



## **January 2021 Newsletter**

Editor - Phillip Tolley  
(all misspellings are mine)

## **Firstly ... An Apology ....**

It has been pointed out by our esteemed Choir Secretary that while other members of the Choir had a 'head and shoulders' photograph accompanying their articles on the December 2020 Newsletter, the Secretary's picture, which accompanied his 2020 review, showed him on his arse having slipped down the bank while walking.

I am therefore rectifying this omission by including a choir 'head and shoulders' photo in keeping with his Committee role.

Thank you  
**Editor**



## **2021 AGM**

The Choir Constitution (*Section 7 (i)*) states that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) should be held during the month of February in each year or at any other date sanctioned by the Management Committee.

In light of the ongoing Covid 19 Pandemic and Government restrictions the 2021 AGM will be postponed until a later date, to be agreed by the Committee.

In view of this delay the current members of the Management Committee, together with the Concert Secretary, have agreed to remain in post until the next AGM.

In accordance with the Constitution (*Section 7 (ii)*) sufficient notice of the intention to convene the AGM, and the new date, shall be given to Choir Members.

## **Zoom Committee Meeting & Quiz Night**

The next AOMC Committee Meeting will be on Thursday 18 February 2021 and the next AOMC Quiz Night (via Zoom) is on Friday 26 February 2021. If you would like to join in the quiz night please contact Kevin Harris

## January 2021 Newsletter

Dear Fellow Choristers, Friends & Supporters,

Welcome to 2021. A year which we hope will be a marked improvement on 2020. We must expect a slow recovery from the Pandemic as the vaccine is gradually rolled out across the population and rules for social distancing, and specifically rehearsals and live music, are relaxed.

As well as the practicalities of what we can, and should do, it may also take some considerable time for confidence and trust to return both for the choristers and importantly for our supporters and friends.

There will also be some obvious rustiness in the vocal mechanism so we will need to be careful to build up singing muscle gradually to protect vocal health and avoid strain.

Despite our ability to adapt to changed circumstance, it remains terribly frustrating that we are unable to meet up for practice evenings, and that our planned performances in 2020 have had to be cancelled or postponed. We also had a full programme of proposed concerts for 2021, which will remain impacted for most of this year.

We are hoping to start rehearsals on 7 September 2021 to enable vaccinations to be carried out and to give time for confidence in its efficacy. However we are unlikely to take part in live concerts until 2022.

So we very much look forward to both our choristers and our supporters returning to enjoy and take part in our concert programme, when restrictions allow and when they feel comfortable to do so.

In the meantime we will continue to update our Facebook Page, send out our Newsletters and hold quiz nights and Committee meeting via Zoom.

Stay safe, protect the NHS and protect yourselves.

Phillip Tolley  
Concert Secretary

## AOMC Repertoire WordSearch

Find the repertoire listed in the WordSearch Grid on the next page.

Please note that there are no spaces between words on the grid and none of the letters are used more than once.

Anthem  
Blame it on the Bossa Nova  
Deus Salutis  
Gweddiaffricanaidd  
Llanfair  
Morte Christe  
Shenandoah  
Softly as I leave you  
This is the Moment  
Ar Lan y Mor  
Calon Lan  
Eli Jenkins Prayer  
Marching  
Pokarekareana  
Sleep Sweet  
Stout Hearted Men  
Benedictus  
Cwm Rhondda  
Gwahoddiad  
Let All Men Sing  
Men of Harlech  
Rhythm of Life  
Sloop John B  
The Wonder of You

