

Kentwood showchoir

Choir President : Dame Cleo Laine

Musical Director : Sheila Harrod

Choir Manager : Chris Harrod

WINTER 2011



My Dear Friends

The final newsletter of 2011 - can you believe it? This year has really flown past, hasn't it? Most of us lead very busy lives and I think that the more important things in life are often missed as a result. I have certainly learned this lesson this year. A lot of you will be aware that both Chris and myself have been quite poorly recently - Chris with a severe bout of shingles and myself with - well, doing too much really! The trouble is that I think I'm still 21!

However, music and Sheila Harrod go hand in glove and I'm sure I'll soon be bouncing back again - albeit being slightly less busy. I think we should all review our lives every now and then to ensure that we're all putting enough of our time aside for our families, our friends, holidays, hobbies and the like. I will certainly be trying to do this in the future.

Thank you all for the love and support given to Chris and I at this time. Special thanks are due to all those who help to keep Kentwood ticking along in any shape or form. It really is appreciated. Anyhow, I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and I hope you all have a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Love, Sheila

The 2011 Christmas Cracker 27th November 2011

Dame Cleo Laine, our guest of honour and Patron of the Choir, attended the 4pm performance at the Wyvern Theatre, and then accompanied Sheila, Yvonne and guests for a meal at the Swindon Rendezvous restaurant.



What a fantastic day for the Choir, playing to two full houses at the Wyvern Theatre for the Christmas Cracker. Joined by the award winning Aldbourne Band, the audiences were left clapping for more. There were some memorable performances, my favourite being the "mature fairy" - you just had to be there !! Once again, members of the Rotary Club of Swindon sold raffle tickets which raised £955 for the Prospect Hospice. At the interval, the audience were served mince pies (1,200 donated by Tesco) and hot punch. Graham Mack from BBC Wiltshire made his solo debut with "You'll Never Walk Alone" and Sharon Lloyd introduced her own choir from Swindon College. Roll-on next year's Cracker - Nov 25th.





SPOTLIGHT ON THE CHOIR : This edition features DAVID WREN

Hi my name is David and the picture shows me doing one of the things I most enjoy - eating and drinking. Here I am having paella in Los Gatos in Old Town. I am a Londoner, but moved to Swindon almost 30 years ago, when the firm I worked for relocated. I don't sing, but I have heard the Choir and attended their Concerts over many years. Three years ago I was the Mayor of Swindon, and the Choir held a concert in aid of my Mayor's charity fund. I was so impressed by their generosity and their enthusiasm, that I subsequently volunteered to help promote the Choir.

I set-up the Kentwood Show Choir's "Facebook" site and I send out the eCards. I beaver about in the background promoting the Choir via emails and flyers, I also produce and distribute this quarterly newsletter. If you are not already on "Facebook", please join us - the more the merrier. If you would like to be in the "Spotlight", please email me with a few words about yourself. All the best - David

Winifred Brown

In the last newsletter we had an article about Winifred Brown. Sheila had known Winifred for most of her life and on Monday 18th July, Sheila, and other members of the Choir shared in the celebrations for her 106th birthday. It is with great regret that we have to announce that Winifred passed away in late September. A lady of great spirit, she will be sadly missed by her many friends.



On Saturday 8th October at the Arts Centre in Swindon, Sheila Harrod presented "those Kentwood Kids" in **"DON'T STOP BELIEVING"**

"Don't Stop Believing" played to a packed house, which is a tribute to the energy and quality of the performances put on by the Junior and Youth Choirs. There were various themed routines enthusiastically performed including a tribute to the Royal Wedding.



The one sad part (for the Choir) of the evening, was when Sheila Huntley announced that she was retiring. There were many tributes given to her, and the following email was sent to her from one of the parents, which I think sums-up the sentiments held about her:-

"Dear Sheila. Thank you for your "last ever" email: it seems impossible to imagine Kentwood backstage without you! You have done such an amazing job for so long and with such infinite patience and great humour, you will indeed be a hard act to follow. I do so hope it means you will have time to sit back and just enjoy the shows. Thank you for all you have done, especially for the peace of mind you have given, knowing that our children are safe in the theatres, in your most capable hands. I hope this is the best ever Show and that the children exceed all your and Sheila's expectations: may you have a truly rousing "send off". With kindest regards and many thanks." From the Choir : Thank you Sheila and have a happy retirement.



The Choir's Christmas Party 19th November Chiseldon House Hotel



Every year the Choir get together for their annual Christmas Dinner. As in previous years it was held at the Chiseldon House Hotel. There was a fabulous three course dinner, followed by some very funny entertainment, provided of course by members of the Choir. The tree was perfectly decorated and every member of the Choir received a pretty tree decoration.



Letter from the Prospect Hospice

After the Christmas Cracker, Sheila received a very nice letter from the Head of Fundraising at the Prospect Hospice, whose comments included:-

"On behalf of everyone at Prospect Hospice, I would like to thank you for your kind donation of £955 plus the £60 from Sheila in lieu of thanks you flowers totalling £1,015. What a tremendous fundraising initiative charging people for their refreshments while having them donated.

We are hugely grateful to you for all the hard work and effort you must put into arranging things, managing to secure the support of Tesco Ocotol Way for the mince pies, donating the hot punch yourselves and no doubt having many volunteer helpers serving on the night. I can only imagine how much work must go on when producing a wonderful show such as yours, so thank you for thinking of us and for fundraising for us at this very busy time for you.

Voluntary contributions are vital to providing our services and your generosity will enable us to continue giving care and support to patients and their families in our community.

*With kind regards
Sheryl Crouch, Head of Fundraising*

Fund Raiser

In November the Choir performed at the Ellendune Centre in Wroughton. There were almost eighty people in attendance, the event was a fund raiser for the Swindon South Conservative Association. The local Member of Parliament, Robert Buckland MP warmed-up the audience with a few solos, ably assisted by Paul Maguire and his musicians.



Robert Buckland MP with members of the Choir

Robert Buckland MP said *"What a fantastic choir. Swindon is lucky to have such talented people, who selflessly give-up their time to help raise money for so many local organisations and charities."*





2012 Dates for the Diary



The Choir already has twenty-one Concerts booked for 2012
Here are some that you can purchase tickets for, more details will follow nearer the dates,
but please make sure these dates are in your diary now.

Sunday 12th February - Mayor's Charity Concert at the DeVere Hotel

Saturday 19th May - Kentwood Showcase at the Wyvern Theatre

Saturday 30th June - Swindon Cares Concert at Christ Church

Sunday 5th August - Macmillan Cancer Care Concert at the Hilton Hotel

Saturday 13th October - Junior Choir Show at the Swindon Arts Centre

PLUS

“CHRISTMAS CRACKER”

Sunday 25th November at the Wyvern Theatre



Junior Choir's Night Out

9th October 2011

Taste buds were on overdrive, when Sheila accompanied 30 of the Junior Choir to Lalbagh Indian Restaurant in Rodbourne. This is their annual treat and all enjoyed the meal.



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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