

# Kentwood showchoir

**Choir President : Dame Cleo Laine**

**Musical Director : Sheila Harrod**

**Choir Manager : Chris Harrod**

AUTUMN 2011



My Dear Friends,

Well, autumn is now upon us! How wonderful to see the leaves on the trees changing colour with the onset of the cooler weather - not that we had a great deal of hot weather this year, did we? I just cannot believe that the Christmas decorations are already in the shops!

The Show Choir is busy rehearsing for the "Christmas Cracker" and has even made a start on some items ready for next year's May Show! We will be recording a new CD in January with the title of "Kentwood Swings" so you can probably guess the overall theme. I am hoping that it will be ready for release in March - just in time for our performance at the Bournemouth International Centre (BIC) as the entertainment at a major Rotary District Convention followed a few weeks later by a concert at the Lights Theatre in Andover. In fact, 2012 is going to be a busy year for the Choir with very few spaces remaining in the programme schedule.

The Junior/Youth Show will be held at the Arts Centre in Swindon on Saturday, 8th October. Everybody has worked extremely hard and it promises to be another great show to follow the successes of previous years. I must give special thanks to Rachel Sparrow from the Show Choir for all her staging input. This is completely voluntary and she has done a really fabulous job! Thank you, Rachel!

I am taking the Juniors to see "The Wind In The Willows" at the Watermill Theatre in Newbury on Thursday, 24th November. The cost, inclusive of ticket, coach travel and an ice cream is £12 per head and if anyone has any children they would like to bring please ring me on 01793-725863 as I have a few tickets left. Well, I must get back to teaching!

Love, Sheila - See you at the Cracker !

## Two of the Choir's events during the Summer

### Old Town Festival, Swindon - Saturday 18th June

Rain didn't put a dampener on the opening day of Swindon's Old Town Festival. The Choir had pride of place at the Opening Ceremony and sang to an enthusiastic audience that included Swindon's Mayor, Cllr Ray Ballman.

Sheila is the Patron of the Festival and wrote this in the Swindon Advertiser:-  
"I have just returned from holiday and feel I must write to say how proud I was to be the patron of this year's Old Town Festival. Chairman Carol Gibbon and her committed team worked so hard to make the event the success that it was. No stone was left unturned to attend to every detail. Thank you also to the various generous sponsors and, of course, to the general public for attending in such numbers and to anyone who in any way helped with this great event. Here's to next year!"



### BLESMA Charity Concert - Sunday 19th June



The Choir performed to a full house at the Hilton Hotel in Swindon. The charity event was to raise money for BLESMA (British Limbless Ex Service Men's Association), which is the charity for limbless serving and ex service men and women and their dependents and widows.





### SPOTLIGHT ON THE CHOIR : This edition features VAL STUMP

Hi my name is Val and I've been singing with the choir for 33 years. I work as a PA/Events Manager for Castrol UK Ltd which has enabled me to travel to some lovely venues both in the UK and Europe. Singing is in my family, my mother was a member and also Chairman of the Thamesdown Ladies Choir for many years and my father has a wonderful tenor voice although prefers to keep his singing at his local church. Although single, I have a very important male in my life going by the name of Obadiah, a beautiful golden retriever 11 months old. Apart from keeping me fit he is definitely my friend for life, even if he is a little thief at times !!!!

### Winifred Brown reaches 106 years

Winifred Brown is a young lady that Sheila has known for most of her life and on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July, Sheila, Bridget, Julie (who is one of Sheila's pupils but isn't brave enough to join the choir, yet!) and myself, had the privilege to share in the celebrations for her 106<sup>th</sup> birthday.



In her more sprightly days Winifred would come to the Wyvern to watch our annual show, at the end of the show Sheila would be presented with a bouquet and she would announce that she would like to pass it on to the oldest person in the audience, for many years, this was always Winifred. In fact she managed to come to the show until she was well into her 90's.

Winnie started the show off with a solo of Onward Christian Soldiers, we actually sang this about 10 times along with many other songs that she would recognise such as Jingle bells, Away in a manger, I'm forever blowing bubbles, Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag, to name but a few. She enjoyed hearing Bridget sing her solo and likened it to a bird, which I thought was a lovely compliment to Bridget. In her younger days, Winnie ran her own choir and every now and then she would start to talk about them, it was really interesting and amazing to see what a wonderful memory she has. Roll on next year when we can celebrate her 107<sup>th</sup>; Sheila has already put it in her diary!!

We arrived at the Ladymead Care Home at 1:50pm ready to sing at 2:00pm. When we arrived I was really surprised to see how many of the residents were waiting to see us and in pride of place was Winnie. She was looking at a card she had received from Her Majesty the Queen when Sheila went over to give her a hug.

**Reporter : Ann Stone**



The Choir has had some new publicity photos taken, here is a selection. More photos will appear in future editions of the Newsletter.



## High Sheriff of Wiltshire's Charity Concert - Saturday 9th July



Robert Hiscox with  
Nicky Alberry



Graham Mack, with  
Jan Blankenstien



Paul McGuire  
leading the band



Sheila Harrod with  
Rowdy Bunch member

Every year the High Sheriff of Wiltshire holds a Charity Concert. All the proceeds go to Swindon Cares, who distribute all their annual fund raising efforts to their nominated charities. For the next two years, their charities are the Rowdy Bunch Youth Club and Swindon Town Football in the Community Trust. "Swindon Cares" committee represents the Rotary Clubs of Swindon and numerous local businesses



Christ Church  
Old Town, Swindon

Guests included Robert Hiscox the High Sheriff; Rotarian Nicky Alberry DL, who organized the concert; BBC Wiltshire's Graham Mack who compered the concert; Jan Blankenstein President of the Rotary Club of Swindon; James Arkell the Vice Lieutenant of Wiltshire and the Mayor of Swindon. Almost 300 people attended the concert which was held in Christ Church and approx £7,000 was raised for the charities.

