

The Joy of Making Music Together

National Boys Choir of Australia
50th anniversary



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The joy of making music together remains strong, 50 years after the choir was begun by Kevin Casey. Although the 1960s were witness to a great change in musical styles, as a teacher of music, Kevin recognised the lack of choral opportunities then available for children. In 1964, there was only one non-school children's choir in Melbourne. Wanting others to experience singing beyond what a school choir could offer, he started with students from Kostka Hall where he taught, as the foundation choristers of the National Boys Choir. Within four years, auditions had expanded beyond this school.

For years the choir rehearsed in the Casey family home, but later moved from Chadstone to Caulfield then Balwyn. Many other rehearsal venues including schools and small halls were used before the choir made its permanent home in Ringwood in 1993. Rehearsals were held on Friday nights and for the reserve choir – the equivalent to today's training choirs – on Saturday afternoons. An annual music camp held initially at Mirboo North and then Bathurst took place during the summer holidays, giving choristers an opportunity to learn the music repertoire and have fun together.

From the beginning, the choir had a professionally-made uniform with the boys going in to Myers to have their blazers fitted. The early choir colours were green and gold. In the 1970s as alternative stage wear, the boys wore red shirts and white trousers. The current uniform was introduced in 2001. The distinctive red robes have remained a constant feature throughout the choir's history.

The early repertoire consisted of classical songs, popular songs from musicals, folk songs and spirituals. Over the last 25 years, the choir has sung major works with an orchestra and staged operas written especially for boys' voices.

Opportunities for performance have always been sought for the choir. From the very first concert for parents and friends held on the Casey's front lawn, the choir has performed locally, interstate and overseas. Further recognition has resulted from links with organisations such as Opera Australia, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Qantas for their well-known *I Still Call Australia Home* commercials.

Over the years many people have worked tirelessly in assisting and developing the choir. Two in particular are Harold and Yvonne Bird, whose dedicated efforts over 25 years culminated in the landmark purchase of the choir's initial Ringwood premises. The involvement of the Casey family in key roles over the entire 50 years is also remarkable.

After 50 years, the choir has developed a strong base and is well placed to maintain its enviable reputation for excellence in both choral performance and in the personal development of its choristers. The opportunities available to the boys are priceless as is the joy their singing brings to countless others.

HISTORY OF THE *National Boys Choir of Australia*

1964

- Choir founded by Kevin Casey

1965

- Rehearsals were held in the Casey home in Chadstone
- First concerts in their front garden

1966

- Annual concerts began
- First Music School at Mirboo North, Victoria

1968

- First major tour to Tasmania and King Island

1969

- South Australian Tour

1970

- New South Wales Tour

1972

- Victorian Tour
- ABC Tour
- First children's roles for the Australian Opera

1973

- South Australian Tour
- Performance on Bobby Limb's *Sound of Christmas*

1974

- First International Tour to Japan, Manila and Hong Kong

1975

- New South Wales Tour
- Televised *Moomba Concert* with Rolf Harris
- National Gallery Concert with the Japanese Mandolin Orchestra

1976

- Tour of Japan and Hong Kong

1977

- Annual Music School now held at the Scots School, Bathurst
- New South Wales Tour
- Appearances on *The Paul Hogan Show*, *Ernie Sigley Show* and *A Current Affair*
- Christmas Carols for Channel 10

1978

- Tour of Japan
- Christmas Carols recorded for radio 3UZ and TV Channel 10

1979

- South Australian Tour
- Hosted World Vision Korean Children's Choir
- Australian Opera: *La Boheme*, *Faust*, *Pagliacci*

1980

- Tour of Taiwan
- Berlioz *Te Deum* with the Melbourne Chorale and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

1981

- Queensland Tour
- Kew Festival Concert

1982

- Tour of Victoria
- Hosted Taipei Christian Children's Chorus
- TV performance *The Daryl Somers Show*

1983

- Tour of Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong
- Hosted and performed with the San Francisco Boys' Choir
- Hosted the Vienna Boys' Choir for a day
- *Carmina Burana* with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra



