

Reminiscences

by John Pearn

Reminiscences on People

Musical Connections

St.Dennis 1953 to 1994



by

John Pearn

Information from over 40 years

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Musical Reminiscences on The People I Knew

Connected with the Village of St.Dennis

From 1953 to 1994

Introduction

What makes a musical area? Is it the underlying rock, industrial landscape or the people with musical talents? During the period above it could be amateur musicians with no professional training or degrees. My experience is drawn from both the area and people met in various places and across a range of music genre. Music made by the amateur in choirs, brass bands, orchestras and various instruments. Enthusiastic performances passed on to appreciating audiences from one generation to another.

Mrs. Sheaff

The Mother of William Sheaff

I knew William Sheaff as a young teacher and local Methodist preacher. His mother was organist at Hendra Road Methodist Church as mentioned in his reminiscences on the St.Dennis Village Website.

My mother received organ lessons from Mrs. Sheaff and played the organ at Indian Queens Wesley Church from 1921 to 1973, before moving to Saltash. Her playing was recognised with a certificate for over 40 years service by The Methodist Church. Mother taught me the organ as an 11 year old boy. My certificate recognises over 60 years of playing in various areas.

Musicians I Knew and Respected

People connected with church choir music, male voice choirs, orchestra and individual instruments such as piano and organ etc. have given pleasure to many audiences and enhanced one's personal performance. I call to mind St.Dennis people such as Harold Treloar, Eddie Williams, Garfield Craddock, Stan Penhaligan, Harold Dunstan, Preston Juleff, Michael Strongman and Hugh Camps. They were all connected with choirs and St.Dennis Band.

I also call to mind the following people :-

- Miss Williams – St.Dennis C.P.School.

- Mrs. Beryl Hooper née Paynter – St.Dennis C.P. School and Trevisker C.P. School St.Eval.
- Mr. Jack Solomon – Headteacher of Trevisker C.P. School St.Eval
Jack Solomon was the son of Mrs. Solomon of St.Dennis who formed the All Stars Choir.
- Arnold Tucker, my father in law, was a brass band player with Foxhole and Indian Queens Silver Band.
- Numerous youngsters from St.Dennis singing, playing with St.Dennis Youth Band, St.Dennis School Choir, St.Stephen in Brannel Secondary School Choir and chapel choirs.

Harold Treloar

Musical Director of St.Dennis Male Voice Choir

The first occasion I met Harold was at the Indian Queens Wesley Church where St.Dennis Male Voice Choir was giving a concert. Miss Doris Bullock was the accompanist. I was asked to accompany the choir in the piece “Thanks Be To God”. Miss Bullock said to me, “Watch Harold because he pulls the piece round a bit”! I managed to Harold’s satisfaction.

In 1985 I met Harold in Victoria, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. He had emigrated and I had a Commonwealth Exchange Teaching experience. He invited my wife Margaret and I to attend the Metropolitan United Church in Victoria where he was musical director of the choir and also to visit his home for lunch.

The first service I shall always remember as the anthem was sung with professional rendering while later in the service Harold played a saxophone solo by Bach. The visit to Harold’s home was repeated on a number of occasions. He extended to me an invitation to sing with the “gowned” choir. I did so on one occasion as school was my main commitment.

Harold also conducted the Arion Male Voice Choir and I was fortunate to attend one of their rehearsals. Winnie, Harold’s wife commented, “Not like St.Dennis Male Voice Choir”! They tended to sing in unison and Harold wrote simple part music to encourage a wider repertoire. His rehearsals with both choirs were master classes for me. He was meticulous in performance with accuracy to detail. Having conducted church choirs myself it emphasised the things I had learnt irrespective of the type of music being performed. Our conversations often led back to St.Dennis and home!



Metropolitan

The United Church of Canada

1411 QUADRA STREET
VICTORIA, B.C. V8W 2L2

MINISTERS

THE REV. L.E. FETTER, B.A., B.D.	721-0155
THE REV. E. LAURA BUTLER, B.A. S.T.M.	384-6248
THE REV. ALEX CALDER, B.A.	598-4677

MINISTER EMERITUS

THE REV. A.E. KING, B.A., D.D.	598-3727
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DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

HAROLD TRELOAR
478-0016

ORGANIST

URSULA THOMAS, L.R.S.M.
656-3345

Church Office: 382-8184

Metropolitan United Church of Canada where Harold Treloar was Director of Music.

