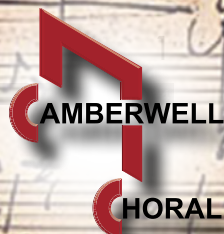


Sounds Organised



August 2014

1/14

Without music, life would be a mistake.

Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher (1824-1900)

Forty Years On

On a crisp night in June, many braved the chill to come from near and afar to celebrate Forty Years of leadership of Camberwell Chorale's one-and-only Doug Heywood in the charm of the heritage-listed Wattle Park Chalet.

Doug said, "These 40 years have been an absolute joy".

"Music is a translation of all that is good. It pieces together all walks of life with a chance to share something collectively. It is something privileged to have that sort of experience.

"To all of you, thank you for your generosity, thank you for your support, thank you for your love of music and thank you for your energy".

The Chorale's President, Adam Brown, also delivered a well-deserved toast to Doug for his tireless contribution and remarkable achievement. Then all were led in singing a golf-oriented version of the Irish Blessing, specifically dedicated to the guest of honour's new-found interest.

Speeches poured in from the Camerata Orchestra's principal cellist, Gerald Keunemann, the Chorale's long-standing baritone soloist, Ian Cousins, and chorale members John Gregory and Margaret Hill (portraying the late Marjorie Marks).

All were in amazement as kilt-dressed Scott North played 'Scotland the Brave' on his bagpipes with the celebratory cake being carried closely behind.

There was plenty of song from the Secret Men's Chorus, The Belles, the Combined Men's and Women's Chorus and Ongenous – each accentuating Doug in their own way.

Wrapping up the festivities with white gloves and the biggest baton she could find, the Chorale's deputy conductor, Alex Cameron, led all present to join in with none other than a rendition of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus (minus the last four chords)!

The night proved a blast in illuminating forty years of Doug's musical past.

Priya Mohandoss



70th Anniversary

In Gloria

Sunday 24th August

Rev up your families and friends for the decade's premium concert – a parade of Glorias by Rutter, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and Puccini.

Followed by sumptuous refreshments.

Review

Sacred Music – A Celebration

Temple Beth Israel, 16 June 2014

As hundreds of music-lovers of all faiths gathered in the sanctuary of Temple Beth Israel in St. Kilda last Sunday afternoon for TBI's long-anticipated Sacred Music Concert, they heard on more than one occasion the words of Psalm 150: "Let all that breathes praise God". This distinctive event, organised and directed by Cantor Michel Laloum, and conducted by Douglas Heywood OAM, featured the fifty-seven piece Camerata Orchestra and over 170 choral singers. They represented multiple religious communities throughout the Melbourne area. The Sacred Music Concert was the first event of its kind for TBI, bringing together repertoire from various traditions, styles, languages, faiths, and eras, and linking musicians and friends from numerous religious and cultural backgrounds.

The concert opened with a Welcome to Country presented by notable didgeridoo artist, David Dryden, whose words and music honoured the native heritage of our land. Following this tribute was the performance of the Bloch Sacred Service – a full-length morning prayer compiled into one five-section composition. For the very first time

in an Australian synagogue, this spectacular piece was performed with the full orchestra, the Camberwell Chorale, and solos by Cantor Laloum, Rhondda Hall, and ministration by TBI Choir member, Peter Haylock.



The second half of the concert brought something new to TBI's sanctuary: the Muslim call to prayer, and a chanting of the 55th surra of the Qur'an. With this recitation, Abdul Aziz and Brother Wasseen of the Islamic Research Education Academy, revealed many points of commonality between Judaism and Islam, highlighting the many points of sisterhood found in our given languages and texts.

The concert continued with a number of pieces featuring all 170 members of the choir. Cantor Laloum and Mr.

Heywood led the entire audience in a collective singing of Dona Nobis Pacem, a classic melody taken from the Roman Catholic mass, translated into Arabic and Hebrew. What resulted was astounding, hundreds of people joining in harmony. In

the words of Cantor Laloum, this piece was "an acknowledgement of the loyalty of each faith to its history and culture whilst building bridges and fostering new friendships".