1984

- Hosted the Hong Kong Children's Choir
- Concert in the Melbourne Concert Hall
- Australian Broadcasting Commission's recording of National Boys' Choir in St. James Old Cathedral, Melbourne
- Performance on Channel 9
- Opening of Pacific Games (Prime Minister and Premier present)
- *Good Morning Australia* – Channel 10

1985

- South Australian Tour
- Tour of ACT, NSW, Victoria with International Bass Baritone, Ivan Rebroff, and performed on the *Ernie Sigley Show*
- Hosted Taipei Christian Children's Choir
- Appeared on Channel 10
- Melbourne Youth Music Festival, Melbourne Concert Hall
- Australian Opera children's parts

1986

- Tour of Taiwan and Japan
- Hosted Woden Valley Youth Choir and the Young Sydney Singers
- Appearances on Channel 10 – *Young Talent Time* and *The Nerve Deafness Appeal*
- First performed on *Carols by Candlelight* at Sydney Myer Music Bowl

1987

- Opened the official Australia Day Concert
- Hosted the Honolulu Boys' Choir for exchange of friendship and culture
- Concert tour Victoria, NSW and ACT
- Guest artists at *Sun Aria* Final in Melbourne Concert Hall

1988

- Royal Performance before Prince and Princess of Wales
- Guest artists with the Texas Boys' Choir concert in the Melbourne Concert Hall
- Guest performance at National Symposium for conductors
- Concert tour to Queensland
- Exchange of friendship and culture programs with 3 overseas choirs

- 1 Early Choir
- 2 Founder Kevin Casey
- 3 Harold and Yvonne Bird on Tour 1972
- 4 Mirboo North Fun Night
- 5 Tasmanian Tour 1968
- 6 Bobby Limb Christmas Show
- 7 Bathurst Music School Public Concert
- 8 Visiting a packing shed on tour, early 1970s
- 9 Moomba Parade early 1970s
- 10 Young Talent Time 1980s
- 11 Country Tour 1980s
- 12 Recorder Group late 1960s
- 13 First International Tour, Japan 1974
- 14 Early Choir Publicity photo



1989

- Two Concerts celebrating the Silver Anniversary Year for the National Boys' Choir
- Tour of the United States
- Performances in the Sydney Opera House and Melbourne Concert Hall with the Male Choirs Association of Australia
- Concert with Rolf Harris, Dallas Brookes Hall
- *Berlioz Spectacular* at the National Tennis Centre
- Christmas Concert for the Victoria State Opera Club

1990

- 25 boys performed in the Victoria State Opera's *Carmen*
- Male Choirs' Festival – Melbourne Concert Hall
- Staged performance of *All The King's Men*, by Richard Rodney Bennett
- Melbourne's Olympic bid telecast from the National Tennis Centre by Channel 9
- Tour of South Australia
- Featured on Ian McNamara's program *Australia All Over* on 3LO

- Special Olympics Opening Ceremony at the Entertainment Centre
- Victoria State Opera Society's Christmas Concert

1991

- Appeared on Royal Children's Hospital *Good Friday Appeal*
- Hosted a visit from the Phoenix Boys' Choir, Arizona, USA
- Hosted a Festival of Choirs – National Boys' Choir, Woden Valley Youth Choir (Canberra) and Young Sydney Singers
- South Australia concert tour
- Concert performance featuring *Come Ye Sons of Art* by Purcell
- European Tour Farewell Concert, Melbourne Town Hall
- Tour to Europe and England
- Three boys appeared in V.S.O's production of *The Magic Flute*
- Victoria State Opera Society's Christmas Concert
- Christmas Concert featuring *A Ceremony of Carols* by Benjamin Britten
- Choir's first CD recording released
- John Rutter became a patron

