



Christmas is very definitely coming...



On the night of December 14th **Colne Valley Male Voice Choir**, the endearing **Colne Valley Boys** and the truly excellent players of **Brighouse and Rastrick Brass Band** will once again be onstage at the magnificent Huddersfield Town Hall for a glorious night of song and musicianship, sufficient to put even the most jaded in the mood for Christmas.

It's a night not to be missed.

What's in store....

Brilliant male voices in impeccable harmony, traditional carols on the organ, the mellifluous introductions of compère, Andrew Edwards, the incomparable artistry of one of the World's greatest brass bands. Add to that the charm of the Colne Valley Boys Choir and you have an evening of Christmas entertainment to revel in.

Still not sure of what's to come?

Try this video of the Colne Valley Men singing that wonderful stirring carol; 'On this day, Earth Shall Ring'. It was recorded live in the Town Hall some years ago – and VotV can reveal it will be returning to the repertoire for this year's concert.



<https://youtu.be/jzZveRnCsk4>

Tickets are beginning to sell out but, if you haven't already got seats booked for this unmissable 'Harbinger of the Festive Season', you should still be able to get a decent seat in the 'Area'.



Click on this link to ensure you get some of the remaining tickets.

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/town-halls/book-tickets.aspx?eventId=104201ASTLSQLVDMGPCGNPKCHHKQPHTCL>

Damian - another new man joins the Choir

Hello Mr Editor,

How about something along the lines of....

Hi, I'm Damian and I'm really pleased to be able to finally follow through on my promise to join CVMVC.

I used to sing in a hodge-podge school choir, more years ago than I care to remember. I've done very little since then, barring singing along to the guitar at home or annoying the neighbours with show tunes. That was until joining the inaugural LAMS for the Choir's centenary.

I thoroughly enjoyed singing in a group again, and it gave me a much needed boost of confidence. Sadly, Monday rehearsals weren't an option for me at the time, but now that my youngest is a little older, (and thanks to the good grace of Linda) I'm at a point where I can join.

Thank you for having me. I'm looking forward to getting to know you all.

Cheers,

Damian Dyer



Damian, you are very welcome.

We wish you many happy years of singing with Colne Valley Male Voice Choir.

Christmas really starts here.

Despite the cynics who say that Christmas starts



straight after **Bonfire Night** -

or worse - when the Christmas adverts start up on the television

..... the real start of Christmas – at least in the Colne Valley - comes when

Colne Valley Boys

bring their concert to **St James's** in **Slaithwaite**.

Once again they'll be supported by the **Musica Kirklees Big Band** and led by the inimitable Thom Meredith

It's always a jolly occasion and really sets you up for Festive Fun

Do go along - It'll be a lovely way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

And another date for your diary....

Colne Valley Boys
Present
A Christmas Festival
Sponsored by
The Cuckoo's Nest



Musica Colne Valley
Big Band
Colne Valley Boys

**St James Parish Church, Church
Street, Slaithwaite, HD7 5AW
Sunday, 7th December, 2025
Starts 2.30pm
Doors Open 2.00pm**

Adults £8 Children under 14 Free
Refreshments/Raffle

Paul Wray - maybe not exactly new - but new to CVMVC

Hi Mr Editor,

Many thanks for welcoming me to the Choir. I am absolutely delighted to have become part of it!

I've always loved choral music and, at times, wanted to join a choir, but my frequent long absences from home as a merchant seafarer precluded any meaningful commitment to an established group. However, I am retired now and can do so!

Some weeks ago I saw the sign above the door of the Conservative Club in Slaithwaite for CVMVC and its message for new membership and, after some enquiry, contacted Kieran Chadha and learned of your new location in Linthwaite.

I did have misgivings about my capabilities, especially after attending the concert at St James' Golcar with Mousehole MVC, as the level of singing was truly wonderful. But with some encouragement from my wife, Karen, I decided to 'take the plunge'.

My background, as I mentioned, is in the Merchant Navy. I worked for many years as technical crew member on multipurpose oceanographic research vessels.

From a musical standpoint, I was in a church choir as a boy, but I have had no training worthy of note; indeed, any singing came mostly from frequent shipboard singing sessions which my colleagues and I loved. (These sessions were often rather raucous, but great fun nevertheless!)



I was born and spent my early life in Co. Durham until our father, a collier, relocated us to the Midlands upon the exhaustion of the Durham coalfields.

Later, Karen and I spent many years living in Cornwall and then we moved to France to pursue an adventure renovating a 26 metre Dutch barge and sailing and living on the beautiful waterways of France. However, there was still a strong pull to return to England, which came to a head when Brexit occurred.

We chose Slaithwaite as Karen has family nearby, and, of course, is a really good place to live and I was recently retired. We bought a house and did much renovation work....

So there you have it..... a potted history!

Right now I am looking forward to improving my singing and being an integral member of a very talented choir and making new friends with a great bunch of guys!

*Best regards,
Paul*



And you are very welcome, too Paul.

David Hirst, fount of all Choir knowledge, corrects VotV

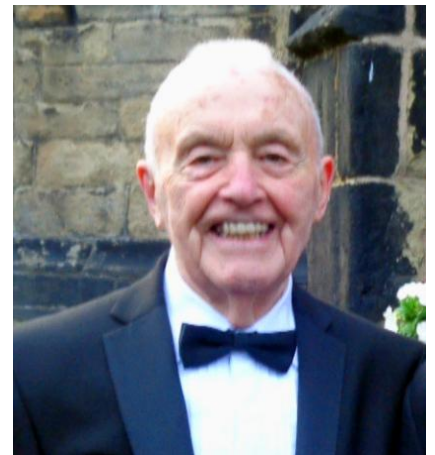
The longest-serving member in the Choir's glorious history - just over 65 years as a singer with us, famed baritone, and keeper of a database of all Choir engagements has been in touch with your Editor with information about the last edition regarding a new relationship with **Yorkshire Imperial Brass Band** and a forthcoming joint concert in the prestigious **St. George's Hall** in Bradford. We'll be performing with them on **Saturday, June 6th 2026**.



