

## New Mill Male Voice Choir

New Mill MVC was formed in 1991 when a few friends led by retired Welsh National Opera singer, Len Williams, decided to form a choir. Over the next 12 months numbers rose from a dozen to three dozen and a performing choir was born. As numbers grew strong friendships were forged and a spirit of openness and welcome developed which still exists today.

The Choir developed rapidly during their first decade. Tentative early performances were quickly followed by spectacular massed male voice concerts at Cardiff Arms Park and at the Royal Albert Hall (twice!). The choir produced its first CD, 'Mills Alive', and shared the stage with Brighouse and Rastrick Band at the Sheffield Cutler's Hall and Black Dyke Band at Huddersfield Town Hall. As the Millennium drew to a close the Choir produced a second CD, 'Mills Alive 2', with good friends Hade Edge Band. The choir marked its tenth anniversary with a packed celebration concert at Huddersfield Town Hall and developed links with the renowned Welsh Choir, Cantorian Colin Jones. Colin inspired the Choir and encouraged it to aim high.

Since 2002 the choir has enjoyed successful tours to Italy, Czech Republic, Spain, Poland, and this year to Belgium singing at the Menin Gate in Ypres, and at Ghent and Brugge cathedrals. The choir has also staged concerts at Huddersfield Town Hall with Cantorian Colin Jones, Sir Willard White (twice), Aled Jones, the Morrison Orpheus Choir, Julian Lloyd Webber and Alison Balsom. In 2013 the Choir hosted the successful new opera company 'Young Opera Venture' in a spectacular night of opera excerpts from *Carmen* and *The Magic Flute*.

The Choir competed successfully at the Don Valley Festival, winning in 2009 and 2010 and coming second in 2011. In May 2011 the choir were honoured to be able to stage a charity concert in York Minster. In 2013 they competed at the Cornwall International Male Voice Festival along with 60 other choirs from around the world, and will be making a return visit in 2015. Another highlight of a busy 2013 was a visit to London where the Choir sang in the magnificent surroundings of Southwark Cathedral and The Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

### ***Alan Brierley, Musical Director.***



Alan became Musical Director of New Mill Male Voice Choir in February 2011 following the retirement of Elizabeth Hambleton.

Alan has been involved in music throughout his life. Born into a musical family in which both his parents were pianists and organists, he was a chorister in the choir of Huddersfield Parish Church before going on to study at the renowned School of Music at Huddersfield Polytechnic (now the University.)

Throughout his teaching career Alan spent much time arranging music for his pupils, and that is still the case, only now it is for the wonderful men of New Mill Male Voice Choir.

Alan is keen to foster an enjoyment of music and when learning new pieces will often take time to explain to the men how a piece of music is put together, believing that an understanding of that process contributes to a successful concert performance. A recent example of that was the Choir's first performance of Robert Cockroft's *In Flanders Fields* in their October 2014 Town Hall concert with Sir Willard White.

## ***Emma McKenna, Accompanist***



Emma was appointed as accompanist to New Mill Male Voice Choir in July 2012. Emma studied at Huddersfield University where she was awarded a B.Mus ( Hons) degree and also achieved a PGCE teaching qualification from Bretton College. She is currently Deputy Head of Lindley Junior School where she has been a major influence in helping to build the tremendous reputation of the school in the music world, having been winners of the prestigious BBC Songs of Praise Award and the Llangollen Music Festival in 2014.

In addition to giving private piano tuition Emma has accompanied Longwood Operatic Society and the Huddersfield Light Opera Company for the past ten years and supported several other musical groups.