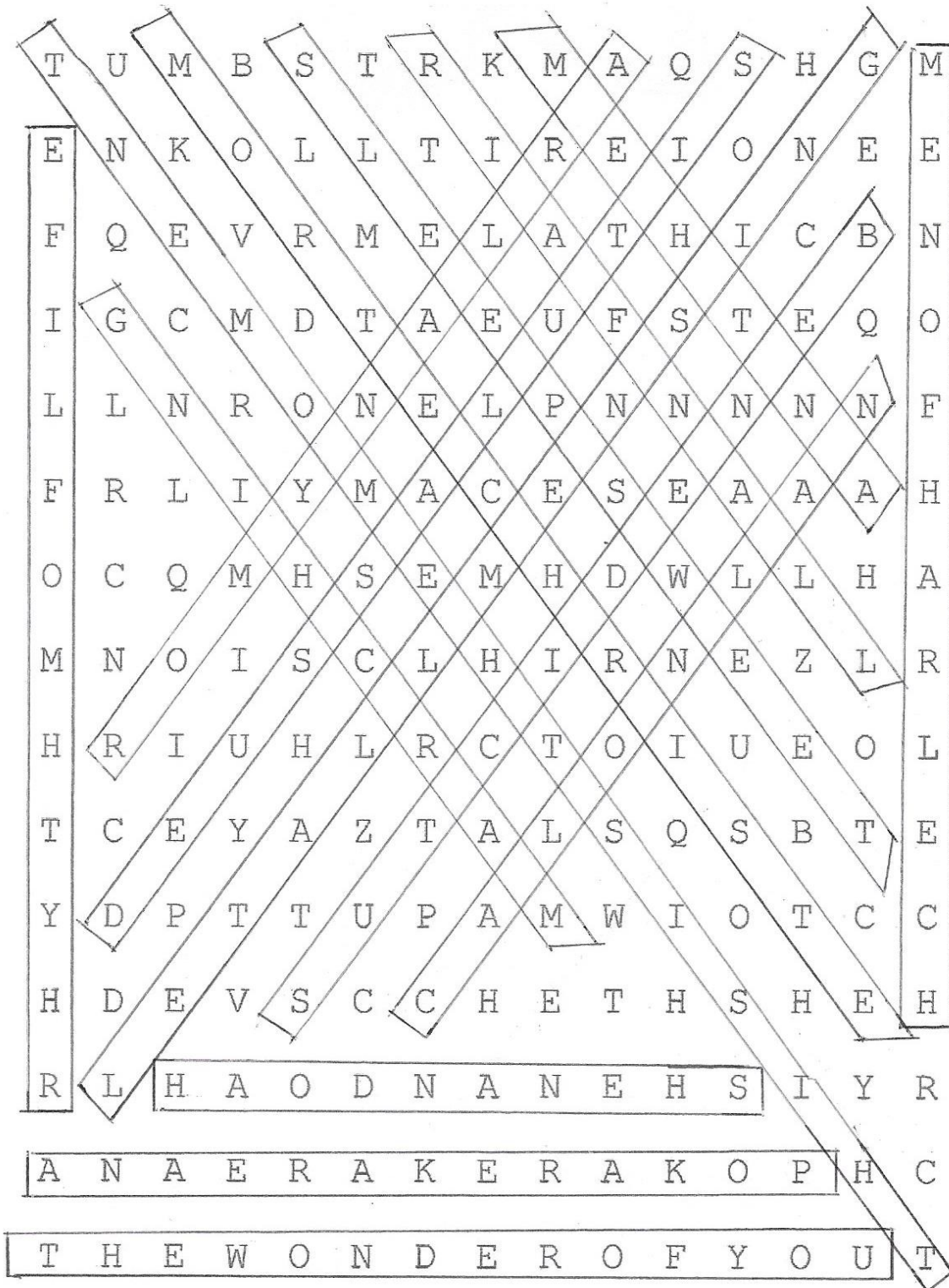
On the next page is the Xmas wordsearch showing 16 of the above titles. The remaining titles will feature in a future Wordsearch later in the year.

*Anyone who can find more than 16 has got better eyesight than I.*

The Newsletter also includes the completed Xmas Crossword

# AOMC Xmas Wordsearch

Please note that there are no spaces between words on the grid and none of the letters are used more than once.



## In Memoria

Unfortunately we started the year with the news of the loss of a number of former choristers, due to a mix of causes.

