

THE LAND OF SONG

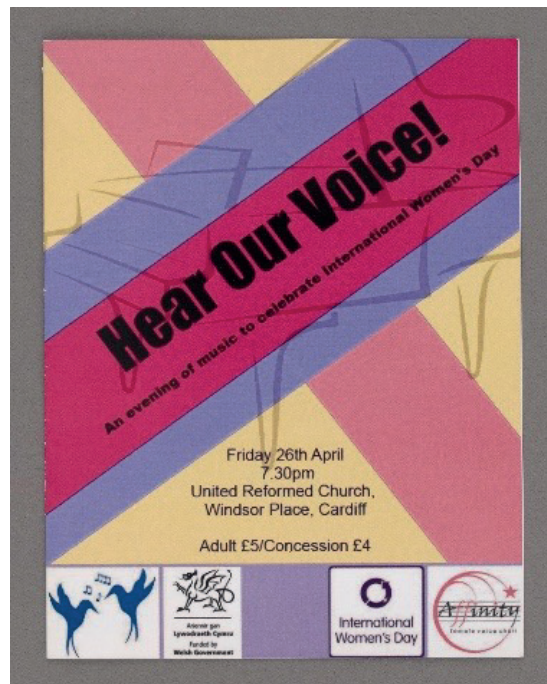
Choral singing has always played a significant role in the national identity of Wales. It is rooted in the culture, and dates back to the 18th century.

Whilst stereotypes and the perception of choirs have changed and evolved over the years, community singing is still relevant today and has now become a multi-purpose practice.

*What does choral music mean to you?
Have you ever sung in a choir, or attended a memorable choral concert?*



Framed photograph of the Royal Welsh Ladies' Choir and conductor Madame Clara Novello Davies, taken when the choir visited America. 1895



Programme 'Hear Our Voice! An evening of music to celebrate International Women's Day'. A concert held at United Reformed Church Windsor Place, Cardiff, on Friday 26 April 2013. Songbirds Choir was set up in 2012, and is a community choir for LGBT+ women and non-binary people based in Cardiff.

OBJECTS OF COMFORT

#OBJECTSOFCOMFORT

During the boom of the mining industry in Wales, many male voice choirs were formed and earned their place in history. In such perilous working conditions, it was often comradeship that saw the miners through.

When mass unemployment and hardship hit in the 1920s and 1930s, choirs often remained an emotional and social lifeline for many individuals living in industrial communities.



*Male voice choir in rehearsal. Treorchy, Wales.
© David Hurn/Magnum Photos/Amgueddfa Cymru*

One of the most famous pieces of music that is traditionally connected to male voice choirs, is 'Myfanwy', composed by Joseph Parry. Joseph Parry was born in Merthyr Tydfil in 1841, one of 7 children. At the age of nine, he worked in the coalmines to help support his family. They emigrated to Pennsylvania, USA, in 1854. Nineteen years later, he became Professor of Music at the University College, Aberystwyth.

***Do you have a favourite piece of music that has been performed by a male voice choir?
What memories does this music evoke?***

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*Plain wooden baton, tapering; silver mounted.
Formerly belonging to Joseph Parry. 1880's.*



Have you ever tried or have been interested in conducting?

Why not try our conducting activity!



Traditional choir music is often revisited by contemporary music artists. Welsh composer and performer, Cerys Matthews, recorded a version of the iconic 'Mi glywaf dyner lais' (Gwahoddiad) on her 2013 Hullabaloo album.

*Black and white photograph,
Cerys Matthews 1988.*

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What to wear?

Whilst times and attitudes towards formal dress are being challenged and are evolving, most choirs still wear a uniform or promote a collaborated identity.

Photograph of the Royal Welsh Ladies Choir with their conductor Madame Clara Novello Davies, taken before sailing to the World's Fair Eisteddfod at Chicago. 1893.



Shirt, waistcoat and tie are the uniform worn by South Wales Gay Men's Chorus from about 2008, and similar to the uniform worn today.



Black waistcoat with South Wales Gay Men's Chorus logo in raised 'diamonds', worn by Nick McNeill, Chair of the choir for many years, and a member since they formed in 2008.

OBJECTS OF COMFORT

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Singing in a group has so many positive health and wellbeing benefits. How does singing with others make you feel?



The Amgueddfa Cymru choir.