

In 1966 Elsie Andrew, the accompanist for the choir, took a year's leave to do further study and I apprehensively took her place. On my first rehearsal, I faced a sea of unknown men, all sitting in rows—farmers, doctors, research scientists, a shoe-repairer, motor mechanics, a solicitor, council workers, shop-keepers.

We rehearsed for the Ballarat South Street competitions week after week as I sat mutely at the piano, shivering and shaking and doing my very best, but my most frightening time was when our amazing conductor Charles Hamilton indicated to the choir to stand up, then exploded in his strong Scottish brogue "Sit doon! Yer like a lot of pregnant elephants!"

I was thrilled to finally have female company when we went to Ballarat. Choir member Ken Olson brought his fiancé, Anne, along and we shared a room in the Creswick Hotel. The hotel was locked when we returned from the competitions and Ken had to climb in through the window to open the door for us - a memorable occasion - but Anne and I have become lifelong friends and she treated Turaton audiences to her beautiful voice for some years. Needless to say, the choir came second in the competitions!



(Marilyn Banfield)

Turaton looks back in history to a notable group of people who have worked tirelessly providing costumes for the shows. To name a few: Lill Kuhnle, Shirley Muir, Isobel Hamilton, the late Liz Vibert, Liz Gale, Ann Fagan, 'Nette Davidson, Barbara Charman and Sharon Giustino. These women, with their teams of helpers, all contributed immensely, leaving a wealthy addition to the company's costume department. Their tolerance was often tested when a cast member complained that they were not accustomed to wearing that colour or the director needed something unexpected and there were so many deadlines to meet. For one particular show, helpful cast members were seen feverishly making potato paint patterns on Grecian robes, minutes before the show was to open.

In 1991, Lyn Parsons took long-service leave and established a workshop in The Shed. With the assistance of Shirley Ferguson and other occasional helpers, she worked well into the night to fabricate a superb collection of costumes and banners for the production of "Camelot".

Many costumes have been hired over the years and the story will never be forgotten when a helpful, willing and somewhat inexperienced volunteer turned on the paint-stirrer in The Shed, shooting paint in all directions and narrowly missing two racks of newly-arrived and magnificent costumes from J. C. Williamson's! (Marilyn Banfield)

(Editor's note: Marilyn herself has been caretaker of our costumes for nearly 30 years, lending and hiring them out and returning them to the proper places.)



ABOVE: Liz Gale and Liz Vibert man the machines to prepare more beautiful costumes for a coming production.



Liz Gale and Ann Fagan select costumes for the coming show.

TEDDY'S YEAR

Teddy McCracken has always been good value for Turaton, whether it be playing a small part, running a barbecue or doing some very necessary work around The Shed. Ted was the hands-on man when the new wardrobe area was built a few years ago and he was there when the toilets were put in a decade or so ago.

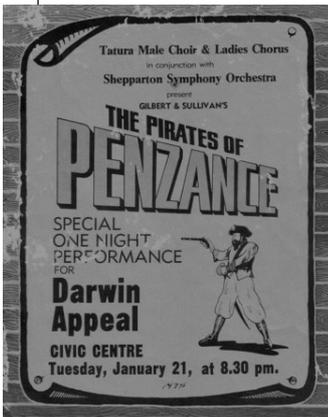
His value to the whole area has just been recognized when he was awarded Tatura's Citizen of the Year in 2004 at the Australia Day ceremony.

Above, Ian Robertson, Mike Condon, Ted, Mick and Liam Muller relax after the 2001 concert.





The committee members of the Tatura Male Choir deciding where to donate the \$500 profit that they made from their recent production "The Pirates of Penzance" There were 30 requests for assistance but finally, \$250 was given to Save the Children Fund and \$250 was given to the newly established Community Care Centre in Shepparton. Pictured above are committee members David Vibert, Bert Gale, Rudi Baer, Doug Rogers, George Ferguson and Herb Whitfield. (1974)



Following Cyclone Tracy in December 1974, the company gave a special Darwin Appeal performance at the Civic centre on January 21st 1975.

CHARITY WORK

Over 60 years, Tatura Male Choir and Turaton have been steady contributors to charities either by direct contribution or by giving organizations the opportunity to work with us to raise money for their group.

In recent years Turaton have staged theatre-restaurants and used dress-rehearsal night as a fund-raiser for some local group such as Rotary or the Parkinson's Support Group.

