

I REMEMBER

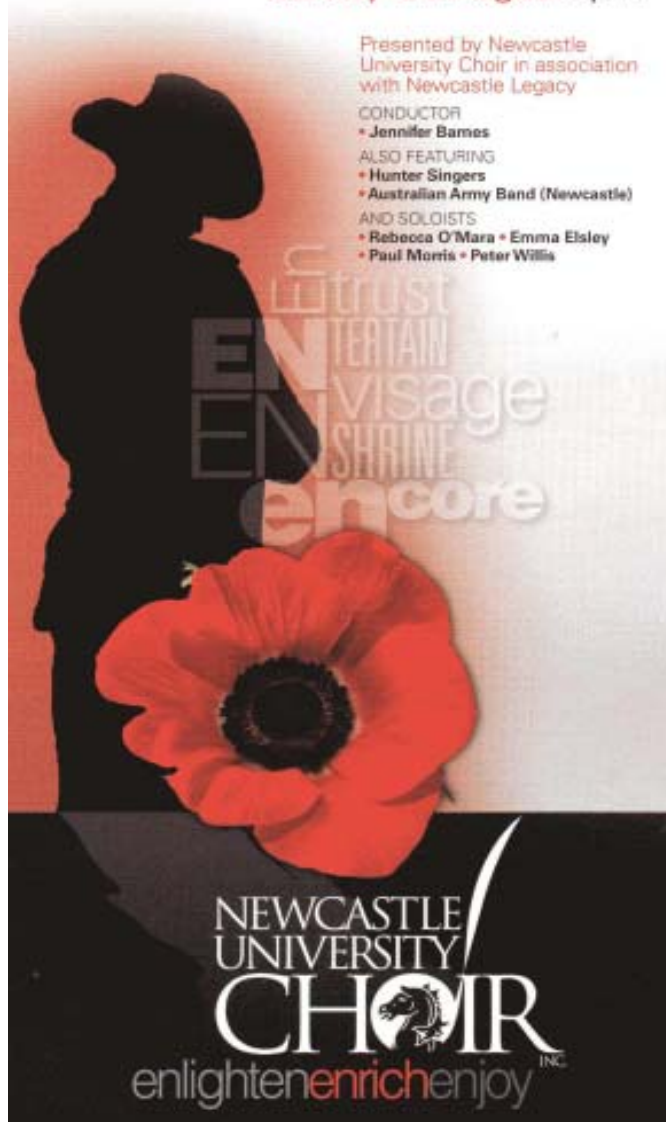
Sunday 3rd August 2pm

Presented by Newcastle
University Choir in association
with Newcastle Legacy

CONDUCTOR
• Jennifer Barnes

ALSO FEATURING
• Hunter Singers
• Australian Army Band (Newcastle)

AND SOLOISTS
• Rebecca O'Mara • Emma Elsley
• Paul Morris • Peter Willis



I Remember is the theme of our August 3 concert, and it's also the title of a choral work by local composer Victor Marden. Vic will be joining the choir for this performance.

I Remember was first performed in 1998, to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of WWI. The work reflects Vic's experiences as a boy, and is an act of remembrance for his father and his mother's cousin.

Vic grew up in the seaside village of Selsey. Here he witnessed the dogfights of the Battle of Britain, as Hurricanes and Spitfires fought off the Junkers and Messerschmitts of the invading Luftwaffe. His father served in K Class submarines in WWI. These steam-propelled vessels became known as *Kalamity Class* – one of their problems being that in heavy seas seawater could enter the funnels and extinguish the boilers.

Vic recalls that his mother and her cousin were very close. She told Vic of their last farewell, when he left to go to war, never to return. His body was never found, and she was unable to find his grave.

In 1948 Vic came to Australia. A music lover, he studied singing and became involved in stage productions. In 1977 he moved to Adelaide and joined the Adelaide Harmony Choir.

He composed his first work in 1991, and was encouraged to further his music studies. He studied composition with Russel Larkin, Music Director of the Adelaide Philharmonia Chorus. During this period he composed his *Coromandel Trio for Violin, Piano and Cello*, a number of waltzes, duets and songs for soloists and choirs.

I Remember is a love story, it reflects the experiences of those who lost their lives or loved ones in the tragedy of war. Our soloists will be Rebecca O'Mara, Emma Elsley, Paul Morris and Peter Willis.



In 2009 the choir performed Howard Goodall's *Eternal Light*. This work was composed to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the outbreak of WWI, and this was its first

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*I remember the tales of the First World War
The tales my father told me
How the war had been won by those brave young men,
So all the world could be free.*

performance outside the UK. We were joined by the Hunter Singers.

Once again we will welcome the Hunter Singers, and we'll revisit some of the pieces we sang in 2009.

