

Next Committee Meeting: Tue 17th November at 5.15 pm,

Monday 7th of Dec, Christmas **Concert** Apex House, Anson St., 5.30 pm
Christmas **Concert** St Francis Aged Care, Clinton St. 6.30 pm

Friday 11th Dec. Xmas **Concert**, Ascot Gardens, 83 Spring St, 10 am

Monday 14th Dec. **Break-up Christmas Party**, 6.30 pm,
Roger Nancarrow's place at 179 Woods Lane Orange

Monday 25th Jan. **first choir practice for 2010**

26th January **Australia Day Celebration**, Cook Park

Friday 12th Feb **OMVC Annual Dinner** at Newstead Bowling Club

Monday 15th February -**The Annual General Meeting**, 7 p.m sharp.
Newstead Bowling Club, Hill Street Orange, followed by choir practice

13th and 14th November 2010 Male Choirs Asscn. of Aust. Festival .
Sunday 14th 2.30 p.m **Massed Choir Concert, Sydney Town Hall,**

A Lasting Legacy

Have you considered providing an enduring gift to the Choir? A bequest in your Will could be used for general purposes or else contribute towards specific needs such as transport and other performance expenses. Contact the Secretary for further information.

NOTES

THE NEWSLETTER OF
ORANGE MALE VOICE CHOIR INC.

November 2009, volume 18, No.8

Friendship through song

Founded in 1926

Visit our website www.omvc.org.au



Our postal address is P.O Box 2310, Orange NSW 2800

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Vice President:	<i>John Read</i>	63651238
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If you have photos or stories you would like to share please send them to the editor; speno.1@bigpond.com



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The Year in Review

by Chris Morgan, President OMVC

As this is the final edition of *Notes* for 2009 it is useful to reflect on what has happened this year. While indeed it has been an eventful and busy year, it is also been one of considerable progress and achievement.

Much has happened on many fronts. We have now been wearing our new uniform for 12 months and our smart, modern look has brought us many favourable comments. Beverly Glover has entertained and skilfully accompanied us on the new piano purchased largely through the generosity of one of our highly supportive patrons, Deidre Penhall. We have welcomed some new members into our ranks while some long serving members have departed. We have managed to keep rehearsing at Newstead despite the club finding it wasn't feasible for them to employ bar staff and continue trading on Monday nights – a huge thank you to John Holland for enabling that to occur. We have continued to contribute to our local community in a charitable way and have taken our *Friendship through Song* to communities beyond Orange.

Any choir has performance goals and 2009 has been a mammoth one for the OMVC. We started the year by singing at the Australia Day ceremony in Cook Park. Another regular community event we continued to support was the Dawn Service on Anzac Day. Early in the year we joined with other groups to raise funds for the Victorian Bushfire Appeal with a performance at the Orange Botanic Gardens and then midyear we were a major contributor to a fundraiser for Cancer Care Western NSW held at the Orange Civic Theatre during Frost Fest when we sang to a sell-out crowd in the 'Voices, Brass and Pipes Spectacular' concert.

We hosted the Wagga City Rugby Male Choir in a concert at the Orange Regional Conservatorium and performed a 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoon' concert at the Wesley Uniting Church to assist fundraising for the Forest Reefs Uniting Church restoration.

We returned to the Orange Regional Conservatorium to sing with the brilliant St Peter's Quartet from Russia and we participated in the Orange Eisteddfod.

We went west to join with the Lake C flat Singers to perform at the Lake Cargelligo Memorial Hall and then the next day we sang during a church service held at the Anglican Church in that town. We went to Sydney where we joined in concert with the Ku-ring-ai Male Choir and again the next day at a service held at the Killara Uniting Church. We went to Mudgee to give a concert to help that town's Anglican Church with its fundraising efforts. More recently we travelled to Wagga where we teamed with the Wagga City Rugby Male Choir and the Australian Rugby Choir for a highly successful sell-out performance at the Wagga Civic Theatre at the '2009 Male Choir Spectacular'.

