dog on a short lead whilst on Open Access land from March 1<sup>st</sup> - July 31<sup>st</sup>



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



Things have become even more precarious for the curlews after another disastrous fire on National Trust land at Marsden Moor the other night.





# Record breaker



We are proud in Colne Valley Male Voice Choir to have more than a handful of veteran performers; not least our tenor **Ken Farr** who just turned ninety and **David Hirst** who's been in the Choir for upwards of 63 years ' ... But ... we've just discovered that in the next County, there's a brass band player who is beating this record by about twenty years - 95 year old-trombonist, **Tom Street** of **Heage Silver band** in Derbyshire.



David Hirst - nobbut a beginner



Ken Farr - lightweight



He's just won a **Guinness World Record** - the world's longest serving brass band player - having joined his local brass band, aged 13 years, some 82 years ago.

He joined the brass band in 1940 along with his five brothers and has rarely missed a practice session or concert since. Incredibly, his playing career has spanned nine decades and he has no plans to hang up his trusty trombone any time soon. He still turns out for band practice twice a week and performs throughout the year around Derbyshire.

In the picture above, he is shown, passing his musical talent onto the next generation with his grandson, **Louis**, 21, who plays the cornet in the same band.



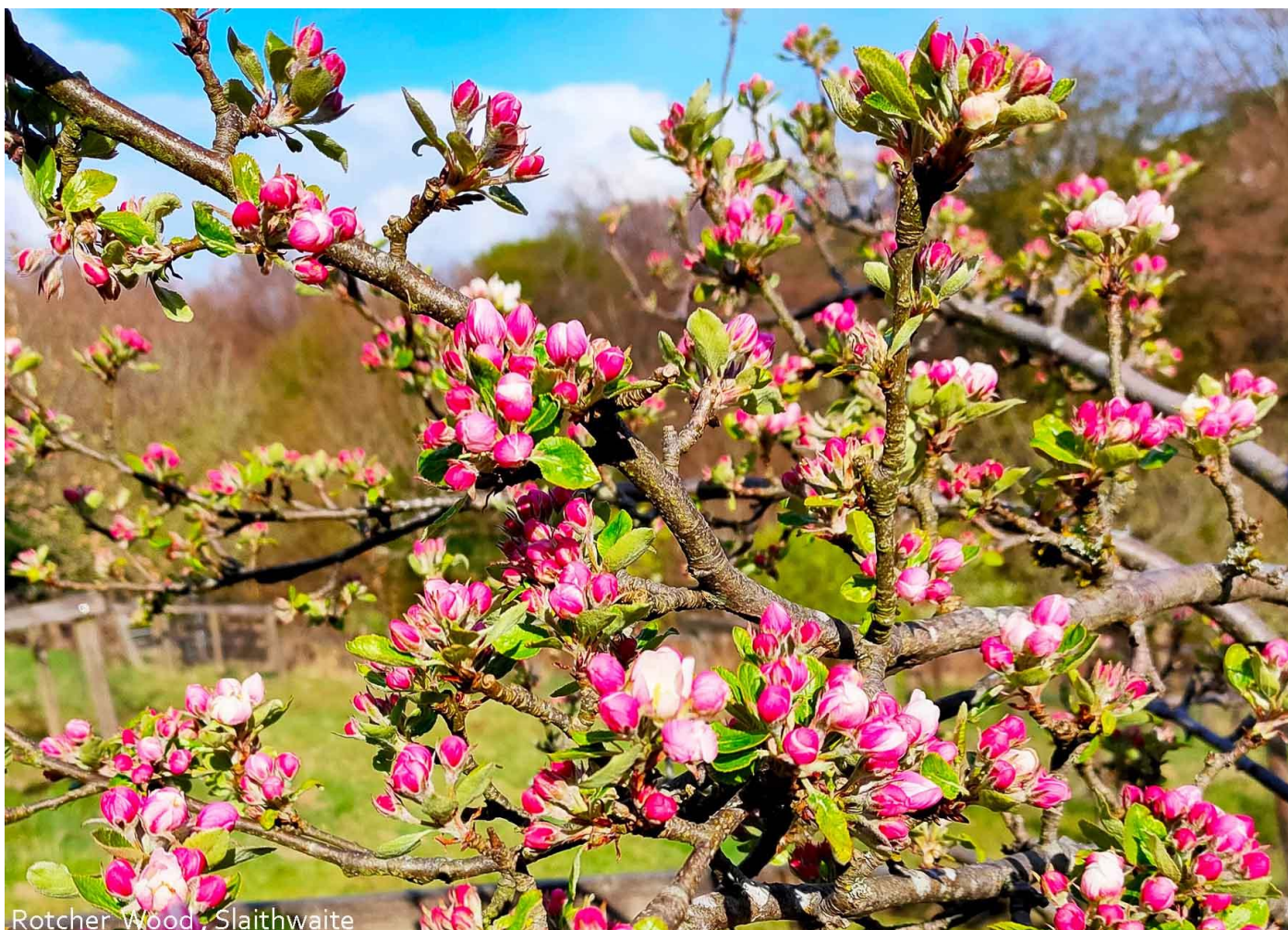
Tom - just a lad - seen second from right with the trombone

It's quite a feat. No wonder it has attracted world-wide attention in recent days. Here he proudly shows his world record certificate. Well done Tom - keep it up!





# Contributions welcomed



Rotcher Wood, Slaithwaite



As May really begins to bring spring to life, your Editor reckons your life would be **'blooming lovely'** if you had your story in the **Voice of the Valley**.

If your tale has some connection with the Choir and its members and activities - even if the connection is a bit vague - 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 - send 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's up to.

**Or get in touch with me on this link:**  
**And see our website to get the full story.**

[cmvc\\_newsletter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cmvc_newsletter@yahoo.co.uk)  
[www.colnevalleymvc.org.uk](http://www.colnevalleymvc.org.uk)

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir  
Est 1922

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