"For me, a modern Requiem is one that acknowledges the terrible, unbearable loss and emptiness that accompanies the death of loved ones, a loss that is not easily ameliorated with platitudes about the joy awaiting us in the afterlife... Musical expression can, I hope, provide some outlet, some reflection, some transportation, even possibly some comfort," Goodall wrote. "I stripped the Latin text down to a handful of resonant phrases and went in search of poetry, some sacred, some secular, to shed new light on the various requiem concepts: peace, everlasting light, grief, comfort, and, most controversial of all, faith in an afterlife."

The result is an eclectic mix of poetry with a few Latin phrases from each of the traditional movements of the Mass for the Dead.

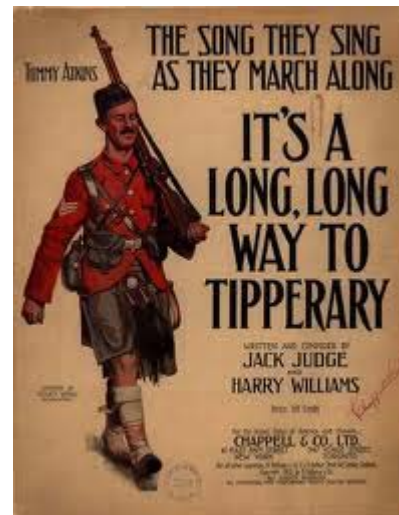
Lead, Kindly Light is a hymn written in 1833 by John Henry Newman. When someone added another verse, Newman wrote "A stranger has been kind enough to inform me that your compiler has added a verse to it not mine. It is not that the verse is not both in sentiment and language graceful and good, but I think you will at once see how unwilling an author must be to subject himself to the inconvenience of that being ascribed to him which is not his own." The offending verse was expunged from future editions of the hymnary.

The hymn was sung by a soloist on the RMS Titanic during a gathering shortly before the ocean liner struck an iceberg on April 14, 1912, and it is often associated with that tragedy.

The *Lacrymosa* is part of the *Dies Irae* sequence in the Requiem mass. Goodall uses the words of *Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep*, a poem written in 1932 by Mary Elizabeth Frye.

The *Recordare* (Remember, loving Jesus) is sung by the soprano, while the choir sings the words of *Drop, Drop Slow Tears*, a poem written by Phineas Fletcher (1582 – 1650).

The music is moving, and Goodall's composition makes the Mass very accessible.



Popular war songs tended to exhort soldiers on to bigger and braver exploits, but that seemed to change in WWI, when the emphasis turned to a longing for home - songs like *Keep the Home Fires Burning*.

It's a Long Way to Connemara was a music hall song written by Jack Judge and Harry Williams. It had never been published, and when Jack Judge was bet five shillings that he couldn't write and perform a song in 24 hours he pulled out the old song and changed *Connemara* to *Tipperary*. The song was published in 1912 by Bert Feldman.

Noting the approach of the war, Feldman suggested they change the tempo from a ballad to a marching song, and add an extra *Long* to the title.

The song sold three million copies in the UK and six million worldwide after 1912. Judge and Williams earned £164,000 in 1915 from royalties – a fortune at the time.

In *Songs my Grandmother Sang*, Peter Brock combines the song with another favourite - *Pack up Your Troubles* - and *Sweet and Low* - a poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson. We're sure you'll enjoy the resulting medley.



The end of WWI saw Finland gain its independence, and *Finlandia*, Jean Sibelius's stirring patriotic anthem, could be openly performed as he intended it to be.

In 1899 Russia had imposed strict censorship on Finland. Sibelius composed six tableaux for a fund-raising gala organized by the Finnish press. Supposedly it was to raise money for newspaper pension funds. In fact it aimed to rally support for a free press. The work was innocuously titled *Music for Press Ceremony*, and the score concluded with *Finland Awakens*.

Sibelius subsequently reworked the final hymn as a stand-alone piece. Words were added in 1941, and it became an iconic song of Finland. English lyrics saw its release as *Be Still My Heart*, and it is this version that we'll present at the concert.



In 1792, France declared war on Austria. The mayor of Strasbourg wanted a patriotic marching song for the French troops. Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle, a soldier and amateur musician obliged. The invading forces were repulsed. *La Marsellaise* was adopted as the French national anthem in 1795.

Tchaikovsky used some of the music in his *1812 Overture*, which chronicled the war between Russia and France in that year.

In 1918 France and Russia were allies, and it was Germany whose invasion of Belgium on their planned advance into France that finally set off WWI.

La Marsellaise is a stirring call to arms to protect the citizenry against 'tyranny's bloody standard - to arms citizens!'



