



Kilimanjaro Joe reaches the summit

Well he did it. Choir Chairman, **Joe Stones**, his mate, Ian and their local guides reached the top of Africa's highest mountain, some 5,895 metres (that's 19,341 feet) above sea level - and by the look of this jubilant photo you can add on another couple of feet for the jump - say 19,343.

Well done, Joe.



They got there on June 18th 2023 at 7.30 in the morning - a date Joe will always remember. He has now made it down safely to base camp.

Joe sends *VotV* this report on his climb:-

"It was the most difficult thing I've ever done.

The final ascent started just before midnight the previous day.

We had camped at 4,670 metres high and then set off climbing through the night in the darkness via head torches with our two guides, James and Crispin.

That final climb 1,200 metre climb was long, challenging, very cold (minus 10/15 degrees centigrade) and to top it off just half the oxygen in the air available compared to sea level.



We were so lucky because as well as being greeted by the most amazing African sunrise when we reached Stella's point near the peak, we also had amazing views from the top looking down on the clouds below. We could also see the spectacular glacier formations around the peak, though unfortunately these are now diminishing through the impact of global warming.



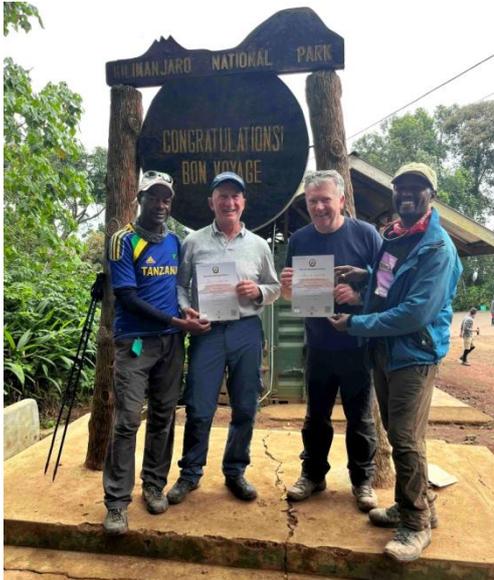
It took me five days to reach the peak. We walked via the Lemosho route which was chosen for the beautiful and changing scenery, starting off in jungle for the first two days where you could see Colobus and Blue Monkeys playing in the trees. The route was also chosen for allowing extra time for acclimatisation which is one of the biggest challenges for those climbing the mountain.

*After the lower jungle levels, the landscape then changed to moorland and ultimately desert conditions higher up. Most of the lower level walking was easy enough, though some stretches were very challenging - such as the **Barranco Wall**.*



The nights were also very cold at sub-zero temperatures helped by early sunsets around 7pm which brought in the cold in very quickly.

After reaching the top, it took two days to walk down the mountain to the exit gate at 1600 metres. My friend, Ian and I have been friends for forty years. We planned this expedition for our 50th birthdays. But that plan failed - as plans often do - so we recast our expedition for our 60th.



Lots of friends have asked me what we'll do next. I haven't got the answer to that one yet but we'll think of something - after all, challenges are what life's all about. But, now I'm in Africa, I'm meeting up with my wife and we'll be on safari and then on Zanzibar for a while.

I decided just before I set off that I would seek sponsorship for our adventure in aid of CVMVC's wonderful 'Let All Men Sing' project.

That's the scheme that was so successful earlier this year, attracting 37 men to come and give choir singing a try. All the men stuck with the programme through its eight sessions and then gave a super concert with the main choir.



Well we are going to run it again early in 2024. If you want to donate to my charitable cause, I would be very grateful - the 'Let All Men Sing' project does cost the Choir quite a bit to run. Don't worry, all the costs of my Kilimanjaro jaunt were covered by me - and every penny you donate will go directly to keeping the LAMS project afloat."

Click on the donate screen to add your contribution even if it's small - every little helps.

JustGiving™

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir

Let All Men Sing Project 2024

Follow this link to support
Joe's Kilimanjaro
'Let all men sing' initiative.

