

SOUND FELLOWS

The story of
York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir

Supplement 2016-2018

Adding

- A new chapter: The Story in Song!
- Updates to the story
- Enhancements to historical chapters

Published November 2018

Note: (p5) a bracketed number like this in this text references the relevant page in book

Colin Hockridge

INTRODUCTION

Sound Fellows took the story of the Phil to February 2016 ending, on page 237, with the commitment - *to be continued*. The timing of any further instalments was not fixed but was dependent on new historical discoveries and significant events in choir life. As it is the interest generated by the book led to new introductions and more information becoming available, in particular recorded material, enabling this supplement after three years. Although the supplement can be read without any knowledge of the book, that is not the intention. It is best understood as part of that larger work.

In December 2017 I was fortunate to meet John Fletcher the grandson of the choir's founding director Cecil Fletcher. We have also been lucky in finding a very rare copy of the first recording made by the choir in 1958 and a unique collection of audio tapes from the 1970s. When added to the recordings by the choir since 1974 I have been able to produce a 3 CD compilation set telling **The Story in Song**, cross referenced to the book. We have also received memorabilia from the family of the late Ossie Gillery (p225) including rare copies of concert programmes which enhance the history and these are now included within chapter updates.

Since publication in 2016 choir membership has remained steady with some younger singers replacing those retiring. Sadly death has claimed a number of past and active members some of whom featured in our narrative and contributed to the story: Cathy Wilkinson (p199); Gerard White (p193); Jim Waggott (p118, p188 et al); Ossie Gillery (p225) and Mike Johnson (p161, p203).

Now seems the most appropriate time for the next instalment which starts on page 238, as a continuation of the book. The supplement adds: a new chapter 14 entitled - The Story in Song; moves the story forward; and enhances our understanding of our history. The sequencing in this supplement will be: chapter 14; updates to still active chapters- Chapter 13 Berenice Lewis (2000-today), Chapter 9 Carols in Kirkgate/Fossgate/now Christmas Traditions; and Chapter 10 the Twinning with Münster and other European Friendships. Then will be shown updates to historical chapters in this order: Carols in Kirkgate; Münster; Cecil Fletcher; Archie Sargent; Brian Lister and David Keefe.

Chapter 14: The Story in Song!

The quality of any choir is, naturally, measured by how it sounds. The success of the *Let the People Sing!* competition in 1970 (p108), and the Yorkshire TV colour production of *Carols in Kirkgate* in 1971 (p141) was such



that the Phil had to give serious consideration to making recordings for sale (p117, 200,226,236). The first production was a Carols LP in 1974. This photo shows all the LPs, cassettes and CDs up to 2011. However, there were three known earlier recordings by the choir which had not been on general sale, two of which were important to the story of the choir, the third an unknown. The first of these was *The Happy Wanderer* 1958 (p75) recorded on behalf of York City FC. This was one of the most successful popular songs of the 1950s and was a regular concert piece. It was also used as the club song for a number of years so is important. The value of the BBC recordings of *Let the People Sing!* 1970 – the most successful competition in

the life of the Phil- is clear. Furthermore the pieces sung were regular concert items. The remaining piece *Up United* 1968 (p107) with the Rowntree Band on behalf



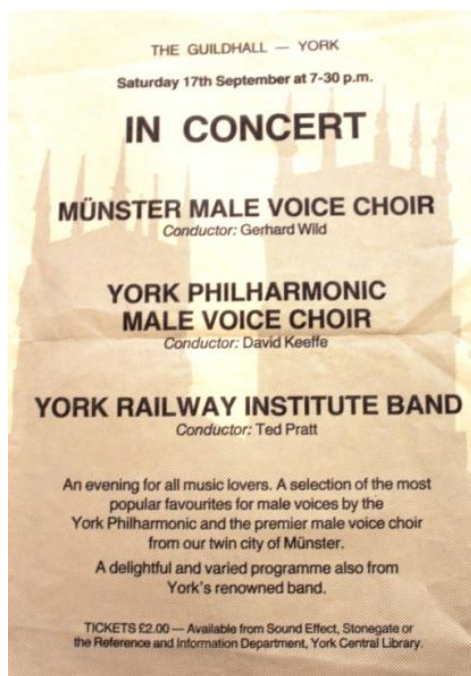
of Leeds United FC was the least important as it was, in effect, a commission piece. Attempts to find this have failed; there are no details of it at either choir or band and it does not seem to have been a success at the club. It has sunk without trace. The composer Jack Morgan is most likely the same who obtained the choir's help five years later to record *Australia Dear Australia* (p253) another unsuccessful piece.



All attempts to locate these important recordings before publication in 2016 failed. Then in March 2017 top tenor Graham Edwards (p151) found a copy of *The Happy Wanderer* (p72,75) in the Kearton House Country Hotel in Upper Swaledale, the property of Wendy Lyons - the granddaughter of Fred Clappitt (p88,100). This 12" 78 rpm shellac record was in good condition and on the 'B' side were two short songs *Spin Spin* and *Oh to be a wild wind* (p73). This gave us three songs showing how the choir

sounded under the baton of Archie Sargent and acted as the catalyst for producing a 2 CD set of 48 songs which could be cross referenced to the story in the book.

A year later in March 2018 a carrier bag full of reel audio tapes was found in a loft where they had lain for many years safely stored, yet forgotten, by that stalwart member of the choir the late Jim Waggott. This collection included that most sought after recording - a BBC copy of the four pieces recorded in October 1969(p108) and used with such success in *Let the People Sing!*



The photo above shows this collection of nine tapes recorded between 1969 and 1983, only some of which were marked. Two were master tapes by Pollen studios of the first Carols recording in 1974. These do not add to our stock as the subsequent LPs are still available. One was a recording of the Phil with the MM and Railway Institute Band from the Guildhall in 1983 – possibly the earliest recording of the two choirs. Three are recordings of the broadcasts of all the heats of *Let the People Sing* up to the semi-final. The remaining three were unmarked although one was in an envelope sent from the BBC. These included the 1970 BBC competition entries, a 1974 BBC audition tape (never broadcast) and an excellent recording of a 1975 concert from Southlands Methodist Church on behalf of York Hospital Radio. This concert included Graham Kay (p233), our current chairman, as guest soloist. In addition to the tapes was a mystery item - a

7 inch 45rpm demo record marked up *Australia Dear Australia*, the story of which is told on page 253.

Audio tape does deteriorate over time and after 50 years needs specialised handling. The choir is very grateful to Mr. David Crosby, a retired recording engineer here in York, who spent many hours rescuing, repairing and making digital copies of this material. With

the tapes identified and the quality checked we now have a significant addition to our stock of recorded material. They yielded 23 songs of which we had no other recordings, plus the competition version of *Bushes and Briars*, and so a third CD *Airwaves* has been produced to complete the *Story in Song!* series.



Here are more details of the condition and content of these tapes. The most recent, the 1983 recording in the Guildhall of two choirs and band was the one in the poorest physical condition. The most likely reason for making this recording was to give a commemorative cassette to each performer. However the 'unknown' recording engineer did have a difficult task in adjusting to two large choirs and a band, with, I suspect, almost no time for pre-concert sound checks. At times quality was compromised by poor microphone positioning with some prominent voices showing through. This may be a reason why it was never developed into a commemorative format. Nevertheless rescued and repaired it is a key historical document and the contributions by the band have not suffered from poor microphone positions as much as the choirs. Four songs from that concert have been included on the *Airwaves* CD. The four are: *Aquarius* from the 1960s hippy musical *Hair*; *Cavatina*; *The Smugglers Song*; and *Die Lorelei*: In the life of the Phil the recording of *Aquarius* is unique in that it includes electric guitars and drums. Members of a local band: Martin Waggott guitar; Tim Shaw bass; and Stuart Fenwick drums took part in this one off performance. To the relief of all, despite its hippy tradition, all singers remained fully dressed. The second piece *Cavatina* by Stanley Myers became well known when a recording by John Williams was used in the film *Deer Hunter*. This arrangement for the choir was done by David Keefe the director at that time. *The Smugglers Song* a setting of a Rudyard Kipling poem by A. Williams was a regular concert piece for some years and the final piece is *Die Lorelei*. The Phil likes to sing in German in all joint concerts and this very well known song was the selection in 1983.

The concert held in Southlands Methodist Church in October 1975 has proved a valuable source of material for the *Airwaves* CD. This concert was very well recorded by Tape Communications of York and was broadcast on York Hospital Radio. It was a programme typical of this time under Brian Lister's direction, a mix of Gilbert and Sullivan, folk songs from around the world, Spirituals, church music, but rarely Welsh hymns, and opera choruses.

Three marked tapes were of all the heats of *Let the People Sing!* These are home recordings of the radio broadcasts but we don't know who by. These were well recorded

Thurs
2 July
1970

**Choir step
into BBC
semi-final**

YORK Philharmonic Male Voice Choir, representing Great Britain, last night sang their way into the semi-finals of a BBC radio contest featuring choirs from all over the world. The Philharmonic sang two recorded numbers in the Let The Peoples Sing competition on Radio 3, beating a Swiss choir, the Chorale de L'Ecole Normale D'Institutrices Delemont.

The judges' verdict on the York contribution, which featured *The Wanderer* (Elgar) and *Music When Soft Voices Die* (Bairstow): "Good combination of voices and a performance full of sincerity."

The choir was conducted by York schoolteacher, Mr. Richard B. Lister.

The secretary, Mr. Donald Crawford, said today: "We are feeling on top of the world and looking forward to the semi-final. But as yet, we do not know which choir we will meet."

He said that as a result of the Philharmonic gaining international honours — having earlier won the United Kingdom finals — it had been invited by the BBC to take part in a half-hour programme of choral music with Newcastle Mixed Choir, to be broadcast in the autumn.

and do give us the adjudication of the semi final (p298). But also recorded was the broadcast of a Radio 3 concert *Sing we with pleasure!* from October 1970 which the Phil shared with a choir from Newcastle. This had been recorded in April and had been reported in the press in July. The quality of this home recording is so good as to enable the songs to be made available 48 years later. The most sought after recording — the 1969 BBC tape had the four songs submitted: *Bushes and Briars*; *The Wanderer*; *Music When Soft Voices Die* and *Tiger Tiger*; the first three of which were used in the competition (p109). This was a selection to showcase English 20th century music for an International Festival: *Bushes and Briars* — a folk song from Essex arranged by Vaughan - Williams; *The Wanderer* — by Edward Elgar using words adapted from Wit and Drollery 1661; *Music When Soft Voices Die* a poem by Shelley with music by Edward Bairstow - organist at York Minster and director of the York Musical Society; and *Tiger Tiger* words by William Blake music by C. Armstrong Gibbs. All were regular concert pieces at the time and indeed *Bushes and Briars* has been in the programme in recent years. In the semi-final adjudication comment was made that the York selection could have been more varied and this was taken on board when the

Phil entered again in 1974 - without success.

Responding to the comments made on selection in 1970 Brian Lister varied the programme in the 1974 entry but included again *Bushes and Briars*. To this he added *Polish Lullaby* (p102) a setting by Arthur Warrel of a traditional Polish piece. This was a favourite of the choir, featuring on all the Carols LPs of the 1970s, which made good use of the strong bass section in the Phil at this time. Still a popular piece it was in the *Christmas Traditions* programme in 2017. Also included was *The Peacocks* a Hungarian piece by Zoltan Kodály; and *Ave Verum Corpus* by da Viadana — 16th century Italian church music. This was a selection of contrasting pieces but to no avail. Nevertheless the recovery of these tapes means that we are now able to enjoy these performances. There are now 3 cds available with a total of 72 tracks.

Disc One: Standard Repertoire

1. Let all men sing (e);
2. Deep Harmony (c);
3. The Grand old Duke of York (b);
4. A Yorkshire Welcome (c);
5. The Two Roses (c);
6. Comrades in Arms (c);
7. Eriskay Love liit (d);
8. The Happy Wanderer (a);
9. Oh to be a wild wind/Spin Spin (a);
10. Bushes and Briars (e);
11. When the Saints (b);
12. The Fighting Temeraire (b);
13. Moonlight Serenade (e);
14. Glory and love to the men of old (b);
15. Creations Hymn (b);
16. Gloria from mass in C (f);
17. Three Merry Ghosts (b);
18. The Ghosts' high noon (f);
19. Loudly let the trumpet bray (b);
20. Just a closer walk with thee (f);
21. Tebe Peom (d);
22. Softly as I leave you (c);
23. My Lord what a morning (c);
24. Hey look me over (d).

Disc Two: Carols in Kirkgate

1. Deck the Hall (h);
2. While Shepherds (g);
3. Hail smiling morn (h);
4. In the bleak mid-winter (i);
5. See amid the winter' snow (g);
6. We 3 Kings (h);
7. God rest ye (g);
8. Christmas is coming (h);
9. Coventry Carol (h);
10. Polish Lullaby (g);
11. Gloucestershire Wassail (h);
12. Here we come a wassailing (g);
13. Shepherd Shepherd (c);
14. Deck the Hall (j);
15. Tomorrow shall be my dancing day (j);
16. Away in a manger (j);
17. Jesus Christ the apple tree (d);
18. The Holly and the Ivy (j);
19. Silver Bells (j);
20. O Holy Night (j);
21. Silent Night (j);
22. Hush Hush Jesus is sleeping (j);
23. The Star Carol (j);
24. We wish You a merry Christmas (g)

SCENE FELLOWS
The story in songs!
2 CD companion set



In June 2018 recording work began on another general repertoire CD. For reasons of both cost and comfort the recording sessions have taken the place of normal rehearsals. Three sessions have been held and 11 tracks have been laid down. We have three tracks with percussion by Hairul Hasnan. These are *Hakuna Mungu* - sung in Swahili, *Fill a me up* a lively modern gospel song and *All the time in the World* with its memories of Louis Armstrong and James Bond, and of its York born composer John Barry. Also recorded, with guest cornet soloist Anna Crook, is *For the Fallen*.

Hairul, a PhD student at York (continuing its role as a source of musical expertise see p223), is not only a performer but also an experienced recording engineer and assisted by another student Danny Yu acted as our producer. We have yet to come up with a title for this collection but plan to launch it early in 2019.



Danny Yu in centre as the choir assembles on a hot summer's evening

Hairul Hasnan setting up



Berry getting ready to start

These photos do not show just how hot it was on these summer evenings. Being on one of the main routes to York Hospital we were also concerned that our recordings might be disrupted by ambulance sirens. We were lucky! Not a single disruption on any evening.

