

*Patron: His Excellency the Governor-General of New Zealand, The Honourable Anand Satyanand, PCNZM*  
*Vice-Patrons: Diana Cable, Professor Peter Godfrey, Ian Fraser*  
*Dr Karen Grylls, Hon. Marian Hobbs*

### **PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT THE SARGOOD BEQUEST : PROJECT FUNDING**

- a) March/April, a choir of 55 singers was auditioned nationwide and selected.
- b) Elise Bradley resigned to take up the position of Artistic Director of Toronto Children's Chorus, Canada, and Robert Aburn was appointed as Musical Director.
- c) Regional rehearsals with Robert Aburn were held in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch in September.
- d) A full course was held in October following a rehearsal course in Auckland in July, and regional rehearsals in September. This course was led by Robert Aburn. It included rehearsals and commission of two waiata from Te Taepa Kameta. Te Taepa visited and choreographed the waiata for the choir. A formal concert was held in the Methodist Church in New Plymouth, as well as a short concert during school assembly (1250 students) at New Plymouth Boys' High School. On Monday 8 October an interactive workshop at New Plymouth Boys' High School was offered to students from Taranaki area. 45 Music students from New Plymouth Boys' High School, St Mary's Diocesan School (Stratford), Spotswood College, Hawera High School, Sacred Heart and Francis Douglas Memorial College attended. An outline of topics covered is included at the end of this report.



Workshop held at New Plymouth Boys' High School, Monday 8 October

On Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup>, a full formal concert was held in New Plymouth at the Methodist Church, Liardet Street, (seating approx 200). An audience of 193 people attended.

Under the heading "Choir lifts the mood on a Sunday of contrasts" reviewer Harry Brown (Taranaki Daily News) wrote:

*C'est La Vie. Sunday October 7 may have brought misery to many, but only joy to the capacity audience in the New Plymouth Methodist Church who heard the New Zealand Secondary Students' Choir.*

*Conductor Robert Adlam (sic) coaxed at times a sensitive sweetness, then sonorous brilliance and energy from those fresh buoyant voices.*

*Singing from a wide ranging repertoire the choir captured both tone and timbre of each period. Colourful backing from piano or organ, flute, cello or percussion added interest to the antiphonal effects from Schutz, as did tender solo voices in a bracket of spirituals, the pick a jazzy arrangement of the Battle of Jericho.*

*Horizons were expanded by works from contemporary NZ composers, with a standout performance of movements from a short Mass by Katherine Dienes, its jagged chords and dramatic dynamics contrasting with a dreamy setting of Sea Child by David Hamilton.*

*An afternoon of contrast, in fact, with skills and the sheer joy of singing which augurs well for their many engagements and a tour of South America, especially with their choreographed Maori welcome and farewell. C'est magnifique.*



Formal concert, Methodist Church, New Plymouth, Sunday October 7

The second part of the course was based in Wanganui where the choir performed a short concert for the entire school and students from Wanganui High School at St George's Preparatory School (285 students), and a workshop for students from the school (50) together with students from Wanganui High School (35). A formal evening concert was performed in the Chapel at the Jane Winstone Retirement Village, Wanganui.



Students from Wanganui High School attend a concert in the amphitheatre at St George's Preparatory School, Wanganui, Tuesday 8 October

The choir then travelled to Marton where it offered a workshop for students from the Rangitikei area. 35 students from Nga Tawa School, 5 from Rangitikei College and 19 from Turakina Maori Girls' School, together with music teachers attended. The choir also performed a short concert during a school assembly at Nga Tawa (250 students) and gave a formal evening concert at St Stephen's Church in Marton. All concerts were attended by capacity audiences.



Workshop at Nga Tawa School, Marton, Wednesday 9 October

What worked well and what didn't work well – Overall 2007 has been successful and has established the beginnings of a fine choir which will represent New Zealand proudly at an important festival in South America next year. What has worked well has been the school workshops which were well supported by many schools and have offered students and teachers an insight into elements of what is needed for good vocal production, and for the creation of a good choir. Concerts have been exceptionally well attended. Perhaps the only area of increasing difficulty is that of billeting. Residential courses would be preferable but are beyond the ability of the choir or its members to fund.

#### Audiences, 2007:

**Radio:** Radio NZ Concert has broadcast the complete concert given in Christchurch Cathedral in July last year on two occasions. Various pieces from the choirs' compact discs have been played throughout the year, eg in support of the 'composer of the week' programme, and on 'Made in New Zealand' programmes.

**Television:** *Praise Be* – The programme aired on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October celebrated the achievements and the 21<sup>st</sup> birthday of the NZSSC and featured four NZSS Choirs.

#### **Concerts**

- At the Methodist Church in New Plymouth 193 people (200 seat venue) attended the concert.
- 170 people (180 seat venue) attended a concert in Wanganui in the Chapel at the Jane Winstone Retirement Village on Tuesday October 9th.
- 160 people (capacity) attended the concert in St Stephen's Church, Marton on Wednesday October 10th.
- Workshop numbers are given above.

The next stage of development for this choir will be a one-week course in Wellington in January, and a 10-day course in Timaru, Gore and Dunedin in April next year. Activities for this choir will

conclude with the choir's attendance at a 10-day Music Festival in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires in July next year.

Variations from original project:

The only variations from the original project concern changes to the Musical Team personnel. All other activities have been completed as per the original proposal.

Copies of newsletter and concert programmes reflecting support from The ASB Community Trust are attached. Uniforms and other equipment sorely needed could not have been sourced without support from The ASB Community Trust, and for this the choir is very grateful.



Young singers join NZSSC members during a workshop in Wanganui, Tuesday October 8, 2007  
Choir member Amelia Ryman works with young singers.



A keen audience at St George's Preparatory School, Wanganui



Wanganui workshop  
Tuesday October 8, 2007



Ampitheatre concert, St George's School, Wanganui

Enclosures: Letters from New Plymouth Boys' High School, and St George's Preparatory School

