Capitalizing on community music: A case study of the manifestation of social capital in a community choir

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DECLARATION

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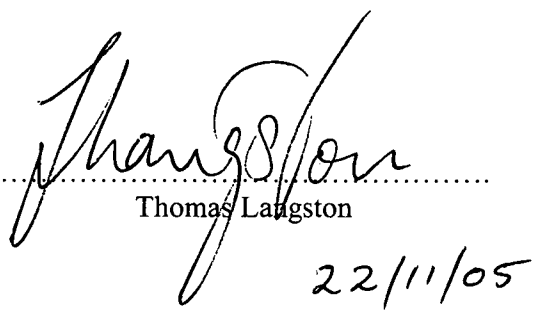

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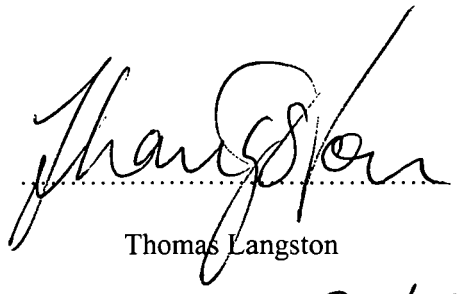

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Abstract

This study examines the manifestation of social capital in a Community Choir and explores the links between community music, and the generation and use of social capital in community settings.

Whilst there is an extensive literature on social capital and its generation and use in communities, little is known about the ways in which social capital is manifested in community music settings. The literature identifies social capital through the presence of 'indicators' such as 'trust', 'community and civic involvement', and 'networks'. This study sought to identify those indicators of social capital that are present in a Community Choir in regional Tasmania.

There is considerable debate in the literature as to what constitutes 'community music'. In this study, I distinguish between two forms of community music: Community Music (CM), characterised by professional intervention in community settings; and, Music in the Community (MiC), characterised by music-making that arises from 'grass-roots' activity in and by the community. Whilst both forms of community music can generate social capital, in this study I suggest that the social capital generated by MiC is more sustainable.

This qualitative, interpretive case study employs multiple data generation methods including surveys, field notes, and semi-structured interviews. Narrative analysis of data from a *Quartet* of choir members is employed to construct individual stories of engagement within the choir, and participation in the generation and use of social capital. An analysis of narrative approach is used to interrogate data from the main body of the Community Choir, (*Tutti)*, and to identify those social capital indicators present in the Community Choir.

Through analysis of the data, it is evident that the social capital indicators identified in the literature, specifically those of shared norms and values,

trust, civic and community involvement, networks, knowledge resources, and, contact with families and friends, are present in the Community Choir. Further, a previously unemphasized social capital indicator that of *Fellowship,* is identified as a key component in group cohesion and social capital development within the Community Choir.

A key element in the generation of social capital in the choir is the identification of a 'new' form of community, a *community of common histories*. I suggest that the identification of such communities has significance for understanding why individuals participate in community groups, and how social capital and groups develop. The literature suggests that those who participate in community activities keep their minds and bodies active, live longer, and maintain health and well-being more effectively. The study of MiC activities such as the Community Choir holds potential to inform policy development and community practice in relation to Australia's aging population.

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When the opportunity arose to undertake doctoral studies it seemed too good an opportunity to miss. At the preliminary meeting at the North West Campus of the University of Tasmania with Margaret Barrett, it seemed as if there were new horizons opening before me. When I learned that it was possible to have Margaret, someone I had known and respected for many years, as my supervisor I was overjoyed. Through her guidance, knowledge, and patience I have come to know something of the world of qualitative research and have become an explorer in the world of educational theory. Both of these experiences have enriched my professional life as a teacher. Margaret has been an inspiration to me and I am forever in her debt. Thank you Margaret.

I also wish to acknowledge and thank the singers in the Milton Community Choir who participated in this study and the pilot study participants. Their interest in my studies, advice, and willingness to share their time, and their lives over several years has provided a wealth of data. I hope if they read this, that they will feel that I have done them justice.

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My wife Jill has been a willing fellow traveller, sounding board, advisor and supporter. She has taken a keen interest in my study and has often proved to have a deep insight into the meanings of texts and into the minds of others. My daughter Emily has discussed my work and read conference presentations and drafts of this thesis. Alan Ward has provided instant computer technical support and ensured that my ancient machine has lasted the distance. Harold Drinkwater, my music teacher, was perhaps the strongest influence on my musical life. I thank them.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

I cannot remember a time when I was not involved in a community or church choir, a band, a church, or some other kind of community activity. When I became the Head of Music at Milton Senior Secondary College (a school catering for students aged 16 years onwards) in 1984, the opportunity to work formally as the Community Education Officer arose. I began to develop a network of community contacts, particularly in the area of community music, and commenced a long-term association with The Milton College Choir (later to become the Milton Community Choir.) The college curriculum included pre-tertiary music and evening classes that targeted people from the wider Milton community, providing tuition in music theory, music appreciation, solo and ensemble instrumental performance, and the college choir. The Music Department of the college also acted as a resource centre for community music groups in the local area, by providing expertise and facilities (such as a recording studio), and loaning instruments, sheet music, music stands, records and CDs.

The Milton Festival

Whilst on holiday on the mainland of Australia, my wife and I became indignant when an article in a national newspaper designated Milton as Australia's dirtiest town. On arriving back in Milton, we began to contact leaders of community organizations with a view to finding some way to show a different side of Milton, portraying Milton not only as an industrial center but as the lively and artistic center of Tasmania's northwest. We organized a community meeting during which it was decided that a festival would be

produced. It was decided that events and activities should be available free of charge and that multiple access to events be provided. To achieve this venues had to be provided free, organizations had to provide their services voluntarily, and performers had to perform 'gratis'. When the details were relayed back to the different community organizations, the attitude generally was one of enthusiastic acceptance and a willingness to cooperate in any way possible. We were heartened to get support from everyone we contacted.

Within a very short time my wife and I organized a ten day cultural festival that showcased the talents of over 80 community groups ranging from The Milton College Choir to the Surf Club, from the Little Theater to the Lapidary Society. Community involvement proved invaluable in a multitude of ways. Leaders of community groups offered to contact people within their networks to help with day-to-day organization. The local newspaper provided regular articles featuring the festival. A publishing organization from a nearby city undertook to produce 3000 programs free of charge to the festival by getting local businesses to take out advertisements in the program. Members of the college music programs, and especially the college choir, volunteered to distribute programs throughout the city. The Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) arranged several interviews on local and statewide radio, and state organizations such as Tourism Tasmania included the festival in its 'Special Events' calendar, thus ensuring national exposure.

We had never before seen such willingness to participate and work collaboratively towards a common goal from such a diverse collection of individuals and organizations. We continued to organize the festival for nearly ten years. I did not know it at the time, because I did not know the term, but what I was witnessing was strong individual and community 'social capital' working towards solving a particular community problem.

At this stage, the college supported the choir as part of the music program. Central to the college choir's philosophy was that it existed for the benefit of its members. Performance was secondary to the teaching aspect, and the overall quality of performance was less important than the opportunity for members to learn about music and to perform as soloists. This philosophy enabled the college choir to use choir members as soloists, provided the opportunity for many gifted students to become soloists, and became the stimulus for some members to become music teachers and to form choirs of their own.

The college choir became a valuable community resource, as it performed works rarely heard in the town. It provided the basis for many college and civic events as well as performing in its own right. The college choir provided the background chorus for *Murder in the Cathedral*, performed by the local Little Theatre, and many choir members performed as the 'off-stage choir' for a college performance of *Cabaret.*

As the chairperson of the Milton Community Choir committee described the structure, it had the:

> ...advantage of rooms, quality pianos, seating, and a music library. The musical director was either the Head of Music or a music teacher at the college. As choral singing was a curriculum subject, this was recognised as a part of the teacher's work responsibilities (email from Luke, 1999).[1]

By the end of 1993 (its final year as a college choir) the choir consisted of 39 members. The college choir's active membership tended to fluctuate during winter, and at times was so low that four and five part madrigals with one

[1] In 1999, the Chairperson of the Milton Town Choir (Luke) was contacted and asked to e-mail a brief history of the Milton Town Choir to me.

voice on each part were all it could perform. Some of the choir members from that time are still in the Milton Community Choir:

> The repertoire consisted of, and still consists of, large-scale choral works such as Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Creation* and Vivaldi's *Gloria*. Many experienced choristers and music teachers joined with other adult learners and students from the college, enabling the membership to grow and providing necessary experience and vocal mass to perform the classical oratorios (Luke 1999).

At the start of the 1994 school year (February), the college announced that due to financial constraints it would no longer support the college choir. However, the members decided that the choir should continue, and so the Milton Community Choir was formed as a Community Choir.[2]

A new beginning for the Community Choir

The Community Choir decided to form a management committee. It was hoped this committee would develop a new direction for the Community Choir. The committee comprised the accompanist and eight elected choir members, and effectively took the place of the college administration. My role within the committee included providing 'expert' advice on choice of music and venues. Several meetings were held in early 1994, with reports made to the Community Choir members at rehearsals. These covered such subjects as the name of the Community Choir, its purpose, mode of operation, meeting place, finance, type of music, and choice of soloists (Luke, 1999).

[2] Therefore evolving from a Community Music (CM) activity to a Music in the Community (MiC) activity, as outlined in Chapter 2.

The new committee moved quickly, and decided that the Community Choir would continue, without any immediate apparent change, from the start of the new term. The accompanist and I were to continue in our positions but the rehearsal venue would change. Minor, but important, changes emerged including electing a publicity officer, and asking choir members to assist in practical matters such as moving furniture and contributing to Community Choir organization. In late 1994, the committee decided to change the strategic focus of the Community Choir, signalling a major departure. A minute at a committee meeting noted, 'The principle aim of the choir is to present professional performances to the public' (28/12/94).

Once the Community Choir settled down under its new structure, it began to learn and perform works and I sensed a greater fellowship emerging within the Community Choir. Indeed, the 'collegial relationships' (Boyd-Dimock, 1992, p. 5) often cited as a component of successful change implementation became apparent. Members began to offer suggestions on music, venues, and times instead of relying on 'the teacher' to do it. New members continued to be welcomed and inducted into the culture of the Community Choir. Members with music reading or piano playing skills often volunteered to help new members learn the music, and new choir members were invited to sit between choristers who were already familiar with the music.

Positive contributions to the life and culture of the Community Choir were also cherished and nurtured. Complimentary comments were made about the publicity officer's work and that of soloists, the accompanist, and the trios when they performed particularly well. New members were often sought out as being 'good for the choir' and people who had never performed solo before were encouraged to do so. The Community Choir meetings were often held at the end of practices in order to involve all members in the decision-making processes. As the Community Choir moved towards self-management, the members developed a 'personal stake in the choir with various members

assuming leadership roles in organisational, secretarial or financial fields' (Luke, 1999).

In the ensuing years, the Community Choir has struggled to maintain the numbers it previously enjoyed. Particularly noticeable is the decline in the number of young people becoming members. When the Community Choir was part of the college musical life, it performed regularly within the college and attracted grade 11 and 12 students as choir participation provided course accreditation. The presence of adults in the college also provided the opportunity for students to learn and perform with experienced musicians, and highlighted the ongoing nature of education. Now that these performances had ceased, this aspect of school culture had gone, and with it, 'the opportunity for young people to hear, many for the first time, classical choral music is [sic] lost' (Luke, 1999).

Although the transition from a college supported choir to a self-managed Community Choir was profound, the Community Choir approached the process positively. The Community Choir committee examined the necessary changes to be implemented, and the actions needed for these changes to have positive outcomes. One immediate positive change was that the Community Choir began to interact more with other musical groups in the community.

Music in Milton

Milton is a small place with approximately 17,000 inhabitants. Consequently, the leaders of the various musical groups have known each other for many years. What is also important is that these leaders respect and are friendly with each other and are willing to work with each other. These features are also reflected in the cordial relations between the musical group members. This interaction between leaders and groups fosters a spirit of cooperation, collaboration, trust, willingness to share knowledge and resources, acceptance

of the values and skills of other individuals and groups, willingness to exchange leadership, and, an environment where people work for the mutual benefit of all concerned.

There appears to be little rivalry between the groups. Indeed, there is a certain degree of fluidity, with members often participating in other groups, or taking part in activities organized by other groups. Examples of this include Christmas performances with the Brass Band (with items being conducted by either of the conductors), large and small scale performances with other choirs involving the sharing of accompanists, soloists and conductors, and major performances in which almost every musical group and performer in Milton participates.

The Milton Community Choir

From 1994 to 2005 The Milton Community Choir has established a membership of 30 of which a core membership of approximately 25 attend all rehearsals. The active membership varies according to the music being performed and the time of year (winter still sees a major reduction in rehearsal attendance, although not to the low levels of the mid 1980s). For example, Christmas performances of *Messiah* result in a significant rise of approximately 50 percent in membership and participation levels. Membership of the Community Choir is open to anyone and there is no audition process, consequently levels of competence and experience vary widely. The majority of members are retired and, in 2003, there was only one member under the age of 40. In this aspect, the Community Choir reflects demographic trends of the city and of the region in general, which indicates that nearly 37% of the population is over 45 years old (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). The Community Choir provides free concerts to the community and occasionally travels outside the community to perform.

I began to have an appreciation of how the choir members saw themselves during the years of the Milton Festival. The members frequently referred to the festival as 'our festival,' and were actively involved in co-opting other groups to work for the whole festival.

I wondered what it was that enabled members of the Community Choir to interact so easily with other groups such as faith based and other community organizations. Putnam (2000) suggests that social capital enables groups to work together. If choir members did indeed possess social capital, I began to ask, 'How is social capital manifested in the Community Choir?'

The study

The literature suggests that social capital is immensely important to the development of communities. By exploring the manifestation of social capital in a Community Choir, valuable research findings emerge which are potentially useful to local government, funding bodies and/or other arts based organizations. In particular, such research can reveal important features concerning the nature of the contributions of community groups, including choirs, to the whole community and to individual participants in these groups. This study explores the link between participation in community music and the generation and use of social capital.

This study sought to understand:

How is social capital manifested in a Community Choir?

Subsidiary research questions included:

a) What social capital indicators are evident in the Community Choir?
b) How is social capital created in the Community Choir?

c) How is social capital used in the Community Choir?
d) What are the choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in their lives?
e) What are the choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in the community?

In Chapter Two I present a theoretical framework for this study, by critically reviewing the literature relating to social capital, social capital indicators, community and, community music, specifically community choirs.

Little research exists in the field of social capital within the context of community choirs. However, there is a body of knowledge relating to the benefits accruing to individuals and communities from participating in community groups particularly with regard to health (Bygren, Konlaan & Johansson, 1996; Johansson, Konlaan & Bygren 2001), social and economic activities (Reeves, 2002) and, communities (Putnam, 2000, 1996, 1995). This literature suggests that social capital is the 'glue' that holds communities and society together. If social capital is 'glue' then participation with others and the consequent development of networks is a major component of the 'glue'. Indeed, social capital at its most basic refers to 'connections among individuals – social networks, norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (Putnam, 2000, p. 19).

Through a critical review of the literature in community music, I distinguish between different forms of community music. These are Community Music (CM) where professionals play an interventionist role to produce music activities within the community and, Music in the Community (MiC) in which music is produced by and for the community. Whilst each of these may produce social capital, and give rise to each other, I suggest that the nature and extent of social capital developed in each differs.

In Chapter Three I describe the methodological processes used in this study. A methodological chart provides an outline of the research design (see figure 3.). Data were generated from surveys, interviews, field notes and a research journal. The ontological and epistemological approach provided for an interpretivist/constructivist stance that facilitated the examination of the 'lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). A reality was co-constructed by the participants and myself, as we explored the relationships and histories of the investigator and the investigated, the knower and the known. The analysis employed narrative analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995) of a 'Quartet' of choir members to construct stories and accounts of individual perspectives on the manifestation and use of social capital. Analysis of narratives (Polkinghorne, 1995) of the transcripts of the main body of the choir members (the *Tutti*) was employed to identify key themes or social capital indicators that emerged. These presentations facilitate understanding of the primary question: How is social capital manifested in a Community Choir?

In Chapter Four I present a narrative analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995) of the 'Quartet'. An 'entry vignette' (Stake, 1995, p. 123) at the start of each Quartet narrative attempts to position the place and the participant in the mind of the reader. Through these narratives, I seek to provide a portrait of the manifestation of social capital in individual lives. Participants' history, participation in community activity, involvement with family and friends, and other aspects of their lives are examined in order to cast light on this phenomenon. At this stage, in a reflexive manner, I draw parallels between the experiences of the Quartet and my own life experiences.

Chapter Five presents the analysis of narratives (Polkinghorne, 1995) of the interview transcripts from the *Tutti*. The analysis highlights the relationships between the social capital indicators, the members of the Community Choir, the Community Choir as an entity, and the manifestation of social capital

within the Community Choir. The social capital indicators reflected in the data are presented and emergent themes are grouped into categories relating to these social capital indicators.

Through these combined analyses, I identify a significant, yet previously neglected social capital indicator and suggest that a new type of community emerges from the data. Finally, I explore the link between social capital and the personal histories of individual choir members.

Chapter Six contains the findings of the study and the conclusions and recommendations arising from the findings. I discuss the issues and implications relating to social capital, community, community music, and participant history and offer suggestions for further research. The study contributes new knowledge to the understanding of social capital in several ways.

Firstly, I make a distinction between Community Music (CM) and Music in the Community (MiC). The establishment of this distinction enables the identification of environments where community development, social capital, and community music may be developed through intervention by individuals, organizations and institutions external to the 'grass-roots' community (CM). Further, the establishment of this distinction enables the identification of environments in which community development, social capital, and community music may be developed through actions of the community itself (MiC).

The study of the manifestation of social capital in the Milton Community Choir is also a partial account of the journey from a Community Music (CM) choir to an independent, self-governing Music in the Community (MiC) choir. Recognition of this distinction has significance for the evaluation of outcomes

of community music programs generally, and for understanding how social capital is created in MiC organizations.

Secondly, I identify a previously neglected social capital indicator that features prominently in participants' interview responses: *Fellowship*. The study examines what fellowship is, how fellowship develops, and, what the prerequisites are for the creation of fellowship.

Thirdly, I identify a new type of community: a *community of common histories*. This community has been unremarked upon in the literature, yet it emerges clearly from the participants' interview responses. In this study, I propose that a major underlying reason behind the propensity to participate in community organizations and community activities, demonstrated by the participants in this study, is the commonality evident in their histories. I suggest that this similarity of life history is, in part, influenced by their musical participation, community organizational membership, and family approaches to participation in community activities. This in turn leads the participants to associate with individuals who are like them. This study links these common histories to the study of communities and to the manifestation of social capital within the Community Choir.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction

> You tell me how many choral societies there are in an Italian region, and I will tell you, plus or minus three days how long it will take you to get your health bills reimbursed by its regional government (Putnam, 1995b, p. 3).

Putnam uses choral societies as an example of the link between the density of community groups and the effectiveness of local government. He suggests that the more community groups there are, the more effective are community operations and the stronger is social capital in terms of 'connections among individuals – social networks, norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). Despite this proposed link between social capital and music-making, the study of the manifestation of social capital in choral societies and community choirs has received little attention. This study investigates the phenomenon of social capital and its manifestation in the context of a Community Choir in a rural city in Tasmania, Australia. The following literature review is undertaken to provide a theoretical framework for the investigation of the ways in which social capital is identified and manifested in the Community Choir.

My interest in this study derives from my role as musical director of the Milton Community Choir (also referred to in this study as the Community Choir) and my interest in the following issues:

- What makes the Community Choir a valuable community resource?

- How is the Community Choir valued in the community?
- What do the members value and why?
- How are these issues related to the presence or otherwise of social capital within the Community Choir?

Much of the research into participation in community choirs focuses on profile characteristics including general musical background (Kelly, 1981; Larson, 1983, 1990), educational background, choral background, repertoire preferences (Darrough, 1990), and, performance preferences (Darrough, 1992; Darrough & Boswell, 1992). Other studies have explored the reasons for participating in choirs (Darrough, 1990; Lohrey, 1997; Simons, 1977; Smith, 2000; Tipps, 1993), and the behavioural and organizational characteristics of choirs and choir members (Eastis, 1998). Little research has examined perceptions of community choirs in relation to social capital.

In the critical review of literature relevant to this study, I have examined prior research in the areas of: social capital, social capital indicators, community, participation in musical activities, and community music, specifically community choirs. This examination of relevant literature enables exploration of the following questions:

- What is social capital?
- What are the indicators of social capital?
- What is the nature of community and communities of common interest?
- What is the nature of community music?

Social Capital

Definitions of social capital are diverse. Within the literature reviewed for this study, social capital is defined variously as a process, a product, a resource and/or a set of outcomes. It is viewed as a property of individuals and/or groups. It is also seen as both a benefit and a problem to society. Most definitions are therefore descriptions of what social capital does rather than definitions of what social capital actually is.

Hanifan is considered to have first coined the term 'social capital' in 1916, in a report on community schools. For Hanifan, social capital referred to 'those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people: namely good will, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals who make up a social unit' (in Putnam, 2000, p. 19). In his report Hanifan identified the important roles that participation and cooperation play in developing a vibrant community. Hanifan suggested that schools would benefit enormously if the community became involved in their activities, and that the 'community as a whole will benefit by the cooperation of all its parts' (in Putnam, 2000, p. 19).

The political ramifications of social capital in the 21st century are many and far-reaching. There has been a growth of interest in social capital at all levels of public policy both nationally and internationally. The pioneers of late 20th century research into social capital, Robert Putnam and Carmen Sirianni, had meetings with President Clinton in January 1995 at Camp David to discuss community decline and the development of social capital through civic engagement to counter this decline and the 'erosion of the social fabric' (Boyte, 1995, p. 4). In 1997, Putnam spearheaded the Saguaro Seminars that discussed ways of increasing civic trust and building social capital amongst Americans.

In recent years Putnam (1993, 1995, 1996, 2000) has explored how social capital (defined as social norms, networks, and trust) developed at regional and community levels, not only encourages cooperation for mutual benefit but also serves to support major democratic organizations and economic growth. Australian social policy has picked up these terms. In this context:

- social norms may be considered to be the 'shared understandings, informal rules and conventions that prescribe, proscribes [sic] or moderate certain behaviours in various circumstances' (National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), 2004, p. 37);
- a network may be defined as 'an interconnected group of people who usually have an attribute in common' (Productivity Commission, 2003, p. 10), and along similar lines, networks may be defined as 'interconnected groups of people who usually have one or more attributes in common' (NCVER, 2004, p. 37); and,
- trust may be regarded as a 'critical part of good quality relations (Stone, 2003, p. 5), or the 'level of confidence that people have that others will act as they say or are expected to act, or that what they say is reliable' (Productivity Commission, 2003, p. 11). Trust has also been defined as 'the expectation that arises within a community of regular honest, and co-operative behaviour based on community shared norms, on the part of other members of the community' (NCVER, 2004, p. 38).

In his book *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community* (Putnam, 2000), Putnam expands on the issues raised in his earlier work (1995, 1996). Drawing on recent resources such as the *Roper Social and Political Trends* (1973-1994) polls, databases such as the *DDB Needham Life Style Archive* (1975-1999) and the archive of Yankelovich Partners (1985-1999), Putnam (2000) argues that Americans have become less engaged with community organizations and with each other, and that connectedness has

declined. Evidence of this is a 15-20% decline in the sending of greeting cards. However, it could be argued that emails and SMS (text) messaging have partially replaced these methods of communicating, and in many ways people live in a web of closer contact through technology. Putnam accepts that Internet use has led to increased communication opportunities for certain sections of the community and that different kinds of communities including 'virtual communities' (2000, p. 171) have been formed. However, he suggests that 'once we control for the higher education levels of Internet users, they are indistinguishable from nonusers when it comes to civic engagement' (2000, p. 170). In other words, increased communication opportunities have not led to these users being more civically involved.

Putnam's 'guesstimate' of the percentages of civic decline is:

- pressures of time and money account for 10%;
- suburbanization and commuting (10%);
- television and other electronic entertainment (25%);
- generational change, 'the slow, steady, and ineluctable replacement of the long civic generation by their less involved children and grandchildren' (approximately 50%);[3] and,
- 'unresolved' elements (approximately 5%) (2000, pp. 132-284).

The overlap of the younger generation and electronic entertainment complicates and blurs the edges of the guesstimate.

Acceptance of Putnam's conclusions has not been general. Putnam's earlier work (1993, 1995, 1995b, 1996) has drawn criticism from Foley and Edwards (1998) that the arguments that 'associationism per se produces habits of

[3] Putnam defines the 'long civic generation' as being those born between 1910 and 1940 who were 'more engaged in civic affairs...than their predecessors or their successors in the sequence of generations' (p. 132);

cooperation and trust, social networks and norms that, at least in certain sorts of groups, ultimately issue in the social trust and civic engagement that healthy democracies need' (p. 12) are flawed and/or fail. Foley and Edwards (1998) suggest that Putnam's pro association standpoint grew out of a 1950s fear that an 'effervescent and contentious civil society would undermine democracy in the face of the 'threat of communism'' (p. 13). These authors further suggest that the degree to which participation in organizations promotes the attitudes that support civic engagement and/or commitment to democracy varies among different organizations. Ammerman (1996) supports this viewpoint suggesting that it is necessary to take into account the context of the data and that people may be associating in groups that are not measured by surveys.

Greeley (1997, 1997b) takes issue with Putnam's assertions of declining volunteerism in the USA. Greeley claims that 47% of the population of the USA had reported volunteering in the previous year. Greeley also identifies three errors in Putnam's use of the General Social Survey. Firstly, Greeley (1997, 1997b) claims that Putnam is selective in the organizations he chooses to illustrate declining membership, as membership in some organizations has increased. Secondly, Greeley (1997) uses an OLS (ordinary least squares) regression equation to show that 'ninety four percent of the relationship between time [taken up by watching TV] and group membership remains unexplained' (p. 6). Thirdly, Putnam's assertions concerning the long civic generation that people born in the 1920s were more likely to participate in organizations than those born in the 1960s are, for Greeley, questionable. Greeley maintains that many of those born in the 1920s would have been in their forties when they were interviewed. Those born in the 1960s would have still been under thirty and 'we know that organizational membership peaks between the ages of thirty and fifty. Perhaps the younger generation is not less civic but only younger' (Greeley, 1997, p. 7).

In Australia the study of social capital has come to prominence through:

- research into community based arts projects and consequent links to social capital development (Williams, 1996);
- research for the Centre for Community Organisations and Management (Onyx & Bullen, 1997) and Research for Family Support Services and Neighbourhood and Community Centres in New South Wales (Onyx & Bullen, 2000; Bullen & Onyx, 1998, 1998b, 1999) which examined social capital in various areas of regional New South Wales on behalf of the Australian Institute of Family Studies;
- commissioned research for the Australian Institute of Family Studies (Winter, 2000);
- Australian Bureau of Statistics research into social capital (2000, 2002b, 2002c), and well being (2002a), measurement of social capital (2002d), and production of a statistical framework for social capital (2003);
- discussion at state government level at the 1999 Regional Australia Summit (Worthington, 2001-2);
- production of Productivity Commission social capital policy (Productivity Commission, 2003);
- examination of the relevance and applicability of social capital for not-for-profit organizations (Hampshire, 2000);
- a NCVER examination of the contribution of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector to social capital in communities (NCVER, 2004); and,
- studies into the effect of social capital on health (Pope, 2000).

The international significance of social capital in terms of public policy and political context is heavily contested. The plethora of definitions of social

capital hinders the development of a common international approach to its identification, development and measurement.

In the following section of this chapter, I shall discuss a number of definitions and descriptions that arise in the literature; compare different concepts and forms of capital; summarize various forms of social capital specifically bonding, linking, and bridging social capital; and, examine social capital indicators.

Defining social capital

Social capital is also known as 'social fabric' (Cox, 1995), and the 'glue that holds society together' (Serageldin, in Grootaert, 1998, p. ii). The concept of social capital as a measure of civic involvement, has gained in significance since the work of early scholars such as Bourdieu (1986), Passeron (1977) and Coleman (1988). Social capital has produced a mass of literature and a wide range of 'definitions' and descriptions in an attempt to explain it.

Definitions of social capital suggest different understandings of what constitutes social capital and how the presence of social capital is indicated. A clear and unambiguous definition of social capital is needed if there is to be consensus about what indicates social capital, its value, and how it can be created, reproduced, exploited, banked and/or depleted. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has led the way with its generic description of social capital as 'networks, norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups' (OECD, 2001, p. 5).

Attempts to define social capital present the phenomenon as one that holds inherent productive benefits for society. The Productivity Commission in Australia suggests that social capital may generate benefits for society:

- by reducing transaction costs;
- by facilitating the dissemination of knowledge and innovation;
- by promoting cooperative and/or socially minded behaviour; and,
- through individual benefits and associated social spin-offs (Productivity Commission, 2003).

There is agreement in the literature that social capital can become a 'public good' (Coleman, 1988, S98),[4] and that social capital is the determining factor in 'how easily people work together' (Hjollund, Paldam & Svendsen, 2001, p. 3; Paldam & Svendsen, 1999, pp. 4-5). Other benefits ascribed to social capital include improvements in human capital through improved education and educational opportunities (Blakeley, 1997; Coleman, 1988, S98-112), less crime (Putnam, 2000, 2001), improved economic benefits (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995; Serageldin in Feldman & Assaf, 1999) and, improved government (Putnam, 1993, 1995).[5] Whilst there is little agreement on a singular definition of social capital, there is widespread recognition that it takes specific forms.

Forms of social capital

The literature suggests that social capital may take different forms. Coleman (1988, S102) examined three different forms of social capital, some of which have been developed by later researchers as characteristics of social capital:

- obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness of structures;
- information channels; and,

[4] Coleman's (1988) study appears in a supplement to the American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 94, S95-120. In the supplement, page numbers are identified using 'S' rather than 'p'.
[5] Human capital, as identified by Coleman (1988) above, may be defined as the 'knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being' (NCVER, 2004, p. 37).

- norms and effective sanctions.

The first of these deals with obligations, reciprocity, expectations, and, trustworthiness of structures within organizations. This form of social capital relies upon the trustworthiness of the social environment (the people involved) to pay back in kind, or some other way, for services provided and is common to most descriptions of a social capital rich organization. Coleman provides the following example of reciprocity in action:

> If A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B. This obligation can be conceived as a credit slip held by A for performance by B. If A holds a large number of these credits slips, for a number of persons with whom A has relations, then the analogy to financial capital is direct. These credits slips constitute a large body of credit that A can call in if necessary-unless, of course, the placement of trust has been unwise, and these are bad debts that will not be repaid (Coleman, 1988, S102).

In the second form of social capital (Coleman, 1988, S104), networks and relationships are used to particular effect and for mutual benefit, as they provide the channel for information flow and speed up personal and economic transactions. This form of social capital has been extended by others who see knowledge and identity resources as social capital characteristics (Falk, 2001; Kilpatrick & Abbott-Chapman, 2002).

The third form of social capital consists of norms accompanied by sanctions to regulate the behaviour of participants in a community (Coleman, 1988, S104). This third form is seen to 'constitute a powerful form of social capital' (Coleman, 1988, S105), as effective norms not only facilitate actions, but also provide boundaries within which people may interact and set the limits on

non-acceptable or deviant behaviour. Such norms reflect the social mores of the organization/environment and act as gatekeepers for membership within the organization/environment.

Building on the work of Coleman, Putnam (2000) suggests that 'social networks and norms of reciprocity can facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit' (p. 117). He considers that networks of civic engagement foster reciprocity based upon trust, facilitate coordination and communication in communities, and facilitate the spreading of information about the trustworthiness of individuals.

Krishna and Schrader (1999) identify two further forms of social capital: cognitive and structural. Indicators found within the cognitive domain are values such as trust, solidarity and reciprocity, beliefs, attitudes, and social norms. The structural domain, 'built through horizontal organizations and networks' (Krishna & Schrader, 1999, p. 10), focuses on the ways that local organizations are constructed and work. These ways include collective and transparent decision making routines, accountable leadership, collective action, and mutual responsibility.

In recent literature, the phenomenon of social capital has been sub-divided into three further forms:

- bonding (Coleman, 1988; Giorgas, 2000; Kilpatrick & Abbott-Chapman, 2002; Lesser & Storck, 2001; NCVER, 2004; Portes & Landolt, 1996; Putnam, 1995, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000);
- bridging (Beugelsdijk & Smulders, 2003; NCVER, 2004; Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 2001; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000); and,
- linking (Stone, 2003; Woolcock, 2001; Woolcock & Sweetser, 2003).

In the following section I shall address each in turn.

Bonding social capital

Putnam suggests that bonding social capital is 'a kind of sociological superglue' (2000, p. 23). Bonding social capital also often refers to the 'relations among family members, close friends and neighbours' (Woolcock, 2001, p. 4). Kilpatrick and Abbott-Chapman (2002) suggest that bonding social capital can assist in helping community members find work by using the networks of which they are members. Australia's National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER, 2004) defines bonding social capital as typically referring to 'relations in groups with a sense of identity and common purpose such as families and ethnic groups' (p. 37).

Bonding social capital tends to lead to the formation of exclusive groups and solidarity of groups with specific interests, and 'bolsters our narrower selves' (Putnam 2000, p. 23). Groups that manifest bonding social capital are inward looking as they look to participants of similar social/economic/cultural background and tend to be self-reliant (Portes & Landolt, 1996; Putnam, 1995, 2000). A feature of these groups is a collective efficacy that is seen to be stronger in homogeneous communities. Giorgas (2000) explains that social distance increases or decreases interaction. Homogeneity implies a closer social distance, hence more interaction. In a discussion of social capital on an Australian Broadcasting Commission radio station in Australia, Putnam suggested, 'bridging good, bonding bad' (Putnam, 2001, p. 18). However, the literature tends to suggest that generally, bonding is good but bridging is better.

Bonding social capital emphasises strong links and networks within families, friends, neighbours and other community organizations. The horizontal emphasis stressed by Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993) can lead to the development of strong bonding and bridging social capital.

Bridging social capital

In the social context, whilst bonding social capital is very important for creating a sense of unity within a group or organization, its very nature tends to preclude others from joining. Bridging social capital, on the other hand, is outward looking. It involves people across a wide spectrum and fosters the generation of 'broader identities and reciprocity' (Putnam 2000, p. 23). Bridging social capital is horizontal in aspect, stretching out to include people 'who share broadly similar demographic characteristics' (Woolcock, 2001, p. 4). NCVER (2004) extend this stretching out concept when it defines bridging social capital as referring to 'relations between groups with significant differences' (p. 37). For Putnam (2000) bridging social capital is a 'sociological WD-40' (p. 23) as it facilitates smooth interactions between groups. Broader issues such as educational or welfare change, and dealing with major collective problems require bridging social capital (Putnam 2000).

Bridging social capital has a downside as far as industry is concerned. Forming links outside the close knit bonding social capital group takes more (expensive) time than forming bonding social capital. In economic terms, 'an exogenous increase in bridging capital may affect growth negatively...the time cost of networking dominates the productive benefits' (Beugelsdijk & Smulders, 2003, p. 15). However, the broader community benefits are seen to outweigh these potential negatives (Putnam, 2000).

Sometimes a community group requires powerful help beyond that of a bridging association in order to accomplish a goal, and needs to call upon another form of social capital known as linking social capital.

Linking social capital

Linking social capital emphasises vertical links between organizations, institutions, those in authority and layers of government (Stone, 2003; Woolcock, 2001; Woolcock & Sweetser, 2003). Linking social capital 'pertains to connections with people in power, whether they are in politically or financially influential positions' (Woolcock & Sweetser, 2003, p. 2). Linking social capital also gives a 'capacity to leverage resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond the community' (Woolcock, 2001, p. 4). Linking social capital is valuable when, for example, it is important to gain power or resources from external authorities to further one's own ends or the ends of the organization.

Different forms of social capital therefore have different strengths and weaknesses. The close ties that characterise bonding social capital can support and strengthen community groups but exclude some people (McClenaghan, 2000). Bridging social capital can extend the opportunities of groups by providing, through the horizontal links to other organizations, access to other resources and opportunities. However, bridging social capital is expensive for industry in terms of time. Linking social capital provides vertical, beneficial links for organizations, individuals, and those in authority, and gives a measure of authority to external bodies.

However, having social capital of various forms available for use or developed within a community does not guarantee that they will profit from it. As has been seen above, social capital has to be used, drawn upon or exploited before it becomes a common good. For Woolcock and Sweetser (2003), it is how people use these various kinds of social capital separately and together that 'shapes their well-being' (p. 2).

Characteristics of social capital

As we have seen, social capital has been defined, described and grouped in different ways and can assume a variety of forms. In this section I shall examine the characteristics of social capital identified in the literature that make it valuable to communities. These include the characteristics of being:

- 'glue';
- a contributor to economic well-being;
- a community resource; and,
- a contributor to a civil society.

Social capital as 'glue'

Cox's reference (Cox, 1995, Lecture 2) to social capital as a glue that provides social cohesion to hold the community together has become an accepted image of social capital by some (Blakeley, 1997; Grootaert, 1997; Serageldin, 1998). Another use of this same metaphor is that social capital is the 'glue of civic networks that binds people to their communities' (Lang & Hornburg, 1998, p. 2). Serageldin (1998) considers social capital to be a fundamental ingredient (the glue) in the mix that allows society, with its multitude of institutions, to exist, and includes the 'shared norms and values that governs interactions among people' (p. ii).

Blakeley (1997) states that social cohesion 'is achieved by the willing and sustainable commitment of the members of a society to its institutions including families, communities, cities and the nation' (p. 1). For Blakeley, one of the factors leading to strong social cohesion is having strong communities. Strong communities have four key factors: 1) participation; 2) resources – including the ability to raise money, buy skill, and access information and technology; 3) leadership; and, 4) cooperation (Blakeley,

1997, p. 2). Participation and cooperation are features of Blakeley's definition of social capital as well. Therefore, if social cohesion is the 'glue which binds communities together' (Blakeley, 1997, p. 1) then 'social capital must be part of the glue which enables this outcome' (Blakeley, 1997, p. 3).

