

## Barry's speech

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Forgive me for speaking for a little while longer than I normally do. This has been a very emotional evening, not just for me, but for a lot of people, judging by the tissue box being passed around!!

This incredible choir started with me, about 10 years ago. Little did I know that the quality of the first concert continued into every concert since then. To be in charge of the choir and orchestra has been an honour....a very nervous honour at times, but nevertheless an honour!!

Although I've thoroughly enjoyed the hard work, it is time for someone else to take over. I had so many choir members come to me to ask if Midland Voices could continue...and continue it will, with Chris Wiltshire at the helm, putting on more evenings like this. On to stage Mr Chris Wiltshire.

I'd like to thank a few people who don't really get the chance to come onto stage and share these moments with me. Our technical man, who, by the way, supports Leeds United, travels down from Leeds for every concert. My good friend Andy Lunn. Come on Andy.

I'd like to thank the Warwick Arts Centre team here backstage, for their help and support over the years, including Howard Potts. To Paul the WAC manager and his team including Ben and Steve, the box office staff, thank you. The team that works so hard backstage, organising all the choir. Jonathan, Charlene, Paul, Becky and Jon,(Rosemary), To Kerry at Warwick conferences for sorting out our get together after the show.

To the support given by Carol's family and my family, thank you. To all my friends who have been to so many of our concerts, and one man in particular, the man who saved my life nearly six years ago, Chris Imray, and he and his wife have been to so many evenings like this.

And now to the choir who have produced fantastic concerts, from memory. Sometimes they even remember the words!! They have been brilliant to work with. I could not have been with any other choir. Actually I have never been asked !! I shall miss them enormously.

To this wonderful orchestra. A lot of them have played in every concert. They are such fantastic musicians. Eleanor Cooke, our leader had been in every concert. So thank you all and to Eleanor.(flowers)

They will be here on 27 June next year. Put it in your diary! My daytime singers will be putting on concerts at The Heart of England School, Balsall Common on 9<sup>th</sup> November and 23<sup>rd</sup> November at Myton School in Warwick, and this choir with a Christmas concert at Myton on 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. It' all go!!

To Terry Street, our Narrator who writes the script as well. Thank you.

And finally, to someone who has not only looked after me since my illness, but has put so much effort into the Midland Voices as well, choosing the choir music, including playing the keyboard. Out you come Carol, so that I can say thank you for everything.

And that's it!! Thank you. And now to finish the evening, our signature tune, at the end! Anthem from Chess, Safe journey.