The groups sell tickets to ensure that a good crowd is present and they are grateful to find a new way to raise funds for their cause.

Recently, Turaton has taken their concerts on the road with local groups in outlying towns having the opportunity to host us, advertise and sell tickets and share in the proceeds. Many make it a good social event, getting townspeople out, watching a concert and having supper. Last year we performed at Rushworth, Tatura, Ardmona, Shepparton and Tongala and this year we are going to Kyabram for the first time in many years.

THE G.V. CENTRE (1968)

The Committee of the G.V. Centre for Intellectually Handicapped Children greatly appreciates the generosity of the Tatura Male Choir in selecting the Centre as the charity to benefit financially from the performance of "HMS Pinafore".

In 1957, the Honourable the Premier of Victoria opened the G.V. Centre in Bowenhall Street, Shepparton. The Centre now has an enrolment of forty-four students (age range from 4 to 40 years). A taxi service operates to transport children to the Centre from the Shepparton, Tatura, Mooroopna, Numurkah areas. There are seven members on the staff. In September last, Mr Peter Ross-Edwards, M.L.A., officially opened an extension to the Centre which was erected at a cost of \$53,000. Because of the outstanding and devoted services rendered to the Centre over very many years by Mr R.T. Stephens and Mr A.L. Levett, the new building has been named - THE STEPHENS-LEVETT WING. The G.V. Centre Committee congratulates the Tatura Male Choir on the excellence of its past performances, and wishes "HMS Pinafore" every success.



An extract from a letter sent to Turaton by Geoff Alexander, Co-ordinator of the Parkinson's Support Group in Shepparton:

"Further to my letter of thanks to Turaton of 28-11-03, I write at the direction of our members following our support group A.G.M. to again thank Turaton for allowing us to have a Super Supper Night where we were able to raise for Parkinsons Vic. \$2179.00. This is an incredible achievement for our group." (2004)

SHEPPARTON AND DISTRICT RETIREMENT VILLAGE SOCIETY

Dear Patrons,

On behalf of the Shepparton and District retirement Village Society I sincerely thank you for your attendance and support.

We were very pleased when informed that the proceeds of the performance of "The Mikado" would be given to our appeal for \$100,000 for the building of a Retirement Village. This very generous gesture by the Tatura Male Choir is typical of the genuine interest that is being shown in this worthy and necessary project.

WE congratulate the Tatura Male Choir on their example and wish them and the Ladies Chorus the very best of luck and success in this production and hope that they will continue to entertain the people of our district.

Yours sincerely,
Keppel Turnour
(1969)

Shepparton
Musical Advancement
Society

presents ...



A FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC

by the
Tatura Male Choir & Ladies Chorus

Thursday, December 16, 1971

SHEPPARTON TOWN HALL

CONDUCTOR _____ CHARLES HAMILTON

ACCOMPANISTE _____ ELSIE ANDREW

GUEST ORGANIST _____ RAYMOND LONG

and
THE SHEPPARTON HIGH SCHOOL CHOIR
Conductor, Priscilla Taylor. Harpist: Jim Cotterell



Program ... price 20c



TURATON'S COMMUNITY SERVICE
Christmas Carols and Anzac Days



CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Presented to

TURATON

In Recognition of

25 YEARS CONTRIBUTION

to the

Annual Presentation of

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

in

SHEPPARTON

1974-1999

CR CHRIS HAZELMAN

MAYOR

on behalf of

THE GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL
AND THE COMMUNITY

19th December, 1999

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

Turaton was the choir for Carols by Candlelight in the Queens Gardens Sound Shell in Shepparton for many years leading the carols and accompanied by the Shepparton Brass Band. In 1999, Turaton was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for 25 years of participation beginning in 1974.

In the early years, the Hallelulah Chorus was performed. Individual members also performed items.

For several years the full choir sang carols in the Maude Street Mall on a Friday evening.

On one occasion we greeted the train at the Shepparton Station singing carols.

Each Christmas for many years Tarcoola had a formal Christmas function for the residents with a message from the Mayor and Turaton leading the carols and performing a choral item.

Each year, Turaton still leads the carol-singing at Mooroopna and Tatura.

By leading the singing at carols for over 30 years, Turaton has helped raise money for the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind.



Rebecca Jeffers
plays The Last Post.



Tatura Male Choir began singing at Tatura's Anzac Day Service in 1953 and continues to this day. Groups also sing at Mooroopna's service.

