

January  
2017

# Derbyshire Constabulary Male Voice Choir

## Diary Dates

6th Jan	St Susanna Horsley Woodhouse	7.45
20th Jan	Holbrook school with school choir	7.30
4th Feb	St John's church Allestree	7.45
17th Feb	St Michaels's Alvaston	7.45
3rd March	Village Hall Findern	7.45
10th March	St Clements Horsley	7.45
17th March	Leylands Broadway	7.45
24/25th March	Wroxham weekend trip	
31st March	Riddings Community centre	7.45

*Performing charity concerts in Derbyshire since 1956*

## Christmas countdown begins in Alvaston

On Friday 2nd December the choir undertook the first of its' festive concerts at Oakwood school in Alvaston. Over recent years we have built a very positive relationship with the school and particularly with Music Coordinator, Charlotte Sykes who trains and directs a junior and senior choir within the school. On this occasion both choir contributed to the evening's entertainment and offered up a programme of lively and topical Christmas songs. This was matched by the police choirs own programme containing a number of carols and Christmas songs. We were delighted to be joined by local community officers Tom Langley and Andrea Thompson who handed out crime prevention leaflets during the course of the evening. For our final song of the evening we even persuaded PCSO Langley to sing with us and he proved to possess a most melodic tone. Having passed his audition we expect him and a number of other male officers to join our ranks in 2017.



## Lucky Numbers December winners

5th Dec	B Norris
12th Dec	R Payne



This season so far,  
we've helped to raise

**£4320**

Interested in joining the choir?

E-mail : [DCMVEnquiry@virginmedia.com](mailto:DCMVEnquiry@virginmedia.com) or call 01332 606356

## David Eyre

It is with sadness that we report the death, on 13 November, 2016 of former choir member and Musical Director, David Eyre at the age of 80 yrs. David had been a long serving and devoted member for some 33 years, having joined in 1976 as a 2<sup>nd</sup> tenor. He served on the choir committee and for many years was a member of the '8 pints and a Snowball', a small group within the choir who, under the leadership of Anne, gave their time between concerts to entertain at the smaller venues such as care homes and hospitals. In 1997 he was appointed Musical Director and served for 12 years, finally retiring in 2009.



Professionally, David was a well-respected local business man in the sale of leather goods, for many years operating from his shop in Babington Lane, Derby, and latterly working in the same line for an international company. He was responsible for supplying the choir with the leather music cases which are still in use today. At David's funeral service,

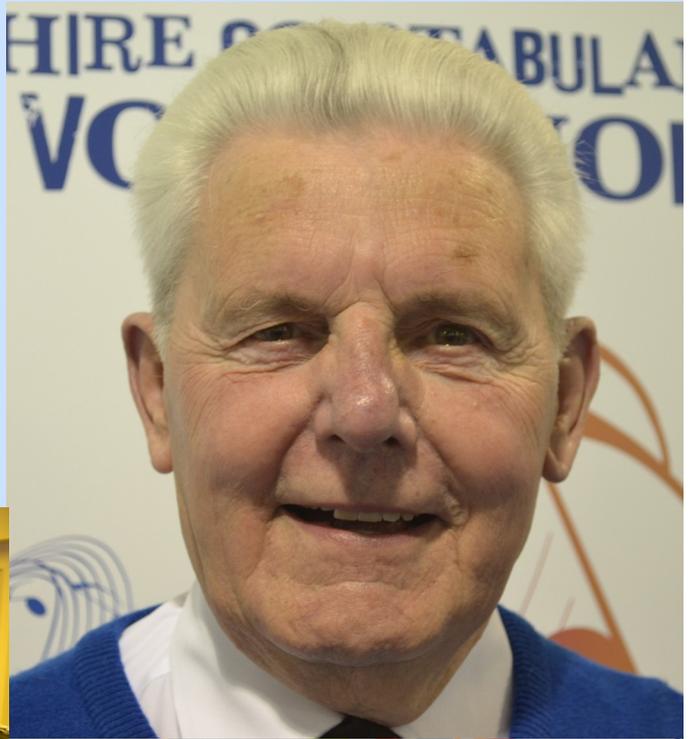
held on the 6 December, at All Saints Church, Mickleover, a large contingent from the choir was joined by several former members and at the family's request sang 'Softly as I leave you' and 'Stout Hearted Men' to a packed church. The service also included congregational hymns 'Jerusalem' and 'Amazing Grace' lead by the choir.



