

Church Music Australia

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Voice for Life

Five Voice for Life Basics

- 5 Levels – White, Light Blue, Dark Blue, Red, Yellow.
- 5 modules within each level – Using the voice well, Musical skills and understanding, repertoire, Belonging to the choir, Choir in context.
- Materials include a Choir Trainer's Book, Choristers' Workbooks at each level, Record Cards, A Chorister's Companion, Specimen Sight Singing Tests. Certificates, Medals and Badges etc.
- May be used purely within the local situation or choristers may choose to sit for Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.
- Australia is in the process of having examiners accredited for the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

Five Tips for Learning More About Voice for Life

- Look at the September 09 Issue of Church Music Quarterly. It has several articles on the subject of Voice for Life.
- Go to the RSCM UK website <http://www.rscm.com/index.php> and proceed to the Voice for Life section. Then download the choir trainer's material for the new White Level. This will give you a very good idea of what the scheme is about, and the help that is given to the choir trainer.
- Also on the UK website, look at the Voice for Life Skills page.
- Buy the Choir Trainer's Book. Even if you don't use Voice for Life it is full of excellent advice for any choir conductor.
- Finally, look around for other people who may be using this resource. Nothing beats networking!

We can learn things in the strangest ways and strangest places! I remember a wonderful lesson in choir training that one of my young treble choristers taught me several years ago.

He was aged about 9 at the time and approached me during a break in rehearsal in great excitement. He was taking Tae Kwando lessons and the following weekend he was scheduled to be tested for his first level – the “white belt”. With great seriousness of manner he told me the names of the particular moves he had to make, all the while demonstrating each one. The combination of the Japanese names, spoken in a piping treble voice with a slight speech impediment, the moves, and the seriousness of purpose from a very young boy were somehow incredibly comic, and I had a very hard job to keep a straight face!

So what choir training lesson can you take from that? I can't answer for you, but it was a reminder for me of the importance of targets and goals and graded programs and rewards in the lives of young people. They thrive on them! Whether it is the next level in judo, or merit badges in scouts or girl guides, making the under 13 “C” team in school cricket, playing for the year 8 “A” netball team, doing Grade 3 AMEB piano exam, etc young people crave the opportunity to accept an achievable goal of some kind, meet it, and then be rewarded for it in some way.

Many activities for young people are set up to use this principle of “targets at graded levels”. Just about all school sport is set up this way. A lot of school music is set up that way. When I was Director of Music in a school our school ensembles were set up that way – for example, you started playing in Jazz Ensemble 3 with the goal that later on you would be good enough to play in Jazz Ensemble 2 and then number 1. And even activities such as playing computer games are set up like that – you can select a “level” to play at.

And in church music? There is some wonderful work going on in children's choirs in churches all around Australia, and a quick look at recent issues of Church Music Quarterly indicates terrific work in other countries as well.

But often when RSCM members meet in workshops, conferences, and summer schools, the conversation sounds frustrated and puzzled. How can we attract youth to join our choirs, or play the organ or become conductors

or become RSCM committee members? Other organizations such as Surf Lifesaving or any

Five Tips for Using Voice for Life

- When you start anything, the wealth of material available can be a bit daunting and forbidding! Look first in the Choir Trainer's Book at the Targets for each module. These will give you a very quick understanding of what you are trying to do at each level
- Voice for Life can be used by the choir director alone. But consider having a second person (could even be a parent) who will come to rehearsal and take children one by one out of rehearsal for 10 or 15 minutes each to work on specified areas.
- Print out the targets for each level and send a copy home to parents. They will be very interested in the work you are doing and can be effective allies.
- Scan Church Music Quarterly for news of Voice for Life. The more choristers see themselves as part of a "worldwide community" involved in a common activity, the better.
- Make Voice for Life a topic of conversation – with your choir parents, your parish, and with other church musicians. The more we talk about it, the more interest it will engender.

number of sports or clubs or other activities seem to have no difficulty in attracting them! Or in the words of the folk song of the sixties, "where have all the young men (and young women) gone?"