Chapter 13: Berenice Lewis

This chapter ended (p237) with the description of a return to the Mrs. Sunderland Festival in Huddersfield in February 2016, gaining two second places. The choir returned in February 2017 but without success. It is not an easy competition to prepare for being so early in the year so future participation is doubtful. At the Eskdale festival in April 2017 the Phil did not enter the Male Voice Class. This rare event only occurs if the test piece is thought to be unsuitable for our choir. The set piece was a Beach Boys hit from the 1960s *Get Around*. This would require a lot of work by the full choir and was never likely to sound that good. However Richard Kay entered our small group *Sound Fellows* (p233) so we were represented and took second place to the only other choir competing *Skelmanthorpe*. The Phil did, however win the Sacred Class but lost out to *Harmonia*, the excellent ladies choir from Malton, in other mixed voice classes. *Harmonia* celebrated their 10th birthday in October 2018 and we were pleased to be invited to share a celebratory concert with them in Norton, the third joint concert in four years (p.259). Their success in only 10 years is reminiscent of our own history and we wish them a similar longevity.

The set piece for the Male Voice Class in 2018 was *All the Time in the World*. This class attracted four good choirs and the Phil was determined to do well- We won!

The concert schedules for 2016/17/18 were similar to most years. One of the most successful events was a concert held in All Saints Church Pocklington on behalf of Parkinson's UK in June 2016. This charity is close to the heart of top tenor Graham Edwards (p151, 247) who used his organisational and promotional skills to great effect. Financially it was the most successful single event of the year and it was also a good performance in front of a full church. It was then a pleasure to return in June 2018 this time sharing the concert proceeds between Parkinson's UK and PSPA. The choir was joined on stage by guest violinist Savannah Brown, and again Graham's organisation was first class and the choir responded well. This concert raised more than £3000 for the charities. For the majority of our concerts a figure of more than £1000 is thought to be a very good night so this was exceptional.

In September 2016 and again in 2018 the Phil enjoyed a day out and concert in Gunnerside (p229), bi-annual trips organised by Graham Edwards. After the 2016 visit with a concert led by Richard Kay to a large and appreciative audience, the story of how and why these days out began was written up. The hope was that this would be published in the Dalesman Magazine. After months of expectation this was not to be, the slot we hoped to have was actually given to a West Yorkshire choir celebrating a centenary. It is, however, an interesting story and the days out have now become a feature of choir life and so here is that article.

York to Gunnerside Just a Song Away!

In 1924 a young Methodist minister was rebuked by his Gunnerside congregation for attending a village dance. In 1992 the York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir was invited to sing at Gunnerside to raise money for chapel funds. What is the link between these two disparate events? The probationer minister survived this criticism and went on to have a successful life-long ministry, but not one based in Swaledale. The choir, having accepted that first invitation, has returned every other year since with the most recent visit in September



Gunnerside Methodist Chapel

2016 raising more than £1400. What hold did Gunnerside have over the young cleric and why does this Upper Swaledale village still attract the 'townies' from the far side of the county?

The Rev. Walter Edwards was the young minister and he stayed in the village for only a year. But in going to that dance he met all the young people in the upper dale and formed life-long friendships. Every August for the next 50 years Walter, with his wife and four sons, came back to holiday with these friends. He was also invited to preach at chapel anniversary services, and to conduct weddings, baptisms and funerals on behalf of these same families.



*'Our little farmer'
Gunnerside August 1947.
Graham aged 7 leads a heifer
through the village.*

In 1940, at a time when Rotherham was expected to be bombed, Doris, Walter's wife, sent her two older sons to safety, one to each set of grandparents. She then put baby Graham in a clothes basket and moved to be with her friends in Gunnerside. By 1947 young Graham, now long freed from his makeshift carry-cot, was a familiar figure in the village each summer as he helped out on Jack Rutter's farm; a childhood experience that fostered his love of farming and secured his own love for the place and its people. To this day, Graham, together with his brothers, cousins and families, takes an annual holiday in the dale. These days he is much better known as the founder and head of 'Graham Edwards Trailers' an innovative and successful Yorkshire company supporting our farming community. The company is based in Full Sutton to the east of York in an area where Graham had worked for some 25 years as a farm manager; so when this keen singer wanted to join a choir it was to the tenor section of the York Phil that he came. So the tenuous links between choir and dale from 2016 to 1992 and back to 1924 begin to emerge.

The York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir formed in 1925 and soon became one of the best in the region. The habit of a Dales

Tour — a summer's day out — began in 1965. On a Saturday that July the men set off from York in the early afternoon (many of them worked on Saturday mornings) stopping to sing in the market square at Grassington; then onto Kettlewell to perform outside the church; from Kettlewell to the Buck Inn at Buckden; then to Castle Bolton by 6 pm for tea and the last performance of the day. At each stop a collection was taken and given to local charities. This day out took place for a number of

years eventually alternating between the Dales and the North York Moors. With this tradition in mind the choir readily accepted the 1992 invitation to visit Gunnerside. This was to be a July outing for the men and their families with a stop at Richmond on the way; an excellent tea provided by the Gunnerside ladies; a concert in the chapel followed by a pint and impromptu sing in the pub; and a sleepy coach trip home. July is a good month for the choir to take such a trip as it is at the end of the concert season – with a summer recess during August. However, July is not a good month for the farming community of Swaledale – too much haymaking to complete. So after a couple of visits the Phil responded to a request to change the date and went at the end of September. This then raised problems – too close to the autumn sheep sales. So in recent years the choir has gone in early September, ironically the worst time of year for the singers. In 2016 the day out took place on the 10th September, allowing only one rehearsal following the summer recess. Nevertheless the concerts are always a great success and it is, perhaps, reassuring to see the rhythms of the city adjusting to suit the rhythms of countryside. The concerts have always been in aid of chapel funds. Known as the New Chapel it opened in 1867 at a time of confidence in the dale when the prosperity of the lead mines was at its highest. There are reports that for a service held on the first Wednesday after opening at least 1000 people squeezed into the building, designed to seat 700, with many more outside. Sadly within 20 years the population had fallen by a half and the mines were in terminal decline. It has, then, never fulfilled the ambitions of its planners with regard to the number of people it has served but it has continually maintained its role as a religious and social centre. Having been on the brink of closure it is now maintaining its viability with the small local membership being supported by a world-wide network of friends and by fund raising events such as the York Phil concerts. However these links are still tenuous and a further catalyst was needed to bring city and village together. In 1989 the choir was at one of the high points in its life and at the Morecambe Music Festival that year had won a remarkable five trophies. The accompanist, who played on that Saturday, was Mrs. Mary Stockdale. She kept from the choir the news that her husband Jack (known to be in poor health) had died on the Thursday as she did not want her loss to affect the choir's performance. We learned later that Jack Stockdale had close family ties to Upper Swaledale, and so the 1992 concert was planned and facilitated by Graham Edwards: to give the choir a day out; to thank Mary for all her work; to remember her late husband; and to raise much needed money for the chapel. Mary, now retired as the accompanist, was invited as a guest. She was then surprised by being asked to play, just once more, as the choir sang one of her favourite pieces (Gwahoddiad), after which the chairman Brian Long presented her with an inscribed gift. The only question remaining is why the York Phil keeps going back? A male voice choir can be seduced by an excellent village tea and a good pint of beer. But a good audience is also required and Gunnerside has never disappointed. Music is, and always has been, important to life in the dale. Indeed the chapel history includes this poignant story of the composition of two hymn tunes – 'Gunnerside' and 'Muker'. As the mines closed and so many of the young left the Dale, three brothers Tom, James and David Reynoldson sought work and new lives in Lancashire cotton mills. Later James lost a son during World War 1 and expressed his grief by composing these tunes, dedicated to the memory of his son and, by their titles, to the land he loved. The tunes were taken to heart by the dales' folk at the time and are still in the repertoire of local brass bands. But it is the musical work of another Reynoldson – John – which added to the pleasure of the choir's first visit. John was the



Richard Bowman and John Addinall hold the largest of the 5 trophies won at Morecambe 1989

Richard Bowman and John Addinall hold the largest of the 5 trophies won at Morecambe 1989

author of 'Swaledale' — the local anthem. Towards the end of that concert, at the particular request of Graham Edwards, the choir began to sing this Swaledale anthem, albeit a little tentatively as it was unknown to many choristers. The audience immediately joined in and so it moved from being a tentative presentation to a joyous rendition which made the choristers feel very welcomed

Swaledale

I'll sing of a place to my heart very dear, a place where I always would dwell.

And if you would kindly lend me your ear, a few of its beauties I'll tell.

It's a beautiful dale, home of the Swale,

How well I do love thee, how well do I love thee

Beautiful dale home of the Swale, beautiful, beautiful dale.

'Tis far away from the noise and the din.....

Back in 1924 Walter Edwards stayed in Gunnerside for a year and it captured his heart. In 1940 it seems to have captured the heart of his baby son, and in 1992 this son, Graham, brought the York Phil to the village for a 'once only' concert. 26 years later he is still bringing the choir to sing — there must be something very special in those village teas.

In September 2018 the tradition of a Gunnerside day out continued with another concert and another enthusiastic audience. With none of our team of accompanists available this was a unique occasion with Graham Kay directing and Berry Lewis on piano. The concert raised almost £1200 for chapel funds.

The summer of 2016 forced another change of rehearsal venue. Central Methodist Church (p230) changed the use of the hall we had used since 2006. We transferred to the York City Church in Gillygate (formerly the Salvation Army Citadel). This is a building which has always played a part in the musical life of the city. It is a comfortable venue with good acoustics so we settled in easily. In 2017 we began to use it as a concert venue and recently as a recording studio so we are hoping for a long term stay.

Another building to become unavailable in 2016 was the Guildhall. Our last concert here was for the Lord Mayor's Christmas Cheer Fund in October 2016. We have no idea when this Hall, which has been so important to the Phil over the years, will once more be available for concert hire. The annual Scandinavian Choral festival has also had to move and that competition is now also held at the Citadel. The Phil still enjoys sharing a concert with our Norwegian friends each May (p231).

Some good news in recent years is the increase in popularity of Choral singing. We noticed this in a return trip to Fountains Abbey in October 2016. The audience was much bigger than previously and we struggled to be heard at the back. This will need a rethink before a return visit. Also the Community Choral Festival in York is growing fast. Started in 2016 11 choirs took part over 3 days We took part in 2017 and again in 2018 by which time 23 choirs were involved over four days. At Eskdale in April 2018 there was a record number of 18 choirs competing. Even our 'one off' contribution to the Scarcroft primary school Christmas Fayre is now in its fourth year.

On the downside 2017 did see an unexpected cancellation. Betty's Restaurant (p230) had booked us for six performances of *Carols by Candlelight* early in the year. A change of management midyear saw all six cancelled with then a late request for one performance which we did and which was as well received as ever. For 2018 two evenings are booked so time will tell whether this will climb back to its earlier popularity.

The hot summer of 2018 led to the choir performing in shirt sleeves rather than blazers. In recent years this has been so rare as to merit a photograph, this one from our visit

to Stamford Bridge Village Hall in July. It raised again the question as to whether we could have an alternative, more appropriate uniform for such evenings and this may be resolved before the summer of 2019.



*Graham Kay
introduces the choir*

As well as the continual attention to how we sound and how we look we have also worked on how we communicate. With the help of David Todd (baritone) and Teniel Green (bass) we have in recent years improved the use of our website, facebook and twitter, so necessary if we are to promote the choir to potential new members and concert goers.

The social life of the Phil has carried on as before. Monday night post rehearsal sings in the Snickleway Inn (p233) continue to entertain an international mix of tourists to York. There have been Eileen's soirées (p221); social evenings; the annual golf day, in recent years organised by David Embleton; choir walks, the last three years starting from Brandsby village Hall and arranged by Graham and Hazel Kay; and St Crux fund raising days. In addition the *Phillies* support group, who contribute so much to choir life, have their own social calendar.



*Gathering at Brandsby for
the walk August 2018*

The annual St Crux fund-raising days, which are organised and run by the *Phillies* have raised many thousands of pounds over the years and stand in the tradition of the work done by the Perimeter support group (p104) which began in 1966. St Crux is a small redundant 17th century Church at the bottom of the Shambles in York. It can be rented, as a daytime café, by the day by charitable organisations and is extremely popular with many local organisations. Working as a café with bric a brac stalls etc. the Phil adds an extra dimension by giving two short open air concerts during the day. St Crux has an older link with the choir as it was a rehearsal venue in the 1950s (p71) and is the most likely location of the first choir recording of *The Happy Wanderer* (p75) in 1958. The October 2018 event, with

breakfast temperatures of 3° and wintry showers all day, was never going to be a financial record breaker.



*It's opening time -All we need is
sunshine and people*



*Yes! Baritones do
wash dishes*

In September 2018 we were pleased to host the Australian Welsh Male Voice Choir in a joint concert at the Citadel. This was a great evening made even more pleasurable by the singing of soprano Ayşe Göknur Shanal from Brisbane, one of Australia's most versatile and entertaining classical singers, seen in these photos singing *Anfonaf Angel* with the choir, and dancing a waltz with our Richard Kay.





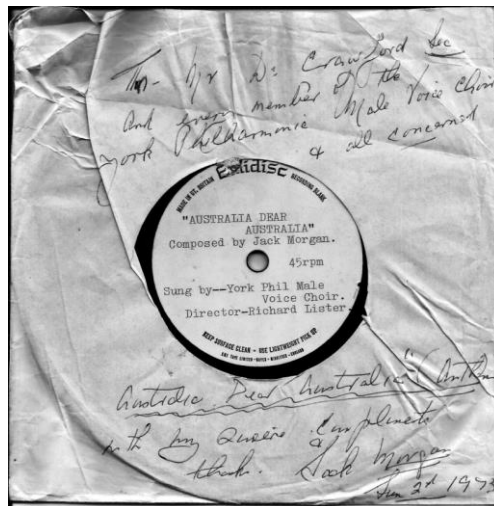
*Here are most of the music team.
Michelle Nyguyen at the piano with
AWMC MD Tom Buchanan as Ayşe sang.
Waiting their turn are David Hammond and Hairul
Hasnan, Berry is sat enjoying the performance just
out of shot*

The choir was on an extensive tour of the UK including Scotland England and Wales ending with a massed concert of Welsh choirs in the Albert Hall. We met them on day four of their trip and they had already performed two concerts. We may live on opposite sides of the world yet within minutes of meeting our shared language, and love and understanding of male voice singing led the two choirs to feel like old friends. It was good that we were able to use this occasion as our traditional autumn concert in support of the Lord Mayor's Christmas Cheer Fund.

The evening also allowed the Phil to make a most unusual presentation to our guests. The carrier bag of audio tapes discovered in March 2018 contained a mystery item – a 45rpm record. With the help of the website of the Australian National Archives we were able to determine that this was a failed entry in a competition held in 1973 to find a new anthem for Australia. The composition was by Jack Morgan, who had also persuaded the Phil to record a song for *Leeds United FC* (p107) in 1968. Here is a copy of that presentation.

York Phil takes part in 1973 competition to find a new national anthem for Australia

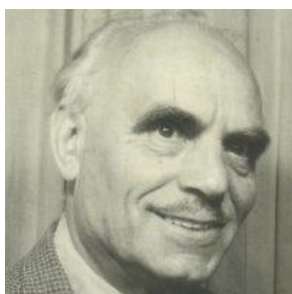
In March 2018 a carrier bag containing a number of tape recordings of the York Phil in the 1970s was discovered during a loft clearance. Some of these are important parts of our choir history which we thought had been lost. These have now been restored and saved. Also in the bag was a mystery item a 7 inch 45 rpm record dated June 1973. Dirty and badly scratched this demo copy could be cleaned and played but remained a mystery as there is no one active in the choir now who could tell its story.