The eulogy, read out by the Revd. Peter Walley, made reference to David's many years commitment to the police choir and to his lifelong service to church music. A picture of David in his Musical Director uniform was displayed on the front of the Order of Service with more photographs included in a 'slide show' at the gathering of friends and family afterwards at the Great Northern pub.

## It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.....

Some weeks ago a concert engagement had to be cancelled and fortunately we were able to persuade the good people of Holy Family Church in Allestree to take up the booking. As many of the audience would have heard our standard concert programme at the recent St Mary's concert we decided to put together a programme consisting exclusively of Christmas songs and carols. The programme proved to be a great success with the audience wholeheartedly contributing to the singing. Festive solos were performed by Brian Norris, Mark Kohrs and a duet by Chris Hare and Kevin Griffiths. The two outstanding performances of the evening however were from Colin Beniston singing "the carol singers" and new member Mark Vestanavondt who offered up a beautiful rendition of "O holy night". Tim Limberger presented a cheque for £340 to Derbyshire Children's Holiday Centre following his sponsored bike ride earlier in the summer. The concert raised £412 for the Church Caring Group and the choir were delighted to receive a generous retiring collection of £100 which will in due course be donated to the Children's Holiday Centre.



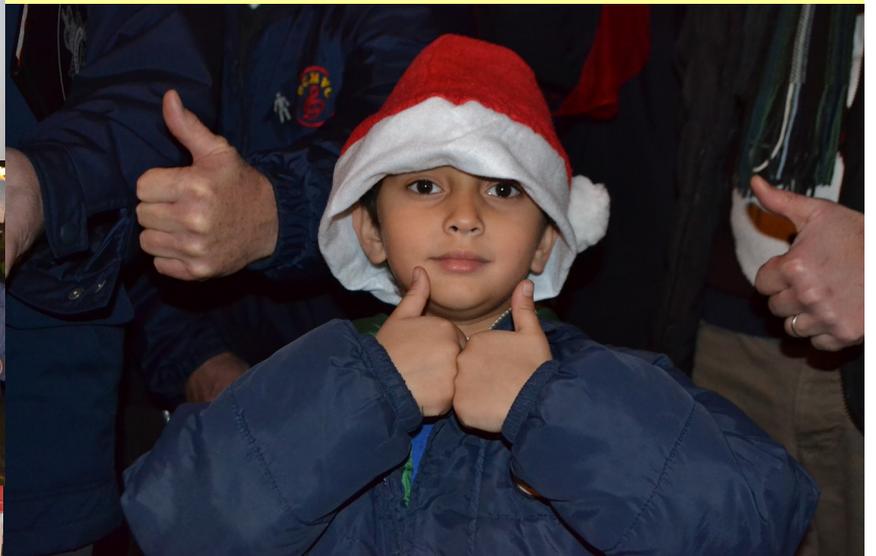
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## Carol singing takes on greater significance each year



Over the past few years singing carols in and around Derby has become a key feature of our December programme and this year we set ourselves the greatest workload ever! Beginning in Borrowash in mid-November we followed this up with three evenings on the Corn Market in Derby and a final session in Chellaston. Singing mainly well known christmas carols and popular festive songs choir members supported these events wholeheartedly with around eighteen choristers at each of the sessions. The weather was particularly mild on all bar the last evening and the Cathedral Quarter marketing team provided us with a shelter for the three city centre sessions. We were also buoyed by provisions of hot mulled wine by a local stall holder on a couple of the nights. As in



previous years we found the people of Derby to be particularly charitable at this time of year and the combination of bucket collections and appearance fees totalled a staggering £1352. This sum along with other monies we raise during the year will eventually be donated to our nominated charity for this season: the Derbyshire Children's Holiday Centre. Established in 1891, the centre is celebrating its' 125th anniversary this year and aims to provide holidays for at least 450 children. Each holiday costs around £330 so the choir is working toward a donation of a multiple of £330 so that our efforts can be measured as a number of holidays rather than an arbitrary sum of money. Wouldn't it be great if we could provide 10 holidays this year?