Others see the 'glue that binds' as growing out of social accountability that depends on trust (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999). Such views fit with what Lang and Hornburg (1998) understand as social glue, that is:

> ...the degree to which people take part in group life. It also concerns the amount of trust or the comfort level that people feel when participating in these groups. Social trust and group participation form a recursive relationship. This level of trust influences one's willingness to join a group. Likewise, group participation helps build trust (p. 4).

In their examination of social capital as an economic entity, Fountain and Atkinson (1998) suggest that:

> ...the glue that makes collaboration feasible in the New Economy is composed of trust and a norm of reciprocity, or enlightened self-interest, among decision makers in networks (pp. 3-4).

Others suggest that social capital is: a) linked to location and is more likely to be developed when an individual is in a community for an extended period; b) strongly linked to years of schooling; and, c) a catalyst for investment that, in turn, produces increased community homogeneity (Glaeser 2001; Glaeser, Laibson & Sacerdote, 2001).

Social capital: A contributor to economic well-being

Social capital has been seen as a contributor to the economy of communities, particularly economic growth and/or well being (Bourdieu, 1986; Blakeley, 1997; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Fukuyama, 1995; Kolankiewicz, 1996; Norton, 1998; Portes & Landolt, 1996; Putnam, 1993; Schuller & Field, 1998; Serageldin, 1998). Indeed, when combined with social obligations or connections, social capital may be converted into economic capital in certain circumstances (Bourdieu, 1986). Social capital has the potential to contribute to the social, civic or economic well being of a community-of-common-purpose (Falk & Kilpatrick 1999), or to be a platform for economic wealth (Blakeley, 1997) when considered a product of community social interactions.

Putnam (1993) sees social capital in regional Italy as a precondition for economic development. Community interactivity, in the form of interpersonal interaction, connects with social, civic and economic outcomes, and societal and community level social capital resources may be sustained by these interpersonal interactions. Sometimes this social interaction may encourage economic enterprise through activities such as the sale of products created within the community (Schuller & Field, 1998). Community interests are then further encouraged firstly through feeding back into the local community recognition of the work achieved and, secondly, through any sponsorship gained (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999).

Social capital: A community resource

A community that contains all the 'forms of social capital' identified by Coleman (1988, S101-S105) (obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness of structures; information channels; norms and effective sanctions) may be regarded as a community rich in social capital and able to access social capital

and use it as a resource that provides benefits to the community. Others too consider that social capital is a community resource that can be drawn upon for community benefit (Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Coleman (1988) describes the relationship that 'allows the resources of one relationship to be appropriated for use in others' as multiplex (S109).

A community rich in multiplex relations where groups have connections with each other through a common membership in a variety of organizations and social groupings and use the resources of groups to benefit others, may be regarded as having the potential to develop considerable social capital (Coleman, 1988, S99). For Fukuyama (1995) trust is a fundamental component of social capital, and communities that are rich in trust find it easier to do business with the cost of doing business being less. Putnam (2000) suggests that communities that have the resource of rich social capital are communities that have feelings of safety and provide mutual support.

Social capital: A contributor to a civil society

The characteristics of social capital outlined above have common features of connectedness, trust, reciprocity, and mutuality. For Bullen and Onyx (1998) social capital is the raw material of civil society and is created from interactions between people. They suggest that social capital originates with people forming social connections and networks based on principles of trust, mutual reciprocity, and norms of action (Bullen & Onyx, 1998). Cox (1995) contends that social connections are of supreme importance in a civil society. In a series of lectures entitled, *The 1995 Boyer Lectures: A Truly Civil Society,* Cox argued that trust and goodwill form a part of social capital, 'a collective term for the ties that bind us' (Lecture 1, 1995). In a later lecture, she suggested that adequate levels of social capital enable us to enjoy the benefits of a truly civil society, and argued that a civil society is characterised by individuals voluntarily working with others in egalitarian organizations in

which trust grows. In her view, diversity and belonging are valued and social connectedness and contacts are encouraged in a civil society (Lecture 2, 1995).

Social capital: A process or a product?

Accounts of social capital may also be grouped according to whether social capital is seen to be a process communities engage in, or a product that communities produce as a sum of other activities.

Social capital as a 'process'

Portes and Landolt (1996) suggest that in relation to social capital process and product are interchangeable terms. They also propose that sources of social capital are often confused with the 'benefits that derive from them' (p. 19). Many attempts at social capital definition identify process aspects. For example, Cox (1995) suggests, 'Social capital refers to the processes between people which establish networks, norms, social trust and facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit' (Lecture 2, p. 2). Giorgas' (2000) study of social capital in Greek communities considers social capital to be a process that enables ethnic communities and families to develop strong links. However, if we talk about groups, communities, and institutions possessing social capital, then this suggests that social capital must be something tangible, the consequence or product of a process rather than a process itself.

Social capital as a 'product'

A number of authors (Anheier, Gerhards & Romo, 1995; Bourdieu, 1986; Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Serageldin, 1999) see social capital as the product of composite features of social capital such as networks,

norms and trust, characterized by Bourdieu (1986) as 'social obligations ('connections')' (p. 243). For Anheier et al. (1995) social capital is 'the sum of the actual and potential resources that can be mobilized through membership in social networks of actors and organizations' (p. 862). Such a view suggests that social capital, as a resource, is a product that can vary according to the nature of the network within the organization and its membership, and is therefore dependent upon context.

For Serageldin (1999), social capital is a product of norms and values shaping interactions between people. Serageldin's definition incorporates the generally accepted image of social capital as 'glue' holding the society together, whilst describing what social capital does rather than what it is. The emphasis on connections and networks is further emphasized by Serageldin, who states that:

> Social capital refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and the institutions in which they are embedded. Social capital is the glue that holds societies together and without which there can be no economic growth or well-being (p. i).

Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) also define social capital as a product manufactured and used in everyday interactions in communities. For these researchers the concept of knowledge resources and identity resources are important (see also Balatti, 2003; Falk, 2003; Falk & Balatti, 2004). Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) suggest that knowledge and identity resources together with the historicity, futuricity, reciprocity, trust, and the shared values and norms that make up social capital help the community to perform its intended activities.

Falk and Balatti (2004) suggest that use of such knowledge and identity resources is 'crucial for the development of social capital' (p. 50). They further suggest that the kinds of resources used by people and the adequacy of those resources are 'determined by the *purpose* of the interactions' (p. 50). In other words, people select from the 'bank' of social capital resources available to them, the one or ones that will best enable them to carry out an action.

Fountain and Atkinson (1998) use the term 'stock' rather than 'product' when they suggest that social capital is the 'stock' created when a network of organizations develops the ability to work in collaboration to promote mutual productive gain' (p. 3). They suggest that the stock is created when networks, shared norms, and trust 'lower the costs of co-ordination and co-operation' (p. 4). This economic approach reflects that of Blakeley (1997) who quotes the New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs:

> ...social capital is the stock of goodwill and trust built up when people voluntarily participate and cooperate for mutual benefit. Social capital leads to a sense of belonging, confidence to resolve community problems, and a platform for social and economic wealth (Blakeley, 1997, p. 3).

In summary, social capital is seen as either a process or a product depending on the researcher and the context. Individuals need to interact before social capital can be created and become a collective community good. Sometimes the features of social capital such as trust, shared norms, and networks are seen as social capital itself. At other times, social capital is seen as the sum of its different features. If we accept Falk and Balatti's (2004) premise that people select from social capital resources what they need in order to accomplish an action, then context would appear to be the determining factor in the form of social capital identified and used.

Social capital as a property of groups or individuals

Much research in the field of social capital concentrates on interaction with others as a process that develops social capital as a property (Blakeley, 1997; Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Narayan & Cassidy, 2001; Paldam & Svendsen, 1998; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2000; Schuller, 2000; Schuller & Field, 1998; Serageldin, 1999; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Narayan and Cassidy (2001) emphasize the interaction and participation features of social capital, when they consider that 'social capital exists only when it is shared' (p. 60). Schuller (2000) agrees with the concept of social capital being a group property and adds that:

> ...the most common measures of social capital look at participation in various forms of civic engagement...or at levels of expressed trust in other people...social capital is generally understood as a matter of relationships, as the property of groups rather than the property of individuals (pp. 2-3).

Although Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988) see social capital as an individually based phenomenon, there is some disagreement amongst scholars concerning the concept of social capital being an individual property. However, individuals need to have the will to interact, participate and share with others, trust, reciprocate, and value others before any social capital can be developed. When individuals interact with others, groups are created. Kilpatrick, Field and Falk (2001) suggest that social capital definitions may be grouped into two categories: those of advantage to the collective, and, those of advantage to the individual. In the next section I examine social capital as a property of groups and then as a property of individuals.

Social capital as a property of groups

Collective accounts of social capital emphasise the roles that groups play in the formation of social capital and in the benefits that accrue for groups acting collectively (Balatti, 2003; Fukuyama, 1995; Kilpatrick et al., 2001; OECD, 2001; Putnam, 1993; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

Putnam (1993) argues for social capital as a public good that benefits all the community even those who do not contribute to it. Others support this inclusive view of social capital. Kawachi, Kennedy, Locher & Prothow-Stith (1998) note that the:

> ...aspect of social capital that makes it a public good is its property of non-excludability that is, its benefits are available to all living within a particular community, and access to it cannot be restricted. Hence, a socially isolated individual could potentially benefit from living in a neighbourhood rich in social capital (p. 7).

Within an Australian context, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2002c), National Centre for Vocational Education Research (2004) and Australian Productivity Commission (2003) all opt for the concept of social capital as a 'collective' or group phenomenon. All three bodies have adopted the OECD description of social capital as 'networks, norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups' (OECD, 2001, p. 5).

Putnam's (1993) study of Italian communities presents social capital as consisting of horizontal associations between people that foster cooperation for mutual benefit. The horizontal aspect of associations theme is later taken up by Woolcock (2001), when describing bridging social capital, and Krishna and Schrader (1999) when describing the structural domain of social capital. Putnam (1993) describes rather than defines the characteristics of social

capital when he says social capital consists of 'features of organizations, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (p. 1). In a later work, Putnam (2000) suggests social capital is a group phenomenon that involves doing things with other people rather than for other people. Such group or organizational activity to harness or produce social capital provides the wherewithal to facilitate collective problem solving and community advancement. In addition to making us more aware of 'the many ways in which our fates are linked' (p. 288), these social capital rich group activities facilitate information sharing, goal achievement, wealth creation, and improve people's lives.

Fukuyama (1995) sees social capital as a capability arising from trust within a society or within certain parts of society. Fukuyama suggests social capital can be found in families, the nation and 'in all the other groups in between...social capital cannot be acquired simply by individuals acting on their own' (pp. 26-27). In later work, Fukuyama (1999) suggests that social capital is 'an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals' (p. 1). Fukuyama asserts that 'trust, networks, civil society, and the like which have been associated with group social capital are all epiphenomenal, arising as a result of social capital but not constituting social capital itself' (p. 2). For Balatti (2003) the networks of relationships formed through interactions are a 'resource that can facilitate access to other resources of value to individuals or groups for a specific purpose' (Balatti, 2003, p. 42).

Social capital as a property of individuals

Whilst some define social capital in terms of advantage to the collective, others (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Glaeser, 2001; Van der Gaag, 2004; Van der Gaag & Snijders, 2004) see it as a resource for individuals. Bourdieu

(1986) maintains that social capital is of benefit to individuals when they are members of groups:

> ...[social capital is] the aggregate of the actual and potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition - or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital (pp. 248-249).

For Coleman (1988) social capital greatly affects individuals' 'ability to act and their perceived quality of life' (Coleman, 1988, S118). Coleman suggests that although individuals may use social capital to advance their own causes, interacting with others is still important as 'unlike other forms of capital, social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors' (S118).

Glaeser (2001) defines individual social capital as 'the set of social attributes possessed by an individual – including charisma, contacts and linguistic skill – that increase the returns to that individual in his or her dealings with others' (p. 35). As such, he emphasises that individual social capital may be of benefit to the individual. (p. 35).

Others (Van der Gaag, 2004; Van der Gaag & Snijders, 2004) consider that the social capital of individuals may be pooled to benefit organizations and communities. It is clear however, that social capital needs the presence of more than one person in order to exist. Whilst social capital may have a benefit for an individual, it is still a collective phenomenon requiring interaction.

Dimensions of social capital

Lesser and Storck (2001) view social capital within organizations as having three dimensions: structural, relational, and cognitive. The structural dimension forms the basis for social capital as it is concerned with individuals within an organization making one to one relationships that form the basis for networking. The relational dimension is concerned with the ways bonding is created and developed. Societal self-regulatory mechanisms including obligations manifesting themselves as reciprocity, community norms regulating behaviour, trust in the form of behaviour predictability, and self knowledge and identification where the participants see themselves linked or, 'united with another person or set of individuals' (p. 834) are located in the relational dimension. The cognitive dimension of social capital is concerned with the values, shared interests, modes of expression and access to terms and understandings common to all (such as language and knowledge based on experience), that are the means to facilitating communication within communities of common interest.

By emphasizing these three dimensions, Lesser and Storck (2001) highlight the importance of face to face interaction in developing networks, obligations and trust, and the shared languages and values that, in business and elsewhere, facilitate information sharing and reduce the time required for, and the transaction costs of, doing business in any community. Crucially, in their view, without the key element of interaction and participation with others, social capital cannot develop.

Benefits and disadvantages of social capital

Many of the descriptions of social capital imply that social capital may benefit communities in different ways. Social capital may benefit human and physical capital, one's own interests, productivity, reduction of

neighbourhood crime, generation of rules for the regulation of conduct and, the establishment of social norms. These occur through encouraging a culture of reciprocity, and cooperation for mutual benefit. The nexus between social capital and other forms of capital such as economic, human, and physical capital is fluid. Putnam (1993) argues that social capital does not work in opposition to investment in physical or human capital; rather, it can 'enhance the benefits' (p. 1) if there is a culture of networks. For Anheier et al. (1995) economic capital centers upon commercial success and failure, with money as the main currency and economic status the major indicator of success. Cultural capital centers upon recognition. The major currency is prestige, and reputation and education are indicators of success and achievement. Social capital on the other hand, is seen as being centered upon membership of informal and professional networks and organizations. Contacts with others are the major currency of person-person transactions in such organizations, and differences in membership affiliation are the major indicators of success.

Social capital is not always an uncontested good. Putnam (2000) examines in detail the 'dark side of social capital' (pp. 350-363) and suggests that the dense networks, mutual obligations, reciprocity and trust, that are indicators of good social capital are also present in terrorist organizations and in many organizations that work against the common good. Putnam (2000) suggests that it was social capital that enabled Timothy McVeigh to bomb the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, as 'McVeigh's network of friends, bound together by norms of reciprocity, enabled him to do what he could not have done alone' (p. 21). Urban gangs exist courtesy of their supportive network and other characteristics of social capital such as cooperation and trust (Portes & Landolt, 1996; Putnam 2000).

The same mechanisms that create social capital and unity within a group or community (bonding social capital) can serve to exclude others who do not fit in, and create a closed community (McClenaghan, 2000). Portes and Landolt

(1996) cite the dominance of certain ethnic groups within occupations or industries that use the benefits of bonding social capital to exclude others. They comment, 'if social capital is a resource available through social networks, the resources that some individuals claim come at the expense of others' (Portes & Landolt, 1996, p. 19). As well as these ethnic groups, building contractors, ethnic union bosses, and immigrant entrepreneurs are cited as using social capital for personal rather than community economic advantage.

Trying to break away from a closed community and its social norms can create its own problems. Community members seeing such activity as threatening their way of life or their values may oppose aspirers to mainstream culture searching for success outside a community. Portes and Landolt (1996) indicate that membership of tight community groups serves to develop a kind of social capital that prevents the acquisition of human capital. McClenaghan (2000) supports this view when she presents the argument that in poor and disadvantaged communities, family and social ties may aid economic survival but limit any activities that may lead to personal improvement through formal learning. McClenaghan suggests that 'such aspirations are deemed by other community members to be threatening to community identifications and solidarity' (p. 575). In such communities the benefits of formal learning and networks to social capital development within these communities and the impact on interpersonal skill development are lost (Kilpatrick et al., 2001).

McClenaghan (2000) gives examples where young adults use a network of personal contacts and obligations in order to find work and consequently, have less incentive to study and/or acquire formal qualifications. In these instances:

> ...social capital does not increase human capital but reduces the motivation of adults to acquire it...the social networks in which individuals are embedded...may therefore limit innovation and creativity, reduce the convertibility of human capital into economic capital and reproduce forms of social exclusion, while simultaneously undermining the ability of individuals to overcome it (p. 574).

These findings cohere with earlier work that suggests that people 'who can draw on other resources to gain access to employment or promotion or any other benefits associated with lifelong learning' (Schuller & Field, 1998, p. 233) find education and training to be comparatively unimportant.

Social capital has been considered by some to have the characteristics of economic capital. Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) suggest that social capital is a resource that has the capability of being banked, drawn against, and depleted if organizations are closed down, or if there are frequent hostile disagreements between members. Continuing the analogy even further, if social capital is indeed like economic capital then there is an assumption of a surplus being possible with a further possibility of exploitation (Beaseley-Murray, 1999).

From these examples, we can see that economic capital provides the source of funding. Physical capital is made up of the tools and equipment necessary to enhance labour. Human capital is the intellectual property, skills and knowledge possessed by people that enable these tools to be used and, social capital occurs when people come together to use these other forms of capital for mutual benefit.

For Putnam (1993) social capital is beneficial to any investment of other forms of capital and, unlike other forms of capital, has the unique characteristic of increasing through use and decreasing through disuse.

Indicators of social capital

The question of how we tell if social capital is present in a community, and how we measure its quantity and/or qualities if it is present, has loomed large in recent literature (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000, 2002d; Bullen & Onyx, 1998, 1998b; Flora & Flora, u.d.; Fukuyama, 1999; Glaeser et al., 2001; Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2001; Narayan & Cassidy, 2001; Onyx & Bullen, 1997, 2000; Serageldin, 1998; Spellerberg, 2001; Stone, 2001; Van der Gaag, 2004; Van der Gaag & Snijders, 2004). The response has been to develop indicators of social capital for individuals and groups. Indicators of social capital have been described implicitly or explicitly in the social capital literature since the work of Bourdieu (1986).

Given that many researchers accept that social capital is a group phenomenon, most indicators of social capital have a group or community focus and simultaneously examine the degree to which an individual actively participates in group or community activities such as voluntary organizations, churches, political organizations, parents and friends associations and choirs. As part of this, groups may be examined for how social capital and/or components such as networks, norms and values work within the group. Individuals may be assessed for their civic mindedness evidenced in their willingness to participate, to do things for others, to reciprocate, to be a good neighbour, to be a good family person and, to value others. Some researchers (Glaeser et al., 2001; Van der Gaag, 2004; Van der Gaag & Snijders, 2004) have attempted to produce formulae for the measurement of social capital.

However, such indicators may be value laden and, ''users'' choice of social capital indicators will ultimately depend on the use to which the information will be put' (Spellerberg, 2001, p. 8). In other words, indicators for the presence of social capital are often selective and need to be considered contextually in terms of such factors as age, gender, place, organization, and

quality or nature of relationships studied and, 'observed in the context of an action or an event' (Spellerberg, 2001, p. 10). As an example, if we are to take group participation and faith based involvement in church or faith based activities as social capital indicators, then regimes or cultures that do not encourage group activities or support churches or faith based activity may be regarded as deficient in social capital, despite the presence of other indicators that are adopted.

Narayan and Cassidy (2001) in their study of social capital in Uganda and Ghana, see social capital as being measurable and therefore identifiable, through an examination of 'group characteristics, generalised norms, togetherness, everyday sociability, neighborhood connections, volunteerism and trust' (p. 67). Networks do not appear in their list, although they see an intrinsic characteristic of social capital as being 'relational' (p. 60). Their descriptions of everyday sociability include many of the characteristics of networks including, associations with others, visiting, and some of the 'group characteristics' such as membership of and participation in organizations. Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2001) point out:

> ...social capital indicators differ both geographically and sectorally. For example, measures of membership in associations were found to be a relevant indicator in Indonesia, Kenya, and countries of the Andean region, but not in India and Russia, where informal networks are more important (p. 9).

A number of authors provide indicators for the presence of social capital within communities, organizations, groups and social units. Bourdieu (1986) foreshadows that it should be possible to identify the actual or potential resources within a community, such as: the presence or possession of a durable network, and what it is about the network that makes it durable, and,

the nature of the relationships of 'mutual acquaintance and recognition' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248).

Putnam's work reveals a number of characteristics of strong communities rich in social capital. I have referred to these characteristics as indicators of social capital. In early work drawn from an analysis of a successful region in Italy, Putnam (1993) suggests the presence of indicators that came to form his definition of social capital. In particular, Putnam identifies 'social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (p. 1). For Putnam, trust not only reduces the cost of doing business but also facilitates feelings of community safety. Trust grows out of knowing people, being involved in the community, and the development of networks. Putnam (1993, 1995, 1996) identifies what has become a cornerstone of his approach to social capital, strong civic engagement. For Putnam, a community, rich in social capital has strong:

- voter turnout;
- newspaper readership;
- membership in choral societies and literary circles, Lions Clubs, and soccer clubs;
- 'Networks of civic engagement [fostering] sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity' (Putnam, 1993, p. 3);
- social trust; and,
- faith based engagement.

Further social capital indicators arising from Putnam's later work (2000, 2000b, 2001) stress the importance of neighbourliness, spending time with family and friends, and various aspects of civic engagement and include:

- concern for others;

- helping others;
- being able to assess the honesty and integrity of others;
- social participation;
- involvement in community groups;
- social connectedness; and,
- involvement in politics.

It could however be argued that some of the above indicators are western and democratic in context, and are not necessarily relevant or significant in other cultures.

Australian literature (Bullen & Onyx, 1998, 1998b; Cox, 1995) has identified a number of social capital indicators, although there is little to separate these from Putnam's established indicators.

Cox (1995), views social capital through various lenses, firstly, through a feminist lens, as founder of the Women's Electoral Lobby in New South Wales, Australia, and secondly, through a social services lens (she held the position of Director of the New South Wales Council of Social Services), and thirdly, through the lens of her experiences working with disadvantaged people. Perhaps not surprisingly with this background, she lists social interactions in the community and at work, voluntary work in egalitarian organizations, trust, social interaction, co-operation, enjoyment of the company of others and doing good for others, as indicators of social capital.

In a study of several communities in regional New South Wales, Bullen and Onyx (1998, 1998b) working with Neighbourhood and Community Centres, identified four 'themes' of social capital that have emerged from the literature – participation in networks, reciprocity, trust and social norms. Their research identified eight 'elements' of social capital. These elements equate with

indicators of the presence of social capital. Four 'elements' are concerned with participation and connections and have much in common with Putnam's indicators listed above:

- participation in local community;
- neighborhood connections;
- family and friends connections; and,
- work connections.

Four other elements are concerned with building social capital:

- pro-activity in a social context;
- feelings of trust and safety;
- tolerance of diversity; and,
- value of life.

These indicators are grouped into participation in networks, trust, reciprocity, norms, and aspects of social agency and what they termed 'commons', or shared resources. In these studies, social capital was seen to be stronger in the elements relating to community, trust and connections in rural areas than in urban areas. These indicators match the consensus of social capital indicators, except that the stress on tolerance of diversity and value of life are particularly linked to these New South Wales studies (Bullen & Onyx, 1998, 1998b, 1999).

Bullen and Onyx (1998) suggest elements held by individuals that build social capital may be measured. Pro-activity in a social context may be measured by answers to questions concerning: willingness to pick up rubbish in a public place, visiting relatives who live outside the local community, knowledge of information resources, willingness to speak freely, willingness to seek

mediation in disputes with neighbours, willingness to 'take the initiative' at work, and, willingness to help workmates. For Bullen and Onyx (1998), feelings of trust and safety may be measured with answers to questions relating to how much respondents trust people, and the safety of their local area. They suggest that tolerance of diversity may be measured by responses to questions about multiculturalism, and the 'value' individuals place on different people. The value of life element may be measured by responses to questions relating to how individuals feel society values them, and satisfaction with the meaning of their lives.

Stone (2001) classifies indicators of social capital in two ways. First, as proximal indicators, that is, outcomes related to key or 'core components of networks, trust and reciprocity' (p. 5); and second, as distal indicators, those not related to the core components. Stone adds that outcomes of social capital are often used as indicators of social capital. She suggests that the structural elements of social capital are networks and that the 'content' of the networks are the 'norms of trust and reciprocity which operate within these structures' (p. 7). For Stone (2001) 'the measurable components of social capital' are networks, trust and reciprocity (p. 7). Stone (2001) expands on Cox's social capital indicators adopting Putnam's (1993) use of reciprocity as a norm of social capital.

The density of organizations within a community has been identified as one indicator of strong social capital (Paldam & Svendsen, 1999) as communities with dense community organizations have dense social networks (Putnam, 1993). Such a communitarian stance has 'made important contributions to analyses of poverty by stressing the centrality of social ties in helping the poor to manage risk and vulnerability' (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 229). Viewing social capital through the lens of World Bank economic development, Woolcock and Narayan (2000) point to membership in associations and networks as a means of measuring social capital. The

internal composition of organizations within a community, that is the 'density and characteristics of informal and formal groups and networks' (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 240) may also be measured and viewed as indicators for the presence of social capital.

Social capital indicators then have been grouped in a variety of ways relating to:

- participation, interaction and civic involvement;
- networks and connections;
- families and friends;
- reciprocity and obligations;
- trust;
- norms and values;
- knowledge and identity resources; and,
- learning.

Participation, interaction and civic involvement

Civic involvement as an indicator of social capital has gained in significance since the work of Bourdieu and of Coleman. Civic involvement is not just interacting with others; it involves active and positive participation. Putnam (2000) considers civic involvement to include political participation as well as participation in community groups. The major thrust of Putnam's (2000) work is that involvement in community and civic activities such as clubs and organizations, politics and sport has declined. For Putnam, the degree of civic involvement in the politics of community is a prime indicator of the presence of social capital and is a cornerstone of social capital.

Community participation strengthening the social fabric (Cox 1995) or social capital of a society is a phenomenon recognised by Putnam. As an example, he observes, 'members of Florentine choral societies participate because they like to sing, not because their participation strengthens the Tuscan social fabric. But it does' (Putnam, 1993, p. 3). In this sense, it may be considered that common interest and activity drive the strengthening of the social fabric rather than an interest in the social fabric per se.

Networks and connections

Networks have been identified as an important indicator of social capital (Anheier et al., 1995; Blakeley, 1997; Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Cox, 1995; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Giorgas, 2000; Kolankiewicz, 1996; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Norton, 1998; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2000; Schuller, 2000; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995; Stone, 2001; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Putnam (2000) indicates that social networks have value, and that this is the core idea of social capital theory. Networks of civic engagement provide feedback on progress and worth of organizations and individuals, and successful collaboration often leads to more collaboration (Putnam, 1993).

Social networks are regarded as essential to the generation of social capital, as much of the benefit of social capital arises from the use to which networks can be put. In societies rich in social capital people often put processes such as networks, cooperation and collaboration into place for mutual benefit (Blakeley, 1997; Cox, 1995; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Giorgas, 2000; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2000; Schuller, 2000; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995). This is especially true in certain ethnic communities where access to a supportive, dense social network can greatly benefit the second generation by increasing the family support base (Giorgas,

2000). In this example social capital is seen as a product that can be drawn upon for mutual benefit.

Analyses of communities in Italy that appear to be rich in social capital (Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany, Florence, Bologna and Genoa) suggest that horizontally organized social and political networks encourage the growth of successful government (linking social capital). Putnam (1993) sees social capital in areas such as these as being embodied 'in norms and networks of civic engagement...a precondition for economic development, as well as for effective government' (pp. 2-3). Foley and Edwards (1996) argue that concentrating on the benefits of 'networks of civic engagement' (p. 40) glosses over the many conflicts between groups in our societies. However, Putnam's view appears to suggest that developing dense social networks is a way of facilitating community harmony. Fukuyama (1995) provides similar descriptions from central Italy and China. We have seen that social capital can encourage successful government growth, but what of community growth in those areas?

Putnam (1993) shows that rural communities grow not only through financial and physical investment or adopting technology, but also through 'Indigenous grassroots associations' (p. 3), and networks of civic engagement (or social capital). Even in more urban fast-growing East Asian economies 'dense social networks... foster trust, lower transaction costs and speed information and innovation' (Putnam, 1993, p. 4). Putnam (1993) suggests that 'Networks of collaboration among workers and small entrepreneurs' are characteristics of efficient, flexible 'industrial districts' (p. 4). Fukuyama (1995) agrees, and goes so far as to identify the characteristics of unsuccessful economics. He suggests that a place that is low in social capital is likely to have 'small, weak, and inefficient companies; it will also suffer from pervasive corruption of its public officials and ineffective public administration' (p. 358).

Networks appear to be important on a personal level too. Just as good networks facilitate business activity, 'close competition for jobs and contracts are usually won by those with friends in high places' (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, p. 226) that is, by those with effective networks. Australian literature tends to support this (Falk, 2001; Smith, 2001). The 1991-92 Australian Bureau of Statistics data suggest that '24% of jobs were found via friends, relatives and acquaintances' (Norton, 1998, p. 3).

Drawing on the work of Putnam (1995) Sirianni and Friedland (1995) indicate that stocks of social capital facilitate community problem solving, and emphasize the importance of networks:

> ...networks of civic engagement foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity and encourage the emergence of social trust. Such networks facilitate coordination and communication, amplify reputations, and thus allow dilemmas of collective action to be resolved (p. 3).

Sirianni & Friedland (1995) suggest that such networks need to be developed by and for the community as economic and political influences upon 'dense networks of social interaction' (p. 3), lead to reduced incentives for opportunism. Also important is a successful history of collaboration as this may provide a 'cultural template for future collaboration' (p. 3).

In places where industries are closing down and communities are being destroyed, social capital also suffers as social networks are destroyed. This is especially true in ghetto areas and in places where housing projects replace old communities. The negative side of close community living may be seen in ghetto areas. It may be the case that 'where you live and whom you know-the social capital you can draw on-helps to define who you are and thus to determine your fate' (Putnam, 1993, p. 5). Portes and Landolt (1996) assert

that whilst there may be considerable social capital in ghetto areas 'the assets obtainable through it seldom allow participants to rise above their poverty' (p. 20). Ghetto residents not only suffer through 'joblessness, inadequate education, and poor health' (Putnam, 1993, p. 5), they also suffer through lack of networks that may help them overcome the effects of non-productive social capital (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

We have seen that networks are an important aspect of social capital. Networks, like social capital, exist when they are used. They facilitate interpersonal and inter-organizational transactions, communication, information sharing and reciprocity and can be beneficial to individuals and to groups who have common interests and/or understandings. Networks created through transitory connections have no lasting benefit to the individuals or the community in which the connections are made. Mutuality of benefit from connections is therefore an important requirement for social capital development.

Networks, the connections within them, the sharing of resources, information, obligations generated within one environment and accessed, paid back and used within a different environment, and the potential for mutual benefit, are invaluable to the formation of social capital within a community. The interlinking of the lives and experiences of people facilitates social inclusion, efficient information flow, resource use, formation of groups, knowledge about others, and community cohesiveness for the mutual benefit of the individual and the community. Putnam (2000) suggests that family and friends provide the most intimate social network for most people.

Families and friends

Involvement with family and friends is considered by many authors to be a strong indicator of social capital (Bullen & Onyx, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995;

Putnam, 2000). Family has been identified as the initial source of social capital (Kerka, 2003), a form of social capital in itself (Putnam, 2000) and, as playing a crucial role in social capital formation (Bullen & Onyx, 1999; Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Putnam (2000) further posits that, in the USA, being married and having children leads to the development of other social capital elements such as membership of associations and volunteering, especially in organizations linked to religion and/or youth. Bullen and Onyx (1999) in their paper prepared for Family Support Services and Neighbourhood and Community Centres in New South Wales, Australia, suggest that social capital is generated in families, neighbourhoods and communities. They argue that trust, tolerance, pro-activity, and the capacity to develop networks and a sense of self-worth are developed in children and young adults within 'functional' families.

This view of the benefit of family to social capital and associationism is not universally accepted. Fukuyama (1995) suggests that the strong family ties found in Asian societies such as Taiwan, Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China, lead to 'weak voluntary associations because unrelated people have no basis for trusting one another' (pp. 28-29). However, even in these circumstances, strong family ties do develop strong bonding social capital within families.

Reciprocity and obligations

Reciprocity or enlightened self-interest is considered not only an indicator of social capital but also a cornerstone of social capital. Many writers see the expectation that others will reciprocate as indicative of a positive society rich in social capital (Blakeley, 1997; Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Kolankiewicz, 1996; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Paldam & Svendsen, 1999; Portes & Landolt, 1996; Putnam, 2000; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995; Stone, 2001). Putnam (1993) holds that

networks of civic engagement foster 'norms of generalized reciprocity,' (p. 3) indicative of a more trusting society. Although not identified by Bullen and Onyx (1998) as a key indicator of the presence of social capital, the interaction of people within organizations is facilitated by some expectation of reciprocity, a sense of caring for each other's interests. Indeed, 'networks based on principles of trust, mutual reciprocity and norms of action' form part of Bullen and Onyx's (1998) description of social capital. This sense of caring and support in communities rich in social capital also encourages trust formation.

Obligation as a social capital indicator appears to be a sub-set of both reciprocity and trust. Trust, and the recognition that obligations will be repaid are seen as the pivotal point of the relationship aspect of social capital (Coleman, 1988; Paldam & Svendsen, 1999). As an example of trustworthiness in the environment, Coleman (1988) cites the rotating-credit associations of Southeast Asia and considers that social structures that contain higher levels of outstanding obligations 'have more social capital on which they can draw...the density of outstanding obligations means, in effect, that the overall usefulness of the tangible resources of that social structure is amplified by their availability to others when needed' (S103).

Kolankiewicz (1996) brings together trust, reciprocity, obligation and networks in his view of social capital. For Kolankiewicz, cooperation is both lubricated by trust in reciprocation and breeds trust in reciprocation. It is trust that provides the foundation for market formation. He describes networks in Communist societies in two ways. First, networks are generally specific and attached to the provision of goods and services not available through normal means. Second, networks expect that favours will be returned in the future. A consequence of a) a lack of expectation of reciprocity and obligation, and b) of trust that favours can or will be repaid to the originator, via some other group, results in networks that tend to be 'largely defensive or coping

networks, not proactive and oriented forms of reciprocity' (Kolankiewicz 1996, p. 438). For Kolankiewicz, network reciprocity under this kind of regime does not form the foundation of society or social order. Instead, it generates a provider network to fill in gaps in state provision.

The importance of obligation, reciprocity and cooperation for mutual benefit are summarised by Putnam (1993), quoting from David Hume:

> Your corn is ripe today; mine will be so tomorrow. 'Tis profitable for us both, that I should labor with you today, and that you should aid me tomorrow. I have no kindness for you, and know you have as little for me. I will not, therefore, take any pains upon your account; and should I labor with you upon my own account, in expectation of a return, I know I should be disappointed, and that I should in vain depend upon your gratitude. Here then I leave you to labor alone; you treat me in the same manner. The seasons change; and both of us lose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security (p. 1).

Trust

Trust is recognised as an important indicator of social capital. Trust in the form of general mutual trust that one might have for another, or trust that people will behave in certain ways is a central component of most descriptions and definitions of social capital and is identified as a critical component of social cohesion (Ammerman, 1996; Blakeley, 1997; Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Cox, 1995; Dietz, 2000; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Fukuyama, 1995; Grootaert, 1997; Kolankiewicz, 1996; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Paldam & Svendsen, 1999; Portes & Landolt, 1996; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2000; Schuller, 2000; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995; Stone, 2001; Wehlage, 2000).

According to Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) trust is the 'observable and accountable reciprocity of every micro interaction... (the) foundation that social participants depend on in the production of meaningful communication' (p. 25). Paldam and Svendsen (1999) define social capital as 'the level of mutual trust existing in a group which might be extended to the whole of the society' (p. 3). For Paldam and Svendsen, trust is the mutual expectation arising from cooperative behavior based on community acceptability and shared norms such as religious or justice values, professional standards and codes of behavior. The benefits of trust as a facilitator of collective action are many. Wehlage (2000) suggests that, 'When people trust each other, and when they share values, expectations, and goals, they are in a position to organize themselves to achieve some collective goals – a common purpose' (p. 3).

Trust is not only a critical component of social capital since basic social interactions depend upon trust (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999), but for some trust *is* also social capital in its simplest form. Social capital:

> ...can be thought of as the stock of goodwill or mutual trust that accrues from cooperative relations among two or more parties...social capital does not reside in the solitary confines of private ownership but among the collective hands of the communities that mould it (Dietz, 2000, pp. 139-140).

If trust is central to the concept of social capital then it follows that communities that lack trust cannot build positive social capital. Social capital results in increased confidence and trust between the participants, which encourage further collaboration, and cooperation for mutual benefit. Blakeley (1997) notes that:

> Social capital has major consequences for the nature of the industrial economy that society will be able to create. If people who have to work together in an enterprise trust one another because they are all operating according to a common set of ethical norms, doing business costs less. Such a society will be better able to innovate organisationally, since the high degree of trust will permit a wide variety of social relationships to emerge (p. 3).

Ammerman (1996) considers the whole concept of community as being dependent on the social capital/trust/voluntary activity nexus and argues that:

> ...voluntary organizations...[are] among the places where relationships of trust are formed, where a sense of identity is nurtured. These relationships of trust are social capital in its most basic form (p. 2).

Emphasis on the role of voluntary activity in social capital is summarised by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) in Australia, which states that 'social capital facilitates voluntary activity; which in turn generates more social capital...a virtuous circle' (NCVO, 2003, p. 2). Indeed, trust itself can arise from the norms of reciprocity, which come out of involvement in civic activity such as volunteering (Sirianni & Friedland, 1995).

Trust facilitates risk-taking in a mutually supportive environment and provides a foundation for basic interaction to take place. In a social capital rich community, behaviour and attitudes conform to social norms, ensuring that people are able to comfortably interact within an organization or community by the exercise of informal social control. A strong community has a sense of ownership of its own resources. There is trust, that the

resources will be used for the mutual benefit of all members of the community created through shared norms and values.