**Colin Holmes:** Colin was a past Chairman of the Choir as well as a being the Chairman of the Crickhowell RFC during the 1990/91 and 1991/92 seasons. He sang in the Bottom Bass section of the Choir. He was a great supporter of the choir even after he left due to long term ill health and always hoped to return. Colin was a well known figure in his local farming community and he worked for a long time at British Steel as a security guard before retiring. He passed away in January at the age of 88 years. He was married to Phyllis for over 60 years and they enjoyed many choir trips together.

*Over fifty people gathered outside Colin Holmes residence in Gilwern before the cortege moved off to say their last goodbyes to the popular man. They included family, friends and neighbours, and representatives from Crickhowell Rugby Club and Abertillery Orpheus Male Choir. At the entrance to Gwent Crematorium six AOMC choristers, Phil Hill, Dai Poole, Fred Hatton, John Tiley, Gareth Spracklen and Mick Bishop lined the pavement to form a guard of honour as the hearse and family car passed by. Colin's coffin was carried into the Crematorium by the boys of 'F Troop': Kev Harris, Phil Heath, Lyn Smith, Rob Stokes, Kev Thomas and Jeff Thomas. Perhaps we couldn't sing for Colin but we were still able to be there at the end with him.*

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**Trevor Challenger:** Trevor, who had recently celebrated his 99th birthday, joined the choir in 1984 at a top tenor, at the invitation of his brother in law Fred Hatton. Trevor was not a member of any other choir before Abertillery Orpheus Choir but had sung in local clubs. Despite having to take a break from Choir when his wife became ill, Trevor completed over 25 years with the choir and continued to support the choir up until his death, having contracted Covid-19 just before Christmas following a hospital visit. Trevor was delighted to be made a Life member of the Choir at the ripe old age of 95.

*Fred Hatton acted as bearer for his late brother-in-law. Steve Bard and Gareth Spracklen represented the choir at the Service. Dai Poole, Lyn Smith, Kev Harris, Alan Powell and Mick Bishop stood at the Crematorium entrance with heads bowed as Trevor made his final journey.*

**Brian Mathias:** Brian was a dedicated member of the Choir and a Committee Member for many years. He was a keen supporter of the Labour Party who always loved to participate in 'active discussion' on any events of the day. Though long since retired, he had worked in insurance most of his life. Those Choristers who knew him will remember a colourful and lively personality that could be depended upon to turn up and join in whenever required. There will be many anecdotes and recollections that live long in the memory. Brian also attended car boot sales each weekend to sell items donated by the Choir to raise funds for a forthcoming tours. It was unfortunate that ill health forced him to step back from the Choir in his last few years, but we can be sure that Brian was with us in spirit to the end. He passed away due to Cancer just before New Year.

*At Brian's family request the choir provided some of their recorded performances for the funeral service.*

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**Brian Parker:** Brian passed away recently. Brian was a member of the Choir and sang in the Bottom Bass section. Brian lived in Brynithel and had the Post Office for some years. He was part of the Brynithel contingent which included Jack Wanklyn, Ken Wanklyn, Hugh Carter and Colin Weaver. He was also a past Treasurer of the Choir.

In April 2020 we lost the aforementioned **Hugh Carter** after a long illness.

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We have also recently heard of the passing of former Top Tenor **Phil Havard**. He sang with numerous choirs over the last 40 years - including Aber Valley, Abertillery Orpheus, Caerphilly, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbach, Dowlais and Rhymney Silurian Male Choirs. But his early life as a chorister was at Tredegar Orpheus Male Voice Choir. He was a resident of Tredegar, and as such was nicknamed 'Lord Tredegar'. During his time with Abertillery Orpheus, where he was a friend of Brian Mathias, he had the nickname of 'Brere Rabbit'.

