

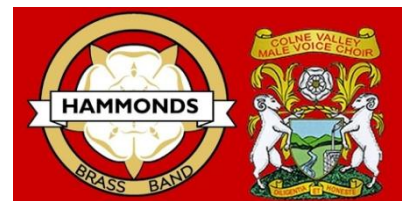


Christmas comes early to Batley



Colne Valley's Christmas season of concerts got off to a great start at the Batley Town Hall on Saturday.

It may have been nearly three weeks before Christmas but a concert room full of enthusiastic music-lovers certainly found their festive spirit.



The Choir were guests of the formidable **Hammonds Brass Band**. Together, we entertained the good folk of Batley in fine style, bringing a wide repertoire of traditional Christmas pieces and newer material, all interspersed with brilliant virtuoso solos.



This was our first performance in Batley since those long-gone days of the **Batley Variety Club** and the Choir really enjoyed giving our 2024 repertoire its first outing of the winter season.

The band was first-rate, playing under the skilful direction of the very talented, **Morgan Griffiths**. In your Editor' view, the highlights were the very rhythmically-engaging, 'God Rest Ye Merry Cha-Cha Men' and, best of all, a beautifully-rendered cornet solo by **Kirsty Abbotts** of the 'Meditation from **Thais**'.



The joint numbers were a joy. The first half closed with **Dan Forrest's** terrific version of 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' and the concert culminated with that most enjoyable **Goff Richards'** medley, 'A Merry Little Christmas' – wonderful.

(Thanks to Christine Wilson for the performance photos.)



This was a first Choir Christmas Concert for several of our newer members.

Here are a few, looking very pleased to be there; **Elijah Redfearn, Paul Nicholson, David Nash, Declan Finney** and **Neil Carey**.

Also amongst our recent recruits were second tenors, **Richard Holliday** and **Andrew Taylor**.



But there was still many an old hand enjoying being part of the performance.

Also seen waiting in the Green Room was **Brian Fairclough** with librarians, **Peter Meadows** and **Keith Holland**.

We'll be revisiting our choral performance later with the incomparable **Brighouse & Rastrick Band** in Huddersfield's Town Hall on Sunday. (15th December)

And on the following Saturday (21st) with the very accomplished, **Marsden Silver Prize Band** at Saint Bartholomew's in the heart of the village.



Christmas with Colne Valley Male Voice Choir

Music Director: Thom Meredith
Accompanist: Christopher Pulleyn

7th December 2024 (7:15pm) - Hammonds Band
Christmas Concert. Batley Town Hall.
Tickets: £14. Please call 01484 225755

8th December 2024 (2:30pm) - Colne Valley Boys with
Musica Colne Valley Big Band.
St. James, Slaithwaite.

Tickets on the door: Adults £8. Kids go free.

15th December 2024 (7:15pm) - Colne Valley MVC with
Brighouse & Rastrick Band. Huddersfield Town Hall.
Tickets from £10. www.kirklees.gov.uk/townhalls

21st December 2024 (7:30pm) - Colne Valley MVC
with Marsden Silver Band.

St. Bartholomew's Church, Marsden.

Tickets: Adults £12. Kids £6.

<https://wegottickets.com/event/640234>

For more information please visit
our Facebook page.



Dan Forrest responds

Your last *VotV* reported on storms in South Carolina, USA, bringing down trees and power lines.

We noticed how this had affected one of the Choir's most-admired composers - Dan Forrest - and how he and his family had been without electricity for eight days.

Votv wrote to him:

Hello Dan,

As our favourite - living - composer, Colne Valley Male Voice Choir, Yorkshire - one of Britain's leading male voice choirs - takes a keen interest in you and your work. We noticed in the UK the recent storms and power outages that so damaged the southern states and I was surprised to discover how you and your family in North Carolina were personally affected.

I do the choir's email newsletter and the theme this month was matters electrical, so your story certainly figured. Please take a look at the November Edition on this link.

[https://mailchi.mp/6fed44d50bf8/x2u7fxodop-18013358?e=\[UNIQID\]](https://mailchi.mp/6fed44d50bf8/x2u7fxodop-18013358?e=[UNIQID])

We were pleased to see that power was restored and hope your preparations for Christmas are going well.

Best wishes

John Clark

Editor: 'Voice of the Valley'

This is the same, **Dan Forrest**, whose wonderful version of **'Hark the Herald Angels Sing'** figured as a joint number with Choir and Band at Batley Town Hall the other day. Hear Dan's choir, 'The Beckenhorst Singers' do his 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' here:-



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TglOqDMDFXE&list=PLCmEiPxMz2DzP0oO9FWVM8c2BhJlgbHwk&index=7>

A desperate time for our Dan

Our favourite composer - living one - is **Dan Forrest**. He's the chap responsible for that fabulous arrangement of the all-time best-loved favourite hymn, **'How Great Thou Art'**.