Fukuyama (1995) taking a cultural and economic view of social capital, describes social capital as 'a capability that arises from the prevalence of trust in a society or in certain parts of it' (p. 26). For Fukuyama, the level of trust that exists within a society determines the ease of doing business, the prosperity, ability to compete, and overall level of democracy. As Fukuyama (1995) states:

> Democratic political institutions no less than business depend on trust for effective operation, and the reduction of trust in a society will require a more intrusive, rule-making government to regulate social relations...Social capital is like a ratchet that is more easily turned in one way than another; it can be dissipated by the actions of governments much more readily than those governments can build it up again (pp. 361-2).

Fukuyama (1995) suggests that great social capital is an indicator of a society rich in trust and this very richness leads to greater economic growth. He maintains that societies that exhibit trust and social capital to a high degree 'can create large organizations without state support' (p. 16). Fukuyama links the decline of trust and sociability in the United States with a lack of 'shared values and community with those around them' (p. 11) resulting in significant amounts being paid for police protection and in lawyers fees. He sees these amounts as being a 'direct tax imposed by the breakdown of trust in the society' (p. 11).

Putnam (2000) considers that decline in public trust in the USA manifests itself in areas such as community political involvement. Putnam suggests that as trust in government has declined, turnout for elections, rallies, speeches,

committee participation, and public meetings has fallen. Inward looking organizations have grown whilst outward looking organizations may be seen as being in decline.

Trust, then, is an important indicator of social capital and important to the development of social capital. It creates a climate that fosters involvement with others, reduces the cost of doing business, and leads to a willingness to form partnerships and create groups. Trust between groups facilitates community-wide activities. Without trust, there can be no social capital. Trust has to be a norm – the product of, and a precondition for social capital.

Norms and values

Norms and values are considered important indicators of social capital (Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Coleman, 1988; Cox, 1995; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Grootaert, 1997; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Paldam & Svendsen, 1999; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2000; Schuller, 2000; Serageldin, 1999; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995; Stone, 2001). For social capital to develop, a community has to have some degree of common understanding, acceptance and sharing of common norms of action and values, as well as a basic trust that one's actions will be reciprocated.

Paldam and Svendsen (1999) suggest that self-enforcement of norms also grows out of trust 'because trust assures you that another individual will not take advantage of you even if he might get an economic net benefit from doing it, self enforcement is possible' (pp. 7-8). The acceptance of common norms of action and values by the participants within an organization facilitates the development of common understanding, and access to the shared knowledge and information that facilitates the development of a sense of belonging.

Knowledge and identity resources

Community knowledge and identity resources are suggested as not only indicators of social capital but also as community resources (Falk & Harrison, 1998; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999). Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) suggest that social capital is 'an accumulation of the knowledge and identity resources drawn on by communities-of-common-purpose' (p. 2). Falk and Harrison (1998) take this concept further. They see the people and organizations, the networks of connections within the community, and the knowledge of the community as valuable resources. These bodies contain the wherewithal to draw on the shared knowledge of the community including 'personal, individual and collective information: Members' length of residence, genealogy, actions, values and reputations, occupations, volunteer positions, hobbies, and interests' (Falk & Harrison, 1998, p. 11).

Within such a society, people develop knowledge and identity resources about the community and develop as community knowledge identity resources themselves (Falk & Harrison, 2000). Through interactions with others in the community, they are able to share knowledge about the community.

Learning

Learning as a social capital indicator has been examined in depth. Balatti and Falk (2001) suggest that learning occurs when social capital is built and:

> ...when the set of interactions calls upon existing knowledge and identity resources and adds to them. Changes in knowledge and identity resources i.e., changes in social capital, are indicators of learning (p. 4).

For Falk and Balatti (2004), learning itself may be described as 'the interactions which are intended for the common good and purpose... and that it is these interactions which produce social capital' (p. 50). This view is supported by others (Falk, 2000; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Field & Schuller, 1997; Schuller & Field, 1998). Falk (2000) suggests that social capital developed through interactions facilitates learning, use of skills and knowledge and 'promotes active and sustainable learning' (Falk, 2000, p. 2). Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) suggest social capital is the result of learning interactions that take place during a learning event, in a 'particular socio-cultural context' (p. 6). For social capital to develop, they suggest that there needs to be sufficient quantity and quality of learning interactions. Field and Schuller (1997) stress the social nature of learning as a 'function of identifiable social relationships' (p. 17). Much of the learning that takes place because of interactions in communities occurs informally as people go about their everyday activities (Falk & Harrison, 1998b; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Kerka, 2003). Falk and Harrison (1998b) suggest that learning takes place not only with individuals but also with groups within the community. Kerka (2003) suggests that this informal learning may take place intergenerationally in informal interactions. Consequently, formal or informal learning develops human capital.

In a study of social capital in the creation of human capital, Coleman (1988) suggests strong links between learning and social capital found in religiously based high schools. Coleman suggests that the networks parents form through school, community and church may be used for the educational benefit of their children.

Recent research by Schuller and Field (1998) examines the human capital/social capital relationship in helping to explain educational attainment 'in the context of the learning society' (p. 226) in Northern Ireland. They suggest that non-formal learning 'takes place during social interaction ...

[and] is primarily undertaken for non-educational purposes' (p. 232). Schuller and Field (1988) suggest that where levels of social capital are high, levels of school attainment are also high. For adults however, high levels of social capital are linked to very low rates of participation in formal adult learning programs as social capital provides an alternative means to realizing goals such as employment (Falk, 2001; Schuller & Field, 1998).

Schuller and Field's (1998) definition of non-formal education misses an important sector of educational participants: those who participate in the non-formal educational process but who have learning and the development of skills, as a goal. This sector may include people who attend sports training, community art classes, field naturalist or photography clubs and performance based community choirs. These communities constitute communities of practice in that the participants 'regularly engage in sharing and learning, based on their common interests' (Lesser & Storck, 2001, p. 831). It could be conjectured that people may participate for pleasure, social interaction, and for the experience of participation. For many, these activities also offer opportunity to develop skills, extend their experience as performers in their field, and learn more about the central purpose of the organization, for example, choral music. Social capital develops in these organizations, as participants need to trust, support, encourage, share information and skills and participate within the norms of the organization. These organizations meet an individual and community need rather than a bureaucratic need and may develop social capital as a by-product of the activity (Coleman, 1988).

As has been seen, learning is a strong indicator for the presence of social capital. Learning not only results from the kinds of interactions that foster social capital (e.g. actions that develop trust, networks, shared norms and values) but also helps to facilitate the development of social capital by providing opportunities for social capital to be created.

Membership of faith based organizations

Membership of faith based organizations is considered by some to be a social capital indicator (Putnam, 2000; Saguaro Seminar 2001). Ammerman (1996) suggests that faith based organizations provide an environment in which members may develop leadership and political skills. Faith based organizations deliberately foster connectivity as part of their perceived role. Some researchers suggest that church or faith based organizations, have greater power and legitimacy than others (Ammerman, 1996; McClenaghan, 2000) and therefore may be seen to be more prestigious (or acceptable) than others and capable of conferring benefits to the membership. McClenaghan (2000), viewing social capital through a community development lens sees social capital benefiting some sub-groups within the community at the expense of others through 'power to define and legitimise meaning, values, norms and practices' (p. 571).

Discussion

Social capital may be identified as a factor in community activities by the presence of certain indicators. However, as has been seen, there is no general agreement on a single definition of social capital; whether social capital is a process or a product; whether social capital is a benefit and/or a detriment to society; indicators for/of social capital; and, strategies for measurement of social capital. There is debate over whether social capital is a group and/or individual attribute. Certainly, there are some common indicators across communities, the presence of trust, for example, but some indicators may be unique to specific communities. Flora and Flora (u.d.) in their focus on Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructure (ESI) conclude that indicators of social capital cannot identify all of the factors contributing to social capital but 'mutual trust, norms of reciprocity and sense of collective identity are consistently part of the whole' (p. 7).

Through this review of the literature I have examined social capital in several forms and contexts. Characteristics of social capital were examined including social capital as: a public good; as a contributor to some negative aspects of community; as a process leading to the development of community; and, as a product of community activities. The literature suggests that meeting and interacting with others in organizations is a necessary precursor to social capital creation. Literature pertaining to social capital as a property of individuals and of groups was also examined. Indicators of social capital were identified from the literature.

However, the literature fails to emphasize that the perceived benefits or otherwise of social capital depend upon the subjective viewpoint of the observer or user. This study aims to understand this viewpoint through the examination of choir members' perceptions of social capital in the Milton Community Choir.

The literature suggests that social capital needs communities and interactions between people in communities in order to exist. The literature also suggests that communities need social capital in some form, in order to thrive. Therefore a study of social capital requires an understanding of the concept of 'community'.

Communities

The term 'community' has come to have such a wide variety of meanings that almost any group may be seen to be a community. Tönnies (2001) suggests that community exists 'wherever human beings are bound together in an organic fashion by their inclination and common consent' (p. 28). Many authors define communities through reference to geographical boundaries (Cook, 1994; Galbraith, 1995; Kilpatrick, 2002). For some, communities

relate to common interests, purposes or practices (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Galbraith, 1995; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002). Others suggest communities possess geographical boundaries and other characteristics such as common interests, purposes or practices (Blakeley, 1997; Schroeder, 1999). In recent years we have seen the development of cyber communities that are not bounded by geography and may never meet, yet interact and participate as communities of common interest (Carroll & Reese, u.d.). In order to further this study of social capital within communities the term community itself needs to be interrogated.

Community 'classified'

Community has been classified in a range of ways, each focusing on a different feature(s) or identifier(s). The New Oxford Dictionary of English (Pearsall, CD ROM Edition, 1999) provides a number of definitions relating to 1) place, 2) common characteristics, and 3) common attitudes and interests. The first, place, considers that 'local communities' are all the people living in a particular area or place; a 'rural community' is a particular place considered together with its inhabitants; and 'the community' are the people of a district or country considered collectively, especially in the context of social values and responsibilities. The second, common characteristics, considers a community to be 'a group of people having religion, race, profession or other characteristics in common'. The third, common attitudes and interests, identifies 'the condition of sharing or having certain attitudes and interests in common: the sense of community that organized religion can provide.'

Many of the definitions found in the literature may be linked with social capital concepts and focus on descriptions of what community does rather than what community is. Community in the social capital literature has been defined in many ways (Ammerman, 1996; Dwyer, u.d.; Finnegan, 1989;

Heiling, 2000; Kilpatrick, 2002; Tönnies, 2001; 2002). Kilpatrick (2002) describes communities as:

> ...places of shared territory, places where we interact with others. They are places where we build a common life with shared values and accepted norms and rules of behaviour. Communities shape our identity. But together we shape our communities (p. 1).

For Dwyer (u.d.) the community has two distinct aspects or realms: the functional and the structural. The functional realm is concerned with location and purpose. In social capital terms, the structural realm is concerned with the way individuals interconnect 'within the structure of non-obligatory social organizations (clubs, churches etc)' (p. 4) in relationships which are mutual and stable with common social norms and concerns, supported by a shared identity and behavioral expectations determined by the community.

Feelings of reciprocity within the community arise through the trust each member holds for others. Such communities place the interests of the group and the responsibilities of the group above self-interest (Bandura, 1997. Feelings of trust, 'the critical component of any social cohesion' (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999, p. 3), within the community give rise to feelings of reciprocity (Dwyer, u.d.). The participants in such a community 'know that their own contribution will come back to them' through the:

> ...pool of goodwill – of 'social capital,' to use the technical term – that allows people to contribute to the community while trusting that at some point, in some form, they too will benefit. This kind of reciprocity is neither selflessness nor simple tit for tat, but a deeper understanding of mutual value that extends over time (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 37).

For Finnegan (1989), community consists of people who are 'bound by numerous ties, know each other, and have some consciousness of personal involvement in the locality of which they feel part' (p. 299). Finnegan suggests that a large city is not a community in the sense that the population is too great, or in some cases too recent, for people to know each other or to have formed networks. In her study of music in Milton Keynes, Finnegan suggests that the musical pathways of the community were not bounded by the city. Even where music-making did take place within the bounds of the city Finnegan (1989) questions the feeling of community:

> ...local music making was not typically practiced within a neighbourhood – based 'community' in the traditional sense...of a collectivity of people living together in a specific territorial area bound together by interpersonal ties or a sense of belonging together (p. 300).

Community, for Finnegan, has a certain feeling. Heiling (2000) also suggests that 'feeling' plays a part in defining community:

> ... (feeling of) positive affinity. It has both a qualitative dimension (poise - negative feeling) and quantitative (strong/weak - affinity/coherence)...Cohesion is seen as a process which is essential for the existence and survival of a group...it is a quantitative measure of the community...There is no need for control, because participation is a personal choice, based on mutual trust (p. 219).

Ammerman (1996) defines community differently and more simply. She emphasizes the caring nature of a community as a 'face-to-face association of caring and trust that transcends utilitarian needs' (p. 4).

A review of the literature shows that communities have been classified in a number of ways, including:

- *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (communities and societies) (Galbraith, 1995; Tönnies, 2001, 2002; Veblen, 2002);
- Unofficial, geographically bounded communities (Cook, 1994; Falk & Harrison, 2000; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Schroeder, 1999);
- Communities with blended geographic and other characteristics (Blakeley, 1997; Schroeder, 1999);
- Communities of common interest (NCVO, 2003; OMAF, 2004);
- Communities of common purpose (Bandura, 1997; Falk & Balatti, 2004; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999); and,
- Communities of (common) practice (Kilpatrick, 2002; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Saint-Onge & Wallace, 2002; Wenger, 1998, 2001; Wenger et al., 2002).

In this next section I shall examine various accounts of community.

Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft communities

Tönnies (2001, 2002) identified communities in two ways: *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. A *Gemeinschaft* community[6] is the archetypal bonding social capital community, primarily kinship based, and 'having real organic life, and that is the essence of Community [*Gemeinschaft*]' (Tönnies, 2001, p. 3). In such a community, Tönnies (2001) suggests that:

> Community by blood...develops more specifically into community of place, which is expressed first of all as living in close proximity to one another. This in turn becomes community of spirit, working together for the same end and purpose. Community of place is what holds life

[6] From Gemein – 'common; general; familiar; vulgar' - common possession or interest; partnership (Lepper, 1964, p. 90).

> together on a physical level, just as community of spirit is the binding link on the level of conscious thought (p. 27).

Tönnies (2001) suggests that in *Gemeinschaft* communities, friendship and comradeship grow from similarities of opinion or work. He maintains that: 'comradeship of minds ... comes alive through the medium of artistic sympathy or creative purpose' (p. 29). Galbraith (1995) suggests that the members of such *Gemeinschaft* communities:

> ...relate to each other in a sense of mutuality, stability, common identity and concerns, and a common subscription to social norms, bonds, and obligations.... gemeinschaft seems most appropriate to bring about a democratic and harmonious process for engaging in lifelong learning opportunities (Galbraith, 1995, pp. 1-2).

Veblen (2002), comparing systems of community music, draws on the work of Tönnies to describe *Gemeinschaft* as:

> ...personal, deep interactions, enduring social relationships, clear understand(ing) of individual's play, rooted, and assigned roles...[where] relationships are homogenous and small scale; church and family are potent factors (p. 1).

A *Gesellschaft* community[7] Tönnies (2001) suggests is 'a purely mechanical construction, existing in the mind, and that is what we think of as Society' (p. 3). Such a society is characterised by disunity and interaction for self interest. An individual in *Gesellschaft* society 'resists contact with others and excludes them from his own spheres' (p. 52). A *Gesellschaft* society is 'large

[7] From Gesell – companion. Gesellschaft - society, association, company (Lepper, 1964, p. 92).

scale, heterogeneous; the state, business, education and media are powerful' (Veblen, 2002, p. 2).

Unofficial, geographically bounded communities

Cook (1994) describes communities as organizations that are separate from official organizations such as council or government organizations, and have geographical boundaries. These communities are what Schroeder (1999) would describe as 'self-defining' (p. 5). In such communities, the voluntary members possess knowledge, identity and consolidated resources that facilitate understanding of the problems faced by the rest of the community (Falk & Harrison, 2000). There is often some degree of historicity and futuricity (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999). Such a community is multifunctional, 'complex, dynamic and sufficiently large that instrumental relationships predominate' (Cook, 1994, p. 13).

Others blend together the concepts of geographically bounded communities and communities of purpose, interest or practice (Blakeley, 1997; Schroeder, 1999). Schroeder (1999, p. 4) describes communities neatly, in a matrix (figure 1):

Figure 1. **Communities Matrix (Schroeder, 1999)**

Geographic, Other-Defined	Geographic, Self-Defining
Community of Interest, Other Defined	Community of Interest, Self Defining

In this description 'geographic, other-defined' refers to a community established by, for example, *Gesellschaft*. 'Geographic, self-defining' might refer to an organization bounded by geography but which is self governing and which has come together for a geographic purpose. Schroeder (1999) gives the example of a neighbourhood block group. Communities of interest set up by an outside organization are 'other defined,' whilst 'any of the

millions of formal and informal associations that are integral to our civic culture' and have been set up by communities or organizations themselves are seen as 'self-defining' (p. 5).

Communities with blended geographic and other characteristics

Blakeley (1997) defines communities as 'being both geographic (such as a neighbourhood or city) or based on common interests/identities' (p. 2). He identifies key factors, and resources, essential for strong communities that include participation, leadership, and cooperation. Resources include access to information and technology and the ability to raise money and purchase skills.

Communities of common interest

Australian research has shown that being a community of common interest 'is as crucial a determinant in the development of social capital as community of place...most interviewees identify shared values rather than shared localities' (NCVO, 2003, p. 5). Community of common interest has been defined by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF, 2004) as:

> ...persons who voluntarily associate with each other due to self-identified common concerns/purpose (i.e., social justice, environmental protection). A community of common bond are persons who have inherent commonalities (i.e., same sex or age group, ethnicity, disability, etc.) (p. 1).

Communities of common interest are able to function collaboratively and reap the benefits of enhanced social capital because of this collaboration. The community may exist only because of the common interest in (say) cars or

choral music. The OMAF definition illustrates the fine distinction between communities of common interest and communities of common purpose.

Communities of common purpose

Within communities of common purpose, members develop ties with each other and become supportive of each other because of their common bonds. Consequently they learn about their communities and become more knowledgeable about the purposes for which their communities were formed. For Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) a community of common purpose is a community linked to a place/locale, or related to an organization or interest group. They note that people may belong to multiple communities of common purpose. Falk and Balatti (2004) describe communities in which learning occurs as 'communities of common purpose', since it is the purpose which defines the knowledge/values of the group for purpose-related activity. Others (Kilpatrick et al., 2003) have described learning communities as communities of common purpose. Such communities of common purpose may be self-governing and may be enterprising regarding self-development (Bandura, 1997).

Communities of (common) practice

The literature pertaining to communities of (common) practice is extensive (Kilpatrick, 2002; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Saint-Onge & Wallace, 2002; Wenger, 1998, 2001; Wenger et al., 2002). Lesser and Storck (2001) suggest, 'the traditional notion of a community of practice is that it emerges from a work-related or interest-related field and that its members volunteer to join' (p. 832). Those that form because of common practices are referred to as communities of practice. Lave & Wenger (1991) put forward the 'intuitive notion' of a community of practice as a concept (p. 42) relating to the changing nature of behaviour, status and attitudes of

learners (apprentices) and masters towards learning in, primarily, work situations. They make the point that a 'learning curriculum' is a characteristic of a community of practice (p. 97). For participants to be transformed into full members of a community of practice, they require access to a wide range of resources. These resources include: ongoing activity, skilled and experienced workers ('old – timers'), 'other members of the community; and ... information, resources, and opportunities for participation' (pp. 101-122).

These notions have been developed further by Wenger who considers communities of practice to be different from communities of common interest. Wenger (2001) suggests communities of practice are:

> ...focused on a domain of knowledge and over time accumulate expertise in this domain. They develop their shared practice by interacting around problems, solutions, and insights, and building a common store of knowledge (p. 1).

Later, Wenger et al. (2002) describe communities of practice as:

> ...groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis...they meet because they find value in their interactions. As they spend time together, they typically share information, insight, and advice. They help each other solve problems...or they may simply develop a tacit understanding that they share. However they accumulate knowledge, they become informally bound by the value they find in learning together...Over time, they develop a unique perspective on their topic as well as common knowledge, practices and approaches. They also develop personal relationships and established ways of interacting (pp. 5-6).

Saint-Onge and Wallace (2002) describe a community of practice as a community that links 'individuals who have a shared purpose [and] provides that context and effectively enables them to think through the situation and draw on their own tacit know-how' (p. 17). The common feature of all of these is the notion of having something shared, be it a place, interest or activity. Such sharing of purpose may facilitate the development of many of the indicators of social capital such as shared norms and values and knowledge. Indeed, Kilpatrick (2002) suggests 'social capital needs communities of practice in order to be generated, and communities of practice need social capital to work effectively' (p. 2).

Wenger (1998) describes three dimensions 'of the relation by which practice is the source of coherence of a community' (p. 72), mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. For Wenger (1998) practice exists because people are 'engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another...Practice resides in a community of people and the relations of mutual engagement by which they can do whatever they do' (p. 73). Mutual engagement then is what defines the community 'because [individuals] sustain dense relations of mutual engagement organized around what they are there to do' (p. 74). Wenger (1998) suggests that 'belonging' is defined by engagement and 'being included in what matters is a requirement for being engaged in a community's practice' (p. 74). In a community of practice, each participant has a unique place and identity and contributes knowledge or skills to the community as they become 'interlocked and articulated with one another through mutual engagement...people help each other, it is more important to know how to give and receive help than to try to know everything yourself' (Wenger, 1998, p. 76).

Wenger (1998) suggests that the joint enterprise that keeps a community of practice together is:

- the result of a collective process of negotiation that reflects the full complexity of mutual engagement;
- defined by the participants as they do it; and,
- not just a 'stated goal, but creates among participants relations of mutual accountability that become an integral part of the practice' (p. 78).

The daily practice in such a community 'is a complex, collectively negotiated response to what they understand to be their situation' (Wenger, 1998, p. 78).

Within a community of practice, Wenger (1998) suggests that the participants cohere because they belong to 'the practice of a community pursuing an enterprise' (p. 82). The repertoire shared by the community includes the ways that the participants demonstrate 'identities as members,' through ways of acting, and through norms. The shared repertoire:

> ...includes routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice (Wenger, 1998, p. 83).

Summary

The concept of community is a complex and contested one. For Ammerman (1996), the notion of common interest (Galbraith, 1995), common purpose (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999), or common practice (Wenger, 1998), as the defining feature of a community de-emphasizes the importance of personal contact. In these descriptions there is more emphasis on the tangible benefits of contact with others however achieved and less on the social and emotional benefits to community members of face to face interaction.

Defining a community by geographical limits, *Gemeinschaft,* or *Gesellschaft* characteristics may be a common way of understanding the term. However, this definition ignores the strengths of active participation that characterizes communities of common interest or purpose, and cyber communities. The idea of 'a sense of community' implies that a community can be a community because it feels like one. A community is not created solely out of, or because of common interest or attitudes. A community operates collectively and is defined collectively. In such a community attitudes and interests are shared and differences accommodated, because of a feeling of membership of the community, that feeling of wanting to belong. Another use of 'community' appears in the realm of community music.

Community Music

Community music described

This study aims to investigate the manifestation of social capital in a community choir. Whilst the term 'choir' is generally understood, I suggest that 'community music' is less understood. Community music is a contested term that is used in a range of ways within the literature. This perhaps arises from its 'novelty' in the field of music research. Evidence for this includes:

1. the inclusion of a comprehensive chapter on community music (Veblen & Olsson, 2002) in *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning.* In the 1992 edition, community music did not feature in the subject index, let alone be accorded a chapter.

2. the recent establishment of the Community Music Activity Commission of the International Society for Music Education (either 1991 ISME website, or 1984 (Veblen & Olsson, 2002, p. 735)). Other commissions such as the Research Commission (founded in 1967) and

> the Music in Schools and Teacher Education (MISTEC) Commission (founded in 1976) are of much longer-standing.

The literature suggests that community music may be many things to many people. Higgins (2003) suggests that everyone who takes part in community music knows what it is and what they do and is content with their 'own definition and secure in its validity' (p. 1). Others attempt to be more specific. Veblen and Olsson (2002) suggest that community music, which can happen anywhere and with anyone, should reflect the cultural life of a community. Further, they suggest that community music should involve people actively participating in music-making of a variety of different kinds from a repertoire of diverse music. The Report on the Ninth Biennial Meeting for the ISME Commission for Community Music Activity (ISME, 2003), and others (Elliott & Veblen, 2004; Veblen & Elliott, 2000; Veblen & Olsson, 2002) suggest that community music has multiple teaching and learning roles. Elliott and Veblen (2004), on the Home Page of the *International Journal of Community Music*, suggest that:

> Community Music may be thought as ... music teaching-learning interactions and transactions that occur 'outside' traditional music institutions (e.g., university music departments, public schools, conservatories) and/or music teaching-learning interactions and transactions that operate in relation to traditional institutions.

There is evidence to suggest that these interactions and transactions foster relationships and processes that result in musical knowledge, personal growth and achievement of equity, through participation in arts in general and music-making in particular (Allin, 2000; ISME 2003; Matarasso, 1997; Veblen, 2004; Veblen & Elliott, 2000). The suggested multiple learner/ teacher relationships described above, correspond highly with those descriptions of

masters and apprentices in communities of practice literature described elsewhere in this chapter (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

For music educators, community music offers 'opportunities for participation and education through a wide range of mediums, musics, and musical experiences' (Veblen & Olsson, 2002, p. 730). Leglar and Smith (1996) highlight the aspect of cultural education when they suggest that community music can be 'a vehicle for cultural self-expression and an avenue for self-disclosure. The former serves diversity; the latter promotes unity, because it is a means of cultural education, which in turn fosters tolerance and mutual respect' (p. 96). Indeed, community music may be expected to reflect and respect local community interests and culture. It has been suggested that community music should value and use music to foster inter-cultural acceptance and understanding and emphasise the awareness of or commitment to including disenfranchised and disadvantaged individuals or groups (ISME 2003; Veblen & Elliott, 2000; Veblen & Olsson, 2002).

Two forms of community music

The literature identifies several ways in which community music may exist. Leglar and Smith (1996) suggest that community music: a) exists to carry out specific objectives; b) has performance as its chief objective but has education as an important component; and, c) is solely for 'cultural transmission and/or for social and entertainment purposes' (p. 102). For the purposes of this discussion, however, I suggest a distinction between two uses of the concept of community music. These are: 1) Community Music (CM); and, 2) 'grass-roots' driven Music in the Community (MiC).

The key feature of CM appears to be its interventionist nature. This is evident in UK contexts (Bohlman, 1999; Jermyn, 2001; PAT 10, 1999; Spear, 1998; Veblen, 2004) where CM is regarded as an important tool in community

development and social inclusion. CM exists in an environment of funded community musicians who work with communities with 'specific intentions in mind' (Higgins, in press). These intentions may be to develop aspects of music within communities, teach others to develop music within communities, develop aspects of community through music (Bohlman, 1999; PAT 10, 1999), or meet certain community or government needs through music activities.

The second use of community music, MiC, refers to amateur music-making, in the local community, predominantly led and owned by local musicians. The purposes of MiC groups may be group or activity focused and primarily intended to meet the interests and pleasure of the participants (Cahill, 1996). Groups meet as communities of practice, or what Breen (1994) calls, communities of musical interest. MiC is an environment that fosters, and in turn is fostered by, grass-roots community music-making.

Community Music (CM)

The bulk of the research into community music, in all its forms, appears to have been undertaken in CM settings. I suggest four reasons for this: 1) government funding; 2) the employed rather than voluntary nature of CM musicians and workers; 3) established connections between CM musicians, programs, and institutions; and, 4) the tendency for linking CM to government aims and initiatives. First, CM is usually funded, and accountability requires that documentation of various sorts such as studies and reports are produced (e.g. Bianchini, Maughan & Merli, 2002; Brandstrom, 1999; Costantoura, 2001; McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001; Shaw, 2003; Williams, 1996; Woolf, 2000) and have an evaluative aspect to them. Second, CM musicians and workers are not, usually, volunteers. Generally, community music workers are funded through industry or through connections with institutions (Veblen, 2004). As an example, at the 2004 ISME Community Music Activities Commission

meeting in Tenerife, nearly all members present were linked to, (and funded by) tertiary organizations, government (local or national) organizations, or professional performance institutions such as orchestras. Third, funding and connections with important/powerful/well respected institutions lead to assumptions of CM credibility, as music and music activities, because 'experts' run it and it is associated with institutions. Fourth, CM often meets Government (local and national) aims and initiatives and may therefore appear to be more 'legitimate' than (say) amateur, grass-roots, and community music-making.

Sound Sense (2003), the National Community Association for the United Kingdom, describes community music as:

> ...making music with people...Community music involves musicians working with people to enable them to actively enjoy and participate in music...Community music helps people to make music - on their own terms. It reflects their lives and experiences. And as well as providing an enjoyable and fulfilling experience, community music brings people together through music...People benefit from music-making in other ways too. It can help people to express things, empower them, create positive attitudes, build confidence, provide skills, and open up routes to new opportunities (p. 1).

Sound Sense (2004), further suggests that community music:

> ...involves musicians working with all types of people to enable them to actively enjoy and participate in music – so this happens with all types of music, anywhere, and with anyone...making sure that everyone has equal opportunities to participate (p. 1).

Sound Sense (2004) also suggests that community music 'improves quality of life...contributes to lifelong learning and personal development... [and] helps to develop community and social cohesion' (p. 7). Atkinson (1986) suggests that community music should be relevant, valuable, and linked to the musical experiences, preferences, tastes, and degrees of development of the participants so that it can be carried 'by successive stages to a higher plane of musical appreciation' (p. 18). Atkinson's approach is essentially that of the CM provider who leads a community to a 'higher plane'.

Internationally, CM links institutions with communities in order to develop musical knowledges within communities (Brandstrom, 1999; Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996; Higgins, in press; Sooyall & Goodall, in press; Strudwick, 2004). Recent Australian research (Breen, 1994; Cahill, 1998; Harrison, 1996; Mumford, in press; Nazareth, in press) suggests similar links between CM and institutions exist, and that within some areas of Australia CM is linked to community music development through conjunction with outside agencies such as universities, orchestras and the Australia Council for the Arts.

Harrison (1996) examines community music in Australia from a historical viewpoint. Harrison's paper deals with CM rather than MiC and suggests that there is little documentation relating to the work of volunteer organizations. Historically, the Music Board of the Australia Council for the Arts introduced community music programs and music education programs to address issues of access and equity, cultural diversity and to broaden the support of the board to include others than professional musicians. Following CM principles, the Music Board of the Australia Council for the Arts funded music coordinators and gave grants for approved community music programs.

Both Nazareth (in press) and Mumford (in press) describe institutional/community collaborative approaches to community music.

Mumford describes a program aimed at enhancing music education for local instrumentalists through the University of Tasmania Community Music Program (UTCMP):

> The program objectives are: to provide a training ground for future music educators; to stimulate instrumental music program growth in primary and secondary schools; to provide enhanced performance ensembles for instrumental performance majors; and to encourage community participation within a tertiary climate. Importantly, a subsidiary aim is to prepare and train potential music performance and music education majors for the University (p. 3).

Breen (1994) subdivides CM into communities of musical interest that are sponsored by public funding. For Breen, communities of music interest divide into four types relating to: geography, particular users of community music, genres and industry.

First, Breen suggests that the communities of musical interest relating to geography exist from the micro level of precinct and local area through to regional, national and global areas at the macro level. Second, users of community music include children, youth, ethnic, adult, senior citizens, disabled, unemployed and an undefined 'other group' of people whom Breen (1994) describes as 'ordinary garden variety' (p. 317). Third, genres covered by communities of musical interest include acoustic, folk, rock, pop, experimental, world music, women, choir, *a cappella*, orchestra, brass bands and theatre. Fourth, industry communities of musical interest include personal, subcultural/specialist, recording, print, radio, television. Breen omits several interesting communities of music interest including: country music which has an immense following in regional Australia, chamber music groups, wind bands, Scottish pipe bands, and, percussion groups. Women appear in his list as a genre, but not men.

Breen (1994) identifies a range of community music formations. He suggests that the 'expressed intention of community music activities is to meet specific social and personal needs' (p. 319) and contends that community music has seven 'social outcomes ... or ... intended, achievable social benefits' (p. 319). These social outcomes reflect the community music formations. Breen identifies the community music formations as utilitarian, industrial, oppositional, pluralistic, normative, consensus, and, welfare.

Breen suggests that community music for 'Utilitarian' purposes involves a community music provider/worker working with the community to meet a specific need. The Utilitarian community music provider/worker acts in such a way that there is little opportunity for community participation. Breen identifies community music for 'Industrial' purposes as meeting specific needs that arise in organizations outside the general community. Community music for Industrial purposes involves a media and, possibly, a commercial link that benefits the industry. Community music used for 'Oppositional' purposes involves the use of community music by particular sections of the community, such as unions, for political ends. 'Pluralistic' approaches have access to musical activities and tolerance of the diversity of community participants as priorities. Music-making within affinity groups with special, or high needs, such as indigenous or migrant communities characterise 'Normative' approaches to community music. 'Consensus' formations have community music approaches involving specifically targeted groups for non musical purposes such as social uplift. 'Welfare' formations involve music participation with disadvantaged social groups.

From Breen's (1994) description, I suggest that five of his identified formations, those of Utilitarian, Industrial, Pluralistic, Consensus, and Welfare, lend themselves to a CM environment because of their 'interventionist' nature or use of paid professionals. Of the others identified

by Breen, Oppositional and Normative formations could fit into either CM or MiC. The political nature of 'Oppositional' formations may well suit highly organised and interventionist workplace CM activities such as team building exercises, and may describe amateur union choirs. The community building nature of 'Normative' suggests that it lends itself to CM activities whilst the involvement of affinity groups suggests MiC characteristics

CM and its purposes vary according to place and context (Veblen, 2004; Veblen & Olsson, 2002). Given the wide ranging 'understandings' of what community music is, Higgins' (2004) work towards developing a theoretical framework for understanding community music may help to provide common ground for future research and/or practical projects. His description of community music as practice:

> ...emphasises a commitment to create authentic opportunities for people to actively engage in music-making experiences. Community Music practice could be broadly described as being concerned with people, participation, places (context), equality of opportunity and diversity (Higgins, 2004, p. 14).

In their overview of international CM, Veblen and Olsson (2002) examine emerging programs in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, Austria, Scandinavia and Nordic countries, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States of America. Whilst the concentration appears to be on intervention or development programs, some programs such as those instanced in South Africa (Higgins, in press), appear to have the aim of using CM to stimulate the growth of MiC.

Scandinavian countries appear to promote strongly a CM approach (Brandstrom, 1999; Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996; Veblen & Olsson, 2002), systematically linking institutions and communities in order to promote the

development of music in four main ways. First, Sweden's music schools, set up in the 1930s, facilitate the learning of instruments (Brandstrom, 1999; Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996). Second, Scandinavian governments facilitate the development of local community orchestras and bands and participation in a wide range of community music programs including jazz, rock and folk through specific policies created in the 1970s and 1980s (Veblen & Olsson, 2002; Veblen, 2004). Third, CM organizations in Scandinavia gain government support at national and regional levels when they 'collaborate with public schools or music schools' (Veblen & Olsson, 2002, p. 739). Fourth, music teacher training is changing to meet the needs of teachers involved in communities in music-making roles. Such structured and powerful government support and skills development may be of immense benefit to MiC, eventually, as members of communities become skilled enough to lead community music-making in their own communities.

There is a strong link between social and political purposes within community music in the United Kingdom with much of community music funding and activity in the United Kingdom being focused on involvement in activities, and/or wider community development (Bianchini et al., 2002; PAT 10, 1999; Shaw, 2003). For others in the United Kingdom, CM environments are concerned with connecting communities with their cultural heritage (Strudwick, 2004), linking community music development with the United Kingdom's interest in 'engaging those who can't normally take part whether for social, physical or technical reasons' (Sound Sense, 2004, p. 1), and, political intervention with groups such as refugees (Garrett, 2004).

The literature on community music in Canada and the USA (Veblen, 2004; Veblen & Olsson, 2002) suggests that these countries have a mix of CM and MiC activities. Community music schools that offer private instruction to adults, opera companies that are associated with schools, ethnic/preservation groups interested in preserving native American culture and other ethnic

cultures, and tertiary institutions that provide skills to choirs, orchestras, and bands (Veblen 2004) reflect CM approaches. Community performance organizations, religious organizations that have choirs and musicians, and informal affinity groups that have little or no institutional involvement reflect MiC approaches.

Much of the literature surrounding community music organizations in the United States and Canada has included demographic studies of such groups as senior citizens who are involved in choirs (Darrough, 1990; Darrough & Boswell, 1992; Kelly, 1981; Larson, 1983), and adult (not exclusively senior citizen), choral groups (Diekhoff, 1991; Tipps, 1993). A feature of these groups is that the main reason for meeting is not performance but interest and enjoyment. Such studies are of organizations that exist in the overlap between CM and MiC since the participants meet voluntarily in choirs organised for them by institutions. Other literature (Leglar & Smith, 1996; Veblen & Olsson, 2002) provides an overview of community music in the United States of America.

Music in the Community (MiC)

Music in the Community (MiC) occurs in an environment characterised by local, amateur, community music-making, led by local musicians and produced for the community to meet the interests and pleasure of the community participants. For these reasons, I characterise the Milton Community Choir as a MiC choir.

MiC has some commonalities with 'informal affinity groups that have little or no institutional involvement' (Veblen & Olsson, 2002, pp. 740-742). Several studies have examined participation in informal communities, non-aligned with institutions and directed largely by volunteers (Durrant & Himonides, 1998; Finnegan, 1989; Russell, 2002; Smith, 2000, 1998).

Finnegan's (1989) key study in this area describes a MiC setting in Milton Keynes in the United Kingdom, with bands and choirs associated with the 'community'. Finnegan (1989) studies what happens within different music-making 'worlds' and provides descriptions of the composition of groups and the selected repertoire of the groups within particular 'worlds'. Finnegan (1989) identifies certain difficulties in defining and/or understanding what constitutes community music in this context. One difficulty appears to revolve around the fundamental issue of defining what constitutes the community in Milton Keynes. Finnegan's description of community resonates with the concept of communities of purpose rather than communities with geographical boundaries. Finnegan (1989) suggests that although music took place in various localities/communities, ostensibly for the particular community and carrying the community name, local music was not produced by communal culture; nor did it fit the romantic *Gemeinschaft* model of the amateur arts, as the city was not made up of local communities. Participants often lived outside the locality of the group activity and travelled from outside a particular geographical area to rehearse. For Finnegan, what brings musicians together are not their communities and/or networks, important features of social capital building, but that their 'habitual musical pathways are their shared and purposive collective *actions*' (p. 305.)