1992

- Appeared at the Prime Minister's Dinner – an official fund-raising event for Australia's Barcelona Olympians
- *Carmina Burana* with the MSO and the Melbourne Chorale
- Toured regional Victoria and southern NSW
- Recorded a CD for S.B.S. radio: *Sing Noel*
- Christmas Concert at the Melbourne Concert Hall
- Performed at the Victoria State Opera Society's Christmas Concert

1993

- Boys sing with Victoria State Opera in *The Magic Flute*
- Guest Artists, Australian Open Tennis on Australia Day
- Hosted visits from and performed with Tucson, Arizona Boys' Choir and Manchester Boys' Choir
- Performed at Opening Ceremonies of Rotary International Convention at Melbourne Tennis Centre
- Concert, *New Song in An Ancient Land* at St John's Southgate
- Boys performed in *Hansel & Gretel* with Australian Opera

- Appearances with Victoria State Opera in *La Boheme* and *Otello*
- Performance of Vivaldi's *Gloria* in The Melbourne Concert Hall

1994

- Children's chorus for *Tosca* with The Victoria State Opera
- Boys appeared in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with The Australian Opera
- Four boys travelled to Edinburgh for The Australian Opera's Festival performance of *Dream*
- Hosted a visit from and performed with the Munich Boys' Choir
- A tour to the U.S.A.
- Sang in the presence of H.R.H The Duchess of York at The Hyatt on Collins
- Television appearances including Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal, Channel 10 Young Achievers' Awards and the *Best for the Bush* Concert
- Performance of Schubert's *Mass in G* with tenors and basses at Melbourne Concert Hall
- The release of the third CD recording *Gloria*



1995

- Concert for the Arts Centre's *Summer Live* Festival
- Boys appear in Australian Opera season
- Hosted a visit from the Auckland Boys Choir
- Boys appear in *Tosca* for the Victoria State Opera
- Sang Masses at St Patrick's Cathedral and St. Francis
- Performed in Orff's *Carmina Burana* for the Orff International Conference
- Performed in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
- Performed in *The Damnation of Faust* by Berlioz for the opening of the Melbourne International Festival
- Concert for the Collins St. Promenade
- Performance of Rutter's *Gloria* at the Melbourne Concert Hall
- Christmas Concert with the Melbourne Symphony

1996

- Performance of Britten's *St. Nicolas* with Melbourne Chorale
- Choristers appear in Opera Australia season
- Performance of Galuppi's *Dixit Dominus* in the Melbourne Concert Hall

- Choristers perform in Strauss' *Die Frau Ohne Schatten* for the Melbourne International Festival
- Concert tour of Victoria and New South Wales
- Performance for Michael Jackson's Melbourne arrival
- Performances at Australian Opera functions
- Performances of Mozart's *Coronation Mass* in the Melbourne Concert Hall

1997

- Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with Melbourne Symphony
- Three Tenors Concert in Melbourne
- Performance of Britten's *Missa Brevis* in the Melbourne Concert Hall
- Order of Australia Association Service
- Performances at Opera Australia functions
- Tour of Europe and United Kingdom: St. Peter's in Rome, Venice, Munich, Salzburg, Geneva, Zurich, Paris, London, Cambridge and Bristol
- Performance of Handel's *Sing Unto God* in the Melbourne Concert Hall
- Carols by Candlelight at Sidney Myer Music Bowl

1998

- National Order of Australia Association Service
- Grand Prix
- Participated in a promotional programme including the filming of television and cinema commercials for Qantas
- Order of Australia Association Service Victorian Chapter
- Boys appear in Opera Australia season
- Tour of Western Australia
- Sang at Polly Woodside for inaugural Bay to Brooke Vintage Car Race
- Christmas CD with Australian Girls Choir
- National Civic Council Christmas Mass
- President's Cup Gala Dinner
- Opera Australia Christmas function
- Corporate functions
- Carols by Candlelight

1999

- Boys sing with Opera Australia in *The Magic Flute*, *Tosca* and *Billy Budd*
- Promotional trips to Los Angeles and Hong Kong for Qantas
- Performances of *Carmina Burana* and *Mahler's Third Symphony* with Melbourne Symphony