His clever version of it made for an electric and dramatic performance piece that the Choir revelled in singing. And his sumptuous piano accompaniment - with its lavish rachmaninovian flourishes - was both a challenge and a delight for Keith Swallow and Chris Pulleyn respectively.

The moving anthem, **'And Can It Be?'** is another Dan Forrest masterpiece that both the Choir and our audiences found deeply satisfying.

Well, our Dan has been having a tough time of it lately. He lives in **Greenville, South Carolina**. Although his home town may not have got the worst of the recent hurricanes, that struck the southern United States, there was considerable damage to houses and property - and in the American way - to all those poles carrying the cables, which bring electricity to people's houses.

Dan reports on how impressed he was by the ways in which the community sprang into action to deal with the damage. He tells us; "2500 linemen from 22 states and Canada are living in this temporary village here in Greenville South Carolina." And he comments, "This is what it looks like when we come together to help other people in need, instead of fighting each other and stirring division."

But for all his positive feelings it must have been hard times in the Forrest household.

He adds, "... and after eight and a half days, power was restored to the Forrests. (There are literally fireworks going off outside in our neighborhood.)"

A surprise response

Rather to your Editor's astonishment, Dan got back in touch almost straightaway, writing:-

How lovely! Thanks for sharing.

We are indeed well, as our area was not the hardest hit. We didn't have any real loss to speak of, besides being without power. One hour north of us, in Asheville NC, the water is still dirty, and they don't expect to have the water treatment plant fixed until December sometime. They're drinking only bottled water, and keeping their mouths closed when showering to avoid ingesting bacteria - it's like being in a third world country, in that regard!

Thanks again for your support and kindness! If you ever need more TTBB repertoire you can filter my website choral page by TTBB to see what's available or new.

Please give my very best to all the choir!

df

The Music of Dan Forrest
info@danforrest.com

Postscript

Dan has been in touch again quite recently, wondering whether his readership might like to consider doing an abbreviated concert version of 'Creation' his oratorio in celebration of the world's wonders and inspired by Haydn's similarly titled masterpiece from 225 years ago.

VotV is happy to commend this to our Music Committee for their assessment. It could be fabulous to do in collaboration with a choir of female voices. (It's apparently available in a TTBB version for male voice choirs only, too.).

Whether or not we ever sing it, it's a piece well worth listening to. Thanks, Dan.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OB-kMPx32_E

Christmas really underway now!

They say the Christmas season really starts when Colne Valley Boys do their annual **Christmas Concert**.

It certainly seems to be true. This year, the boys both the younger section and the older group, with their guests the **Musica Colne Valley Big Band** entertained a Sunday afternoon audience at Saint James' and they made sure everyone had a good time - generating a benign feeling of Christmas to come.



Top left we see **Matt Houston**, who - with partner **Linda Houston** - does so much to keep the Boys choir running - well done Matt!

A fine row of excellent saxophone players fronted the Colne Valley music centre ensemble.

They manifested a really wonderful 'Big-Band' sound for such a small group



The smaller boys, too, were terrific.



Here, we see a handful of the men joining in with the Boys version of 'Pine Cones and Holly Berries' (with actions).

Fine young singer, **Damian Stirling** is the one in the red waistcoat. He now frequently sings with the adult choir.

He joined **Chris Pilgrim** in the solos for **Michael Bettridge's** special arrangement of 'The Three Kings' in Batley the other night.

(Thanks to Lucy Chapman for the photography.)

Crazy

applause greets recent 200 Club announcement

Every week, the 200 Club draw is made. Some lucky person wins a £45.00 or maybe £185.00. Interest is stronger when the £1,000 draw is made every six months, of course, but I'm bound to say, generally, excitement is a little muted.

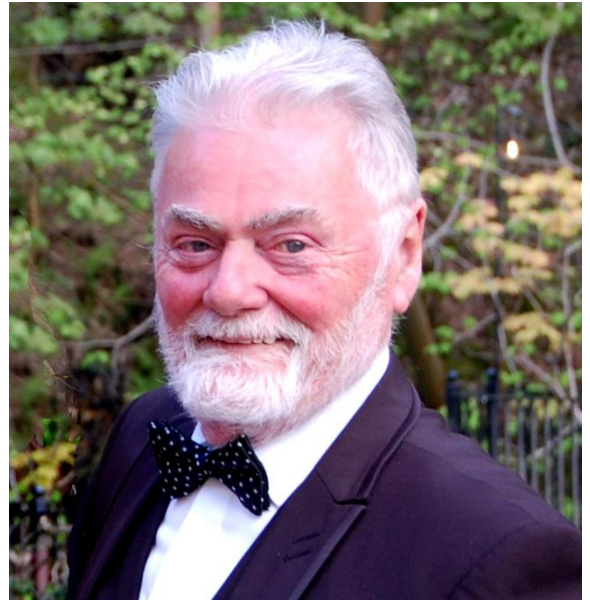
So it was strange, when a routine £45.00 draw, the other night, initiated crazy applause, wild whooping, exultant exclamations and other unrestrained behaviour.