In another English study, (Durrant & Himonides, 1998) five participants in a North London choral society were interviewed to ascertain what motivates people to sing together. They suggest that 'collective singing is, after all, a basic human need...strongly related to the culture itself' and that people 'enjoy being among similar people and using the most versatile and complete musical instrument – the voice' (p. 69). Such voluntary, self directed activity in 'grass-roots' community music-making typifies MiC.

Cahill (1998) provides a practical guide to forming and operating community music groups primarily for those involved in community music development in Australia. Cahill identifies characteristics of MiC rather than CM and provides definitions of community music. Importantly, she suggests that, 'perhaps a central aspect of any definition is that the development is controlled by the community rather than, for instance, by a commercial organisation or a governmental agency' (p. 4).

Australian MiC focused literature relating to participation in choirs is sparse (Lohrey, 1997; Smith, 2000, 1998). Lohrey (1997) focuses on singers participating in community choirs of different kinds and documents their responses extensively. Lohrey herself participated in many of the activities and explored the experiences and backgrounds of some of the participants as far as they relate to their participation in private singing and/or choirs. Her study examines the stated emotions experienced by participants in the choirs. One choral conductor suggested that gospel singing was 'not about the voice, it's about the soul, the spirit' (Lohrey, 1997, p. 243). A choral member suggested that 'the liberation of group singing for me is that it's an art form where I don't have to be the best, where my ego is not involved, where I don't have to be ever hoping for a solo, or to shine; where all I need to do is experience the music' (Lohrey, 1997, p. 245). Smith (2000) examined the narratives of singers who had recently retired from a large, amateur symphonic choir 'in order to explore the meaning of the choral experience for such a group' (Smith, 2000, p. 81). This choir, (also the subject of a previous study in 1998), I suggest, operates at the intersection of MiC and CM as it is self-described as amateur and yet operates at a professional level. Smith suggests that participants identified a number of benefits flowing from participation in choral singing, including: self-actualization, self-enrichment, self-expression, recreation or renewal of self, feelings of accomplishment, enhancement of self image, social interaction, and, feelings of belongingness. Participants in the choir indicated that 'the chance to perform at a high

standard, with professional musicians and conductors' was the most important reason for joining and remaining with the choir (p. 83). Paradoxically the singers also indicated that they wanted their situation as amateurs to be recognized by the conductor and administration of the choir. Smith (2000) concludes that conductors and administrators are at risk of failing to 'recognize the reality of the 'community' aspects of the organization' (p. 84) in their concern with professional standards.

Russell (2002) explored communities of musical practice in the Fiji Islands and suggests that singing practices transmitted orally in schools, families, churches, and villages create overlapping communities of musical practice where 'participation in musical activities has personal, social and cultural meaning' (p. 31). The study uses the concept of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Lesser & Storck, 2001; Saint-Onge & Wallace, 2002; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002) and suggests 'communities of practice exist as constellations or clusters, having in common mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoires of knowledge and skills' (Russell, 2002, p. 32). In this ethnographic study, Russell also found that the younger people in the communities learn informally as they internalize the attitudes and the singing styles of significant members of the communities, as they are involved in singing with them. These communities of practice are products of Music in the Community (MiC) practices within a *Gemeinschaft* community, rather than the results of structured Community Music (CM) activity.

Common characteristics of CM and MiC

The above critical review of the literature suggests several differences and similarities between CM and MiC. I propose that several of the characteristics of CM identified by Veblen & Olsson (2002) are shared by MiC. In both kinds of community music there is voluntary and self-selected membership of all ages and abilities, a sense of individual responsibility to the group which is

reciprocated by the group to the individual, personal growth being valued as much as musical growth, and finally, individual and group ownership of 'musics'. Both CM and MiC demonstrate respect for a community's cultural property, recognise that identity and self-expression are important and, use music to foster acceptance and understanding of an intercultural and interpersonal nature. Many of the 'characteristics' of CM then, may lead to the development of 'community and social cohesion' (Higgins, in press, p. 2) and hence social capital. CM aims to foster social cohesion through the development of such social capital aspects as tolerance of diversity, community participation, and learning.

Many of the characteristics of MiC also reflect features of social capital. These include community participation, the sense of reciprocity reflected by group and individual responsibility to each other, learning, valuing of self and others, and, tolerance of diversity through music facilitating acceptance and understanding of an intercultural and interpersonal nature. In MiC, social capital development may occur as a by-product of the activities and interactions within the groups and not as a deliberate intention (Coleman, 1988).

Many outcomes of involvement in CM and/or MiC resonate strongly with the social capital indicators identified earlier and include:

- community involvement in a social and/or political manner (Bohlman, 1999; Cahill, 1998; DeNora, 2000; Harrison, 1996; PAT 10, 1999; Shaw, 2003);
- the development of shared knowledge, identity and community consolidated resources (Bohlman, 1999);
- personal growth and the growth of others (Kelly, 1981; Leglar & Smith, 1996; Russell, 2002);

- personal health improvement (Bygren et al., 1996; Johansson et al., 2001);
- networking (Bygren et al., 1996);
- the development of bonding (Shaw, 2003; Williams, 1996) and bridging social capital (Jermyn, 2001);
- growth of safety (Shaw, 2003; Williams, 1996);
- trust (Shaw, 2003; Williams, 1996);
- self knowledge (Leglar & Smith, 1996; Shaw, 2003, Smith, 2000);
- knowledge and valuing of others (Leglar & Smith, 1996; Shaw, 2003);
- communication (Shaw, 2003; Williams, 1996);
- community leadership (Williams, 1996);
- tolerance of diversity (Leglar & Smith, 1996; Williams, 1996);
- cooperation and collaboration (Leglar & Smith, 1996; Williams, 1996);
- the development of a sense of community ownership of the activities (Cahill, 1998; Smith, 2000; Williams, 1996); and,
- knowledge and skill sharing (Russell, 2002).

Such links suggest that the Community Choir that is the focus of this study is potentially a strong environment for the production of social capital and the study of social capital.

Summary

In the literature review I examined research in the areas of social capital, community, and, community music. Definitions and descriptions for social capital were examined and forms of social capital discussed. Bonding, bridging and linking social capital were defined and their uses described. Characteristic features of social capital were examined. In particular the following views of social capital were discussed, social capital as: 'glue', a

contributor to economic well being, a community resource, and, a contributor to a civil society. The distinction between social capital as a process and social capital as a product was also explored. Dimensions of social capital were identified and indicators of social capital described.

Social capital facilitates interactions between people for mutual benefit but the benefits of social capital to individuals, groups, and communities, depend on how it is used. Of direct relevance to this study is the suggestion that participation in community groups (such as choirs) is one way that social capital may grow and be used.

The literature relating to communities of various kinds has been examined. A number of definitions of community have been suggested and characteristics of these communities have been discussed. Literature relating to community music in its various forms has been explored. I argue that community music may be classified in two ways. The first Community Music (CM) is characterized by interventionist actions and institutional or governmental links. The second, Music in the Community (MiC) is characterized by a 'grass-roots' approach to amateur music-making by, and for, the local community. For this reason, the Community Choir as a MiC organization is an appropriate site for the study of social capital.

In the following chapter I describe the theoretical principles supporting the methodology employed in this qualitative case study of the manifestation of social capital in a Community Choir. The epistemological and ontological basis of the research is outlined, and the methods employed to generate record, validate, and analyse the data for this study are explored.

CHAPTER THREE

Method

CHAPTER THREE

Method

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine how the phenomenon of social capital is manifested in a Community Choir. To fulfil this purpose a qualitative case study of a bounded system, the Community Choir, was employed to examine participants' experiences and perceptions, their interactions within the Community Choir as individuals, and, the interactions of the Community Choir with community members and other community groups.

In this chapter, I shall describe the theoretical principles supporting the methodology employed in this study, and the epistemological and ontological basis of the research. In particular, I will outline the key features of the interpretivist approach and describe the ways in which this approach informed my methodology. These issues will be considered in context of the three research phases of the study. The first phase consisted of a 'Thoughts on the choir' survey (Appendix 1), a demographic survey (Appendix 2), and a pilot study. In the second phase, I conducted semi-structured interviews with choir members and developed field notes. In the third stage, I examined these data by employing both narrative analysis and analysis of narrative (Polkinghorne, 1995) techniques.

Using narrative analysis techniques, I constructed stories of a quartet of Community Choir members (the Quartet). These stories describe the ways four members of the Community Choir developed and used social capital in their lives. I used analysis of narratives techniques to group data generated with the remaining members of the Community Choir (the *Tutti*) into themes

and categories. These themes and categories illustrate the manifestation of social capital in the Milton Community Choir.

In this chapter, I also outline the data checking processes, including member checking and triangulation. I describe how issues of credibility, transferability, believability and confirmability of the data were addressed. Further, I evaluate interpretations of the narrative by employing Riessman's (1993) criteria of persuasiveness, correspondence, coherence and pragmatic use of the data. In a short 'Reflexion' section, I describe some of my thoughts and 'reflexions' during the course of the research.

The design of the study was iterative in nature as each step built upon previous knowledge. Consequently, each data generating method informed the next. For example, responses to the surveys, by the participants, guided the structure of the interview schedule (Appendix 5) and provided data pertaining to the choir members' propensity to participate in community activities.

Methodology

In this study I chose to employ a case study methodology (Stake, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2000). Furthermore, the research was both interpretivist and qualitative in approach. Denzin and Lincoln (1998b) consider that 'all research is interpretive, guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied' (p. 26). An interpretivist approach suggests that reality is socially constructed by the participants, including the researcher, and is therefore subjective and multiple. The believability of the interpretation is a major factor in assessing the quality of the interpretation. An interpretivist, qualitative approach facilitates the acquisition of rich, thick data; this aids believability and enables a deep understanding of the main research question underpinning this case study:

How is social capital manifested in a Community Choir?

In order to address this question, it is necessary to answer a number of subsidiary research questions:

a) What social capital indicators are evident in the Community Choir?
b) How is social capital created in the Community Choir?
c) How is social capital used in the Community Choir?
d) What are the choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in their lives?
e) What are the choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in the community?

Qualitative research

Creswell (1998) suggests that a qualitative approach is particularly suited to research questions that begin with *how* or *what*. Use of a qualitative approach allowed me to study *how* social capital is manifested in the Milton Community Choir through the analysis of data relating to the lives of the choir participants. The raw data consisted of survey responses, field notes, descriptions, and life stories of the members of the Milton Community Choir elicited through semi structured interviews.

For the purposes of this study, qualitative research is understood as:

> ...research in which researchers use observations, interviews, content analysis, and other data collection methods to report the responses and behaviour of subjects. This kind of behaviour is often conducted in naturally occurring social situations and gives considerable attention to describing the context of the social environment. A key feature is

> its concern with the relationships among all the variables in the natural setting and the interpretation of events in the environment by the people in it (Vockell & Asher, 1995, p. 452).

Wolcott (1990) suggests that descriptions and the descriptive account play a major role in qualitative research. For Wolcott (1990) they are not only the 'foundation upon which qualitative research is built' but also 'likely to constitute the most important contribution you have to make' (p. 27).

Interpretivism

A central tenet of interpretivism is that 'to understand this world of meaning one must interpret it' (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118) from the language and activities of 'social actors'. An interpretivist position suggests that:

> ...meaning - and hence, reality - is constructed through the social interaction of people within a social setting. Meanings change in the course of interaction because the participants hold different perceptions; thus, reality is flexible and based on interpretations, rather than fixed (Bennett & LeCompte, 1990, p. 32).

An interpretivist approach can therefore facilitate insight into emotions, meanings and reasons for actions.

Interpretivism can be questioned on two basic grounds: first, its inherent subjectivity; and second, its perceived lack of a systematised approach for creation of meanings due to this subjectivity. Interpretivism involves 'understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). The very nature of an interpretive approach to case study opens up the possibility that:

> the interpretations of the researcher are likely to be emphasized more than the interpretations of those people studied, but the qualitative case researcher tries to preserve the multiple realities, the different and even contradictory views of what is happening (Stake, 1995, p. 12).

Interpretivist ontology

Ontology seeks to understand the nature of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c). Interpretivist ontology suggests that reality is constructed in the act of interpreting reality itself. As all observers and participants bring different experiences and backgrounds to their interpretations of being and reality, the nature of being and reality is also different for each individual. Therefore, being and reality may be multiple (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c, Hatch, 2002).

The assumption of multiple realities that is central to interpretivist ontology is also a feature of a 'constructivist paradigm' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c, p. 27). However, Schwandt suggests that constructivism in social sciences is 'of a more recent vintage than interpretivist thinking' (Schwandt, 1994, p. 125). For Hatch (2002b), the terms interpretivist and constructivist are synonymous. Interpretivist/constructivist ontology is relativistic, multiple, and holistic (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Hatch, 2002b).

A dialogic relationship between the knower and the known is assumed within an interpretivist approach. In this manner, knowledge is constructed from dialogue between the interviewer and the participant (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In the context of the present study, a social reality then can be constructed from the social relations, life experiences and understandings described by the Community Choir members and interpreted by and with me (Mason, 1998).

Interpretivist epistemology

An interpretivist epistemology in a research process seeks to study the nature of knowledge (the epistemology) from the point of view of the participants. Interpretive epistemology acknowledges that knowledge and meaning are not fixed and that understanding of the social world of a participant can be gained from the perspective of the participant (Price & Cybulski, 2004). Through such an interpretivist epistemology, we seek to understand the 'relationship between the inquirer and the known' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c, p. 26). Participants then, construct their own realities (Stake, 1995) as the 'knower and known interact and shape one another' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 21). Creswell (1998) suggests that a qualitative approach should facilitate this co-construction by the researcher and participant, as it allows participants to collaborate in the study and present findings from the point of view of the participants. Further, such co-construction facilitates understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 1998).

Epistemology 'is linked intimately to worldview' (Ladson-Billings, 2000, p. 258). Through interacting and communicating with the participants, I was able to gain an understanding of their lives and worldview. As the researcher and as a participant in the Community Choir I was at once the asker of questions, part of the answer, and part of the interaction with the Community Choir members. Thus, data generated because of this interaction were socially constructed both by me as researcher and Community Choir member, and by the other Community Choir members.

An interpretivist approach therefore provided a means to co-construct a 'reality' from my interaction with the participants. In so doing, this approach facilitated the development of a nexus between me as researcher, and the Community Choir. This nexus enabled me to interpret the various data co-constructed with participants and to understand how social capital was

manifested in the Community Choir. However, I also accept that realities are multiple and that knowledge is multiple. Through this study, I am not trying to arrive at a certainty or a single conclusion; rather, I am seeking to arrive at an understanding through a search for meaning (Barone, 2001).

Case Study

The term 'Case Study' has been defined in different ways. For Stake (1994), a case study is 'both the process of learning about the case and the product of our learning' (1994, p. 237). Case study has alternatively been understood as the investigation of 'one thing' (Stake, 1997, p. 402), a particular case with its unique complexities and very special interest (Stake, 1995). Robson (1993) defines case study as:

> ...a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence (p. 52).

A case study approach is often used to examine individuals' 'uniqueness and commonality...their stories...how they function in their ordinary pursuits and milieus' (Stake, 1995, p. 1) in order to gain 'greater understanding of the case' (Stake, 1995, p. 15). Accordingly, in case study approaches there is an attempt to describe the experiences of the participants deeply, in the participants' terms. Qualitative case study approaches have the advantage of being 'non-interventive and empathetic' (Stake, 1995, p. 12). Case studies also place emphasis on understanding 'how the actors, the people being studied, see things' (Stake, 1995, p. 12). Case study research therefore becomes an 'interaction between researcher and case' (Stake, 1997, p. 406).

A qualitative case study approach allowed the study of 'the lived world of immediate everyday experience' (Riessman, 1993, p. 8) through analysis of

data gathered in 'face-to-face interaction' (van Maanen, 1988, p. 52). A qualitative case study approach also facilitated the linking of 'the meaning of the experience to those having it' (Eisner, 1996, p. 12) and assisted understanding of the 'socially constructed nature of reality' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b, p. 8). This approach also enabled me to benefit from the 'intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied' (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b, p. 8) as the environment of trust that existed between the participants and myself, facilitated the free-flow of qualitative data between us throughout the study.

Case studies can be categorized as either 'intrinsic', 'instrumental' or 'collective' (Stake, 1995). An intrinsic case study is a study of a particular case because of an 'intrinsic interest in the case' (Stake, 1995, p. 3). An instrumental case study is a study of a particular case that leads to general understanding, where 'this use of case study is to understand something else' (Stake, 1995, p. 3). A collective case study has a similar purpose to an instrumental case study. It is a study of several cases rather than just one, usually in order to understand a particular phenomenon (Stake, 1995).

This case study rests in the intersection between 'intrinsic' and 'instrumental' case studies (Stake, 1995). Whilst the focus is on a particular case, the Milton Community Choir (intrinsic), the study also provides insight into a particular phenomenon, the manifestation of social capital in community choirs (instrumental). The conclusions of this case study relate primarily to the Milton Community Choir but the results of the study may be transferable as they suggest questions for further study.

Narrative Inquiry

This study adopts a narrative inquiry approach towards the interview data. Narrative inquiry is a research strategy that 'gathers events and happenings as

its data and uses narrative analytic procedures to produce explanatory stories' (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). In narrative inquiry, stories are considered a way of understanding the lived experiences of individuals (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Through narrative thinking and writing, narrative inquiry allows the researcher to represent and understand the experiences of others.

In recent years, the term 'narrative' has become synonymous with 'story' (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Hatch, 2002; Stake, 1995) the telling of which may be a basic attribute of humans. Dhunpath (2000) suggests that, 'our lives are intrinsically narrative in quality. We experience the world and re-present our experience narratively' (p. 545). Gudmundsdottir (1998) suggests that narration of experience 'comes naturally, like learning a language,' and is learned during childhood (p. 3). Further, stories serve as a tool to help us make sense of our experiences (Gudmundsdottir, 1998; Riessman, 1993). Stories may also provide the 'scaffold' to help us 'climb to higher ground mentally and intellectually' (Gudmundsdottir, 1998, p. 4).

Polkinghorne (1995) suggests that, in the context of narrative inquiry, 'narrative refers to 'the data form of field notes or original interview data and their written transcriptions' (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 6). Further, Polkinghorne (1995) considers that narrative is a 'discourse form in which events and happenings are configured into a temporal unity by means of a plot' (p. 5) through a process referred to as 'narrative configuration' (p. 5). In other words, narrative refers to the approach, raw data, and the final text.

Whatever the fine detail, it is clear that it is through narratives, in the form of story telling, that individuals recapitulate and reinterpret their lives (Riessman, 1993). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) propose that 'narrative thinking' (Bruner, 1986) forms part of the phenomenon known as narrative and 'narrative method is a part or aspect of narrative phenomena' (p. 18).

Bruner's 'modes of thought'

Bruner (1986) suggested two distinctive ways of classifying thinking or 'modes of thought' (p. 11): firstly, the traditional 'logical-scientific' mode of knowing or 'paradigmatic cognition' and secondly, storied knowing, or 'narrative cognition'. Bruner (1986) suggested that these two modes of thought had 'distinctive ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality' and that, although considered to be complementary, they were 'irreductible to one another...Each of the ways of knowing, moreover, has operating principles of its own and its own criteria of well-formedness' (p. 11).

The narrative mode 'leads ...to good stories, gripping drama, believable (though not necessarily 'true') historical accounts' and seeks to locate 'experience in time and place' (Bruner, 1986, p. 13). The narrative mode then is subjective and concerned with narrating experiences, and 'the vicissitudes of human intentions' (Bruner, 1986, p. 16). In contrast, the paradigmatic mode is objective and detached, 'reaching for abstraction' (Bruner, 1986, p. 13).

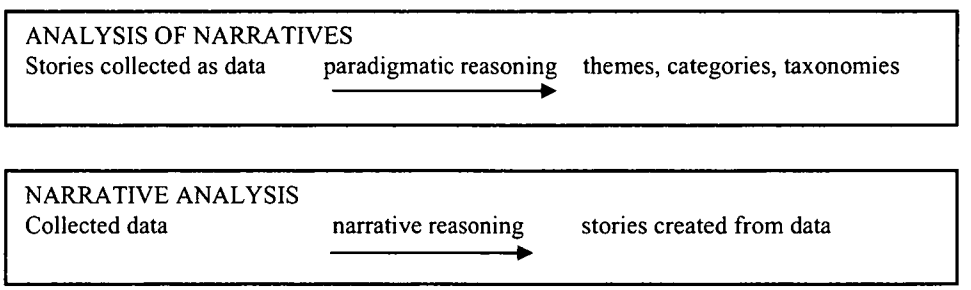
Polkinghorne's approaches to analyzing narrative

Polkinghorne (1995), in building on the work of Bruner (1986), suggests two analytical techniques for narrative. The first, narrative analysis, is similar in concept to narrative mode. Narrative analysis takes data from a range of sources for example, descriptions and story fragments and restories them 'by means of a plot into a story or stories' (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 12). The second technique, analysis of narrative, is conceptually similar to paradigmatic mode. Analysis of narratives examines participant accounts (stories) as data and analyses the stories through paradigmatic processes. Consequently, 'paradigmatic analysis results in descriptions of themes that

hold across the stories or in taxonomies of types of stories, characters, or settings' (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 12).

The two approaches may be represented graphically as follows (figure 2):

Figure 2. Polkinghorne's approaches to analyzing narrative



In this study, I employ narrative analysis to create stories from 'original interview data and their written transcriptions' (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 6) of a quartet of choir members and from field notes and reflexive accounts. I employ analysis of narrative (Polkinghorne, 1995) to identify key issues, ideas, links and themes from the written transcriptions from multiple choir members (the *Tutti*).

This study therefore has three facets: 1) it is qualitative and interpretive; 2) it is a case study; and, 3) it uses narrative inquiry.

Method

The case: The setting and the participants

As the intention of the research was to examine the manifestation of social capital within a Community Choir, the selection of a Community Choir provided the case and the choir members a 'carefully selected group of people' (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, pp. 46-56). The selection of the Milton Community Choir was straightforward. I knew the Community Choir and its

28 members well. At the commencement of this study we had worked together for over ten years, a relationship reflected in the age range of members (49-82) (see Appendix 3 for a demographic overview of the choir members). I thought the choir members may have knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon (the manifestation of social capital in a Community Choir) that was the focus of the investigation. I also suspected that the Milton Community Choir had several characteristics as a Community Choir that may resonate with those of other community choirs, nationally and internationally. In particular, the Community Choir:

- is a mixed voice choir of mainly retired people;
- tends to concentrate on large-scale choral works such as oratorios;
- is a true Community Choir open to anyone regardless of musical ability or experience;
- does not require auditions as a pre-requisite for membership;
- selects all soloists from within the Community Choir;
- is managed by a committee comprising members of the Community Choir who select the music, venues, and make all arrangements with venue owners; and,
- has free entry to all concerts.

The Milton Community Choir holds an important place within the local city arts community. However, I suggest that the Community Choir may also be considered a community in itself. The choir members reside in a specific locality, and the members share common interests (Cahill, 1998). The Community Choir is clearly differentiated from other groups in the area, and the self-defining nature of the Community Choir leads to it being a sustainable community (Schroeder, 1999).

Methods and techniques

Conducted in three phases, the methods used included administration of surveys and a pilot study (Phase 1); interviews, field notes, transcriptions of interviews, and member checking (Phase 2); and analysis (Phase 3). The methodological steps followed in the development of this study are illustrated in figure 3 below.

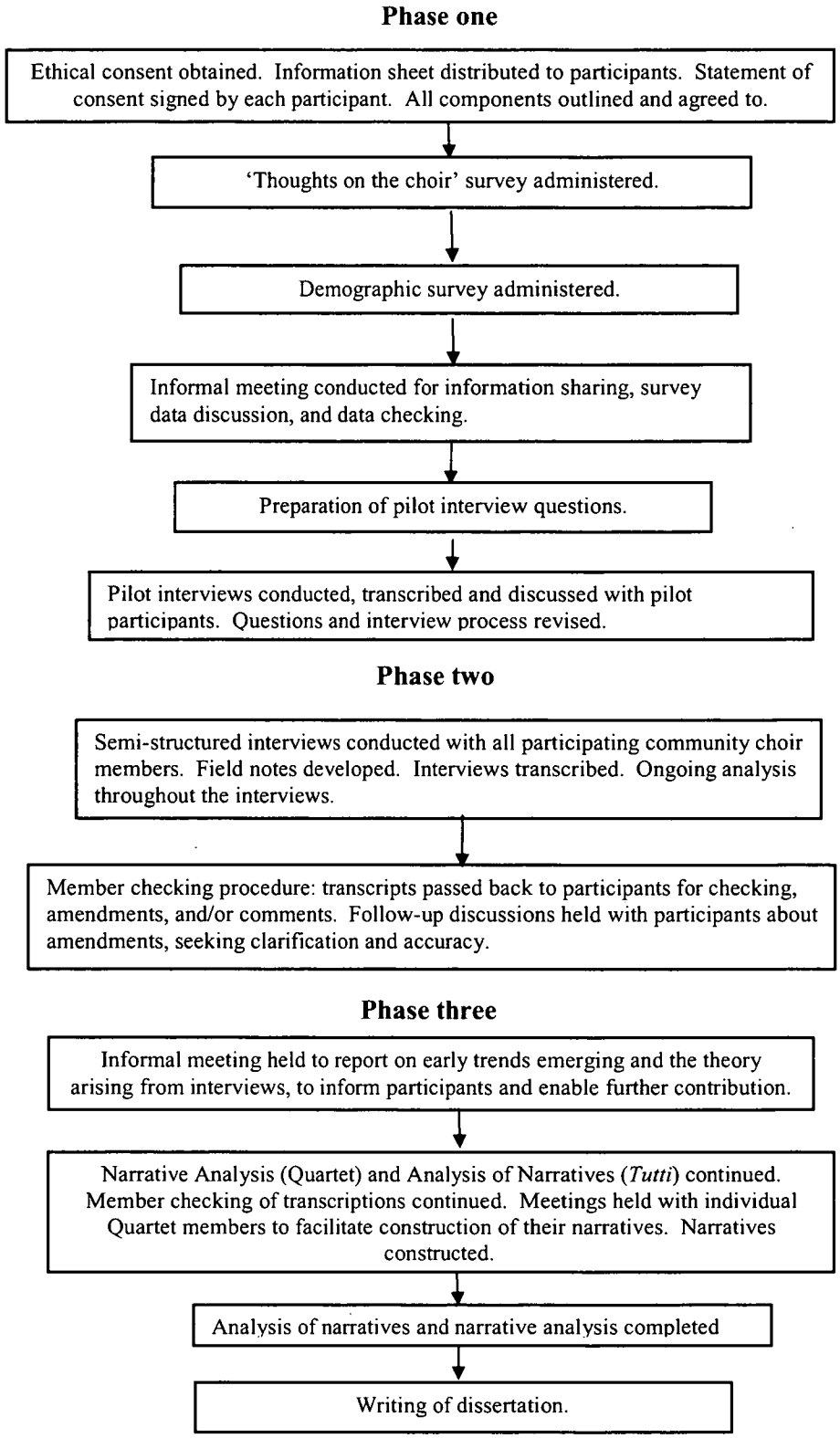
Methodology

Ethical consent

After obtaining consent from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) network to conduct the research, I provided potential participants with an information sheet and a statement of informed consent. I explained the documents to the potential participants at the first Community Choir rehearsal and asked them to sign the statements of informed consent if they wished to participate further in the study. I attempted to promote a view of participants as co-workers on the project, on the basis that I, an insider, was also a co-participant.

All choir members were already familiar with the purposes of my study, even if they lacked detailed knowledge. However, I explained to the choir members in detail what involvement in the study would entail, and that they could withdraw at any time. I explained that later that evening those who had signed the statement of informed consent would be involved in a short writing exercise, a survey relating to 'Thoughts on the choir'. Only one choir member declined to participate in the survey process. At this time, interestingly, there were no withdrawals from the study. Some (initially reluctant) choir members asked to become participants during the course of the study.

Figure 3. **Methodology flow chart**



Surveys

I developed two surveys with the aim of gaining a preliminary perspective on the phenomenon of the manifestation of social capital in the Community Choir. The function of the first of these surveys, the 'Thoughts on the choir' survey, was to inform the interview schedule construction. The function of the second of these surveys, the 'Demographic' survey, was to obtain greater insight into the demography of the Community Choir, especially choir members' propensity to participate.

The main research question, 'How is social capital manifested in a Community Choir?' guided the form and structure of the surveys. The use of surveys as a means of generating data is well established. Surveys are particularly useful for eliciting information that 'covers a long period of time in a few minutes' (Burns, 2000, p. 567). As surveys elicit comparable information from a number of participants, patterns may be revealed in the data (Burns, 2000). A disadvantage is that subtle differences in responses may be obscured by the use of standard questions (Burns, 2000) and the lack of provision for probing further into particular answers.

'Thoughts on the choir' survey

The 'Thoughts on the choir' survey (Appendix 1) was a written survey that allowed participants to become involved in the study without undue stress. The focus of the questions was to ascertain participants' views of the Community Choir, their role within it, their contribution to the Community Choir, and the Community Choir's contribution to their lives, practices and experiences within the Community Choir, and, their perceptions concerning the Community Choir as a contributor to the community.

The seven questions in the 'Thoughts on the choir' survey were deliberately open-ended in order to encourage participants be as free ranging in their thoughts as they wished within the set limits of space provided. Participants were asked to describe: the Community Choir, themselves as choir members (research subsidiary question d.), what they liked most about the Community Choir and liked least about the Community Choir (research subsidiary question d.), what they brought to the Community Choir (research subsidiary question d.), what the Community Choir gave them (research subsidiary question d.), and, what the Community Choir contributed to the community (research subsidiary question e.).

The survey was administered with those twenty eight members of the Community Choir who attended the first Community Choir rehearsal of the year, in its usual practice venue. Participants sat in their usual voice part groups. General information on administrative issues concerning completion of the surveys was provided. Participants were informed that completion of the survey was not compulsory; however 27 participants did complete it and one declined. Participants were also informed that surveys were anonymous but participants could choose to identify themselves if they so wished and 22 did so. Participants were advised that if they chose to identify themselves, it would indicate that they were receptive to participating in the interview stage of the project. Not all participants completed all questions in the same way; some provided one or two word responses whilst others answered in complete sentences. Participants were allowed a set amount of time of 30 minutes for completion of the survey. However, the majority of participants took less than the allotted time to complete the survey.

It is possible that some of the regular members from the previous year failed to attend because the rehearsal incorporated the AGM and a planning meeting, where the plans for the year were to be outlined.

Demographic survey

The demographic survey was designed to provide a snapshot of the background, history and music and community experiences of the participants. Questions related to education, musical background, and musical and community participation. The responses are summarised in Appendices 3 and 4.

The Demographic Survey (Appendix 2) asked 19 demographic questions that required one word answers or the selection of an appropriate answer from choices provided. The demographic survey was administered after a rehearsal conducted later in the rehearsal year. Participants were informed that providing their name was optional. The rehearsal finished half an hour early and participants were asked to fill in the survey in the time left.

After the 'Thoughts on the choir' (Appendix 1) and the 'Demographic Survey' (Appendix 2) data had been analysed, a short informal meeting was held after the formal part of a Community Choir rehearsal had finished. The purpose of the meeting was to enable me to 'check back' with the participants and share information about trends and theories emerging from the data.

Interviews

Interviews are an established method of gathering data in the social sciences (Fontana & Frey, 1998, 2000; Gubrium & Holstein, 2002; Mishler, 1986; Robson, 1993). Most commonly, 'interviewing involves individual, face-to face verbal interchange' (Fontana & Frey, 2000, pp. 645-6). The semi-structured interview format that I adopted fostered active interaction between the participants and me as researcher and led to an understanding of 'the *hows* of people's lives (the constructive work involved in producing order in everyday life) as well as the *whats* (the activities of everyday life)' (Fontana

& Frey, 2000, p. 646). Robson (1993) identifies several advantages in using interviews as a data generation method. Interviews provide:

- a simple and straightforward approach to the study of personal characteristics such as attitudes, values, beliefs and motives;
- the opportunity for the interviewer to clarify questions; and,
- encouragement to the respondent to participate and become involved.

After an extensive study of the literature on social capital, participation in community organizations, participation in musical activities (Gates, 1991) and community music, I devised an interview schedule (Appendix 5). The structure of the interview schedule was shaped by the literature (Taylor-Powell, 1998; Saguaro Seminar, 2001), and by analysis of the survey data.

The interview schedule

The interview schedule (Appendix 5) consisted of a list of questions 'used to jog the memory of the interviewer about certain issues or concerns...this interview guide is revised as informants provide information which has not previously been thought of by the researcher' (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander, 1995, p. 82). The actual questions and/or the ordering of the questions varied slightly from participant to participant, according to previous answers and/or how well the participants showed they understood the questions. Follow-up questions allowed for amplification of views and opinions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Artefact elicitation was employed in each interview and involved playing a piece of music to the participants that was similar in style to the kind of music performed by the Community Choir. Through this process, participants' reflections on their own experiences of performing this style of music and deep perspectives of what it was like to participate in this kind of music were

elicited. In this way, artefact elicitation provided a means of eliciting knowledge and attitudes that may have remain hidden during the interview process (Barrett & Smigiel, 2003). Artefact elicitation enabled participants to 'externalise their knowledge that would otherwise remain inaccessible' (Teeravarunyou & Sato, 2001, p. 1).

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to trial the interview schedule and techniques to be used with the participants from the Milton Community Choir. The participants in the pilot study consisted of six female members of an *a cappella* group, a male member of a male only local choir, and an audience member married to a Milton Community Choir member. All pilot study participants were from the Milton region.

Accepting that 'the things people say and do depend on the social context in which they find themselves' (Burns, 2000, p. 397), I considered it important that the data were gathered in a naturalistic setting, where one might reasonably expect to find the participants, their homes or offices. Accordingly, these interviews took place in venues of the participants choosing and in which they were comfortable. Two individuals (one *a cappella* member and the male choir member) chose to be interviewed in their respective offices. Another *a cappella* choir member chose to be interviewed in my home. Each pilot group participant was interviewed using the same interview schedule and was invited to make constructive comments about the pilot interview in which they had just participated, at the end of the interview. Participants were asked how they felt the interview went, what else they thought I could have asked, whether there were problems with the way the interview was conducted, and, for any other comments they wished to make. Finally, the participants were invited to ring me should they have further thoughts on the pilot study.

The interviews in which participants were able to tell their stories with minimal interruption from me seemed to be more relaxed and informative. Indeed, silence on my part after an answer had been given often encouraged the respondents to enlarge on the answer and to explain what they had just said. Only one participant, a member of the *a cappella* group, preferred to be asked direct questions. This participant suggested that she might be able to give a 'more organised account of myself' if she were asked questions as prompts.

I gained valuable feedback from the pilot study participants on a number of methodological issues, including choice of venue for the interviews, and the structure, length, and content of the interview schedule. In particular, I added a number of major questions and several probing sub-questions, and adjusted the phrasing, timing, and order of questions.

In the pilot study, the *a cappella* group members listened to (Palestrina's *Stabat Mater*, performed by the Choir of King's College, Cambridge, directed by David Willcocks. Decca 421 147-2). Pilot study participants who were not members of the *a cappella* group listened to Orff's *O Fortuna* from *Carmina Burana* (performed by the Deutschen Oper Berlin, conducted by Eugen Jochum. Deutsche Grammophon Galleria 423 886-2). This music was chosen because of its familiarity to them and similarity to the Community Choir repertoire, (the male choir member had performed in *Carmina Burana* at a major community performance, and the audience member had been present at the performance).

Since the Milton Community Choir had performed in *Carmina Burana* on at least one occasion and was a work with which we had affinity, I decided to use *O Fortuna* for artefact elicitation with the members of the Milton Community Choir. I elected to play the *Stabat Mater* for one Milton

Community Choir participant, Rebecca, as I knew that she had a love of Renaissance music and the choir of Kings College Cambridge in particular, and considered such affinity would elicit rich data. The pilot interviews and the comments relating to the structure of the interview schedule were recorded and transcribed.

The Community Choir interviews

In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the 27 Community Choir members who wished to participate. As the interviewer, I adopted Kvale's metaphor of the 'traveler' rather than 'miner' (Kvale, 1996, pp. 3-5). The interviews were a journey of discovery that the participants and I took together, rather than a mining expedition where I dug into the lives of the participants looking for information gems. I hoped for a 'tale to be told upon returning' (Kvale, 1996, p. 4). The interviews let the participants tell their own stories. Each interview took the form of a 'semi-structured life world interview... (defined as an interview) whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena' (Kvale, 1996, pp. 5-6). The described phenomenon in this case was the participants' perceptions of the manifestation of social capital in the Milton Community Choir.

As some months had elapsed between completing the surveys and the start of the interview process, choir members were asked at a Community Choir rehearsal to indicate willingness to participate in the interview process by placing their names and telephone numbers on a list. The list was also used to generate the timetable of interviews. After agreeing to participate in the interview phase, participants were asked to nominate a time and place (or in some cases to select from a range of times) for the interview. The interview procedure was finalised and interviews took place over a six month period in the places and at the times of the participants' choosing.

I made an appointment with each participant and telephoned each participant before the interview to confirm convenience, time and location. I ensured that I arrived in time for the interview and that equipment such as tape recorder, new tapes, journal, and pens were all present, and in working order. I learned, very early, to allow more time for the interviews rather than less. Many of the participants wanted to show me their homes and introduce me to their families. Some participants provided refreshments, and all were eager to tell me more, rather than less. Most interviews lasted from one to two hours, although one interview took over three hours.

Within the interview 'easy' questions (relating to age, voice part and family background) were designed to put the participant at ease, and were asked first. The interview was then funnelled (Minichiello et al., 1995) into five particular areas relating to: 1) the Community Choir as an entity and as part of the community; 2) themselves as members of the Community Choir; 3) themselves as members of the community; 4) their motivation to participate in the Community Choir; and, 5) knowledge of the local community. The final part of the interview employed artefact elicitation techniques to facilitate individual discussion about a chosen piece of music.

