

*Friends of*  
**cambrensis**  
*Newsletter*  
*April 2011*

Welcome to our Spring / Summer edition of the Friends of Cambrensis Newsletter. Doesn't time fly????!! We can't believe it's been a full 6 months since our last newsletter!

So, what do you get if you cross a magnificent orchestra, 300 strong choir, dear little children, a grumpy elf and Anne Brown on a surfing board? Yes – it could only be the Promise of Christmas 2010!!!



What a day we had! Snow drifts cut off most of South Wales – but we didn't even notice! Anne donned her summer wardrobe to lead the Cambrensis Junior Choir through calypso carols and Kelvin the Grumpy Christmas Elf gave musings on why on why Kelvin the Musical Director deserved a nice big Christmas present!!

The Promise of Christmas 2010 saw us treated to solos from the talented Junior Choir. The Orchestra wowed us with such diverse pieces as Stravinsky's Firebird Suite through to the Overture from Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street. The poignant and atmospheric *O Magnum Mysterium* sang by Cambrensis, provided a time of reflection, whilst a Hall of 1,000 voices joined in carols to celebrate the birth of the Messiah!!!

All in all, the event raised £2,200 which was shared between Cardiff Foodbank (which distributes food to needy families), Teen Challenge (a Christian drug rehabilitation centre based in Swansea) and Bangla Cymru (a small Welsh charity which provides cleft lip and palate surgery in Bangladesh).



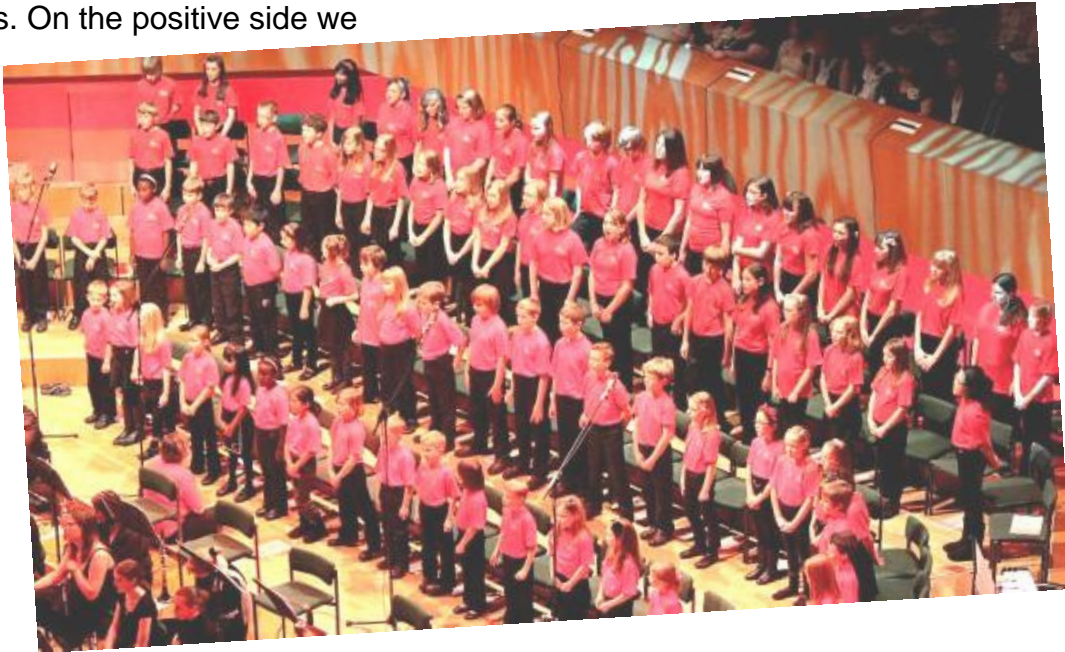
## NEWS

### **The Cambrats & Cambrensis Youth Choir**

After the great time we had had with the Promise Of Christmas Youth Choir (which numbered around 80 children and teens), it was back to business for the Cambrats ( the smaller group of 6-13 yrs olds who meet all year round).

We said a sad goodbye to a few older Cambrats who have left after many long and happy years with us. On the positive side we

welcomed about 8 new children, most of whom had sung in the Christmas choir.



We started practising in January, with rehearsals

every 10-14 days and the new group

has gelled together well. We have a good "back row" of 11-13 yr olds - many of whom are boys - who are great singers though sometimes provide for times of testing!!!

Friends of Cambrensis would be most welcome to attend our next two concerts coming up at

**Ebenezer Church, Talbot Green (16th April, 7pm) and**

**Lodge Farm Church in Caerleon (25th June. 7pm).**

It's lovely to go to new venues. The Cambrats will be doing solos (instrumental and vocal) from within the group, a "belleplate group" and a dance routine (very moving) from some of the children.

It's really encouraging to see how the children are benefiting from the Cambrats by way of fellowship with other children of like mind - the friendships formed by Cambrats of past years are still going on - two who met in the Cambrats, now 18, living 25 miles apart, are now "an item!" I wonder if the first Cambrats wedding is on the cards?!!!

