



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2006

LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

My Dear Friends

The date at my time of writing is September 12th. Can you believe it! One thing I am not going to think about at the moment is Christmas. Every year it gets earlier and every year more commercialised. My only slight worry is the Christmas Cracker. The Wyvern or not the Wyvern is the question. Watch this space!

The Hilton Hotel concert proved to be as wonderful as ever. The grand sum of £2,700 was raised. This concert is always very special. We also sang at Littlecote Manor at the reunion of the Grenadier Guards. Another memorable evening - especially the wonderful feast they gave us before hand!

One of my highlights must surely be the making of our new CD - "A Collection for Christmas". My stress levels were high when I found out that the Wyvern was closing. Clarry Bean searched high and low to find us another venue (I was away) and luckily St Margaret's School in Calne came up trumps. Thank you to the Headmistress and Vince Pennock (Head Gardener and Kentwood parent) and of course Clarry. What a day to remember! The icing on the cake was John Horler (Cleo Laine's accompanist) playing for us and indeed Dame Cleo Laine herself recording two tracks. This super CD should be out for the Christmas Cracker. What a great Christmas gift.

All hands are now on deck for the Junior Show at the Arts Centre this week. Thank God for music!

Once again thank you all for your great love and support. See you at future concerts.

Love

Sheila

THE KENTWOOD SHOW CHOIR ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please note that the AGM will be held on WEDNESDAY 25 October 2006 at the St Margaret's Centre, Kenwin Road, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon, Wilts commencing at 7.30pm.
Refreshments will be available following the meeting.



OUR GOLDEN WEDDING EVENING - 30 JUNE 2006

We had a lovely evening at the Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton with a meal for our family and special friends (67 adults) and our 2 great granddaughters aged 11 months and 5 mouths!! The weather was lovely, fine, warm and sunny and everyone enjoyed their meal, but the real highlight of the evening came at 9.20pm when 20 ladies and 2 men from the Kentwood Show Choir entered the hall and entertained us in splendid style - our friends from far and wide, Bristol, Gloucester, Worcester, Newport, Trehorchy and London were amazed how excellent you all were - you have built up a whole host of new fans!!

Thank you Sheila and all of you for making it such a memorable evening for us all, one we will never forget. We had a charity box in the hall and asked for donations but no presents and we are delighted to tell you it raised £750 which we equally divided between the Prospect Hospice and the Swindon Hydrotherapy Pool.

Derek and Shirley Main



CONCERT AT THE HILTON FOR MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

Once again we were in for a treat at our Fundraising Concert! We are indebted to Sheila and the Choir for the marvellous entertainment they gave our capacity audience on August 6th. The audience was treated to some marvellous new material and from the feedback we have had, people felt that they had had a wonderfully enjoyable evening. As well as the Choir, the soloists were excellent and, as in previous years, Paul Maguire working his magic on the keyboard, all of which thrilled the audience. The dedication and energy of the Choir is exceptional and we would like to thank all those members who delayed, or returned from their holidays for be with us. We are so grateful for all the tremendous support and generosity that this concert engenders and the "special atmosphere" it creates.

We have been overwhelmed by two very substantial and extremely generous donations which have brought the final total up to a magnificent £2,729! It was especially pleasing to see two members of the Choir win raffle prizes, one of which was the top prize! The committee were amazed at the huge amount of £509 raised by the raffle this year by a very generous audience.

We were delighted Sheila was presented with Life Membership of Macmillan by Lady Talbot, Wiltshire Chairman, who always loves attending the concert. We were very pleased to welcome the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Swindon, Mr and Mrs Belcher - Kentwood Sponsors and Mr Geoff Walters, President, who unusually for him, saw the Choir from the audiences perspective this year!

In April this year Macmillan Cancer Relief changed its name to Macmillan Cancer Support which was felt to better reflect the services Macmillan offers, and to increase awareness of what Macmillan can do to help those affected by cancer. Macmillan is making changes to the organisation that people affected by cancer have said they want and need. With the new visual identity Macmillan will hopefully stand out within a crowded environment. This means more people affected with cancer will have a clear picture of what Macmillan can do and how they can help. Thank you so much to everyone who has helped us help those living with cancer in the area.

We look forward to next year and another great evening of entertainment.

Gillian Thornton and the Swindon Committee



THE PRODUCTION OF KENTWOOD'S CD 'A COLLECTION FOR CHRISTMAS'

The journey starts at 8.15am from Tesco. As the Wyvern was closed, the choir had to find another venue to record our new CD. We arrived at St Mary's School in Calne just after 9am and were met by Vince Pennock who had organised the day at the school. After a welcome coffee the choir proceeded to the recording hall, all dressed in black with full make-up on (even the men!). We walked into a very airy hall/theatre where the band (Paul, Steve and John Horler) were setting up. Once we had found our seats, Sheila asked us to warm up our voices – "do 3 sirens please, in your own time" Sheila says, which means start NOW but after the second siren I'm going to ask you to be quiet! After that we had a nice easy warm up singing 'And the Glory', 'It's a lovely day today' and 'Three thousand three hundred and thirty three thrushes'.

