



1984 - 2024

A brief history in words, pictures and song

# Banchory Singers community choir was founded in 1984 by Marion Jenkins

Trial by Jury (G and S)

1989 Christmas concert



# In 1993 the Deeside Singing Festival was founded by Marion Jenkins, Bob Davidson, Alison Ewan and others.

2 April 1993

Dear George

## **Banchory Singers Spring Concert**

Banchory Singers are giving two concerts in May in Churches in Banchory and Aboyne. No charge is being made for admission, but a donation is expected for programmes. We have decided that the donations received should be divided equally between the host church (to cover lighting, and heating if necessary) and the Steeple Fund for Torphins Church.

Each concert has the same programme :

Locus iste Os Justi	Church motets by Bruckner
2 choruses from Acis and Galatea	Handel
Organ Solo	
Psalm 37	Coombes
Messiah Part 3	Handel

The concerts are being given as follows :

Banchory-Ternan East Church on Sunday 9 May 1993 at 7.30 p.m

St Thomas (Episcopal) Church, Aboyne on Sunday 16 May at 7.30 p.m.

We are sure that many members of local churches would enjoy this programme, and would be grateful, therefore, if you would commend the concert to your members. We look forward to seeing some of them at one of the concerts.

Yours sincerely

Here is an example of some of the repertoire that was being sung that year with a link to [Locus iste](#)

◆ PAST TIMES ◆



Do you have a picture you would like to share with P&J readers? Photographs from the 70s, 80s and 90s would be particularly welcome, black and white or colour. Please send prints to: Past Times, The Press and Journal, Lang Stracht, Mastrick, Aberdeen AB15 6DF. Remember to include your name and address if you want us to return your picture.

The Banchory Singers rehearse in readiness for their Christmas concert in 1994. The group were to perform with Banchory Academy's Brass Ensemble at the town's East Church

Marion is pictured far right (1994). I was told a story by members Malcolm and Pat Buckley that if Marion lost her place in the music score she would just roll her hands in front of her as an indication to just keep singing until she found her place!

1995

COMMUNITY NEWS

# own your Way

Have  
Let y  
corr

## Banchory

### Chorus of approval

*Singers find new musical director*

by Eileen West

BANCHORY Singers are on song for a special open night to show off their new musical director.

They are inviting everybody to come along to their first rehearsal after the summer break to give multi-talented Tara Leiper a rousing welcome.

Since the resignation of their previous musical director, Marion Jenkins, earlier this year, the group have been looking for the right person to help maintain their popularity on Deeside — and they've finally found her.

Tara (25) comes to the job with an impressive musical record, having been musical director with Aberdeen Opera Company for their production of *The Merry Widow* and with Pro Arte's *Kiss Me Kate*.

She lectures in music at Aberdeen College, is musical director for the Aberdeen-based Learig Amateur Orchestra and teaches piano privately.

An accomplished pianist, violinist and player of the clarsach — the Scottish harp — she also enjoys singing, but admits it's hard to find time to practise everything.

A great devotee of 20th century



● FINE TUNING: Banchory Singers' new musical director Tara Leiper gets in some practice on her clarsach.

composers. Tara hopes to introduce the singers to some new exciting music.

On the open night, the singers will demonstrate their diversity with Alexander's Ragtime Band, The Piper o' Dundee, Faure's Cantique

de Jean Racine, and the Mellsto Carols.

If you enjoy singing and would like to join the group or you just enjoy listening to good music then make sure Wednesday at 7.30pm in your diary.

# 1995

- Tara joins as MD with David Shepherd as pianist with 24 members
- Christmas at the Woodend Barn with Britten's '[Saint Nicolas](#)' with solos from Hazel Shoebridge and Malcolm Buckley and Banchory Academy Brass Ensemble join us led by Moira Ross



- Sing a Rainbow with Aberdeen College Brass Ensemble with choruses from Bach's Coffee Cantata
- Carol singing in Scott Skinner Square
- We participate in the Aberdeen Jazz Festival in a newly composed composition by Tom Bancroft
- Christmas concert with the Banchory Academy Brass Ensemble and the Banchory Youth Singers led by Jim Murdoch with pianist Muriel Welch with a specially composed piece by Tara for the three groups called 'Christmas Miniature'.
- Ben Strachan is our president
- Bus trip to Edinburgh for a massed choral concert for choirs of the North East members of the National Association of Choirs. We sang '[O gin I were where the Gadie rins](#)'.

