

Reminiscences

by John Pearn

Reminiscences on People

Musical Connections

St.Dennis 1953 to 1994



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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.

1. Mrs. Sheaff - The mother of William Sheaff

I knew William Sheaff as a young Teacher, local Methodist Preacher and his mother was organist at Hendra Road Methodist Church (mentioned in his Reminiscences - St. Dennis Web Site). My mother received organ lessons from Mrs. Sheaff and played the organ at Indian Queens Wesley Church from 1921 - 1973 before moving to Saltash. Her playing was recognised with a Certificate for over 40 year 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.

2. Musicians I knew and respected

People connected with Church Choir music, Male Voice, Orchestra Individual Instruments (piano, 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, Hugh Camp, All connected with choirs and St. Dennis Band. Teachers in our local schools - Miss Williams, Mrs. Beryl Hooper (St. Dennis & Trevisker C.P - St. Eval) Mr. Jack Solomon Head of Trevisker - son of Mrs. Solomon who formed the All Stars Choir. My father-in-law a Brass Band player with Foxhole and Indian Queens Silver Band. Numerous youngsters from St. Dennis singing, playing with St. Dennis Band (Youth), St. Dennis School Choir, St. Stephens in Brannel Secondary School Choir, Chapel Choirs.

a) Harold Treloar, Musical Director of St. Dennis Male Voice Choir.

The first occasion I met Harold was at the Indian Queens Wesley Chapel where St. Dennis M.V. Choir was giving a concert

② Miss D. 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 Margaret and I to attend the Metropolitan United Church in Victoria where he was Musical Director of the Choir 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 M. V. Choir and I was fortunate to attend one of their rehearsals. Winnie, Harold's wife commented, "Not like St. Dennis M. V. 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, 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!

b) Came Hill Methodist Chapel - The Choir - Conductor Mr. Garfield Craddock, Accompanist: Miss D. Bullock.

I met Margaret in 1953 as a seventeen year old and that year I was chairman to the St. Columba and Padstow Methodist Youth Rally. Margaret sang in the Youth Rally Choir on several occasions under Mrs. G. Roseveare, also Came Hill Methodist Chapel Choir. During the Easter 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 chapel choir under Mr. Garfield Craddock. Garfield had a wonderful baritone voice, taking over the choir when Mr. Stanley Treloar retired. He 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 (C of E). The choir was fortunate in having members in all parts able to take solos.

③ 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 Queens Wesley Choir in 1958. Our close association with Came Hill Choir ended when living at Indian Queens.

Brass Band playing - Cornet Lessons - Sir Malcolm Arnold,
c) Mr. E. Williams and St. Dennis Youth Band

Our eldest daughter was encouraged by her grandfather - 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 the second marriage, that he could 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. "Would she play to me?" Margaret and I were amazed that a composer and trumpet player was interested in a child. After listening he said, "She needs a teacher like Mr. E. Williams of St. Dennis Band." In the future after St. Dennis Youth Band, the Cornwall Youth Band!

As Margaret's parents lived in St. Dennis this was arranged. We were indebted to Mr. Math Bazely 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. Williams was followed by practice with the Youth Band. The Bazely 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 and such improves the standard of playing. Competition is important in pacing one's music on the road to excellence - a lesson for life!

d) Mr. S. Penhaligan - Conductor of Indian Queens Band.

Mr. 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 Wadbridge 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. Penhaligan was often present; and not being a brass player myself, 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, also the precision of Mr. Williams teaching.

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



The Metropolitan
United Church
Choir leaving
after service

16 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 part of
the hymn "Crimond," also
a framed hord's Prayer.



After church Harold
cuts his cake, assisted
by the church organist-
Ursula 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!



Metropolitan

The United Church of Canada

1411 QUADRA STREET
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DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

HAROLD TRELOAR
478-0016

ORGANIST

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

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Harold Treloar - he was
Director of Music at
this Church in
VICTORIA, capital of
British Columbia,
Canada.

We attended this church on a number of occasions during our stay in Victoria Jan - July 1985

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

Anthem rendered by Harold's Choir were

"O Lord God", Solomon's Prayer

by S.S. Wesley
Harold played a Saxophone Solo:
Arioso from Cantata 156 J.S. Bach.

The church could hold 1200 people. The morning congregation on 28th Jan '85 was 750 people.

