

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Council helps Noosa Chorale with a home of its own
- From the President
- Life Member tribute for John Woodlock
- Messiah in June at The J
- Messiah's melismata—can you Handel them?
- What's coming up
- Hallelujah! Win 2 tickets to Handel's Messiah
- And on a light-hearted note

Celebrating 20 years Concert Program 2014

8th June
Handel's
Messiah

19th October
20th Year Gala
Performance

20th & 21st
December
Wassail 2014
(Christmas Cheer
Concert)

Council helps Noosa Chorale with a home of its own

JIM FAGAN

On June 8 Noosa Chorale will perform Handel's "Messiah" and early in March it was a chorus of hallelujahs all round when the singers rehearsed at The J at Noosa Junction for the first time. It's taken 20 years but the choir at last has a home of its own.

Noosa barrister Joe McMahon founded the choir in 1994 and, as President John Davies told Noosa Today, "Since then it's been a case of practising at various halls, performing concerts at different venues and then storing the Chorale's archives and most of our equipment in someone's garage or cellar.

"We thought that with the establishment of the Sunshine Coast Council, the Bicentennial Hall at Sunshine Beach, our most recent

concert venue, would be upgraded but, as with many things north of the Maroochy River, that wasn't to be. Instead, after every concert we had to move out our stage risers which had been stored there for many years.

Continued page 2...



Councillor Frank Wilkie congratulates Noosa Chorale music director Adrian King on the choir's move to The J. Photo: Ann Milland

From the President of Noosa Chorale

What a fabulous beginning it has been to the Chorale's new chapter in life, with the move to our new home of The J coinciding with our celebration of 20 years since the Chorale was established. Our first three rehearsals there have met with overwhelming approval from choristers who are delighted with all the support provided by The J's helpful staff, and the exceptional quality of the space and facilities.

At the Noosa Chorale Inc 2014 AGM on 11th March, Adrian King was re-appointed Music Director to enthusiastic applause.

The newly elected members of the Management Committee in 2014 are, along with myself as President:

- ◆ Talluah Harper, Vice-President
- ◆ Michael Andersen, Venues Manager
- ◆ Cal Webb, Secretary & Publications Editor
- ◆ Julie Simpson, Treasurer

- ◆ Jane Tillson, Publicity Officer
- ◆ Nan Felton, Librarian
- ◆ Jim Fagan, Fund-Raising
- ◆ Pam Sage, Deputy Music Director & Assistant Librarian)
- ◆ Carol Monks
- ◆ Helen Cundiff, Membership & Mailing Lists

Congratulations and thank you to my fellow members for their willingness to serve the Chorale.

At the AGM, we also were thrilled to be able to acknowledge publicly the wonderful contribution made by John Woodlock to the Chorale, by awarding him Life Membership. (See story page 2)

Don't forget to submit your entries for the Messiah competition (see page 4 of this newsletter). You can't win if you're not in!

John Davies,
President.



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on Facebook

www.noosachorale.org.au

Find out more from
our website

... Continued from page 1

The partnership we hoped for did not eventuate.

"Until today that is. Now we will not only rehearse at The J, we will perform at a ready-made concert theatre. Thanks to our own Noosa Council, there is a spirit abroad of community consultation and community partnership and I would like to acknowledge the help of the council, particularly The J's venue co-ordinator, Scott Braby, and his staff with the negotiations.

"It's a mutually happy deal, something we had hoped to do with the Sunshine Coast Council but were unable to achieve. It is a true partnership as The J will be able to store and use our stage equipment when needed," John said.

Handel's Messiah was the first work the Chorale performed in 1994 and it has chosen to present it again as a key part of its 20-year anniversary celebrations.

The Chorale has a reputation for presenting major choral works on a major scale and it is sparing no effort to make the

June concert a memorable one as it will feature 90 singers, a 22-piece Baroque orchestra and four soloists, all of whom have sung with Australian and New Zealand opera companies.

Chorale music director, Adrian King, feels the already rich sound of the choir will be greatly enhanced by the move to The J. "It's fantastic," he said. "The acoustics at The J are much better than the Bicentennial Hall and being able to rehearse in the same auditorium as our concerts can only help us."