- 1 Channel O Christmas Carols
- 2 Carols by Candlelight
- 3 New South Wales Tour 1990s
- 4 With the Pope in Rome 1991
- 5 London 1997
- 6 Paris 1997
- 7 St Peter's Rome 1997
- 8 Country Tour 1995
- 9 Colosseum 1997
- 10 Europe Tour 1997
- 11 Melbourne Olympic Bid 1990
- 12 Japan tour 1978
- 13 On tour – Echuca
- 14 On tour – Sydney



- Grand Prix
- Hosted Phoenix Boys Choir
- Performed Bennett's *All the King's Men*
- Tour of Victoria and New South Wales
- Carols by Candlelight

2000

- *Carmina Burana* with Melbourne Chorale
- Bach's *St Matthew Passion* for the Melbourne Festival with Philippe Herreweghe
- Britten's *War Requiem*
- Recorded two segments for the Sydney Olympics Opening Ceremony
- Tour of North Queensland
- Second series of Qantas commercials filmed and released

2001

- Opera in the Market
- Melbourne Grand Prix
- Berlioz *Te Deum* for the Melbourne Festival
- Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* at the Exhibition Building for the Centenary of Federation
- New uniform and logo introduced
- New Patron – Anthony Warlow
- Tour of Tasmania and country Victoria

2002

- Sang for the opening of Federation Square
- World premiere of Colin Brumby's *Eureka*
- Commonwealth Games Dinner and performance for the athlete's return
- AbaF Awards Dinner
- First major commercial CD released – *Not Always Angels*
- Australian/American Children's Choirs Festival in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney Opera House
- Melbourne Symphony Christmas Concert

2003

- Tour of Japan
- Re-release of Christmas CD under the title *A Christmas Celebration*
- Qantas filming for new advertisements

2004

- 40th Anniversary
- Release of new Qantas advertisements
- Channel 7 Olympic theme with the Old Boys
- Tour to Choralfest in Adelaide and regional centres
- New building developed
- *The Magic Flute* and *La Boheme* with Opera Australia

- Melbourne Symphony Christmas Concert

2005

- Mahler's *Third Symphony* with the MSO
- Mid-Year Concert featuring Yip's Children's Choir from Hong Kong
- Hosting Yip's Children's Choir
- MSO Concert performance of *Otello*
- MSO World Premiere of *The Little Mermaid* by Richard Mills
- Japan Tour to the World Expo for Victoria Week
- Qantas 85th Birthday celebrations in Brisbane with John Travolta and *This is Your Life*
- Christmas Concert featuring *Missa Criolla*
- MSO Symphony of Angels
- Carols by Candlelight

2006

- Escort runners with Queen's Baton Relay
- World Premiere of *Child in Nature* by Calvin Bowman
- Tour of NSW and Victoria
- *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* with MSO
- MSO Symphony of Angels

2007

- Joint concert with Fort Bend Boys Choir
- Hosting of Keystone State Boychoir
- Hosted a visit by Toyota Boys and Girls Choir
- World Swimming Championships Opening Ceremony
- Bledisloe Cup Rugby and Socceroos Game
- Tour of the USA
- New Zealand Television Awards for Qantas
- New Choir Patron – Richard Gill
- Australian Premiere of *Magnificat* by J. Willcocks
- Carols by Candlelight – 20th year of involvement

2008

- Australian Open Tennis – Australia Day
- Concert performance of *La Boheme* with Victorian Opera
- Socceroos v Qatar
- Tour of South Australia
- Victorian Opera Gala Concert – *La Boheme*
- Boys in Opera Australia's *Carmen*

2009

- G'day LA
- *Carmina Burana* with Victorian Opera



- World Premiere of *Lost to the Music*
- Tour of Queensland
- André Rieu Australian Tour performances
- New Qantas commercial

