



February 2022

A newsletter for all choristers in Western Vic. & SE
of SA

Founder: June Roberts

Editor: Helen Lyth

3/13 Balmoral Crescent

Rippleside 3215

Phone: (03) 52786058

Email: hlyth@westnet.com.au

The Choral Grapevine website: <https://thechoralgrapevine.wordpress.com/>

CHORAL CALENDAR

Date, time, venue	Performance details
Friday, 18 th February, 8pm, Basilica of St Mary of the Angels, Yarra Street, Geelong	SECRET CHAMBER , The Australian Chamber Choir Bookings and information ACC website .
Friday March 11 to Sunday March 20, 2022, various times and venues	WINDFIRE MUSIC FESTIVAL presented by <i>Music at the Basilica</i> Full details via the Festival website . (Only choral events listed on Choral Calendar.)
Sunday March 13, 3pm, All Saints Church, 113 Noble St, Newtown	EXCELSIS CHOIR Director Tom Buchanan More information and bookings Festival website Windfire Festival event
Thursday, 17 th March, 10.30 am to 12.00 noon St. James Anglican Church Hall, 45-55 Collins Street, Drysdale	CHORAL WORKSHOP with Kym Dillon presented by Music at the Basilica Bookings \$10 http://www.trybooking.com/BQVMF Windfire Festival event
Saturday 19 March, 3.00pm, Wesley Uniting Church, 100 Yarra St., Geelong	EXAUDI YOUTH CHOIR , Director Mark O'Leary Bookings \$25 (or via Festival Pass) Windfire Festival event
Sunday 20 th March, 3pm, at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels, 136 Yarra St., Geelong	MELBOURNE CHAMBER CHOIR , Director Alan Cook BOOK CONCERT Windfire Festival event
Sunday, 27 th March, 5pm, Geelong Art Gallery, Little Malop Street, Geelong	VOX ANGELICA directed by Tom Healey. \$20/\$15 (Gallery members) Bookings via the Gallery
Sunday 1 st and Sunday 8 th May, Blue-stone Theatre at 28 Hutton Street Kyneton	DIDO AND AENAEUS presented by <i>The Gisborne Singers</i> and soloists. Artistic Director Luke Severn More details as they come to hand on the Choral Grapevine Calendar
Sunday 15 th May, 2:30pm. All Saints Church, Noble Street, Newtown	RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: A LIFE OF MUSIC The Geelong Chorale and soloists conducted by Allister Cox. Music to celebrate RVW's 150th Anniversary More information and tickets
May 20-22, Seacroft Estate, 4990 Great Ocean Road, Sugarloaf	CHOIR LEADERS WEEKEND presented by Stephen Taberner (Director, <i>The Spooky Men's Chorale</i>) Contact Stephen Taberner for more information and to book
May, MAY 27-29, Ballarat (venue/s, times to be confirmed)	SINGING WEEKEND, BALLARAT presented by Stephen Taberner (Director, <i>The Spooky Men's Chorale</i>) Contact Stephen Taberner for more information and to book
December 14 th , Ballarat	MESSIAH <i>The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Chorus</i> and <i>The Ballarat Choral Society</i> More details as they come to hand.

For further updates, check the [online calendar](#).

EDITORIAL

Another year of mask wearing but with the hope that live singing has resumed. Most choirs are now back to more-or-less face-to-face singing. Concerts are returning. For example **The Australian Chamber Choir's** first concert in Geelong for 2022 is this Friday evening. For those still not taking the live music plunge I see that **Live from London** digital festivals are continuing with an Easter edition. Many of you who are involved in Church music will already be preparing your own Easter programs.

Look to the last page for news of two singing workshops with Stephen Taberner in May. Stephen is the charismatic leader of the **Spooky Men's Chorale**.

If your concert dates and details are not in this edition of the Choral Grapevine, don't worry. The online calendar is updated whenever I am given information, and our website and Facebook pages are updated with posters etc. as soon as information is to hand. Happy singing all. [Helen Lyth](#)

VOX ANGELICA GEELONG CHAMBER CHOIR

Concert 1: 5pm Sunday 27th March, Geelong Gallery

The Geelong Gallery is restricting the audience to 80 people, so booking is essential. We start rehearsals with 25 singers in February, with covid safe measures in place.