By the end of the interview process, all 27 members of the Community Choir who wished to participate in the interview had been interviewed. Five people who filled in the original 'Thoughts on the choir' survey and demographic questionnaire were no longer with the Community Choir at the time of the interviews. Two had relocated inter-state, another had moved to another part of the state, a third had died, and one had left the Community Choir. The 27 choir members interviewed (12 male and 15 female), included five choir members who had not filled in the 'Thoughts on the choir' survey (Appendix 1).

These latter five members had indicated an interest in the research and a willingness to participate although they had missed the rehearsals when the surveys were filled in. I provided each of these members with an information sheet and a statement of informed consent. I explained the documents to them and asked them to sign the statements of informed consent if they wished to participate further in the study. After reading the information sheet and signing the statement of informed consent, they were included in the list of interview participants. As specific informant lists were not made, the lateness of joining in the process was not considered an issue.

Believing that 'interviews are always social interactions' (Mason, 1998, p. 40) I adopted a conversational style throughout the interviews. My friendships with the participants facilitated information and data flow that was 'as much a product of this social dynamic as it is a product of accurate accounts and replies' (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 647). The semi-structured interviews provided convenient and legitimate methods of data gathering (Seidman, 1998).

Researcher role

As a participant observer with a long history of association with the participants, many of the logistical problems besetting interviewers did not arise. Specifically, problems of accessing the setting, understanding the language and culture of the respondents, deciding on how to present oneself, locating informants, gaining trust, establishing rapport, and collecting empirical materials (Fontana & Frey, 2000) were not encountered. As most participants had been members of the Community Choir for many years, the important steps of gaining trust with them and being credible in their eyes had already taken place: we had 'empathy' (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2002, p. 54). Rapport with the participants was already present and strong (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000) and we spoke the same language (Fontana & Frey, 2000):

the language of the Community Choir, of music, and of our 'common histories'.

Robson (1993) suggests that data might be affected by the characteristics of the interviewer including interviewer bias, interaction characteristics (for example class or ethnic background) and, lack of anonymity. However, my friendship and long-term relationships with the participants encouraged frank responses. There was no apparent motive for the participants to be less than frank or honest in their answers. As they had little awareness of how their responses at the time of the interview would be used, it was difficult for the participants to slant responses to provide me with answers they thought I wanted. In addition, because of my long relationship with the participants, I would know if they adjusted their answers to accommodate their perceptions of my needs.

There were also important beneficial factors to consider. I was able to use my knowledge of, and relationships with, the participants to put them at their ease and provide an encouraging environment as 'the way an interviewer acts, questions, and responds in an interview shapes the relationship and therefore the ways participants respond and give accounts of their experiences' (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 110).

A form of inductive analysis took place from the first words spoken. As I listened to the participants' stories, I made decisions relating to how relevant certain comments were to my study, how deeply to probe into personal matters, how closely to follow the wording of prompt questions and, indeed, the sequential nature of the schedule. Thus, the interview schedule adjusted to the environment of the interview process. However, the basic structure of the interview itself did not change.

Recording the interviews

All interviews were recorded on audio tape, and no participants expressed any reservations about the taping of their stories, especially as they understood that they would have a chance to edit out or add in any information at a later stage. The tape recorder was strategically placed so that it would pick up voices clearly whilst being unobtrusive. I learned to keep the tape recorder recording after the apparent end of the interview as often a participant would say, 'Oh I just wanted to add...', just after I had turned off the recorder. I explained to each participant beforehand that the tapes were for private, study use, only. At the conclusion of the interviews, the tapes were clearly labelled with a code identifying the participant and the date of the interview. The tapes then had tags removed to ensure no possibility of accidental erasure. The data on the tapes were then stored as password protected 'WAV' files on my computer and as a further security measure were transferred to CD protected by passwords, and stored separately from the tapes.

The interviews generally went as planned, with participants being happy to provide a quiet private room and to ensure they had plenty of time available for the interview. There was one exception. Henry, (a member of the Quartet), had clearly spoken to other participants about the interviews and had prepared his own piece of music for me to listen to, and to provide a springboard for his views on what music he found moving.

Field Notes

Field notes not only provided important contextual detail and an opportunity for reflection, but also facilitated the writing of a strong and persuasive account. Field notes took the form of brief comments written in a small notebook.

I made field notes throughout the interview period, recording the conduct of the interview, features of the setting, non-verbal behaviour, atmosphere, observed behaviours and the emotions of the participants and myself. During the interviews, the participants' stories were recorded on audio tape, but my thoughts on what they said, how they reacted to certain prompts, even descriptions of their home environment, were recorded in my field notes journal shortly after the interviews had taken place. In this way, I had a 'record of the details and moments of our inquiry lives in the field' (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 104).

I also kept a research diary in which I made notes of comments potentially relevant to my study. These comments typically arose from lectures, at work (when particular events triggered an urge to make a note), and from other relevant research.

Trustworthiness

Issues of trustworthiness of the data generated from the multiple data generation methods relate to triangulation, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study data are considered to be credible if they present the social world of the participants in a realistic and believable way. Through prolonged engagement, triangulation, and member checking procedures the credibility of the data was ensured. Transferability is understood as the extent that researchers may be able to transfer findings from this study to other contexts. In order to ensure data dependability great care was taken in collecting the data, interpreting the findings, and reporting results. Methods and procedures employed in this study have been made transparent and explained fully. Data confirmability was ensured through member checking and co-construction of narratives that allowed participants to have input into the results of the study.

Triangulation

Triangulation is a common method of establishing the validity of qualitative data (Guion, 2002) and 'is directed at a judgment of particular data items' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Janesick (1998) proposes that triangulation may be achieved through data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, methodological triangulation, and interdisciplinary triangulation. Denzin and Lincoln (1998c) suggest four different terms for what are essentially the same triangulation strategies, and assert that triangulation can be achieved through the use of multiple: 1) methods; 2) empirical materials; 3) perspectives; and, 4) observers (p. 4). In this study I employed the first three of Denzin and Lincoln's strategies.

Triangulation by employing multiple methods and empirical materials (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c; Fine et. al, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was supplied by two kinds of survey, a semi-structured interview, and field notes. In each of these surveys and interviews the empirical materials differed. Triangulation by multiple sources included the use of 27 individuals as participants, and validating individual data against at least one other source (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Through these processes I added layer upon layer of data to build 'a confirmatory edifice' (Fine et. al., 2000, p. 118). For example, events mentioned by participants that were important to the study were checked against other appropriate sources. These sources included the initial surveys or my personal knowledge of the participant's role in the events available to me because of my presence 'in the setting over time' (Janesick, 1998, p. 53).

Member checking

Individual and group meetings, individual member checking of transcripts, and checking of narratives by the members of the Quartet (Stake, 1997), were important processes in establishing trustworthiness. Individual and group meetings allowed for, 'taking data, analyses, interpretations and conclusions back to the participants so that they can judge the accuracy and credibility of the account' (Creswell, 1998, p. 203), and for dissemination of general information regarding the progress of the study. After the interviews had been transcribed, I checked the transcriptions against the recordings, as a step in ensuring the trustworthiness of the data. The transcriptions were then returned to the participants for member checking for 'accuracy and palatability' (Stake, 1995. p. 115) of the data.

Member checking procedures, 'directed at overall credibility' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316) also ensured that errors had not entered into the transcriptions, and that what participants said was what they meant to say. Member checking also gave the participants 'a chance to comment, add materials, change their minds, and offer their interpretations' (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 751). Participants were advised that they could keep a copy of the transcription if they wished.

Member checking revealed some errors in some transcriptions. Errors related primarily to names of people such as performers, and places that were unfamiliar to me. After making the corrections, the transcripts were saved and coded to preserve anonymity. One participant made a number of transcription alterations, by removing any sections that were negative about other choir members or organizations within the area. This may attest to the initial honesty and trust established in the interview process.

Credibility

Credibility of responses was established if other participants referred to the same incident in similar ways. Whilst corroboration and consistency of data may be viewed as problematic in credibility as, 'there is no reason to assume that an individual's narrative will, or should be entirely consistent from one setting to the next' (Riessman, 1993, p. 65) such inconsistencies can lend depth and richness. I felt it important that the data evoked a 'feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 751). This evocation was informed by my personal knowledge of the participants, and by the knowledge I gained through the collective body of data obtained through surveys, field notes, interviews, and member checking practices.

If the reader's experiences are similar to those described in the study, then the credibility of the data is apparent and the 'research text [has] legs' (Barone & Eisner, in press). In this study, credibility was enhanced through accurate recording and transcription of interviews and further enhanced if what was said was corroborated by others.

Transferability

The transferability of findings was facilitated by the use of 'thick description' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Thick description enables other researchers to transfer the findings to other settings (Creswell, 1998) with, 'each reader relating it to their own context and method and inferring the quality of contribution it can make for their particular context' (Burns, 2000, p. 476).

Analysis

The aim of the analysis is to understand the phenomenon of the manifestation of social capital in a Community Choir. This is achieved by an analysis of data obtained from two surveys and through semi-structured interviews supported by field notes, conducted with members of the Milton Community Choir. In this section, I describe the data analysis processes used in the two initial surveys and the semi-structured interviews.

Wolcott (1990) regarded basic description, analysis and interpretation as starting points in the writing process. The analysis of data in the present study began at the earliest data gathering stages. After I received the responses to the 'Thoughts on the choir' written survey and the Demographic survey, I noted my initial impressions and interpretation of the data. I further elaborated on my thoughts about these interpretations of the data in my journal and in conference and seminar presentations.

The surveys

The surveys were analysed in different ways. The 'Thoughts on the choir' survey was analysed using a constant comparative method (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg & Coleman, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each participant was given a coded name and his or her responses were transcribed. The responses to each question were analysed for each participant. That is, the responses to question one were analysed for each participant, then question two and so on. Similar data were grouped together. From these groupings of data common features emerged which helped to clarify the emerging themes. Common themes arising from the responses from each participant for each question were grouped together into categories. Analysis of the themes in these categories informed my understanding of the stories generated later from the semi-structured interview data.

The demographic survey provided personal information about each participant. The data relating to each question were compiled in a spreadsheet, tabulated for each respondent. The use of the spreadsheet facilitated the identification of general information on for example, how many members participated in other choirs in the community apart from the Milton Community Choir, and patterns of membership in community organizations (see Appendices 3 and 4).

Narrative inquiry

A characteristic of the narrative mode (Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1995) is that stories are created from data. Polkinghorne (1995) suggests that the narrative mode typifies 'narrative analysis' approaches to narrative inquiry analysis (p.15). A characteristic of the paradigmatic mode (Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1995) is that common features from, say, a number of interview responses or narratives are grouped together into categories that have a relationship with each other (Bruner, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1995). Polkinghorne (1995) suggests that the paradigmatic mode typifies the 'analysis of narratives' type of narrative inquiry analysis (p. 12).

In this study, I adopt two narrative inquiry analytical approaches: 'narrative analysis,' and 'analysis of narrative' (Polkinghorne, 1995). Ongoing analysis of the data revealed the same social capital related themes were emerging from interview to interview, with few new interpretations forthcoming as the interview process was completed. However, the rich stories that emerged from the interviews provided such depth of insight into the experience of the phenomenon that I decided that narrative analysis of the data generated with a quartet of choir members (the Quartet) would enable stories to be created from the data. Each individual story could then serve to contextualise the manifestation of social capital through 'a storied episode of a person's life'

(Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 15). Narrative analysis is essentially descriptive, relying on the narrative to tell the story and provide the mechanism for analysis. Narrative analysis is also open not only to the researcher for interpretation but also to the reader.

The common themes arising from the data of the *Tutti* were examined using analysis of narrative techniques (Polkinghorne, 1995). Analysis of narratives facilitated the identification of emergent themes and categorizations arising from the data. These themes and categories were linked to social capital indicators, whilst the process remained sufficiently open to allow 'new' themes or 'indicators' to emerge.

Adopting these two approaches provided a dual perspective on the manifestation of social capital within the Community Choir and the lives of the participants and their roles in the Community Choir.

The Quartet

Four participants (the Quartet) provided particularly rich responses during the interview process. Consequently, the stories of Rebecca (soprano), Ruby (alto), Charles (tenor), and Henry (bass) were chosen for narrative analysis. As previously noted, the selection of the Quartet was on the basis that their stories contained a certain depth and richness of data, and expressed particularly close links with social capital. Their stories also showed great insight into the Community Choir and the general community. My long-standing personal association with the Quartet, together with field notes and processes of co-construction, enabled deeper insights into their stories. The choice of the Quartet also provided a certain perspective of male/female symmetry. As a consequence of the number of points of resonance between their stories and mine, and my knowledge of them over a large number of years, I became part of their stories.

One of the advantages of narrative analysis is that participants have an opportunity to tell their stories and participate in the editing and presentation of the stories, to co-construct them as, 'they, along with researchers construct the meanings that become data for interpretation' (Olesen, 2003, p. 364). Quartet members were consulted about their narratives and were given the opportunity to correct any mistakes or misrepresentations in the transcriptions (Stake, 1997). With the exception of Henry, all pronounced satisfaction with their story. Henry had reservations about the inclusion of certain family details, reservations he had not voiced at the member checking stage, but he agreed that the narrative could stand as it was.

The narratives of the Quartet revealed that their actions and personal characteristics reflected many social capital indicators. In order to further expose these indicators the Quartet data were configured 'by means of a plot' (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 12) into stories. In this sense, the manifestation of social capital in the Community Choir provided the plot. My personal reflections from field notes, diary entries and later thoughts or interpretations on the stories facilitated the re-creation of the, 'mental atmosphere, thoughts, feelings, and motivations of the characters in the story' (Barone & Eisner, 1997, p. 77). Such an approach rendered the Quartet's stories persuasive, reasonable and convincing.

The *Tutti*

I employed analysis of narratives techniques with the transcripts of the *Tutti* interview responses and extracted from them relevant themes and issues as 'instances of a category' (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 10). I then drew conclusions from the themes and issues exposed (Polkinghorne, 1995). In this kind of analysis, it was not the story itself that was important; rather it was what the

story told me about specific topics, particularly the manifestation of social capital in the Milton Community Choir.

The analysis of narrative approach (Polkinghorne, 1995) has features in common with constant comparative analysis methodology (Creswell, 1998; Hewitt-Taylor, 2001; Merriam, 1998). As with constant comparative analysis methodology, an analysis of narratives approach allows data to be re-examined frequently during the analysis process, and provides opportunities for data transformation.

When analyzing the data I was conscious of maintaining a careful balance between looking and allowing for codes, ideas, themes, and categories to emerge from the data. Through use of an open-coding system, I compared segments of data to determine similarities and differences (Merriam, 1998). When new coded sections were extracted, I carefully compared them with previous ones to ensure that the nature and intent of the extracts remained constant. It became apparent very early that much of the data obtained from the interviews closely related to social capital indicators and social capital issues: I highlighted these emerging themes and issues that related to the phenomenon of social capital in the transcripts.

Using social capital indicators as a guide for category headings, I nested the categories derived from the data within social capital indicators with which they most closely related, and prepared a preliminary report. If a response fitted into more than one category, I ascribed several codes to that response. I added the coded name of each participant to the extracted sections to allow for further checking or the addition of supporting data from the interview transcript.

Inductive analysis (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001; Patton, 1990) began early, as the ideas, themes, and categories emerged from the 'data rather than being

imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis' (Patton, 1990, p. 390). Once themes began to emerge from the data, future readings and interpretations of the transcripts began to be coloured by them. It became necessary at times to revisit individual spoken responses on tape, to ensure that I fully understood the intention of the comments of the participants. In many cases a phone call to, or a meeting with, a particular participant helped to clear up any confusion as I moved between the sections of data and the whole story.

At these times, it became increasingly apparent to me that my own background and history were enabling me to relate to what happened in the stories of the participants as they resonated with my own. Indeed, it was remarkable to me that there was no apparent conflict between the participants' stories and my own as researcher. The issue of reflexivity in relation to relationships with the participants and to their stories therefore needed to be taken into account.

Evaluative possibilities relevant to the *Tutti* responses include those of trustworthiness and credibility as described elsewhere (pp. 120-123).

Four evaluative possibilities

Narratives and their interpretation are subjective and value laden. Narratives describing even the same events may be different 'according to the values and interests of the narrator' (Riessman, 1993, p. 64). However, in relation to the Quartet narratives I chose to examine the following four evaluative possibilities:

- persuasiveness;
- correspondence;
- coherence; and,
- pragmatic use (Riessman, 1993).

Persuasiveness

Persuasiveness 'and its cousin, plausibility' relies on any interpretation being reasonable and convincing (Riessman, 1993). The task of making the text seem reasonable and convincing involved grounding the writing in 'thick' literary description and in a, 'particular context so that the complexities adhering to a unique event, character, and/or setting may be adequately rendered' (Barone & Eisner, in press, p. 5). If, as Riessman (1993) suggests, it is the rhetoric of writing and the response of the reader that determines how persuasive an interpretation is then interpretation itself may be open to evaluation.

Correspondence

Correspondence relates directly to credibility (Riessman, 1993) and may be enhanced by ensuring correspondence between the researcher's interpretation of a story, and the story teller's own interpretation of that story. In the event that the participants disagreed with the final interpretation it was my responsibility to make the interpretation as, 'In the final analysis, the work is ours. We have to take responsibility for its truths' (Riessman, 1993, p. 67). Correspondence can also be increased by the use of member checks (Bryman, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). All the interview transcripts were subject to an intense scrutiny by me, as responses to the interview would appear in the final document as finished narratives. Any editing was discussed with the individual concerned, and altered to ensure that the narratives presented were 'recognizable as adequate representations' (Riessman, 1993, p. 66). Such sharing in the creation of the narratives or co-authoring of narratives allowed a potentially more credible narrative to be produced.

Coherence

The interpretation, the narrative text itself, and the presentation of the story must work together to present a body of work with global coherence. For Riessman (1993), global coherence refers to the narrator's goals giving the narrative local coherence in the use of language to relate events to each other, and 'themal' coherence in which the content refers prominently to particular themes. For me, the Quartet narratives did cohere due to their particular thick description, richness and relevance. The stories did make sense and meshed with my own personal knowledge of the participants. Riessman (1993) suggests that transparency may be achieved by the use of four procedures that are relevant to this study: '(a) describing how the interpretations were produced, (b) making visible what we did, (c) specifying how we accomplished successive transformations, and (d) making primary data available to other researchers' (p. 68).

In the first of these procedures the interpretations that form the narratives of the Quartet were produced from the interview data, through the process of narrative analysis (Polkinghorne, 1995). For Wolcott (1990), stories can be created from the data by relating, 'events as they occurred, or events as you learned about them and recorded them' (p. 28). Consequently, there were at least two different 'plot' construction processes (Polkinghorne, 1995). In this study, the Quartet narratives were first written in the order that the information was given (the second of Wolcott's methods of relating stories), and were later re-written in chronological order (the first of Wolcott's methods) to provide an historical account.

The second of Riessman's procedures, 'making visible what we did', involved descriptions of the various processes employed in analyzing the data. In particular, the data handling routines that the Quartet narratives passed through have been described elsewhere in this chapter and satisfy

requisite procedural visibility issues. The third of Riessman's procedures (relating to specifying how successive transformations of the data were accomplished) have also been described in detail elsewhere in this chapter. The narrative analyses and analyses of narratives employed to analyse the data from the Quartet and the *Tutti*, respectively utilized primary data that are available to readers of this study. In this manner, the fourth of the procedures is satisfied.

Pragmatic use

Riessman (1993) suggests that pragmatic use of a study is 'future oriented' (p. 68) and relates to the use, by another researcher, of a particular study as a basis for his/her own work. In qualitative research, the findings may be such that other researchers may not use the work in their own research directly, as the context of their research may be different. However, such is the detail that I have provided, that aspects of the study may resonate with other research areas and be relevant in those contexts. After all, the aim of the study was to understand a particular phenomenon, the manifestation of social capital in a Community Choir, 'instead of aiming first of all at generalizability' (Smeyers & Verhesschen, 2001, p. 84). To this extent, the information provided may not be capable of generalization, but may be transferable.

Reflexion

Reflexivity is important in qualitative research for several reasons. Firstly, the literature suggests that, 'when we are reflexive, other human participants join us in being reflective as well' (Russell & Kelly, 2002, p. 11). Secondly, Lipson (1991), and Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) suggest reflexivity and self-analysis may lend qualities of insight and depth to the research.

My research approaches reflected those of the 'virtuous researcher' who regarded reflexivity as, 'synonymous with thinking critically about one's research practices ... wherein one identifies possible sources for the anxiety of influence' (Maton, 2003, p. 55). I acknowledged my role and possible influences on both the participants and interpretation of the data, and I applied the same kinds of critical analysis to my role as researcher as I applied to participants (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2002; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Foley, 1998; Haskell, Linds & Ippolito, 2002; Ruby, 1980).

My reflexive approach created an awareness of personal involvement in the generation of knowledge (Fox & Murry, 2000) because of my long association with the Community Choir. Continuous questioning of 'what I know' and 'how I know it' (Clarke, Edwards & Harrison, 2000, p. 1) made me aware that my prior experiences of the participants enabled me to assess whether their stories as related to me, were in keeping with what I knew of the participants. However, I was also open to any new and/or surprising knowledge. Accepting the inevitable subjective slant to my research, I resolved to maintain, 'virtuous subjectivity...as the salt of creativity' (Peshkin, 1988, p. 268).

In reflexive studies, a relationship between the 'cognisant' and the 'cognised' (Guillaume, 2002, p. 15) is assumed, and we attempt 'the epistemological aim...to braid the knower with the known' (van Maanen, 1988, p. 102). I discovered a side of me that resonated with the histories of the choir members and it became increasingly difficult to write myself out of the text. Adopting the interpretivist standpoint, I decided to write myself into the text, to become a visible partner in the co-constructed narratives and accept my presence as part of the narratives. By the end of the interview process, I discovered that I too had had a journey that led to 'a tale being told upon returning' (Kvale, 1996, p. 4). In acknowledgement of this, my story is provided as a 'postscript' as it explained my 'personal connection to the project, [and used]

personal knowledge to help ...in the research process' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 741).

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodological framework of my research and explored the interpretivist stance, ontology, epistemology and methodology employed in this study. The case, the setting and the participants were described and qualitative research and case study defined. My qualitative, interpretivist case study approach was also described.

This chapter also described the phases of the research process. Phase one included describes the processes of data generation, administration and recording of data from the two surveys, and the pilot study. Phase two described the interview process and the role of field notes in this study. Data checking processes including member checking and triangulation and the processes used for the resolution of issues pertaining to data credibility, transferability, reliability and confirmability are described. In Phase three, the narrative inquiry approaches to research are discussed and narrative is defined. Narrative analysis and analysis of narratives (Polkinghorne, 1995) as analytical tools to examine the data from the Quartet and *Tutti* respectively are described. Techniques used to link the data and social capital indicators are explained and detailed. Strategies employed to determine the persuasiveness, correspondence, coherence and pragmatic use of the data are discussed. The 'Reflexion' section described some of my thoughts as I positioned the research practices and processes that would eventually locate me within the research.

In the following chapter, I will present the narrative analysis of the Quartet stories.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Quartet

REBECCA: *Always the bridesmaid, never the bride*

I pulled up outside the beautiful two-storey house. My briefcase was on the seat next to me and inside it were the tape recorder, spare tapes, music CD, diary, spare pens, mobile phone and empty tape packets from previous interviews. I checked the diary again to ensure that I had the time and day correct for the interview, not that it would have mattered as Rebecca and I were old friends, and had been so for nearly twenty years. I got out of the car and looked around at the neat, beautiful gardens and the beach opposite. Once again, I marvelled at the lifestyle one could have in Tasmania. I knocked on the door and her husband greeted me with the words 'I'll hang on to the monster if you can hurry through.' I had not been to their house since they had acquired the dog, a jubilant, bouncy, manic, longhaired, beautiful animal, full of excitement. I decided not to hurry through but to grab the dog and throw it onto the floor. What followed was controlled mayhem. Both the dog and I had a great 'fight' and I found a new friend at Rebecca's house. I checked my watch to ensure that I was not keeping Rebecca and her husband waiting only to find that the dog had destroyed it. The hands hung limply side by side and swung together uselessly. Rebecca was apologetic, her husband, also a friend of mine, less so. I could always get another watch I thought.

We moved through to sit in the sunroom of Rebecca's beachside home and I thought how nice it was to be with friends and how good it was of Rebecca to provide finger-food snacks and drinks and a dog to play with. Clearly at home with me, and the interview situation, Rebecca sat back on the lounge chair and prepared herself to participate in the activity. We discussed the room, a new addition; the garden and the dog-destroyed watering system; our respective families. Rebecca's son is a pilot as is my son-in-law.

Rebecca is a retired former Personal Assistant to a local executive, arranging professional development, training, and courses within specified areas. She

has worked for major international organizations in many countries, and has a facility for languages. Although Rebecca did not matriculate, she did get a School certificate and had secretarial training. In her words:

> *I really feel that I have a really interesting life so far, even though I didn't get to university or anything like that, but still, I have worked fairly hard and got some interesting jobs.*

Rebecca is a soprano in the Milton Community Choir who is 'well, getting on in years.' Well spoken, well educated and with a highly developed sense of humour she has the time to participate fully in community activities now that she has retired. She fills her days with church and musical activities. I knew from previous discussions with her that she has an extensive and enviable history of involvement in music stretching back to her childhood, and is from a musical family. Rebecca had participated in church and opera singing from childhood through to her young adulthood. I asked her to describe herself to me:

> *I had an idyllic childhood. As somebody said, you always see your family or families through rose coloured spectacles and I think perhaps that I do but then that is my little world I live in. I had loads of relations. At Christmas time we all came together with the big get togethers. I don't think that happens quite so much now because people go away. My son went to the mainland, another has gone farther a field because there was not the job here so we are sort of stuck here and I suppose that is why I gravitate and go back to UK.*

I recognised myself in her story. I suspect it is the story of so many immigrants. Looking back on my life, I remember particularly the good things. Not an idyllic childhood perhaps but certainly a family orientated childhood:

I have always loved music. I came from a family who were fairly musical and we had the traditional piano and my father played violin and my mother played the piano and father sang and so from a very young age I was involved with music; sang in concerts; sang on the stage of the Odeon one day when it was the Mickey Mouse Club and I cannot imagine a time when I haven't, when there hasn't been music around. I had singing lessons from the age of about 11 or 12.

I was brought up in a Midland city in the UK and I was in my grammar school choir, at school, of course. That would have been about 1945. I should have these dates because I tend to forget. I was in the grammar school choir there and also sang solo and when we moved down to Kent, that is when I joined the Southsea College choir. I wasn't in the college but other people were allowed to join and I think in the Southsea Girls High School, I was in the choir for a time but I didn't seem to be as active after I left the city for that little space.

I did sing in various church concerts and then on Sunday afternoon, I would go and sing at an old people's home and, you know, the usual thing from church. We went around the hospitals singing carols or giving concerts in the hospitals and that sort of thing.

Rebecca went on to talk about graduating from performances for old people and hospital patients and described how she moved on to 'higher level' performances with local adult musical organizations and received correspondingly higher musical instruction:

Then growing up, I did various concerts and things, all in the amateur way, with the church. Later I joined an operatic and dramatic society and we were very fortunate because we had a producer who used to

come down from London to do the production. We had a very good musical director too and nice little orchestra. That was when we used to perform in the Palace Theatre in Southsea, Kent, where, I might add, I was always an understudy.

I nodded understandingly. I remembered back to my youth in England. We always seemed to be able to get 'big name' musical directors and top class famous soloists and my village was really a provincial backwater.

It was at this stage in her life that Rebecca was to experience the kind of role that would be hers for the rest of her life, that of support person. In her words: 'I was always the bridesmaid, never the bride'. Her enthusiasm overcame difficulties and she was always positive about the experiences she had even when the reasons for selecting her for a part were not very musical:

I was always the lead's understudy and because of my size I was very often strategically placed with a good friend of mine, he was about 6.3' and a rather large young gentleman and so if there was an awkward spot they needed to hide on the stage, well, Eddie and I were placed in this spot.

Being rather large myself, and having been used on stage for the same sort of purpose I could appreciate the story. I laughed and the dog outside the French windows, attracted by the noise began to scratch frantically at the glass. Excusing herself for a moment to get her husband to control 'that dog' Rebecca returned to the sunroom, poured more tea and resumed her story:

We used to perform for a fortnight with three matinees and also in our company, for a short time, were Alf Roper and his two sons. Madame Vera Roper was the pianist for Frankie Howerd (a popular comedian from the c1960-1990). Madame Vera Roper used to come and watch

our performances and sometimes she would just come to rehearsals and act as our pianist.

From previous informal discussions after Community Choir rehearsals, or when my wife and I had visited Rebecca's family, I knew some of Rebecca's story. It seemed that Rebecca had a history of being fully involved in community music activities in England and elsewhere:

There were different townships along the coast bordering the Thames – and one of them said they would like me voice wise but I think I was not terribly well, deportment wise. It was very good that I didn't get into that society because the one that I did get into was really thought to be the better one. We worked very hard and we had some tremendous times and put on the Novello things – after all it was in that era. I think I was with them for about five or six years if not longer. That was in the 1950's. Then I happened to go to Switzerland and I joined something entirely different. I joined a French choir and made out that I could understand what the conductor wanted because, of course, it was all in French. But, there again I was fortunate because our choir sang with the Suisse Romande Orchestra on a couple of occasions and that was a terrific experience too. I was never a leading light but I suppose a good all round chorus member. And I enjoyed it and we had some fabulous times in each thing I joined.

Rebecca thought for a moment and then went on to talk about her experiences in Eisteddfods (music competitions). My personal knowledge of her made me think that she did this a little reticently, perhaps thinking of negative comments that I had made over the years in response to choir members' frequent indications (especially in the early years) that they wanted to participate in Eisteddfods. She developed a love for Eisteddfods that

continues to this day. Rebecca received stimulation and encouragement, as a singer in her youth, from some very famous and significant composers at Eisteddfods:

> *I had always entered competitions – South End, Westcliffe, Leigh, Stratford, London and I was very privileged, not that I knew it at the time, but one of my adjudicators was Herbert Howells who wrote (I have got it somewhere as I kept my adjudications) 'A pleasantly ordinary voice. Watch when you say 'nature' that is not 'nachoor' and he has written it and underlined it. And, I had Michael Head as an adjudicator – that was the thing. They were top-notch people. Not perhaps as well known then as they are known now, but I remember singing one of Michael Head's songs I think it was 'Go down to Kew in lilac time.' Yes, thinking back on it, I have had some really interesting adjudicators and they were all quite complimentary. But, I have always been beset by nerves and never feel that you can do your best. That is the whole trouble but it's just one of those things and you always could have done that little bit better. But still, as I said, it has been an interesting time.*

For a short while, we discussed 'Eisteddfods we have known'. I thought back over several terrible experiences, shuddered inwardly, smiled bravely and after a steadying sip of tea continued the interview.

A little later, she moved to Geneva and began to have lessons for the first time. Rebecca is a person who has a thirst for knowledge, and problems for some such as language and vocal range became interesting challenges for her as she continued her musical involvement:

> *I also had some singing lessons when I was living in Geneva and that, too, was interesting – I don't know if you want me to go on about that.*

I nodded my head eagerly. Rebecca is a good storyteller I have found:

> *My teacher was a Russian, Tatiana Tatrianov, a rather strange lady and much bigger than I, and that was some size, then. She insisted that I sang with a contralto voice but that was quite interesting too. I was in a church choir in the English church in Geneva, as well as the French choir.*

She had indeed had an interesting life. All those exotic places and fascinating people with names straight out of an Agatha Christie novel! I asked her about her experiences here and it appeared that emigration provided another opportunity for Rebecca to participate:

> *In 1966, I emigrated and came out to Chelsea; just really to see what it was like. I had just been travelling around and thought that I may as well go there at my husband's instigation. He had come out in 1964, after we were married. I joined the Chelsea choir and was also in the Holy Trinity Church choir. Then we went back to UK and had the two children. I didn't really join any kind of choir or do anything in the singing line.*

I expressed some surprise that she had managed to avoid being in a choir and any form of singing when she had the children. She laughed and continued:

> *We went back to UK, principally because we were burnt out in the bushfires. We could only get a little flat and I had had our first son in the meantime. Relations wanted to see him and all that business. We had four years back in England and then we came out in 1972. Very soon after that, I joined the Kimberley Chorale under Conductor Janet Sproule and had some very happy times there. And then it was the*

> *Milton Community Choir. I was also in another choir when I was in West End. The church choir and the Southsea Community College as it was then, their choir. I have been in various choirs and, as I said, always singing. Then I have been with the Milton Community Choir ever since the Kimberley Chorale folded.*

I asked her when she had joined the Kimberley Chorale:

> *I joined the Kimberley Chorale in 1973 and it probably folded in 1978 or 1979. And ever since I have been in the church choir until that folded and various other... just helping out in the Community Choir things and principally being with the Milton Town choir.*

It was comfortable talking to Rebecca. She was talking about people and groups that I knew. I thought that it was not really like an interview at all. Perhaps that is when these interviews are at their best.

It is apparent that Rebecca is highly motivated to participate in community music activities. Even the setback of her church choir folding acted as a stimulus for Rebecca to contemplate joining another choir:

> *Our church choir has folded and I am thinking of joining the Kelsey Choral Society but I am just not sure now. I was in that when it first started and then, I forget why it was, perhaps sickness, and I left. That sickness carried on and I have wondered about joining it again but am not just not sure yet.*

Rebecca has an interest in the educational side of singing, and a willingness to perform at her best level. Rebecca recalled restarting her singing lessons, this time with a local teacher, when there was a reason:

> *I used to have lessons for quite a long time with Amelia* [singing teacher, solo vocalist, conductor of other local choirs, member of the Milton Community Choir, life member of a number of community musical groups], *but I don't have lessons with her now except if I am doing anything specific. The only exam I have ever done has been a Grade Three singing exam, with Amelia. I got, can you get honours? Anyhow, it was a pretty high mark.*

Rebecca expressed some regret regarding her music background, apparently feeling that she has not done as much in music as she could have done. She gives a variety of reasons for this:

> *I should have had more motivation earlier on to do a bit more than I have. That is my regret, really, that I did not give it as much as* [I needed] *to really get somewhere. But, there we are. Different circumstances impinge on what you do at the time. For one thing, cost to a certain extent. I know it is not a huge amount but I do have to think about some things like that and ... I haven't got the brain for exams.* [My son] *has tried to go through theory things with me and theory and I, it is the same with figures – language I am alright with but anything to do with figures, I have a total – I don't know. My father used to spend hours with me. His maths were always perfect and various people have tried and I have had coaching with maths and it is just as if I have got – not exactly dyslexia in that respect – because you can't have. That's what frightens me – the theory of these exams. The singing, I think I could cope with quite well. If I put my mind to it, I know I could do the singing but it is the theory that one has to do.*

From my personal knowledge, I was surprised at her comments. Rebecca had always seemed to me to be extremely capable and very knowledgeable about many things. I thought for a moment about asking her about her attitude

towards her own abilities and thought better of it. It seemed to me that the happy feelings and enjoyment she gains from music and from singing in particular are important to her. I asked her what motivated her to participate in musical activities. Was it anything in particular?

> *We had some tremendous* [times], *not just singing the whole time, as a soloist at a concert but in a complete group and that was absolutely, I found, just tremendous, because everyone just relied on everyone else and there was such a feeling of support and, it was just a lovely feeling.*

I asked her to describe herself to me in terms of the Community Choir; how she saw herself as a Community Choir member; what does she like about the Community Choir what have been the best and worst times. I wondered about this question as I said it. My readings have all pointed out the dangers of multiple questions in one. I balanced the negatives against the openness of the question and hoped that Rebecca would be able to field the question. She paused, looking out of the window at the garden before replying somewhat hesitantly:

> *I suppose I am fairly dedicated. I don't miss many rehearsals and I would feel that I could not just stay away if, something a bit ordinary cropped up. I would feel that I was letting the choir down. I think I am a pretty consistent member. I think the majority of them would have that same dedication actually. And I think they have basically got the same sort of views as me. I think that is why we have all stuck together.*
>
> *Well, I enjoy the company. I enjoy particularly your work* [a work written for a Christmas performance] *and other new works, the challenge. I enjoy performing, hopefully to a receptive audience. That*

is, as a group performing. I think we do keep up a certain standard and you require a certain standard. I would miss it if I did not participate. I would have to join something if that folded in any way.

'What about rehearsals and performances?' I asked:

I suppose some of the best times [in rehearsals] *are when you go over and over something and when I don't understand it and by going over and over it, I think it suddenly clicks perhaps what you want. So therefore, I am learning all the time. I am learning perhaps something different and that's good.*

I suppose the worst part would be if we, as a group and I think we probably all think the same, perhaps muddle up something and kind of let you down. That would be a disappointment to most of us, perhaps by our own inattentiveness or something like that, we have just missed either a cue or done something or even if we are singing on our own. You know, that would be, the worst sort of thing.

But then, when we do put our heart and soul into it and really feel we have given a good performance, and if the audience appear to really like it well that is just what we do it for. I think most audiences come with the idea that they are going to enjoy it so I hope we can give them that enjoyment.

I felt some difficulty. I wanted to agree with her but did not want to lead her, or be seen to be putting words in her mouth. The problem of 'moving back and forth between full involvement and distance' I noted later (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.81). It was interesting, I thought, that Rebecca placed so much emphasis on the personal nature of involvement in the Community Choir. Relationships with other choir members were clearly important to her.

I asked her if her membership of the Community Choir had an impact on her self-esteem:

> *If I have got a solo bit to sing and I make an absolute muck of it, then I feel that I should just crawl away somewhere. I think, oh dear, I don't think I should be doing this. So yes, it does have an effect.*

'And if you do it well?'

