

# A Christmas Gift

Music Director - Kerith Fowles



**Saturday 3 December, 4pm**  
*St Thomas Aquinas Hall, Victoria St, Bowral*

**Friday 9 December, 6pm**  
**Saturday 10 December, 4pm**  
*Bundanoon Memorial Hall*



Patron – Richard Gill OAM

## THE PERFORMERS

Kerith Fowles      Conductor  
Ann Clipsham      Pianist

## SINGERS

Andrea Skrt <sup>+</sup>	Graeme Whisker <sup>+</sup>	Karen Granger
Bert DeHosson	Graham Warner <sup>+</sup>	Ken Ferrier <sup>+</sup>
Brian Goodes	Greg Oehm <sup>+</sup>	Lorelei Tait
Cathy Hughes <sup>+</sup>	Hugh Mackay	Louise Cassidy
David Kelly <sup>+</sup>	Ian O'Farrell	Meg Herbert
Desley O'Farrell <sup>+</sup>	Jan King	Michele Nobbs <sup>+</sup>
Emma Llewelyn	Jane Irwin	Richard Bosly-Craft
Eric Conley	Jean DeHosson <sup>+</sup>	Rob Dunstan
Fran Bosly-Craft	Jean Long <sup>+</sup>	Rose Conley <sup>+</sup>
Georgie Hurda <sup>+</sup>	Jo Deligt <sup>+</sup>	Sandra Menteith
Gill Dunstan	Judy Coverdale	Sue Reid
		Tony Coyle <sup>+</sup>

<sup>+</sup> madrigal group

## THE MUSIC

- Fanfare and March on "Gloria"** Drennan
- Joy to the World** Handel, arr. Lawson
- Christ Has Come** Hommerding
- Jabula Jesu** Zulu folksong, arr. Hatfield
- Love Divine** Goodall
- \*The Boundary Rider** Wesley-Smith\*  
*Solo:* David Kelly, Judy Coverdale,  
Ken Ferrier, Fran Bosly-Craft
- Sleigh Bells** Ukrainian folktune, arr. Rentz
- Have Yourself a Merry  
Little Christmas** Martin & Blane, arr. Clipsham
- Jolly Old Saint Nick** trad., arr. Billingsley

### ~ INTERVAL WITH REFRESHMENTS ~

- In Dulci Jubilo** trad. German tune, arr. Pearsall
- \*Look Up, Sweet Babe** Mackay\*  
*Solo:* Meg Herbert, Michele Nobbs,  
Ken Ferrier, David Kelly
- Sing We With Gladness** based on "Wanton" by Holborne,  
arr. Snyder
- Cantate Domino** Elberdin
- Stille Nacht** Gruber, arr. Carter
- Throw Open Your Shutters!** Bernon
- Gotta Whisper, Gotta Shout** Johnson  
*Solo:* Jean de Hosson
- Jingle Bells** old folktune, arr. Charles

\*world premiere\*

## PROGRAMME NOTES

While this concert series is very much our gift to you, **Serendipity: the Choir** too has been honoured to receive gifts – of not one, but two musical works composed especially for us, and that we will be performing today. From the brothers Peter and Martin Wesley-Smith comes “The Boundary Rider”. All of the Wesley-Smith compositions for choir are known for their witty narratives with a humorous twist at the end, and “The Boundary Rider” is no exception, telling the tale of a horseman riding home in a hot Australian summer. Meanwhile, David Mackay has penned us a setting of “Look Up, Sweet Babe”, verses taken from the poem “A Hymn sung as by the Three Kings” by Richard Crashaw. One wonders if Crashaw, whose Roman Catholic sympathies led to his sacking and eventual exile from Civil War England, saw his own land and its wise men as the ones who “strangely went astray, lost in a bright Meridian night”. While we may never know the answer, we are grateful for David’s beautiful setting.

The century preceding the English Commonwealth was marked by the rise of the madrigal, and we present two examples for you today. Adapted from a piece by Elizabethan composer Anthony Holborne is “Sing We with Gladness”, arranged by Audrey Snyder. Similarly, “Throw Open Your Shutters” by Bernon is a modern adaptation of the madrigal style; both these items display the energy that the madrigal form is well known for.