We have a lovely programme for this beautiful acoustic, including works by Monteverdi, Stephanie Martin, Faure, Ēriks Ešēvalds, Elgar, Moses Hogan, and a selection from Barber's *Hermit Songs* for baritone solo.

Concert 2: Windfire Festival Closing Concert, Sunday 16th October, St Mary's Basilica Geelong

Programme includes Rachmaninov (*Bogorodītse Dēvo*), Christopher Willcock (*Merton Mass*), Mårten Jansson (*Fear Thou Not*), Morten Lauridsen (*Sure On This Shining Night*), Melanie Bonis (*Ave Verum*), Louis Vierne (*Messe Solonelle for Choir and Two Organs*)

[Tom Healey](#) Musical Director

ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH GEELONG CHOIR

We have been rehearsing and singing, distanced and masked since the latter part of 2021, including our two carol services a week before Christmas. We had singers' masks made but, now that experts are recommending N95 masks, some might switch to these as they provide a bit of space for breathing. I am hoping to introduce a monthly Choral Evensong in the second half of the year (covid willing!) and invite singers to join the St Paul's Occasional Choir for this.

The church offers a number of Choral Scholarships (\$1700 pa); all voice parts are invited to apply. Contact Tom: [Tom Healey](#), Musical Director

THE GEELONG CHORALE

The Geelong Chorale welcomes new singers in all vocal parts. Contact the Chorale via [Angela West](#) the choir secretary.

This year, the Chorale will present four concerts. On May 15, the first concert will feature Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Mass in G Minor*. The long awaited concert, **Folk Songs from Around the World** is on July 11th, followed by Bach's **St John Passion** on October 7th, in conjunction with the Windfire Chamber Choir sponsored by Music at the Basilica. The annual Christmas concert details are not yet to hand.

Rehearsals resumed on Monday, January 31st at St Luke's Uniting Church Highton with current covid restrictions in place. (

The Chorale committee decided not to hold the usual full day rehearsal in January as originally planned . Rehearsals resumed on Monday January 31 at 7.30pm at St Luke's Uniting Church, Highton. (This decision was made in respect of the current case numbers of COVID-19 in the community, and the restrictions this imposes such as wearing masks, not using crockery and cutlery for lunch, and also definitions of social and close contacts which could impose work restrictions for some if anyone tested positive.

Current COVID restrictions are listed here: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/arts-and-live-performances-sector-guidance>

Angela West, Secretary thegeelongchorale@gmail.com

GEELONG HARMONY CHORUS

Hello fellow singers! Like some other groups in our Choral Grapevine, Geelong Harmony Chorus managed to keep most of our members singing during these last two pandemic years, despite the restrictions. This was due in no small part to our talented and very determined Musical Director, Alex Morris, and our Assistant Musical Directors, Michelle Roy and Emily Moriarty, and ... Zoom!

Love it or hate it, Zoom has been key to a huge part of our chorus interactions. As a group, we pride ourselves on being pro-active to all COVID restrictions, but believe us, we positively lunged at any opportunity for in-person rehearsals whenever restrictions permitted. We sang out, duly masked, in the open air or in our meticulously spaced open-doored (freezing!), QR-coded rehearsal hall. Even when we can rehearse in person, we continue to offer Zoom upon request to those members who prefer to maintain their distance but who want to be a part of the rehearsal. Most members though are eager to attend and enjoy each other's company and our voices and our beautiful harmonies!

With most gigs cancelled in 2021, we didn't hesitate when any easing of restrictions permitted us to sing in small groups at some Citizenship Ceremonies or even do carol singing at Market Square for Christmas. Our end of year Christmas party at Geelong Yacht Club saw us put on a small, mostly impromptu show for family and friends on the gorgeous lawn area with the bay and the yachts as our backdrop.

If we have learnt anything from two years in chorus lockdown, it's that people really want to be able to sing. Throughout the year, we had enquiries from people about joining us but put them on hold in the belief that we needed to be out of lockdown to provide newbies with the full Geelong Harmony Chorus experience – but now we believe that we can welcome new members regardless of whether rehearsals are online or in person. So the plan for 2022 is to welcome new singers wherever we are – starting now!