Fortunately the online resources of the National Archives of Australia can help.

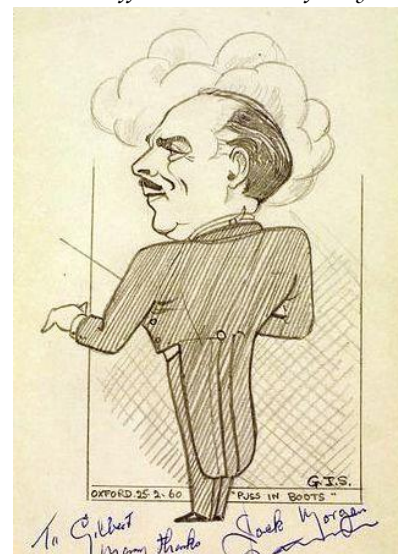
This is one of the 2500 rejected entries from the 1973 competition held to find a new national anthem for Australia.

Words and music are by Jack Morgan a retired Welsh music director who had lived in London for some 50 years and had been smitten by Australia during a visit in 1956 whilst working as the bandmaster on the P&O liner RMS Strathmore. Jack was enthusiastic in making his entry, indeed he made his first approaches to the High Commissioner in London before the competition was announced. This fervour was, perhaps, further encouraged by the prizes on offer \$5000 each for lyrics and music, and so Jack asked the York Phil to record it in May 1973.



This photo of Jack appears on National Archives of Australia website and the sketch by Gilbert Sommerland (V & A collection London) shows Jack conducting Puss in Boots in Oxford in 1960. The Australian records office has scanned images of many of the

entries submitted for the competition and in an age of handwritten scores and letters the quality of presentation was variable. To that end the entries by Jack do contrast with the smart professional portrayed in this sketch.



Jack made 3 submissions to the High Commissioner in London. The first was on December 7th 1972. The second – a signed copy – was sent on December 18th and later an audio tape of our York recording was submitted (now held in the archives in Sydney).

Here is the letter Jack enclosed with his first submission:

50

JACK MORGAN. EX MUSICAL DIRECTOR
19 MORPETH RD. S. HACKNEY. LONDON. E.9.
DEC 7TH. 1972. 7LD.

DEAR SIR.

I WONDER WHETHER YOU WOULD ACCEPT THE ENCLOSED ANTHEM WHICH I HAVE JUST COMPOSED AND DEDICATE IT TO THE AUSTRALIAN PEOPLE FOR WHOM I HAVE A GREAT REGARD.

I WAS IN AUSTRALIA IN 1956 AS A VISITOR BANDMASTER ON THE P.&O LINER THE STRATHMORE. HOWEVER, I HAVE ENCLOSED A ROUGH PIANOFORTE AND VOICE ALSO THE TOP LINE COPY WITH THE WORDS. IT IS ON A MILITARY STYLE SONG OR ANTHEM AND WOULD BE VERY PROUD IF IT IS ACCEPTED. I AM AN O.A.P. HAVING JUST RETIRED.

KIND THOUGHTS AND WISHES YOURS SINCERELY.
Jack Morgan

JACK MORGAN.....
(BORN IN WALES LIVED IN LONDON
-ON 50 YEARS.....)

Mr Humming

18

THE LONDON ORCHESTRAL ASSOCIATION
13-14 ARCHER STREET
SHAFTESBURY AVENUE, W1V 7HG

Telephones:
Members - 01-437 5027
Office - 01-437 1588

PA.
Mrs. Bellgreen
Mrs. O'Connor

19 MORPETH RD. S. HACKNEY LONDON. E.9. 7LD

77/677

Dec 18th 72

Dear Sir Alexander..

You may have received a music copy (M.S.) of a new Anthem I composed. Entitled Australia Dear Australia which I sent to Australia House - Dec 7th as a suggestion for a National Anthem for Australia.

However I would be most proud if you will accept the enclosed signed copy, whether the first one is accepted or not, & wish you a very

NAFI
all yours
SD

Here is his hand written (but on headed notepaper to add to his credibility) second letter dated 18th December 1972. This credibility was not enhanced by Jack recycling an old envelope and clearly delivering the copy by hand.

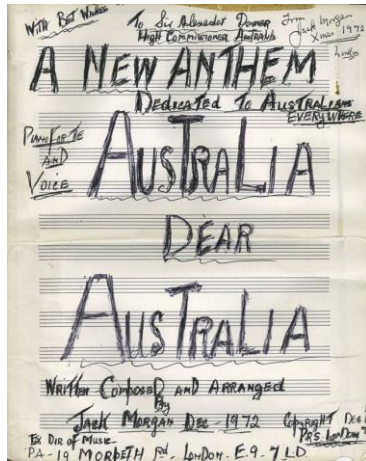
Number 2 Will you please forward
obliga. Thanks

PERSONAL

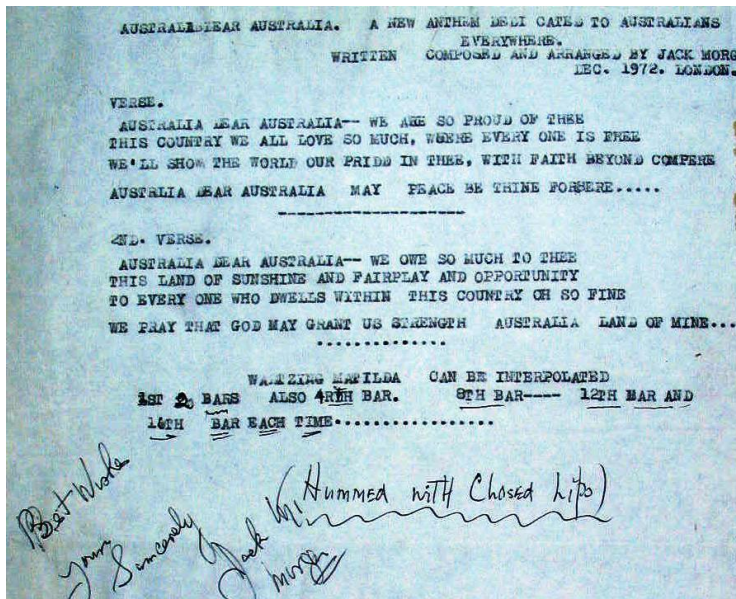
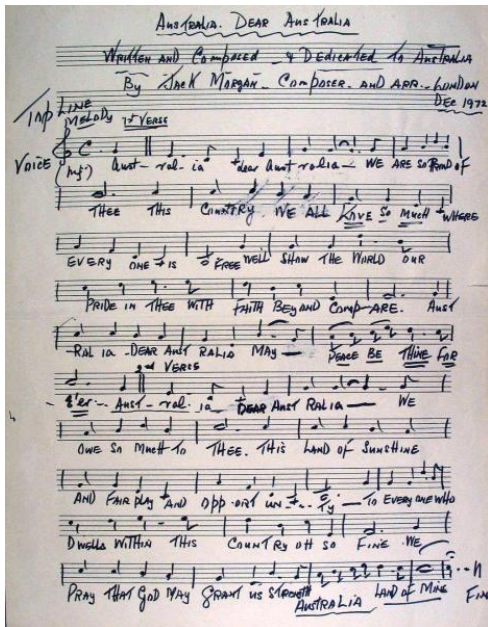
SIR ALEXANDER DOWNER
High Commissioner's Office
c/o AUSTRALIA HOUSE
STRAND W.C.2

S

POST OFFICE



As would be expected at this time the score was handwritten. Here is the title, the first, and the last page with Jack's dedication:



Many of the 2500 entries included 'Waltzing Matilda' in some way or other and Jack was no exception: Jack suggested interpolating Waltzing Matilda into the score with a hum but when we recorded it in May 1973 we offered two versions one whistled and one sung.

Jack ensured that his composition was registered with the PRS and then perhaps learned that other composers were making audio

submissions and so decided to do the same.

In 1970 York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir was very successful in a BBC radio choral competition 'Let the People Sing!' the Phil won the national competition and represented the UK in the international heats against choirs from 25 countries. We reached the semi finals only to be beaten by a Bulgarian ladies choir. Jack would have known of this and this is the most probable reason why he asked for our help rather than seek a choir from his native Wales. What is known is that the arrangements were quickly made and carried out in May 1973. There are no written records of the event and only two memories have been recalled. One is the belief that Richard Lister, the choir director at the time, agreed to make the recording before seeing the score; the other is from a choir wife who recalls joining in a rendition of the song in the Tiger Inn following the recording. We do know then that it has had at least one public performance.

The recording, including an introduction by Jack, was submitted to the High Commissioner and a copy sent to us in York. All this work was to no avail as all the 2500 new entries submitted at this time were rejected with the Australian people eventually deciding to adopt an already well known song 'Advance Australia Fair'.

From information that is easy to find on the internet it is clear that introducing a new anthem is a sensitive subject and the agreement and adoption of a new anthem took many years. However when Gough Whitlam announced the competition on Australia Day 1973 the newspapers and public were not impressed. The important news of the day was Shane Gould being named Australian of the year after winning three gold, one silver and a bronze medal at the Munich Olympics in 1972. In July of 1973 the Guardian here in the UK commented on the final short list of six and added:

'If a suitable tune can be found, the winning anthem will be sung for the first time next Australia day, January 26. The Fellowship of Australian Composers, in what has been interpreted, as a truer reflection of Australian spirit than the sentiments in the candidate anthems, is boycotting the competition until its members get more pay'.

Given the poor state of industrial relations in the UK in the 1970s I am not sure what point the Guardian was trying to make.

Reading many of the entries on line and looking back from 2018 it is illuminating to see how many men and women from all over the UK in 1973 felt that they could compose the ideal anthem for Australia and how easily they assumed the right to do so. Many entries also lacked any gender awareness; even Jack wrote a military style piece and had it recorded by a male voice choir.

If (a big if) the judging panel in 1973 had been all male and of Welsh descent then maybe 'Australia dear Australia' may have made the final shortlist. Had that happened then here in York we would be able to add to our list of choir achievements;

'1973 - Reached the last six in an international choral competition in Australia'.

However that was not to be and perhaps there are only two copies of this recording in existence; one safely under lock and key in Sydney and the other recently retrieved from an attic in Easingwold.

Jack Morgan never won the prize, to the relief, or perhaps disappointment, of all Australians who may now listen to this little piece of social history

*A copy of the 1973 recording was included in the presentation and a solo performance rendered after which our Aussie guests did not think that Jack Morgan's work would ever replace *Advance Australia Fair*.*

In October 2018, within a few weeks of the centenary of the armistice of 1918, we were pleased to support John Williams, one of our bass singers, and the village of Newton on Derwent in the unveiling of the Victoria Cross Commemorative Stone to honour Corporal (Lance Sergeant) Harry Blanshard Wood, VC, MM, 2nd Battalion Scots Guards. The day was dry yet very blustery and the choir led the community singing and also sang *For the Fallen*, the wind carrying our voices and this much respected poem high into the sky. The guests included the deputy mayor of the small French village of St. Python where this act of bravery took place 100 years earlier.



The choir gets ready



Crowds gather around the stone following the ceremony

Harry's story was told in the programme for the day.

Corporal (Lance Sergeant) Harry Blanshard Wood VC, MM



Harry was born 21st June 1882 in Newton upon Derwent, East Riding of Yorkshire. His father was John Wood a farm labourer and his mother was Maria Nichol Wood, the eldest daughter of Edward Dey, a farmer.

Harry had five sisters, Laura, Jessie, Hilda, Elizabeth and Margaret, all born in Newton upon Derwent and baptised in Wilberfoss. Harry finished school at Strensall after his family had moved there in 1887, and after

working with his father as an agricultural labourer he got a job at York station as a cleaner and stayed there until he joined the 2nd Scots Guards in 1903 at the age of 20. His enlistment papers stated that he was 5ft 10in tall with blue eyes and brown hair. He extended his service to complete 8 years in the colours and a further 5 years as a reservist.

In May 1905 he had been promoted to Corporal, and by May 1907 he was appointed Lance Sergeant. Sadly, in 1908, he was tried by Court Martial for "drunkenness" and was reduced in rank to Private. It was as a Private that he was transferred to the Reserve on 4th February 1911. What Harry did between this date and the outbreak of the Great War is unclear, but he was mobilised in London on 5th August 1914. On the 7th October 1914 the Scots Guards 2nd Battalion landed in Zeebrugge, Belgium.

After The War

Following the war, Harry was certainly not unscathed: he was given a civic reception in York in February 1919 but in May, when the city was conducting the traditional collection of funds for him, he was in hospital "suffering from the effects of his arduous service". He was wined and dined frequently, and presented with several gold watches, and later the sum of £138 by the city.

In November 1920, Harry was part of the Guard of Honour of 100 VC winners at the burial of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

Harry moved to Bristol and, in July 1920, married Georgina Naylor in London. Harry died on 15th August 1924 after being a witness to an accident involving his wife while on holiday in Teignmouth, Devon. She escaped with only minor injuries, but the shock was so great to Harry that he fell unconscious and into a coma from which he never recovered.

His funeral on 20th August 1924 was like a state occasion. A service in the cathedral was attended by a captain of the Scots Guards, with a party of pipers in kilts. Scores of army officers and dignitaries including the Lord Mayor attended.

A party of Guards sergeant majors bore Harry's coffin until it was laid on a gun carriage and drawn by horses of the Royal Field Artillery, escorted by warrant officers and NCOs of the Guards, as it wound its slow way to Arnos Vale. Sgt Harry Wood has a place of honour at the very front of Soldier's Corner near the entrance to Arnos Vale, Bristol.

Victoria Cross Citation

The London Gazette, 14 December 1918 reported:

"16444 Corporal (Lance-Sergeant) Harry Wood MM, 2nd Bn, Scots Guards. For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty during operations at the village of St. Python, France, on 13 October 1918. The advance was desperately opposed by machine guns and the streets were raked by fire. His platoon sergeant was killed and command of the leading platoon fell to him.

The task of the company was to clear the western side of the village and secure the crossing of the River Selle. Command of the ruined bridge had to be gained, though the space in front of it was commanded by snipers. Corporal Wood boldly carried a large brick into the open space, lay down behind it, and fired continually at these snipers, ordering his men to work across while he covered them by his fire. This he continued to do under heavy and well-aimed fire until the whole of his party had reached the objective point.

He showed complete disregard for his personal safety, and his leadership throughout the day was of the highest order. Later, he drove off repeated enemy counter-attacks against his position. His gallant conduct and initiative shown, contributed largely to the success of the day's operations"

Later the same day we were delighted to sing once more with *Harmonia* as that very successful choir reached its 10th Anniversary. The large parish church in Norton was a good venue for two choirs and an audience of 250 plus and an excellent concert was given. All the members of *Harmonia* can be justly proud of all they have achieved in their first 10 years.