We have had our reflective moments when we honoured some long serving choristers who passed away – we held a moving function at Newstead honouring Don Burn and were prominent at funerals for Ron Hazzard and EJ Chapman.

Our own Dennis Bradley had an art exhibition at Molong and we sang at its opening. Similarly we sang when our major sponsor Spectrum launched its new showroom. We sang at Byng at the Cornish festival.

Other major activities included the conducting of a survey of our members which has given us a wealth of information to use as a platform to move the Choir ahead. Some of the suggestions received have been implemented and others will surely follow. As part of our drive to facilitate our future organisation and management we have produced a *Policy and Procedures Manual* for the Choir – it is a publication intended for continual development that details our expectations and provides a checklist of how we operate for those who take on roles in the Choir.

The Choir has significant costs to meet and has held several fundraising activities to help offset those costs – principally these have been the recent Clearing Sale held at Newstead Bowling Club and three BBQs at the Bunnings store. Besides the obvious benefit of these activities, they also served to mobilise our members - many of whom made significant contributions to the success of these occasions and enjoyed the fellowship that abounded. Our own efforts have been supplemented by the generosity of our sponsors, our principal sponsor being Spectrum Homemaker Products, and by a most welcome legacy kindly provided from the estate of the late Ursula Jones.

Our year of activity will finish in our traditional manner by performing some Christmas singing at nursing homes. This year we will be singing on three occasions – at Apex House, the St Francis Aged Care facility and Ascot Lodge. Our final event for the year will be our Christmas Party at the home of Roger and Margaret Nancarrow.

As this is our last issue for the year, it is fitting to thank our *Notes* editor John Spencer for his great work in producing this publication throughout the year. It does take a lot of work.

For my own part, I have been privileged to have enjoyed the friendship shown to me by so many during my year as your President. While at times it has been challenging, it has been most enriching and I have gained much from being entrusted with that responsibility. The Management Committee is a group of volunteers all of whom have worked hard for the benefit of the broader Choir community and I am most grateful to them and all others who have contributed to the progress we have made this year. For my own part and following considerable thought, I have decided to step down from the Management Committee for 2010 and am confident the Choir will continue to move ahead in good hands. Best wishes and thanks to all.

Choir News

The auction of Don Burn's odds and ends, plus a lot of gear generously donated by choir members, went off very well. Bargain hunters weren't disappointed and the choir saw over \$1200 raised for the travelling fund. Many wives and sweet hearts were pleased to get rid of unused items taking up space - although Malcolm Paix used a reverse strategy, and rumour is that he is looking for more space to rent to store it all.

We encourage all members and associates to come to the annual dinner on the 12th of February. It is always a good night and next year will not be different.

WANTED

In accordance with the Choir's Constitution clause 4.3.2 – executive positions can only be held for a maximum of three years.

Therefore when all positions are declared vacant at the AGM by the President, the Secretary David Woodside and the Treasurer John Holland cannot re-apply as they both have held their positions for three years. In addition, Chris Morgan, our president is not standing next year.

Would all choristers please give careful consideration to volunteering to stand on the Committee and particularly the positions of **President**, **Secretary** and **Treasurer**, as the Choir cannot function without these being filled.

Nomination forms are available from David Woodside. There are four Executive positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) and five other non-executive Office Bearers to be filled.

The Definitive Guide to Being an Aussie

The shorter the nickname, the more they like you.

Whether it's the opening of Parliament, or the launch of a new art gallery, there is no Australian event that cannot be improved by a sausage sizzle.

If the bloke next to you is swearing like a wharfie he's probably a media billionaire. Or on the other hand, he may be a wharfie.

There is no food that cannot be improved by the application of tomato sauce.

On the beach, all Australians hide their keys and wallets by placing them inside their sandshoes. No thief has ever worked this out.

Industrial design knows of no article more useful than a plastic milk crate.

All our best heroes are losers.