> *Well, I suppose everyone likes to have a bit of a boost and I think it gives you that bit of extra 'yes, that wasn't too bad' kind of feeling.*

I wondered if Rebecca could sum up her feelings on why she participates in community activities in general and in the Community Choir in particular:

> *Well, I suppose I have always loved singing and I suppose I thought to myself, 'well I came out here I had better join something.' The funny thing was that neither of my sons had ever heard me sing in anything until we sang at Kelsey and that was sometime after I had been in the choir, and doing different singing, and they never had any idea. But I don't think they had ever really thought about their mother singing and that was quite an eye opener I think. I think when I first moved to Chelsea, I joined a choir there because I have always been in a choir of one sort or another. And, as I said, with the Milton choir, had you not been there, it was you principally, I suppose that influences that too because if I hadn't felt that we got on, I would have left or you would have left. Probably me. It is that I feel that we support one another. I really do, come what may, I would have joined some kind of musical something. I can't act or anything like that so it would not have been the CWA, I would have been involved with music somehow in a choir situation.*

I asked Rebecca to describe the other members of the Community Choir to me. I had noticed that other participants in the study often expressed an unwillingness to talk about their fellow choir members possibly out of loyalty or maybe out of politeness. However, Rebecca talked comfortably about the other members of the Community Choir:

> *I know that numbers fluctuate but that's the same with everything, but so often or very often the things can just fold up. We might grumble about different sorts of things we might be asked to sing, but on the whole we are a very loyal lot and I think that says a great deal for the conductor, for the whole lot of us. We are quite loyal to one another and to the choir as a whole. Hopefully, they are interested in the music. They have to have a commitment because it is no good just wandering in and wandering out, you have to have a commitment in whatever you do, you have to be committed and I want to do this and I want to do it as well as I can and I suppose commitment and loyalty come into it. Loyalty to you. Just like me, the enjoyment of it. Learning something new and there is always something you can improve upon. I think it is a great tribute to you that we have all stuck together for a long time, and the choir. I know numbers have dwindled, but basically we do all come together and we all give of our best for you and that's a very great tribute to you as the figurehead.*

I basked in the warm glow of her compliment and remembered a fellow doctoral student saying to me once that 'members of your music groups come to warm themselves in the fire of your enthusiasm.' Maybe this is what he meant.

We paused in our discussion. I changed the tape over to the other side and Rebecca went off to play hostess for a while and came back with fresh tea, her

husband, and the dog. The dog clearly thought biscuits were a good idea. There were a few moments of panic as the dog eyed the biscuits and thought about his chances of getting away with at least one. Rebecca's husband calmed the dog down and we sat pleasantly chatting about the dog, the building extension, and how my studies were going. When the biscuits were finished, and the tea was drunk, the dog decided that this was no fun anymore and Rebecca's husband and dog departed leaving us to our interview.

After any kind of an extended break, there seemed to be an unspoken need for a fresh start. Irrespective of the participant, it always appeared to be difficult to pick up the mood from where we had left it. I felt, as on previous occasions, that a straight question might be the way to go. I wondered how she thought the other choir members perceived her. This time there was very little hesitation:

> *Well, they probably feel like me that we have all got our own little bit to give and, you know, apart from the outstanding voices like Amelia's who we miss when she is not there obviously, I think most of the rest of us, just sort of keep going. We are part of that team. And that's how I think, and I suppose, if I wasn't there, they might say 'Rebecca's not here tonight', bit of a gap.*

I asked her to describe her thoughts on the Community Choir, what it meant to her and so on:

> *Well, it has so much been part of my existence here. It has helped me because there is a certain amount of support in it, because when you are an immigrant, you don't have family support at all. And, I know my family have sort of grown up and away, but there is that kind of continuity and the sort of support feeling. We don't have a lot of*

social contact but I would miss it dreadfully if I didn't have that. As I said, it is a sort of supportive thing...

'What about your thoughts on the Community Choir in terms of the community?' I asked. 'How do you think the community see the Community Choir?'

I think that also in the community that people recognise that they [the Community Choir] *have a certain standard and perform certain sort of works mostly and, I think they look to the choir for some quality and something enjoyable that they can go to.*

I definitely think it [the Community Choir] *has a role* [in the community] *because I think that probably certain parts of the community always look to it to provide a bit of something extra, i.e. 'The Messiah'. Now, if we haven't done it on an occasion or two, then it has been missed. People have looked forward to it for years. It is a sort of thing that people cling to, maybe it is in my age group, but there is the tradition. It has got a sort of tradition of quality, I think and it is something that people would miss a great deal if it folded. I think it has made a great contribution, particularly to the Milton area, the community there, and I think it was welcomed when we performed in* [the far west]. *I think the people really appreciated us going there and also when we went down to* [the west coast]. *When we combined that time with the Milton Band and went to* [the western harbour] *I think it was really, really appreciated and if it was logistically possible, I would like to do some more of that kind of thing. And, when we performed your work, down in* [the western harbour], *I think all those things give the community something and they do remember the Milton Community Choir for doing those things. I think it enriches peoples' lives more than they perhaps realise. I think it is recognised*

in the community as something that has carried on – it is the continuity.

I thought of the shared experiences of the participant researcher. I remembered the Community Choir trip to the western harbour town. It was just before Christmas and the Community Choir had joined with the band to perform carols on the wharf as part of the ABC Christmas appeal. The night was warm and balmy, and, unusually for the west coast dry. We set up just in front of the cruise ships, opposite the hotel. It was a perfect night. We performed beautifully and I remember saying to the bandmaster, 'It just doesn't get any better than this.'

Rebecca had described how she thought the community saw the Community Choir. I asked her how she thought the community saw her, and what she saw as her role in the community:

Just as a small stalwart part, you know, just as I said when I had to fill the holes in the stage, that sort of same thing. Just a team member.

'Just a team member,' I thought. It would be hard to imagine anyone more involved in selfless service to the community than Rebecca was. I knew this from my own knowledge of her, but I asked anyway. Are you in any community groups apart from the Community Choir?

I suppose I am a member of the Milton community more so than the Kelsey community. I live here, in Kelsey because we happened to see this house and liked the position. I do my shopping in Kelsey and I have got a few friends there but after having been in Milton for 23 or 24 years, I suppose my main friends are there. I am secretary of the hospital auxiliary so that is one of the community things I am involved with. Of course, there are about 60 of us in that organisation so I

suppose I get involved in the community simply by working at the kiosk and being secretary of that and going around the wards and seeing people. A lot of them are from the immediate Milton area.

Rebecca paused slightly, possibly to catalogue the organizations in her mind, possibly to get a breath, and continued to add to the list:

I am a Lion's Lady so that is another, the City of Milton Lions, because my husband's in that so I see community people there and I am still part of that Milton Community. I am a member of the Victoria League [people who are loyal to the Crown and to the system of constitutional monarchy]. *I am just wondering how much longer, that will keep going. I think it will, but you see, they are a Royalist type organisation. But also, by no means all, but a lot of them, I suppose, way back were emigrants from England and other Commonwealth countries. That's more a fund raising thing. It is not so much getting out in the community and doing something for the community. They give donations to Giant Steps; a couple of the schools for the underprivileged children; a fair bit for clothing for, perhaps, children from broken homes or whatever and we have two or three sort of functions. It's more a social thing but we do fund raise, not a huge amount, but it is for those sorts of local things so that money gets out into the community.*

I am in Probus [a community service arm of Rotary] *but that is purely a social thing. We don't do fund raising. We have guest speakers; people who have worked or been in business or whatever. That's once a month.*

I belong to the church but we don't outreach a great deal. I suppose my main thing would be with the auxiliary and with Lions. The Lions

get involved in a lot of community events. I don't necessarily go unless wives have to serve things. I mean, there is the Milton Footrace, and last week they were catering for Paintworks' get-together. That would have been a community thing because Paintworks was one of the biggest employers, and I think there were over 500 people there. My husband was involved in that all day. The New Year's Day Carnival, that is with Lions. You are kind of involved as an offshoot of that if they need extra people for the catering, and I would go and help there. I also help the village green fair and am on one of the tea tents there and I sell raffle tickets, that sort of thing. I am not involved [with committees] *except on the village green fair.*

I am not a dedicated committee person I must admit, but by the same token, I suppose I like to be involved. You see at one stage I was churchwarden at the church. I was on the parish council for about five years and I was secretary to parish council, and that took a bit of dedication, but I have since come out of that a bit. When I retired, I thought I would not get too involved, but unfortunately, this is not the case. This last thing, I was down at the Civic Centre with the Volunteers on View Expo – I was on the hospital auxiliary stand there and Mary Ingham, who is principal of West River Primary School came up to me. She was just looking around because she is coming up to retirement in a few years time and was just looking to see what she might or might not join. She does not want to be bored when she is retired. I assured her that she will wonder, as so many people say and I never really thought it would be true, how ever did she have time to go to work. But it is true. People think that you don't have much to do.

Rebecca gets quite involved in many activities for someone who is 'just a team member'. She has leadership roles as Secretary of the auxiliary, and has

had such roles in the past: member and secretary to the Parish Council; a Lady Lion; Victoria League; Probus; the church; Volunteers on view and, the Milton Community Choir! I asked her to describe some community groups with which she was familiar. In answering, Rebecca expanded on her own involvement and the involvement of her friends in the community:

> *In the musical side of things, you have got the Eisteddfod Society. A lot of us are involved in that. I was on the committee of that for a time too. I still help. All the time that is on, I am down there taking notes or running around somewhere. I mean that is really quite significant when you think of all the children or how many people are involved with the Eisteddfod during those three weeks. Of course, the hospital auxiliary, that is a fair size and we do raise thousands for the hospital. St John's of course, the ambulance people who, no matter what community function, are usually in evidence, as are the Salvation Army people. I said there was about 40 at this* [the Volunteers on View] *Expo, some a lot smaller than others. The service clubs do a good job. When you think of the Lions selling their Christmas cakes and things like that and the heart walking machines, which they buy for the disabled children, they are absolutely amazing things. They are all working towards helping in some respects as are Rotary and ACE clubs and those sorts of things.*
>
> *There are so many, many people – I don't think any of my friends aren't involved in some way in some kind of community voluntary organisation.*

I suspected that her view was correct. If there was any truth in the saying that 'birds of a feather flock together' then Rebecca's friends would be like her. I asked Rebecca to describe her worship habits. Did she go to church on a regular basis, how often, which church and so on?

> *Unfortunately, I am in a rather difficult position because a lot of things have been kind of shattered. In the Anglican Church to which I belong, we now have what's termed a 'contemporary service' at the time that I would normally go, i.e. 10.00 a.m. It has been changed to 10.30 a.m. so that the youngsters can get there. We have a big screen, which is permanently in the church on which we have all the hymns – we don't have hymnbooks. It is a bit of a thorn in my side. We have just recently spent thousands on buying new hymnbooks. We now don't use them. The organ has been dispensed with in favour of a band, which consists of a couple of guitars and a drum and, I think, a flute, the drum being the predominant feature. All my traditional views, and traditional things that I clung to, have been wiped away. I am in a bit of a void at the moment.*

It made me wonder, as a non-member of that church, if it was really worth alienating the older, loyal members of the church in order to get youngsters involved. Maybe it was. Most of the Community Choir members had started attending church when they were young:

> *I have been an Anglican and been in Anglican choirs and I adore a lot of the church music and a lot of the new Rutter music and his settings of different traditional hymns and carols, but some of the music, which is, to my mind, nothing short of the ordinary pop, repetitive melody, and repetitive phrases singing, I really am not that keen on. So as I said, at the minute I have been going up to Kelsey Anglican for a time, back and forth. I go to the 9.00 a.m. services, they have changed, and as I said if you don't want to go to the contemporary, we are still having a service at 8.00 which has no music but just a communion service. That is at St John's, the main church. There are the two, St Paul's, which is part of St John's parish actually, that is a 9.15*

traditional service and a 9.15 traditional service at St Michael's. But I don't know quite where I am because both of those congregations are as old if not older than me, about 18 in one and 20 in the other in number. One has a little organ, but not anything much, and the other has a harmonium. I long, sometimes, to go into a church and hear an organ blasting out and all the old hymns. As I said, I will be going to the contemporary service tomorrow because I feel I have got to be a bit flexible and accept that these things are coming. The whole idea is that they are going to bring the youngsters in. But not many more youngsters are coming in, so I don't quite know what the answer is. I don't know where I fit in because there is no singing for me as such. The choir has, sort of, been disbanded and so I don't quite know where I belong at the minute, and am finding it very difficult to sort out where I belong.

We have just spent out $49,000 to get that organ in order and some of it was contributed by Rotary and different people like that and now it is not being used at all. I feel that is a dreadful shame. It really is a waste. They have just bought another keyboard. Well, not bought. They have been given a keyboard, so that will be used. That actually sounds like an organ you know. You can make it sound like an organ, so I say, why don't we use the organ?

I don't know where the thinking is or where I belong and I am finding that a bit difficult, but I have still got my faith but it gets a bit tested on occasions.

As an ex-Anglican Church organist and choirmaster, I sympathised with her views. This was not the first time that I had heard these kinds of things from older Community Choir member/churchgoers during my interviews with them. I made a small note in the back of my mind to try and meet what was

possibly a clear community need. Maybe we could have a regular hymn singing session, once a term; we would sing the hymns we grew up with, the old favourites.

I asked her to describe any links she saw between adult participation in community music and the 'sense of community'. She replied:

> *Being an outsider so to speak for nearly 30 years, I felt that when we came together for the last Federation thing, and for Carmina Burana, I know we had a lot of people coming up from Chelsea, but it was the first time, it really brought it home to me the feeling of community by being a participant. I haven't really felt it quite so much as this last time and I just thought it was wonderful. We all came together. We all just try to be as one and that's a tremendous thing. I thoroughly enjoyed it. It is the same sort of feeling as when you are in a company, a musical society or something like that. You have a tiny little part but you all come together and perform as one and I think that is tremendous. I think it contributes a lot to the Milton community.*

Rebecca had indicated earlier that all of her friends participate in community activities. I asked her 'who participates?' In her description of community participants she identified, 'As a general thing – well the older age group' as the main participants. Other participants, she described as:

> *...the ones who can afford it. Some of these, not totally voluntary like the hospital auxiliary, you don't have to pay anything to join that – only $1.00 a year, but some of the other service clubs you have to pay to join. Not an exorbitant amount, or fees, and you go to a dinner meeting once a fortnight and that does preclude some people because they are on very tight budgets. I suppose you have to have a bit of something so that you can join these things. And* [another aspect] *is*

time. To keep up, and to keep your job, you've almost got to be one step ahead of the next person. Therefore, that means working longer hours and perhaps doing extra study so therefore you haven't the time to join a community or voluntary organisation.

I think that is why a lot of the younger people don't want any more responsibility. They don't want to take on, secretary-ships or something they will be required to go to, or be at, or serve at, because perhaps they have got young families, their money is tied up and it is a question of time as well. So really, it is the older and I don't mean to say, more affluent age group, but I suppose it is the older people who have a bit put by who form most of the volunteers, it seems to me.

Well, that gave me something to think about. I wondered about the link shown by the statistics that the population of Milton is largely made up of people in the 50 plus age group. Maybe there are not the youngsters around to take on these positions. Maybe the large number of older people in these organizations was off-putting to younger people. We had experienced, from time to time, younger people joining the Community Choir and finding that the regularity of rehearsals, the need to have a performance uniform and the large number of older people was off-putting, no matter how welcome they were made.

'So, Rebecca,' I said, 'who are the main movers and shakers in the local musical community do you think?' Rebecca was quickly able to identify the ones who meant something to her:

Without a doubt Jordan Waters and, I suppose Amelia and Lily. [Jordan Waters organised several major community events, bringing together vocal groups and instrumentalists from across the region, Lily is a local accompanist, organist and composer]. *Those names you see*

time and time again, because they are the ones who get things done. And where's Tammy Long? I saw her name the other day. She used to be here but she's not any more, is she? I don't think that there has been anything like when you and Jill did that festival. It was really unheard of, the whole concept over here wasn't it, to do something for free that everybody could go to. I feel it was such a shame that it took a different direction and fell through from your initial [work]. *I know it was a lot of terrifically hard work on your part with the sponsors, getting sponsors and everything but, my word, that was a terrific era when you were doing that for all those years... Charlotte Brown, I was just thinking of the flower festival and I know it is one type of thing, but that was lovely when she organised all that. She did that for ten years. There is the Orchid Society, the gardening clubs, all sorts of things that are going on all the time. People need never ever be bored if they want to join things... You contribute a lot. Particularly down in your area as well. It is a combination with Amelia. She has got so many with her different choirs and things and now she is involved in the Good Old Variety Show and that sort of thing.*

We went on to discuss other groups such as those that help the needy. I asked if community groups cater for all the needy people within the community:

I think the elderly are catered for really quite well and then the middle lot, who are involved in things as is evidenced with the Expo of the Volunteers on View, it seems that a great majority of people are involved in voluntary work. The community, it amazed me. I think there are about 40 different organisations. Now that is tremendous, to get that much community involvement. It does concern me that the young unemployed, I don't know what they can be involved with. I don't know how they can be encouraged. Some do go visiting the old people and that sort of thing but the majority of voluntary

> *organisations are staffed, if you like that word, by people in their 50s, 60s and more. And I don't know quite what the 15, 16, 17, 18 year olds are doing. I don't quite know who is looking after them. I suppose I should know. I only know from the Anglicare type of view. A lot of that age group and into their early 20s are in really desperate situations.* [They] *need their food parcels and that sort of thing. And it worries me that I don't know quite what constructive* [things we can do] *to really get them out of the situation they are in. I don't know how one can do that.*

I asked Rebecca if she could remember a time when the community had banded together in the face of adversity, maybe to solve a common problem:

> *I suppose they came together a lot when the employment i.e. Paintworks and the Wood Company, they closed because so many people here were affected by those closures and, I think that the community as a whole were very concerned. But I don't know quite whether they are getting complacent about things now. I know from the Anglicare point of view the amount of people affected, and I think it is the same with the Salvos and St Vincent De Paul. It seems to be that the gap is getting wider for those people who are falling through the net somewhere. They are not being supported somehow and have to rely on handouts and it is not always their fault. That is the thing that worries me. They sort of get into a situation, sometimes by no fault of their own, and it is difficult for them to see a way out and to get a way out. That does concern me, and I don't know what individuals can do about it. I know the different organisations like those above are trying to help but it doesn't seem to be enough.*

Despite her social justice attitude, Rebecca does not appear to be interested in politics at all. She is 'not politically involved i.e. canvassing, door knocking

and things like that'. Even signing petitions, whilst still representing her social justice values, is a rather unimportant event:

> *Now what was the last petition I signed? I am trying to think if it was the debt thing. Yes, I signed that about, not abandoning the debt for all under developed countries. Yes, I did sign a form about that. I think the last one along here was to try and get sewerage. But anything else, I haven't really been approached to sign.*

I thanked her for her comments and I explained to Rebecca that, next, we would be listening to a piece of music, and asked if we could use the CD player in the lounge? She readily agreed. We moved through to the lounge. Spacious and well furnished with a very nice CD system. I explained that I wanted her thoughts on the piece of music and anything else that came to mind when the music finished. She sat on a comfortable chair and I got the music going. The music (Palestrina's *Stabat Mater*) was a piece that clearly Rebecca liked. I could see from the expression on her face that the sound of the choir of Kings College thrilled her and lifted her spirits:

> *It is something that I like. I love the voices, the blending of the voices. I like the form, that to me is sort of traditional music. I would term that 'church music' but I don't know if it really is. I loved the way the voices blend. It is my sort of music. I would love* [to sing in] *it. It is very uplifting isn't it? Well to me it is. I think it would be what happens when you go to a big cathedral and you hear that sort of singing and it kind of echoes and makes shivers go up your spine. It has been going on for so many centuries and it has never become diminished in any way. I think it must be absolutely marvellous to be in a choir and to be able to sing in something like that.*

I agreed with her and promised that I would try to find the music and we would 'do' it at a future time. We went back into the sunroom and had more refreshments and another 'rough and tumble' with the dog.

As I drove home, the sea sparkling brilliantly on my left, I thought that it was always pleasant talking to Rebecca. She appeared to be a person with community 'values'. If social capital has to do with participation in community activities, trusting others and being trusted by others, reciprocation, volunteering, community knowledge, networks and generally being involved, then people such as Rebecca embody it. Her networks would be powerful, linking with people from church, hospital, community music, service clubs, Eisteddfod Society and volunteers and, through her husband, with his networks too.

RUBY: *I just like to be a person in the choir*

I pulled up at Ruby's door. Her home is a suite of rooms inside a supportive house for ten elderly residents, a hostel for independent senior citizens. Ruby's job is to prepare meals, organise cleaning and shop for house needs. The residents do their own shopping. As always, the surroundings looked nice, neat and clean. A variety of flowers growing in the beds near the front door added colour to the sandy brickwork.

Ruby greeted me at the door in her cheerful and hearty way and led me into the small kitchen/dining/lounge area asking where I would like to sit. As usual, I chose the table. I was able to rest my tape recorder, note pad, interview schedule, spare tapes and music tape on the table. Also on the table was a mixture of cakes, biscuits and after a few minutes, a teapot, milk and cups.

She asked after my family, we have known each other for nearly twenty years, and I asked after hers. When she had finished fussing with the tea, she settled down to the interview. We spent a couple of minutes discussing the format of the interview. Did she, for instance, want to just talk about herself, the Community Choir, community and so on, or would she prefer to have the interview guided by my questions? I explained that it was up to her, and she replied that she was happy to 'go with the questions' and just take the interview as it came. In response to my first question, Ruby described herself as follows:

> *I am an ex teacher who enjoys music – who has always enjoyed singing, who is unmarried now. I have been on my own for 20 years. I have had a varied life – all in Tasmania, mainly on the east coast, George Island and Milton. I have four daughters – some of whom enjoy music. They are all married now with children of their own. I*

now enjoy this job caring for some elderly independent people. I think I like a laugh. I like to enjoy myself but I like to have an impact and be noticed except when I have done something 'really stupid.' I am a Christian so I enjoy singing in church. I enjoy leading worship services – participating in Christian groups of different sorts and encouraging others to understand what I can help them understand about Christianity – my brand of Christianity. I enjoy reading – when I don't fall asleep. I thoroughly enjoyed my overseas trip and I hope to do it again.

I actually went to Teachers College just for two years – way, way back in the dim dark ages – late 50s. But I have since then, I have gained my TTC but that was only through practical components as well as what I have done through the history of music. That would be the only other one. That was just – Teachers College would be the last time I was actually sitting at school doing study.

As usual, Ruby was easy to talk to. She expressed herself plainly and forthrightly from the beginning of our conversation. Music appeared as a major factor in her life. It was through music that we first met. Ruby had been a student of mine for history of music, music appreciation and theory as long ago as 1984. I knew some of her history but she was willing to talk as if I knew nothing of her background. Ruby went on to describe her early experiences in music and to expand her descriptions into her early years of teaching:

My childhood was not very remarkable; it was pretty ordinary and not something that I talk about much. I learned to play the piano very early. I remember going to trips down at Rosebery, I used to go in to see Mrs. Swan who was the local dance band pianist and it cost a

shilling for a half an hour music lesson on the way home from school. Sometimes I spent the shilling and sometimes I didn't go in. She was fairly strict, and a 'knuckle basher,' but it was a good introduction. I used to sing at school as well and then I went to boarding school in Sydney and I continued learning there and did exams, theory and piano and I used to sing at school but I never learned anything in the way of singing.

From there, I suppose, the next thing in music would have been playing the organ in churches when I was teaching. I still never learned any singing but I used to enjoy it, but it wasn't very good but I did enjoy it, and I was in musicals on George Island. I was an ugly sister in Cinderella and I was in a choir with a Catholic nun on George Island. I enjoyed most of that and we did things like Pirates of Penzance in another area as well. There was quite a lot of musical goings on when I was there and it wasn't until I came to Milton that I actually joined the church choir and then the Milton Community Choir. I had never been in a formal choir, school choirs excepted, I suppose because I have actually sung in the Sydney Town Hall, once, Jerusalem, that was a long time ago. That was back in the 50's.

It was interesting that despite having been in so many choirs such as singing groups for musicals and a choir 'with a catholic nun' that she did not consider that she had been in a formal choir since her school days. I asked what had happened in those choirs:

But there was no formal training of the voice. It was just being in the school choir. Then it was when I was in the Milton Community Choir or the Milton College Choir as it was then, and then when I started having lessons with Amelia and actually learning a little bit about the voice and it has just gone on from there. I was in the Kelsey Choral

Society for a while but then I couldn't keep going two days a week and working whatever I was doing so I had to give that one up. I preferred the interaction of the Milton Community Choir. I liked being in the choir and it was also closer. And, I have done one exam in singing with Amelia.

I sang in the Eisteddfod too and that was earth shattering. Talk about feeling vulnerable, standing up there and I could never do it without the music in front of me, I forget. But I think that is about all.

When I asked her how she saw the Community Choir, as an entity, as part of the community, Ruby sat, playing with her cup, and thought seriously for a few moments before replying. She approached the topic by describing something of the history of the Community Choir and the changes through which it had gone:

It is a group of 20-30 individuals who enjoy singing. There are a lot of sopranos. The bass section is fairly strong with up to eight basses. We have a couple of regular tenors and we can get up to four or five and there is a regular line now of four altos. So it probably balances fairly well because the soprano line is usually the line that needs to be the melody line and the sound is I don't quite know how to describe the sound, whether it is strong, because it changes. If we put dynamics in it changes quite a lot. But, sometimes we have, well, in the beginning we had, some people who wanted to just sing and they were very loud which did not allow for other people to sing for the tonal quality to come through but I think that is changing now or has changed.

The choir has changed a lot over the years. It has been going for 18 years. The people in it have changed. The dimensions have changed. I think it has a fairly strong mix of people who want to be able to sing

> *something more than very light frivolous type of music, that want to get their teeth into something. I think in the beginning some people joined thinking that they were just going to be singing light airy fairy stuff and they tried it for a year or two and could not cope with having to read music so they have dropped by the wayside. Or, they have been elderly like Georgia, who could not keep up with reading the music.*

Georgia had been a faithful member of the Community Choir and great supporter of the Milton Festival. She bravely turned up regularly to sing Handel, Bach, Haydn, and Vivaldi, even though, at heart, she was a country and western fan. At the end of the rehearsals, she would go to the next rehearsal with her husband, a rehearsal for their country music band. Ruby continued:

> *Some of them don't realise the need for having a little bit of musical training, in knowing how to read notes and length of notes, but I enjoy being there with those who like to give of themselves and share what they like to do. I think that when it comes to the crunch, we usually manage to sound quite good. When you think of the small choirs of days gone by, I think some of the sounds are quite good and certainly, from my point of view, I am improving so hopefully the quality of the alto line is improving along the same way. I think a lot of the others are improving as the years go by and they train, and that can only make the sound of the choir improve.*

In the early days of my involvement with the Community Choir, few singers used to attend during the winter months, often no more than six or eight. The venue for rehearsals was outside of the centre of town in a college music room that was often not heated in the evenings. The singers at that time tended to be hesitant about making a big sound, even a relatively big sound for such a

small group. We used to rehearse madrigals and simple but effective part songs. Occasionally I would 'do' an arrangement of a spiritual. We used to participate in college music concerts.

As I sat, listening to Ruby's reminiscences of the Community Choir in years past I began to piece together thoughts about the unity of the Community Choir, what it meant to people such as Ruby, to belong to the Community Choir, what had kept the Community Choir together. I had planned to ask questions relating to these issues later. Would now be a good time?

There was a lively spirit in that small cohort. Comments, insults, jokes and other forms of banter would flow freely especially over the tea and biscuits, often prepared for us by the college services officer, who would join us. There was a feeling of belonging, fostered, in part, by the informal rule, that if you didn't rehearse with the Community Choir, you didn't sing with the Community Choir in performance. The members also attended other music classes – theory, history, appreciation and we all knew each other and each other's families very well. To be a member of that select little group required being free on Monday evenings. The ability to sing and/or hold a part was optional although some, including Ruby, could actually do it. All of the surviving members of that group, of which Ruby was one, are still in the Community Choir:

> *It seems to attract, nowadays, people who actually can sing and want to join in with something special. We had a visitor here yesterday – we had met through choir work – he is from Greyport, and he was saying he wondered whether he could come and join in singing in 'The Messiah'. I didn't really answer because he said he could not come over to any practicing. So I feel, that maybe he shouldn't, because he has not come to any of the rehearsals, and this is probably part of it. Those of us who are there have sung 'Messiah' now for, even if it is*

> *every second year, for the past 18 years. We actually begin to know some of it now and we can put a bit more feeling into what we are singing. The dynamics just happen if we are thinking about what we are singing rather than trying to remember the notes and I think that is part of the way we have changed.* [The choir is for] *somebody who enjoyed singing so if they wanted to enjoy singing more difficult classical style music in harmony, it is the place to be.*

My insider knowledge enabled me to agree quietly with Ruby. Over time, the Community Choir has increased in skill, repertoire, reputation and profile. We are often considered to be the backbone of a community music event and have performed with every instrumental group in the city and with most of the other choirs in joint concerts:

> *I think it has standing in the community; the choir itself is respected, as a classical part of the arts of the community and appreciated when we put on a public performance. It is just a pity we cannot all be professional singers and spend full time singing and do more of it because I think it would be appreciated, like a Sunday afternoon concert once a month or something. But, it is just impossible because so many people do other things, because being a volunteer choir with nobody getting anything, it is a commitment of time and I think people are happy to give up that time.*

Given Ruby's view that the Community Choir has standing in the community, I asked her what sort of contribution she thought that the Community Choir made to the community:

> *I think it makes a valuable contribution because it adds depth that isn't anywhere else on the coast. The Madison Male Choir sing a lot of different things and they sing some things that have depth to them.*

> *But, I think when we do longer works like 'Elijah', 'Messiah,' and 'Gloria,' and 'Creation', some of these things show the community that there is a choir around that is willing to tackle some of the harder stuff. Even The Milton Singers sing 'Gloria', but they because they are a cappella mostly, they sing shorter pieces, but there are a lot of classical pieces in there and I think the Milton Community Choir gives that depth to the community. I would put the choir on a par with some of the entertainment that actually comes from elsewhere, such as some of the small ensemble groups from the TSO* (the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra). *I was just thinking of the Welsh Choir* (a male voice group that had toured a few weeks before the interview). *I think we could sing as well as them and I think that is how we can contribute to the community.*

I was having trouble trying to phrase my comments without 'leading'. I wanted to ask if she thought that participating in community music led to the development of a sense of community. Instead, I asked Ruby what she thought about adult participation in this sort of community music activity and community involvement. Again, she thought for a while before talking about community in terms of informal networking (Putnam, 1993) arrived at through group participation and the opportunity to meet people:

> *There are some areas. Some people are happy to come along and sing in a group whereas they would not be happy to sing solo, and sometimes they are not happy to volunteer in the community in some other capacity but doing a group activity, they are happier to participate that way. I think it gives you a sense of fulfilment to be able to sing and make the sound that the choir makes and some people have never made that sound before and never participated. Thinking of the recent 'Braddon – a place of our own' and 'Carmina Burana,' where choirs from all over the place, the North West, participated in a*

> *really big exercise that was appreciated by a lot of people and, well, it is where I have met this chap who came yesterday. And I think you do meet a lot of other people so community is there.*

It appeared from what Ruby had said that the Community Choir was meeting her needs. However, I asked her 'If you could change anything about the Community Choir culture, what would you change?' and Ruby went on to be quite explicit about how important it was to her to network, to get to know people:

> *Maybe time for a cup of tea afterwards with a little bit of socialising or before or in the middle, because there is not a lot of time to interact with each other at choir rehearsal nights* [would be a good change.] *I know that is difficult with you coming up from Rosebery, but sometimes I think that some people rush out the door and you don't get the chance to say hello and it is nice to know a little bit about the people you sing with but because some people must find there are time constraints. It is just a difficulty but it would be better to know more about some people. I don't mean intimate details but I didn't know that, who have you just been to see? Daniel? lived out at North Point. Now, you see, for him that is quite a bit of travelling, obviously, to get into choir practice. I don't know where a lot of them live and what sort of time it takes people to get to choir practice therefore what differences it makes in their home lives and who might be waiting at home, just some of these things.*

We sat for a little while letting these thoughts sink in. Eventually I asked her why the others come to the Community Choir, what they get out of it:

> *Most of them are fairly outgoing and willing to talk. Some of them are a bit shy and it is singing that brings them to their full potential,*

because I think that some people have blossomed. Well, I think that Arthur Smith (a former member, now deceased) *loved it, being in choir. I think for someone like Laura who has followed her son and helped David with his career and helped him right through and been there and encouraged him and then, all of a sudden, she decides to join the choir and to me has blossomed forth as a singer, singing solos. It has been wonderful to have Bernice singing a solo and the numbers of others who have gained confidence from singing with the group, being part of the group as a whole. To them, feeling confident enough to sing a solo has been wonderful. And, I think it gives them confidence in their lives outside the choir as well, although I don't know enough about some of them to be sure on that. But they seem to act with confidence within the choir or have gained confidence as people within the choir, as well as singers within the choir.*

And yet people like Rachel who was very hesitant about singing solos, but not as hesitant as some, became quite happy to sing solos. Yet, as a teacher, she must have been confident in herself, but maybe it was just the act of singing a solo and that comes a lot through your influence with everyone. Just encouraging people to sing, as you have said to me time and again, just sing it and if you are wrong I will let you know.

We had discussed how she saw herself as a choir member, and how she saw others as members of the Community Choir. Over another biscuit, I asked her what she thought the characteristics were of a good choir member in order to see if this might elicit some information, in a roundabout way, about how she saw herself as a choir member:

Someone who listens to you as choir conductor, to the accompanist, to the other members of their section and to the other parts within the

> *choir, would probably be the basic* [way I think of myself], *but also people need to be willing to talk to someone and encourage others, to be positive about those who are willing to have a go.*

Ruby went on to describe her attendance at the Community Choir, possibly implying that a good Community Choir member was also someone who attended regularly and only missed rehearsals when there were urgent and important reasons or what Ruby described as external factors:

> *...as in recently going overseas. I didn't miss many when I had my hip replaced because someone picked me up and took me. That was a big part of being in choir too, that people know and are willing to do things like that, that would come into the community part of it. So would sending cards or flowers or being aware of people's needs and it is good that someone in the choir is willing to bring along those bits of information to give to the choir at some time. But, for me, it is a reason, even if it is pouring with rain, Monday night has been choir night for 18 years. But, it is nice to have a break over Christmas and over the holidays. Maybe it has just become routine after 18 years.*

I asked Ruby why she participated in the Community Choir, what were her beliefs and values? Suddenly Ruby looked a little uncomfortable. The question had clearly taken her aback. Her answer revealed an entirely different focus than I had been expecting:

> *I have never actually analysed it but I just enjoy singing. Partly in the beginning, it was when I moved here from George Island, I didn't know anyone and Mavis knew that the choir was there, this is about Mavis. She knew that the choir was starting and she was attending Milton College and she said, 'Mum, there is a choir starting for adults,*

why don't you go and join?' Not 'do you want to' but 'why don't you go and join it?' and that was brilliant.

Ruby looked more and more upset, but put on a brave face, smiled and said:

Goodness, that's a long time ago. So, what was the question?

I asked her why she had become upset during her answer. She replied:

Probably because I have a problem with Mavis at the moment and just thinking back to her doing that for me was wonderful.

I knew Mavis from her days as a student but I had not realised that she and her mother had a problem. I wished to some extent that I had not raised the issue but Ruby seemed quite prepared to tell me that she had a problem with her daughter even if she chose not to elaborate. I did not want to enquire further but I wondered to myself later, in the car, if telling me about Mavis and what she had done for Ruby, had in some way helped to build a bridge between them.

I paused the tape. We had a break for a short while to enable Ruby to compose herself. This took the form of more tea and biscuits. I went on to ask her why she thought others participated in the Community Choir:

Mostly because they enjoy music [and] *being able, maybe, to participate in public performances with a group that sings well and does public performances regularly. Partly fellowship but not a lot of fellowship but enjoyment of music and the desire to learn different music; to learn how to sing harder and longer four part singing. Part-singing would be a big part of being in the Milton Community Choir.*

Was the fellowship not just the fellowship of good company but also a fellowship grounded in music, I wondered? I asked her if these views also reflected her own reasons for participating, as well as her views on the participation of others:

> *I think both. It is partly mine but I think other people would come to enjoy the parts as well because you hear comments about, 'I heard the tenors come through there' or, 'the basses came through and just made that flow nicely' so they enjoy listening to other people singing as well.*

Ruby had already indicated that she found the interaction with others to be an important factor in participating. I asked her how she saw her relationship with the other choir members. Did she know the others well? Did she socialise outside the choir? Did she think the others in the choir valued her?

> *I value my relationship with those in the choir that I know reasonably well but I don't necessarily pursue relationships with any choir members unless there is already a link there, church people, and Amelia through singing, and I probably would not see the others from one choir time to the next.*

'How do you think the others see you as a choir member?' I asked, innocently. With a twinkle in her eye perhaps reflecting the easy-going relationship we have, Ruby went on to say:

> *...as the butt of the director's jokes. But then, so few of them have been right through the 18 years. There are only three or four of us who have been there all that time through the ups and downs and all the transitions. Apart from that, I really don't know.*

We laughed, as old friends do.

Ruby and I have a strong relationship. We have never been close friends but we are good friends. We rarely see each other outside of rehearsals and performances but have always been able to talk, ask advice of each other, trust and support each other. I had one of Ruby's daughters in a Renaissance brass group for almost a year until she moved on. This was at the same time that Ruby attended my theory, history and music appreciation classes. Ruby participated in college musical activities as time allowed. For example, she was a choir member for my setting of *Murder in the Cathedral*, and was in my choir for the college production of *Cabaret*. She helped to involve the Church in the Milton Festival when I first started it in 1988, she sang in choirs at the church, arranged flowers, handed out programs throughout the town and so on. Many years ago, my mother-in-law, on a visit to Tasmania from England, made a wedding dress for one of her daughters:

> *But I am known in the community as a Christian because I will have people come up and say something to me about the church, or, 'You go to church don't you, can you tell me where I can get such and such or who can help me do this or something?' But, I am also known as a choir member, 'Oh, I have seen you standing up in the choir singing 'Messiah'', that is the one they think of mostly.*

She saw herself then, as a person who was approachable, able and willing to answer questions and a source of knowledge about the community. I asked her how she thought that kind of thing impacted upon members of the community:

> *I think at times, if they are looking for information and they think they know you, it gives them more confidence to come and ask about something they want to know about. It is a basis. There is a link there*

> *between us, 'will you help me do such and such?' So it is giving confidence to someone else within the community to do something that maybe they are a bit scared of doing.*

It was clear from the above comments that Ruby did not mind being the 'butt of my jokes.' Drawing on my participant researcher knowledge of Ruby, I know Ruby as the choir member who is always talking when the Community Choir are ready to sing, and I frequently have to tell her, with tongue in cheek, to, 'shut up Ruby.' Far from being upset at the comments, at the jokes, Ruby sees herself as an important figure in the Community Choir both as a leader of a section, and as a social leader, although her comments are ambiguous:

> [I see myself] *as a focal point in the choir. I think I have from the beginning. Central to its being a choir, a central part of being in the alto line. I like to think that I am. Not so much in the beginning, for my voice, because it was just loud. I suppose it is partly because I like to think of the community of the choir as a group of people rather than as a choir. It is a group of people and I just like to be a person in the choir. I know most people by name and try to make others feel welcome. That is probably it.*

I nodded understandingly. I thought it interesting that, on the one hand she says she just likes to be a 'person in the choir' and on the other hand, she sees herself as a 'focal point.' She is the person who makes a point of welcoming new choir members, providing tea and cakes for performances at her church and is the person who knows 'someone who can help,' in any given situation.