Both choirs gathering to rehearse the joint piece

The following week we were at Easingwold to enjoy our first joint concert with the *Jubilate Ladies Choir*. *Jubilate* was founded in 1998 as a WI choir changing its name two years later. It was another good evening with an appreciative audience. Although a new venue for the Phil it felt comfortable, a feeling helped by two members of our choir family Anne and Janet Waggott being members of *Jubilate* and second tenor Bryan Hunter with former member Brian Allinson (p145) recalling time spent at the church as boy choristers.



Stage manager Mike Wash at work



Graham rehearsing the joint item

As the Phil rehearses for Christmas and 2018 draws to a close, this update can be ended by reporting a highlight of the year. In the Summer Concert in July there were more long service awards presented than usual. This followed a decision to reduce the qualifying time from 25 to 15 years, reflecting the fact that few members join before their middle years. Nine singers qualified: Ian Burks; James Elliot; Gordon Greenbank; Adrian Houghton; Bryan Hunter, Richard Kay; Paul Newman; David Pike; and Peter Smith.

But there was one more award to make and this was held back to the end of the concert. In recognition of 20 years service to the choir our director Berenice Lewis was awarded Honorary Life Membership. This presentation was met with generous applause from the audience.

Here are two photographs from that presentation. Eileen Grey (p222) is also shown sat at the piano. We now have a unique situation with both ladies being Life members, in a choir which has only made five such awards in a 93 year history.



Christmas Traditions 2016-18

The published narrative (p157) finished with the news that the show would move to the De Grey Rooms in 2016. A new title would be required and it was decided to break with the tradition of linking the name with the location and so *Christmas Traditions* became the new title. The ballroom with its adjacent bar allows a cabaret style layout with a bar service and mulled wine and mince pies delivered to the table. The choir also needed to learn how to best use the new performing space and is very grateful to Richard Kay for his direction. In 2016 and 2017 there were 4 performances with nightly audiences of up to 110 and to meet demand in 2018 there will be 5 performances. Here are some photographs from 2016.



View from back of ballroom

Berry directing the men



Berry directing the ladies

*Richard directing and singing
with Sound Fellows*



*Berry leading both choirs and
audience in a well known
Carol*

2017 MarQant in York

The narrative closed with the 2015 visit by the Phil to Münster to take part in the *Music builds Bridges* week-end. But the story moves on and MarQant, as the Münster choir is now known, visited York in September 2017.

With the Guildhall in York no longer available the concert was held in the De Grey ballroom. With two choirs and a limited audience capacity the concert was a 'family' affair. However, long serving members from both choirs were very aware that, since we had last met in 2015, this family had lost two of its most significant members. Rudolf Häming (p203) and his good friend Jim Waggott (p176,188) had both passed on. Here are the programme notes from that concert.

This is the 17th time our two choirs have shared a concert stage yet it is the first time that our friends from Münster have been introduced to a York audience as MarQant rather than the Münsterscher Männergesangverein (MM). The long established choirs of the MM formed in 1889 and Männerchor Constantia - 1874 merged in 2010 and took the name MarQant, which can best be translated as 'something special'. Both choirs were under the direction of Gerhard Wild and indeed members of Constantia were in the choir which visited York in 1997 when we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the twinning of our two cities. We are delighted to welcome all our friends today as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of that successful twinning. Our last concert together was in Münster in September 2015 when the Phil was pleased to accept an invitation from the city authorities to take part in an international music week-end commemorating the 70th anniversary of the ending of war, and the next time we meet in 2019 the two choirs will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of our own very successful twinning.

Tonight MarQant is directed by Gerd Wild (now taking part in his 15th joint concert) with Juhee Lee at the piano and the Phil is directed by Berry Lewis accompanied by Eileen Grey. Both choirs invite you to relax and hope you will enjoy our varied selection of music.

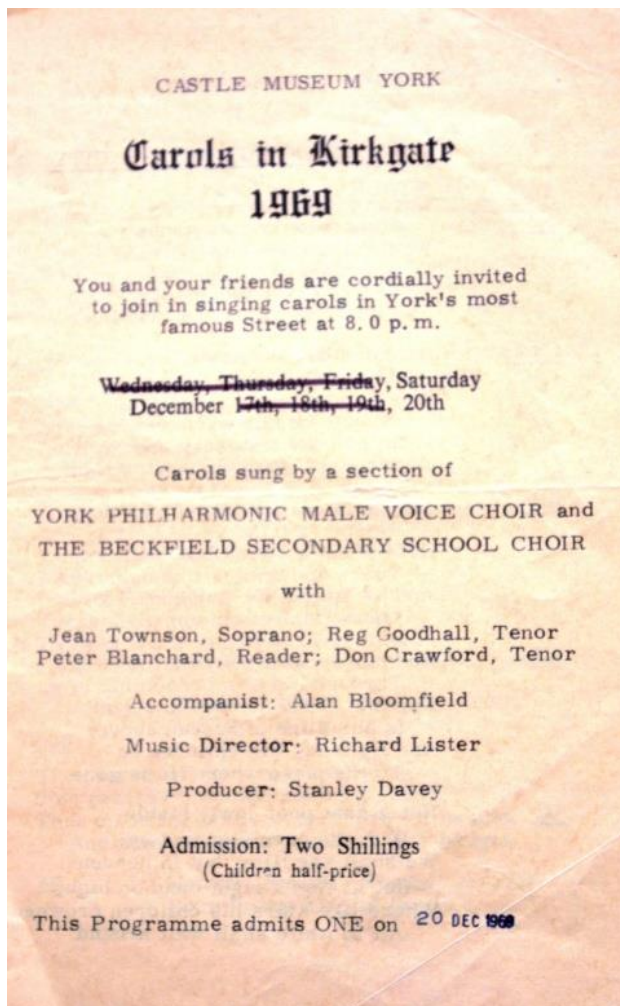
Juhee Lee played some excellent piano solos during which Berry Lewis stepped across to act as her page turner.

With the tour arrangements made months in advance MarQant had once more booked into the Monk Bar Hotel in York. Unfortunately shortly before their arrival the hotel was sold and so our guests arrived to find a hotel full of builders and new staff. This was disruptive but the social evening went ahead as planned with a dinner and entertainment from both choirs.

With the 50th anniversary of our choir twinning in 2019 on the horizon plans were made to meet again in Münster. However this has now been put back to May 2020 when the Phil will also visit Lochem as the Netherlands marks the 75th anniversary of liberation and the ending of World War 2 in May 1945 (p205).

Chapter 9: Carols in Kirkgate – historical additions

The Gillery collection (p239) included some programme details dating from 1969 to 1982.



Here is the front cover of a programme/ticket from 1969. Pre-printed to show all four performances the non relevant dates are pencilled out at the top and a date stamp is put on the base as a proof of payment. Acting also as a concert programme the inner pages carry the words of the six community carols to be sung.

These named solo artists also appeared in the Yorkshire TV recording made in 1971(p141). This recording was an adaptation of the show performed that year the running order of which is shown on the next page.

The Castle Museum, York

Carols in Kirkgate 1982

The Christmas of a hundred years ago celebrated in
York's most famous street

Musical Directors
David Keffe
Richard Bowman

Accompanist
Ronald Davis

Producer
Donald Crawford

Choirs
York Philharmonic
Male Voice Choir
Kirkgate Singers
New Earswick Primary School

Friday, 17th December
161

In aid of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff's Christmas
Cheer Fund
A Collection for the fund will be made at the close
of the Carols

Adults: £1.75 Children & Pensioners £1.00

CAROLS IN KIRKGATE 1971

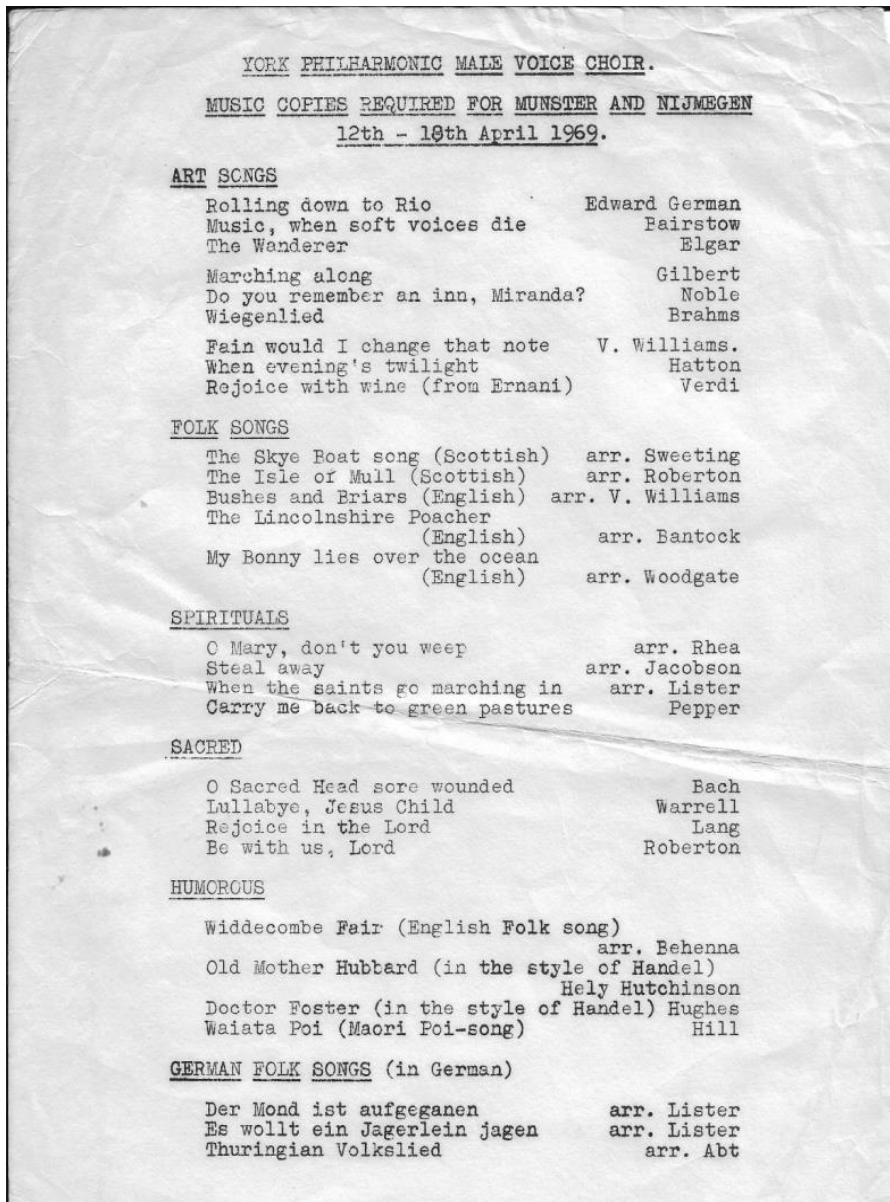
1. Boys & Street Character Yorkshire Rhyming Greeting
2. ditto Christmas Conversation
3. SATB Christmas is Coming MVC enter during applause
4. Both Choirs Bright and joyful is the morn
5. ditto We wish you a merry Christmas
Exit Beckfield Choir
6. MVC Here we come a Wassailing
7. MVC Christians Awake
8. MVC Heil Smiling Morn Exit MVC
9. Soprano Solo
10. Reading I sing of a Maiden Enter Small SATB
11. Small SATB Sleep Holy Babe Exit SATB
12. Reading The Night before Christmas
Exit MVC
13. Audience While shepherds watched (Tune: Winchester Old)
Enter MVC
14. MVC While shepherds watched (Tune: Ilkley Moor)
15. MVC, Audience The First Nowell
During the singing of this carol Girls enter from P.O.
Boys climb on coach,
16. Choirs & Audience
Once in Royal David's City
17. MVC In Dulci Jubilo
18. MVC We three Kings
19. MVC Gloucestershire Wassail Exit MVC
20. Soprano Solo
21. Boys & Street Character Ghost Story Enter Girls
22. Beckfield Choir The Pipe & Drum Carol
23. SATB The snow lay on the ground Exit Beckfield Choir
24. Small SATB O sing we a song Exit Small SATB
25. Reading The Cretchits' Christmas Dinner
Enter MVC
26. MVC The Boer's Head Carol Beckfield process during singing
Boys on to coach
27. Both Choirs I saw three Ships
Announcement from the Reader
28. Choirs & Audience Good King Wenceslas
29. ditto Hark! the Herald Angels
30. ditto O come, all ye faithful
Speech
31. Choirs Exit during singing We wish you a merry Christmas
Watchman calls off over singing. 'Past nine of the clock
and all's well'
(Repeat on stage ad lib)

The running orders for both 1974 and 75 show how easily the Beckfield choir was replaced by the Kirkgate singers. There were no noticeable changes to the format other than there no longer being a need for a guest female soloist although they were still available as two of them - Eileen Henderson (now Grey) (p221) and Jean Sutcliffe were founder members of Kirkgate Ladies.

This 1982 programme shows David Keffe (chapter 6) as the choir director and Richard Bowman as the school choir director. Richard went on to become Choir director as well (chapter 7). When compared with 1969 (above) this programme has been pre-printed with the day and date. The verification is then by a number stamp below the date. The price has risen from two shillings to £1.75 but pensioners now gain a concession. The inside pages still carry the words of the five community carols, one less than 1969.

Chapter 10: The twinning with Münster and other European friendships - historical additions

As in the chapter on Carols in Kirkgate, the Ossie Gillery memorabilia adds to our understanding of the early days of these relationships. Initially the plan was to visit Nijmegen only (see programme p296). The inclusion of Münster (p158) was organised very quickly. We do know that a comparatively small choir of 35 made the trip (p163) and that



Brian Lister chose an excellent selection of folk songs to show the choir at its best. What was not previously known was the extent of his musical preparation. Here is shown the list of music the Phil needed to pack and know. This is serious preparation - 29 pieces including some requiring piano accompaniment. It is interesting to note that *Der Mond is Aufgegangen* (p162) was only one of three pieces available to be sung in German.

It is known that Brian Lister was flexible and could change his programme ideas as he did at Nijmegen (p165). However Ossie's copy of that concert programme

of 16/04/1969 shows even more late changes.