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# Abertillery Orpheus Male Choir

**President**

Martin Budd

**Vice Presidents**

Mrs M Berry  
Mr M Blanche  
Councillor Mr N Daniels  
and Mrs Daniels  
Mr & Mrs B Dean  
Mr & Mrs C Freeman  
Mr M German OBE AM  
& Mrs German  
Mrs H Griffiths  
Rev. V Nicholls  
Mr & Mrs P Lewis  
Mrs V Smith  
Mr & Mrs M Spencer  
Mr & Mrs A Thomas  
Mr & Mrs T Wilde  
Mr A Stone  
Mrs R Withers  
Mr & Mrs T Wookey

**Patron**

Robert Lloyd CBE

**Life Members**

Mrs J King  
Mr G Andrews

**Honorary Members**

Mr R. Assinder  
Mrs S Garratt  
Rev. P Coleman  
Mr J Saunders

**Musical Director**

Stephen Bard

**Accompanist**

Ross Leadbeater  
Penny Hughes

**Top Tenors**

B Ainsworth  
T Challenger  
J Dawkins  
D Dutson  
L Godfrey  
C Hunt  
CJ Jones  
N Llewellyn  
J Miles  
R Morgan  
A Nash  
C Porter  
G Pratt  
J Thomas  
M Williams

**Second Tenors**

G Andrews  
B Davies  
R Furber  
K Harris  
P Heath  
P Hill  
K John  
J Jones  
K Phillips  
D Poole  
M Rogers  
J Tiley  
C Weaver

**Top Bass**

W Bard  
A Betty  
J Brickell  
H Carter  
F Hatton  
L Hill  
M Howells  
M Johnson  
K Lloyd  
B Mathias  
J Morgan  
D Peddle  
D Roles  
L Smith  
R Stokes  
D Tadd  
M Taylor  
J Wanklyn

**Bottom Bass**

P Balfe  
B Bevan  
G Bourne  
T Cook  
M Dixon  
C Holmes  
D Johnson  
T Jones  
M McDonald  
B Parker  
R Porter  
A Rees  
M Smith

**Committee**

L Godfrey (Chairman)  
W Bard (Vice Chairman)  
R Zerbino (Treasurer)  
D Roles (Secretary)  
D Poole (Ass. Secretary)  
M Williams (Publicity  
Officer)  
G Pratt  
M Rogers  
A Betty  
D Johnson  
M Taylor (Stage Manager)



## News from the BOG

Hello everyone (Choristers, Ladies of the Eurydice and choir friends) and welcome to a brand new year as we look forward now to our Jab In The Arms (JITAs).

I am yet again instructed to up date you on events as I write to you from my office up here at Brynithel Organic Gardens. I can tell you much work has been undertaken to enable us to roll out the The Vax Scene. I can therefore up date you on the following:



### **SAGE up date**

Our man Wallace Bac A.S.H.E.R. although losing his moral compass on a night out in Blackpool has tracked down our Dom on the Isle of Skye working in a pie factory chewing the fat. As reward for his sterling work Boris has rung Elizabeth and they have made him the honorary chief of the muck rakers and mud slingers association (MR&MS Ass). His chain of office has pride of place next to his silver rake and trowel set on his mantle piece in his official residence at Penrhiw court Brynithel. He has now been released from his govt duties to return to the allotment where he is attending a crash course in needlework so he can administer our magic serum to you all.

### **The Vax Scene and JITAs rollout**

Your appointment for the JITAs will be sent to you as soon as I can get all the admin sorted. Please be patient as Drakeford wants me to get it right. " This is not a sprint". Our serum has been approved by the medicines and health care regulatory agency MHRA And has a zero percentage efficacy - a truly wonderful effort by our organic research team. I am currently arranging to get coloured signed photographs of the Management Committee sent to you all with your appointment details on the back. This you can then keep as a memento of this terrible time .

### **Return of Restricted movements**

If symptoms have returned I have to say I did warn you but you must sit tight until you get your signed photo with your appointment for the JITAs then you can go as quickly as you can to the JITAs club then I am sure things will open up again. Until then sit tight

## Lock Down syndrome

If you are fed up, down and feeling blue and need a shot in the arm contact our IT Guru Capt Kev (the Zoom) Harris to get a link in to our next Zoom management committee meeting - its a cross between a Punch and Judy show and a pantomime. Its worth a look.