Last Saturday John, Adrian and some choir members were welcomed to The J by Noosa Councillor Frank Wilkie.

"This move by the Chorale is an excellent illustration of how staff under the new council structure are better able to use their initiative to utilise facilities like the J for the benefit of community groups and, ultimately, ratepayers," he said.

"This is a good example of making community facilities sing!"

Reprinted: Courtesy of Noosa Today

Life member tribute for John Woodlock

Noosa Chorale president for 11 years, John Woodlock, has been made a life member of the choir. John and wife Yvonne are planning to leave Noosa to be closer to their grandchildren in Brisbane, and the decision to honour John's work for the choir was loudly applauded at its annual general meeting on Tuesday, March 11.

Committee member Jim Fagan reviewed the contribution John has made. "Back in 2002 the choir was having problems. Our music director Leonard Spira had resigned the previous year but had agreed to continue if the load of arranging and publicising concerts could be taken away from Gail and him.

"John took over both jobs and the first concert he promoted was the Verdi Requiem. To give you some idea of the Woodlock deathless prose at that time here are couple of lines from his publicity writing.

'Peaceful and dramatic as a wild and turbulent sea. Verdi's Requiem can be as sublime and serene as your favourite beach on a calm and windless day.'

"In spite of that, the Requiem was a sell-out!

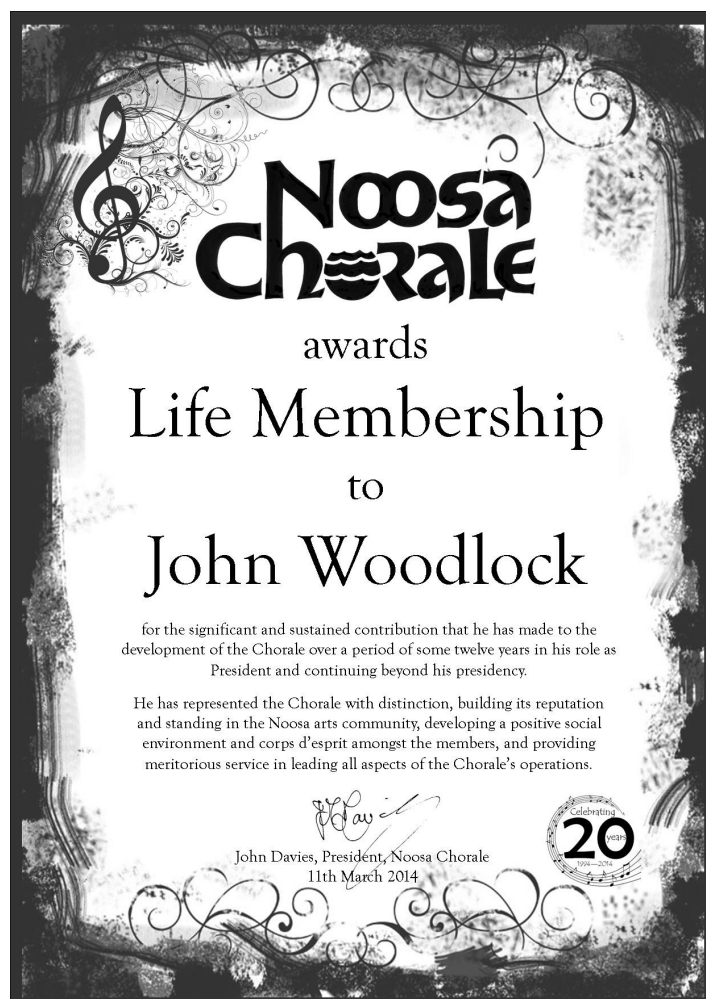
"The president at the time, Jim McDonald, also decided to resign to concentrate on his PhD and John took over as president, bringing to the job an energy and skill which bonded us more than ever before and, importantly, giving Leonard some space so that we were lucky to have him as choirmaster until the end of 2006 when another maestro called Adrian King came to us.

"It's easy to use words like 'energy,' 'enthusiasm,' 'creativity,' 'drive,' 'originality,' 'talent' when it comes to describing John but when they are used for someone who has a genuine love for what he is doing, and wants only the best for those he is doing it for, then this work ethic takes on a new and very real and exciting significance.