P R O G R A M M A

"York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir"

A. *Marching Song*

1. Music, when soft voices die Bairstow
2. Fain would I change that note Vaughan Williams
3. The Skye Boat Song (Schots volksliedje) Arr. Sweeting
4. The Isle of Mull (Schots volksliedje) Arr. Robertson
- X 5. The Lincolnshire Poacher (Engels volksliedje) Arr. Granville Bantock
6. My Bonnie lies over the Ocean (Engels volksliedje) Arr. Woodgate

B. "Koninklijk Nijmeegs Mannenkoor de Vereenigde Zangers"

1. Nachtgesang im Walde F. Schubert
2. Drie Negro Spirituals Foster
 - a. Old Black Joe
 - b. Swing Low
 - c. O Mary don't you weep Arr. Rhea
3. de Kwink J. Mul

met medewerking van:

J. Snoek - fagot
G. Krijt - slagwerk

P a u z e

C. "Koninklijk Nijmeegs Mannenkoor de Vereenigde Zangers"

1. Drie volksliedjes
 - a. Fishermen of England
 - b. En revenant d'Auvergne bev. Koekelkoren
 - c. Johnny come down
2. Scorrando uit "Rigoletto" G. Verdi
3. Bandietenkoor uit "Ernani" G. Verdi

D. "York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir"

1. Widdecombe Fair (Engels volksliedje) Arr. Behena
2. Old Mother Hubbard Hely Hutchinson
3. Dr. Foster Hughes
4. Waiata Poi (Australisch Maori Poi Song) Hill

When the Sun

Goodnight Ladies

Now available is a copy of the programme from the return visit by the MM in 1970 (p168). This confirms the greater scope available to Brian Lister with a full choir available but also suggests a correction might be needed to the comment on page 173 that there was no joint item. The last listed song is *Good Night Ladies*. At the end of a set by the MM it is most likely that both choirs joined in this light hearted benediction.

MUNSTER — YORK

... in the sign of the town friendship. Last April the York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir visited Münster and were the guests of the Münsterscher Männergesangverein. The visit was a notable one, being the first musical exchange between the two cities, and was a great success both musically and socially; male voice singing serving as the first link between the two nationalities. Members of both choirs soon found other common interests and many friendly exchanges were made.

The York Choir was given an extremely cordial welcome by the Burgomaster and citizens of Münster and there occurred many memorable events and some moving occasions during those few days spent in their beautiful city.

This weekend the York Choir, generously aided by Perimeter, is entertaining the Münster Choir and aims to show them what real "Yorkshire" hospitality is, to give them as memorable a time as they had in their city and to provide an opportunity for them to sing to a York audience. Through our music may we yet find greater understanding

R.B.L.

YORK PHILHARMONIC MALE VOICE CHOIR

Forthcoming Concerts 1970 Season


Sunday, 10th May—
FLORAL HALL, BRIDLINGTON, 7-30 p.m.
with Jean Townson (Soprano) and Reg Goodhall (Tenor)

Saturday, 20th June—
LYONS CONCERT HALL, YORK UNIVERSITY, 7-30 p.m.
with Agnes Nattrass (Soprano) and Reg Goodhall (Tenor)

Saturday, 4th July—
TOWN HALL, HUDDERSFIELD, 7-30 p.m.
with the Huddersfield Vocal Union

Saturday, 27th June—
ARTS CENTRE, MICKLEGATE, 7-30 p.m.
with Agnes Nattrass (Soprano)

W. H. HILL, PRINTERS, TANKER ROW, YORK



York Corporation Entertainments Sub-Committee

present the

MUNSTERSCHER MÄNNERGESANGVEREIN
(Münster Male Voice Choir)
Conductor: TORSTEN BRAND

and the

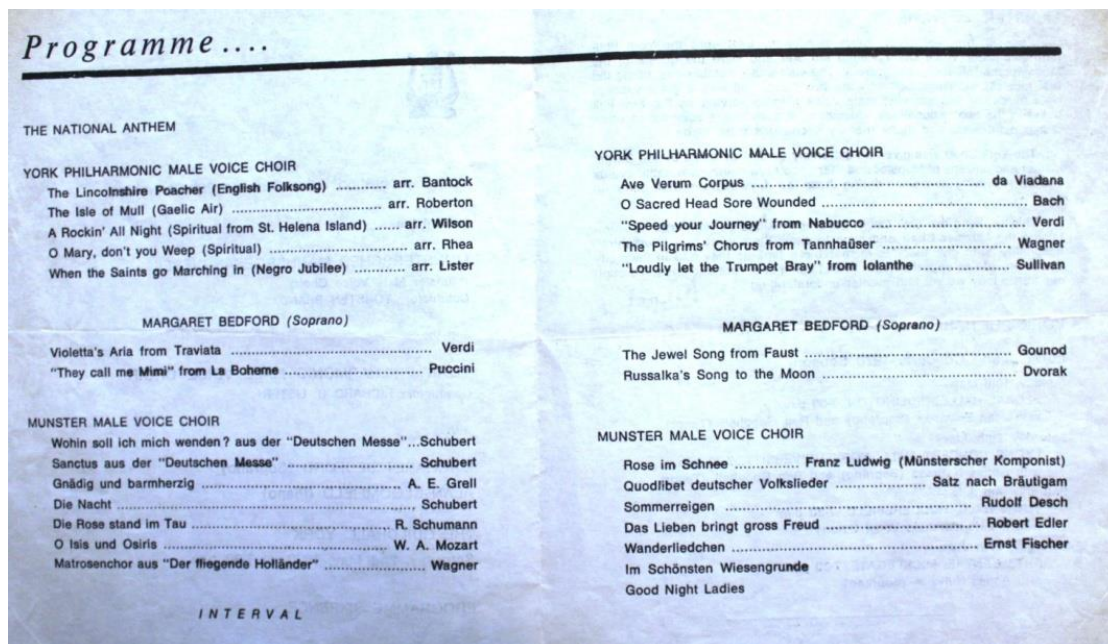
YORK PHILHARMONIC MALE VOICE CHOIR
Conductor: RICHARD B. LISTER

with

MARGARET BEDFORD (Soprano)
ALAN BLOOMFIELD (Piano)

THE GUILDHALL, YORK
Saturday, 2nd May, 1970, at 7-30 p.m.

PROGRAMME SIXPENCE



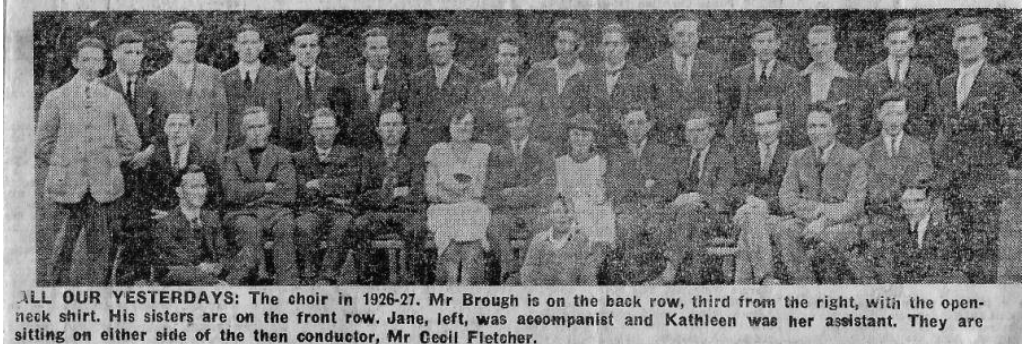
The 1983 visit by the MM (p184) now has greater prominence since the discovery of a tape recording of the concert (p243). There is another item from that visit the significance of which was missed by this writer at the time. The twinning of the two cities began in 1957; the twinning of the two choirs came 12 years later in 1969. During the 1983 visit all York choristers were given a photo of the MM to which was attached a token. This writer has to admit that at the time he took little notice of this token and the photograph did not appear in the original narrative. Here it is.



The small token is a commemorative coin marking the 25th anniversary of the twinning of the two cities. This should, perhaps, have been included in the first narrative.

Chapter 1 Cecil H. Fletcher

On page 5 is promoted the first known photograph of the choir. The only source available, at the time, was this press cutting which gave a date of 1926-27.



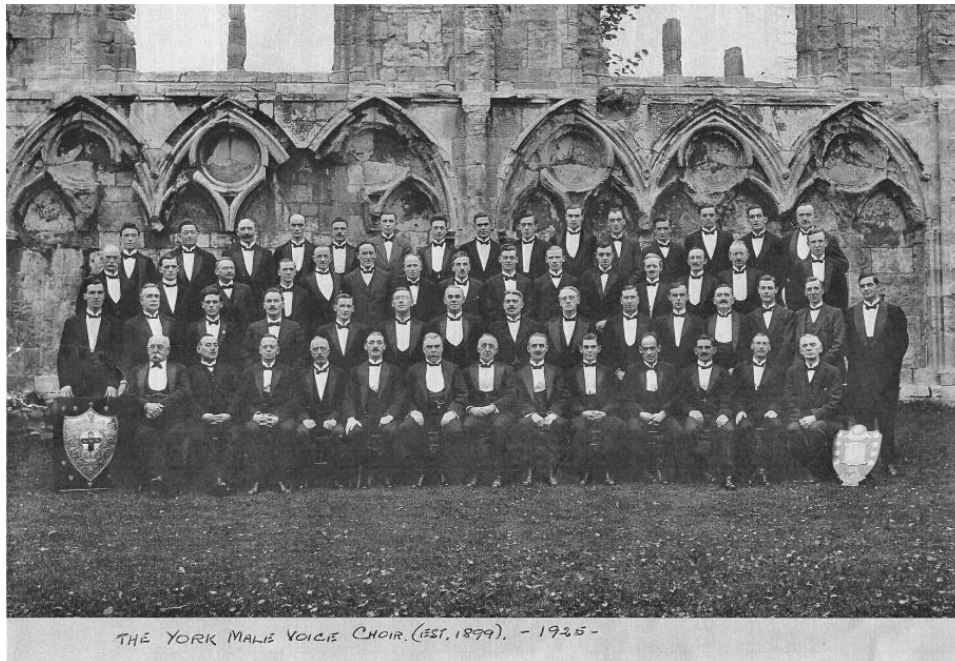
ALL OUR YESTERDAYS: The choir in 1926-27. Mr Brough is on the back row, third from the right, with the open-neck shirt. His sisters are on the front row. Jane, left, was accompanist and Kathleen was her assistant. They are sitting on either side of the then conductor, Mr Cecil Fletcher.

John Fletcher, Cecil's grandson, was able to provide an original copy of this photo in its original printed mount.



This is significant as the printed mount carries the choir name York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir. The change of name from Leeman Road Adult School Male Voice Choir took place in November 1929 (p9). Therefore the date of this photo is most likely the spring/summer of 1930. The boy sitting at Cecil's feet is now more visible and given a date of 1930 is most likely Cecil's son Harold, aged 12 (p21).

It is useful to once more compare this photo to that of the York Male Voice Choir taken 5 years earlier in 1925 (p87).

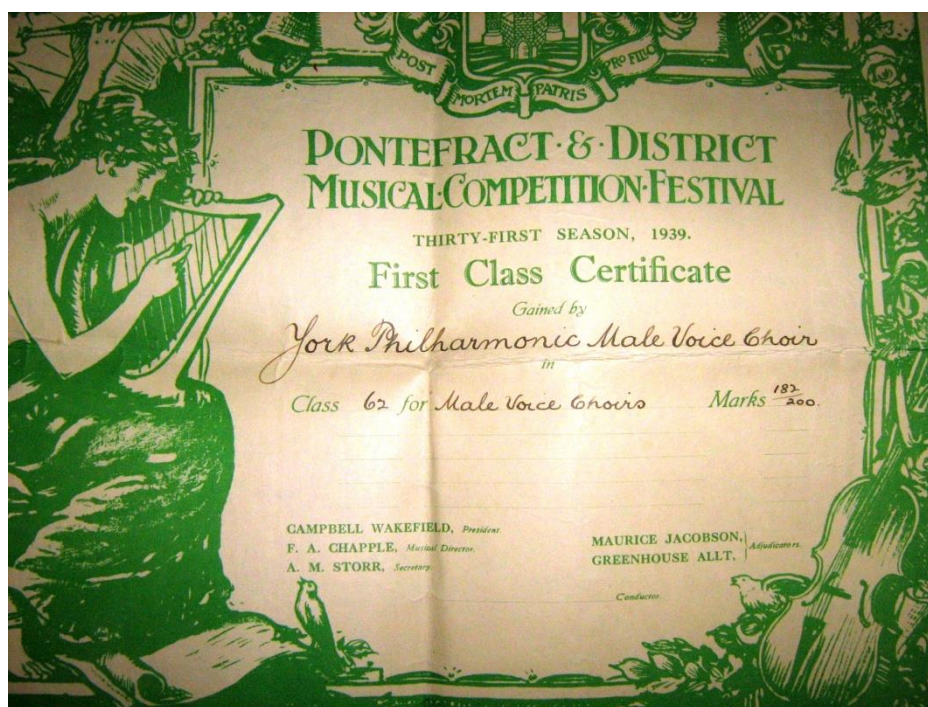


The size, success, stature and apparent wealth of YMVC is clearly evident in 1925 and yet this small group in Leeman Road under Cecil's leadership had the confidence, self belief, and ambition to adopt a prestigious title which must have drawn immediate comparison with the older MVC.

Included in the Fletcher family archive are two winning competition certificates. The first Sheffield competition in 1934 (p18, 19, 40) was an important win to the choir and a day which was well described in the choir magazine.



The second date is Pontefract 1939.



This certificate is not dated but is probably springtime as we know that post war the Pontefract festival was held in April. This is probably the last competition that the choir won under Cecil's leadership. The Pontefract festival was also important in the post war

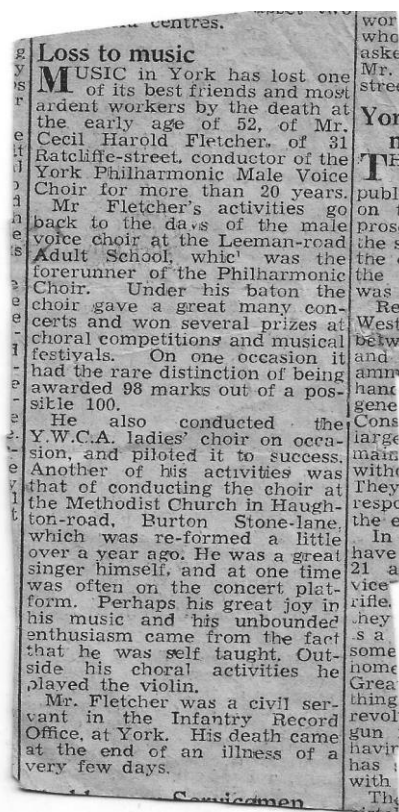
years. It was the first competition entered and won by the Phil under Archie Sargent's direction in 1955 (p72); and the first competition



won under Brian Lister's direction in 1964 (p102).

John Fletcher was able to provide a press cutting of an obituary to his grandfather to add to the funeral notice (p61) and a later photograph of Cecil who died, at home of heart failure following a short illness, in March 1946

As an observation it is interesting to see how many photographs of men at this time feature pipes (p67) or cigarettes.



