

NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF
ORANGE MALE VOICE CHOIR Inc.

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'Friendship through song'

Founded 1926

Visit our website www.omvc.org.au



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Australian National Boys' Choir Concert

A contingent of 42 boys from the Australian National Boys' Choir visited Orange for a concert at the Orange High School Performing Arts Centre on Thursday, 29th of September. The visit was organised by Rotary and our own Rob Westcott was instrumental in both bringing the Choir here and making all the arrangements for an excellent evening which featured our own choir as well.

Unfortunately Orange turned on one of its alternative spring days with rain and very low temperatures. This was undoubtedly a factor in attracting what can only be described as a fairly meagre audience, but those who braved it were enthusiastic and emphatic that they got their monies worth from the contrasting programs of the 'bold and the beautiful.' (Perhaps audacious might be a more appropriate term to describe a choir prepared to perform alongside one with a mean age probably 60 years its junior.)

The Boys sang a selection of works from the classical repertoire in the first half including some Bach, Faure, Mendelssohn, Bernstein and Rutter, as well as an interesting selection of Copland's *Old American Songs* and two Australian pieces, *Botany Bay* and *Waltzing Matilda*, which were arranged by one of their Artistic Directors, Philip Carmody.

The sound was clean and pure and balance was excellent. Repertoire was well matched to the very light but elegant sound and the boys were exceptionally well drilled and disciplined. A feature was their sustained legato singing, always singing right through the phrase and never breaking it.

Their performance of Bennett's *All The King's Men*, with its relatively obscure characters from the English Civil War, appeared at first to be a strange choice for boys of this age, but they took to their roles with relish and vivacity bringing the ancient *Humpty Dumpty* rhyme to musical life. Several boys were quite outstanding in their roles; the young chap playing Queen Henrietta Maria would rival the very best of Ronnie Barker's drag roles and King Charles 1 in bearing and voice was the essence of regal majesty.

OMVC did well, despite the ranks being very thin with only 24 singers taking the stage (despite having nearer to 30 at the preceding Monday rehearsal). It's a rather daunting ask to do justice to a piece such as Tui Egeo which demands such a big sound in the final verse, but the boys did a very creditable job and wisely accepted Leon's pre-concert advice to sacrifice power for sound quality.

Your editor encountered a number of people in the street the following day and all indicated that they'd enjoyed the concert tremendously, not just the Boys they said but OMVC too. So well done lads.

Several of the boys were billeted by Choir members. 'Do you think you'll still be singing at my age?', I asked our two. 'Oh yeah' they chorused together, 'We love singing.' Warming

stuff. I know that those who billeted boys were uniformly impressed with their maturity and good manners. Our's couldn't have been more considerate or natural. Warming stuff indeed.

A Choir is a Beautiful Thing

Why do we sing? My wife Dorothy came upon a lovely extract in a novel she was recently reading which is worth sharing. To my mind this comes as close as anything might in providing an answer to that question.

Every time it's a miracle. Here are all these people, full of heartache or hatred or desire, and we all have our troubles and the (school) year is filled with vulgarity and triviality and consequence, and there are all these (people) of every shape and size, and there's this life we're struggling through full of shouting and tears and laughter ... and dashed hopes and unexpected luck - it all disappears, just like that, when the choir begins to sing. Everyday life vanishes into song, you are suddenly overcome with a feeling of brotherhood, of deep solidarity, even love, and it diffuses the ugliness of everyday life into a spirit of perfect communion... I see human beings surrendering to music.

Every time it's the same thing, I feel like crying, my throat goes all tight and I do the best I can to control myself but sometimes I come close: I can hardly keep myself from sobbing. So when they sing a canon I look down at the ground because it's just too much emotion at once: it's too beautiful and everyone singing together, this marvellous sharing. I'm no longer myself, I am just one part of a sublime whole, to which the others also belong, and I always wonder at such moments why this cannot be the rule of everyday life, instead of being an exceptional moment during a choir performance... In the end, I wonder if the true movement of the world might not be a voice raised in song.

Barbery, M. 2006. *The elegance of the hedgehog*. Paris, Gallic.

New Zealand Information

Here is the latest and complete information we have on the New Zealand tour.

Travel

Bus

We must set an early deadline to allow for the unexpected - the bus will leave no later than 3.30 am sharp (from either Orange Council carpark or Orange Railway Station - t.b.a.)