## In Conclusion

Someone said things can only get better but no one knows when. If anyone knows when please contact any body - if you can't find anyone ask the secretary he knows everything and everyone - I'm sure he will know some body and let us know.

Signing off

Gareth. AOMC



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## Some one said

Once upon a time someone said  
does anyone know where anyone has gone  
Nobody didn't know anything he said  
Everybody knew something but everyone said to ask Else Where  
Although she was nowhere to be found either  
Then everyone said ask everybody—he knows everything about nothing  
and if he doesn't know then no one knows anything about where anyone had gone  
Everybody then said if we can find everyone he will tell anyone to turn up  
when everyone turned up with no one they said  
why don't you just ask somebody if he knows where anyone had gone  
so nobody asked somebody and he said  
He's on the coach waiting for you lot

The coach leaves in 2 minutes!



**William Gwynn (Parry) Jones (OBE)** was born in Blaina, Gwent (then Monmouthshire) on 14 February 1891. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music, and in Weimar and Milan. Jones made his performing debut in 1914. Shortly after his debut, Jones went on an opera and concert tour in the United States. In 1915 he sailed from New York to Liverpool with the Gwent Royal Welsh Singers. On Thursday 6 May 1915 he and his fellow choir members performed in the first class saloon lounge and music room in a Seaman's Charities benefit concert. On the 7th May the ship was torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat. The ship was the RMS Lusitania. 1,198 passengers and crew died, but Jones was one of 761 survivors, although he suffered a nervous breakdown due to the sinking.

After he recovered, Jones joined the D'Oyly Carte Repertory Opera Company in July 1917. Jones was principle tenor until November 1917, playing Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Earl Tolloller in *Iolanthe*, Prince Hilarion in *Princess Ida*, and Colonel Fairfax in *The Yeoman of the Guard*. After his tour with D'Oyly Carte Repertory Opera Company, Jones joined the Beecham Opera

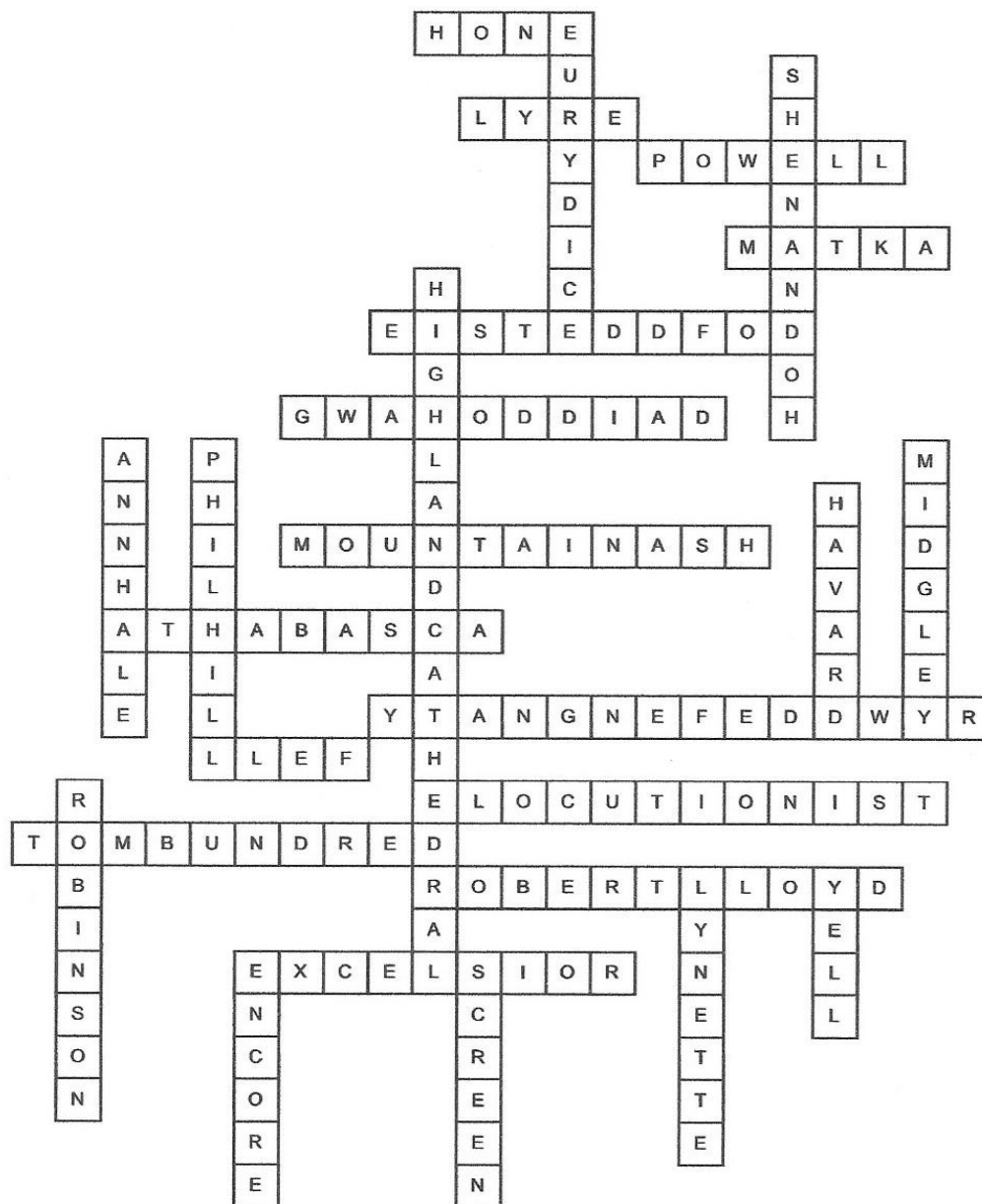
Company. He was also an original member of the British National Opera Company. He also started using the name "**Parry Jones**" professionally.