In a more modern genre, but no less energetic for that, is “Jolly Old Saint Nick”, a very up-tempo homage to everybody’s favourite man in red. Later, “Jingle Bells”, a work inextricably entwined with Christmas, takes us dashing through the snow; today’s arrangement is by the famous soul pianist, Ray Charles. For a more reflective mood, we also sing “Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas”, originally from the MGM movie musical *Meet Me In St Louis*, and here arranged by our own Ann Clipsham.

Bells figure prominently at yuletide – and in this concert program! From Ukraine comes “Sleigh Bells”, the eastern European version of “Jingle Bells”. Join us as we take a troika ride on a crisp winter’s night! In a different vein, but one where bells are central to the work as a reflection of rejoicing at the birth of Jesus, is “Christ Has Come” by the contemporary composer Alan J. Hommerding. Similarly joyful are two pieces with origins in African music – “Jabula Jesu” is a celebration in the Zulu tradition, while “Gotta Whisper, Gotta Shout” is a modern work in the style of a spiritual. We are sure you’ll enjoy the energy in both!

Some of the pieces you will hear are based on more sacred texts. From the Ordinary of the Mass comes the Gloria, a hymn of praise to Christ. The praise element is certainly evident in Patti Drennan’s “Fanfare and March on ‘Gloria!’”, while the contemporary Basque composer Josu Elberdin has set – in three languages – extracts from “Cantate Domino” (Sing to the Lord a New Song), another enthusiastic hymn of praise to God.

Charles Wesley was without doubt one of the finest hymn writers of the Protestant tradition – it is said he wrote at least one hymn a day. “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” is one of his most loved. These words have been taken by English composer Howard Goodall for his setting, “Love Divine”. While Goodall is most famous for his themes to television shows including *QI*, *Blackadder* and *Red Dwarf*, we are sure this stunning arrangement will rival his “The Lord’s My Shepherd”, the theme to the *Vicar of Dibley* series.

No Christmas is complete without old carols, of course, and we are pleased to include some favourites as part of the programme. “Stille Nacht” (Silent Night) is arguably the most popular carol of all time, and our setting by English arranger Andrew Carter beautifully displays the calm that this carol is famous for. “Joy to the World” is also well known, and today’s version is arguably unique in being an arrangement of an arrangement! Originally based on a theme by Handel, it was worked into the popular carol by Lowell Mason, and here further arranged into a new setting by Philip Lawson that features a repeated emphasis on “Joy!” Finally, in a combination of both stillness and joy is “In Dulci Jubilo” (In Sweet Jubilation), a sumptuous nineteenth-century setting for double choir by Pearsall of the great Lutheran chorale.

And as the year, and this concert season, draws to a close, all at **Serendipity: the Choir** send you and your families best wishes for the Christmas season and the New Year, and look forward to seeing you at the next concert in June 2017!

**Martin Wesley-Smith** (born 10 June 1945) is an Australian composer with an eclectic output ranging from children’s songs to environmental events. He works in a range of musical styles, including choral music, operas, computer music, music theatre, chamber and orchestral music, and audiovisual pieces which bring words, music and images together. His work has been performed by the Song Company in Amsterdam, den Bosch, Denmark, Ghent, Groningen, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Portugal, and by many others throughout Australia. Martin lives with his librettist brother, Peter Wesley-Smith, in the Kangaroo Valley east of Bundanoon.

**David Mackay** is a conductor, composer, and singer based in Canberra. He has worked as a conductor in Australia and the United Kingdom, including work with Opera Australia, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Sydney Chamber Choir, the Sydney Chamber Orchestra, Nova Camerata, and the Sydney Youth Orchestra. He was the Music Director of Canberra’s Oriana Chorale from 2010 to 2012. As a tenor, David has performed with the choirs of St James’ King Street in Sydney, St Simon Zelotes Church in Chelsea, London, the Sydney Philharmonia Motet Choir, and the Brandenburg Choir. David is active as a composer, particularly of works for choir and solo voice.