Audience members departed the sanctuary in high spirits after a hearty rendition of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus. Judging from the greetings of warmth and joy that echoed through the halls long after the last sounds of chorus and violin,

it is clear TBI's Sacred Music Concert served as a reminder to Melbourne religious communities of all kinds: coming together to share holy music can be a meaningful pathway to new friendships, renewed understanding, and lasting peace.

*Sarah Edelstein,
Jewish News*

[see also <http://www.jewishnews.net.au/tbisacred-music-concert/35823> and <http://jntv/2014/06/18/musical-bridge-across-faith-traditions/3915>]

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Forty Years with Douglas

For those who couldn't make Doug's 40th anniversary dinner on 24 June (see page 1 story), or couldn't hear everything properly on the night – the sound system at the Wattle Park Chalet did leave a little to be desired – some further details follow. Guests present included many choir members past and present (including Joy Warr, who sang with the Chorale many years ago), orchestral players and their partners, and soloists, Lauren Oldham and Kerrie Bolton. Mary Johnston (leader of the Camerata) unfortunately was unable to attend, but her partner, Colin Gersch, and close friend, Ophelia Bryant, came in her stead. Violinist, Moira Yffer, was also present.

The evening kicked off with a bang, with the piratical Secret Men's Chorus singing their occasionally recognizable version of Verdi's *Va pensiero*, "Oh, Doug Heywood" (see

below); all present were encouraged to join in the closing stages of this rousing rendition. They were followed by the first two speeches of the night, by Gerald Keunemann, principal cello with the Camerata Orchestra, who spoke with both wit and wisdom about his years of association with Doug; and Margaret Hill, whose moving tribute to Doug, spoken through the voice of Marj Marks, also appears below. The Belles then echoed these sentiments with their parody of a song made famous by Marilyn Monroe, "Doug is the Choir's Best Friend!" Ian Cousins, who has sung baritone with the Chorale for longer than anyone (including him) can remember, then reminisced about Doug, recalling their arm-wrestles over various issues to do with tempi, repeats and other such minor musical matters, and also praising Doug's commitment, computer skills and all-

round enthusiasm.

After the toast, cake-piping, and Doug's speech (see page 1), the entertainment resumed, with the combined men's and women's chorus contributing a spirited mauling of Haydn, with "Achieved is his forty years", re-written by Di Camilleri, the brilliant organizer of the evening's events (see page 6). John Gregory, the evening's MC, then spoke about Doug, praising his skills at communication, and comparing the choir to a harmonious and creative workplace.

The festivities were rounded off with two further musical tributes – Colin MacDonald and Jennifer Stengards (aka Onjeous)'s brilliant performance of "Doug's Song" (with apologies to John Denver), and a mass rendition of Handel's unfinished Hallelujah Chorus.

JG

Letter from the redoubtable Marj (-orie Marks)

Dearest Douglas

As you might guess I've been pretty busy in my life away from choir, my treasured husband Lionel, family, friends, my music and beautiful garden.

And while we haven't seen each other for some time, I needed to let you know that you, Alex, Thomas and Simone are always in my thoughts.

I'm so pleased you and Alex are so happy and so thrilled for Thomas on his appointment as Musical Director of St Andrews.

Don't think for one minute that your old pal Marjorie doesn't know what's going on or would let a milestone like your very special anniversary slip by without a special word. Those forty wonderful years have passed so quickly.

Even you would have to admit that your hairline has altered a little since 1974 ... but your humour and the twinkle in your eye have definitely not.

I believe your appointment as Musical Director of the Camberwell Chorale in 1974 was destined to be, and this allowed you to explore and grow as a musician and develop into a fine individual. Your journey has been our journey.

Your vision, passion, generosity, professionalism, enthusiasm, humility, compassion and energy are unmatched.