2010

- G'Day LA
- Victorian Opera Gala – *Damnation of Faust*
- Socceroos World Cup Farewell Match at the MCG
- World Expo Shanghai – Australia's National Day
- MSO – Britten *War Requiem*
- Yip's Childrens Choir visit
- Premiere of *Songs of Sea and Sky* by Todd McNeal
- China Tour
- Oprah's Australian Adventure
- Carols By Candlelight
- Opera Australia *Tosca* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*

2011

- G'Day USA LA, New York, Houston
- Jordan Janssen sings world premiere of *Missa Solis* with MSO
- Grand Prix and also welcome function at Government House

- Major production – *All the King's Men*
- Socceroos v Serbia
- *Carmina Burana* with MSO
- Simon Casey sings on Greta Bradman's new CD
- Tour of inland NSW
- ABAF Better Business Award for Judy Hooper and NBCA
- Christmas Concert featuring J.Willcocks *Gloria*
- Presidents Cup Golf Opening Ceremony
- Ethan Flora sings *The Snowman* at Melbourne Recital Centre
- Carols by Candlelight

2012

- G'Day USA LA, New York
- Australian Tennis Open
- Blakely McLean Davies sings *Missa Solis* with MSO
- Grand Prix
- Premiere of McNeal's *Poems of Walter de la Mare*
- Socceroos v Saudi Arabia
- Mahler's *Third Symphony* with MSO
- Boys sing in *Turandot* and *The Magic Flute* with Opera Australia
- Tour of New Zealand

- Olympic Homecoming in Sydney
- *Lord of the Rings* with MSO
- Austin Haynes sings *The Snowman* at Melbourne Recital Centre
- Christmas Concert featuring Vivaldi's *Magnificat*
- Carols by Candlelight

2013

- Release of CD *Earth, Sea and Sky*
- Australian Open Tennis
- Grand Prix
- *Lord of the Rings – The Two Towers* with MSO
- Performances of Britten's *The Golden Vanity*
- Tour of Tasmania
- Hosted All American Boys Choir
- Lions v Wallabies Rugby pre-match performance
- Anthony Callea Christmas Album recording
- Ben Hazlewood album recording
- Two International Conferences – Paediatrics and Nurses
- Opera in the Roses
- Arts Centre Morning Melodies
- Carols by Candlelight

- 1 New Uniform 2001
- 2 On safari in Tanzania
- 3 Starstruck, Channel 9
- 4 Qantas filming, Whitehaven Beach
- 5 Socceroos v Greece at MCG
- 6 Fiddler on the Roof 2006
- 7 André Rieu Australian Tour
- 8 China Tour 2010
- 9 New Zealand Tour 2012
- 10 G'day USA with David Campbell 2009
- 11 Carols by Candlelight 2012
- 12 Australian Open Tennis 2013
- 13 MSO Lord of the Rings 2012
- 14 Christmas Concert 2013



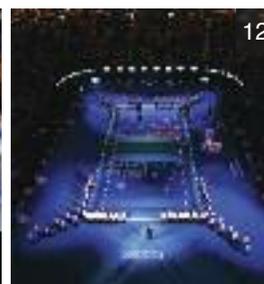
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STAFF ROLL CALL

National Boys Choir of Australia

Artistic Directors:

Kevin Casey (Founder)
Peter Casey
Philip Carmody

Accompanists: Performing Choir

Rodney Sigston
Margaret Holden
Elizabeth Chappell
Monica Laczoffy
Nehama Patkin
Beverley Phillips
Brian Fitzgerald
Janet Perkins
David McNicol
Denis Hennig
Coral Glen
Miriam Leuba
Alison Price
Sarah Major
Beverly Norris
Lorel Wall
Philip Carmody
Robyn Cochrane

Music Staff: Performing Choir

Lynette Casey-Brereton
Michael Casley
Cathy Armour
Richard Nicholls
Kathleen Southall-Casey
Harry Rijs
Dermot Tutty
Ben Namdarian
Franca Ross

Music Staff: Training Choirs

Directors:

Marie Ward
Margaret Boyle
Rosemary Boyle
Meredith Valk
Rhonda Slater
Harry Rijs
Dermot Tutty
Rebecca Frew
Alex Boemo