Flights

Forward Wed. 23/11/11

Checkin Sydney International. 7.30 am

Flight. NZ 846 L

Depart Sydney. 9.20 am

Arrive Wellington. 2.30 pm (NZ time)

Return Mon. 28/11/11

Checkin Wellington 1.30 pm (NZ time)

Flight. NZ 849 L

Depart Wellington 3.30 pm

Arrive Sydney 5.10 pm (Aust. time)

Calendar of Activities

WEDNESDAY 23/11

- Pick up at Airport.... rest of day relaxing, resting with hosts/at hotel.

THURSDAY 24/11

- 11 AM (Group activity) We take you out for picnic lunch then to car museum/(or shopping/wonderland park for those not interested). (Museum cost of entry NZ \$12)
- to be confirmed).Back 4PM'sh
- Evening Practice...:7:30 Pm (at ST Stephens or Hosanna Baptists)

FRIDAY 25/11

- PM: Walking/car/bus tour of Wellington -visit Te Papa, Sea Museum, cable car etc. and lookouts or elsewhere of notable interest. (not sure if costs here but should be **minimal**)
- 6PM Evening barbecue (Cost NZ \$10-\$14) at David Pasks church(Upper Hutt). This includes Nelson members.

SATURDAY 26/11

- till 10:30AM with hosts.
- Practice 11AM or 2PM. to be confirmed.....
- ...other activity middle of day for wives/partners
- 7:30 PM CONCERT at WESLEY CHURCH Afterwards: Afterglow at Welsh Pub or Cup of tea and nibbles at ???????

SUNDAY 27/11

- till 11:30 AM with hosts
- Light lunch HOSANA CHURCH PORIRUA(Cost NZ\$4 approx)
- 2PM CONCERT at HOSANNA CHURCH
- 7:30PM.DINNER at the Rugby Club Tawa (Cost \$NZ23). 6PM

MONDAY 28/11

.. Last farewell... Coordinate transport for departures.

What Your Management Committee Does



They'll go to any lengths (and any place) to recruit new members! Two members spotted in undercover mode on assignment in Vietnam recently.

Calendar

23 October Orange concert with Woden Valley Youth Choir
23 - 28 November Wellington, N.Z. Anniversary concert with Wellington
and Nelson Male Choirs

For our Associate Members

Do you know that each issue of *Notes* is also published in electronic format? If you have access to email and would like the opportunity to have instant electronic copy instead of waiting for a hardcopy to arrive by 'snail mail', you can easily arrange it. Just contact John Holland (6362 4744) so that he can have your email address added to a distribution list. Apart from faster delivery you'll also be saving valuable natural resources.

Stop Press

The family of our late member John Farrand has recently had contact. Quite some years ago John was the lucky winner of a raffled artwork of one of Orange's most loved artists, Greg Turner. The family are returning the painting to the Choir.

John's daughter Merrylyn recently contacted our Life Member, John Rowland with the news that the family now wish to pass the painting back to the Choir. Merrylyn explained that the family feel that this is what her father would have wanted and that its return to Orange, and in particular to the Choir which gave John so much joy, would be an appropriate closing of a circle.

John Farrand lived at Springwood and Lawson before taking up residence in Orange. Merrylyn says that the Choir was a great sustaining force in John's life, something he valued and prized. John Farrand was possessed of a splendid voice and sang in the tenor 1 section. Ill health forced his retirement from singing in the early 1990s but John made a regular practice of dropping in to rehearsals for several years to say hello to 'the boys.' Sadly, he was finally claimed by the cancer which he battled for some years.

All members of the Orange Male Voice Choir express a resounding 'thank you' to all the Farrand family.

For your diary

Our next Bunnings BBQ:

Sat. 10 December, 2011

Before You Go ...

Never Argue with Kids - real stories from the classroom

A kindergarten teacher was observing her young students while they drew their masterpieces. Moving around the room she observed and discussed each work-in-progress. She drew alongside one diligent young girl and asked what she was drawing. 'I'm drawing God' came the reply. The teacher paused momentarily and said, 'But no-one knows what God really looks like Sandra. Without pausing from her task Sandra replied, 'They will in a minute.'

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds. Following an explanation of the commandment to 'honour thy Father and Mother', she then asked, 'Can you think of a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?' Quietly a little boy, the oldest in his family, raised his hand. 'Yes Andrew', she invited. Andrew intoned with due seriousness, 'Thou shalt not kill.'

The children had all been photographed individually and the teacher was now attempting to convince each child of the merits of buying the group photo as well. 'Just think how nice it will be to look at when you're grown up and you can say, 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer, or 'That's Michael and he's a doctor.' The teacher was taken aback by the small voice from the back of the room, 'And there's the teacher - she's dead.'