From Nicky Alberry DL. *"Dear Sheila. Many thanks to you, your wonderful choir and musicians for making the High Sheriff's Concert such a success on Saturday night. Once I have collected all the money in, you will have helped us to raise around £7,000 for our two beneficiaries - a remarkable amount. It was a wonderful Concert - my love and many thanks to you all. Nicky x"*

From Robert Hiscox, The High Sheriff of Wiltshire. *"Dear Sheila. What a star you are and what a sensational Choir you have created. Thank you for making "my" Swindon Cares Concert such a rousing success. You lit up the church with enthusiasm, fun and music, in support of two very good causes. Very best wishes Robert"*

**BREAKING NEWS**

### BY POPULAR DEMAND

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*The Kentwood Show Choir will perform at the High Sheriff's Concert on 30th June 2012. Once again, the Concert will be at Christ Church and will be recorded by BBC Wiltshire.*

## On The Mend

At the end of July, one of the Choir, Rachel Sparrow, was walking her pug Lily when she and her dog were attacked by two Staffordshire Bull Terriers. "I tried to prise open one of the dog's jaw and it clamped down on my hand. I was screaming and I could not get them off. I blacked out for a minute or two and when I came around I was being cradled by a lady and I was losing a lot of blood. Lily was taken to Drove Vets and her throat was ripped to pieces. She nearly didn't make it". UPDATE at the end of September : Rachel says "We are doing well. Lily is almost back to normal and all her stitches have been removed. I unfortunately have lost the use of my right ring finger, it has a metal plate and pins in it to correct the splintered bone but the tendons are crushed beyond repair. I am seeing a consultant who may be able to transplant a tendon from my arm into the finger to get some elasticity back into it. The rest of my hand has healed nicely".  
*Editor's note : We all wish Rachel and Lily a speedy recovery*



## Dial-A-Ride's 25th Anniversary

The Choir helped Dial-A-Ride celebrate their 25th Anniversary at the De Vere Village Hotel in Shaw Ridge, Swindon.

Their Director, Evelyn Ryder said:-

*"We would like to thank the Kentwood Show Choir for their wonderful performance at our 25th Birthday Party. Everyone very much enjoyed being able to join in and sing-a-long to the well known tunes. Thank you for supporting our event and for helping to make it such a success"*





## Our Next Shows



Sheila Harrod presents those Kentwood Kids in

### “DON'T STOP BELIEVING”

Saturday 8th October : 7.30pm

Swindon Arts Centre, Old Town, Swindon : Tickets £9 each

Tickets are available NOW from the Art Centre Box Office 01793 614837

### “CHRISTMAS CRACKER”

Sunday 27th November : 4pm and 8pm

Wyvern Theatre, Swindon : Tickets £11 each

Tickets are available NOW from the Wyvern Box Office 01793 524481

Book online : [www.wyverntheatre.org.uk](http://www.wyverntheatre.org.uk)

Get your Christmas off to a cracking start with Kentwood's Christmas Cracker.

Featuring Kentwood's Senior, Youth and Junior Choirs together with the ever popular Aldbourne Band.

A real feast of seasonal music, carols, fun and laughter - not forgetting the mince pies and mulled wine!

### MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT



On the 7th August the Choir performed to a packed house at the Hilton Hotel in Swindon, on behalf of the Macmillan Cancer Support Charity. This is an annual event and this year the concert raised £2,396. The Charity has confirmed that over the years the Kentwood Show Choir has raised a staggering £39,606 for their charity. In the audience was the Mayor of Swindon, Cllr Ray Ballman and the Lord Mayor of Salzgitter, Frank Klingebiel, with his delegation from Germany. The Lord Mayor was so impressed that he has invited the Choir to perform at the 60th celebrations of his City, in April 2012.

Sheila received a lovely note of thanks from the Macmillan Chair, whose comments included:- *“Thank you again for your great generosity, we are indebted to you and the Choir for your wonderful support. It is a vital fund raiser for us and it is good of you to offer us the opportunity each year. The Hilton are pleased to welcome us back and I have written to Yvonne to confirm next year's date on August 5th 2012. We do hope that the Salzgitter Concert will become a reality. Carol Deamer, the Mayor's Secretary was delighted with the Concert and said how much it had been appreciated and enjoyed by the Salzgitter party as you had involved them in the show. Our very best wishes and sincere thanks.”*

### CONCERT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The Choir already has a full diary for the rest of this year and into 2012 - here are some of them.

Sat 3rd December 2012 : STEAM Museum

Sun 12th February 2012: Mayor's Charity Concert, De Vere Hotel

Thurs 15th December 2012 : Gorse Hill Community Centre

Sat 30th June 2012 : High Sheriff's Concert, Christ Church

Sat 21st April 2012 : Faringdon Community College

Sun 5th August 2012 : Macmillan Cancer, Hilton Hotel

**SATURDAY 19th MAY 2012 - THE KENTWOOD SHOWCASE at the WYVERN THEATRE**

Contact us by e-mail or post - see also Kentwood Show Choir on Facebook

Please send me pictures and any stories about you or the Choir

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