You are, deservedly, recognised as one of Australia's

"Oh, Doug Heywood"*

Oh, Doug Heywood, beloved director
Oh, come listen to our song, we beg you.
When we try to sing in tune we often err,
But our hearts are in the right place, don't you agree?

Does a Mass or a Gloria present difficulty?
Do we quail at the sight of a pause or a double fugue?
No, we'll forge on regardless of subtlety,
Oh, we will not be silenced or fail you, don't you see?

Yes, we'll roar out our notes more or less accurately,
And when it's soft, we'll go flat without fail!
We will never forget our entries,
Or if we do, we'll do better next time.

We will watch you with care when the speed changes,
Though it might be safer if you watch us!
We think choirs are more fun when you can sing what
you like,
But we must always finish together!

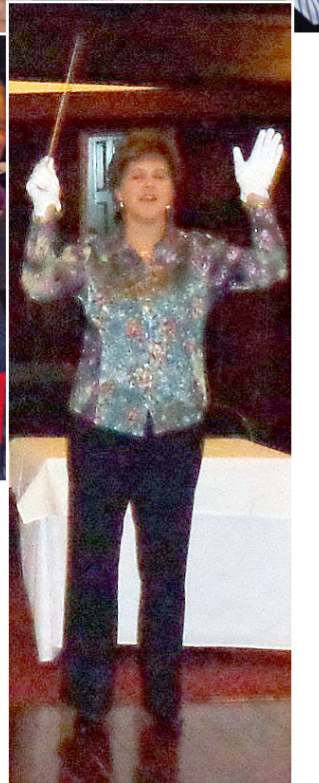
The sopranos are shrilly resounding,
And the altos sing one note with a frown,
And the tenors think they are astounding,
And the basses as usual are off on their own,

But after forty years, Douglas still seems happy!
He's a legend, on that we all agree;
And Alex is too!

... continued on page 6 ... 

* with sincere apologies to Joe Green – oh, and Verdi

Doug's Anniversary Dinner - a picture spread for the illiterate (and others)





Achieved is his Forty Years!

Achieved is his forty years!
He made it through with all of us,
With all our fuss, with all our fuss.

Dougie, what about the risers?
Well if you fall, you break your necks.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Dougie, what about the risers?
They are so high, they are so high,
(Hallelujah)

Take your noses out of books,
You look at me, you look at me
(Hallelujah)

Do stop talking, do stop talking
(Hallelujah)
Do just be quiet
(Hallelujah)

Glory to his forty years
(Hallelujah)
What now from here?
What now from here?

Another forty
(Hallelujah)
He is our Dougie, our one and only
Our very special
(Hallelujah)

He is our Dougie.
Hallelujah!

DC/Haydn

... continued from page 3 – Letter from Marj

great choral and orchestral conductors – appropriately awarded an OAM in 1995. Your ability to motivate and impart your musical knowledge to all-comers is a fine gift, and you instilled in me and others the passion and desire to learn and push the boundaries. You've taught us all the joy of choral and sacred music, and have helped ordinary people make blissful music in beautiful and dramatic settings.

Forming the Camerata Orchestra, and later the Victorian Concert Choir, was inspirational and groundbreaking. Lionel and I remember our days with the VCC so fondly. Bringing together choristers from Melbourne's best choirs to sing oratorio at venues such as Hamer Hall was a brilliant idea. We all worked so hard to make these performances the success they were.

But, if you're wondering what I'm up to, I'm now a chorister with the Celestial Choir, singing alongside old friends – Michael Coles (who

sings as confidently as ever), Max Latham, Pauline Lynch, Chris Selby-Smith, Pat Carney (who's still making her presence felt), and gorgeous Gwen O'Brien and husband Ted. Gwen is, again, one of the best sopranos.

Thankfully we wear shimmering gold and silver gowns, no black, and definitely no unsightly, button-popping white shirts – so unflattering on those of us with mature figures.