VotV told its readers this will be the first time the Choir has teamed up with **Yorkshire Imperial** and the first time we've performed in **St Georges Hall** for over 50 years.

Well, David comes up with the facts:-

'Yorkshire Imperial Metals Band, as it was once called, and Colne Valley Male Voice Choir performed together last at Dewsbury Town Hall on December 17th 1995. This was the second of two Christmas collaborations that year. We also gave a concert on the 1st December in Morley Town Hall.'



David didn't give chapter and verse but it seems we've appeared together on 8-10 previous occasions. So VotV was not right at all - but it is 30 years since we last played together.

*'As for performing at St Georges Hall, we joined **James Shepherd Versatile Brass** in a concert there in April 1979 and a few years earlier (in 1970) we sang in St Georges Hall, having teamed up with the venerable **Hammonds Sauce Band**.'*

VotV is happy to set the record straight.



Thom has a birthday.

Chairman Kieran, rose to give the men the usual announcements at the half-time break in Monday's rehearsal, all very much as normal. Then he added that one of our number was having a birthday; that is our wonderful Musical Director, Thom Meredith

Kieran declined to say how old Thom is, saying simply that it was 'a significant birthday' but VotV recalls that there was a big family celebration for his 50th. My goodness, that was in 2015.

We sang 'Happy Birthday to You' - Thom looking quite pleased and slightly embarrassed. He couldn't help conducting us.

Thom is now into his 37th year as our leader and we are consistently aware of how lucky we are to have him.



Thom, sporting a very snazzy waistcoat for our last Christmas Concert at the magnificent Huddersfield Town Hall.

Who knows what he'll come up with for this year's performance on Sunday 14th December?

You should still be able to get a decent seat in the 'Area'.



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Choirmen celebrate 250 years of trains - what?



‘Men have adored steam locomotives for about 250 years’ said VotV.

Well, various readers have said - ‘What bunkum. You got it all wrong with your 250 years nonsense. The first railway was the 1825 Stockton and Darlington - 200 years ago. That’s what we’ve all been celebrating.’



Well up to a point ...

England had numerous early, isolated, wooden-railed tramways, called wagonways, which were used for transporting heavy goods like coal and were typically horse-drawn. These railways had been going for years before the first public, steam-powered railway in 1825.

And steam engines were nothing new. In 1775, the partnership between **James Watt** and **Matthew Boulton** led to the development and commercialization of **Watt's Improved Steam Engine** design. This is considered a key event in the Industrial Revolution. Their first commercial engines were built to provide power for collieries and ironworks. But steam engines had been built and functioning from much earlier - eg the **Newcomen** engines of 1712. These engines, of course, were stationary but many experiments were being made to put them on wheels. Perhaps the first really successful was **Richard Trevithick's** full-scale working locomotive, the **Penydarren Locomotive**, which made the world's first railway journey on February 21, 1804, in South Wales. It successfully hauled ten tons of iron and 70 men over 9 miles from the Penydarren Ironworks to the Merthyr-Cardiff Canal.



Our friend in the Choir, John Smith - RIP

Any singer who's been in the Choir for a few years - and anyone who's been a regular part of our audience for the last few decades - will be saddened to hear of the death of one of our most enthusiastic singers, second-tenor and all-round good guy, John Smith. (often known as Jack).

John, who has been very frail for some time, passed away peacefully in his care home in Dalton last Wednesday, well into his 94th year.



John - always an enthusiastic singer - for 47 years - on the right - performing in Cornwall



Awarded Honorary Life Membership, Jack went on singing with us for over 47 years before his last concert in Golcar in April 2022 – the Celebration Concert for our retiring accompanist, Maestro Keith Swallow - Jack didn't want to miss that!



Jack saw army service in Egypt, was a bus driver and, latterly, an ambulance driver. If you went anywhere in Kirklees, he'd know the route and would probably tell you some gory story about a terrible accident he got called to deal with - but generally with a smile and a joke to follow.



Seen here, around Easter 2019, is one of the youngest 'CV Boys', **Richard Cooke** (7½) (son of James and Treasurer, Annabel) with then current oldest member, **John Smith** (86½) in our final rehearsal before the Slaithwaite concert.

John was with us when we first travelled to the Cornwall International Male Voice Choir Festival.

We see him here with his brother, Melvyn and the cups we won.

And again, he was in the thick of things when we won the '**Overall Best UK Choir**' title again at Cornwall in 2015.



John leaves an extensive family to remember him.

His son, Andy, tells VotV how important music and CVMVC was to John and he invites as many Choir friends as can make it, to the service on Wednesday 17th December at 10.30 at Huddersfield Crematorium. And afterwards at the Roundhill Inn at Rastrick where everyone is welcome.

Rest in Peace, John

5-8-1932 to 25-11-2025



It's beginning to look a lot like
CHRISTMAS

The homely, local concert for Marsdeners and other villagers in the 'Cathedral of the Valley' St. Bartholomew's.

It's closest to Christmas and it's always good fun!





Colne Valley Male Voice Choir
Est 1922

Events	Recordings	Our History	About Us	Information
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