Ruby had been one of my main contacts at the Anglican Church for many years and in our time together in the Arts Council had demonstrated a willingness to involve the church in local activities. Ruby was recognised as a

church and choir member in the community. I wondered aloud what she thought were the best and worst parts of rehearsals:

> *The best parts would be getting right, something that has been difficult, hard to get the timing right or the words right or what have you. There are spots in 'Messiah' that took months to get right but now they are right they come easily but looking at them I can still remember the trauma of trying to get it right. So, the worst time is knowing it is wrong and having great difficulty trying to make it right. Feeling that I ought to be able to read it accurately and knowing that I can't, that it is just not fitting the way I think it ought to fit. But then the best part is getting it right.*
>
> *Hearing the harmonies when they are all spot on is wonderful and hearing other people progress and knowing that their confidence is up and that they are feeling good is great. That is one of the best times for me.*

And performances?

> *Having it all come together right, and it doesn't always.*

For Ruby, then, the music and the pleasure of singing with others gave a boost to her spirits. Ruby felt great when performances and rehearsals went well:

> *I was actually thinking this morning. One of the best things I will never forget was when I sang 'O Rest in the Lord' at a rehearsal in the Catholic Church. And I was just singing, and I know that I was just on another plane, and I got to the end and everybody just clapped and for me, that was fabulous but I had forgotten they were there. Totally*

> *forgotten because I was just singing the words and meaning. I don't know whether you can remember that occasion, can you?*

I could remember the day vividly. The rehearsal had gone well; the venue was perfect, the empty spaces ringing with our combined sound. Ruby stood up to sing. At that time, Ruby had a rather pronounced 'scoop' or glissando between musical intervals. We had worked on it together for many years and it was gradually disappearing. The evening sun was shining through the stained glass windows, colouring the chancel in pastel shades. The church smelled of polish and flowers. I advised her not to push the sound but to 'just open your mouth, concentrate on the beauty of the sound and just sing.' Ruby continued:

> *I knew Jane was playing, and you were there, and I think I had half an eye on you because I usually need to, but as I got to the end and everybody clapped, it was just I meant the whole thing. Yes, an impact on my self esteem. Well, that was one of the reasons Amelia offered me lessons because she said, 'I can't have Tom telling you off all the time like this, you have got to come and learn to sing some of these notes.' Which was her way of boosting my self-esteem and she was thinking of me, which was wonderful.*

I was a little surprised at this revelation but thought back over the years to when I had first taken on the Community Choir.

There was some conflict at first between Amelia, who had been the only good, experienced, singing teacher in the city for a number of years, and me, the new choir director who was also a qualified singing teacher. However, since she has realised that I am not in competition with her, and don't in fact want singing students we have become firm friends with a great cooperative spirit between us, even to the extent that she and I ask advice of each other about

the soloists' presentations. Taking these comments in, I was a little tentative about asking my next question. 'What do you think makes the Community Choir work,' I asked, 'what makes it gel?'

> *Having you as director, because you expect the best. You may say things that may not be appreciated at the time but your 'end of the road' expectation is for people to give of their best and I think they know it. That whatever you ask of them is for the good of the choir as a whole in the performance. And, you just want the best that that person can give, for themselves, and for the choir, and I think that when you expect the best, that is what you get.*

Ruby is a person who readily volunteers for community activities although her employment has started to limit this involvement. For many years, Ruby has helped to facilitate performances, eisteddfods, musicals and, especially, children's pantomimes:

> *Working the hours I work here makes it difficult to join many other things because they start too early. That has changed over the past few years. Because I am now working full-time, I have less time to volunteer in areas that I used to. I used to volunteer in Anglicare regularly, several hours a week helping those in need and I did a lot of volunteering around the church. Whereas now it is down to what I need to do, and the occasional volunteer things at the church. But I can't do anything else because my hours are very difficult, for doing things in the normal hours that other people use.*
>
> *I haven't volunteered very much, partly because as a relief teacher I never knew when I was going to be volunteered, and it creates difficulties for the people that you volunteer with and I would rather*

not create that difficulty. But there are thoughts about when I retire about volunteering in various areas. No, [at the moment I volunteer my services] *only to choir and church. But, even then, church has to miss out occasionally because of family problems with Mum being quite ill.*

I nodded thinking about the occasions when her own life was fraught (moving house, problems with her children, over-involvement in Eisteddfods and so on), and yet she still had time for others. I wondered if there was any element of reciprocity, if there were people in the community that she could go to when she needed to:

One or two. I think – I am a private person.

My knowledge of Ruby led me to think that it was a little unnecessary asking Ruby if she knew her neighbours. Ruby is the sort of person who would be bound to know the people next door, even the people living next door to where she now works and lives. Nevertheless, I asked her how well she knew her nearest neighbours:

Well I know some of them very well. The people across the road used to have a lot to do with the house. The rector of the parish is in the next house so I know him. I knew him on George Island and I know the girls by name but that is all, and I think I taught his wife. The lass on the corner, I know her through hockey. My girls played hockey with her. The lady next door, I don't know at all but I know her son because he has climbed the fence and thrown things at the house and made himself known. The lady over the other side is a hairdresser, so a couple of my ladies go up there to have their hair done. And, the next house along, they are acquaintances through church, from years ago. But, that is about as far as it goes.

Ruby had mentioned earlier that people in the community saw her as a person they could approach, but, apart from church and the Community Choir, I wondered how she would describe her interest in the community. Did she, for example, attend festivals, community events and theatre when the opportunity arose?

> *Yes, I went to the theatre last night to see Jake's 'Once Upon a Time' which was brilliant.* [Jake Scott is Musical Director of the wind band]. *I enjoy theatre. I went down to see the 'Milton 10'* [a local fun run event] *too, but I didn't go in it. I would like to go to the Art Gallery more often but I don't always remember that it is there and I sometimes fall asleep in my chair. I go to musical performances when I can, like the TSO when they come up. Theatre that comes. Ruth Cracknell* [an Australian actress] *was here and I went to see her. Yes, I can't remember all of them. I usually keep all of the programs and there was something down on the wharf that is an annual thing, but I can't remember what it was. But there are some things, some festivals in Upper Milton. And 'Carols by Candlelight', I think that is fabulous, and I have seen that grow to thousands from just a couple of hundred when I first came.*
>
> *I think that says a lot for the community. I don't go to everything but I do go to some things. I don't go to football matches that are here. I don't actually even go to the New Year's Day sports either. Sitting in the sun getting sunburnt doesn't really attract me very much.*

Having established that Ruby attended performances that interested her in the community when the opportunity arose I went on to discuss with her other kinds of community involvement such as involvement in community meetings, and protests. Ruby spoke about her interest in a local community

matter. The council were thinking of closing the animal enclosure in Upper Milton, (a small zoo with a few animals and birds – very popular with children), because of the cost of maintenance and issues of vandalism. A councillor, who opposed the closure, had called a public meeting to gauge public opinion on the matter. The meeting had been well publicised and had elicited considerable comment in local newspapers and radio:

> *I have been very interested of late, but I couldn't get to the meetings because of time. The meetings were about Upper Milton and the animal enclosure,* and *clearing up the creeks and walkways around, because I have been doing quite a bit of walking I suppose. Also, with the park, I have always taken the grandchildren and the children there; I think it is just the park as a park. It is an integral part of Milton as a community. The animals are partly what make it so. I have never attended a protest meeting but I would not like to say that I never would because it might depend on what they were protesting about.*

Ruby was quite adamant that she was not interested in politics but went on to say that she had actually, in the past:

> *...handed out leaflets for my party, the Liberal* [Party], *but that was some time ago when I had some time to think about it. I think I would do that again.*

There was a knock at the door. I stopped the tape. One of the residents needed Ruby for a few moments. She apologised and left to deal with whatever the issue was. I continued to sit at the table. I decided to check the tape in the recorder during this natural break. There appeared to be some time left on it but I turned the tape over, rewound it to the start, and got it ready to record when Ruby returned.

When Ruby returned, I asked her if she considered herself a 'joiner.'

> *Yes, in some instances. A joiner with reservations. I would have to be selective. Selective because I have been a member of the Arts Council and I am not at the moment, I rationalised. Maybe I was a joiner, and maybe I am not now because I have turned down two or three in recent years. Soroptimists and the like because some of them, I think, just want money and I don't have money to just give them. I have been a joiner but maybe I am not now. I think I am learning to say 'no'. For me personally I think this is good, yes, because I think I had got to the stage where I was stretching out and joining too many things and trying to spread myself in too many directions.*

I nodded in an interested way and asked her how she would define 'a joiner':

> *A person who wants to be in everything. A person who maybe isn't able to give much unless they are selective and then they join two or three things to give them all their time and attention. But, a joiner, I would say, who joined every club in sight and could not do more than attend one or two of their meetings couldn't be effective in that committee or that club. I think to be a proper joiner you have to be effective so if you are not effective, it is not worth it.*

Ruby considered herself a joiner, by her own definition. She also thought it important to be a positive, active and effective member in any group of which she was a member.

From my knowledge of Ruby, I knew that she would have an awareness of the needs of 'the community'. Also, knowing some of her friends I felt sure that her friends were like her in their attitudes. I was interested in whether Ruby

and her peers felt committed to the community and that they cared for the community. Ruby paused for a short while and then set the terms of her answer in the framework of her own definition of community, a geographical one. Caring for the community also meant more to Ruby than caring only for people:

> *Community being Milton and its surrounds. Some of the people who are my peers care about people, about the things there, and here and now, about helping where they can and when they can and some don't. Perhaps, I don't know, about 75% would care, and there are 25% that don't care. But I include in that people who maybe don't recycle things because they are not thinking about the best way to go about trying to save the world for future generations, doing a little bit now in different ways. But there are a lot of ways of showing you care and people who might not recycle could be people who would care about those in need, right now, who need a meal. But there are some who don't. They just think of now for themselves and don't worry about anything.*

Ruby's generous nature showed through. Just because people didn't show they cared in ways that were common in the community, such as recycling, didn't mean that they didn't demonstrate that they cared in other less obvious ways. Ruby sat thoughtfully for a few seconds and went on to talk about how peoples' circumstances also influence how and if they care:

> *In a way, the older you get too. And if you live on your own, you become very selfish, which has an impact on the way you do things, and the way you talk to people and the way you think about the news and what you hear on the radio and on the television which all impacts on the community. As in the recent disaster in New York with the planes* [9/11], *and then Ansett here* [shortly after the terrorist attacks in

> New York and Washington, Ansett Airlines, an Australian airline, ceased to trade, with a loss of thousands of jobs, and thousands of passengers were stranded throughout Australia]. *That has impacted on people right next to us with inability to get somewhere, to get somebody back from somewhere, or get back or plan holidays. So it is all a concern but there are some things we can do something about and some things we can't.*

Ruby and I went on to talk about the local community and what happens in it. I asked her if she would describe the local music scene to me. Which would be the main groups?

> *I think there are a lot of people here who don't care much about music but there is also a big group that does. But some just like to listen and will go to the Town Hall for a big performance and enjoy and appreciate our performance. But there are a lot of different musical groups in Milton with the Brass Band, the concert band, the pipe band, The Madison Male Choir, the CWA choir, The Milton Singers, school choirs – but there are also small rock bands all over the place. There are obviously enough of them around, and jazz bands because there is a big jazz musical society here. So I think some of the people, maybe, if one group puts on a performance, others from other groups appreciate some of that and will go and watch or listen and sometimes even volunteer as a helper for a performance. And there are people in the community who have no appreciation and will still volunteer because they want to help. I don't know how big a differentiation there would between the people who would go. I suppose it is not that big when you consider the population of the area. What was the question?*

We laughed together at the way her thoughts ran on until she felt that she had tied herself up in verbal knots. Eventually, I nodded my head and made an inconsequentially encouraging remark about the number of groups in the community. I asked her which she thought the significant groups were:

> *Milton Community Choir. The Milton Musical Society and the Jazz Club and The Madison Male Choir and the CWA choir but there is also country music that seems to me to be quite big. The band music of different sorts including the orchestra, which has grown from nothing, very quickly, but I don't know how many of them are actually in Milton or in the area.*

What about the 'movers and shakers' in our musical community I wondered. Who are 'they' and do 'they' get the support from the community? Ruby pondered this question for a moment before identifying certain local musical leaders:

> *Jordan Waters is a major mover. I think she seems to push and get help, but she seems to get the help she needs because she believes in what she is doing, I suppose. Adam Edwards* [the Musical Director of the local Brass Band] *is a fairly important mover in the area, willing and wanting to go along with and have some input. As is Jake Scott. But then I think that Amelia is also a big part of the musical community, music teaching, and music, and singing, and all parts of it, and I think she usually gets assistance if it is needed and helps others along all the way. Very encouraging, on a personal level. I think Adam and Jake help on a personal level with the instrumental work but I don't know enough about Jordan.*

I asked if she thought that these people got the help they needed and if so why:

> *Because they are seen to have achieved in the past or people believe that they can achieve what they are aiming at, and whatever it is will benefit the community as a whole, and I think that is partly the way you work too as a big part of the musical life of Milton, musical life of wherever you are. That whatever is started, such as those weeks of free musical entertainment* [the Milton Festival] *was just amazing to see so much appear and so many people put themselves forward and volunteer their services.*

This appeared to offer a good segue into the area of 'community' in general. We left the topic of music and went on to talk about the community. I asked her why she thought that people lived in this community. It appeared that this was a familiar question for her:

> *That is a question we have asked through the church and a lot of the answers were that* [for the] *families living here there was work here for some of them but for so many there is not work now; some just like the area. Being a biggish town, I know we are called a city but I think we are below city status in population now, with a lot of the facilities we have, and yet the bush and peace and quiet, if that is what you want, is ten minutes drive from anywhere. I just think that, for me, would do it. You have got the facilities you would need but you have also got peace, quiet, bush, the river walk, you have airports nearby for ease of access; road transport in and out.*

I remarked that indeed for people like us Milton has most of what we want. I wondered to myself 'what about the others?' She had mentioned unemployed people in the town and I went on to ask her what she knew of groups in the community that help people in the community with their problems:

> *Yes, there are some local groups. I imagine I don't know them all but we have got a lot of groups for people with illnesses, for instance such as Grow groups, and heart walking groups and other. I can't think of all those other diseases but there are groups for people who have been in accidents and child abuse groups, all those sorts of things. There are also groups, like coastal art groups, for helping people with their own ability but they hold exhibitions as well. There are surf clubs for juniors right through to seniors and late seniors. There are gardening groups. Yes, there are a lot of groups, and if you want to find a group that you wanted to belong to, I am sure you could find one.*

What about specific groups? I wondered. I asked Ruby if she could describe some (and I waved my fingers in the air), 'significant' groups that help others. She paused for a very short time before answering:

> *Red Cross, Anglicare, the ones that help the people in need. Salvation Army and St Vincent De Paul would come into that. The big one that is missing is a group for young people and I don't know what there is for them, but I think that is a significant gap. I can't think of any other major* [group] *because there are a lot.*

Moving on from talking about 'people in need' to 'community in need' I wondered if Ruby could recall a time when the people of the city had banded together in the face of a major community problem. She recalled when a local, major, employer had problems with its workforce:

> *Yes, when the problems at the Mill, when they were all lined up, and protesting and a lot of the community were behind them because it affected so many people, employers in other businesses as well.*

We had talked about community groups, musical groups, groups whose purpose was to help others, and people who participated. I asked Ruby what kind of people participated in these activities:

> *Volunteers. A lot of them would be outgoing, but there are jobs in all of these things for the quiet people as well. People who are interested in their community, and interested in being with other people who want to give a little of themselves to help somebody else. That is probably the basic one in whatever way, singing or handing out tickets or advertising.*

What would be the demographic? I asked. Would they be young, old, unemployed, men, and women?

> *Any or all of the above. It goes right across the board because it goes right through. Maybe more women than men but then I really don't know about that either but on the whole, perhaps, it is more women than men but that could just be that men are busy in full time employment, more so than women.*

At the end of the interview, we listened to *O Fortuna* from *Carmina Burana.* Ruby organised her sound system so that it would play the CD. With another round of tea and biscuits, we settled down to listen. The music was representative of the sort of things the Community Choir sings on occasions, and I thought that Ruby would have something interesting to say about it as it is well known and our choir has sung it several times. I tend to listen to the sound as a whole and pick out voice entries. What would Ruby tell me? Ruby gave what to me, was a choir member's response:

> *That was a very well controlled choir. The difference between the light and dark was fabulous. But I couldn't hear the altos as well as I*

> *can hear them sometime and have been able to listen to that music and be able to follow the alto line right through. But, I could not in that and I know it, so I can usually pick it out, but there was a lot of real rousing 'oomph' coming through the piece. They sang it well inasmuch as it was rousing. So if I had been singing in there, it would have been better because the alto line would have been stronger. So now, you will probably tell me that it was the New York Philharmonic or something.*

I asked if she could see herself participating in a choir like that. Confidently, she replied:

> *Yes, as a part of that, but I think we could do just as well. I think our choir could achieve a result like that with practice and getting it right. Although, it sounded like a good few voices in the last part, but then their voice control was brilliant, but we could get there.*

Later, as I drove back through the afternoon traffic I thought about the interview. The music still worried me a little. I was not sure that it was providing me with the information that I needed. Then I realised that the music allowed me to see through Ruby's eyes and hear through Ruby's ears the kinds of things that she looks and listens for in a performance of a piece of music. The joy in her voice when she spoke about contrast, her disappointment at the lack of a clear Alto sound, her use of (one of my descriptors), 'oomph,' all indicated her involvement in the music. Her loyalty to the Community Choir and her belief in the skills and potential of the Community Choir stand out in her final comments. The music wasn't just a pleasant way to finish our afternoon! It was a powerful tool that could draw out of the listener her inner feelings.

CHARLES: *Willing to join in and be part of a team*

Charles' house is a very pleasant building surrounded by trees. Although it is on a busy main road in Milton it is secluded and very quiet. I arrived at Charles' house rather flustered and a little unprepared as there had been some problems with the tape recorder. Although I had bought a new machine the recording part stopped working as I was testing it prior to entering Charles' house. I managed to get it to work, after a fashion, and explained the problem to Charles. He was sympathetic and as I tried to get things organized we sat and had refreshments.

I had worked with Charles for a number of years both as a teaching colleague at Milton College, and as a member of the cast of a number of musicals for which I had been musical director. We liked each other, and knew each other, and each other's wives. Charles is in his 'very late' forties and sings tenor in the Milton Community Choir.

I asked Charles if he would prefer to take the questions one at a time or if he would prefer to take the interview as it came. He opted to, 'see how it goes, but probably we could take the questions in order.'

To begin the interview I asked Charles if he would describe himself to me. He responded with, 'what do you want me to say?' What do you say to this kind of question I wondered? Thankful that I had a list of probing questions to use and to get the interview under way I asked him to tell me about his musical involvement:

> *Musically I guess I was brought up within a Salvation Army family. I was accustomed to singing, from an early age and once I was at school I was in the school choir, that I very much enjoyed, and that was in Adelaide, and then when my family moved to Alice Springs and*

> *I was in high school I didn't have as much opportunity for choral, in fact I didn't have any. But I did take part in a couple of pantomimes. I was a belly dancer in one of them, believe it or not, Prince Charming in another one and then in my later high school years I had a year in the United States as an exchange student. I joined the church choir over there, which I enjoyed, and also was part of a musical production at the school, 'Little Abner'. Then as an adult, I guess, I resumed singing with a choir in Mitchell, a church choir, and then of course when I came to Milton in '86, I joined the Milton Community Choir. I've no musical experience outside that, I've never had lessons of any kind. These were something I've always enjoyed doing. My highest level* [of education] *is a master's degree, MEd. Bachelor of Science, with Honours, Dip Ed. of course. I've done a small amount of theological study but that's about it*

The interview had started well, with this succinct overview. I wondered about Charles' musical experiences as a child and asked what experiences he'd had:

> *None apart from singing in church, singing in that choir, I've never had any training in reading music, I've just picked that up a bit as we've gone along. That was in the St. Peter's church choir and particularly in the Milton Community Choir. I did actually start to learn a euphonium when I was about 14, but I wasn't keen on keeping that up, I only did it for just a couple of months.*

'Who,' I asked, 'motivated you, initially, to participate in music?' His response was slow to come. He sat back, cup in hand and thought for some moments before exclaiming:

> *Goodness, probably my mother. She used to sing, not necessarily songs we used to sing at Sunday School, at church, and so on, we'd*

sing at the kitchen sink. My mother had some keyboard skills; we used to have a little old-fashioned 'push the pedal' organ that my Mum played very rarely. She must have had some lessons, she did singing herself, one of her brothers was a proficient singer. On my father's side nothing at all. On my mother's side, being involved with a group like the Salvation Army where music was such an important part, not that I'm in the Salvation Army now, but I was as a child.

I asked Charles if he played anything since so much music had gone on at home when he was a child.

I wish I did. Nothing at all. I can sit at the piano if I'm practising a piece, and I know I'm singing a C#, if I give myself enough time I can find the right key to press. And I can pick out individual notes, but no, I can't play anything. I suppose really, I'm a baritone. In choirs I've usually sung in the tenor section although as I get older it's getting harder and harder.

I nodded to encourage him, but the response didn't come. I asked him how long he had been in the Community Choir:

The Milton Community Choir? Nearly 16 years. Yes that's right, it was 1986 when I came here, and I joined the choir.

We had a drink and I, suffering from a bout of 'flu, took the opportunity to cough. Charles looked on sympathetically. I asked him how he would describe the Community Choir as an entity and as part of the community. Charles hesitated and then, having thought through his answer, explained that:

I think it actually plays quite a significant role in the community. Particularly among people who enjoy music. I think that we have a

reasonable sort of a following who come along for the presentations we do. I think it fills a need for people who enjoy singing the kind of music we do and there really is no other outlet that supplies that here, that I am aware of. I think we take part in community events too, from time to time, like Tasmania Day events, and things like that. It's a fairly significant role we play in the community.

Well, it's a group of amateurs, who get together because they enjoy singing a fairly classical sort of repertoire in choral music. We are not terribly concerned about the quality of an individual's voice. Basically, anyone who is interested in belonging is welcome to belong. So, we don't have auditions, if you are keen to be involved, and you want to be involved, then you're in.

It was interesting to hear again about the Community Choir's attitude to participation. It seemed that the majority of interview participants thought this to be significant. I was interested to hear Charles' views on the Community Choir's participation in the community and said, 'You were saying about how the Community Choir takes part in community events, how significant is that kind of contribution made to the community?'

I think it's very significant when you consider some things like the recent 'Braddon - a place of our own'. I wasn't in that personally, but the Milton Community Choir tends to form a nucleus for wider community performances such as that was. Similarly with the production of 'The Messiah' a couple of years ago, and 'Carmina Burana', a few years before that. I think that Milton Community Choir has always been a bit of a nucleus and other people have come along and joined in as well. I just think that when it comes to fairly major events in the community the choir always forms a nucleus.

I think that something like that recent 'Braddon - a place of our own' does build a community spirit, events like that are important. And the adult choir is part of that. I think there was an important role too when we did the combined production of 'The Messiah', years ago. More so just being part of celebratory events such as Tasmania Day. I think it's on a par with something say, like the Brass Band, which I think, performs a similar sort of role in an instrumental way.

Charles seemed very happy with the way the Community Choir was operating and participating in community events. In order to check this I asked Charles if there was anything about the culture of the Community Choir that he would like to change. Charles did not hesitate but responded with:

I don't know that I would change anything about the culture of the Milton Community Choir. It's the nature of what it is that makes it attractive to me and a lot of people. You know, the fact that nobody will feel too upset if we make a mistake. The fact that it's not professional, and that it welcomes anyone who wants to take part. That's what I think is important with that choir. And I wouldn't change it.

Occasionally there's a sense of disappointment that we didn't do something as well as I thought we might have. When we did Lily's piece a few months back, I didn't think that we did that very well. That's disappointing. But another time, I think we'll do it better next time. So I guess that's a drawback. The fact that we are amateur means that sometimes our standard may not be what another choir's might be. But that's the nature of what we are. I don't see it as a major issue.

A few months before the interview, our accompanist, Lily, had written a Mass. It was quite modern in its tonality and difficult for the Community Choir to perform. However, we rehearsed it and it eventually became quite successful. I was surprised by Charles' comment. I thought it had gone quite well, and the comments from the audience were very supportive:

> *I enjoy singing. When I first came to Milton there was a choir at the church I go to, but it only had female members, and if the choir had other men in it, I probably would have joined that because that's what I had done before. I didn't not* [join] *because I didn't want to stand out as the only male, that wouldn't have bothered me, but it would have upset the balance. That would have been ineffective. So, when I became aware of the Milton Community Choir, I thought it was something I knew I would enjoy.*

> *Rehearsals are usually a lot of fun. I enjoy them. Sometimes, in the evening, I find I get tired, and get way off if I'm really run down, but generally speaking, I just really enjoy it. We have good fun, we have jokes, as I said before, nobody worries too much if somebody makes a mistake. It's just an enjoyable thing to do. Almost all the time.*

Almost all the time? What were the occasions when it wasn't I wondered?

> *The only times I don't enjoy it are when I'm really tired and I'm just not able to sing. There have been occasions in the past when our choir leader has got a little bit annoyed at things, but even that, I laugh that off, and I think most of the choir do too. It hasn't really happened for a long time anyway! Sometimes when you really want to do something well and it's not going well, it's an irritation. I mean, I don't personally find that, because it just doesn't worry me. And if other people get irritated, well, that's fine. It doesn't concern me.*

> *I think most of the performances we've done have been very good for an amateur choir. Occasionally they haven't been. I think I mentioned* [that] *we made a mess of Lily's piece. Most of the time I think our performances are very good quality, and I certainly hear good comments from people, about how they've enjoyed it. When people tell you that you did a good job with that, that's good, it makes you feel good. It's part of that encouragement thing I think I said before. It does build you up.*

We had talked earlier on about describing the Community Choir. I wondered what he would say to someone to get him or her to join the Community Choir. Coughing again, I put the question to him:

> *I'd say, 'Look, if you like singing, come along with me, it's good fun and just come and enjoy yourself.'*

'Who or what was the biggest influence on your motivation to participate in the Community Choir?' I asked:

> *I am just trying to think who initially made me aware of the choir...I think it was Elizabeth Long when I first came to Milton. It might have been Cath Connor as well.* [Those people taught with us at the time]. *They were both in the choir and I can't recall how it initially came about, they said to me, 'we've got this choir, why don't you come and join us?' and I think actually you said to me, the day after 'why weren't you there last night?' I wasn't aware that you'd already started. I think it was Elizabeth and Cath initially, who just made me aware of it. So I just came along to see what it was all about, and I've been there ever since.*

In order to tease out some details about Charles and the Community Choir, I asked him to describe one of the best and worst moments he had had as a member of the Community Choir:

> *The one I personally found the worst was the first time I sang 'Messiah', I did the opening tenor solo and I don't normally, but on this occasion, I got very nervous because I knew it was so familiar to the people in the audience. Because I got nervous, I really choked on it and I didn't sing it well. That was probably the worst moment. The best is hard to say. I think a moment I enjoyed years ago was when we did 'Horrortorio' in the Art Gallery. Again, I was singing the opening bit and the opening words were, 'I was there,' and I started singing it in the wrong key. So I sang, 'I was there' off key and said, 'no, I wasn't,' and started again. It was just the fact that I could say that and laugh. No, no, I enjoyed that. Yes, that was fun. Other things? I really enjoyed, and this was not really part of the choir, 'Amahl and the Night Visitors' which we did some years back. That was a lot of fun, performing to an audience of kids was good.*

'Gave you an opportunity to be a deaf king!' I commented.

> *Yes, that's right. In front of all the little kids.*

We had toured the opera around remote area schools in the North West and involved children from the schools as shepherd boys and shepherd girls. I had visited the schools prior to the performance and taught the children the music. The teachers in the schools then worked with the students on actions and movements. In one, very small school every child in the school participated. The performances were free and the schools, children, and parents, most appreciative.

We sat and reminisced about this tour, talking about the best and worst parts of it. I said, 'Remember when they said, 'Are you really deaf?' and you said 'Ey?'

> *And that kid asking you 'Why do you sing so low?' and you said, 'Because I can!'*

We sat and laughed, lost in the past and thinking of other things that happened during that tour.

After a while, I asked what Charles thought made the Community Choir go so well:

> *I think the friendship, the fellowship, the mutual support, that's there. And I think if we were a load of prima donnas, it wouldn't work. Because everybody takes part, we appreciate the role other people play.*

Clearly, for Charles, fellowship was not just friendship and mutual support. In order to probe more deeply into Charles' views of the Community Choir and its values and practices I asked him how he saw himself as a member of the Community Choir. What role does he play in it? Surprisingly, Charles was quite self-deprecatory:

> *Well, as a member of a fairly small tenor section, I personally feel that I have a larger role than I would really want to. Somebody said to me after one of our performances, 'I could hear your voice clearly' and I think that in a choir that is not really the best. But the nature of me is that when I sing, I sing loud. And I guess, that makes me heard. I really wasn't terribly aware that I was dominating. But that was a comment that was made to me and, I guess, maybe that's true. I am*

> *aware that the other tenors that are alongside me, I usually can't hear. So I assume that other people can't hear them either, and consequently I increase my volume to make up for it.*

If that is how he saw himself, I wondered how he saw the other members of the Community Choir:

> *Well, there are other people who obviously differ in the strength of their voice, people like Amelia, but I think most people in the choir are just happy participants, probably happy to follow the lead of others, and are probably a bit reluctant to stand out. I guess, too, when you look at people volunteering for solo lines, some take them on willingly; others will be very reluctant to do so. And it gives everybody an opportunity. But Amelia certainly dominates and I can hear her above other people. I'm not really aware of a dominant character in the altos or bass section. I can't hear any individuals. So I don't know if there's anybody else.*

A previous interview participant had expressed some doubts about the music we performed, preferring something of a lighter nature. I asked Charles what motivated him to participate? As I expected, having known Charles for many years, his answer was very positive about the repertoire of the Community Choir:

> *Well, I participate because I enjoy singing that kind of music. I mean, I have a Christian belief, and the fact that a lot of the music that we do is part of the Christian heritage is part of it, but it's not really a major part. So, singing some of the works, for example 'The Messiah' has a meaning to me other than music. But on the other hand, I'm equally willing to sing something that is just a bit of fun.*

'What,' I asked, 'do you see as the characteristics of a good Community Choir member?'

Possibly in order to gain time to think, Charles had a sip of his drink and a bite of biscuit before answering:

> *Oh, somebody who laughs off someone else's mistakes. Somebody who will be as regular as they can be, comes to rehearsals, and so on. Someone who is willing to join in and be part of a team.*

I thought this an interesting response as Charles was often absent from the Community Choir. His job entailed frequent travel and after-hours work, and so he was frequently unable to come, or arrived late. I asked him how he would describe his attendance:

> *Most years it's been pretty regular. This year it has been less so because of the pressure of work. Particularly, I have had a lot of work to do for the Examinations Board, so for that reason it's been less so. Most of the time, I've been pretty regular.*

I had heard why Charles participated in the Community Choir, and now I wondered what he thought were the reasons for the participation of others:

> *I think, for the most part for the same reasons that I do. They enjoy taking part in a group like that, singing that kind of music and it's also, I think, for the fellowship, we enjoy being together. We enjoy each other's company.*

It was interesting I thought, that he hadn't mentioned fellowship as one of his reasons for participating. His reasons had been all musical. Maybe he just hadn't thought about fellowship as a primary reason for his participation. To

tease this out a little further I asked him if he thought their beliefs and values were the same as his:

> *I think for the most part yes. It may not be true for all, but certainly, I think it's true for a large number. They have been part of church choirs in the past and still, that's not true for everybody. I couldn't pick out individuals, but yes, a large proportion of them think the same.*

If they had shared values and shared beliefs I was interested to see what sort of relationship Charles thought he had with the other Community Choir members:

> *I regard them as friends. That's not to say that I necessarily do things with them at times other than choir practices. Some I have contact with in other areas. I enjoy their fellowship.*

> *I do* [feel valued by the others]. *I think we all value each other, I think we all value the part that everybody plays, the way you get encouraging comments, when you get somebody who has done a solo for the first time there's usually some applause, and that kind of encouragement. That's a good part of the choir.*

The interview was becoming a 'formal' question and answer interview. However, Charles seemed comfortable with that. I hoped that as time went on he would become freer with his answers. I had heard how Charles thought of himself in terms of the Community Choir, now I asked if he could describe himself to me as a member of the community:

> *I have a role in the teaching sense, in the school and in the community that is, sometimes with parents and so on. I have a role in the church I*

attend as service leader, lay reader, study group leader from time to time, and things like that. I take part also in touch football teams for something completely different. I don't have any direct role other than that. I'm not at all interested in party politics. I've never really thought about that very much.

'What about the near community, how well do you know your neighbours?'

Oh, pretty well. I would say we have good contact with the neighbours on either side, we greet each other, check the mail when someone's away.

'So you know their names, their family, occupations and so on?'

Well, yes. The people next door, and their family, so yes.

Charles went on to say that he attended community events such as concerts and plays only occasionally (five times a year at most), as he had a young family but:

I like to go to an orchestra concert, if the TSO was here. I've only been a couple of times. Part of that's cost. So I'd go to something like that. I don't know what else I'd go to, really.

I asked Charles about his family:

In terms of my own family, with my wife and children I like to show interest in what they are doing; take part when it's appropriate. As far as the family from which I come are concerned we're a bit spread out now, all of the rest of my family are on the mainland, but we keep in touch, we write, stay in contact, be concerned for each other and so

on. With my wife's family, we keep in pretty regular touch. We have an event coming up this weekend with my son being confirmed. The family will be coming here to join with us. We all get together at Christmas time.

With my younger son who's in the Brass Band, when they are doing a concert or something I go along. When he's doing a grading day for his Tae Kwon Do, I'll go and watch. I'm not involved in any sort of committee sense in any of my children's activities. On the other hand, when they were in Primary School I was on the School Council, taking part in that, in that sort of role. I guess that summarises it.

Charles did however express a willingness to join in community activities if he was interested in the activity itself:

I'll join things that I'm interested in. I joined a choir, I joined the church, I joined Bridge. In that sense, I'm a joiner. But I think too, I'm probably becoming more aware of my limitations, I think, 'Braddon - a place of our own', I just couldn't do that. I'm becoming increasingly aware of when I need to stop.

When I asked what he thought the characteristics of a joiner were, Charles answered:

Oh, somebody that likes to be with other people, enjoy other people's company, do things together, whatever it is.

We moved on to questions about his community activities and I asked him if he acted as a volunteer in the community:

Yes, only in a small way. My wife and I are both involved in a recent innovation, which assists separated and divorced couples to exchange their children for visits. It allows child exchange without the parents having to meet. That's the only thing, apart from activities at church, that's the only thing.

As a lay reader at church I lead services from time to time, do sermons, I've got Sunday School next week. I'm also a member of the Parish Council.

I was surprised. I thought I knew him better than this. I had thought that Charles was involved in many community activities. I asked about his involvement with community meetings. He had said earlier that he was not involved in politics of any sort:

Outside church, not very much. I attended meetings when people were concerned about possible destruction to Milton beach. I can't think of anything else. I'd probably not go to politically motivated meetings. It's just not of interest to me. If I thought it was just going to be one group against another, it's simply not my style.

I took the opportunity to speak to some politicians a few months ago now about the problems of parents in regional areas sending their children to university, and the cost that that involves. Basically because I'm directly interested in that. I'll sign petitions, if they're, you know, something I agree with.

I was finding it difficult to assess Charles' involvement with the community. Maybe it was because I was sick. He seemed to be telling me on the one hand that he was not interested in politics, and then was telling me about Milton beach, and meetings with politicians about the cost of university.

In order to clarify the situation I asked him to describe his level of commitment to the community and care for the community and that of friends and members of organizations with which he was involved:

> *I guess it varies, I mean, a church group by it's nature has a concern for the community and has various ways of assisting that community, those who are troubled, and by belonging to the church I'm supporting such a cause. Occasionally, from time to time, an organisation like the choir, it's really quite active in the wider community outside the choir, and I'm involved with that. The same applies to the people I'm involved with in the touch football team, so there's a wide range.*

> *I think networks are important in that sense. If there is a particular need and people know that there are these people who may be able to help them, and these people may know other people who might have particular skills that they can bring to bear. I mean they might have a particular problem with a sewerage pipe overflow and they get to know people who know who to ring to sort it out.*

The topic of sewerage pipe overflow seemed to indicate a natural sort of a break. Charles went to get more coffee and refreshments. I had another coughing bout, changed the tape over and checked to ensure that it was still working properly. I was getting a little worried about the tape recording, and if the transcriber would be able to hear anything at all. The sound from side one was faint but audible. I positioned the tape recorder nearer to Charles' chair and tried to set it to record at a higher level, but I had doubts. When Charles returned, I asked him to describe the local community for me, in general and musically:

I think Milton as a community is starting to come out of its shell. It's been a declining community for a number of years because of employment, economic prospects and so on but I think there seems to be a more lively sense about the place, in the past year or so. Think of the things like the developments in the town centre. I went to a jazz concert in the street a few weeks back, it was great. You know, you just didn't see things like that before, and I think the 'Milton Gleams' festival is a really good indication of things, of people starting to enjoy being here. I can't remember what else you asked.