Simple question – though the answer can be very complex. However, one simple answer may be that they have gone to activities which place before them achievable targets and goals. If we are not providing this in our children's choirs, then we won't be able to compete against these other organizations. And membership in a choir may be the answer to other church music problems. I'll bet that many of the adult cantors, organists, choristers, RSCM members and RSCM committee members are where they are because someone asked them to join a choir in their childhood!

Which is where Voice for Life comes in. Here is RSCM in action! Based on previous choir training schemes it really is a tremendous resource – a graded program of chorister training with targets and goals. Though designed basically for the church choir, it can also be used in school and for that matter, even in a secular choir.

I like it for several reasons:

1. It is attractively presented, and very creatively written, with materials for the chorister, excellent resources for the choir trainer, repertoire materials as well as support materials such as badges, ribbons, etc.
2. Voice for Life is another "hook" to increase your choral program's attractiveness to youth. There are some people who are charismatic conductors and attract children to their choirs by the force of their personality and the brilliance of their music making. But for those of us who aren't, VFL increases the attraction of the choir to young people. Attracting new members to the choir doesn't depend solely on the skill of the conductor.

3. It works very well with very small choirs. Sometimes a choir is very small and its members are not yet good choristers. It is hard to generate the "momentum" that convinces other choristers to join. A larger, longer established ensemble that makes a terrific sound and has toured to interstate locations and made several CDs has no difficulty with gaining momentum! But VFL gives choristers a reason for being in the choir even when (so far) the choir can't manage to sing wonderfully. And the training of VFL moves the choir towards the time when it will generate the momentum and excitement that brings in new choristers.

4. It is an incredibly flexible training scheme. It allows you to do things differently to cater for your own local situation, or for your preferences in teaching, or for the characteristics of your choristers.

At the same time, "overlaid" on VFL is the awards scheme, where choristers can sit for bronze, silver and gold awards. These are, if you like, "external exams" like say a Trinity College or AMEB exam, and allow choristers to compare themselves with the standards of other choristers internationally.

It could be an excellent recruitment tool for us to bring more members to RSCM. Since it can be used in schools and in secular choirs, we could make the contact with such organisations and eventually bring them into the RSCM "fold".

I have been speaking about the scheme as if it is for children only. But it can (and should) be used at the adult level as well.

So, does your church want to compete with all of those other organisations or groups which are shouting for a piece of the lives of our youth? If so, look at Voice for Life!

Ralph Merten

President RSCM Australia



Sick of Christmas Already?

Michael Deasey

Chair RSCM, NSW Branch
Precentor, All Saints' Cathedral, Bathurst NSW

My first year as organist of St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney (1981) was also the last for the then archbishop, Marcus Loane. On my first (and his last) Christmas morning, he walked into the vestry and said to me in that distinctive voice: 'I hope we're not going to have *O come all ye faithful*, I'm sick to death of it'. I quickly looked to Dean Lance Shilton for assistance. Unhelpfully, he merely winked at me. Because we all knew we were in for yet another dose of *O come all ye faithful* and it was of course in the printed order of service.

The archbishop had a point of course. And church musicians, whether they are organists, choir directors or choristers certainly can relate to the man who had probably already attended his quota of Speech Nights and school carol services. Come Christmas Day, carols and Christmas hymns seem to have lost any sense of freshness.

It's easier in the northern hemisphere. Because summer holidays don't coincide with Christmas it's actually possible to observe a real Advent, then to begin the Christmas season on Christmas Eve by putting up the tree, continue it for its full twelve days, culminating in the feast of the Epiphany on January 6 when the tree comes down. And the first time we sing *O come all ye faithful* would be at Christmas itself.

As a young organist in the UK in the early 1970s my Vicar refused to have the service of Nine Lessons and Carols until the Sunday after Christmas. At Liverpool Cathedral in England, the annual carol service at that time was always (and maybe still is) prominently advertised as for the 'Last Sunday of the Year', that is, right in the middle of the Christmas season.