Click here:-

<https://checkout.justgiving.com/c/3457227>

Grand night at Halifax Minster

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir in collaboration with **Elland Silver Band** kicked off the Halifax Minster Summer Festival the other night.

And it was a concert in which everybody present took great pleasure - both audience and performers.



VotV photographer, Chris Wilson, sent the following note:-

'Hi Mr Editor,

Loved the concert. I could hear more of the singing with Elland Silver Band. It was a great sound. Maybe it was the church acoustics and the fact the Choir members have increased. Whatever!

I know it was well-received by those around me and there was a tear in many an eye with the 'Bui Doi' song.

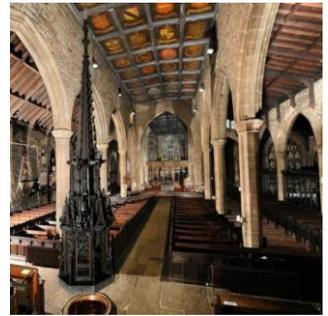
(Watch Thom and the Choir and Band sing 'Bui Doi. from Miss Saigon on this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSaV78_0u2k)

I have sent you a selection of photos for you to choose from. I hope they capture the spirit of a terrific event.'

Thanks Chris – some terrific pics and videos



This event marked three 'firsts' for the Choir. It was the first time we have performed in the wonderful mediaeval church that is **Halifax Minster**. It has a warm and vibrant acoustic, which suits the Choir.



It was a performance greatly aided by excellent work from stand in accompanist, Jane Robertson, playing for a Choir performance for the first time - though we have enjoyed her skills in rehearsals on several occasions.

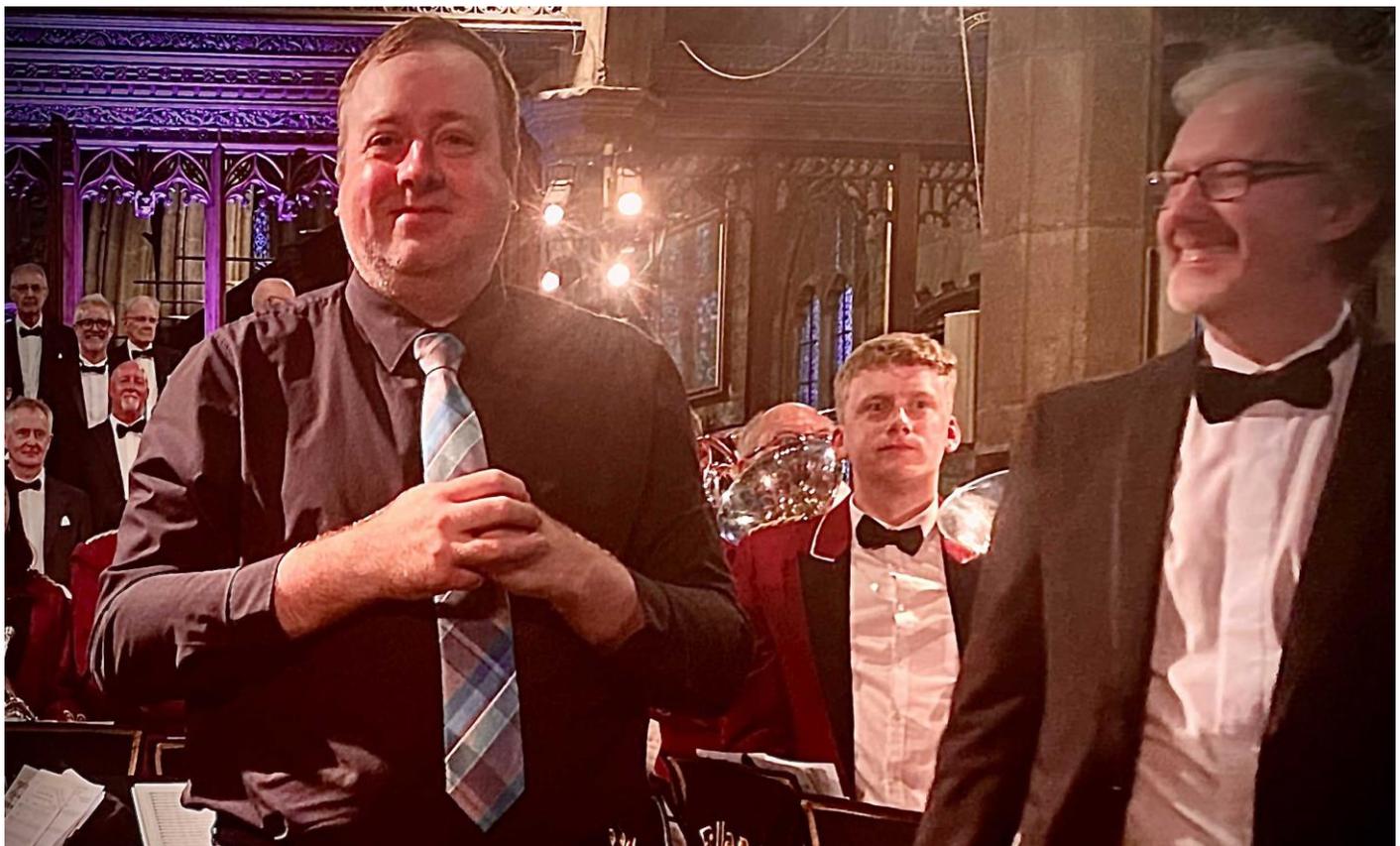
The Choir was extremely pleased that 16 new men have secured places within the Choir following the '**Let All Men Sing**' initiative. Many of these new chaps were onstage with the Choir on Thursday in what was for many their first full CVMVC Concert.