The obituary adds to our knowledge by confirming that he was self-taught and by giving his place of work at the time of death as the Infantry Record Office. But it also states: *He also conducted the Y.W.C.A ladies choir on occasions and piloted it to success.*

This is new information that is supported by the shortest chapter in Archie Sargent's autobiography *Voices Pipes and Pedals* which is reproduced below in full. In 1946 the YWCA choir was in a desperate position without a conductor. Although not stated the dates suggest spring/ summer 1946 following Cecil's death in March. Clearly this was yet another quality York choir more than capable of performing at a prestigious event attended by the Princess Royal, and it is in keeping with what we know of the respect and friendship between Archie and Cecil that Archie should step forward and lead the choir on such an occasion.

Y.W.C.A. LADIES' CHOIR

This brief but most interesting experience arose quite unexpectedly. The Secretary of the local Y.W.C.A. for some years — Miss Theo Carcaud — was a delightful, thoroughly efficient and dynamic person with a flair for getting things done as easily and as quickly as possible. Calling to see me one day, she was quite obviously very worried, and she said she would 'put all her cards on the table.'

In connection with a very important anniversary of the Y.W.C.A., they had booked the Rowntree Theatre for three nights, but the conductor of the choir had not been with them for some weeks, and the members of the choir were feeling disheartened. As the time was relatively short, she pulled out all her persuasive stops, and asked me to take the whole thing over. I was really under pressure, and hesitated, but eventually I undertook it, and promised to do my best to help.

Intensive preparations commenced, and Janet came with me as accompanist. Each night at the Theatre, the ladies were well received, but unknown to us, an official of the Y.W.C.A. in the West Riding of Yorkshire was present. She was so impressed by their singing that she asked the Secretary whether they would sing in Bradford. The choir members were quite willing to make the journey, and all the necessary arrangements were made accordingly.

Y. W. C. A.
WAR AND NATIONAL SERVICE APPEAL
1855 Y. W. C. A. 1946
Presentation of Purses to
H. R. H. THE PRINCESS ROYAL

Chairman:
 LADY PROCTER, O.B.E.
 THE GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL
 BRADFORD
 Saturday, 26th October
 1946

As this was shortly after the end of the war, Janet had great difficulty in obtaining the needful equipment — white gloves, etc., necessary when meeting a member of the Royal Family.

The sequel was somewhat amusing!

Naturally she had to remove her white gloves in order to play the piano, and at the conclusion of the programme, the Lady-in-Waiting came to the piano to say that the Princess had been most interested in one of the arrangements. Janet at once offered her copy — as she was wanting to know the particulars — but before anything could be done, the Princess herself followed. Consequently, Janet was obliged to shake hands with the Lady sans gloves!

On the way to tea, I was discussing the acoustics of the hall with the Headmistress of the School, when a lady came along the corridor calling, 'Mr. and Mrs. Sargent, Mr. and Mrs. Sargent, the Princess waits.' I said to the Headmistress, 'I think I'd better go.' After chatting over a cup of tea, it was not difficult for us to understand why the Princess Royal was so immensely popular wherever she went.

Perhaps, had he lived a little longer, Cecil's considerable musical talents and leadership skills would have received wider recognition.

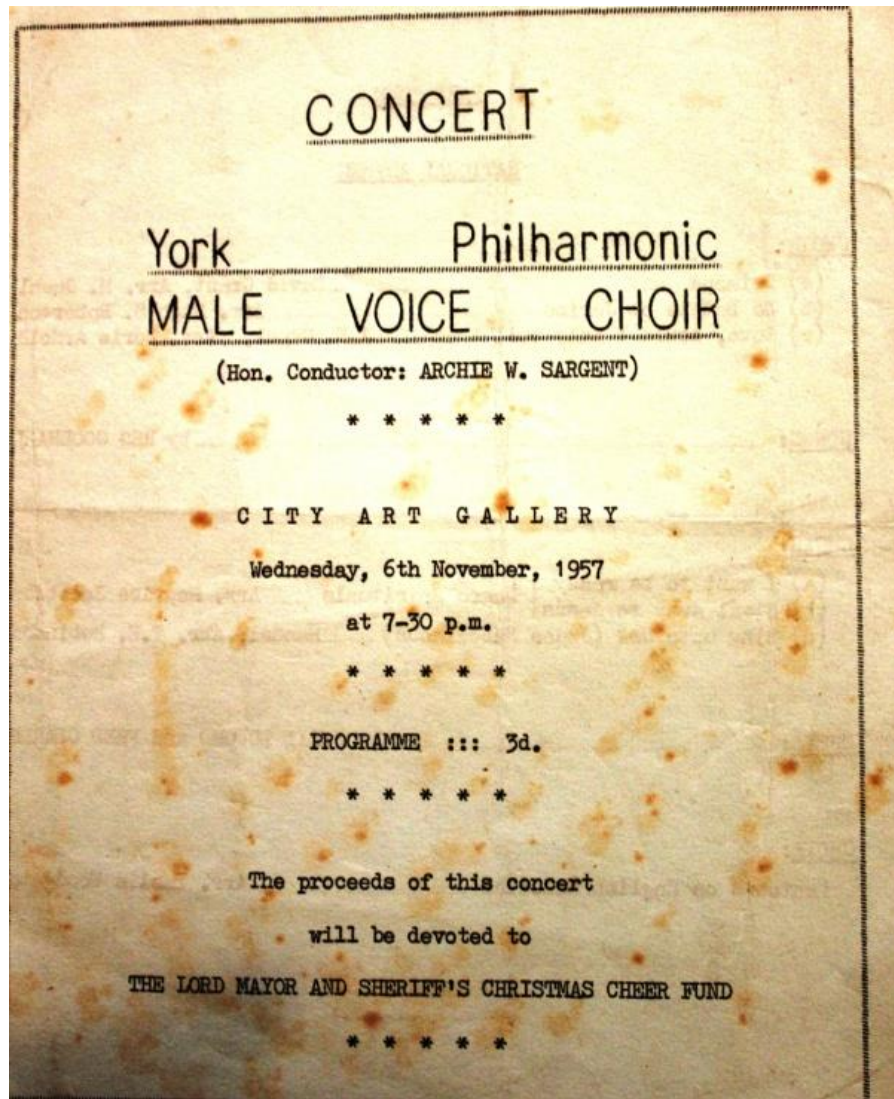
We know that a choir meeting (p62) was held on Friday 26th March when a decision to carry on was made. Still looking to the future, two days later, the choir went ahead with a Sunday outing by bus to Scarborough at a cost of 5s/4d per head.

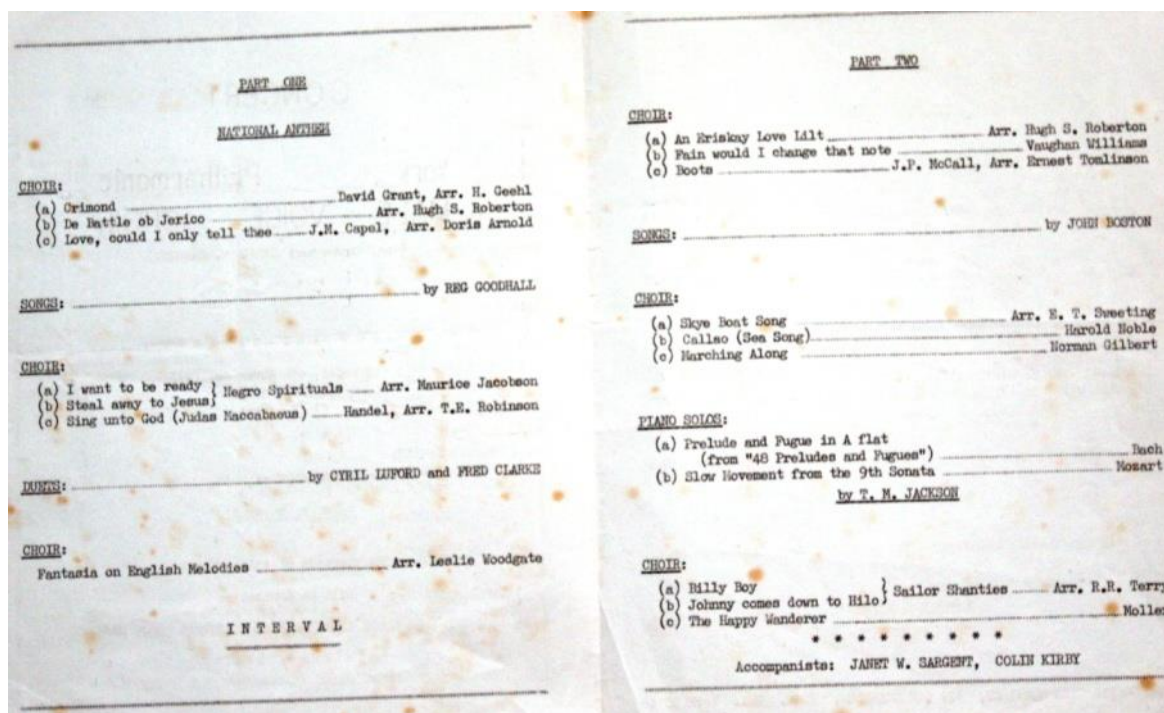
We know that Cecil's son Harold was one of a number of choir members who stepped forward (p66) in 1950 to help lead the choir and ensure its survival. It is sad to note that Harold, whose creative talents went beyond music as he was a founder member of the York Society of Magicians, collapsed and died of a brain haemorrhage in February 1956 – just ten years after his father- at the very young age of 38 years, leaving a widow Daphne and a young son John. Despite these tragic early deaths the music gene within the family was carried forward. Cecil's grandson John was a drummer with local bands for 40 years and great grandson Stuart played bass with *The Seahorses*, an English rock band, in the late 1990s.

Chapter 3: Archie W. Sargent.

We are now able to illustrate this part of the story with five printed programmes from concerts featured in the original text.

The earliest is the annual Autumn Concert in aid of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff's Christmas Cheer Fund 1957. This is the concert attended by Cecil Fletcher's daughter Joyce (p77).





The autumn concert held in the City Art Gallery was always a highlight of the choir year. The programme shows the commitment made to its success. There are 16 choir items with the programme opening with Crimond and finishing with the Happy Wanderer (p75). In addition there were solos by Reg Goodhall (e.g. p73), and John Boston (p74) both regular soloists; Fred Clarke (p74) in duets with Cyril Luford (not previously mentioned in the narrative); and piano solos by another new name T.M Jackson. Janet Sargent was joined at the piano by Colin Kirkby, a tenor who at times deputised for Archie. Colin was one of those lost to the choir by 1958 as mentioned in Janet's diary (p77).

The second is from a concert held in Harrogate in December 1961. This night, in addition to the solo singers Archie played 4 pieces on the organ.

VICTORIA AVENUE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

HARROGATE.

RECITAL

by the

YORK PHILHARMONIC MALE VOICE CHOIR.

(Hon. Conductor: Archie W. Sargent).

REG GOODHALL. (Tenor).

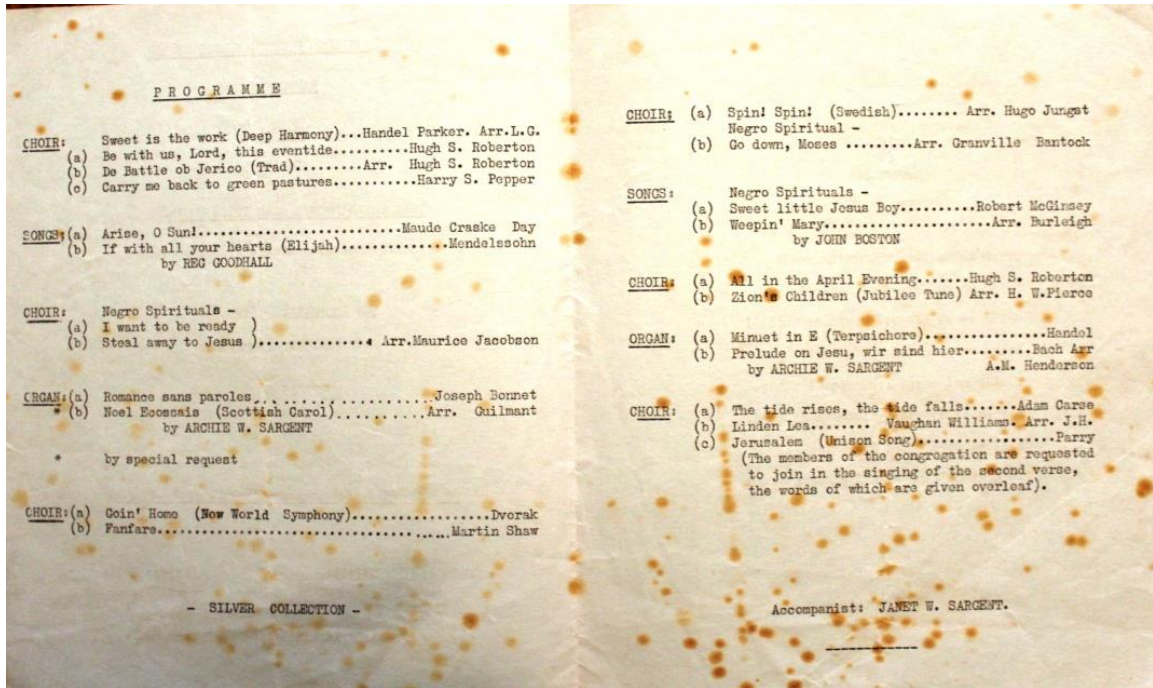
JOHN BOSTON. (Baritone).

On Wednesday, 6th December, 1961, at 7. 45 p.m.