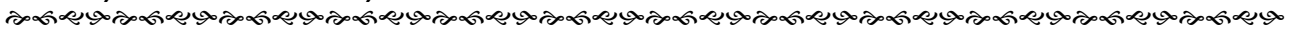
Now I have to acknowledge that St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney always waited till Christmas Eve for its main carol service, and still does. But many churches, and especially schools, have it anytime in December. That is understandable, but we are in danger of missing out on the richness and meaning of a proper Advent preparation, and of course, like the archbishop, are 'sick to death' of it all by the time Christmas really comes.

Is there a solution for clergy and church musicians?

There are a couple of lines in Betty Smith's novel *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* that read: 'Look at everything as though you were seeing it either for the first or last time. Then your time on earth will be filled with glory'.

This Christmas I'm going to sing or play *O come all ye faithful* (and possibly a few other perennials) as though it were for the first time. I'm going to ponder each line, each phrase, sometimes each word. Then maybe my Christmas can be filled with a new sense of wonder as I'm bidden to transcend time and space and actually travel to Bethlehem with the shepherds, behold a baby who is the 'Light of Light eternal', and then sing along with a choir of angels.

O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.



Summer School Adelaide 2010

The music chosen for the final two liturgical celebrations for the RSCM Summer School in January includes a number of anthems composed by Australian, New Zealand and American composers.

RSCM Queensland commissioned an anthem cycle from Colin Brumby and Juliet Hoey for the Summer School held in Brisbane in 1983. We have chosen "*O Christ, our light, shine forth*" from the cycle to enrich the symbolism of the lighted candles held by the congregation as part of the Liturgy of Light to be celebrated on Saturday evening. One of Australia's most prolific choral composers, Colin Brumby was born in Melbourne in 1933 and studied at the University of Melbourne. Post graduate studies in London and teaching in England preceded his return to the University of Queensland as lecturer and later Reader in Music. Another Australian composer's music has been chosen to complement the renewal of baptismal promises that forms part of the same Liturgy of Light. Becky Llewelyn (born in 1950), who studied composition with Graeme Koehne at the University of Adelaide and has written for chamber ensembles, choirs, and orchestra, wrote "*Carol of the Font*" in Adelaide in 2002. She used the poem "*Holy Baptism*" by George Herbert, which tells of the faith and hope that lies within the innocence of the young child that resides in us all.

From New Zealand we have selected Jenny MacLeod's "*Light of Light beholden*" to complement the readings from the Bible on Saturday night. Over the years Jenny MacLeod (born in 1941) has developed a many faceted approach to composition, including songs and hymns for Christian communities and an increasing identification with Maori life and culture. Also from New Zealand is David Childs (born in 1969), whose setting of the text "*Ave verum corpus*" that he composed in 2002 will be one of the Communion motets on Sunday morning. David Childs comes from Nelson in New Zealand, having studied at the University of Canterbury before moving to study and work in the United States of America.

The Choral Director for the Adelaide Summer School, Dr Jeffrey Smith, has selected four American choral works for singing at these final celebrations. David Hurd (born in 1950) wrote "*O Night that is brighter than the day*" in honour of Larry King, who died in 1990. Larry King (1932-90) himself is represented by his "*Introit for a Feast Day*" with which we shall begin the Sunday Eucharist. Both composers have had distinguished careers as composers and music directors for churches and theological colleges in America. Two further American composers represented in the repertoire for the Sunday morning Eucharist are Harold Friedell (1905-58) and Aaron Copland (1900-90). The former's "*Jesus, so lowly*" was written in 1946 for the choir of Calvary Episcopal Church in New York, and Copland's "*At the River*" is from his set of Old American Songs composed in 1952.

We hope that you will find these choral works interesting and satisfying to sing, and if your choir back home is not familiar with them already, that you will be able to take the scores away and introduce them to your colleagues.

It is not too late to register for the Summer School, even though the early bird registrations are now closed. Registration forms and details of the Summer School program are available on the RSCM Australia website: www.rscmaustralia.org.au.