It has been said that the main Choir has lost some performance quality in recent months. There may be some truth in that. Perhaps we've been somewhat distracted and maybe under-rehearsed as we focussed on the LAMS project. Most of us now feel that as our very welcome new men are bedding in and as we all get to grips with our new material, that we are returning to the standards of performance we expect to produce. Perhaps we weren't at our absolute best at the Minster but we were definitely much closer. The sound with our new influx is getting to be terrific.

(Watch our first performance of 'Sway' on this link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fndn2JzyRRo>)

And, it was also our first time collaborating with up and coming outfit: **Elland Silver Band** and its Musical Director is **Danny Brooks**.





Danny was appointed MD to the band in May 2012 and has a distinguished reputation as band-leader and musician. Hailing from Preston, Lancashire, Daniel started playing trombone at the age of 10 for his local brass band and music instantly became part of his life. He continued to study music at both the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and the University of Huddersfield.

During this time and following, Daniel became a well respected trombone player as Solo Trombone with, amongst others, our close friends **Brighouse & Rastrick Band**.



And Elland Silver Band is once again a fine band.

Daniel has taken them from the 2nd section to the **Championship Section** in only 3 years.

All at Elland Silver Band were deeply saddened just after Thursday's concert at the Minster to hear of the passing of its former musical director, **James Shepherd**. The band has designated Thursdays performance of '**As I Pray**' by the Band and its principal cornet, **Lewis Barton**, as a tribute to his memory.



Hear Elland Silver Band playing their beautiful elegy on this link.

<https://youtu.be/RExUV9lct64>

'As I pray' at Halifax Minster

Choir man in accident



'Break a leg, Eric' I said just before we went on stage at Halifax Minster. Well I didn't think he would!

It seems Choir second-tenor and go-to cellist has done just that.

I hear it's quite a nasty break. I gather they are keeping him in hospital for a while.

Word is that he wants to come home but that his Mrs isn't so keen. Surely she's only got his welfare in mind!

VotV says;

'Get well soon, Eric'

Sea Side trip coming up

The Choir's next event is a return to Scarborough. For years now, the Choir has been a key part of the Scarborough Music Festival, hosted by the irrepressible entrepreneur, **Miss Christine Cox**.