The alpha male in any group is he who takes the barbecue tongs from the hands of the host and blithely begins turning the snags.

It is proper to refer to your best friend as "a total bastard". By contrast, your worst enemy is "a bit of a bastard".

If it can't be fixed with pantyhose and fencing wire, it's not worth fixing.

It's considered better to be down on your luck than up yourself.

The phrase "we've got a great lifestyle" means everyone in the family drinks too much.

If invited to a party, you should take cheap red wine and then spend all night drinking the host's beer. (Don't worry, he'll have catered for it).

OMVC Christmas Party 2009

This year's party will be held at the home of Roger and Margaret Nancarrow at 179 Woods Lane, Orange.

Directions: (from Orange take the Cargo Road. Woods Lane is the first one on the left past the 100kph sign [just past Neales Lane] - you go over a small railway bridge and drive south almost all the way along Woods Lane ...up the big hill and down the other side travelling west towards the Lake. Roger and Margaret's place is half way down the hill on the left hand side)

- **Date:** Monday, 14/12/08
- **Time:** 6.00 pm
- **Cost:** \$10 per person. Please pay John Chapman
- **Food & Drink:** OMVC will supply the food but you need to BYOG. Tea and coffee will also be provided. It would be nice if some brought along some slice to share.
- **Seating:** If you can bring your own folding chair it will be appreciated. A folding table will also be useful if you can provide it.
- **Theme:** ...fun. Wear the craziest hat you can get hold of together with your biggest smile.

RSVP to John Chapman (6366 9078 or ej.chapman@bigpond.com) immediately or yesterday, whichever is the sooner - we need to know for catering purposes.

A Grand Night for Singing

Dorothy and I had the great pleasure of attending a family wedding in Edinburgh last September, just prior to flying home. Those Scots certainly know how to party! It was a thoroughly memorable day; the ceremony in a beautiful Currie kirk on a magical late spring day (on the western side of the city), bridal party and many guests in full traditional Scottish attire, the grandeur of Edinburgh Castle overlooking the hotel reception room and the most wonderful and friendly hospitality extended to the colonial visitors.

We had just completed a whirlwind tour of the UK prior to the wedding, driving through the west of Scotland, south to Cumbria and Wales and on to the south of England before returning to Scotland via Cambridge and Yorkshire. Another memorable day, or rather evening, will remain etched in our memories from our visit to Swansea, Wales. Before flying out I had emailed The Morriston Orpheus Choir and Alwyn Humphries suggesting a visit to a Wednesday evening rehearsal and had very positive responses from each.

We reached Swansea from our B & B near Newtown by about midday. It would be no exaggeration to describe the weather as atrocious. I rang Alwyn in Cardiff and arranged to meet him at the Dylan Thomas pub that evening and we then drove vainly around Swansea in search of an information centre to organise our accommodation. After 20 minutes or so I ducked into a side street to take stock of our situation and found myself parked outside The Grand Hotel. It seemed some kind of portent in the storm's fury so I had no hesitation in checking in for the evening.

As arranged, Alwyn rendezvoused with us at 6 pm at the poet's pub. We passed the hour or so most enjoyably with several drinks and a meal before Alwyn guided us to the rehearsal venue, Morganite Factory Canteen in an industrial estate a short distance from the pub. We received a warm welcome and met Alwyn's charming wife, Joy Amman Davies who has succeeded him as MD, and several other key personnel, before taking our seats behind the Choir. I counted very close to 80 singers at the rehearsal! Joy is miked up for rehearsals and took charge immediately at 7 pm.

The Choir practice twice weekly (Wed. and Sun. for two hours) and their task for the evening was to attend to some running repairs to pieces for their MOCSA (Morriston Orpheus Choir Supporters' Association) concert on the forthcoming Saturday in the Morriston Tabernacle. They launched into what would obviously be the concert opener, *Let All Men Sing*. What a sound! The acoustic in the canteen is really quite poor (a very low ceiling) but Joy told me it's good in that the Choir take great heart when they open up in an acoustically supportive concert venue. There was very little work to do on this piece. A lovely delicate hymn followed (didn't catch its title) with some minor balance adjustments set in place and then to *Soon and Very Soon*. This was done in slightly different style to OMVC's version; sung with a little more restraint and lacking the full swing treatment that Leon likes to provide. A Welsh language version of *How Lovely are Thy Dwellings* followed.