The next few weeks will see us continuing to perform in small group, and there is the very real possibility that many of us will head over to Adelaide for a Sweet Adelines Australia festival-style convention in May. Other things on our 2022 agenda include a retreat in August (postponed three times in eight months) and a show at the Potato Shed in October 2022, and by the year's end, fulfilling our range of Christmas performances.

We are welcoming new singers – particularly those with a low alto range but other voice parts are welcome too – who want to take their harmony singing to a new level to join us. Contact our Membership Manager Petal O'Dell on email membership@geelongharmony.com.au or 0406 666 737 (Chorus Phone). Or have a look at us on www.geelongharmony.com.au

Co written by Anna-Marie Shew PR and Marketing Manager & [Corina Hassett](#) Secretary for Geelong Harmony Chorus.

HAMILTON SINGERS

Happy New Year to you all. The uncertainty of the last couple of years continues to pervade our lives.

Hamilton Singers committee had a meeting last night and we have decided to survey our singers to see if they would be willing rehearse with masks on and separate at 1.5m as per Government restrictions. If we get enough of our singers willing we shall try having rehearsals where one singing part comes in for 45 minutes then another part. This will allow lots of part work and once a fortnight we shall try to have everyone present for a shortened session. We are going to try rehearsing in a different venue which has better ventilation. We are very aware that our singers need to get together for their mental wellbeing and we also have concerns that if we do not do something **Hamilton Singers** may end up disintegrating as members have been so accustomed not to meet that the habit is becoming the norm. Of course, our idea will be reviewed as we go along and any necessary changes be made to suit all concerned.

We plan to work on repertoire for a recording. We have received a grant from our local shire to help cover the costs of this. We tried starting work on this last year until lock downs make it impossible so we shall take up this project again and keep working on that.

I hope this lets you know what we are going to attempt at least for the first part of this year. I look forward to the day when the fear factor of Covid passes and more people are willing to get on with things. Beth Tonissen Musical Director

WONDROUS MERRY

What'sApp became our friendship link for such a lot of 2021 as face-to-face singing became very sporadic. It continues to be communication of choice for some Wondrous Merry singers. We resumed singing together (in the guise of Wondrous Masked Merry Minstrels) in early February, with Marie presenting us with new songs each week to help the brain cells get working. Warm-ups consist of a few half-remembered rounds and we've been brushing up on some of our favourite arrangements. There's lots of merriment and chat, and not a little sharing of goodies and produce. (My kitchen smells of stewed plums as I write thanks to Sally and Geoff, two of our multi-talented members.)

Sigh! We wonder if we'll ever get to perform *Moon River*. Our arrangement is quite challenging, but very satisfying, and it's finally getting there. Join us one Tuesday evening and we'll sing it for you!

Helen

BALLARAT CHORAL SOCIETY

We started back as a choir very cautiously in September 2021, rehearsing in a well-ventilated space, with choristers seated 2 metres apart, and all singers wearing masks. Practice times were shortened to 20 minutes at a time, with at least 10 minutes between sessions, during which time, the practice space was well ventilated with strong fans. We have now purchased a Co2 meter, which has assisted us in monitoring the indoor air quality.

Of course, we have also insisted on all choristers being double vaccinated in order to sing in the Choir and are encouraging people to get the booster shot as soon as possible in order to obtain maximum protection.

We have recommenced rehearsals for 2022 and are preparing for a number of concerts, potentially in collaboration with other music groups in Ballarat. Our first event will be in late May/early June, at which time we will be performing Haydn's 'Little Organ' Mass along with a selection of other classical

music from the late 18th Century. We are still working on our performance schedule for our second concert. However, our last concert for 2022 will be with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Chorus who have invited us to sing with them when they visit Ballarat for a performance of Handel's Messiah on December 14th. We are so excited to be able to join forces with them again.

I hope this gives you a bit of an indication of the things in store for us this year.