Time to record the 1st song – 'Joy to the World'. We sang a couple of times as the recording team needed to hear which one was the best! Next song was 'Christmas Lullaby' (my favourite) but I lost count how many times we sang this one! 'You Raise me Up' was the next song sang with Clarry as the soloist but it was not recorded at this time until we had a well earned coffee break and a piece of Mary's Sherratt's lovely ginger cake or mince pie! (Thank you Mary).

It was 11.45am and we had only recorded 2 songs so far. Sheila said we had to record 5 more before lunch - looked like it was going to be a late one then! We recorded 'You Raise me Up'. Sheila and Clarry went into the other room to listen to it back. Sheila thought it was great but Clarry wasn't happy but we carried on any way. Before we started singing 'Saviours Day' we had to build a sound proof wall around our drummer Paul. After we sang I was lucky enough with Sue Hatchard to listen to it. Sheila thought the drums were still too heavy, so out we came and covered the drums a bit more! This was a definite success so on with recording 'And the Glory' which Sheila thought was the best of the day so far. The next 3 songs 'Carol of the Bells' (which was bang in tune 1st and 2nd time) 'Red, Red Robin' and 'Oh Holy Night' all went very well so it was time for lunch.

After our 45 minute lunch break we were back to the recording hall at 2pm where we were joined by Sharon and Alison who unfortunately couldn't make the morning session. The music really flowed in the afternoon with the following songs just recorded twice then it was on to the next one. 'Scrooge Anthem', 'The Virgin Mary had a Baby Boy', 'On Holy Ground', 'See Amid the Winter's Snow', 'We Wish you a Merry Christmas' and 'Away in a Manger'. As we had caught up time, Sheila wanted to sing through 'Red, Red Robin' again which we did, again and again!

Another coffee break at 3.45pm then back recording at 4pm with 'Rudolf' (We all enjoyed John's playing of the piano in the middle) OH AND 'You Raise me Up' again and again. We were all feeling tired now, only 2 more songs to go! 'It is Well with my Soul' now this song became Sheila's best of the day. Last one 'Coventry Carol' we needed all our concentration as this had to be sung unaccompanied! We sang our hearts out and finished bang in tune! Sheila wasn't risking singing it a 2nd time. The entire choir went behind the scenes to hear the end result and what a result. It was amazing, we couldn't believe it was us singing. Sheila and the choir were moved to tears, it was very emotional.

Sheila said how proud she was and it shows what you can achieve with hard work and plenty of practice. John also congratulated the choir and said we probably had not seen the last of him.... so watch this space!

Sam Humphreys



THE RECORDING OF THE CD

By Georgia Pennnock (member of the Junior Choir)

On 9th September 2006, the Kentwood Show Choir did a recording at St Margaret's Prep School which is my school. The Wyvern was closed so my Headmistress offered the use of our lovely hall. Mrs Harrod and Clarry came to look at it and thought it was just right. My dad, who works at the school, and I had put up signs the night before so everybody knew where to go and the piano was tuned. Then the day came. There was tea and coffee and lots to eat. We all had a fab day and it sounded great. THANK YOU EVERYONE!!!



NEWS FROM HOME AND ABROAD

Greetings from the far southwest in Hayle, Cornwall from one who thinks of you all often with affection and pride. I have never felt separated from Kentwood somehow, even though I live so far away. You can be sure that the Kentwood name is alive and well in Cornwall, as only last week a lady in my church asked if she could borrow my Kentwood CDs. She is actually in a local choir called the Pentyr Singers, not a patch on Kentwood I have to say. When Yvonne asked me to write something for the newsletter I spent some time thinking what on earth I could write this time that might be of interest. After racking my brains I decided to give you an update on Hayle, then a bit of philosophising from a seventy year old! So here goes.

Hayle is a very small town of 8000 people with "three miles of golden sand" so says the road sign on the A30 just before the Hayle turnoff. The town has wonderful natural resources with the river estuary flowing into St Ives bay and big pools that flood twice a day with the tides. Migrating birds and the RSPB love this place and during winter months you can see clusters of birdy people with their binoculars on tripods looking at widgeon, egrets, shelducks and so on. (Remember that concert Sheila, where you told the audience that the proceeds were for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Birds?). The whole of the harbour area in Hayle which historically was a busy port with big coal ships coming in to feed the iron foundry and copper smelting works, has been bought by a big international company for restoration and redevelopment. For many years Hayle harbour has been in a semi-derelict state with walls tumbling down and signs of years of neglect everywhere. Residents of Hayle are now holding their breath and waiting for the transformation. We are promised a new marina, fisherman's wharf and new houses and hotels. Can't wait. At the other end of Hayle on the roundabout at Loggan's Mill is a new "retail therapy" park with Next, Boots and soon Marks and Spencers. Can you believe it? We have also been chosen as a good place for the new Wave Hub which will generate electricity from the power of the waves, and will be situated 10 miles out in the bay, and according to the experts will not harm wildlife ie the fish. No evidence of anything happening yet however.