The reason:-

The winner was First Tenor stalwart, **Matt Houston**. For years now he's commented at every draw that he's been in the 200 Club for ages and has never won a thing. And here he was - a winner - he says, for the first time in over 22 years.

Well his claim to being the unluckiest participant is now over. Maybe he'll win every couple of months now and maybe the whopping '**One Grand**'.

Certainly the odds are good - a one in every 200 chance every week, fifty weeks a year. That's way, way better odds than you'll get buying a National Lottery ticket! Fully half of the money generated goes back to 200 Number holders as prize money!



The 200 Club is organised for the Choir by Tom Jennings of the bass section.

He tells VotV, there is a handful of 'Numbers' unsold. He recommends - as it's Christmas gift time - that a 200 Club number (just £50.00 per annum) would make an excellent Christmas gift for a good friend or family member.

Just contact him on the link below and he'll set you up with a number of your own. And remember, whenever a gifted number comes up - as it's likely to - the winner will think warmly of you and of your Christmas generosity!

	<p>£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 Tom Jennings at:- 200club@colnevalleymvc.co.uk</p>	
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Coming up on Sunday - don't miss it

Christmas

WITH
COLNE VALLEY
Male Voice Choir

FEATURING
SPECIAL GUESTS

**Brighouse
& Rastrick**
BAND

AND
Colne Valley
BOYS



MUSICAL DIRECTOR
Thom Meredith
ACCOMPANIST
Christopher Pulleyn



COMPERE
BROADCASTER
**Andrew
Edwards**

Sunday 15th December 2024

7:15pm | Huddersfield Town Hall

Tickets from £10 plus booking fee

Discounts for children & NUS

Available at www.kirklees.gov.uk/townhalls

Looking forward to a great night in Marsden

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S
CHURCH PRESENTS THEIR
ANNUAL

Christmas Concert

Saturday

21st December 2024

7.30pm

DOORS OPEN 6.30PM

FEATURING

MARSDEN SILVER PRIZE BAND

Musical Director Jamie Prophet

COLNE VALLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR

Musical Director Thom Meredith

Accompanist Christopher Pulleyn

COMPERE BARNEY STEVENSON

TICKETS £12

CHILDREN (U16) £6

Tickets available

Katies Homemade Kitchen

Church and Choir members

Online @wegottickets



St Bartholomew's Church
Marsden HD7 6DN

Another welcome newcomer: Derek Kitchin

Your Editor, not noted for his observational or social skills spotted a new chap in rehearsals, up the other end with the basses. My first thought was he looked like a coach-driver.

It turns out I was completely wrong! New man, **Derek Kitchin** later put me right.....



“At rehearsals on Monday, I had just come from a couple of schools on the Wirral, where I had been dressed for speaking at Remembrance Day assemblies. So was in half rig.

Served at San Carlos Bay in Falklands in 1982, so it means a lot to me.

Would be equally proud to be a coach driver”

Derek went on to give VotV a little Biographical detail.....

“As a youth did some Amateur Operatics and loved it. Played ‘Artful Dodger’ at 13 in quite a big production of ‘Oliver’. Then nothing musical for forty years whilst in Royal Navy, Police Force, Social Work, then into teaching

Retired last year as an Executive Headteacher / Lead Ofsted Inspector after getting Prostrate Cancer, needing treatment and then having two successive total hip replacements - one new hip choosing to completely dislocate six weeks later. Bored.

What to do?

*Took up ukulele, taught myself and joined **Mucipups Ukulele Group** in Marsden requiring singing as well as playing. People said ... ‘you have a good voice’. Started doing lots of the K word at weekends (Karaoke) and more people said ... ‘you have a lovely voice.’*

What to do?

Came for first experience at CVMVC in October - Chris took me through scales. Following week Thom took me through scales. Last week - Audition / singing test. Didn’t bring Thom any music (naive me) so did ‘You are the New Day’ a-capella plus the other hoops. Thom said congratulations you’ve passed.

What to do?

... join CVMVC, knowing I have so much to learn.



Ready for my first Christmas Concerts - a bit nervous but really looking forward to them.”

Derek Kitchi



Contributions always welcomed!

As the Christmas season really gets going, your Editor hopes that VotV readers will find that Christmas brings them what they want and need.

He also reckons the Christmas spirit would rise 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 new 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 is up to.

Email: newsletter@colnevalleymvc.co.uk

And do check out our website....

The banner features the Colne Valley Male Voice Choir crest on the left, which includes two figures holding a shield with a landscape scene. The text 'Colne Valley Male Voice Choir' is prominently displayed in white on a green background, with 'Est 1922' below it. A navigation menu with yellow buttons for 'Events', 'Recordings', 'Our History', 'About Us', and 'Information' is positioned below the text. A large QR code is located on the right side of the banner.