Once again, she invited us and other guests to perform at Queen Street Methodist Church by the seaside in Scarborough's old town. It's a great place to sing in and we are always made welcome.

Put the date into your diary. This is an event to look forward to.



Lots of winners in the 200 Club Draw

200 Club Organiser, **Peter Kelly**, sends *VotV* a list of all those lucky people who have won prizes in our **200 Club** - the enormously valuable scheme which helps keep the Choir afloat - and better still gives you enormously good chances of winning.

If you aren't already a member or reckon another number or two would be a good idea, contact Peter by phone or email.



Peter with lucky winner

200 Club winners in 2023

DATE	NUMBER	NAME	PRIZE (£)
2 January	166	Barry Slater	£45
9	46	Rob Dickinson	£45
16	134	Kieran Chadha	£45
23	14	Keith Holland	£45
30	157	Peter Meredith	£185
6 February	98	Roger Fielding	£45
13	42	Susan Hibbert	£45
20	166	Barry Slater	£45
27	62	Margaret Parkin	£1000
6 March	198	Kath Garner	£45
13	158	William Meredith	£45
20	99	Gina Fielding	£45
27	132	Margaret Parkin (no relation)	£185
3 April	51	Marilliam Flowers	£45
10	61	Noel Clarke	£45
17	96	Trevor Bowers	£45
24	7	Sue Rosborough	£185
1 May	61	Noel Clarke	£45
8	91	Gail Hirst	£45
15	155	Barry Slater	£45
22	38	Jean Hall	£45
29	84	Elizabeth Kelly	£185
5 June	20	Vera Cowgill	£45
12	34	Michael Parkinson	£45
19	145	Amy Ripper	£45
26	193	Linda Houston	£185



Just one pound a week buys you one of the 200 Club numbers.

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.

Even if you don't win, you win - because half of the fund supports Choir concerts and performances.

Contact **Peter Kelly** at peter.kelly10@btinternet.com or phone him on 07802 544717.

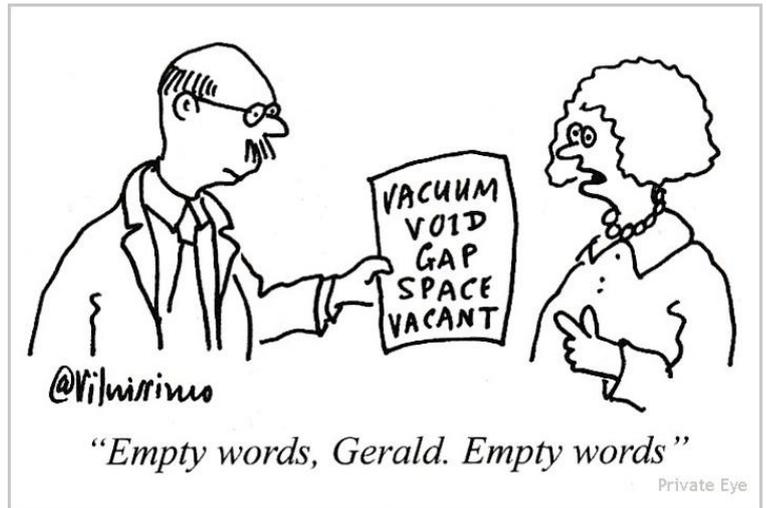
Beautiful Colne Valley

This picture - many thanks to local photographer **David Geoffrey Foster** just reminds us how fortunate we are to live in such a pleasant part of the world. This is Blake Lea Lane above Marsden at the head of the Colne Valley as seen one June evening.



© David G Foster

Well it made
me smile...



Summer is well on us now.

Your Editor takes the view that your summertime fun might just be enhanced if you told your story to **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 former 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's up to.



Or get in touch with me on this link:
cmvc_newsletter@yahoo.co.uk

Colne Valley Male Voice Choir
Est 1922

Events Recordings Our History About Us Information

And see our website to get the full story.

www.colnevalleymvc.org.uk