# 1996

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF CHOIRS

(Scotland East)

## CHORAL CONCERT

in  
St. Stephen's Centre  
Edinburgh

Saturday 28th September 1996



Programme 50p



1996  
**BANCHORY SINGERS**

### *Christmas Concert*

*with  
Banchory Youth Singers  
Banchory Academy  
Brass Group*

*Woodend Barn*

**Saturday December 14th  
Sunday December 15th**

# 1997 BT voices for Hospices



- BT voices for hospices – massed choir event to raise funds for Roxburghe House. We performed Handel’s Messiah with local amateur soloists: Hazel Shoebridge, Fiona Kelly, Linda Howie, Marion Dunn, Belinda Rennie, Malcolm Buckley, Alasdair Norris and Jim Murdoch with organist Kyle McCallum



## Arts Extra



The Banchory Singers were just one of the choirs to thrill the audience at the Deeside Singing Festival at Aboyne Theatre at the weekend.

### Massed choirs in impressive finale to festival

**ABOUT 100 members of the participating groups in the Deeside Singing Festival took part in the Grand Finale as part of the Massed Choirs.**

Guest conductor Michael Brewer is the director of both the National Youth Choir and the Youth Chamber Choir. He is used to getting the best out of performers and it quickly became obvious that all those who had attended his workshops during the day benefitted enormously.

With another musical maestro, Donald Hawksworth as guest accompanist, the choirs entered the fray with *Dies Irae* from Mozart's *Requiem*, their hearts and souls steeped in harmony, their eyes fixed on their conductor.

The singers then brought new richness to the haunting *Slaves' Chorus* by Verdi. And, just when it seemed the best had been reached they added something extra-special. Michael Brewer had introduced them to a complicated, but delicious-sounding Zulu song.

So filled with fire were his "students" that they burst into a spontaneous Zulu encore when the conductor tried to leave the stage at the end.

Sadly the concert had to finish. But then – there's always next year's Festival to look forward to. **JE.**

1997  
The Deeside  
Singing  
Festival is  
still going  
strong and  
we sang  
Verdi's  
'Chorus of  
the Hebrew  
Slaves'



# 1998-1999

- We have 40 members
- Graeme Wilson is president
- Spring concert with Aberdeen College students and we sang Tavener, Polly wolly doodle, Ploughman and Verdi
- Festive concert in the Barn with Youth Singers conducted by Marion Bateman-Dunn and with Banchory Strathspey and Reel Society led by Jane Davidson and Margaret Smith as pianist.



- Tara won second prize in the NAC (National Association of Choirs) Millemium composition competition with Psalm 81.
- We bought a digital piano with lottery funding (photo opposite)
- Charity donations given to Kosovo Refugee fund
- Festive concert at the Barn with the youth singers was a journey through time from 14<sup>th</sup> century to contemporary and we had a raffle for the first time (I think!).

# 2000

- We took part in our second BT Voices for hospices in October – a global event and we chose to perform [Haydn's Creation](#) and was the first outing of our newly purchased staging from lottery funding and proceeds to Roxburghe House. Our soloists were Kerry Fleming, Jan Ord, Hazel Shoebridge, Belinda Rennie, Malcolm Buckley, Geoffrey Cormack with students from Aberdeen College providing the accompaniment.
- We performed at a supper buffet to raise funds for Macmillan cancer relief at Storybook Glen and sang Home is a special kind of feeling, The gospel train and By tide and by moon.

## Haydn The Creation

Conducted by  
Tara Leiper

Accompanied by pianist  
Robert Howie

### Soloists

Kerry Fleming	}	Soprano
Jan Ord		
Hazel Shoebridge		
Belinda Rennie		Contralto
Malcolm Buckley		Tenor
Geoffrey Cormack		Bass

The Banchory Singers are delighted to have had the opportunity to coordinate this event for the benefit of Roxburghe House which is a unit catering for patients with advanced disease. The philosophy of Roxburghe House is to give patients and their families sufficient help and support to enable them to make the most of their last weeks/months together and to attempt to "make the unbearable, bearable".

This unique event brings together singers from all walks of life in the local community of Banchory and beyond.

The Banchory Singers gratefully acknowledge receipt of a grant from the Scottish Arts Council Lottery Awards. The staging used in this concert was purchased with this grant.



# 2001 - 2003

- We have Banchory Academy young musicians of the year joining us with Dorothy Carnegie as pianist and Bob Davidson is our President
- Festive concerts at the Barn with invited guests 'The Harping Hussies'.
- Tim Tricker is MD and David Shepherd pianist (2002)
- Spring concert with 'Four by Four' string quartet and Heather Wilson performs 'We must all be very kind to Auntie Jessie'.