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## First joint forces carol service at Derby Cathedral



It was a pleasure to be invited to sing again at Derby cathedral on Tuesday 20th December as part of the first ever joint carol service for the Derbyshire Constabulary and Derbyshire Fire Services. The traditional service lead by Jo Whitehead consisted of nine lessons punctuated by well known Christmas carols. The choir sang two pieces without the congregation— Morning Star and O men from the fields –both of which sounded wonderful given the superior acoustic of the cathedral building. There was a general consensus amongst choir members that the evening had been a great success musically and this was underlined by a very positive and welcome letter of thanks from Mick Creedon, the Chief Constable. Mr Creedon commented “somehow this seemed a grander event than usual, maybe due to the setting... but maybe also to the quality of the music and the singing. As ever the Derbyshire Constabulary Male Voice Choir was at the heart of this and numerous people spoke to me at the end about the quality of your singing, in particular those parts of the service where the choir sang without the congregation”



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## Choristers score Radio Derby hat trick

For the third year running the Derbyshire Constabulary Male Voice Choir has sung carols live on Radio Derby in the last few days before Christmas. In the two previous years it has been on the breakfast show on Christmas Eve whilst this year it took place on the eve of Christmas Eve. We have always been made to feel welcome by presenters Richard Spurr and subsequently Ian Skye and have sung a selection of popular carols live in the studio. During the course of the programme the presenters have interviewed various members of the choir and this has provided us with further exposure to the general public. This year Ian Skye chatted with choir chairman, Kevin Griffiths and one of our newest members, Marc Vastenavondt who has experience of singing professionally as part of the ensemble of Phantom of the Opera. Marc was quizzed as to the role he played in the musical and invited to perform a short excerpt from the show. Arrangements for this year proved extremely challenging with pianist Louise Buxton being struck down with influenza and assistant musical director Brian Norris falling down the stairs leading to broken ribs the day before our scheduled appearance. We are grateful to pianist Joan Fleetwood for standing in at very short notice and providing us with excellent musical support during the morning.



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## Publicity effort continues to pay dividends

The January 2017 edition of the newsletter is the 41st publication since its inception back in April 2013. Following a little experimentation with the layout the format has remained relatively unchanged throughout the period. The newsletter has provided choir members with a written and visual history of all the choir's activities throughout this time and it has also proved a useful and efficient marketing tool, as it can be easily e-mailed to choir contacts, prospective concert hosts and prospective new members. The newsletter is produced each month by Kevin Griffiths who took on this task as part of his then role as publicity officer. Other regular contributions have been made by Len Briddon who has a wealth of knowledge as to the choir's history. Len has taken on the unenviable task of writing the obituaries of a number of former choir members who have unfortunately passed away in recent years. As demonstrated in the photograph below, Kevin never attends an event without his Canon AV1 and over the past 5 years has established a comprehensive photographic library which supports all of our



marketing and publicity activities including our facebook page, the choir's website and regular articles which appear in the local press and community magazines. The choir's profile has developed considerably in recent years with regular items included in the Derby Telegraph and other regional newspapers. Once again Len Briddon and Keith Bonnett have made valuable contributions through their items on the 60 year history of the choir which have appeared in the "Bygones" section of the Derby Telegraph. We have also been relatively successful in securing exposure on local radio. Over the past three years choir members have been interviewed a total of four times by BBC Derby's Richard Spurr, Andy Potter and Ian Skye. Our next objective is to secure a slot on local TV to further enhance our developing programme. Whilst Kevin is happy to continue with the production and editing of the newsletter he is keen to involve others and would welcome contributions from all members. As 2016 draws to a close our Facebook page has reached a landmark of 500 likes.



The page is an economical and efficient way of reaching many of our followers and can be easily and regularly updated with the latest choir news and future events.

**500**

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## 2016 Review of the Year

Looking back, some of the highlights of last year include:

- 18 concerts in and around Derby and Derbyshire
- Diamond Anniversary concert at Derby Cathedral
- Awarded Chief Constable's commendation
- Raised substantial funds for local charities including donations of £5000 each to both Safe & Sound, Derby and the East Midlands Air Ambulance



- Honorary life membership awarded to Keith Bonnett
- Article published in the Journal of the National Association of Choirs
- Launched our own web site managed by John Elliott
- Choir pennant displayed in Derby's Council House

- Retirement of baritone singers John Tomlinson and Jim Noble
- Retirement of Len Briddon and John Newsham from the choir committee following 43 years of joint service
- Resignation of choir members Bob Potter, Harry Brentnall and Tim Bentley



- Passing of former Chief Constable John Newing
- Passing of former Musical Director David Eyre
- Passing of former choir member Alan Sutton
- Retirement of police chaplain Keith Orford and seamstress Alma Clarke
- New members Tom Fleming, Marc Vestanavondt, Ellis Pugh and Jason Brown join the choir

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