

The Stephenson Trail Project

A music project about Northeast Legends



Sunderland Male Voice Choir evolved from the former Shiney Row Male Voice Choir in July 2022.

The Choir has recorded and performed an extensive range of music which has been popular with audiences across the region and the country.

Originally recorded material was re-mastered in 2022 and is available on CD. It is also being promoted, with live recordings of ongoing concerts in musical videos published on the Choir's website and social media.

The Choir has also embarked on a programme of creating new musical material. Some of this material incorporates new arrangements of traditional numbers. An exciting new initiative is the creation of brand-new songs based upon the region's rich local heritage and its people.

The Stephenson Trail Project

Introduction

Sunderland Male Voice Choir made a project submission to The Cultural Spring to deliver a musical creation initiative associated with planned celebrations for the Bicentenary of the Hetton Colliery Railway in November 2022.

Although the initial application was short-listed, it was not successful. The Cultural Spring was however impressed with the submission and presentation by the Choir, and as a result commissioned them to undertake some additional work.

The Stephenson Trail Project comprised of the creation of a new song about George Stephenson and the Hetton Colliery Railway, the promotion of the new piece of local heritage through concerts and recorded media.

We're Going on A Randy!

'We're Going on A Randy!' is the title of the new song created and performed by Sunderland Male Voice Choir.

The song has been written and produced by Sam Jordan, one of the Choir's tenors and deputy musical director.

It tells the story of local legend, George Stephenson, who was born in Wylam, Northumberland. He was initially illiterate and taught himself to read and write, becoming one of the country's most famous mining and railway engineers during the Industrial Revolution.

The song explains how he struggled to be recognised by the establishment for his inventions, such as the 'Geordie Lamp', tested at Killingworth.

Each verse introduces his role in The Hetton Colliery Railway, the high death rate in the Woodhead tunnels, his illiteracy and inventions, and the impact of their work on the landscape.

The chorus describes the difficult and dangerous roles of the workmen ('navvies') but their respect for George Stephenson.

Sunderland Male Voice Choir

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Heritage Concert at Hetton Methodist Church

The Regional Concerts

Sunderland Male Voice Choir held a series of regional concerts to promote and record 'We're Going on A Randy!':

04.11.2022 – Hetton Methodist Church

This was a 'Heritage Concert' which launched the new song. It was attended by The Mayor of the City of Sunderland, the Hetton Town Council Mayor and representative from The Cultural Spring.

12.11.2022 – Trinity Methodist Church

The Choir was proud to perform the new song in Shiney Row where it was originally founded. This was at an 'Autumn Concert' with Belmont Ladies.

19.11.2022 – Hall Garth Manor Hotel

The Choir performed the new song at the 'Hetton Colliery Railway 200 Banquet'. They also supported Marty Longstaff with harmonies on his new number, 'Stephenson's Engine'.

07.01.2023 – South Hylton Independent Methodist Church

The new song was promoted at a 'Festive Celebration for a North East Legend' at a local community event.

Positive Outcomes to Creative Heritage Project

New Heritage Music

'We're Going on A Randy!' Is a new song about local heritage and people created by a local community choir.

Developing Volunteer Skills

Member skills developed by learning and performing new song with the assistance of teaching tracks.

Regional Concerts

Four regional concerts have been held to promote the new song to local communities.

Musical Videos

Recordings of the new song have been made and musical videos created. These videos are posted on Facebook & YouTube and linked to the website.

Complimentary Project Support

The Choir has supported Marty Longstaff with harmonies on his recording of 'Stephenson's Engine' and in concert.

Project Page & Information Sheets

A dedicated project page has been created on the Choir's website and information sheets produced.

Social Media and the Press

Regular postings have been made on Facebook and the Choir's website with releases issued to the media where appropriate.



Hetton Colliery Railway 200 Banquet

Sunderland Male Voice Choir Information Sheets

Sunderland Male Voice Choir is producing a range of information sheets on its new music creation and project work. These sheets will be published within the 'Project' page of the Choir website.