**~ PROGRAMME ~**

All That Jazz..... From Chicago the Musical  
..... Music John Kander, Lyrics Fred Ebb

Lead me Lord..... Text Psalm 5:8, 4:9  
..... Music Samuel Wesley

Ave Verum..... Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Brother James' Air..... Text Psalm 22  
..... Music James Leith Macbeth Bairn

**HEATHER WILSON**  
*'We must all be very kind to Auntie Jessie...'*

The Ploughman..... Robert Burns, arr. Tara Leiper

Dark Island ..... David Silver, arr. Tara Leiper

Lewis Bridal Song..... Traditional

Mice and Men..... Set to the Psalm tune 'Desert'  
..... arr. Hugh S. Robertson

**'FOUR BY FOUR'**  
*Syncopated Clock.....Leroy Anderson*  
*Blue Tango.....Leroy Anderson*  
*Summertime.....George Gershwin*  
*Over the Rainbow.....arr. Mazzoleni*

Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves.....From Nabucco  
.....Giuseppe Verdi

Humming Chorus.....From Madame Butterfly  
.....Giacomo Puccini

**~ INTERVAL ~**

Three Love Song..... Traditional, arr. Tara Leiper

By Tide and by Moon .....David Shepherd, arr. Tara Leiper

Dashing White Sergeant.....Traditional

**DAVID SHEPHERD**  
*Mr Cellophane ... From Chicago, the Musical*

Irish Blessing..... Traditional, arr., Bob Chilcott

Londonderry Air.....Traditional Irish, arr. Bob Chilcott

**'FOUR BY FOUR'**  
*Air by Parry*  
*Star of the County Down..... arr. H. Hutchinson*  
*Irish Party in 3rd Class from Titanic by Gallic Storm*

Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man.....Oscar Hammerstein  
..... Music Jerome Kerr

The Way You Look Tonight.....J Kern, arr. Tara Leiper

I Got Rhythm.....George & Ira Gershwin

Razzle Dazzle.....From Chicago, the Musical

THANKS TO: TIM TRICKER .....MUSICAL DIRECTOR  
DAVID SHEPHERD.....ACCOMPANIST  
BOB DAVIDSON.....PRESIDENT



# 2003 - 2005

- David Shepherd takes over as MD with May Lyon as pianist
- Guest artists include Kirsten Zappert on Clarsach and 'Honk' saxophone quartet from the academy.
- Christmas concerts are moved to the Town hall and refreshments and mince pies advertised for the first time!



# 2006 - 2008

- Angela Foster takes over the baton with pianist Frank Odds and then Shona Elliott.
- Concerts have piano solos and duets and choral repertoire from Abba, traditional African, Music Theatre and Classical.
- A trip to Norway! →
- Our logo appears for the first time



# 2008

- 56 members
- Tara back as MD with Shona as pianist
- Purple waistcoats for the ladies and Tara introduces recording audio files on cassette tapes (!) and learning by rote – controversial!
- 2009 saw our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Tara received a ‘Musical Inspirator’ award from the membership.
- We continue to support young musicians and the Deeside Singing Festival is renamed the Aberdeenshire Singing Festival and takes place in Inverurie with 6 choirs participating. Guest conductor is Edward Caswell and we sang ‘Didn’t it rain’ and ‘[Bobby Shaftoe](#)’.
- Performed at Birse and Feughside Church with half the profits going for famine in Africa.

## EDWARD CASWELL

Guest Conductor

Edward Caswell was born in Bournemouth and attended Christ Church College, Oxford, and the Royal College of Music in London, where he studied singing with Norman Bailey. He made his conducting debut at the age of 18 in Oxford in a performance of Haydn's *Nelson Mass*. In 1991 Edward won the Choral Conducting Prize at the Royal College of Music. In 1987 he founded the Bournemouth Bach Choir, performing Bach's *St. John Passion*. In 2003 Edward moved to Scotland and is a visiting lecturer at RSAMD, conducting the Academy choral society. He is Director of Music at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Newlands in Glasgow, and in September 2005 he took over the Cunninghame Choir. He is a guest conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus, the Huddersfield Choral Society, and Edinburgh Royal Choral Union. He is now Director of Paisley Choral Festival, and sings with The Dunedin Consort. Edward was recently appointed Director of the Philharmonia Orchestra Chorus. We are delighted to welcome Edward on his second visit to Aberdeenshire Singing Festival.