## **The Cambrensis Concert Band and Wind Band**

In the autumn, we arranged a "foreign" tour to Swindon where we were the main group in a concert with a Baptist cluster choir. We played our usual mix of light, classical, pop and Christian music. We even taught the choir and audience to sing "Gwahoddiad" including the "Amens" at the end!!!

Our numbers continue to grow and our largest band to date (even though at least 4 were

missing!) played with Cambrensis Choir and Kelvin's various community choirs in Whitchurch High School on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011.



At the moment we are learning some new repertoire and are looking forward to 2 new players possibly joining us in the very

near future - including an oboe player!!

The brass quintet continues to rehearse fortnightly and we are on the look out for venues to play. We played for Anne Brown's Community Carols at Christmas and recently shared a concert with Cefn Hengoed Ladies Choir in Ystrad Mynach.

## **The Cambrensis Choir**

Well Cambrensis Choir have had a busy couple of months since starting rehearsals again in January.

### **26<sup>th</sup> February Ebenezer Church, Llanbradach**

One of our tenors, Clive Rich is a lay pastor at Ebenezer Church and he invited Cambrensis to help him with a "Songs of Praise" evening, featuring hymns old and new. It was a lovely evening and obviously thoroughly enjoyed by the congregation who joined in wholeheartedly with the hymns. We sang many of Clive's own favourites - including a "Crusade Songs Medley" that Jeff Howard had arranged many years ago. Clive was able to present the gospel through the words of many of these songs.

The church were greatly encouraged by the evening and for many of us the "blast from the past" was a great blessing!

## **The Cambrensis Choir (Continued)**

### **11<sup>th</sup> March - The Dutch Barn, Whitchurch High School - Let's Celebrate!**

Kelvin had asked Cambrensis Choir to help out in a Community Concert involving his other 3 choirs/groups - Voicemale, Women in Harmony and the Heath Community Singers (a new group formed out of a desire by folk in that area to get together to sing). A dance group from the school also took part and the Cambrensis Concert Band played a big role throughout the evening, using their diverse repertoire.

It was a most enjoyable evening and good for Cambrensis to sit back and listen to the other groups perform. Cambrensis sang music which would be out of our normal repertoire and "comfort zone", including Les Misérables and Andrew Lloyd Webber medleys. We were told that the other groups found Cambrensis' contribution very encouraging to them and enabled them to sing music which they otherwise would not have been able to tackle. This new branch of Cambrensis' "ministry" has expanded our horizons.

### **March 26<sup>th</sup> The Dutch Barn, Whitchurch High School, The Life – The Remake with Michael Card**

Yet another event in the school's "Dutch Barn" which is a lovely venue in which to sing. We were privileged to be asked to sing as a "backing choir" with this well known American singer and again the choir enjoyed and were mightily blessed by the whole evening.



Michael is more than just a singer/songwriter - he is also a Bible scholar and his thoughtful way of introducing, linking and explaining the songs was very helpful - the theme was "The suffering of Jesus" and many of the songs were very powerful.

We hope our links with Michael will continue. For at least one lifelong Michael Card fan in the choir, her ambition has now been realised!!!

## INTRODUCING.....

As you know, we think of "Friends of Cambrensis" as an extension of the Cambrensis family. We like to introduce you to other family members, and this time we have a real treat for you!! Not only do we have two for the price of one, but these are two extremely talented young musicians who have grown up within the Cambrensis family. Here they reflect on how Cambrensis has supported them in developing their music skills and in their continued faith.

### ..... Jason ("Jay") Elliott

"I was born in Cardiff and brought up in a Christian family environment - my parents were involved in both Cambrensis and St. David's Praise from the very early days. I attended a number of concerts as a child, giving my life to Christ at 12 and affirming it in my late teens.

My first experiences of involvement Cambrensis was with the Concert Band, and in 1999 I played trumpet in the St David's Praise orchestra for the first time. Since then I've been a permanent fixture in the brass section of the Orchestra, Concert Band and now the Brass Quintet; you will also see me sprinting across the back of the stage to play the electric bass in some songs too!

I work as a radiographer by day, and Cambrensis has been a blessing as the solid outlet of worship and music for me over the years: though school and county music groups; past the odd other orchestral, jazz or band experience and into worship teams in churches and at conferences. Now it's a part of my family life as my wife Jude is a leader in the Cambrats and my baby daughter is often in tow!

In the last year or so I have started writing worship songs and music with Christian perspective, hoping to encourage and challenge Christians and non-Christians alike - God willing I will be producing a CD and performing some concerts too!"

To listen to Jay's solo music log onto [http://soundcloud.com/jay\\_elliott](http://soundcloud.com/jay_elliott) or <http://www.facebook.com/jayelliottmusic>



## **INTRODUCING.....**

As promised, here is another introduction to one of the 'next generation' of the Cambrensis family.