Dr Warren Bourne

Organising Chairperson, RSCM Summer School Adelaide 2010



Celebrating Our Faith

About two hundred participants from every Australian state and territory, except the Northern Territory, enjoyed the third National Seminar on Word and Music in Worship held recently at Wesley Uniting Church, Canberra, with the theme of Celebrating our Faith.

Three outstanding overseas speakers were a special feature of the seminar: John Bell, of the Iona community, Colin Gibson, leading NZ author and hymn composer, and Michael Hawn, Professor of Church Music at the Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, USA.

John Bell led off with a stimulating paper titled "Public liturgy in a privatised society". He maintained that a Biblical prerequisite for worship was that people should know each other. Now, distinct from even twenty years ago, many people forsake communal worship on the grounds of everything from aesthetic taste to shortage of time, while others who do attend expect the corporate prayer to be the forum in which their private needs are met. In the midst of this, churches have to decide whether to play to the expectations of the audience or be deliberately counter cultural. He went on to spell out the implications of this in music and other areas.

Colin Gibson spoke on "Songs of Justice: futile or fertile". He pointed out that justice has long been a theme for Christian hymns, but the emphasis has shifted from the terrifying prospect of the Last Judgement to the modern imperative to work for social justice for the poor and oppressed. But what is meant by the term "justice" is often left fuzzy and ungrounded, and although we sing a lot about justice, is there any evidence that song generates effective action.

Michael Hawn's topic was "Singing a 21st century faith: what our generation has to say to the church". It has been said that "Each generation needs to add its stanzas to the great hymn of the church". A study of the congregation's song provides insight into how the church has voiced its prayer and praise throughout the centuries. What does our "stanza" look like? Michael then explored the shape of congregational song since the Second Vatican Council and the unparalleled diversity and outpouring of congregational song during our generation.

Other plenary sessions explored related themes in more detail, and workshop sessions investigated ways and means of putting some of these ideas into practical usage in regular worship.

There was a lighter side to the weekend as well. Colin Gibson spoke on "Make room for comedy: the case for laughable hymns"; he explored a range of less-than-serious hymns and found (God forbid!) a spirit of comedy abroad among some of our hymn writers. And on the Saturday evening in a wild extravaganza of entertainment, the highlight was listening to Michael Hawn doing things you wouldn't

believe on the piano accordion, including singing practically any Wesley hymn, and even “Silent Night”, to the tune of “Lady of Spain”.

Many participants were able to stay on to join in worship on Sunday morning at either Wesley or Kippax Uniting Church. I am sure everyone went home not only stimulated and inspired but full of new and exciting practical ideas for the music in their congregations.

Laurie Wigney

Uniting Church representative on the NSW Branch Committee



A story of two organs . . . and a piano

As most of you probably know, the Dodd organ of St. Mary’s Cathedral in Perth has recently undergone a major overhaul in New Zealand by the South Island Organ Company (SIOC). This was an extensive project involving the restoration and preservation of the original Dodd organ, most of which is still present within the existing organ. In addition to this, the Cathedral is gaining a smaller chancel organ built by Arthur Hobday (1851-1912). Hobday was an Australian who worked with the legendary organ builder, George Fincham (1828-1910). When their partnership dissolved in (1896) he settled in NZ and set up his own firm there. The organ was built in 1905 and has also been restored and added to in preparation for its new home.

It was with huge excitement that I travelled to NZ earlier this year to see both of them. Being closely involved with the planning for the Hobday organ and receiving numerous detailed progress reports is one thing; but to finally walk into the SIOC factory at Timaru and meet her in person was something very special. She was already assembled in the factory and I spent quite some time exploring the different tone colours and timbres of this new addition to our Cathedral. Our Dodd organ had not been assembled when I visited, but to inspect all the detailed work which SIOC is putting into this instrument, see the new additions we are making to it, and to research the consoles was not only a wonderful experience but hugely educational and makes one realize even more how truly intricate these instruments are and how incredibly skilled their builders really are.