## DONALD HAWKSWORTH

Guest Accompanist

Donald Hawksworth hails from Yorkshire. He moved to Scotland in 1954 after studying at the Royal College of Music in London. After teaching at Aberdeen Grammar School, he served as Music Adviser for the area in succession to John Dalby. He continues to perform on piano, harpsichord and organ as soloist and accompanist, and also takes part in chamber music. He has examined for the Associated Board both in the United Kingdom and abroad.

## Aberdeenshire Singing Festival Committee:

Robert Downie (Chairman) · Bob Davidson · John Hearne (Music Director)  
Moira Downie (Secretary) · Ian Fowell (Treasurer)  
Eileen McLeman · Anne Watson

Special thanks are also due to:

Gordon Forum for the Arts  
Festival Staff, Inverurie Academy

## CONCERT PROGRAMME

THERE WILL BE NO INTERVAL

### PETERHEAD CHORAL SOCIETY

Conductor: ALISTAIR MACDONALD · Accompanist: Mary Kirkwood

*Ay Waukin' O'*  
*A Man's a Man (Burns)*  
*A Gaelic Blessing*

*Trad., arr. Alistair Macdonald*  
*Traditional*  
JOHN RUTTER

### INVERURIE CHORAL SOCIETY

Conductor: MOIRA HUNTER · Accompanist: Donald Hawksworth

*Libera Me (from 'Requiem')*  
*Bennachie (James S. Wood)*

GABRIEL FAURÉ  
JOHN HEARNE

### *The Linties*

Conductor: MARION JENKINS · Accompanist: Donald Hawksworth

*One Candle*  
*Migildi Magildi*  
*It don't mean a thing*

ANDY BECK  
LLIFON HUGHES-JONES  
DUKE ELLINGTON, arr. Mac H.

### BANCHORY SINGERS

Conductor: TARA LEIPER · Accompanist: Shona Elliott

*Sanctus (from 'The Armed Man')*  
*Didn't it rain*  
*Bobby Shaftoe*

KARL JENKINS  
arr. Bob Chilcott  
arr. W. G. Whittaker

## Aberdeenshire Singing Festival

2009

Saturday 7th March

INVERURIE ACADEMY

This is the 21st Aberdeenshire Singing Festival and it comes to Inverurie for the fourth time, having taken to the road after nine years in Aboynae as the Deeside Singing Festival. It is now firmly established as an annual event, and although it is now on a more independent footing, the policy is the same as it was when under the auspices of Aberdeenshire Council: to provide an opportunity for choral singers from all over the North-east to meet, sing to each other, and sing together. The original idea came from Bob Davidson and Marion Jenkins, Alison Ewan and others, and we acknowledge their initiative in establishing this unique event.

As in previous Festivals, tonight's programme will feature a wide range of choral activity, with six choirs presenting examples of their own repertoires, and a massed choir involving about 140 singers who have come from all parts of the shire, from Buckie and Peterhead in the north, from Stonehaven in the south, from Inverurie and the Garioch, and some from Deeside and Donadee.

During the day the singers have all joined together to work with guest conductor Edward Caswell to prepare two very different pieces, representing different aspects of the choral repertoire.

### The Stonehaven Chorus

Conductor: JOHN HEARNE · Accompanist: Donald Hawksworth

*Abendlied*  
*The Winter of Life (Burns)*  
*The Devil's Awa' (Burns)*  
*Los Pastores Bailan (Venezuelan Carol)*

JOSEF RHEINBERGER  
arr. John Currie  
arr. John Currie  
arr. John Hearne

### THE GRANITE CITY CHORUS

Conductor: MIKE WARNER

*I'm sitting on top of the world*  
*Hello Mary Lou*

LEWIS, YOUNG & HENDERSON  
arr. Hohl & Stevens  
PITNEY & MANGIARACINA  
arr. David Wright

*When you and I were young, Maggie*

JOHNSON & BUTTERFIELD  
arr. D. Strachan

### MASSED CHOIRS

Conductor: EDWARD CASWELL  
Accompanist: Donald Hawksworth

*Hymn to the Trinity*  
*Behold, God the Lord passed by (from 'Elijah')*

TCHAIKOVSKY  
MENDELSSOHN

# 2009 our silver anniversary party

A return visit from our Cassdorf friends

We are performing some items [here](#).

Our friends are performing [here](#).