### **..... Lydia Marshall**

"I first joined the Cambrensis family aged 6 when I joined the Cambrats with my older sister. It was after being a part of concerts that involved the St David's Praise Orchestra that I was first inspired to play the violin.

I was a member of Cambrats until age 11 when I was no longer classed as a 'junior' or "fell off the back row" as they call it. During my time in Cambrats my mum, Danae, joined Cambrensis Choir and began helping with Junior Choir. Apart from the odd embarrassing moment, it was great to share the experience with her!!!



One of the most memorable experiences I have is of Cambrensis' trip to Poland in 2007. My sister and I joined the choir on tour where I played flute with a small group of musicians. It was such a great experience being a part of the Cambrensis family.

I play flute and violin in any group that I can within the Cambrensis group – Wind Band, Concert Band, String Groups and the Orchestra. Cambrensis has so much to offer a young Christian musician. It helps us to focus on why we play our instruments and lets us use our talents for God's glory.

I am now in my 2<sup>nd</sup> year studying violin at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama where I am able to bring other students to join in the Cambrensis fun!."

We are very pleased to hear that Lydia has been successful in becoming leader of the National Youth Orchestra of Wales.

I'm sure you will join with the rest of the Cambrensis family in wishing Lydia and Jason well with their future endeavours. God bless you both!!!

## Hellos and Goodbyes!!

### Congratulations!!!

The Cambrensis family gets bigger with two of our basses, Eddie Rees and Richard Smith becoming Grandfathers for the first time. We send our hearty congratulations to respective families and pray for many blessings for the babies.

We also congratulate Helen and Ben Dare who take up a joint post as ministers of Broadhaven Baptist Church, Pembroke, in the Autumn. Helen has sung with Cambrensis Choir since medieval times (ok, maybe not that long, but it seems so!!), starting off as a wee Cambtrat. Aside from singing alto, Helen is also a director of Cambrensis Ministries. She has often been heard speaking at events from a heart so obviously attuned to God. She will be a sad loss to the choir, not just her superb singing voice, but her quiet wisdom and her willingness to help out. However, we know that Cambrensis' loss is Broadhaven's gain and we wish them every blessing in their new venture.

## COMING UP.....

We have a very busy year coming up and we hope you will be able to join us along the way.



**The Crucifixion**  
**John Stainer**  
and other Easter music

with  
**cambrensis** & the St David's Praise Choir

Music Director Kelvin Thomas  
Organist Jeffrey Howard  
Soloists Steffan Jones & Joshua Mills

**Y Tabernacl, The Hayes, Cardiff**  
**Saturday April 23rd 2011**  
**7.30pm**

**Tickets £5**

Tickets available from choir members or from the Cambrensis Office:  
Email [admin@cambrensis.org.uk](mailto:admin@cambrensis.org.uk), tel 01656 784376  
Send SAE with remittance to 21 Windsor Rd, Porthcawl CF36 3LR  
Cheques payable to "Cambrensis Choir"

As stated in the last newsletter, we are having a break from the May St David's Praise event for 2011. However St David's Praise Choir and Cambrensis will join together on **23<sup>rd</sup> April**, to perform John Stainer's *The Crucifixion*. Two talented young soloists, Steffan Jones and Joshua Mills, will join the choirs accompanied by Jeffrey Howard on the organ.

The Crucifixion will be performed in the first half and provide a reflective basis for the Easter weekend. The second half will have rousing hymns celebrating the resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

This surely sounds like a night not to be missed! Starting at 7.30pm, tickets are priced at £5 and available from [admin@cambrensis.org.uk](mailto:admin@cambrensis.org.uk) or by telephoning 01656 784376. Local parking is available at only £1 after 5pm.

## DATES FOR THE DIARY.....

### **16th April - Ebenezer Church, Talbot Green**

A delightful concert provided by the Cambrats

### **23<sup>rd</sup> April - Y Tabernacl, The Hayes, Cardiff**

Cambrensis and St David's Praise choir perform John Stainer's *The Crucifixion*. With guest soloists Steffan Jones and Joshua Mills and Jeffrey Howard on organ.

### **11<sup>th</sup> June - English Baptist Church, Carmarthen**

Join Cambrensis to celebrate 150<sup>th</sup> years of God's grace and abundance.

### **25<sup>th</sup> June - Lodge Farm Church in Caerleon**

Be entertained by the wonderful Cambrats!!

### **1<sup>st</sup> October - Tenby Deer Park Baptist Church, Tenby**

If you happen to be holidaying along the west coast in early October, why not come see Cambrensis take part in an outreach concert, as part of the Tenby Festival.

### **October 15th – Tredegarville Baptist Church**

Join Cambrensis to celebrate and give thanks as part of this beautiful church's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> December – St David's Hall, The Hayes, Cardiff.**

The Promise of Christmas 2011 with Cambrensis, The St David's Praise Choir, Youth Choir and Orchestra

**FRIENDS OF CAMBRENSIS**



**PARTNERS IN THE WORK**

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