

Dear

It is with pleasure that we welcome you as a member of the Orange Male Voice Choir, one of the oldest continually functioning male choirs in Australia, with a history dating back to 1926.

Many of our concerts are given to raise funds for worthy organisations. We perform at many towns in the Central West, as well as in Orange. From time to time we tour to other parts of Australia and overseas.

Singing for the enjoyment of the public is our main function, so delivering concerts to the highest standard possible on a regular basis is our core activity. This will require a commitment to attend our weekly rehearsals and a commitment to our community and concert performances. All our activities allow the opportunity for great fellowship with like-minded men in realising our motto of "Friendship Through Song".

The following information will allow you to quickly integrate with your fellow choristers.

Following your initial audition, the Music Director has placed you in the \_\_\_\_\_ Section of the Choir.

Welcome.

---

President

---

Music Director

## **Orange Male Voice Choir Member Information**

### **Introduction**

The Choir, founded in 1926, is a classic four-part male choir with Bass, Baritone, Tenor 1 and Tenor 2 “parts”. The Music Director (Conductor) determines the most appropriate section for a new member after an audition.

### **Choir History**

The Choir was formed in 1926 as the Orange Male Voice Choir. It was conducted for 44 years by Welsh migrant and musician Rowland Gregory. At his death, and in recognition of 44 years of his dedicated leadership, the Choir was renamed the Rowland Gregory Orpheus Singers (RGOS) in 1970. It returned to its original name in 2008.

The Choir has performed widely during many years – overseas in Wales, Ireland, England, China, Hong Kong and New Zealand and at home in Queensland, Victoria, Western Australia, Australian Capital Territory and throughout regional New South Wales. It has sung in St. David’s Hall Cardiff and London’s Royal Albert Hall and in the Sydney Opera House. The Choir has shared the stage with luminaries such as June Bronhill, Sir Harry Secombe, Julie Anthony, John McNally and Eric Bogle to name a few. It has celebrated successes in eisteddfods and has been a great force in the musical profile of Orange. The choir has released three CD’s – in 1996 ‘Song for all Seasons’, in 2002, ‘The Music Starts’, and the third was released in 2008, ‘You Raise Me Up’ (featuring also the Woden Valley Youth Choir).

A more detailed history of the Choir can be found on our website.

### **Performances**

The Choir is composed of auditioned singers who have been assessed for competency and sectional placement by the Music Director. It sometimes happens that over time a singer’s voice changes, requiring his movement to a section different to the one to which he was first assigned.

Singing is generally accompanied by piano and/or other instruments, however some songs are sung unaccompanied. We have a range of musical styles in our repertoire including popular, folk, contemporary, classical, opera, songs from the shows, Welsh classics, African, spirituals and hymns.

Choristers maintain a folder containing the current allocated music. This allows choristers to practise at home between rehearsals, aided by recorded tracks on the website. All music is the property of the Choir and choristers are required to pay for any losses.

Our base is the Orange Regional Conservatorium and its facilities are used for rehearsals and many of our concerts.

## **Choir Structure**

As stated above, the Choir consists of four main sections - Bass, Baritone, Tenor 2 and Tenor 1. Each section is looked after by a Section Leader and a Music Monitor. Tenor 1s and Tenor 2s share the same Section Leader.

The role of Section Leaders is to facilitate the smooth functioning of their sections. Music Monitors and Leaders for each section of the Choir will be appointed, or confirmed in their positions, by the Management Committee at the beginning of each year and members advised of the office holders and their responsibilities at the first rehearsal following their appointment.

The current positions are held by:

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Basses:    | Mike Collett (Music Monitor)<br>Don Harvey (Section Leader)      |
| Baritones: | Rodney Davis (Music Monitor)<br>Derek Ferrie (Section Leader)    |
| Tenors:    | David Woodside (Music Monitor)<br>John Mealings (Section Leader) |

If you have particular queries or concerns please consult your Section Leader.