"Perhaps it is best shown by the fact that one of John's jobs is now being done by a publicity committee of four!

"And also by the number of singers here tonight. Keeping members is usually a matter of concern for many choirs but over the years we have retained a constant and eager membership. This choir is stronger than it has ever been, and even more exceptional and enriching in sound than it has ever been, and that is the legacy John's leadership has given us."

"I have much pleasure in moving that John Woodlock be made a life member of Noosa Chorale."



Messiah in June at The J

Every year, there are thousands of performances of Handel's *Messiah* around the world, and every one of them is different. Unlike many great choral works, *Messiah* does not actually require a full symphony orchestra, nor a large choir, and this helps to explain why it is so universally performed.

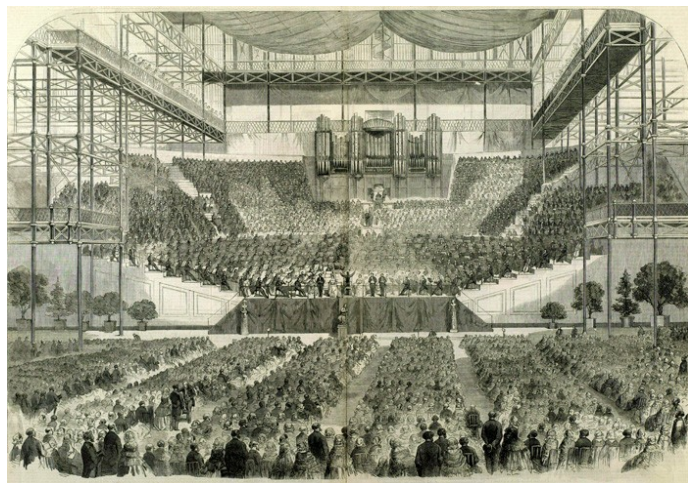
Nonetheless, some performances have been enormous affairs like the massed choir (pictured) of 2000 singing at London's Crystal Palace in 1857, with an orchestra of 500.

Writing about another massive performance of the day at Westminster Abbey in 1785, Abigail Adams, a noted correspondent, swooned over the sheer scale and immensity of the concert: "...conceive six hundred voices and instruments perfectly chording in one word and one sound! I could scarcely believe myself an inhabitant of Earth. I was one continued shudder from the beginning to the end of the performance."

Noosa Chorale's performance on the afternoon of Sunday 8th June is shaping up to be a fabulous occasion—a little smaller, that's for sure, but no less memorable than those London extravaganzas. Although the sixth time the Chorale has sung *Messiah* since their first concert in 1994, this will

be the first concert they have held at their new home of The J. The soloists and orchestra are all lined up, and the choir is already in excellent voice preparing to hit the dizzy heights again.

Tickets will go on sale soon—watch this space!



Handel Festival at The Crystal Palace, London, 1857.
Reproduced in *Illustrated London News*, 27 June 1857; pp. 630–631

Messiah's melismata—can you Handel them?

Handel was a great one for using melisma in his music—this is where a single syllable is sung continuously over different notes across a passage, such as in 'For unto us a child is born'. The effect of such ornamentation is a musical lightness and delicacy which distinguishes many of the choruses and solo passages in *Messiah*. But for many choristers, singing the melismatic passages can feel like an extreme sport and the vocal gymnastics involved can be difficult to achieve and master.

So for all you choristers who are feeling melodramatically challenged, here's 10 tips from Music Director Adrian King on how to Handel it!

1. Keep your voice light. Don't sing with vibrato or too loud. A light, unburdened voice is much easier to sustain and much less tiring in performance, as well as being much more pleasant to listen to.



