

Community

There's lots going on in and around Beeston for all age groups.

For those caring for younger children, information about toy libraries, playgroups, toddler groups, and parenting skills is readily available from Beeston Clinic, Dovecote House, 38 Wollaton Road, Beeston.

If you are planning events or wish to advertise products or services for families, ring 0115 922 8007

Singing a sad song of farewell *by the Editor*

AFTER conducting Chilwell Ladies' Choir from the piano keyboard for more than 27 years, Kay Bridgewater is upping sticks and leaving town – at the age of 90.

The decision to leave for pastures new is nothing to do with the choir, however, and it was a sad occasion for all concerned on Monday, February 1, as Kay conducted and accompanied the group of 18 choristers for the last time. There is no one available to take over Kay's role, and the choir has no option other than to disband.

Kay is leaving Nottingham to be close to her family and will be moving to a village outside Wakefield, South Yorkshire, very soon.

The Chilwell Ladies' Choir was set up by Ken Moakes. Kay became the choir's accompanist when

she arrived in Nottingham and, when Ken died in 2002, she took over his position as musical director. Under Kay's guidance, the choir extended its repertoire to include anything that appealed: songs from the shows, folk songs, and sacred music. The final rehearsal before Kay's departure to the north included a very unusual musical setting to the children's poem, 'Hickory Dickory Dock'. The ladies clearly enjoyed singing the lively song proficiently and professionally.

At one time, the choir rehearsed at Clarke's Lane Methodist Church, Chilwell. They were asked to find themselves a new home when some building work at Clarkes Lane was due to start and have rehearsed at Greenwood Court, Cator

Lane, ever since. Residents at the Court consider it a pleasure and a privilege to be able to sit in the court's lounge on a Monday evening and listen to the choir rehearse.

The choir would give about 10 concerts a year, raising money for charity. Kay explained: "We often get asked to perform concerts, perhaps at sheltered accommodation or for other outside groups and organisations in the area. We also do a number of what you might call 'End of Term' concerts and parties each year, at Christmas, Easter and before the summer break.

Representatives of three charities: Cancer Research Beeston, the Association of People with Disability in Banglaore and Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air

Ambulance were invited along to receive cheques for £250 for each of the charitable organisations.

After thanking the group, Alan Godfrey of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance said: "It has been lovely to sit and listen to the choir rehearsing and it's such a shame to learn that, as of this evening, they will be disbanding."

Over the years, Chilwell Ladies' Choir has donated more than £4000 to various charities.

The formal presentations included an inscribed mantle clock for Kay from choir members and, perhaps more evocatively, a collection of scrapbooks containing concert programmes, press cuttings and photographs, surely destined to become a treasured aide memoir for

Kay in her new home.

Kay Bridgewater hails originally from Wales, and has generated a family with a real love of music. Once known pithily as 'The Singing Bridgewater's', she has a daughter (Ann) who sings with the Nottingham Harmonic Society and two sons, Roland and David. Roland was named 'Singer of the Year' at the Llangollen Music Festival. Husband Haydn, who died 13 years ago, also loved to sing.

The Chilwell Ladies' Choir is clearly a closely-knit group, and Kay, along with the Monday evening rehearsals and the pleasure the choir has brought to the community over the years, is going to be missed.

Contralto Carole Wood travels from Calverton to rehearse and sing with the

choir. She said: "Kay got me singing again after I'd stopped and, from there, I've gone on to make a CD. She is one of the best friends anyone could wish to have.

"The group is almost like family; we're all friends and we care for one another."

Kay said a special 'thank you' to Mary Smith, a Greenwood Court resident who had made it her job to make tea and coffee for the choristers.

She will be taking her piano to her new home. When asked if she would start another choir in Yorkshire, she said: "I have no plans to, but who knows what the future holds."

It's Behind You!

IT'S time for the Queens Road Church Pantomime again – Oh! Yes it is! – and this year, members of Queens Road Methodist Church will be putting on 'Peter Pan' as their 47th performance.

Andy Coley, directing for the first time, has been putting the cast through rehearsals three times a week, and the show promises to be a great night out for all the family.

All proceeds raised go to charities voted for by each and every member of the cast. Last year, a total of £1,400 was raised to be split equally amongst

five charities. This year the charities selected are Meningitis, Macmillan Care, Smile Train, the Haiti Earthquake Fund and Cancer Research.

The shows begin at 7.15pm from Wednesday, February 17 until Saturday, February 20. Tickets are on sale now and cost £4.50 for adults and £2.50 for children, including refreshments. So come along and join in the fun!

To book your ticket, call (0115) 985 4659, (0115) 925 3470 or pay at the door on the night.

NCC invests an extra £100,000 in salt budget

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE County Council has invested an extra £100,000 in its salt budget and an extra £150,000 in repairing winter damage to the roads as it continues to grit A and B routes only due to the national salt shortage.

Cllr Richard Jackson, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, said: "The national supply of salt is still in a critical state and continues to be controlled by the Government through the National Salt Cell.

"Our advice is not to drive unless you have to, and to follow AA advice on how to drive in icy conditions if you do have to, and drive as much as possible on A or B routes, or Highways Agency-

maintained roads – the motorways and trunk roads.

"We want to reassure residents that our gritting teams are on standby 24 hours, seven days a week, during the winter months, to ensure a prompt and effective response to icy weather.

"However, we would also urge residents to use the salt from grit bins wisely for use on the roads and pavements, so salt stocks are not exhausted unnecessarily"

"When ice is predicted, more than 200 tonnes of salt are used to treat 1,800km of the county's roads. We liaise with the police and neighbouring authorities to make sure that the roads are kept clear."