Margaret and I attended this church on a number of occasions during our stay in Victoria from January to July 1985.

At Harold's invitation we first visited it on 28th. January 1985.

The anthem rendered by Harold's choir was "O Lord My God"

Solomon's Prayer by SS.Wesley.

Harold played a saxophone solo "Arioso from Cantata 156 by J.S.Bach

The church could hold 1200 people.
The morning congregation on 28th. January 1985 was 750 people.

I was invited to join the choir for its 126th. Anniversary on 10th. February 1985.
The anthems sung were "Praise to the Lord The Almighty" by Norman Gilbert with trumpet accompaniment and "Thanks be to God" from Mendelssohn's Elijah. The choir members numbered 40.

Due to our commitments we did not attend every week but anthems I remember were :-

10th. March - "Onward Christian Soldiers"

24th. March - "The Legend" by Tchaikovsky (unaccompanied)
"All Ye Who Pass By" (first rendering in the church)

Anthems and introits were sung at all morning services. The standard was extremely high.
Harold used his talent on a world platform!



The Metropolitan United Church Choir leaving after service 16th. June 1985.

Harold's resignation service after 5 years as Musical Director.

He is in the centre by the music. The organ in the church was a four manual.

Note the pipes and central position.



Harold's Resignation Cake. Music on cake is part of the hymn "Crimond".
Also a framed Lord's Prayer.



After church Harold cuts his cake, assisted by the church organist Ursula Thomas L.R.A.M. We joined the crowded reception – a well deserved tribute to Harold's musical contribution. We represented the appreciation of St.Dennis people for a fine musician!



Colewood area in Victoria
Harold and Winnie Treloar's house in Victoria, British Columbia with his tourer in front.



John Pearn, Winnie Treloar, Harold Treloar

It was a pleasure to meet St.Dennis people in a distant land!
We spent many hours with them in their home and our temporary home in Cardiff Place,
close to the university.



Winnie Treloar, Margaret Pearn, Harold Treloar

We had pasties, yeast cake and saffron cake.
Harold would want to know about "home".

Carne Hill Methodist Chapel

The Choir

Mr.Garfield Craddock

Conductor

Miss.Doris Bullock

Accompanist

I met Margaret Tucker in 1953 as a seventeen year old and that year I was chairman of the St.Columb and Padstow Methodist Youth Rally. Margaret sang in the Youth Rally Choir on several occasions under Mrs.Grace Roseveare and also Carne Hill Methodist Chapel Choir. During the Easter the St.Dennis Methodist Youth Group the "Crusaders" visited London for the Methodist Youth Weekend in the Albert Hall and it was there that our friendship developed!

After National Service and college at St.Luke's, Exeter I gained a teaching post at St.Dennis All Age School and during our courting days sang in the Carne Hill Methodist Chapel Choir under Mr.Garfield Craddock. Garfield had a wonderful baritone voice, taking over the choir when Mr.Stanley Treloar retired. Stanley was the father of Harold Treloar. Cantatas and anthems were the order of the day. My experience of church music was widened from the menu of church music at St.Luke's College (Church of England).

Carne Hill Methodist Chapel Choir was fortunate in having members in all parts able to take solos when necessary, while teenage youngsters added youthful voices to the mature adults. "Giver Divine" was the cantata chosen for the Harvest Festival in 1957. This stood me in good stead when asked to conduct Indian Queens Wesley Choir in 1958. Our close association with Carne Hill Methodist Chapel Choir ended when living at Indian Queens.

Brass Band Playing

Cornet Lessons

Sir Malcolm Arnold

Mr.Eddie Williams

St.Dennis Youth Band

Our eldest daughter, Gillian was encouraged by her granfer Mr.A.Tucker to blow the cornet and he began to teach her from a typical tutor of the day. By this time we had moved to St.Merryn where I had my first headship. Living in the area was the composer Malcolm Arnold. Malcolm was keen for his child by his second marriage to attend the village school. Hence his visit to the school house. Once we had agreed a place for his son, he noticed the trumpet tutor on the piano.

“Who is playing the trumpet?” he asked. I explained that it was Gillian. Malcolm asked “Would she play to me?” Margaret and I were amazed that a composer and trumpet player was interested in a child. After listening to Gillian he said, “She needs a teacher like Mr. E. Williams of St. Dennis Band” In the future after playing with St. Dennis Youth Band Gillian played with the Cornwall Youth Band.