Section Leaders will be responsible for the following matters:

- \* Creating and maintaining attendance rolls.
- \* Ensuring that choristers have the requisite music.
- \* Rallying the section for performances, including those at short notice e.g. funerals.
- \* Monitoring attendance of section members, including reporting to the President for follow-up action such as health issues, hospitalisations, prolonged absences and so on.
- \* Assisting both prospective and new members by:
  - helping to ascertain whether they are of a standard for the Choir
  - teaming them with a “buddy”
  - settling them in their sections
  - arranging seating position in consultation with the MD
  - introducing them to the Wardrobe Manager to facilitate the issue of uniform items.

Under the MD's direction, Music Monitors will assist their sections with music matters.

### **Rehearsals**

Rehearsals are held at the Orange Regional Conservatorium on Monday nights each week from 7.30 pm till 9.15 pm, except on long weekends. Choristers arrive from 7.00 pm to have some time to talk over a cup of tea or coffee, arrange the chairs and piano and read any relevant notices. From time to time extra rehearsals may be scheduled before important events such as a tour. Full information concerning rehearsals is available on the Choir website.

It is an expectation that a chorister unable to make a rehearsal will let their Section Leader know. This is particularly so in the case where the absence may be for a lengthy period.

The Secretary will regularly send out group emails to the entire Choir and this is the principal means of communication. Emails will cover such things as concert details, repertoire, songs to be rehearsed, updates and requests etc.

### **Uniforms**

A uniform is worn on all occasions when we perform. The formal uniform consists of a burnt orange choir jacket, specified charcoal grey trousers, worn with a white shirt and the Choir tie. Black leather shoes, black socks and a black belt are worn on all formal occasions. On informal occasions you will be advised of the uniform to be worn.

The jacket and tie remain the property of the Choir and are loaned to choristers for a one off payment of \$50 but choristers must purchase the other uniform components. The Wardrobe Manager (Chris Mills), will assist with arrangements to purchase uniform items as well as providing members with the correctly sized jacket.

### **Membership fees**

There are two fees that members pay and these are determined each calendar year; a Membership Fee and a Music/Service Fee covering a range of service costs including the acquisition of music. The current fees are \$100 for membership and \$50 for music. Choristers joining in the second half of the year to the end of October will pay half fees. When joining after October they pay full fees which cover them to the end of the following year. Junior members (under 18 years), pay an annual fee of \$25. Membership lapses if fees are not paid within 3 months of the due date (1st January annually).

## **Management**

The Choir is an incorporated organisation. Management of the Choir is vested in the Management Committee which includes executive members (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer). The Committee meets monthly to manage the Choir's affairs. The names of all current members of the Management Committee can be found on the Choir website.

## **Policy and Procedures Manual**

This document provides the operational framework for the Choir and is maintained by the Management Committee. Members are encouraged to access the current edition through the Choir's website (in the 'Members' part of the menu).

## **Fundraising activities**

The Choir charges a performance fee when it is engaged by other organisations for concerts. For those concerts organised by the Choir itself, a concert admission fee is applied to recover costs and raise funds. Additionally, the Choir may run various fundraising activities from time to time and choristers are expected, as far as possible, to participate, especially when raising funds for tours in which they participate.

## **OMVC Website**

A good deal of the information you will require about the Choir is on our website which is to be found at:

[www.omvc.org.au](http://www.omvc.org.au)

Among other things, you'll find our history, a calendar of concerts and events, contacts, choir news, photos and more.

There is a dedicated members' area which is password protected and includes music for each section to assist learning parts. Current notices and all official documentation (policies, procedures, the latest meeting minutes and the Choir constitution) can also be found on this site.

The website belongs to all members and feedback and suggestions are always welcome. Choristers are urged to visit the website at least weekly to keep up to date with any developments and new information. On first joining the Choir members are urged to familiarise themselves with the website, especially the "Members" section.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary)