

PATRON:

His Excellency
Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce
AC, CSC, RANR
Governor of South Australia

PRESIDENT:

Colin Styles

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ALMONER:

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VICE PATRONS:

Myfanwy James
Margaret Lambert
Genty Stevens
Len Turner

LIFE MEMBERS:

John Lawson
Robert McLeay

Choir practices are held every Monday from 7.45 pm to 9.45 pm at St Stephen's Lutheran Church, 152 Wakefield St, Adelaide.

WEB ADDRESS:

amvc.org.au

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the first edition of *In Harmony* for 2009. On behalf of all the members of the Adelaide Male Voice Choir I would like to welcome you to another full and exciting year of music. Thank you for your continued loyalty and support during 2008 and we trust we can rely on it again this year.

Back to Rehearsals

After the end of year break we are back at St Stephen's preparing for another year. In fact it is our **125th** year of providing choral music to the people of Adelaide and surrounds.

During these 125 years the group has been privileged to bring enjoyment to so many people in good and not so good times. It is one of the wonderful powers of music that it can bring together people from different walks of life, from many different social, economic, political and cultural backgrounds. It has been our joy to be able to pass on to others some small part of the enjoyment music has given us.

It is our hope that the Adelaide Male Voice Choir can continue to provide music for others for many years to come BUT that will rely on men who enjoy making music in the company of other men joining us. We deliberately keep our annual membership and weekly levy to a minimal amount so that they are not a barrier to men joining us.

SO we ask you to encourage any men you know who enjoy choral music and who enjoy the company of others to contact any of the members of the AMVC to find out more about us and the activities in which we take part.

Please see what you can do to help the AMVC provide quality music to the

people of SA and beyond for many years to come.

Concert Programme

A list of the concerts organised, to date, for this year is featured in this edition.

Do put these dates in your diaries and join us.

Exciting Concerts:

As you have seen the programme looks to be a pretty full one but there are two concerts I wish to highlight.

Firstly the **SA Police Band**, which needs no introduction to the people of SA, was like us formed in 1884. Arrangements are currently under way for them to join us in a Celebratory Concert. This concert, in support of research into men's health through the Freemasons Foundation Centre for Men's Health, has been designated as our major Charity Concert for the year. I would urge you to not only attend yourselves but also encourage you to get a party of friends and acquaintances together to support us and a very important cause whilst enjoying an afternoon of great music.

Secondly, you will be interested to see that the **Buderim Male Voice Choir** is planning to join us this year for a concert series. You will remember that when we travelled to Queensland last year we joined with this group for a concert in their area. Contact has been maintained with them and we are delighted to hear that they are joining us this year. This combined concert will be another one not to be missed.

Renewal Time

Now is the time for renewing your subscriptions to the Supporting Friends Group. The price has been kept to \$10

per family. This is great value, for not only does it give reduced ticket prices for our concerts and the chance to join in any of the social events which are held, but it also gives you the chance to find out a bit more about the members from the biographies which appear quite regularly. There is a renewal application included with this edition and we would very much appreciate you filling it in and returning it (with your cheque of course) to the address on the form or through a member of the AMVC. We also encourage you to seek support from your friends by inviting them to join you at our concerts and perhaps becoming a Supporting Friend also.

We look forward to seeing you again this year.

Colin Styles

SOME SNIPPETS ABOUT THE EARLY DAYS OF THE CHOIR (1884 to 1904)

Recently I began the somewhat daunting but most interesting task of researching the history of the Adelaide Male Voice Choir from documents held in the archives of the Mortlock Library.

This year the *Adelaide Male Voice Choir* will celebrate 125 years of continuous existence, contributing significantly to the musical life of Adelaide and South Australia. It has had a fascinating history, and I include below some snippets I have unearthed about the early days of the Choir:

The Choir was founded as the *Adelaide English Glee Society* after a meeting was held in the rooms of a Mr Niesche, photographer, at 97A Rundle St, near where the Regent Arcade now stands. It was decided to form a Men's Glee Society to sing in the English language. The first conductor was Mr H Evans, a master at Prince Alfred College.

The Choir gave its first concert in the Norwood Town Hall on March 24, 1885, in aid of the Library for the Norwood Young Men's Club. This concert was under the patronage of the Hon T. Playford. In February 1886 members travelled by bullock dray to the Coromandel Valley Institute to present a concert, and in September of the same year they sang at Noarlunga District Hall.

By 1889 the Choir had changed its name to the *Adelaide Glee Club* and Mr A Walmsley took over as conductor, a post he held for the next 22 years.

In 1890 the Choir undertook a much more ambitious programme of concerts, from Port Adelaide, where they sang at a Concert and Dance for the Rowing Club, to a performance at the Adelaide Children's Hospital. In July the Choir performed at Norwood Baptist Lecture Hall together with, and in aid of, the "Norwood Band of

Hope". There were 21 members, and "an adequate repertoire". This was the first year that the Choir presented its own concert in the Victoria Hall.

The next few years saw the Choir performing more than 12 concerts per year across all areas of Adelaide. Some of these were in aid of cricket clubs, and included a cricket match where members of the Choir played an informal game with the hosts and then sang a concert in support of the club. In more unusual venues, the Choir sang at Glenelg at the end of the pier, at the Semaphore Rotunda, for the Retailers Union of SA in a concert at the Adelaide Town Hall and several times for the Jubilee celebrations for Queen Victoria. It is noticeable that the Choir sang for a variety of charities, including a Town Hall concert in 1895 in aid of the "Widows and orphans from the Broken Hill mine disaster". This tradition of supporting charitable organisations has continued to the present day.

By 1899 the Choir had established a regular calendar of rehearsals and performances, was financially secure and undertook several concerts in aid of local charities. Most of the meetings and rehearsals during this period took place in Ware's Exchange Hotel, and the minutes of Annual General Meetings often refer to the continual improvement in musical standards and to the high levels of friendly cooperation between members.

Some highlights of 1900 include a resolution "that bouquets not be worn by members at Club concerts" and "a photograph should be taken of the Club in concert dress". New music arrived from England, membership stood at 36, and planning began for a Town Hall concert with the Hopf Orchestra. The Secretary arranged to hire a drag (a large vehicle drawn by 5 horses) to take members and their families to the Summertown concert on 1st December and "supper was arranged at the Mt Lofty Hotel at 2/- per head".

In 1901 the first rules of the Club were printed and accepted at the AGM. Two major concerts were planned and presented by the Choir in this year, each one continuing the tradition of promoting local solo performers as well as the Choir. In 1904 the Choir moved rehearsals to larger premises and a piano was bought for use there. "The piano was purchased from Mr Hooper at a cost of £30 with interest at the rate of £3 per annum. After having paid £12/5/0, our liability was taken over by Messrs Dorman, Lewis and Lloyd who paid the balance due". These 3 members were repaid their loan in a year and the purchase was finalised on 7th February, 1906.

I will be delving into these historical records for some time yet, and will keep you posted!

Bill Shaw (Musical Director, AMVC)