Kind regards,

Lyn Broadstock Secretary and Communications Officer info@ballaratchoralsociety.com

TIDES OF WELCOME

Current guidelines require us to either sing inside with masks on or sing outdoors without masks but using social distancing. We are excited to announce that we have secured the hiring of the **Ocean Grove Pavilion** in Ingemala Park. This will enable the entire choir to rehearse safely.

We have over ten people on our waiting list but due to Covid we have decided not to draw upon it as it's far easier to cater for our 24 or so given current restrictions and the promise that one day we will return to our home base of Queenscliff Neighbourhood House.

Wayne Jury, our choir director, has been working with Sarah Carroll and together have been preparing us for the *Water Bearer Project* (an initiative in Geelong) which involved translating one of Sarah's songs into Wathaurung language. In addition to this the same song is being translated into a Canadian indigenous language Mi'gmaq for a choir to perform as well. Choir rehearsals started in February, working towards recordings from March 1st to 10th and projections on film in Geelong from April 8th to 17th.

Shedding the Blues [local men's music group] have funding for a music event day called Tune-Up on Sunday afternoon April 10th. We have been invited to perform for around half an hour. Other performances will be showcased and it is a free event.

Paul Jones

THE GISBORNE SINGERS

The Gisborne Singers have returned to choir practice with great enthusiasm after their Christmas break. They are busy practising for their concerts in May. Artistic Director Luke Severn has introduced an opera to their repertoire. Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* is providing choir members with opportunities for small solo parts alongside professional soloists. With its stage setting, the opera is broadening choristers' horizons and proving to be a whole lot of fun. The performances will be at a new venue for the choir, the historic Bluestone Theatre at 28 Hutton Street Kyneton on Sunday May 1st and May 8th. Check the choir's website www.gisbornesingers.org.au for the performance times closer to the date. The next projects for the choir include a "Come and Try" session next practice night and they are very happy to be returning to the Lancefield Relay for Life on March 5th. The Relay was postponed in 2020 and 2021. Providing a service to the community is one of the joys of singing in the choir.

Alison Kinghorn

From Stephen Taberner (*Spooky Men's Chorale* Director)

Proposed weekends of fun and music...

Hello! The time for things may be approaching. we are sniffing the breeze, venturing gingerly out the front door, and thinking about what we may be able to soon do. and we'd like you to tell us what you might be able to do.

We are hoping to revive not one but TWO rather excellent notions we had that were scuppered by the events of 2020. In order to help us, we'd like you to let us know your thoughts/interest in these!

SO.....

CHOIRLEADER'S WEEKEND, SEACROFT ESTATE, MAY 20-22

The proposed venue is the wonderful Seacroft Estate, on the Great Ocean Road, about 30km past Lorne. The weekend would run from Friday 4pm to Sunday 4pm, and the suggested price of \$470/\$390 would include all meals and accommodation. There WOULD be space for some people who are just there to sing, because we're using the participants as kind of guinea pigs. *Particular areas of interest will be the finer points of arranging for mixed voices, how to get a great sound from a choir, and what it means to conduct. We will also consider the mysteries of group leadership and the ways in which the human emotion-musico landscape is curiously contagious and susceptible to many influences, both good and bad. The extended format will enable us to explore these areas with much greater expansiveness than previously possible...*

SINGING WEEKEND, BALLARAT, MAY 27-29

this will be modestly priced, and will be a delirious celebration of the best of ST's singing things in some of Ballarat's grand spaces, open to all comers. Accommodation, travel and food will be up to you. the weekend is going to feature satisfying collisions with local choir legend Stella Savvy and her singers, and...a local ska band.

Please, if you will, reply by email and let us know whether you may be an interested starter for no. ONE, no. TWO, or BOTH of these weekends. this information will be VERY USEFUL.

Stephen Taberner (and Coral)

Stephen needs expressions of interest ASAP if these are to become firm dates on our calendar. - HIGHLY RECOMMENDED (by a past participant in workshops and Spooky Men's groupie).