Throughout his career, Jones appeared in all the leading English festivals and appeared in that of the International Society of Contemporary Music in 1938. Jones' repertoire included opera, German leieder, French and English songs, and music contemporary of his time. In his performances, he appeared with the Carl Rosa Opera Company, the Covent Garden Company, the Royal Philharmonic, the Liverpool Philharmonic and Royal Choral Societies, and in the BBC Symphony and Promenade concerts.

Jones also sang with Toscanini in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and was in the first performances in England of *Wozzeck*, *Gurrelieder*, *Doctor Faustus*, *Psalmus Hungaricus*, *Christopher Columbus*, and *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*.

He taught at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Gwynn Parry Jones retired in 1954 and was the subject of *This Is Your Life* in 1957. He died in London on 26 December 1963 at age 72. He was later honoured in his home town Blaina, along with Mostyn Thomas and others, by having a street named after him in the Forgeside council estate in 1985.

# AOMC Xmas Crossword 2020



## Across

- 1 Stanley - first AOMC accompanist
- 4 Orpheus's instrument
- 5 Tom - first Secretary of Abertillery Orpheus Male Choir
- 6 The Pope's folk song
- 8 A Welsh Music and Poetry Gathering
- 9 An Invitation
- 14 Location of 1921 Orpheus Juvenile Choir Music Festival success (8,3)
- 15 Canadian Glacier - site of impromptu concert
- 16 The Peacemakers (1,13)
- 17 A Cry
- 19 Trevor Wilde's choir role
- 20 First Conductor (3,7)
- 21 The Six foot Cinderella (6,5)
- 24 The Llanhilleth Male Choir

## Down

- 2 Orpheus' Wife
- 3 A river in Virginia
- 7 Scottish Religious Building (8,9)
- 10 Ladies Choir accompanist for 40 years (3,4)
- 11 50 Year Man (4,4)
- 12 Vernon & Maryetta
- 13 Long serving accompanist was a Joy
- 18 Susan - 26 years a soprano soloist with the choir
- 22 Miss Greenway - Patron
- 23 A Japanese Shout
- 24 AOMC's 1997 Record title
- 25 Ivor, the conductor of both Orpheus Ladies and Male Choir