While I miss you all enormously, I do my very best to keep up with everyone's news, but life's hectic here. There are flowers to arrange, and when they found out I'd modelled at Blue Illusion, I was prevailed upon to help out with parades here as well.

I also listen in to your concerts where possible, and was absolutely spellbound by last week's performance of the Bloch Sacred Service at Temple Beth Israel. It was a triumph – Herman and Michael Schildberger agree.

You know I'm still trying to pull a few strings and orchestrate an overseas trip for the choir, perhaps a double act with Thomas! What do you think about King's College Chapel?

In closing, congratulations on a stellar musical career and fine leadership of the Camberwell Chorale for all those years. Enjoy the celebration and special concerts to mark Herman Schilberger's vision. I hope you can hear us singing "for he's a jolly good fellow" as we toast you with the best nip of whiskey we can find.

I'm so proud of you and your achievements, and am honoured to have been part of your life.

All my love, Marjorie.

PS – I see those naughty girls in the back row of the Altos are still misbehaving and chattering . . .

MH

Mr Handel is indisposed

The year 1737 marked a turning point for England's most celebrated composer. George Frideric Handel had been entertaining London society with his Italian operas since 1720. Each season he staged several, for which he wrote the music, hired the singers and directed fifty or more performances. Then he abandoned opera and wrote the type of music he is best remembered for, his English oratorios. Handel's operas had been peopled by gods and heroes, played by strutting superstar singers. Now his themes tended towards the tragic, his characters mere mortals, and his music more personal. What prompted the change? Ill health, says Handel authority David Hunter.

"The ingenious Mr Handell is very much indispos'd and it's thought with a Paraletick Disorder, he having at present no Use of his Right Hand, which, if he don't regain, the Publick will be depriv'd of his fine Compositions". As the *London Evening Post* reported in May 1737, George Frideric Handel, composer to kings and perennial favourite of opera-going London society, had been struck down by a palsy that threatened to cut short his glittering career. Handel recovered but his next 20 years were dogged by ill-health and repeated attacks of the "Paraletick Disorder". They were also the years in which he composed some of his greatest works.

For the first fifty years of his life, Handel seems to have been untroubled by illness. Even in middle age, and decidedly overweight, he had the stamina to stage several operas a year, a workload that would have defeated many younger, fitter men. Then in the spring of 1737 Handel suffered the first of a series of seizures that temporarily paralysed his right hand and caused his head to be "a good deal disordered".

"We may never be absolutely certain what ailed him", says David Hunter, who in his youth was a



cathedral chorister, and is now music librarian at the Fine Arts Library of the University of Texas at Austin. After spending more than fifteen years piecing together Handel's medical history, however, he believes there's enough evidence to support two diagnoses that go a long way towards explaining the fundamental change in his music that gave us *Messiah* and other masterpieces.

Handel was clearly obese. According to friends and admirers he "paid more attention to [his food] than is becoming in any man" and was "corpulent and unwieldy in his motions". Others were less kind, making him the butt of jokes and mocking verses. "He consumed what even by the standards of his well-fed peers were embarrassingly large amounts of food and drink", says Hunter. His odd behaviour indicates something other than simple greed: Handel couldn't control his eating, even

if it meant losing friends or facing ridicule.

One secret binge caused a rift between Handel and one of his oldest friends, the painter Joseph Goupy. In 1744 or 1745, Handel invited Goupy home for dinner, warning him that business wasn't going too well, so the meal would be frugal. Dinner over, Handel excused himself. He was gone so long, Goupy went looking for him – and found Handel stuffing himself with "such delicacies as he had lamented his ability to afford his friend". Furious, Goupy left, and had soon produced a new portrait of Handel, one in which he was caricatured as an organ-playing pig (page 8).

On a second occasion, Handel played host to some of his musicians. During dinner, it was later reported, he suddenly had an idea. His guests urged him to go and make a note of it. Handel was so inspired that evening he had to

... continued from page 7 – Handel

leave the room at regular intervals. Astonished by his burst of creativity, one guest spied on Handel through a keyhole and saw him hard at work on a “fresh hamper of burgundy”.