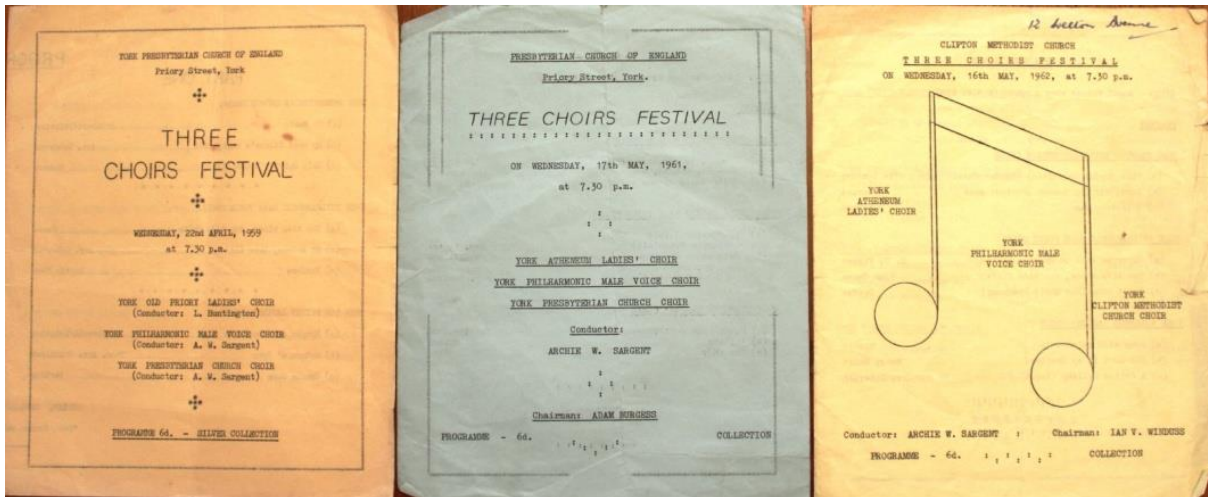
PROGRAMME One Shilling

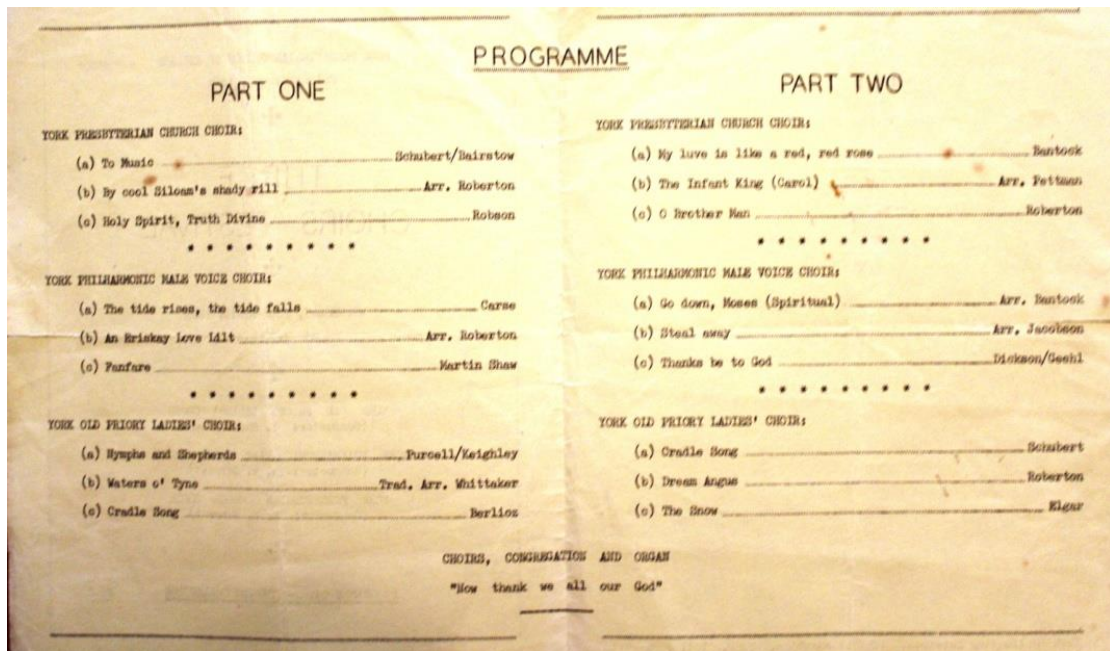
Silver Collection.

Proceeds in aid of the Centenary Fund.



The Three Choirs Festival (p36) had been extremely popular pre-war. Archie Sargent tried to revive the format (p74). Here now are the programmes from those three concerts April 1959, May 1961 and May 1962.

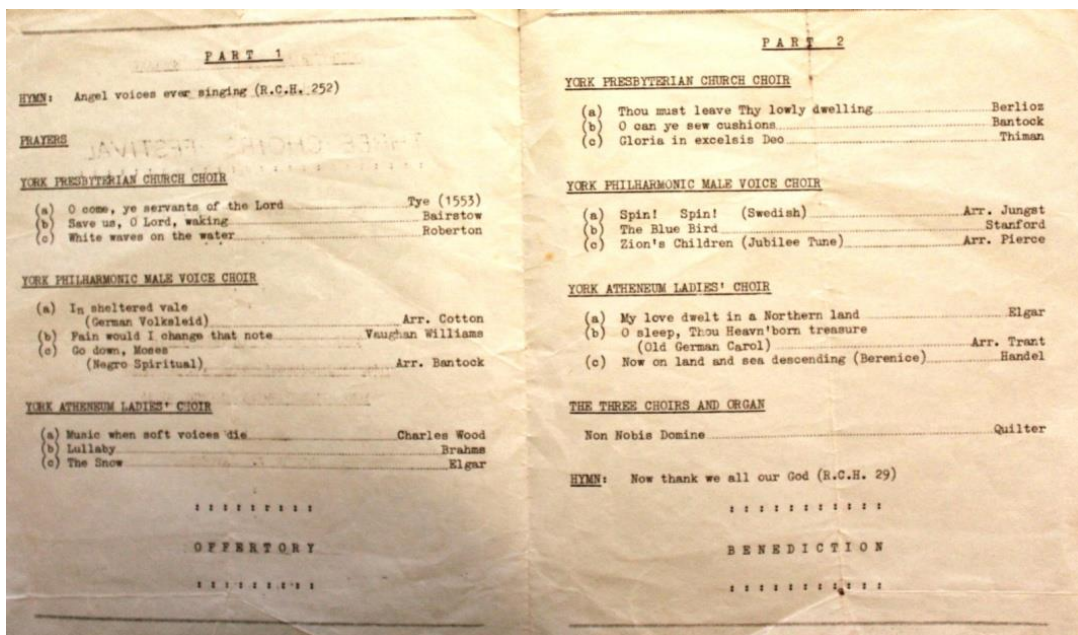




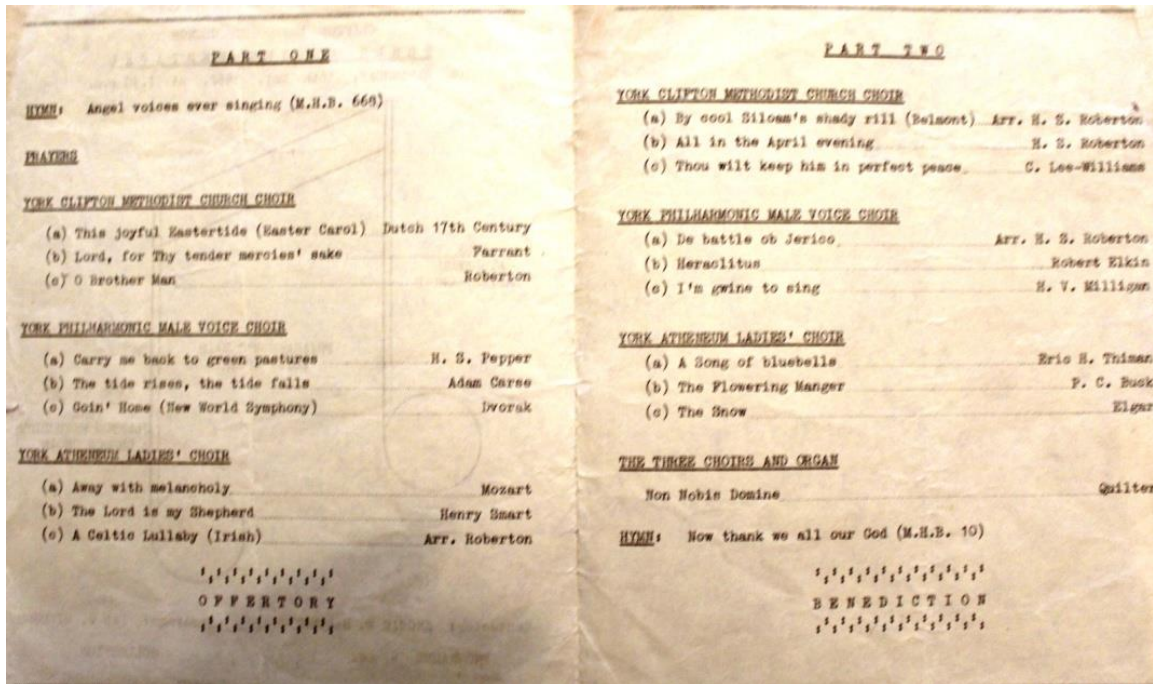
Here is the 1959 programme. The choirs each sing the same number of pieces and the concert ends with a congregational Hymn (*Now Thank we all our God*-used in all 3 years). In 1959 there was not the confidence to have all the choirs with organ singing *Non Nobis Domine* by Quilter. This piece had been the concluding item in most of the concerts in the 1930s with Archie playing the organ with the other conductor leading the choir as noted in this magazine review from 1936.

The massed choirs under Mr. Forster's conductorship with Mr. Sargent at the organ, singing 'Non Nobis Domine' (Quilter) brought to a close a very enjoyable afternoon. Surely Mr. Sargent must have gone home a happy man. (VPP53)

In the 1930s these concerts were always on a Sunday afternoon in Monkgate Methodist Church. In this later revival the concerts are held on Wednesday evenings.



The 1961 programme. This year and in 1962 Archie Sargent conducted all 3 choirs.



Programme for 1962.

Being in sole charge must have been challenging for Archie and Janet. It does raise the question as to whether he conducted the massed choir item 'Non Nobis Nomine' or played the organ or managed both. The only reference made in his memoirs says;
Mine was the privilege of conducting all three choirs individually and combined. (VPP283)

This concert in May 1962 was the last to be led by the team of Archie and Janet Sargent. Archie had resigned from the Phil in March and they led their last rehearsal on 28th May (p78).

Chapter 5: Richard Brian Lister

The November 1963 concert (p101) was the first to include songs arranged by Brian Lister. The York Evening Press (YEP) also wrote of the Russian songs as being a highlight of the evening.

RUSSIAN SONGS AT YORK CHOIR CONCERT

IT was a real pleasure to listen to the York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir give its annual concert in the Tempest Anderson Hall last night.

Under its director of music Richard Lister and, for one selection, under its deputy conductor Thomas Sparrow, it gave a fine performance of disciplined choral singing of excellent tone which thoroughly merited the warm reception it was given by the large audience.

The concert was in aid of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff's Christmas Cheer Fund and in the audience were the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress (Ald. and Mrs. Archibald Kirk), the Sheriff and his Lady (Ald. and Mrs. V. A. Bosworth).

The choir provided variety as well as quality, for the programme included not only well-tried male voice pieces like Deep Harmony, Rolling Down to Rio and the Soldiers' Chorus, but a group of Russian folk songs specially arranged by Mr. Lister, a number of works from opera and Stephen Foster favourites

Jeannie With The Light Brown Hair and Beautiful Dreamer. An excerpt from Act 1 of The Mikado with C. B. Croft, P. Iley, F. R. Morton and J. G. Jones singing the solo parts was especially popular with the audience.

RICH CONTRALTO

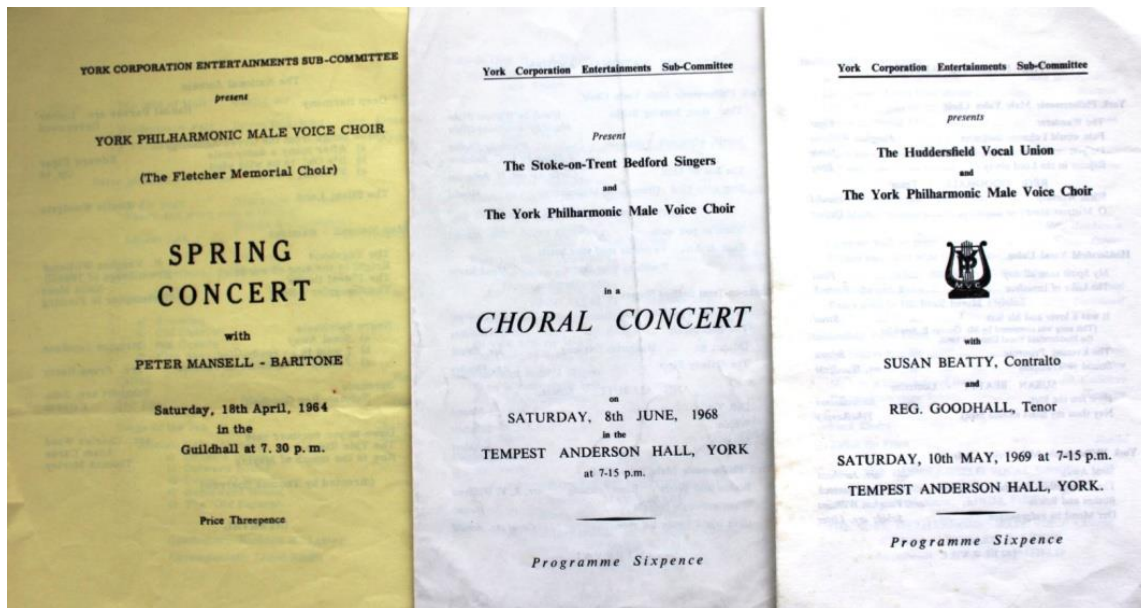
As guest artist the choir had Rhiannon Davies, a young singer with a rich contralto voice. She sang a number of works, most of them from opera, which included Softly Awakes My Heart from Samson and Delilah. As an encore she gave Mendelssohn's On Wings of Song.

The other principal soloist was Reg Goodhall, a member of the choir and a fine tenor. In his selection was On With the Motley and Catar. For an encore he sang Mighty Like A Rose.

The accompanists were Neil Wade, Edna Ward and David Cottam.

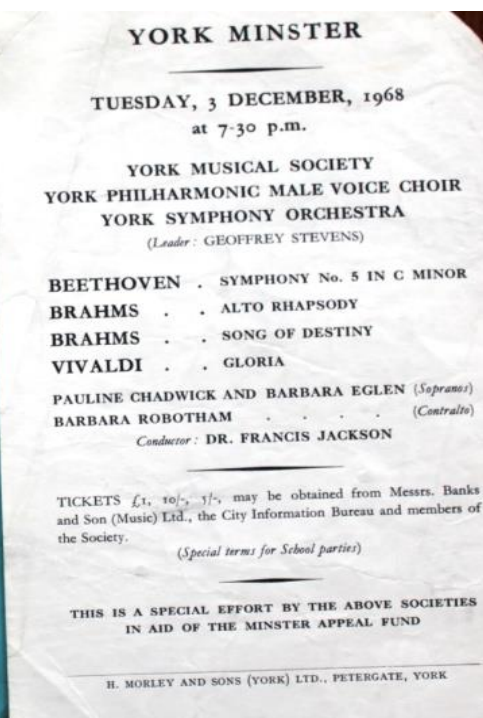
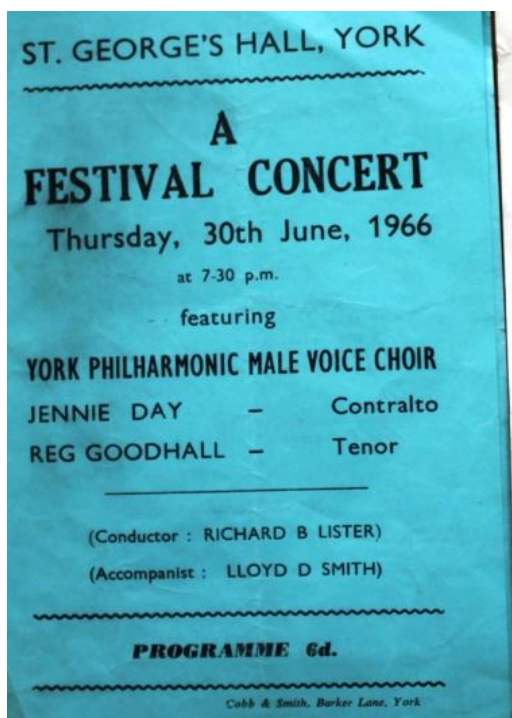
Thomas Sparrow led songs by a quartet. With three pianists named it seems the role of accompanist was not yet fixed. This came the following year with the appointment of Lloyd D Smith (p102).