Accompanists:

Phyllis O'Brien
Kerrin Hancock
Michelle Kearney
Pam Robinson
Anthony DiGiantomasso
Alex Boemo
Ruth Tenace
Sophie Liu

Tutors:

Cameron Wenn
Marcus Greening
Julian Brown
Nicholas Carter
Michael McDonald
Peter Finnigan
Alicia McGorlick (Work Experience)

Instrumental Teachers:

Alison Rabinovici
Michael Casley
Michael Sinclair
Gordon Dickson
Geoffrey Hughes
Jan Caple
Beverly Phillips
Louise Young

Committee Presidents:

Kevin Casey
Harold Bird
Peter Casey
Ron Ramsdale
Shayne Mooney
Rex Wenn

Managers/Administrators:

Peter Riordan
Glynn Sinclair
Brendan O'Donnell
Robert Gregory
Gerald Leinkauf
Harold Bird
Ron Ramsdale
Julie Chamberlin

Assistant Managers:

Rex Wenn

Treasurers:

Norma Thorn
John Boyle
Dorothy Crawford
Yvonne Bird
Brian Kimmins
Bruce Carrick
Colin Seedy

Other Management Committee

Members:

Eric Gabb
Harry Rijs
Kerry Blake
Philip Carmody
Linda Latimer
Judy Hooper
Stephen Mansour

Management Committee

Secretaries:

Norma Thorn
Lynette Casey-Brereton
Patricia Bainbridge
Rosemary Greenhalgh
Fay Bissett
Jan Eldred

Administration:

Lynette Casey-Brereton
Patricia Bainbridge
Rosemary Greenhalgh
Fay Bissett
Ann Williamson
Leanne Wilkinson
Jan Eldred

Administrative Assistance:

Robert Gregory
Michael Casley
David Cosgriff
Timothy Mullen
Stephen Mansour
Stuart Fox
Marcus Greening

Wardrobe:

Managers:

Jean Sinclair

Judith Gabb
Estelle Bird (Wilson)
Yvonne Bird
Diane Costigan
Audrey Glen
Val Wells
Peika Namdarian
Wendy Di Luzio

Assistants:

Gillian Baxter
Liz Logiusto
Dawn Treloar
Anne-Marie Smith
Rose Whitehurst

Interpreters for Tours:

Linda Chin
Cameron Wenn
Matthew Tutty

Tour Nurses:

Heather Thomas
Karen Aberdour

Ticket Secretaries:

Campbell Murray
Harry Mullen
Neville Greenhalgh
Terance Langley
Trevor Norris
Keith Sandford
Geoff Gray
Kathryn Ashton
Jo Ellemor
Katie Lloyd
Carmel Trecate

Current Management Committee

Members:

Rex Wenn – President
Peter Casey – Vice-President
Colin Seedy – Treasurer
Jan Eldred
Philip Carmody
Judy Hooper
Linda Latimer
Stephen Mansour

In addition to the above, there have been many parents who have offered tremendous support over the Choir's first fifty years. Public relations, wardrobe, fundraising, camp and function supervision, set and costume development, building development, music library, nursing and medical assistance and hospitality are some of the major areas where parents have given wonderful service. It is not practical to list the hundreds of people who have given freely of their time and effort but we take this opportunity to sincerely thank them for their assistance.



Many congratulations to the National Boys Choir of Australia on reaching their half-century. The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is so proud of its ongoing collaboration with the National Boys Choir and looks forward to many more outstanding performances in the years to come.

Huw Humphreys

Director of Artistic Planning, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra



QANTAS
Spirit of Australia



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ConnectEast has also extended its support to a range of artistic endeavours including Frankston Arts Centre and the Archibald Prize exhibition at Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery.

We are a proud sponsor of the National Boys Choir of Australia's 50th anniversary celebrations.



Enjoy the performance.



CELEBRATING
50
YEARS
OF MUSIC
1964 – 2014

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