# 2010

- Trip to Cassdorf
- Sang at Cluny Church to raise funds for the roof with solos from John Harle
- We perform scene 1 from the Gondoliers in our spring concert with roses everywhere
- Aberdeenshire singing festival is in Huntly with Michael Brewer again
- Our festive concert has us in Black and Silver



## PROGRAMME

### The Gondoliers by Gilbert & Sullivan

Scene 1 and various extracts.

Special thanks to John Harle and Denis Burns for their 'Cavalier' performances, and soloists from Tara's Teaching Studio.



INTERVAL AND RAFFLE

Requiem	John Rutter
My Sweetheart's Like Venus	arr G. Holst
Londonderry Air	arr B. Chilcott
Ca' The Yowes	arr T. Leiper
Mary Morison	arr T. Leiper

### KIRSTY CLARK - Solos for the Piano

Irish Blessing	arr B. Chilcott
The Ploughman	arr T. Leiper
Anton Water	arr T. Leiper
Mice & Men	arr Robertson
Rhythm of the Rain	Jack Stern
Viva la Musica	Ivan Erod

THANK YOU FOR COMING



# 2011 - 2012

- Spring concert with The Linties conducted by Marcus Marsh and Tara surprises both choirs in the concert by teaching them a new song as a way of showing the audience how we learn and rehearse repertoire. Our outfits were red, blue and green and we sang 'Hey Baby'.
- Article in the Banchory Gazette and we take part in the Aberdeen and NE of Scotland music festival and win (I think) the Peterhead Challenge Trophy
- We have two festive concerts on the same day and perform 'Little fir tree'.
- We have 67 members
- Take part in the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations in the Scott Skinner Square in June
- Recitations in the festive concerts come from Peter Hodgson, Graeme Kerr and Cathy Taylor and we sing Durufle's '[Ubi caritas](#)'.
- We sing 'Don't stop me now' at the music hall in Aberdeen in the festival.
- Sing at St. Annes in Kemnay with soloists Denis Burns, Duncan Menzies, Jeremy Cutler and David Bond, Hazel Shoebridge, Fiona Simmons, Lynn Burns and John Harle.

# 2013



Telfs choir visit us from Austria and present us with a peace bell. I am unexpectedly asked to waltz during the concert – I don't dance, but smiled and carried on regardless with extreme embarrassment!  
We recorded a CD!

# Pirates of Penzance

## G and S

Story

**Act 1**  
The story begins on a rocky seashore where the pirates are celebrating young Frederic's coming of age. He has completed his apprenticeship and is now about to become a full-fledged member of the crew. Frederic however shocks the pirate King and his men by announcing that he is leaving their band.  
We find out that Frederic was mistakenly indentured to become a pirate when he was a child. Although he never approved of the pirates' plundering profession, he stayed with them because he was bound by his sense of duty. This same sense of duty, he tells them, now compels him to forsake them.  
Frederic is about to marry his elder nanny Ruth, who has constantly accompanied him since he joined the ship, but he wants her to remain with the pirates. He has not seen another woman since he was eight years old, and he wants to compare Ruth with other women. He comes upon a group of beautiful maidens, all of them daughters of Major-General Stanley, and falls in love with the youngest, Mabel.  
The pirates try to abduct the Major-General's daughters and marry them. But the Major-General begs for their release, claiming that he is an orphan, and that he would be all alone without them. The pirates, who are all orphans themselves, are sympathetic to him, and they give up their plans for marriage.

**Act 2**  
We find out that the Major-General lied to the pirates: He is not an orphan, and he now fears the consequences of his story. Frederic meanwhile has arranged for a Sergeant and his police force to help defeat his former buccaneering comrades.  
Ruth and the Pirate King inform Frederic that through an unusual circumstance, he is still bound to remain a pirate. He reluctantly surrenders to his sense of duty and agrees to join them again. Mabel begs him to stay with her, but he sadly tells her that he cannot.  
Meanwhile the pirates have planned their revenge on the Major-General and are now coming to rob his estate. The Sergeant and his police force await them. They meet. All is resolved after the ensuing battle.