The Army Band Newcastle

The Newcastle Army Band is part of the Australian Army Band Corps (AABC), whose role it is to provide the Army with musical support and to promote its public image and operational effectiveness. The musicians are required to support many tasks, with a variety of ensembles including concert band, marching band, stage band, woodwind and brass quintets, jazz quintet, vocal and other small groups. They will demonstrate this versatility with a variety of numbers.

In 1893 Norwegian composer Johan Halvorsen was offered a post at the Bucharest Conservatory of Music in Romania. He became acquainted with

Boyars, the 18th century aristocracy of Eastern Europe. Despite declining the position, he was inspired to write *The Entry March of the Boyars*, which the band will perform before the concert.

Some may remember Mat Gallimore as our conductor for a concert in 2012. He will sing *This is the Moment*, from the musical *Jekyll and Hyde*. The song is sung by Jekyll before he tests his formula on himself. Appropriately we will witness Mat changing from a conductor to a very fine baritone.

The choir will join the band, with bagpipes and drums, in *Amazing Grace*, which was composed by John Newton. Newton was one of the most profane men he had ever met, according to the captain of the *Greyhound*. He admonished Newton, not only for using the worst words the captain had ever heard, but for creating new ones to exceed the limits of verbal debauchery. Surprising then to learn that Newton composed one of the most popular folk hymns of all time. Some experts estimate that it is performed 10 million times each year.

Highland Cathedral was featured, along with 600 performers, in the finale of the Edinburgh Tattoo in 2004, 2006, 2009 and 2012. It has become a crowd favourite, and has been suggested as Scotland's national anthem.

Surprisingly, it was written by two German composers in 1982 for a Highland Games held in Berlin.



The Hunter Singers

We've shared the stage with the Hunter Singers before, notably in our 2009 concert *Songs of Remembrance*. Their rendition of Paul Jarman's *Shackleton* and *Known Unto God* are simply unforgettable.

On 14th April 2007 Jarman and the Singers performed the European premiere of *Known Unto God* under the Menin Gate in Ypres. The title of the work refers to the inscription placed on the graves of unidentified soldiers who fell in battle.

In composing the piece, Jarman worked with a team of ten students from the Singers. It includes

29 spoken and sung quotes from soldiers, poets and writers of the time. One of the team told of her grandmother Hannah, who as a child of six met a stranger on the road who said to her “You must be Hannah; I’m your father.” The story inspired the solo *Daddy please come home* – a metaphor for a lost generation.



In the 17th century, British officers would inspect the sentry posts at the end of each day. A drum beat would sound as they proceeded, telling off-duty soldiers that it was time to rest, or if they were in town that it was time to leave the pubs and head home.

When they completed their rounds, the bugler would sound the *Last Post*, a message that the night sentries were at their posts.

The *Last Post* was eventually incorporated into funeral and memorial services as a final farewell, symbolising the duty of the dead is over and they can rest in peace.

Since 1928 the “Last Post” has been played every evening at 8 p.m. by buglers of the local Last Post Association at the war memorial at Ypres commemorating the British Empire dead during the First World War. The ceremony has now been held more than 29,500 times; its 30,000th occurrence is scheduled for 9 July 2015.

The Choir, the Army Band, the Hunter Singers and our soloists will join together in the finale - the Evening Hymn, the Ode and the Last Post.



Probably the most effective weapon in WWI wasn’t the tank or the artillery – it was morale. Letters from home were one of the few comforts the troops had, and the delivery of mail was seen as being crucial to an Allied victory.

Astonishingly, it only took two days for a letter from Britain to reach the front in France. The journey began at a purpose-built sorting depot in Regent’s Park before being shipped to the

trenches. Twelve million letters were delivered to the front every week. By the end of the war, two billion letters and 114 million parcels had been delivered.

Both soldiers and those at home used humour to counter the horrors of trench warfare. To the soldier humour was as important a weapon as his rifle.

The ANZAC Book was produced at Gallipoli, and contained some rather typical Australian humour:

We were on the march to a new sector with full packs up; and as usual, for one of the brief spells the boys simply sprawled on the ground leaning their backs against the packs, without troubling to unfasten their equipment.

Whilst they were taking their ease in this fashion, a staff car full of red tabbed Tommy officers came up and stopped.

“Hey, my man!” said one of them, to the nearest Digger, “do you know where Third Division AIF headquarters is?”

The sprawling Digger remained sprawled, but jerked his arm in the direction from which the car had come.

“You passed it!” he said, it’s by the cross roads about a mile back.”

The failure of the Digger to spring to his feet and salute shocked the T.O. “What’s the matter with your legs, my man?” he demanded, sharply.

The Digger was unperturbed. “What’s the matter with your eyes,” he retorted, “that you didn’t see Third Divvy HQ?”



Much of the mail consisted of postcards such as the above, sent by a soldier in 1917.

An exhibition in the foyer of the Great Hall will feature postage stamps from WWI.