

# NOTES FROM THE TOP

Mandurah City Choral Society Newsletter | Winter edition 2015 | Editor Roger Palmer

## President's Message

Welcome to the winter edition of the MCCS newsletter – 'Notes from the Top'. What a great way for us all to communicate both within the choir and with our fan base out there! I encourage you all to contribute to future editions.

This year we hit the ground running with the March concert and then the Come and Sing that followed shortly afterwards. They were both extraordinary events and I congratulate you all. It has been nice to relax a little and appreciate learning some new and beautiful music over the past few weeks. Enormous thanks to Chris Timoney for taking the reins and keeping us on our toes with practice for the *Vivaldi Gloria* and some other interesting pieces too!

The executive committee has been busy as always and are currently planning the October concert that will feature the *Gloria* among other items and will include the orchestra. We had a planning meeting in June to help look at the next year for MCCS, which is a very special year as it is the 25th anniversary of the choir. In terms of planning I would like to encourage you to have a bit of a think about joining the committee next year as running the choir is an enormous job and help is needed in many ways. You may even know someone outside the choir who may be willing to help.

I hope you have all had a look at our shiny new website - it gives us a very professional edge don't you think? We will also be joining Facebook soon. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the committee members for the time and effort they put in to keep this choir running like a well oiled machine. Well done!

I would like to welcome all the new members who have joined us in 2015. I hope we have made you feel welcome and that you are enjoying singing with us.

Finally I hope that 'music is the wine that fills your cup of silence' (Robert Fripp) and that you delight in reading 'Notes from the Top'.

**Wendy Summers**  
MCCS President



## MCCS Rehearsals

Mandurah City Choral Society breaks from rehearsals over winter.

From Monday July 20 we will be back rehearsing Monday nights starting 7:15 pm at Christ's Church Mandurah. Come along and try us out!



## THE MAGIC FLUTE

**Tuesday 18 August 2015**

### Mandurah Performing Arts

The ancient tombs of the Pharaohs hide many secrets.

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## Patron's Piece

It is with delight that I contribute a few words to this winter edition newsletter of the Mandurah City Choral Society. I have been Patron of MCCS for many years now and am always honoured to attend your performances and indeed promote the activities of the Society. It is of interest that the Society's history spans the history of Mandurah becoming a city itself in 1990. It is so crucial that we have organisations like the Mandurah City Choral Society in our community because not only does it allow local people to be involved in their love of music and singing, but it also ensures that the arts is maintained and promoted as an integral part of any community's culture and heritage.

As the City of Mandurah evolves and develops, so too does our population. There is ample evidence that being active in local community groups, particularly arts based organisations like the MCCS, is so beneficial to one's mental, physical and emotional health. And there can be no greater joy than singing! I am always so proud to attend and watch performances by MCCS because I know you are all putting so much into your performances so that we in the audience can escape for an hour or so the challenges of life and immerse ourselves in the beauty of the human voice and spirit.

So thank you to all MCCS members for your contribution to the rich fabric, which is the cultural identity of Mandurah, and the Peel Region.

**David Templeman MLA**

**Proud Patron of The Mandurah City Choral Society.**



**Mary-Rose Campbell**  
Optometrist

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## 16-19 July – Cinderella

SWOC is delighted to announce that its Production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's Musical *Cinderella* will be performed at the Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre with a 17 piece live orchestra under the musical direction of Marguerite Monagle and direction and choreography of Mary-Ellen Sutherland.

**Contact 1300 661 272 for bookings.**

## Music Director's Observations

Music is such a powerful force in the world, and is even more powerful when groups of people get together to perform. Mandurah City Choral Society has matured into a vibrant performing group over the last few years, and I hope that it will prosper for many years to come.

I am always thrilled by the concerts that we stage, and with the dedicated effort that everybody puts in, even though the music at first seems challenging to many. I am looking forward to being back with you in July for the lead up to the October concert.

I have heard good things about your progress on the Vivaldi lately, and I congratulate you on what was obviously a highly successful Come and Sing, with Marilyn Phillips at the helm.

At the moment, Neb and I are still getting over our Grand Tour of Europe and the USA, with 10 countries visited, 5 different currencies needed, 16 plane flights successfully undertaken, and many cities, castles, palaces, cathedrals, lakes, lochs, and mountains! See you all in July!

**Chris Ryland**  
**Musical Director**





## Current Program

MCCS is rehearsing the *Vivaldi Gloria* in preparation for a performance with orchestra in early October.

## A minor musicianship lesson

### Some helpful terms

***dolce*** - softly and sweetly

***legato*** - smoothly joined, well connected

***molto*** - very

***maestoso*** - majestic

***da capo al fine*** - from the beginning to the word fine

***tie*** - a short curved line which joins two or more notes of the same pitch (sound the first note only and hold for the value of all the notes)



***slur (or phrase)*** - a curved line placed over the notes of different pitch, it means play legato, (smoothly joined and well connected)



## MPAC Remarks

It is with great pleasure that we established a partnership between MCCS and Mandurah Performing Arts Centre earlier this year. This partnership has seen the Choir rehearsing in MPAC's dance studio, presenting an autumn concert in the MPAC Foyer, and hosting the Come & Sing workshop and concert during Stretch Festival Mandurah in May.