As Margaret’s parents lived in St. Dennis this was arranged. We were indebted to Mr. Mark Bazeley to bring Gillian back to Winnards Perch for me to collect on a Sunday lunchtime which saved me driving to St. Dennis. A lesson with Mr. E. Williams was followed by practice with the youth band. The Bazeley children were part of the youth band, while Mark and his brother both played in the St. Dennis Senior Band. The Youth Band entered various competitions which improves the standard of playing. Competition is important in pacing one’s music on the road to excellence and a lesson for life!

Mr. S. Penhaligan **Conductor of Indian Queens Band**

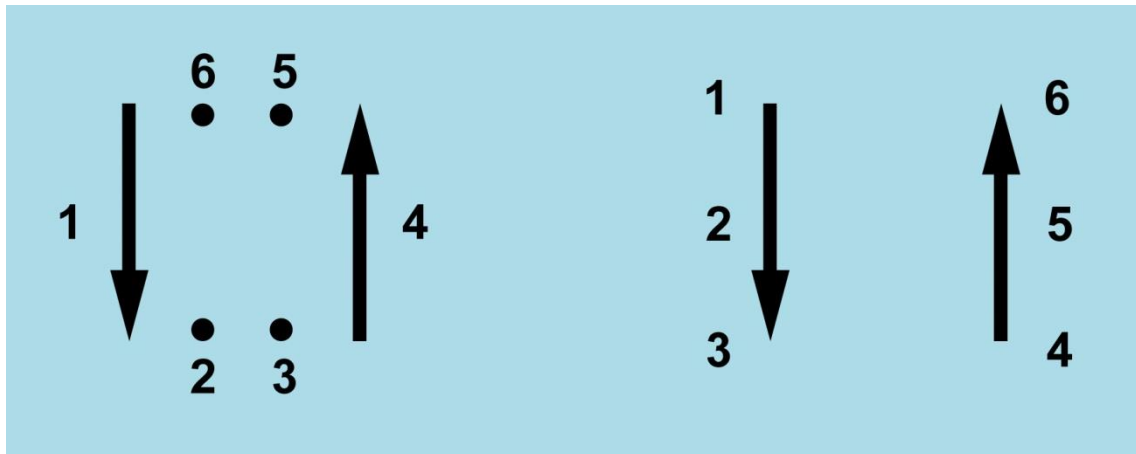
Mr. S. Penhaligan lived in St. Dennis and knew all about brass band playing. Gillian entered local music festivals and often played in the various age groups. Music festivals such as Indian Queens, Roche, Bugle and Wadebridge had brass sections as did local bands. Here, there was competition between youngsters. I accompanied Gillian on the piano and could tune the instrument to the piano. Mr. S. Penhaligan was often present and not being a brass player myself, I would leave the final tuning to him. I am sure that some of the prizes won by Gillian were due to his expertise in the final sound produced and also the precision of Mr. E. Williams teaching.

Gillian played with The Cornwall Youth Band, The Youth Band of Great Britain and she played the flute with The Wind Band of Great Britain. The standard of teaching in Cornwall must have been good!

Mr. P. Juleff **Ex St. Dennis Band**

Preston Juleff was a member of the successful St. Dennis Band in its early days. Unfortunately he suffered an industrial accident whilst operating a hose washing down the China Clay. As a result he lost his teeth and suffered facial damage. He was unable to play at the standard he set himself. He joined Indian Queens Wesley Chapel Choir to sing in the bass section. I was conducting the choir at the time but my conducting was learnt through books and watching other conductors!

On one occasion he said to me, "You work hard in your conducting. You don't need to conduct every beat in 6/8 time" This is shown in the diagrams below.



This was typical of Mr.Juleff. Just a quiet word to a youngster from a man of experience.

Some St.Dennis Senior Band Members

These people were known to me and of similar age

Michael Strongman and Hugh Camps

I met both Michael and Hugh at Newquay Grammar School for Boys. Michael was in the same class as myself and our teacher started an orchestra. The maths teacher taught us the violin and the geography teacher accompanied on the piano. I played second violin, while Michael and Hugh provided the brass section with a player from Newlyn East Band. Both boys played with the St.Dennis Senior Band for a number of years. Hugh Camps went on to conduct Bugle Band and tutor Cornwall Youth Band. Neither are living today, but I treasure the playing of Handel's Water Music and overtures like Zampa, Caliph of Baghdad and Air on the G String. All played as youngsters and trained by amateur musicians in addition to their normal subjects.