From [http://www.anglo-iren.de/pirates/pirates\\_s.htm](http://www.anglo-iren.de/pirates/pirates_s.htm)

**Principals:**

Mabel	Jennifer Murray	(Understudy)
Ruth	Lynne Burns	(Ceri Kindley)
Edith	Christina Nicol	(Norma Murray)
Kate	Jane Elder	(Hazel Shoebridge)
Isabel	Lorraine Walker	(Lorraine Walker)
Pirate King	Robbie Strachan	(Val Bridger)
Frederic	Denis Burns	(Stan Jastrebski)
Major General	Peter Hodgson	(Graeme Kerr)
Sergeant	Jeremy Cutler	(Duncan Menzies)
Samuel	Eric Quin	(Peter Carter)
		(Alan Murray)

Many thanks to the members of Deeside Orchestra and Banchory Singers for the extra rehearsals and responsibilities involved in putting on this operetta.

Poster and programme design and illustration by ©Natalie Smillie  
To commission please email [contact@nataliesmillie.com](mailto:contact@nataliesmillie.com)

Banchory Singers  
AND THE DEESIDE ORCHESTRA  
PRESENT A CONCERT VERSION OF

# PIRATES of PENZANCE

OF THE SLAVE TO DUTY

W.S. GILBERT AND ARTHUR SULLIVAN

ORCHESTRA DIRECTOR DR GYNN HESKETH  
ORCHESTRA LEADER SHARON GRIFFITHS  
CHORUS DIRECTOR DR TARA LEPPER  
REHEARSAL PIANIST SHONA ELLIOTT

iMarvel  
2015

CURRENT PATRONS

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MR AND MRS L SANGSTER	MR AND MRS R ROBERTSON
MRS NORMA MAKIN	MR AND MRS S HOWE
MAJOR BEN AND MRS LIZE STRACHAN	MRS R HOUSDEN
MR AND MRS D BOND	MR J MUSSELWHITE

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A PATRON  
PLEASE CONTACT ANY CHOIR MEMBER.

# Pirates of Penzance maidens, pirates and cops



# 2014 - 2016

- Movies and Musicals massed choir event in the music hall
- We perform at Bellwade sanctuary and the Banchory Business centre
- We record a live Christmas concert cd
- We sang in the High Street for the Commonwealth Baton relay
- Our most adventurous spring concert yet – A Musical Menu for May – the audience chose all our repertoire from a menu list of 41 possible songs.
- Come and sing event of Purcell's 'King Arthur' in the East Church with string quartet accompaniment and pianists Shona Elliott and Ben Marsden
- 2016 saw our first festive meal/social in February (!) at the Banchory Lodge Hotel
- We are still supporting our young musicians and perform 'Don't worry be happy' and 'Fa una canzone' and take our concert to Alford – on a bus...
- Festive concert has themes of Victorian, Midwinter, Peace and Contemporary and we are joined by percussionist Lisa Nicol and the Hill of Banchory Choir.

# Selection of photos from 2016



# 2017-2018

- We are still performing at the Aberdeen Music Festival and continue to support young musicians in our concerts
- Festive concert is Christmas on Stage and Screen and we have a group of children helping us with extracts from Scrooge and Elf
- We have our film debut with our unaccompanied carols being included in the film '[Connect](#)' aired at 'Fringe at the sea', Lomond film festival' and at the Scottish parliament.