Through the three year community engagement association with Jonathon Welch, first with Mandurah Sings in 2012, and then Mandurah Proms in 2013 and 2014, I have been introduced to the local choral scene and, in particular, MCCS. I have so enjoyed getting to know the choir, and appreciate the professionalism and commitment that ensures MCCS is a leading force in the local music scene.

In my view, the partnership with MCCS is a model for the way that MPAC intends to engage with our local and regional community into the future.

**Guy Boyce**

**General Manager MPAC**

## Board Member's Musings

Mandurah Performing Arts Centre exists to engage with the people of Mandurah, at inspirational levels. We are delighted that Mandurah City Choral Society has chosen to use our centre as a base for practice and performance. The arts, when performed collectively, touch us at a deeper level than our heads, whether ballet, plays or the opera, they have inspired some of the greatest creative minds to lift humanity.

This is personified by the choral society's aims.

Collective dance and song have underpinned people's highest cultural and historical identity, nationally, tribally and spiritually. We are moved at soul level by Beethoven's *9th chorale*, and Verdi's *Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves*.

As a soccer nut, I am always moved when I hear the Liverpool fans sing in unison *You'll never walk alone*. MCCS brings a new ubiquitous modern concept, using technology, transcending location, race or religion, as only collective voices can. Congratulations, and thank you for your contribution.

### Old Gaelic Song

*And whether the blood be high, lowland or no,  
And whether the skin be black or white as the snow  
Of kith and of kin we are one be it right be it wrong  
As long as our voices join the chorus of song*

**Mike Ryan**

**Board member MPAC**



## FunSing! with Marilyn Phillips

**Thursday 27 August - \$20**

**St. Nicholas' Church Hall, Floreat**

FunSing! was set up by Marilyn Phillips and some valiant helpers last year. It takes the form of an evening of mixed music, to be learned on the night – no performance, just what the title implies – FunSing! **Email Marilyn at [marilynnp@iinet.net.au](mailto:marilynnp@iinet.net.au) to register.**





## Singing Our Way To Wellness

The therapeutic contribution of singing to physical and mental health is well understood by all who participate in community choirs. I'm sure all of us have experienced its power in so many facets of our well-being. From my personal experience, singing in a community choir has nurtured my health in many ways. The benefits I have received can be grouped into two categories:

Physiological health benefits derived as a by-product of the exertion and discipline demanded of those who sing in concert, such as: stamina, posture, breath control, speech, concentration.

Mental Health benefits brought about by the release of endorphins, serotonin and other chemicals by the brain when singing that manifests as emotions, such as: joy, alertness, satisfaction, inclusion, worthiness, fulfilment.

What may be less well understood is the power each of us possesses to supercharge therapeutic benefits gained from singing, as well as from all other pursuits in life – the focus of this article.

Each of us is a unique individual with a persona shaped in part by our genetic lineage (nature) and in part by life-experiences collected to date (nurture). The extent to which the benefits of participating in a community choir is realised by us individually, will vary accordingly.

The emerging science of epigenetics (control above the genes) is indicating that our health outcomes depend more on the mind-set we carry than previously thought. It has been objectively shown that cohorts of people who adopt a positive, optimistic and loving outlook on life, tend to enjoy substantially better health outcomes than cohorts who adopt a negative, pessimistic and adversarial outlook. Indeed, some research has demonstrated an average life-span advantage of ~7 years to those in the positive camp.

In addition to environmental factors such as pollution, diet and exercise, the ability to manage stress in our lives is a major determinate of our health outcomes.

Stress can be a life saver or killer!

End part one. To be continued...

**Walter Bennett**

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## Editor's Comment

We hope you read and absorb this, the winter edition of 'Notes from the Top', and gain something from the publication. You are invited to submit articles on any choir or music related matter. We will publish anything, subject only to editorial scrutiny and the laws of libel. Anonymous submissions will, of course, not be considered.

Do you have suggestions for the committee to consider, or indeed would you like to share your thoughts on any choir matters with other choristers? What do you think of our move to MPAC for rehearsals? Do you know of a particular choral piece that you would like our music director to consider? Would you like to have some original music or lyrics published?

It is planned to have particular comment from executive committee members, our music director and our resident accompanist. Hopefully, you will also find our program of events, and times and venues for rehearsal included. The editor suggests you give earnest thought to assisting with 'Notes from the Top', as it will prosper with your valuable continuing support.

And finally, from Billy Joel.

*I think music in itself is healing. It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music.*

**Roger Palmer**  
Editor