Desmond Angilley and Kenneth Tucker

Desmond Angilley began his career with Indian Queens Band and played under a number of conductors. His son went to music college and has played the piano for celebrated musicians. Kenneth Tucker kept up the family tradition of brass band playing.

Harold Dunstan

I met Harold Dunstan at Woolwich Arsenal while doing National Service in the Royal Artillery. He was playing in the Royal Artillery Band at a concert held in the barracks.

I have recorded this to show that music is a universal language and takes people all over the world.

School Music

St.Dennis, St.Stephen in Brannel and Trevisker C.P. (R.A.F. St.Eval)

School music has featured prominently in my teaching career. Choirs, recorder groups and percussion instrument groups have been formed. Music festivals were entered, sometimes winning, sometimes losing, rejoicing with those who did better.

Miss F.O. Williams

Miss Williams accompanied our St.Dennis School Choir on the piano and was keen on Gilbert and Sullivan. This again developed another aspect of music making. The County Music Festival held at Perranporth was entered and encouraged by Mr.Lewis, headteacher. We performed at a reasonable standard but the winners were Perranporth C.P. School under Mr. Nancarrow. They had won on previous occasions.

Mrs. Beryl Hooper (née Paynter)

Ex St.Dennis teacher, teaching at Trevisker C.P. (R.A.F. St.Eval)

As Deputy Head at Trevisker, I teamed up with Beryl to form a choir, encouraged by the Headteacher, Mr. Jack Solomon (a St.Dennis boy). He was the son of Mrs. Solomon, who during the war years, had formed the All Stars Choir in St.Dennis.

The County Festival was held at St.Ives Guild Hall in 1966. Parents, Mr. B.Chaine (the caretaker) and my wife Margaret assisted with the children. The parking arrangements were changed hence we were late arriving. Our class had begun but fortunately we were in time to take our turn.

The children were excited and could see the array of trophies through the glass door. I had told Mr.Solomon previously that we had a difficulty of staying in tune,

but we would go. Mr.Solomon's reply was, "Don't worry John, they will rise to the occasion". He knew R.A.F. children better than I did!

The children wanted to know, "Is that what we came for sir"? My answer was, "You will need to sing better than you did at rehearsal"! We took our position on the stage. Beryl and I were probably a little nervous. We began and their tuning was spot on! Diction was excellent and the result was that we were first out of a number of choirs. We won the County Shield and the second class of Voices and Recorders Cup.

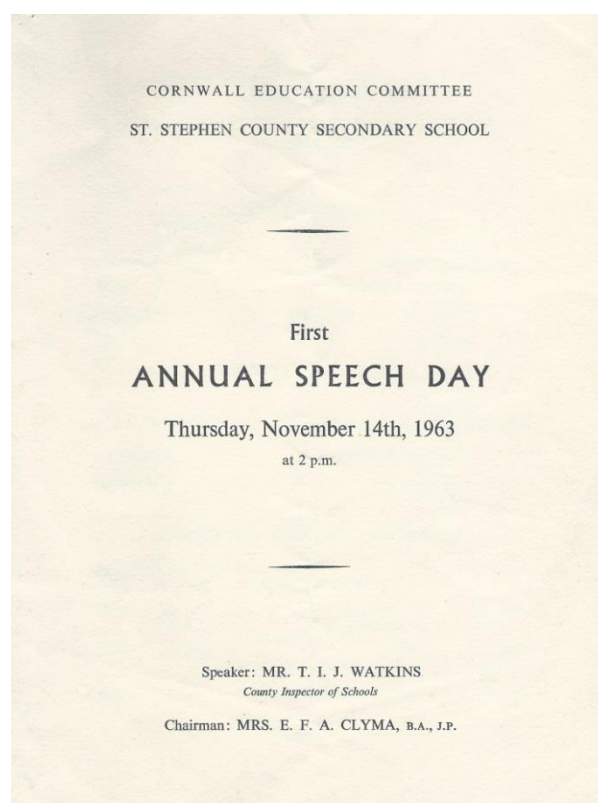
Bill Chainey, the caretaker, whose father trained Gweek Band was delighted and began to find a place in the hall for the shield, cup and certificates. My remark was, "Steady Bill as next year we could lose the lot"! Next year we lost the County Shield at Truro but retained the Voices and Recorders Cup.