I was invited to join the choir for its 126th Anniversary 10 Feb '85
Anthem "Praise to the Lord the Almighty" - Norman Gilbert with Trumpet Accompaniment. Also "Thanks be to God" from Mendelssohn's
The choir numbered 40. Due to our commitments we did (Elijah. not attend every week but anthems I remember were

Mar 24th The Legend by Tchaikovsky (unaccompanied)

All Ye who Pass By (first rendering in the Church)

Mar 10th Onward Christian Soldiers

Anthems and Introits were sung at all morning services.

The standard was extremely high - Harold used his talent on a world platform!!



Colewood
area in
Victoria.



Harold and
Winnie Treloar's
House in
Victoria, British
Columbia, also
his tourer.

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

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



④ c) Mr. P. Juleff (ex St. Dennis Band)

Preston was a member of the successful St. Dennis Band in its early days. Unfortunately he suffered an industrial accident when operating a hose washing down the clay. As a result he lost his teeth and facial damage. He was unable to play at the standard he set himself. He joined 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 was typical of Mr. Juleff, just a quiet word to a youngster from a man of experience.

f) Some Senior St. Dennis Band known to me and of similar age. Michael Strongman, Hugh Camps, Desmond Angilley, Harold Dunstan, Kenneth Tucker.

Michael Strongman and Hugh Camps I met at Newquay Grammar School for Boys. Michael was in the same class as myself and our teachers started an orchestra. The Maths teacher taught us the violin, 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 Senior Band for a number of years. Hugh Camps went on to conduct Bugle Band and Tulor Cornwall Youth Band. Neither are living today, but I treasure the playing of Handel's Water Music, overtures like Zampa, Caliph of Baghdad, Air on the G String, all played as youngsters and trained by amateur musicians in addition to their normal subjects.

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 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.

⑤ School Music, St. Dennis, St. Stephens in Brannel, Trevisker (RAF St Eval)

School music has featured prominently in my teaching career. Choirs, recorder groups and percussion instruments have been formed. Music Festivals entered, sometimes winning, sometimes losing, rejoicing with those who do better!

⑤

a) Miss Williams accompanied St. Dennis School Choir 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, head teacher. We performed at a reasonable standard but the winners were Perranporth C.P. School under Mr. Wencarrow. They had won on previous occasions.

b) Mrs. B. Hooper (ex St. Dennis teacher. Teaching at Trevisker C.P. R.A.F. S.G. Eval.) nee Beryl Paynter

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 M.U.S.C.S. Choir in St. Dennis.

The County Festival was held at St. Ives Guildhall 1966. Parents, the caretaker (Mr. B. Chainey), Margaret assisted with the children. The parking arrangements were changed hence we were late in arriving. Our class had begun and 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!

Children wanted to know, "Is that what we came for Sir?" My answer, "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 - First out of a number of choirs We won the County Shield and the second class of Voices and Recorders.

Bill Chainey, the caretaker, whose father trained Gwech Band was delighted and began to find a place in the hall for 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 & Recorder Cup.

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

c) St. Stephens - in - Brannel - Secondary School. - 1962 - 1964

St. Dennis children contributed to the musical life of the school. They became founder members of the school choir singing under Mr. H. Dunn (Music teacher ex St. Stephens C.P. School) and accompanist while I conducted the choir. This choir sang at the first Prize Day for the School. See programme in "Looking Back at St. Dennis and St. Stephens Schools" - St. Dennis web-site.

Prizes were presented by Mr. Watkins, County Inspector.

⑥ One of the prize winners was Wendy Bewetherick. She won the the first Music Prize presented.

④ Son of St Dennis parents, Mr & Mrs. R. Jacobs, becomes a Primary School teacher at Burraton C.P. School, Saltash and in charge of Music.

Mrs. Jacobs taught Margaret, my wife, in St. Dennis School. They lived in Trelavour Road and Mr. Jacobs built his own organ. They moved to Bristol for his work and a boy 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 had teachers of music who were unable to play the piano with confidence. I set the interview up 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.

Margaret, as school secretary, provided all with tea and biscuits. One candidate remarked that she had a "Cornish accent". She said to him that he would not know the area or village she came from.

"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 taught at Burraton C.P. until 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.

⑤ Finale In recent years Mr & Mrs. W. Sheaff came to live in Saltash and we worshipped at the same church. He continued his local preaching and often led the 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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