The Choir have just learned a beautiful arrangement that Joy has completed for them of *Fields of Athenry*. It was impressive and Joy took some time securing the parts for its premier performance for Saturday in the Morriston Tabernacle. It would have assuredly been a great success, the Choir sang it with great passion and beautiful control. I asked Alwyn how he felt Joy had fared with the arrangement and he replied that he had to admit it was at least equal to anything he could have achieved, probably better - but he wasn't telling her that!. It's a piece that I've always thought would translate well to TTBB and would be a great one in OMVC's repertoire. At this point Alwyn left for a commitment in Cardiff and the rehearsal took a 10 min. interval. Joy came to us and asked what we would like the Choir to sing for us. What a dilemma! *Calon Lan*, *Cwm Rhonda*, *American Trilogy*, *Hine e Hine*, *Hiraeth*, all rushed to mind - any of them would be wonderful I returned. 'Yes, but which one would you really like?' Joy insisted. I said something to the effect that any of them would be great and finally plumped for *Calon Lan*.

After some work on *Shenandoah* and *Nazareth*, Joy announced that they would sing *Calon Lan* for their visitors from Orange, Australia and introduced us to the Choir. What followed was quite spellbinding. This was a performance with everything; excellent diction, lovely interpretation

through dynamic variations, thrilling sotto voce singing, wonderful ensemble work and the most rousing finale imaginable. The Choir returned again to *Soon and Very Soon* for some more attention before the Chairman, Hugh O'Neill, addressed members with the official notices. I was a little taken aback to find that we were the main item here. Hugh gave us a splendid welcome and gave members a brief introduction to OMVC and its history and noted that I am the current Secretary (He'd obviously made good use of our website!). Hugh referred to the very successful MCAA concert with Alwyn in Canberra and requested that I deliver a warm greeting from Morriston to OMVC on our return. I responded briefly indicating that I certainly would, that it was a great thrill to be in the home of male voice choirs with the most recorded of Welsh Choirs, how wonderful it was to be part of the international family of male voice choirs and thanked them for their superb rendering of *Calon Lan*. Of course we issued an invitation for Morriston to join OMVC in Orange at any future time.

It was already 9.00 pm at this point and I began readying to leave when Joy announced that the Choir had one more piece to sing. The accompanist struck up the intro for *Cwm Rhonda* and I took up a position at the front to get a final shot of the Choir in full flight. Joy immediately beckoned me over, 'I'll take the photo, you come and sing.' I wasn't about to pass up an opportunity like that and slipped into the first tenor section. The result is below. Joy farewelled us with a kiss, we thanked her, said our goodbyes to as many as we could get around and took our leave.

I was impressed by everything I saw and heard. Joy is a charming and friendly personality who is productive and decisive in her work and clearly knows precisely what she wants as MD. Being a very large and busy choir, Morriston requires high level organisation and this is evident in all it does. The business arm is clearly critical in achieving success in the Choirs' extensive tour, recording and concert activities, as well as in its general organisation. (I was even handed a one page visitor welcome flyer on arrival.) Its promotional material is slick, its production output impressive and commitment is a by-word for all choristers. They don't use copies in concerts and are expected to attend the two rehearsals every week with regularity. In fact Morriston uses this as the chief criterion in gauging

potential member commitment in a standard six month probationary period. Morriston works very hard at its music but is also obviously a very friendly and sociable group.

In all, this was an outstanding evening and well worth the rigours of motoring four hours in driving rain and dealing with the frustrations of locating accommodation in Swansea.

For more information visit the excellent Morriston Orpheus Choir website at:

www.morristonorpheus.com