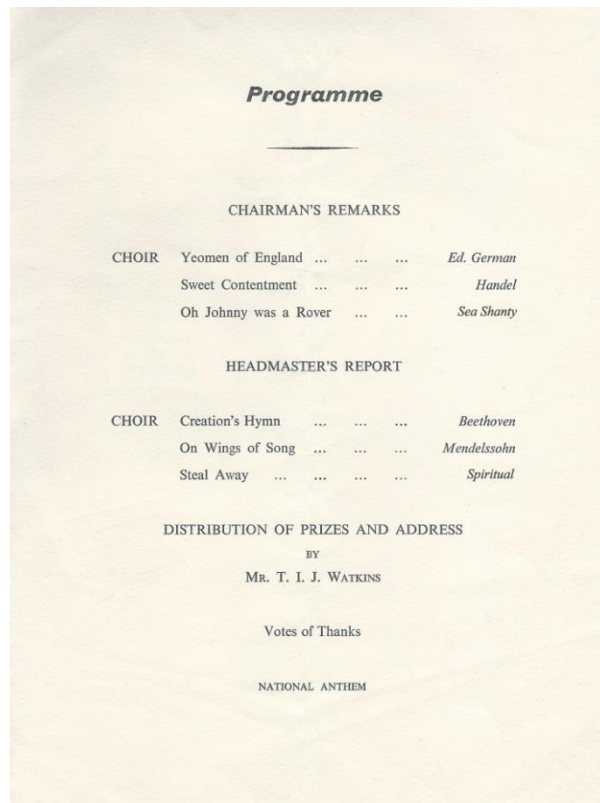
Jack Solomon believed that children would rise to the occasion. He was a colourful character who could inspire a staff and was willing to use local people to achieve the aims of his school.

St.Stephen in Brannel Secondary School

1962 to 1964

St.Dennis children contributed to the musical life of the school. They became founder members of the school choir singing under accompanist Mr. H.Dunn (music teacher ex St.Stephen C.P. School) whilst I conducted the choir. This choir sang at the first Annual Speech Day for the school.





Prizes were presented by Mr. Watkins, County Inspector. One of the prize winners was Valerie Bestwetherick. She won the first music prize presented.

SUBJECT PRIZES (continued)			
Art	C. Rowe	Domestic Science	L. Gay
Needlework	V. Best	Rural Science	D. Doherty
Music	V. Beswetherick	Physical Education	N. Prynne B. Grigg
Progress	A. Manhire C. Hooper	O. Green D. Norrish	C. Crowle D. Gregory

Mr. Edward Jacobs
Son of St.Dennis parents Mr. and Mrs. R.Jacobs
becomes a primary school teacher at Burraton C.P. school Saltash
and in charge of music

Mrs.Jacobs taught my wife Margaret in St.Dennis School. They lived in Trelavour Road and Mr.Jacobs built his own organ. They moved to Bristol for his work and their son was born there.

While headteacher of Burraton C.P. School the governors and myself interviewed a teacher for a music post as well as a general class teacher. I required a pianist but had previously had teachers of music who were unable to play the piano with

confidence. I set up the interview so that each candidate played a set hymn. This was, “Jesus I have promised” to the modern tune. Governors were invited to listen to the rendering as sight reading was an important issue. Candidates on the whole struggled with it.

My wife Margaret, as school secretary, provided all with tea and biscuits. One candidate remarked that Margaret had a Cornish accent. She said to the candidate that he would not know the area or village she came from. The candidate replied, “Yes I do, my mother and father came from St.Dennis and lived in Trelavour Road”!

Margaret realised it was Edward Jacobs. I did not know this as the formal interview had begun and there was nothing on his documentation to indicate a link with St.Dennis.

Edward gave a robust performance of the piece of music set and was far better than anyone who played. I did not know his background but knew the teacher I required! He was still teaching at Burraton C.P. when I retired in 1994 and only finished there in 2019. He built the musical tradition of the school with his enthusiasm for all types of music. His accompanying was of a high order and electric.

Finale

In recent years Mr. and Mrs. W.Sheaff came to live in Saltash and we worshipped at the same church. Mr.Sheaff continued his local preaching and often led a group to visit the Tamar Nursing Home. It was a pleasure to join this group and accompany any musical items.

I am grateful to all these people, plus others in the Mid Cornwall area for enriching my life and family with a wide range of music.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Pearn', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

July 2020

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