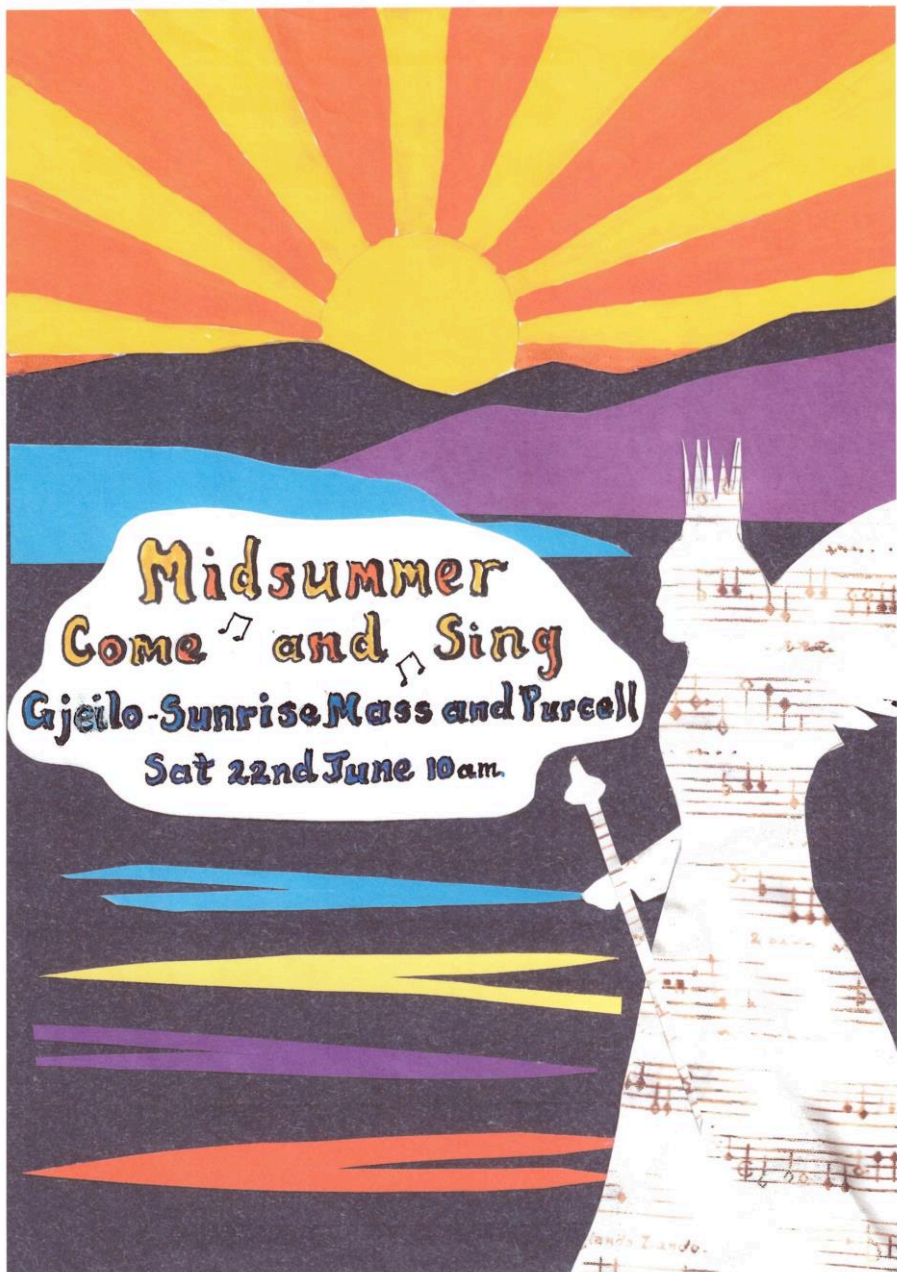
# 2019



The Walter Smith Rose Bowl Trophy, awarded annually by Banchory Rotary Club to individuals for exceptional service to the community, was presented this year to Tara Leiper, Musical Director of the Banchory Singers. Tara has been directing the Banchory Singers (with over 70 members) with energy and enthusiasm for eighteen years. The Banchory Singers not only put on four concerts a year but have performed on the continent too. Tara Leiper is an accomplished musician in a number of fields, and mainly teaches singing and piano. She also supports the Camphill Newton Dee Phoenix Community Centre with regular monthly events. Tara Leiper and Ceri Kindley comprise 'The Great Dames' vocal duo, performing duets, solos and arias. Pictured with Tara are Rotarians Ryan Bond, who proposed Tara for the award, and Harry McNab, Club President, who made the presentation. Picture by Chris Engel.

- Tara was the recipient of the Banchory Rotary Club's Walter Smith Rose Bowl trophy for exceptional service to the community.
- We have our first secret santa and buy red floaty tops as a uniform
- Have our festive social meal in February at the Tor na Coille entertained by a magician
- Our spring concert also goes to Ballater and our festive concert has 'Feliz navidad' and 'Ghost riders'.





- Raise funds for the renovation of the Guide lodge hostel on Deeside
- We perform as part of the Tarland Food and Music festival
- We have a come and sing event at Newton Dee of Gjeilo's '[Sunrise Mass](#)' with a poster designed by Lorraine Walker

# Virtual concert a real hit for choir



REFLECTING ON SUCCESS: Tara Leiper hailed the way challenges were overcome. Picture by Darrell Benns.

### KATHRYN WYLIE

A north-east choir group didn't have much to sing about when lockdown forced them to call off their get-togethers and performances.

But the Banchory Community Singers swapped the town hall for Zoom for the staging of their annual carol concert, and members were astounded when a global audience of more than 500 people tuned in.

That was more than double its usual 200-odd audience.

The 90-minute programme has been months in the planning, ever since members took

"Working towards the concert has been crazy," she said. "The group is the life and soul for lots of people as a lot of our singers live by themselves."

"As soon lockdown started we knew something had to be done to keep people together and life their spirits."