### Fanfare and March on "Gloria!"

Gloria in excelsis Deo, sing Gloria  
Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis  
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,  
adoramus te, glorificamus te  
Gratias agimus tibi  
propter magnam gloriam tuam,  
Domine Deus rex coelestis

Glory to God in the highest...  
and on earth peace to people of goodwill  
We praise you, we bless you,  
we adore you, we glorify you  
We give you thanks  
for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly king

### Jabula Jesu [the Zulu bits]

Sithi jabula, Jesu, jabula  
Sithi thandaza, Solly, thandaza

We say, be joyful with Jesus  
We say, play, Solly, have a good time

### In Dulci Jubilo (Latin / English)

In dulci jubilo, let us our homage show  
Our heart's joy reclineth in praesepio  
And like a bright star shineth matris in gremio  
Alpha es et O

O Jesu parvule, I yearn for thee alway  
Hear me, I beseech thee, O puer optime  
My prayer let it reach thee, O princeps gloriae  
Trahe me post te

O patris caritas, o nati lenitas  
Deeply were we stained per nostra crimina  
But thou has for us gained coelorum gaudia  
Ubi sunt gaudia, if that they be not there?  
There are angels singing nova cantica  
There the bells are ringing in regis curia

[In sweet rejoicing]  
[in the manger]  
[in his mother's lap]  
[you are the alpha and omega]  
[O tiny Jesus]  
[O best of boys]  
[O prince of glory]  
[make me follow you]  
[O love of the father, gentleness of the son]  
[by our crimes]  
[the joys of heaven]  
[where are those joys?]  
[new songs]  
[in the courts of the king]

### Cantate Domino (English / Basque / Latin)

Sing to the Lord a new song  
Sing all the earth, praise his name

Kanta Jaunari, kantu berria  
kanta Jaunari lur guztia  
egin alaitsu haren nahia  
Benedicite nomine eius  
annuntiate diem de die salutare eius  
Kanta Jaunari...

Cantate, exsultate et psallite in cithara  
psallite voce psalmi  
Cantate Domino, quia mirabilia fecit  
Kanta Jaunari ... Cantate Domino

Sing to the Lord a new song  
Sing to the Lord, all the land  
Do his will with joy  
Bless his name  
Show forth his salvation day by day  
Sing, rejoice and praise with the harp  
Sing praises with the psaltery  
Sing to the Lord who has done wonders



### **The Boundary Rider**

(Peter Wesley-Smith 1990, 2016)

The bound'ry rider heads for home, the ride is nearly over  
He's seen not a soul for thirty days except a passing drover  
His thoughts are on the homestead with his loyal wife residing  
He's smiling now, he'll soon be home, then no more bound'ry riding

He's been alone so many days, some things he can't remember  
He's not sure what the date is, but it must be late December  
He hasn't heard the wireless since he left the railway siding  
A month has passed, now he's homeward bound, soon no more bound'ry riding

The burning midday sun beats down on eucalypt and wattle  
His thoughts are all of liquid in an ice-cold amber bottle  
Some Vegemite on damper's all his tucker bag's providing  
No matter now, he's heading home – soon no more bound'ry riding

He sees his house and waves his hand, but no-one comes to meet him  
He canters up the driveway; not a soul is there to greet him  
His neighbours too have disappeared; is everyone in hiding?  
It's dismal for a lonely bloke just back from bound'ry riding

He rides to town – no sign of life – he cannot find a paper  
The townsfolk have all gone as if just vanished in a vapour  
He jumps down from his horse and to the pub he's quickly striding  
– Deserted! Has the town died out while he's been bound'ry riding?

But then behind the pub he hears a sound extraordinary  
The whole town is shouting "Welcome home!" and "Happy Christmas Harry!"  
The barbecue's alight, the party's on, his wife presiding  
It's Christmas Day, he's home at last! Now no more bound'ry riding – hooray!

### **Look up, Sweet Babe**

**Richard Crashaw (1603–1649)**

Look up, sweet babe, look up and see;  
for love of thee, though far from home,  
the East is come to seek herself in thy sweet eyes.  
We who strangely went astray,  
lost in a bright Meridian night, a darkness made of too much day,  
beckoned from afar by thy fair star, Lo, at last have found our way.  
To thee, our day of nights, our East of West  
Lo, we at last have found the way;  
To thee, the world's great universal East,  
The general and indifferent day.