Choirs in The Choral Grapevine network in 2021:

Apollo Bay: Apollo Bay Community Choir **Ballarat:** Ballarat Choral Society, U3A Choristers Ballarat, Vox **Berr:** Riverland Choral Group, **Bordertown:** Bordertown A Cappella Singers, **Camperdown:** Camperdown Uniting Church Choir, **Casterton:** Sacred Heart Church Choir, **Cobden:** Cobden Community Choir, **Colac:** Colac Chorale, **Deans Marsh:** Deans Marsh Singers, **Drysdale:** Coryule Chorus, The Bellarine Community Choir **Geelong:** acabellas, Bella Mama, The Geelong Chorale, Geelong Harmony Chorus, GSO Chorus, Geelong Trades Hall Choir, Geelong Welsh Ladies Choir, Geelong Youth Choir, The Gesualdo Consort, International Harvester Male Chorus, Sing Geelong, St Luke's Uniting Church Choir, St Mary's Basilica Choir, Geelong, St Paul's Church Choir, U3A Geelong Choir, Windfire Chamber Choir, With One Voice Geelong, Windfire Chamber Choir, Wondrous Merry, Vox Angelica Chamber Choir, Vox Box Community Choir **Gisborne:** The Gisborne Singers **Hamilton:** Footprints the Choir, Good Shepherd Choir, Hamilton Singers, Tabor Male Choir, **Lavers Hill:** Lavers Hill Choir, **Millicent:** Millicent Choral Society, **Mt Gambier:** Mayfair Youth Jazz, Mount Gambier Choral Society, Mt Gambier Christ Church Anglican Choir, **Naracoorte:** Naracoorte Singers, **Penola:** Southern Heritage Singers, **Port Fairy:** Port Fairy St Johns Anglican Church Choir, **Portland:** Portland Choral Group, **Queenscliff:** Tides of Welcome, **Torquay** Surfside Singers **Warrnambool:** Cantori, Warrnambool Christ Church Choir, Merri Singers, Red Tent Singers, Warrnambool St Johns Presbyterian Choir,

GEELONG WELSH LADIES CHOIR

Like many choirs, the past couple of years has proven tricky to maintain momentum, however we were able to stay connected with online catch ups and used the opportunity to expand and brush up on our Welsh songs with our Musical Director Jeanette leading the way. It proved a great way for our newer members to dive a little deeper into the pronunciation of our Welsh words and definitely gave us more confidence when we all got back together.

We are now back for 2022 with the choir keen to get back into rehearsals. Towards the end of last year, our previous accompanist Selmo and family headed back to Portugal which left us on the search for a new and equally talented accompanist. As luck would have it, we now have a very experienced and talented accompanist in Heather Wickes. We are very excited to have Heather join us and looking forward to the collaboration with Jeanette, Heather and the choir.

The choir has also been in discussion with the Mornington Peninsula Ladies Welsh Choir (the only other Welsh Ladies choir in the Southern Hemisphere) and plans are underway for a couple of joint concerts later in the year. We are very excited to be working with them and looking forward to the challenge.

We were also fortunate to be involved in discussions with BBC Radio Wales recently on the Roy Noble Show - who had somehow seen our advertisement when we were attempting to recruit an accompanist! They were interested to hear about our choir, its history and Geelong in general, plus our plans for the future.

The choir will also be involved in the online Cymanfa Ganu on 27th February with the Melbourne Welsh Church along with a number of other Welsh choirs.

So it has been an exciting start and look forward to the rest of the year being as promising. [Bronwyn Elford](#)

U3A CHOIR, GEELONG

The U3A choir commenced rehearsal last week with a new conductor and accompanist. Jeanette John has taken over from Margaret Hughes and Heather Wickes takes over from Jan. Both Jan and Margaret have been fantastic contributors to this choir and the new music team is looking forward to working with the choristers and expanding the repertoire. [Jeanette John](#)

INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER MALE CHORUS

The choir is really keen to increase its membership this year so anyone reading this please consider supporting this long termed choir. Kym Dillon continues in her role and such a valued accompanist and Jeanette John continues in her role as musical director.

The choir is planning a concert in April on this year and hopes that this will be able to be achieved. The current program includes some beautiful music and the choir looks forward to performing it. [Jeanette John](#)

HAPPINESS IS



...singing
in a choir.

for more visit www.dailyhappyquotes.com