Happy Birthday score (Handel version)

2. Study the melismatic passages to understand their structure. Notice the way the pattern is built up, concentrating on how the primary note in each phrase builds the sequence. Look also at the interplay of the four parts, seeing how the patterns reflect and echo each other, and where they depart from the patterns.
3. Try to think of each note on beat 1 of the measure as a "target" or "energy" note, and group the three 16th-notes before it as "towards" the target (slight crescendo into the target) and the three 16th-notes after the target as "fade" notes which are not quite as vigorously articulated. This allows a line to be seen as having a structure with some ebb and flow, as opposed to a long stream of identical notes.
4. Sing the melismas very slowly to begin with until they are correct. Then gradually speed them up. Break the melismas into small sections and slowly piece them together. Sing them to a variety of sounds and consonants – much like "scat singing" in the jazz genre. Also try to visualise the phrases in a way that emphasises this light and dancing pulse:

1234—1234—1234 ...

Da-da-da-da—Da-da-da-da—Da-da-da-da ...

Doo-bee-doo-bee—Doo-bee-doo-bee ...

Pah-pa-pa-pa—Pah-pa-pa-pa—Pah-pa-pa-pa ...

Try singing the melisma on nah, with lots of loose jaw movement on the n. Once notes and rhythms are accurate and the jaw is relaxed, sing the melisma with the text. There should be a natural bounce retained for each note and a real nice clarity.

Continued page 4

What's coming up?

Maleny Harmony Day

21 March, Maleny Community Centre

Email: Laurel goodwills@ozemail.com.au

Phone: 5435 2333

Minefields and Miniskirts

13—22 March, Noosa Arts Theatre

<http://www.noosaartstheatre.org.au/productions/ournextproduction.aspx>

Ornaments of the Earth concert

(Handel chamber concert with soprano soloist)

4 April, Cooroy Butter Factory

Phone: Janet Brewer 5446 8128

Sunshine Coast Oriana Choir

2014 Competition Showcase

6 April, Caloundra Uniting Church

<http://www.oriana.org.au/events/whats-next/>

Caloundra Chorale—A Choral Easter

13 April, CCSA Hall, Nutley St, Caloundra

<http://www.caloundrachorale.com.au/home.html>

Queensland Choral Convention 2014

20—22 June, Crowne Plaza Surfers Paradise

<http://www.qcc2014.com/>

... continued from page 3

5. Memorise the melismatic passage so that the phrase will flow more easily instead of sounding too technical and exacting. Imagine a wheel-like motion to get the idea of the flowing style.
6. Practise the runs with a gradual crescendo to the end, in order that the phrase doesn't disappear! This applies particularly to the bass ascending passage in "For unto us".
7. Practise melismatic sections with lots of diaphragm work (like laughing) and work on nailing each note in tune. Start slowly and increase the tempo as the line comes easier.
8. Instead of straight quavers or semiquavers, "swing" the rhythm of the melismatic passages.
9. If you're running out of air, don't try snatching a large breath in a gap—your stolen inhalation will be magnified many times over. Try refreshing your breath by not singing a few notes and quietly inhaling instead, thereby creating a feeling of continuity in the phrase.
10. Finally, practice makes perfect! Please but do remember – 15 minutes twice a day is better than 40 - 50 minutes at a time as the voice will get tired with the continual work.

HALLELUJAH! Your chance to win 2 tickets to Handel's Messiah concert!

Entry is open to all readers of Noosa Chorale's Tune In Newsletter. Just answer the quiz question, and write a short passage saying what you like most about Noosa Chorale's performances.

SEND IN YOUR ENTRY WITH THE FOLLOWING DETAILS

Name

Address

Phone

Email address

Question 1: Where was Handel's Messiah first performance and when?

Question 2: What do you like most about Noosa Chorale's concerts? (up to 25 words)

SUBMIT ENTRIES

To: Cal Webb, Secretary

By hand: at rehearsal night

By email: cal@carolynwebb.com.au

CLOSING DATE 17th April 2014

Entries will be judged by a small panel chaired by John Davies (President). The winner will be announced the following week. A selection from amongst the best entries (anonymously if requested) will be published in a following issue of Tune In.

GOOD LUCK!!!

And on a light-hearted note



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For enquiries regarding Tune in, the Newsletter of Noosa Chorale Inc, please contact the Editor, Cal Webb.

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Please advise the editor if you wish to be removed from this mailing list.

For all other enquiries regarding Noosa Chorale Inc, please contact the President, John Davies.

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