A few tutorials on how to work Zoom later, the group were back singing, albeit solo and from home.

The organiser added: "It was stressful emotionally for a lot of people getting used to the new way or practising and getting used to hearing their own voice rather than their own voice

closely emulated the sound of the choir.

The resulting concert, featuring 18 performances including four solo spots, has been hailed a huge success, gaining applause locally and with viewers from as far afield Mexico, Sweden and America.

Tradition was maintained with live introductions to open the concert and a fundraising raffle during a virtual interval.

Choir chairwoman Marion Mathie said the excitement of a live concert was still evident as the choir waited to see who would turn up and whether the broadband connection

"Of course, there were plenty of opportunities for audience participation as the words of some well-known carols and songs were put on screen.

"As the concert wound up with a rendition of We Wish You A Merry Christmas, the microphone mutes were released on the last verse and a jolly chaotic pandemonium ensued.

"It was both fun and demonstrated the major problem of time lag which has prevented many choirs from attempting such an undertaking.

"The feedback we have received has been

# 2020 - 2021



- We have virtual concerts with Marion Mathie steering us as chairperson. This included awarding prizes to choir members for the best named solo recording track titles such as 'if I have to sing this once more I'll scream' and 'Strong take 17'.
- We received our first ever 'Outstanding' award from the Aberdeen music festival for our virtual performance that was submitted.

We created a group composition to document our covid learning experience entitled 'We are stronger'.  
 You can watch our zoom video [here](#).

Soprano

BS 2020

$\text{♩} = 60$

Ma-king vid - eo calls I'm so grate - ful and so  
 luc - ky I live in the great out - doors. We are strong-er than we be-lieve\_\_\_\_  
 Sing to - ge-ther to raise our spi-rits, Ce - le - brate, en - joy the  
 po-si-tives, We are strong-er than we be-lieve.\_\_\_\_ Lone-ly  
 for a hug, so we meet by zoom, walk the riv - er Dee helps to clear my mind. I'm so  
 for - tu-nate liv-ing in this place, it is such a beau-ti-ful part of the world.  
 Full of dis - ap-point-ment and fru - stra-tion. I re - fo-cus on what's im-por-tant,  
 joy of some home-grown veg, just ac-cept-ing the newnorm.

2 Soprano

65 *p*  
 I have lots of hob-bies and I whis-tle and sing, and I feel fan-tas-tic when I  
 69  
 walk the dog. Watch the leaves change while lines of love zoom a-round the world.  
 74 *mf*  
 We are strong-er than we be-lieve\_\_\_\_ Sing to - ge-ther to raise our  
 81  
 spi-rits, Ce - le - brate, en - joy the po-si-tives, We are strong-er than  
 88  
 we be - lieve.\_\_\_\_ Oh we are strong-er than we be-lieve. We be-lieve,  
 94  
 Sing to - ge-ther to raise our spi-rits, Ce - le - brate, en - joy the  
 101 *mf*  
 po - si - tives, We are strong - er than we be - lieve.\_\_\_\_  
 105 *p*  
 We are strong-er than we be - lieve.\_\_\_\_

**BANCHORY SINGERS SPRING CONCERT 2021**

**SUNDAY 16TH MAY AT 4 P.M.**  
 BRINGING US TOGETHER FROM ROYAL DEESIDE  
 IN A VIRTUAL CONCERT OF MUSIC AND SONG

**FREE ADMISSION - TICKETS FROM - BANCHORYSINGERS.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK**

**Banchory Singers**

**Virtual Festive Concert**

An online performance, guaranteed to bring smiles,  
 song and our festive cheer into your home

**SUNDAY 13TH DECEMBER AT 4PM**

Admission £5  
 For tickets please email: banchorysingers@gmail.com

The Banchory Singers - www.banchorysingers.co.uk

Charities and venues we have supported in our 40 years not already mentioned:

- Dalvenie care home
- Annesley House care home
- Inchmarlo village hall
- Festive light switch ons at Banchory and Inchmarlo
- Echt and midmar church
- Inchmarlo care home
- Raemoir Garden centre
- Tarland community garden and hall
- Tesco
- Homestart
- Banchory Swimming pool
- Sports village
- Horseback UK
- Help the heroes
- Disasters and emergency fund (Ukraine)
- British Legion
- Torphins organ restoration

# 2022 - 2024



# 2021-2022



# 2024 Happy 40<sup>th</sup> birthday



Huge thanks to the committee for their ongoing support.

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