However, my first taste of Timaru actually had to do with a piano. No sooner had I arrived in Timaru and been briefly introduced to the SIOC factory – we were being whisked off to see a piano. It is the (unofficially) world’s largest piano. Stretching over six metres in length it was built by a 20 year old university student who is fascinated by the acoustic properties of pianos: particularly the ‘actual’ lengths of the bass strings. Because of its huge size, he had trouble finding a space to build it – he eventually found a very kind sponsor who allowed him to use a shed on a farm 20 minutes out of Timaru.

We all had a bit of a play – due to the very large amount of tension in this piano, the touch was quite

hard. Surprisingly, it had quite a singing tone. However, it seemed to have a ‘clucking’ stop. ‘Wait,’ I thought, ‘pianos don’t have stops.’ On further investigation, we found it to be a chicken who apparently loves to help with showing visitors around – she often hangs around the piano.

But there’s more! Not only had we just seen the world’s (unofficially) largest piano and it’s body-guard (would that be ‘piano-guard’?) but on the way back to Timaru we drove through a river! I was a little concerned ... but apparently the river had been dried up since the summer months. And the name of the ‘mountain’ near the piano-farm was. . .wait for it. . .‘Mount Horrible’!

In addition to lots of playing and numerous organ visits particularly highlighting the major instruments of Christchurch, my visit also included giving a major recital at the Sacred Heart Basilica in Timaru which was sponsored by SIOC. The weather in general was beautifully sunny with temperatures around 15-16 degrees (just a little cool). However, the day of my big recital was 26! John Hargraves, the Director of the SIOC commented that ‘this is warmer than Perth!’ He was right – when I checked on the internet, that day in Perth the temperature was 25. All in all, a beautiful time in a beautiful country with two beautiful instruments which we at St. Mary’s are eagerly anticipating. One will be very affectionately welcomed home and the other will be welcomed to her new home – both embarking on a new era of giving joy to all and praise to the Almighty.

Jacinta Jakovcevic

Director of Cathedral Music and Principal Organist, St. Mary’s Cathedral, Perth



The following article contains information that should be of great interest and use to those who print music booklets for RSCM workshops and Summer Schools.

COPYRIGHT LAW IN AUSTRALIA

Basic information compiled by RSCM NSW for general guidance only.

Australian copyright law is based on the Commonwealth Copyright Act of 1968, which has been amended many times since, and from court decisions. The Copyright Act replaced an earlier Act based on UK copyright law.

As a result of international copyright treaties, such as the Berne Convention (formulated 1886; amended 1979) and the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS 1995), Australian works are protected automatically in most other countries. Similarly, works from most other countries are automatically protected in Australia.

The Copyright Act lists categories of material which are protected by copyright, including: "literary works"; "dramatic works"; "musical works"; "artistic works"; "sound recordings"; "cinematograph films"; and "broadcasts" (a broadcast is protected separately from the content of the broadcast). There is no registration procedure for copyright protection in Australia, and no official list of what material is in the "public domain". Except for broadcasts, if something can be classified in one of the categories of copyright material, it is automatically protected as soon as it is "fixed" in material form: written down, drawn, photographed, recorded on audio or video tape, or saved to computer disk. One item (such as a CD) may include a number of underlying "works" and other subject matter protected by copyright.

THE AUSTRALIAN COPYRIGHT COUNCIL (ACC www.copyright.org.au PO Box 1986, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012, Tel 8815 9777) was founded in 1968 to assist creators and other copyright owners to exercise their rights effectively:

- to raise awareness in the community about the importance of copyright;
- to identify and research areas of copyright law which are inadequate or unfair;
- to seek changes to law and practice to enhance the effectiveness and fairness of copyright;
- to foster co-operation amongst bodies representing creators and owners of copyright.

As a result of the January 2005 AUSTRALIA-US FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (AUSFTA), the period of protection for copyright material was extended from 50 years to 70 years. If copyright expired pre-AUSFTA, the material remains in the public domain and may be freely used.

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APRA-AMCOS provide advice to those concerned about copyright. (www.apra-amcos.com 16 Mountain St, Ultimo NSW 2007 Locked Bag 5000, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012, Phone (02) 9935 7994 Fax (02) 9935 7790, email apra@apra.com.au)

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