Thurs 28 Nov 1963



Through the 1960s and into the 70s the choir received regular support from the York Corporation Entertainments Subcommittee (p101). Here are 3 front covers of programmes showing how well the committee facilitated visiting soloists and choirs.

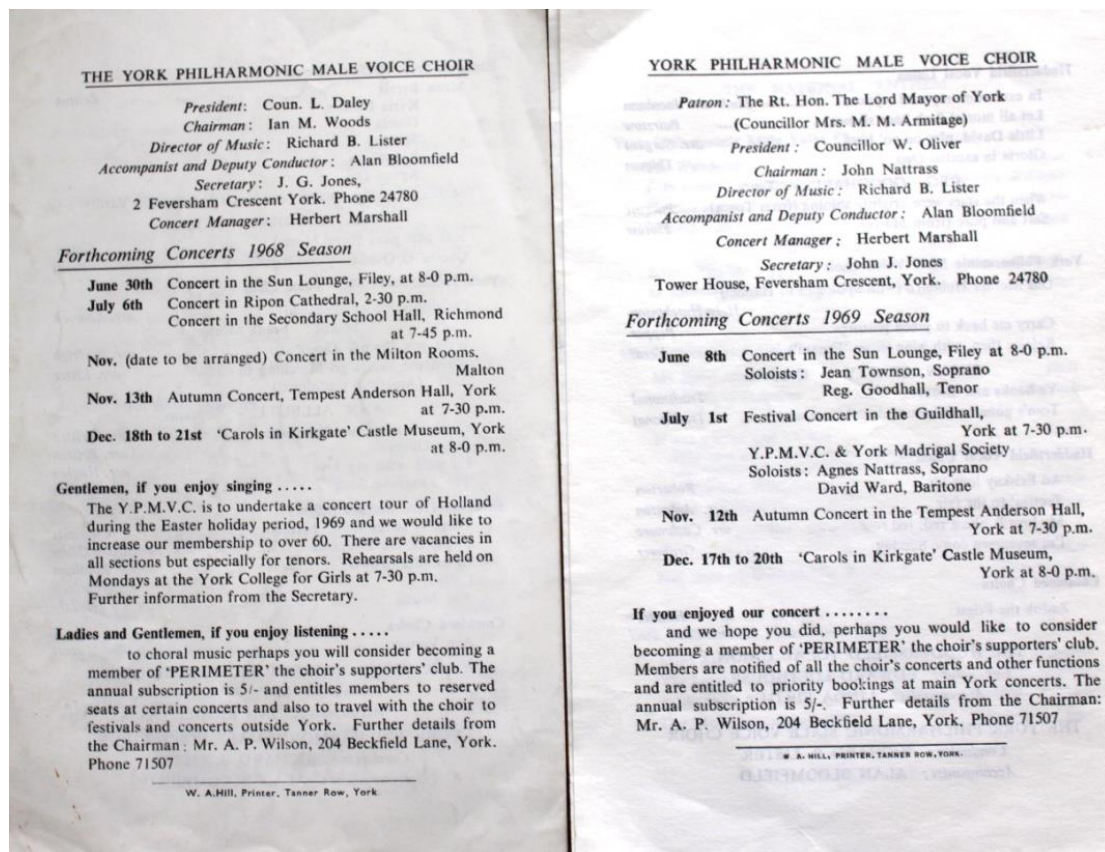
This was also a time when the choir fully supported the York Festival committee and also took part in joint fund raising events of particular importance to the city, the biggest of



these being the York Minster appeal. Here is a poster for St. George's Hall (in Fairfax House), not a normal venue for the choir plus a joint concert with York Musical Society and the York Symphony orchestra in support of

the Minster restoration fund. The Phil joined with YMS and orchestra in the Minster again the following December in a presentation of Handel's Messiah.

Also shown here are the back pages of the programmes from 1968 and 69 shown above.



The format of these is familiar giving details of people and events. The 1968 programme has a recruitment plea – particularly for tenors. A list of singers at November 1969 still shows an imbalance (as in 1962 p100) with 10 top tenors, 13 second tenors, 16 baritones and 18 basses. Times do change and whereas a choir can never have ‘too many tenors’ if such a plea were written in 2018 the emphasis would be on recruiting basses. But this plea, written in June 1968, is based on a planned tour of Holland in 1969. This tour was extended to include a visit to Münster but those talks did not start until November (p158). Despite this plea only 35 singers were able to join the tour (p165).

As shown here the concert Manager for many years was Herbert Marshall. In addition to this role Herbert also filmed the choir during its first visit to Germany (unfortunately this film cannot be found), and, with his wife, was a founder of the Perimeter support group formed in 1966 (p104). What is unusual in choir administration is the fact that Herbert, known to be a fine singer was never a singing member.

The list of concert venues, particularly in 1968, shows the wide popularity of the Phil: Filey; Ripon; Richmond; Malton.

Moving forward to 1976 we have the rare opportunity of showing a press review alongside an autographed concert programme.

YEP. Thursday
1 JULY 1976



Choir shrug off the heat

THE vigour of York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir was undiminished by the heat in the Assembly Rooms last night.

After the National Anthem, they plunged straight into battle with the Fighting Temeraire, whose position on the programme looked a little uncomfortable next to four sacred motets.

Three songs selected from Schubert, Brahms and Roberton led to a lively rendering of Viva l'Amour, with the solo taken by James Waggett.

After the interval, the tenors sounded much more relaxed in Richard Lister's arrangements of the Three Bells and Ma Belle Marguerite than they had in the first half.

Singing in the Assembly Rooms obviously has an initial resonant attraction, but does present problems of intonation to certain voice ranges. And, of course, it was hot!

ARIAS

Soo-Bee Lee, instead of her advertised opening item, gave us Rossini's La Pastorella, following this with three other operatic arias.


Her second set, this time from musical comedy, included Lehár's Villa from the Merry Widow, and the audience responded enthusiastically to her invitation to join in the chorus. For an encore, we heard a delightful unaccompanied Chinese song.

For their closing items, the choir turned to folk song, with the Russians coming out favourites.

The hypnotic choruses of Kalinka were nicely balanced by some sensitive singing by Reg Goodhall, including a neat touch of humour at the end.

In an encore of King's Singers' vintage, the choir brought us right back home with The Grand Old Duke of York.

K.R.P.



YORK FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS, 1976

YORK PHILHARMONIC MALE VOICE CHOIR
Conductor: RICHARD B. LISTER

with

SOO-BEE LEE, Soprano
J. SIMON BRAITHWAITE, Accompanist

THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, YORK
WEDNESDAY, 30th JUNE, 1976
at 7-30 p.m.

PROGRAMME 5p

*To Ausy,
Best wishes,
Soo Bee Lee
J. Simon Braithwaite*

Soo-Bee Lee was from Singapore so it is not surprising that when asked to dedicate the programme to Ossie she put Ausy.

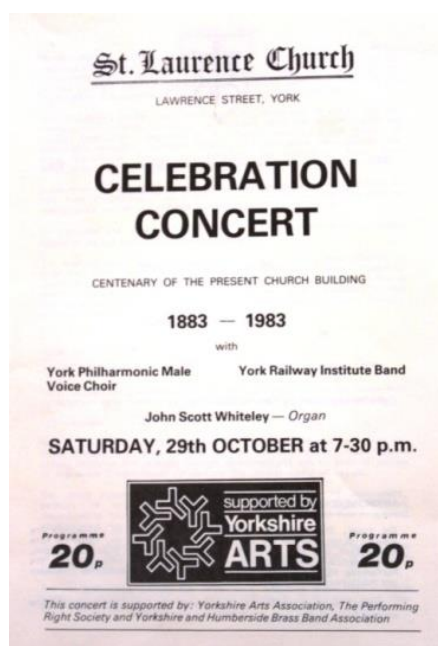
The success of the *Let the People Sing!* competition in 1970 (p108) was regularly used in choir promotions (still is). However, in no written material have I ever seen a reference to the choir which beat us in the international semi finals. I only knew that it was a ladies choir from Bulgaria (p110). However the discovery, in March 2018 of audio tapes of this period (see chapter 14) answers this mystery. In a recording of a BBC radio broadcast we learn that the Phil was beaten by: *The Chamber Choir of Trade Union Culture House of the Construction Workers in Sofia*. The recording also shows that there could be no complaints from York the Sofia choir was the better on that day. The adjudicators described the ladies' performance in emotive terms e.g. honest, deeply moving, and the Phil performance as being a very good well trained, controlled choir. The final comment suggested that the Phil could have chosen a greater variety of songs the Vaughan Williams and Bairstow being quite similar.

The recordings were made in October 1969. A concert programme, now received, from November 1969 puts names to that winning choir.

FIRST TENORS			
J. Coverdale	R. Goodhall	A. J. Sawyer	N. A. Thomson
D. Crawford	J. M. Johnson	J. P. W. Simpson	I. M. Woods
O. F. Gillery	J. Pinder		
SECOND TENORS			
W. Buckle	W. C. Elsworth	J. G. Jones	A. D. Spink
F. Caine	D. R. Holmes	D. J. Nicholson	E. V. Wharram
H. A. Cheetham	J. E. Igoe	C. Rutherford	A. Williamson
T. M. Cooper			
BARITONES			
C. B. Bailey	D. Chaplin	M. Raw	L. Smallwood
R. J. Bell	H. L. Dutton	T. Robinson	H. Taylor
H. Birkley	T. G. Henderson	N. Rogers	I. P. Wilson
G. H. Cass	E. S. Porter	J. F. Sagers	L. R. Wright
BASSES			
J. E. Addinall	E. de Burgh	J. McLaren	F. Robinson
J. H. Brough	P. Evans	F. R. Morton	R. H. Shoebridge
F. Clampitt	S. Herdman	J. Natrass	E. Sharpe
A. F. Clarke	R. A. Hewitt	A. T. Patterson	J. E. Tierney
D. J. Cundell	W. E. Kneale		

The collection of programmes donated by the Gillery family also remind a reader of just what an asset Reg Goodhall was to the choir for some 30 years. Described by the YEP as the choir's resident soloist there were very few occasions when Reg did not make a solo contribution to a concert. Another observation with regard to concert planning from 1925 till the 1980s is that the majority of concerts were held mid-week. In 2018 almost all are held on a Saturday. This change, which seemed to happen rather than be actively sought, began after Brian Lister's resignation as a younger generation of directors took over and Saturdays seemed to suit choir and directors better with no apparent detriment to audience numbers.

Chapter 6: David Keefe (1980-84)




This chapter (p121) on David's four year tenure is very short. However the recent discovery of concert programmes and a recording of the 1983 Guildhall concert (chapter 14 p 241) together with the MM means we can now give greater recognition to his contribution. Four songs from that concert are included on *Airwaves* the third CD in the series telling our story in song. The four are: *Cavatina* – the theme tune from the film *Deer Hunter* arranged for the choir by David; *Aquarius* from *Hair*, the only time that electric guitars and drums have been added to a choir piece; *Die Lorelei*, as a courtesy to our German guests the Phil sings at least one song in German during each joint concert and this is the earliest recording we have of this; and *The Smugglers Song*, a fine example of the choral genre of noted composers arranging well known poems.

This concert took place in September 1983(p184) and included the Railway Institute Band. Joint concerts with bands only happen occasionally but in 1983 the two groups were together again only one month later in a concert celebrating the centenary of St. Laurence Church.

The concert programme shown below does show David's willingness to challenge the choir as the programme included a medley with the band which would have had minimum rehearsal. Les Bresnen once again accompanied the choir.

St. Laurence Church, York



Saturday 29th October, 1983.

PROGRAMME

NATIONAL ANTHEM

<u>March</u>	Imperial Echoes	Safroni
<u>Waltz</u>	Merry Widow	Lehar
<u>Cornet Solo</u>	Maid of the Mist	Clarke arr.
<u>Soloist:</u>	Howard Bousfield	T. Bousefield
	Hungarian Dance No. 5	Brahms

Introducing York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir

Sound An Alarm (Judas Maccabaeus)	Handel arr. Noble.
Two Roses	Werner
Rolling Down to Rio	Edward German
Hippopotamus Song	Flanders & Swann

Choir & Band


A Rogers & Hammerstein Medley Surrey with a Fringe on Top.	arr. Hartley
Oh What a Beautiful Mornin'	
Clieb Every Mountain.	

Organ & Band

Jubilate	Barry Russell
The first performance of a work specially commissioned for this celebration concert.	

Christ is made a sure Foundation,
And the precious Corner-stone,
Who, the two walls underlying,
Sound in each, birds both in one,
Holy Zion's help for ever,
And her confidence alone.

To this temple, where we call thee,
Come, O Lord of Hosts, to-day;
With thy wanted loving-kindness
Hear thy people as they pray;
And thy fullest benediction
Shed within its walls for ay.



INTERVAL (Ten Minutes)

<u>March</u>	Father Rhine Slovonic Rhapsody No. 2 (Opus 269)	Linke Friedemann
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Once again welcome York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir

Cavatina Night	Myers arr. Keeffe Schubert
Wandering the King's Highway	Coward
Comrades song of Hope	Adams

York Railway Institute Band

<u>Overture</u>	Le Corsair	Berlioz arr. Brand
<u>Organ & Band</u>	Jesu Joy of Man's desiring	Bach
<u>Band & Choir</u>	Finlandia (Tone Poem)	Sibelius

Finale... Organ,
Choir, Band &
Audience

WESTMINSTER ABBEY	Purcell arr. Snell
"Christ is made a sure Foundation"	

Here vouchsafe to all they servants,
What they supplicate to gain;
Here to have and hold for ever
Those good things their prayers obtain,
And hereafter in thy glory
With thy blessed ones to reign.

Laud and honour to the Father;
Laud and honour to the Son;
Laud and honour to the Spirit;
Ever Three and ever One:
Consubstantial, co-eternal,
While unending ages run.

David is a fine exponent of the French horn so was probably comfortable when working with larger ensembles as he led yet another concert with a band - Rowntree Mackintosh – at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre to help launch the York branch of 'Headways', a charity supporting people who had received head injuries.

David also returned to the choir as guest soloist on the French horn after his resignation as director. This was at the Guildhall in November 1984 in a joint concert with Felling Male Voice Choir during which they sang *The Rhythm of Life*. This so impressed our singers that we immediately bought copies and it has been a regular concert item ever since.