Based on all the available evidence, Hunter believes the diagnosis that fits best is binge-eating disorder. Such a condition might also explain Handel’s notoriously heavy drinking, which in turn was largely responsible for the condition that led to his seizures and, Hunter suspects, his eventual blindness.

There has been no shortage of explanations for Handel’s illness in the past. They include stroke, damage to the peripheral nerves and saturnine gout – the expression of chronic lead poisoning. But if Handel was exposed to enough lead over a long time, that alone could account for all his symptoms, including the seizures, says Hunter (Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle, vol 41, p 69).

In the early stages of lead poisoning, symptoms include headaches, colic and irritability. Continued exposure brings rheumatic pains, paralysis, confusion and sometimes loss of speech and memory. It can also cause small strokes, deafness and blindness, even coma and death.

In Handel’s day, doctors recognised a link between lead and saturnine gout among workers whose jobs exposed them to lead. They were more puzzled by wealthy patients with the same condition. Yet those who could afford to eat well and drink heavily were at almost as much risk as plumbers, miners and pot-menders. Lead contaminated food, medicines, cosmetics, even the powder so liberally applied to the wigs then in fashion. But wine was the worst of all.

Most wine was imported from southern Europe, where many makers added lead to sweeten it and prevent it going off en route to

England. Once there, unscrupulous merchants added lead shot to freshen tired tasting wine and mask off flavours. Port was even more dangerous: it was fortified with brandy made in stills with lead parts and pipes.

Ingestion of two milligrams of lead a day can produce symptoms of severe lead poisoning within a year. An analysis of late 18th-century port carried out in the 1970s found as much as two milligrams per litre. Handel may have been partial to burgundy, but port was his favourite tippie and he quaffed it in large quantities.



“All the reports of Handel’s illnesses are consistent with a diagnosis of saturnine gout”, says Hunter. No one mentions whether Handel suffered headaches or colic – why would they? – but they do mention his irritability. “He was notoriously irritable when working with other musicians”, says Hunter. “People put it down to his frustration when they didn’t meet his exacting standards, but it was likely to have been an early sign of lead poisoning”. Later, when the palsy struck, it was described as a “rhumatick palsy” which “seemed at times to affect his Understanding”. In 1743, a second attack “affects his Head

and Speech” and in 1745 he was “much out of order in his body, and a little in his head”. In 1751, Handel lost the sight in his right eye. Two years later he was blind. He lived for another eight years, dying on 14 April 1759 at the age of 74.

Handel’s health, in particular the debilitating effects of lead poisoning, made worse by obesity, played a significant part in the history of English music, argues Hunter. After his first seizure in 1737, Handel scaled back his opera work and focused on oratorios, offering much shorter

runs of performances (*Eighteenth-Century Music*, vol 3, p 253). In 1740 he gave up opera altogether. “I don’t think he could keep up the fifty-plus performances a year and all the associated rehearsals and so on”, says Hunter. “It became too much”.

The music was fundamentally different too, coloured by Handel’s undoubted pain and an increasing awareness of his own mortality. No longer tied to the plots of traditional Italian operas, Handel chose his own stories and commissioned writers to produce the words. Gone were the immortals, replaced by more tragic and more human figures. “The music had a different feel too”, says Hunter. “Listen to *Susanna*

or *Joshua* or *Israel in Egypt* – it’s lamentation and breast-beating. He can be tender too and, while there are some heroic pieces, there’s a preponderance of tragic ones”.

If Handel had taken the advice of doctors and friends and cut down his eating and drinking, he might have stuck with gods and heroes. Fortunately for us, he didn’t – or couldn’t. “Handel’s oratorios are such an integral part of the British musical tradition”, says Hunter, “it’s unthinkable that he should not have written them”.

Stephanie Pain
New Scientist
4 April, 2014