Now for some philosophising. I feel so blessed living in a place like this. It was certainly meant to be and I believe God is gradually revealing his purpose in bringing me here. I have come a long way on my spiritual journey in the last four years since moving to Cornwall and have learned so much more about God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. I have done a lot of reading and studying the Bible with other Christians from Hayle, St Erth and St Ives and have discovered some amazing and mind-boggling stuff which I had never heard of before. It is very exciting and new to me - yes, even after years of Sunday School as a child, confirmation as a teenager at Bath Rd Methodist and years of church attendance. I have been fortunate indeed in Hayle to meet many inspiring and dynamic preachers who have opened my eyes, my heart and my mind. Don't worry,

I haven't changed into a fanatic or a religious nut. I'm still the same old me! Just a bit older and wiser maybe. I'll leave you with a couple of thoughts to ponder. Don't neglect your spiritual side and remember that prayer is a hugely powerful force in this world and is ALWAYS answered but not always in the way you might wish or expect. With love to you all and especial good wishes to Bev and Bob on their marriage.

Ann Donaldson



Well, can't really remember where I left off last time so apologies if I am duplicating myself, I promise its not that I am going crazy or anything, just that I have a shocking memory (not a sound from the pavement). Well

Emily and I moved into our house in May of last year so have now been there for over a year and really love (all you need is love) the area. It is relatively close to Emily's parents well about a 5 minute drive. The area is quite young with most of the properties about 7 or 8 years. The demographics is also quite young with a lot of young families and couples. At the end of our street we have two cricket ovals with nets and a tennis court and they have just started to build a PGA golf course as well so plenty to do when I am grey and old (have a lot of catching up with you though Graham and Clarry). We have also had new neighbours within the last year who are great and friendly (she is Irish so a little Crazzzzzzzy).

Work wise I am still with the same company although have moved around a little since last year working nearer to the city as well as in the city for a short time and I now manage a Retail Centre a little closer to home which is great for the Summer months. Emily is still teaching her fitness classes and loves it, which then leads me to the little addition that popped its head in May this year. We had a little girl and named her Saffron Dakota, she looks a double of Emily and even has the cute button nose. She can certainly make some noise although not really in a melodic tone as yet. She has also just started to roll over which is very cute. Anyway I suppose I had better actually do some work. Take care and regards

Simon Rumbold



THOSE KENTWOOD KIDS

The talents of the Juniors were showcased at the Arts Centre on 15/16 September attended by the Deputy Mayor of Swindon. We were taken on a rollercoaster ride of songs which spanned many musical forms. Ros Hollands from the Swindon Advertiser reported that 'the youngsters were stars, everyone of them and she could hear every word of every song and every note was true. She was particular heartened with the young men in the school who were brave enough to sing solos which was no easy task at their age. Emily Hayward got a particular mention as she brought the house down with her rendition of "I'm Late" from Alice in Wonderland. All those words remembered by one so young', .

Ros continued, 'one thing that stands out above all in Kentwood concerts is the discipline with which these young people are trained. No waving to mum or not concentrating throughout. Oh no, they know just how to behave on a stage and how to get the best out of it'. She concluded by saying 'well done to all those involved in making this a thoroughly enjoyable evening of superb singing'. Praise indeed!!



THANK YOU

Just a short note on behalf of Sue and I to thank you for inviting us to the splendid entertainment by the Kentwood Junior and Youth Choirs and for your hospitality throughout the evening. The high standard of the performances by these youngsters is a credit to your hard work and dedication, Sheila. Swindon can be rightly proud of the Kentwood Choir.

Regards,

Councillor Michael Barnes, Deputy Mayor of Swindon



FUTURE CONCERTS

2006

4 October	Lawn Community Centre. Batchelor (01793 487698)
21 October	Melksham Assembly Hall. Simon White (01225 704428)
27 October	St Andrews Church, Chippenham. Basil Jones (01793 523949)
5 November	Remembrance Festival - Venue to be advised (01793 524481)
22 November	Chippenham Arts Festival. Jane Clarke (01249 721171)
3 December	Christmas Cracker - Wyvern Theatre (01793 52241)
16 December	Chepstow Male Choir. Dave Higgins (01291 689646)
21 December	Roves Farm (01793 763939)

2007

3 February	St Peter's Church, Penhill. Mr Saunders (01380 724369)
20 April	Malmesbury Abbey. Sara Davis (01666 822685)
27 April	Oliver Tomkins School
4 and 5 May	May Show - Wyvern Theatre (+ Matinee on Saturday 5 May)
1 June	St Mary's Church, Akers Way. Don Hodges (01793 536829)

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The 2007 Swindon Music Festival syllabus is now available in booklet form from Brian Taylor's Music Shops (Commercial Road or Wootton Bassett), John Holmes Music, Faringdon Road or The Secretary (Yvonne Walker at the above address) or why not visit the website www.swindonmusicfestival.co.uk where the syllabus and entry form are readily available.