'And the local musical community?'

Musically. Well I think that's part of it. There's always been a sense of a fairly good musical spirit around the place for a place its size. And I think that came out in the concerts for the [Federation] *celebrations. But the jazz was great. You know, even sitting in a windy street in October in Milton. It was bloody cold but it was enjoyable, just listening. Some of it was free and people just wandered around. That sort of thing is very good.*

As someone who didn't live in the Milton community I was interested in what the interview participants thought were the reasons why people did live in the Milton community:

Well, if they're like me they come here because that's where their employment takes them. And then their family grows up here. I think it's a good place to bring up a family. I think it's unlikely that my children will stay here. Perhaps their employment will take them elsewhere. But I've got no desire to move away. My first impressions of Milton were terrible. The very first time I came here, years ago, were not very positive. It was not a very attractive place to drive into,

particularly from the East. It's better now but my first reaction was 'I wouldn't like to live there!' but ten years later when I was living there I found it wasn't so bad after all. It's a community where most people enjoy being, and people take part in things. When I lived in Alice Springs, in my teen years, it was similar in some ways, much smaller than Milton, and people just had to take part in things or they'd die of boredom. There was a strong community spirit there, the same as here.

Charles had already described the role of the churches in looking after people, especially the church and the activities with which he was involved. I wondered if he knew of other groups in the community that were involved in looking after people:

You have all the various service organisations, Rotary and Apex and so on. I'm not involved in any of those but they have their roles in the community. I think the church is very active, I think the council has its activities. Who else would you put in? There are a lot of musical groups, and they have an important role. Not in the same sense. I mean, they're fulfilling an entertaining need; a sense of belonging need, various sporting organisations do the same thing, without focusing on the professional aspect.

Whilst we were talking about community groups, I thought that Charles might mention which groups were significant to him. When he did not do this, I took the opportunity to question him on the topic. Charles thought, for only a short while before replying:

I think a significant organisation is an organisation that plays a significant part in the community. Significant means different things to different people. The choir is significant to me because that's what

> *I'm in. The Brass Band is significant to my son because that's what he's in. The dancing classes that meet in the church hall are significant to those people. A lot of groups like to have a sort of ownership element within their circle. Others more directly look out, say your Anglicare type of organisations, that actively seek people who are in strife, or a Lions Club that builds barbecues in the park, something like that. In something like our choir, to some degree it's internal because we sing because we want to and we don't care if nobody comes to listen to it, well we do, we like people to come to listen to it, it does have a significant following. It really is difficult. It depends on the nature of the organisation.*
>
> *I spoke before about the role it* [the choir] *plays in the community as far as celebratory events. Something like the Brass Band, with its Christmas parades and so on, they have a role to play. They are significant musical groups on an ongoing basis. And they come together on occasions, for a particular purpose, to present a combined choir and band.*

If significant community groups to Charles are musical groups then it ought to follow that the people who organise these groups are significant in their own right. I asked Charles who the 'movers and shakers' are in the local musical community:

> *You would have to say somebody like Jordan Waters, who is an ideas person. The ideas don't emanate from her necessarily but she is very good at taking ideas and making sure they work. She comes to mind, I guess, because I know her, and I suppose there are others. You and Jill had a strong role in the Milton Festival concerts and events when they began, some years ago. Somebody like an Adam Edwards leading*

the Brass Band and involved in other groups. Musically, they're the ones that come to mind.

I wondered if the community got behind these people, in his opinion and asked him what sort of help and support they received from the community:

Probably not as much as they should. Sometimes there's financial support, people support them by going along. When we put on a production or a concert, we get a lot of people going to that, there is that sort of support, yes, support in terms of giving something else, I'm not sure of. [Other community organizations] *generally all get involved. That seems to be the way. Everybody comes together, good on them.*

We talked for a little while about the demographics of the groups and individuals who participated in the group activities, if there were certain characteristics in common:

Musically it's largely the same groups, the Milton Community Choir, perhaps the Kelsey Choral Society. With something like the Milton Community Choir, it has a very wide demographic although most of the people, of course, are getting on in years; we don't have many young people getting involved. We have the occasional, but we haven't had many over the years. In terms of economic situations, it's probably not representative of the wider community. For the most part, they're retirees who can afford to be in it, buy music and so on. In that sense, it's not representative of the wider community. I think that's true of a lot of groups; it usually costs a fair amount of money to be in it.

I asked him what sorts of percentages were involved in terms of men and women. Again, Charles hesitated. A true mathematician, he seemed to need to marshal his mathematical facts before he could answer:

> *Well, something like the choir has a majority of women, not an overwhelming majority but a majority. I think when you look at other musical groups you can for the most part see the same. Other groups outside of music groups, organisations like Rotary and Lions have got men. Groups, which come out of the churches to meet people's need, are predominantly women, largely because they're often daytime activities. Women do a lot of free-time work.*

I asked if Charles, a relative newcomer to Milton, knew of a time when the community had come together to face a significant problem? Charles hesitated and appeared to rack his brain for a few moments. Predictably, Charles knew of the industrial problems that had faced what was Milton's major industry several years ago. However, he did not appear to be aware of any of the details, preferring instead to talk about a more famous disaster:

> *I don't know. I think there was an element of that in those industrial problems at the Mill a few years back. I really can't think of anything else. I can't think of anything particularly that happened that led to that. I can recall when Cyclone Tracey hit Darwin, and the sense of community that there was up there, but not in Alice Springs where I was then, in that sense of pulling together, with a need for people to be evacuated, but I'm not aware of anything like that here.*

I attempted to bring the conversation such as it was, back to Milton and his experiences in that particular city. I pointed out that he had talked about many of the things he did through the church, so maybe in that way, or other ways

he might have some ideas about the sort of social problems that exist in the community and how these problems might be solved:

> *Unemployment would have to be the biggest one and that filters down into other problems. That's a real issue here. I think there's a significant issue with homelessness, there's a problem with that, and with people who are unstable in terms of living conditions. I hear a lot of stories that my wife's been telling me about the emergency relief organisation that she's involved with. People who are really struggling, who don't know where they are going to get their next meal from. That's a real concern because it's not, on the whole a wealthy community. It's an area, I think, where there's a fairly large degree of poverty. There's family breakdown and a lot of people suffer from that. I think they don't feel, very much, that they belong.*

> *We see it sometimes in school with the way students relate to each other. In times when I've been active in an Assistant Principal role, I've become very aware of some of the difficulties some of our people face. Even in school, getting by. Outside of school, I probably don't know much, I don't get involved in that. Although even this child exchange program that I mentioned, you can see the hurt there as fathers come at the weekend to do the exchange. You can see the hurt. That's a major issue.*

We moved on to the music. I explained to him that I was going to play a recording of a piece of music, and asked him to imagine himself as part of the performing group. Having performed the work several times, he knew what it was, but instead of talking about the recording, he went on to describe his feelings when he performed it in the past:

So, what's it like to be in 'Carmina Burana'? Fabulous, that's a very emotional piece; it starts out with that great oomph! And then it's quiet, and then you really belt it again at the end. I actually find it hard to control the emotions when I sing something like that. A bit like the 'Hallelujah Chorus'. I can sing the 'Hallelujah Chorus' and the tears roll down my cheeks when I do it. Not because of the words necessarily but just the power of a piece of music like that. I get a bit like that particularly with performances.

The tape recorder had done a valiant job until the playing of the tape but during the music, the machine almost died. Despite this, I asked Charles what his thoughts were on the choir performing the music:

You mean in terms of composition? It's a bit hard to say because of the quality of the tape, to be honest. That could have been the production that we did. It's hard to tell. Are you going to tell me who it was?

I was quietly thrilled. The thought that an experienced singer like Charles could have possibly mistaken the Berlin Opera Choir for the Milton Community Choir, even with a poor tape recorder, was astounding:

'It was the Berlin Opera.'

Alright, they said the words differently to how I think we were taught it in Carmina Burana, and I don't really know it, but we would probably be up to that standard. Probably not. People would say, 'does that matter?' and I would say, 'probably not.' Certainly not as a participant. I mean you do the best you can and you enjoy doing it. You don't take it seriously like the Berlin Philharmonic.

I thanked Charles for his time and energy and for being willing to put up with the coughing and wheezing and made a mental note that if I was ever as sick as this again that I would just go to bed. However, the sheer numbers of interviews I had to conduct and the short time frame available for me to do the interviews made for a pressing timetable. Living over 120 kilometres away from Milton I could only conduct the interviews when I was in town, at the weekend. Another restriction was that I could only visit these busy people when they were free.

I said my farewells to Charles and his wife and, having had detailed instructions on how to deal with the one-way traffic system, left to try and recover before the next day's interviews.

HENRY: *I'm a joiner because I grew up that way*

It was a beautiful sunny day. The sun glinted on the sea on the horizon. The interview took place in Henry's well-appointed Upper Milton house. We sat in the study drinking coffee. My personal knowledge of Henry is that he has a reputation in the Community Choir for bluntness and for frank expressions of his views. It would be interesting to see how the interview would proceed. Henry is a fit, lively, 65 year old ex-teacher, retired for ten years, well qualified and articulate. He has fostered music within his family, encouraging his children in their interest in music. We talked surrounded by instruments, some belonging to Henry and others belonging to family members, of whom he is very proud:

> *The highest level of education I have reached is Bachelor of Arts, second highest – Diploma of Education. Tasmanian University. I had to go right through to Grade 12 to get into university. My last paid employment was Principal of Kelsey High School.*

He sings bass in the Community Choir:

> *But like 99% of people in the choir, I'm not a bass, neither am I a tenor, so I sing as well as I can bass, because I can handle that a bit more comfortably than tenor.'*

This was something of an understatement! Henry has a very pleasant and accurate light voice with a good range. He appears to have little difficulty with anything that he sings:

> *My two sons are very musical; you can see we play a variety of musical instruments, five keyboards in here at one stage. My family are a lot more musical than me.*

As Henry began to talk about his family and his choral music background his voice warmed and he began to relax. Settling himself into a story telling position, arms leaning on the table he talked of his childhood:

> *As a child, I had tremendous exposure to music. At one time...for quite a bit of the time we had two pianos in the house, my mother was A.Mus.A, pianist and pipe organist. Played pipe organ in Mitchell, St Michael's, Albert Street Methodist. The family all learned the piano and one of my sisters was probably the best of the lot, she was an organist, pianist, accompanist. In my opinion, she's the best.*

Henry sat back in his chair and gazed out of the study window at the view of the town stretching down to the sea, running his life through his mind. Having got his thoughts in order he turned from the view, looked straight at me and said, as if defying me to contradict him:

> *I've liked singing all my life, been in choirs all my life from school onwards, everywhere I've been, I've been in choirs. Well, I grew up in a time when school choirs were girls and I think I was in the first group that included boys at Mitchell High School, perhaps my grade A class, B class. Always Sunday School choirs and we had huge ones in those days, 100-150 kids, parts.*

Henry went on to describe his earlier life. I sat and listened, nodding occasionally to encourage him to keep going:

> *Motivation... must be basic...genetically; I have inherited a lot of music just in me. Before that,* [involvement in school music] *in my family we always sang. At home, we sang in the car and if someone pinched the tenor I sang alto, and if someone pinched the alto I'd sing*

the bass, I just put it in. I learned piano but did not do singing formally.

I understood well what Henry was talking about. In my family, my grandmother, father and uncle played piano and sang. From an early age I was encouraged to join in with family music-making. I didn't ever find it quite as easy as Henry apparently had, but the experience was close.

I asked Henry 'what happened next?'

When I started teaching Tara had quite a good choral society and I sang in that. Moved to Kimberley and joined the Kimberley Chorale and I was in that for donkey's years, perhaps 15 years, 20 years. President of that. And nothing happened until I came back to the Milton area and I joined the Madison Male Choir and Milton Community Choir and church choirs of course.

I asked him to describe his musical abilities. He smiled openly at the thought of his abilities as a keyboard player:

I play no other instruments apart from keyboard, I don't play keyboard very well. I learnt to play for seven years when I was young but I don't have the ability to read, and never cracked the code. It was fairly liberating when I just sat down and selected a key, G suits me because it only has one sharp in it, and I now play everything in the key of G. I can't read it in the key of G but I can play most things. I'm much better on the organ because I can then fill in with the foot, and fill out the harmonies on both manuals.

I had heard about his keyboard abilities in the key of G from mutual friends who attend the same church. They admire his skill, even if everything he plays is in the same key:

> *I did have some lessons in singing just for the heck of it when I was at Tara* [as a teacher] *and a fellow came, I think he eventually went down to the Con* [the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music]. *He came out to Tara and gave singing lessons to the choral society members.*

We started talking about the community. I asked him how he saw the Milton Community Choir in relation to the community, what sort of a role if any did he think that it played:

> *The Milton Community Choir fills a niche in the community, I think it's a very small one, but for those people who go to the Milton Community Choir it's a significant one for them. If you like singing and like singing a little more of serious work, the Milton Community Choir fulfills that role.*

'Why do you think the current members participate?' I asked him. Henry thought for a moment before giving his opinion.

> *They love to sing. Some of them take part in the Milton Community Choir because they love that type of music and I've heard some say that if we didn't sing that type of music they probably wouldn't come. I think that's a bit unfortunate but that fulfills something for them. I think, we made this comment at a meeting recently, most of the people in the Milton Community Choir are not strictly community people they are mainly people with church affiliation, and I don't know what comes first, the chicken or the egg there, whether because of the type of thing we sing, it attracts people with religious beliefs and*

> *affiliations or because the church people are there we sing that sort of thing, or because Tom Langston likes that sort of thing.*

I wasn't sure if this was a jibe at the others in the Community Choir or at me. I didn't take it too personally. They were interesting comments. Initially (years ago) we began to specialize in oratorios because we had access to a large collection and it cost us, as a choir, nothing to use them. Maybe people had begun to attend because we were doing 'their kind of music'. Certainly, our repertoire has changed little over the years. We still specialize in religious music, and we still get 'church people' in the Community Choir.

I indicated for him to continue. It seemed to me that, for Henry, the Community Choir does not necessarily meet all of his choral music needs. I wondered to myself if this accounted for some or all of Henry's absences from rehearsals at different times. He shifted awkwardly in his chair. Talking about the Community Choir repertoire in a negative way to me, the choirmaster must be putting him in an awkward position:

> *I'm a little more eclectic in my musical taste. I have sung in Milton. We had a Jazz Quintet at one stage. I'm not a great Jazz fan but I enjoyed singing that, it was something different, Manhattan Transfer stuff. The Milton Community Choir is a vital part of the community in that rather small, oratorio, serious works* [way], *and I enjoy that, but I would like to see a little wider scope of music. Just for variety.*

Given his apparent indifference to the music the Community Choir sings and his love of other kinds of music, I decided to ask Henry why he participated in the Community Choir. Henry continued to be blunt:

> *I don't think I can look for any deep and meaningful reasons why I participate in the choir I think it's reasonably self-centered. I enjoy*

> *singing, and if the only place I can sing is the Milton Community Choir, that's where I go. It sounds a little bit rough, but it's a fairly selfish motive. Sometimes I thoroughly enjoy rehearsals, there's a bit of humour, we make some progress, the sound coming out suddenly starts to gel and it makes it all worthwhile. Other times rehearsals are absolute purgatory (laughter). So, no I if you are wanting me to say, or thinking I might say, I want to put some sort of culture into the community, that I want to expand peoples horizons, that I want to give them something, that would come way down the bottom of the list I'm afraid.*

'Good old Henry' I thought. He specializes in being blunt and honest. I can cope with this well. He should have been born in Yorkshire like me. He had done some research into the kinds of questions I had been asking the others and prepared for the interview. Henry had always been open and frank with me, both privately and in public. This frankness had not affected our relationship before, and it did not seem to be doing so now.

I relaxed as Henry began to relax more. The awkward moment seemed to have passed. Becoming a little more open and expansive, Henry talked about his love of singing and began to describe himself as a choir member:

> *I'm usually fairly quiet, enjoy singing and provide a little bit of stability, in pitch at least, for those that I'm unfortunate enough to stand next to.*

Henry smiled to show that this was intended to be (possibly) a little tongue in cheek. I wondered if many a true word was said in jest:

> *Mainly, because I love singing, I love music so much, and I love singing so much because singing is the only part of music that I can*

> *really do. I'm not competent enough with another instrument, so the voice is the one, and it will be a very sad day when I've got to give it up.*

I asked Henry what he thought he contributed to the Community Choir as an individual:

> *I think my contribution to the choir is that I am blest or cursed with an ear which recognizes a note and finds it very difficult to tolerate anything that is off that, and I sometimes hold three or four (others) together. As I said modesty forbids me from saying that, but that's what I feel. If you say, 'You're off the note,' they can't understand what you're saying. So sometimes, I feel that I have a weight on my shoulders because if I don't carry them then they are not there.*

These were interesting comments. I wondered what he thought happened in the Community Choir on those evenings and those weeks when he was not there. I wondered if Henry thought that singing in the Community Choir had an impact on his self-esteem. He looked surprised at the question and took a moment to think through his answer. Having thought about it Henry was surprisingly open about the impact that participating in the Community Choir has on his self-esteem, although he was still a little hesitant:

> *I don't suffer from great self-esteem, if you can put it in that way, and over the years I suppose I have become less panic stricken about singing by myself. I still don't like it, but sometimes if I do, I get a feeling, well, well, I did it! And I think that is a great lift to self-esteem. But that is why I sing in a choir. So, if you are looking for basic selfish reasons,* [such as] *I would like to sing like Placido Domingo, I never will. Not even if I was a Buddhist and came back a second time, (shared laughter) so the only way that I can sing and*

> *sound, in a way that's just thrilling, is to belong to a choir. The overall sound then subsumes your level, your voice. And, if I sang into that tape recorder it would be pretty chronic, if I add my voice to ten other basses singing in a choir, I'd love it.*

We had a laugh at these comments. This was a new side to Henry, for me. The modest Henry! I wondered if he was fishing for compliments but decided that would not be like him. Henry certainly has nothing to be modest about. His skill level is exceptional and, I think most people in the Community Choir appreciate his talent.

I asked Henry to describe his involvement in community activities. I already knew some of what Henry described to me, but the depth of his involvement came as something of a surprise:

> *I have been in the Lions Club, the City of Milton Lions Club, since I came here in 1983, I have been president and most positions within that club and very active. I'll be cooking pancakes for Targa patrons tonight* [Targa is a car rally held annually in various places in Tasmania]. *I have run Neighbourhood Watch in Upper Milton area, pretty well since its inception in about 1991. And I'm area co-ordinator of that. I am fully involved in the Uniting Church in Milton, and I do things. I have produced for five years a quarterly magazine with my wife, church council and so forth. Choirs, I'm involved in the musical side with Milton Community Choir, and the Madison Male Choir, we get roped into all sorts of performances and events. That's about it, I suppose. I forgot to say I teach School for Seniors. All voluntary of course. I think I'm one of the ones who goes to a lot of things. I think I participate in a wide range of things, concerts, cinema, either going to concerts or participating in them or through Lions Club. You know, cooking hamburger and sausages or pancakes*

> *tonight, working doing other projects for Lions, there's a lot of work that I do and yeah, I think I attend most things but I don't make it my business to be at everything. My wife is often very much involved, and I go along to support her. She does work, with Crossroads for example, which helps out people with special needs and quite often I go down and I carve the meat and I serve and I clean up and set out the tables, and no-one knows that it's done, but it's done. I put in a lot to the local community, never a front-runner, never upfront but I do things.*

The latter comments struck me later, as I read through the transcripts of the interviews, as being so much like Rebecca's views of being 'always an understudy.' There was clearly something of a paradox. Henry appeared to have such 'selfish' reasons for participating in the Community Choir, but had such a deep investment in social capital in other contexts, such as participation in a wide range of community activities for the benefit of others. I suspect Henry has a love of the Community Choir that he is not prepared to admit to, and an interest in participating for community benefit that he wishes to keep to himself. Maybe he doesn't want to encourage me.

From his amount of involvement, Henry is clearly someone who participates in the community. I asked him to describe the people he thought participated in community activities, what the demographic profile is:

> *I think they tend to be upper middle class, traditional, they went to church when they were kids, they still do. Solid attitudes towards the community, towards morals, and I think it all ties together. We tend to be those that like to put in instead of saying, 'who's going to do something for me?' We're joiners, my generation. I can almost see the 21st century struggling to get anyone to join a service club, a neighbourhood watch, or a community choir. I mix with people who*

> *like music; I mix with people who have the same sort of values as I do. Because I'm a belonger, I belong to various groups. A lot of my friends are exactly the same, so we have similar interests, and while some of my good friends are not Lions, they belong to Rotary or Masons, or other churches or other groupings, it's birds of a feather I suppose.*

I was going to ask Henry to define 'joiner' for me but Henry put out a hand to stop me and continued:

> *In the 21st century and the latter part of the 20th century, people don't want to commit to belong where they have to go along every week, and in a choir you have to because you let everyone else down if you're not practicing with them. And probably it's a more essential part now, because there are so few things in our community where people do band together, where they are not going to get monetary reward out of it, they put a lot of effort into it and they are doing it for other people.*

I wondered how Henry reconciled his comments about attending every week with his lapses in attendance. Then, I thought, even after all the years we have known each other I still don't know much about his personal life. I thought I would wait for Henry to enlarge upon this statement, if he chose to. Henry had always seemed to me to be such a 'private' person.

We sat a little while and pondered. Henry got up and made coffee. I took the opportunity to change the tape and ensured that it was ready for when he sat down. We organized the placing of the coffee on the table, and I started the tape recorder. In order to resume the interview where we had left off, I asked Henry who he thought were the people who were 'involved' in the community and if he could describe them to me in some detail:

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> *I think it's a fairly small percentage of the community who are involved and they do a tremendous amount. I contact them because I know all the fellows in Lions, two Lions clubs. I know most of the fellows in Rotary, both here and Kelsey,* [and in] *The Good Old Variety Show* [an annual community concert, in Kelsey]. *I taught at Kelsey so I know all those fellows, and all the choirs and the churches. So those are the people that put in. Through Neighbourhood Watch, both here and Upper Milton, I know quite a few people there, and I go to Western District meetings of Neighborhood Watch in Kimberley. At the moment this group of people my age or even ten years younger than me who have come through, a lot of us are now retired, put in a huge amount into the community. I did when I was working. We tend to be those that have had reasonable jobs, reasonable education, wider interests. We tend not to be, and I don't want to sound elitist, people who see the pub, or the one arm bandits, the gaming machines as the highlight of their career. Quite a few people in service clubs and Neighbourhood Watch are ex-business people. Very few school teachers, a few professional people, a couple of lawyers, but mostly people out of business. But that wouldn't apply to the choir. I think we get most of the people who put into choirs through church affiliations.*

With Henry appearing to be such a community minded person I asked him how well he knew his neighbours. Did he know their names, their jobs, their families and so on?

> *I know the neighbours reasonably well now. The fact that we don't get on with the ones next door is their business, not mine, but I know them.*

'And what about your own family?' I asked. In all of the years I had known Henry we had never talked 'family.' Our conversations had usually been about music or teaching. I knew that he had a son in Chelsea because I had met him, but I knew no family details:

> *We have a family situation in Chelsea where sometimes we have to go down, to a granddaughter who has a dreadful medical condition.*

So that was (possibly) why Henry's attendance was irregular. I was glad I hadn't pried. I didn't intend to pry now either.

At the end of the interview Henry again surprised me. I was expecting to finish the interview in the usual way with me playing a piece of music and Henry talking about his feelings regarding that music. Henry, who had clearly been talking to other members of the Community Choir about the interviews had decided to turn the tables and played me a piece of music, *You are the new day*, sung by the Kings Singers, (composed by John David, arranged Peter Knight), that he found to be particularly moving.

Henry's voice rose a little higher, his eyes misted and he was at one with the music, and appeared to be in a state of transcendence. Even though Henry did not have the technical musical knowledge to appreciate and explain the finer points of the construction of the music, in just a few words he managed to convey powerful reasons why he participated in community music, especially when the music really appealed to his inner self. In describing his feelings for the piece of music he played to me he said:

> *It's got involvement, and it's got dynamics and it's got harmonies, which grab. I can't explain why but they do. And there's emotion in that. Oh it's a sweet feeling. The harmonies are a lot more complex and a lot more modern, I can say that. You know more about*

harmonies than I do but they're much closer harmonies. The other harmonies were very traditional, which I like. You see, sometimes intervals in a tune just are emotional to me, and they will get me, and some of those intervals there, in that tune are of that type, but despite the impression I give, generally no-one really knows me. I'm very emotional. So if you could get a group that could sing that in the Milton Choir I would be there five days a week (laughs), waiting for the door to open, but as I did say at that meeting, we're too old and we can't do it.

So, Henry, at last! Emotional and private. I'd suspected as much but never dared to ask him outright. Maybe the brash, blunt honesty was a front. I still wasn't sure, but that was his business. I wondered about including the piece in the Community Choir repertoire. Then I thought again. The Community Choir does perform oratorio and other religious music very well, but we had tried singing syncopated music before. Even with significant work, it had not been stunningly successful.

I asked Henry if there was anything else he wanted to say; if there was anything he thought we might have missed out. Henry sat for a short while toying with his coffee cup. There was clearly something on his mind, something he needed to say. At last Henry let go of the cup and, lifting his head up, looked at me and said:

In my era, 1936 onwards, in the last century, we belonged to things, we were part of things. If we didn't belong we felt that there was something wrong and we put in, whether cubs, scouts, service clubs, choirs, the lot. So I grew up that way. We grew up joining and we have a sense of belonging and kids these days are encouraged not to belong, to be themselves. If you want to do something, you do it yourself; if you don't want to do it you don't have to. Whereas, yeah,

I'm a joiner because I grew up that way.

I backed the car out on to the street and headed off down the hill, for the next interview. Henry had presented himself in a complex way. Apparently indifferent to what other people thought, but very much involved with others. Unemotional and blunt on the one hand and yet misty eyed over a piece of music. Henry, a passionate man? Something to think about.

Interlude

I couldn't help but wonder if social capital development in these individuals was much more to do with upbringing than almost anything else. The interviews I had conducted pointed towards common features emerging. The Quartet narratives reveal continuous lifelong involvement in community and musical activities. All Quartet members currently participated in community and/or church activities that involved caring for others. Their background histories of experiences were common even though they may have come from different socio-economic backgrounds, different places in the world, and were of different ages.

Interestingly, each narrator presents his or her life simply, and their roles in their experiences as if they were unimportant. Rebecca is 'just a team member', 'always the bridesmaid never the bride'. Yet Rebecca provides leadership and support for the soprano line. She is willing to perform solo roles, and just as willing to help others with their vocal parts. She is involved in caring activities in the community, in the local hospital, and is a leader in a number of community musical activities. Her involvement with the Community Choir reflects her interest and support for others. Further, her involvement represents not only involvement with a community group, but also involvement with friends and 'family'.

Rebecca embodies many of the elements of social capital that the social capital indicators in the literature identify. Rebecca manifests bonding social capital in her involvement with the Community Choir. She manifests bridging social capital in her involvement in activities such as the hospital auxiliary, Eisteddfod Society and Lady Lions. Indicators for the presence of individual social capital include: involvement in civic, community, and faith based activities; networks that she has developed through her own activities and through supporting her husband; charity work demonstrating that she

values others; the taking of leadership roles in church and Community Choir; and valuing the learning opportunities that present themselves in her activities. It is particularly interesting that Rebecca has manifested these features of social capital for most of her life, in one way or another.

Clearly, music has played a major role in her life and provided significant opportunity for the development of social capital in her as an individual. Rebecca has helped to hold organizations and their activities together whether it is 'filling a hole' on stage, or just being a 'team member.' Being encouraged to participate and have a social conscience that can be propitiated for example, through performing at 'old folks' homes, and hospitals, when young, and to later grow into a caring participant is a common thread throughout many of the narratives and is particularly strong in Rebecca's. The urge to join something is strong in her and appears to have always been. Like Henry, Rebecca grew up that way.

Rebecca does not participate in community activities out of an overt urge to do good things for and in the community. Her involvement with church is very personal but her caring attitudes involve her in community activities. Rebecca serves the community through doing things she enjoys or that satisfy her sense of social justice.

Ruby says that she is just 'a person in the choir'. In reality, she is more than this. She is the leader of the alto section, a strong soloist and a willing helper behind the scenes. Ruby links the Community Choir to a number of local organizations including churches and choral groups in neighbouring towns. Ruby's narrative describes how she forms links, and develops networks, with community members through her caring nature. She recounts vignettes from her community, church, and choral life to illustrate how she thinks communities in general and the Community Choir in particular work or should work. Such vignettes fit well with definitions of bonding social capital

and Tönnies' descriptions of *Gemeinschaft* as, 'the lasting and genuine form of people living together' (2002, p. 35).

Church and choirs are possibly the two most important aspects of her activities within the community. Social capital indicators manifested by Ruby include involvement in community and faith based activities, valuing others, leadership, support for others, and community knowledge. Ruby's abilities in leading from the front, and willingness to work in the background when appropriate, act as examples to others. In these ways Ruby possibly fosters a sense within the other choir members that they can do what she does, and achieve what she achieves. Her long-term membership of the community fosters extensive community knowledge and provides a database that the Community Choir individually and collectively draws on for benefit.

Charles describes his place in the Community Choir and the community in a manner that suggests that he does not see himself as playing a leading role in the community. Charles considers that he is a volunteer, only 'in a small way', yet for the families and children that he and his wife help, his contribution to their lives is enormous. Charles' current links with Milton College continue to assist the Community Choir. For example, Charles uses his college connections to facilitate the borrowing of music from the college by the Community Choir.

He is committed to serving the community through the church. Charles considers he is a joiner, and lists a number of community and faith based activities that he has joined. However, his reasons for joining are not primarily centred upon the community itself. He has to be interested in the activity and enjoy the company of the people involved in that activity. Social capital is often created as a by-product of other activities (Coleman, 1988). Charles manifests indicators of bonding social capital in his strong involvement with family and the Community Choir. Other activities include

his involvement with the child exchange program which demonstrates, graphically, Charles' valuing of others. Through the act of active participation, Charles may help to create social capital in the groups in which he participates, and in the community as a whole.

Henry's narrative presents his life simply, but Henry himself, is quite complex. Henry has had a lifetime of participating in community activities. Indeed, he considers that he grew up that way. There is evidence that 'early experiences in volunteering and associational activity appear to be highly predictive of community engagement in later life' (United Kingdom Performance and Innovation Unit (UK PIU), 2002, p. 63). Henry is proof of this.

Henry's narrative acts as a powerful record of Henry as a community member and a person who embodies bonding and bridging social capital. Henry is committed to his family, a strong bonding social capital indicator. Many of his other activities involve linking with others and caring for others outside of the immediate family circle. Henry is not only a leader in the bass section; he is also a community leader with significant networks within community welfare organizations and civic groups such as Neighbourhood Watch. Henry sees himself as working quietly in the background supporting his wife and others, 'I put in a lot to the local community, never a front runner, never upfront, but I do things'. These activities demonstrate Henry's valuing and caring for others. Through his wide networks, Henry also acts as a catalyst for the development of social capital in others.

The activities of the Quartet manifest individual social capital and show how they work to develop social capital in the community in general, and in the Community Choir in particular (Coleman, 1988, S109). Their upbringing and events they describe have shaped their attitudes towards participation and have shaped their own 'social capital' responses and subsequent impact on the

social capital of the groups with which they have been involved. For each member of the Quartet, involvement with the Community Choir links the Community Choir network to the networks of other groups. Each in their own way contributes significantly to social capital in the Milton Community Choir, and manifests individual social capital in their own actions.

CHAPTER FIVE

The *Tutti*

The *Tutti*

Rehearsals and performances form the major part of the life of the Community Choir. The Community Choir meets weekly and, consequently, many of the shared experiences choir members have are rehearsal experiences. Their stories reveal common histories of upbringing and experiences that facilitate the development of trust and shared norms and values. What follows is an examination of the manifestation of social capital within the individual members of the Community Choir, and within the Community Choir as a *community of common histories*. The analysis of narratives of the *Tutti* reveals a number of common features that equate to social capital indicators. These indicators include trust in a variety of forms. Participation, interaction, and civic and community involvement, with friendship (that can sometimes be in Olivia's words, 'a bit like a family'), cooperation and collaboration as strong features of the involvement with others are major components of social capital in the Community Choir. Networks and connections, leadership, knowledge and identity resources, caring for and valuing others, obligation and reciprocity, faith based engagement, shared norms and values, learning, and the hitherto largely ignored social capital indicator arising from the data, *fellowship* emerge as recurring themes throughout the responses from the *Tutti*.

Trust is the fundamental aspect of social capital. Without trust, social capital cannot exist. It underpins the quality of interactions of individuals providing an arena of commonality, a mutual awareness and understanding of the state of the community and, at a larger level, the nation. As Fukuyama stated:

> ...a nation's well-being, as well as its ability to compete, is conditioned by a single, pervasive cultural characteristic: the level of trust inherent in society (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 7).

Trust is detected in the interactions between individuals that rely on trust: expectations; feelings of obligations and reciprocation; commitment; loyalty; norms and values relating to behaviour; and, community attitudes and beliefs. Trust appears to be important for the development of mutuality: the concept that what happens within a community group, which is rich in social capital, happens for the benefit of the group as well as for the benefit of the individual.

The combination of trust as the indicator that social capital is developing (Kilpatrick et al., 1999), and commitment as the element of social capital, manifests the presence of social capital within the Community Choir. Many members talk about commitment in relation to 'loyalty and regular attendance and punctuality and paying attention' (Oliver). Others describe commitment as attention to basic things such as watching the conductor, and preparation for Community Choir rehearsals by practicing the parts:

> Claudia: They need to watch the conductor for a start and need to listen to the other parts and they need to be prepared to practice the parts.

Consistency in attendance is a facet of contractual trust (Hargreaves, 2003). It is about meeting obligations and keeping promises, albeit implied promises made when joining the Community Choir. William, a consistent and punctual attender, is adamant that reliability is a major factor if the group is to learn new works:

> William: A good choir member should turn up reliably. You cannot rehearse anything if people are erratic. He has to be fairly consistent. It is not always possible to be there every time but they should be. I think they owe it to the group and to themselves to arrive on time and do their bit and then come back and do it week after week because

> otherwise it is very hard to learn new work and you have got to be prepared to do that. It is not much good being an erratic member.

Amelia echoes these thoughts, but from the point of view of the conductor, in her description of what makes a good Community Choir member. Amelia sees reliability as a manifestation of loyalty to the group and to the conductor. For Amelia, loyalty and reliability are outward appearances reflecting an inner wish to be in the Community Choir. In her description of a good Community Choir member, she illustrates ways that the betrayal of trust that comes with non-attendance can be softened:

> Amelia: ...perhaps apologising if they cannot come. There is nothing worse as a choir conductor, to stand in front and wonder where people are. If you are a conductor, you need to know where people are, and why they are not there, but if they keep turning up every week, well they are loyal. They obviously want to be there. I think that people in our choir, the reason they are not there is that they are either sick or away. The characteristics are loyalty and punctuality, and not moaning about things, and accepting it all.

Contractual trust (Hargreaves, 2003) is also perceived in the appreciation that some members have for my attendance. For many years, I travelled long distances to direct the Community Choir. Rebecca mentioned this commitment in her narrative, and Sarah draws attention to this, 'You see, you have such a long distance to come, Tom, this is the thing and you have to take that into consideration.'

The social capital indicator of trust is a factor that influences the way members engage with each other. Other indicators such as fellowship, identity, knowledge and consolidated resources (Falk & Harrison, 2000), team work, and caring for others, rely on a bond of trust, to link the members

together. To Sarah, the issue of respect is a precursor to trust. She sees that mutual respect can provide the catalyst for interaction that boosts knowledge about the other members through a sharing of experiences:

> Sarah: I think respect comes before trust. When you come to talk about the social thing, I think it may allow you to get to know the person better in a way. Like, I sat and talked with Matthew the other night, he shared something of what he was doing in the Baptist church with a choir, and I thought how lovely that he could actually talk about that. It was to do with the fact that he had known Dad. He knew I was interested in choirs and singing, so he shared a little bit of that with me, and it gave me an insight into who he was. Now that, to me, is different to gossip and you are able to share things too.

Trust builds as members become aware of the nature of others in the Community Choir, their skills and attitudes, likes and dislikes, and willingness to voice opinions. Gaining confidence through participation and trust in their own abilities and the abilities of others and the willing support given by others is important to singers of lesser competence. This kind of support builds bonding social capital through the development of internal support networks (Bandura, 1997; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995). The degree of competence trust (Hargreaves, 2003), and the certainty that there will be no betrayal of that competence trust by having a lack of competence singled out encourages even poor music readers to participate:

> Charlotte: I am a better mime than I am a singer. I would like to be able to sing better but I can't, and I like to be able to stand near somebody such as Rebecca who is a strong and true singer.

Trust manifested through good faith is inherent in the views of certain members who identify with the Community Choir and get a sense of personal

identity from membership of the group. The choir members have a willingness to talk about the Community Choir. Their feelings for the Community Choir clearly demonstrate a bond with, and sense of belonging to, the Community Choir (Blakeley, 1997):

> Lucy: Oh, yes. I like to think of myself as a Milton Community Choir person. I like to think I can sing. I even brag sometimes, 'I am a singer.' Yes, I do think of myself as a singer and a choir person. I am quite proud of that.

Competence trust (Hargreaves, 2003) as manifested through trust in your own and others' capability is an important aspect of the life of the Community Choir. Its presence is appreciated and mentioned often as a characteristic of the Community Choir. When I demonstrate this trust in the abilities of the members to perform solos, duets or quartets, opportunities are provided for personal growth and for the development of collective efficacy (Bandura, 1986):

> Daniel: Whether you are trained or not, you are likely to be asked to take a singular part like a solo or duet, or something like that, straight out of the blue and this is great. There are very few choirmasters who will pick on someone who is untrained to do this sort of work. It gives everybody a new lease on life almost. They feel they can do this, and it gives everybody a lift. I think they come on much the stronger for it. You usually find in a choir that it is the trained singers, the ones who usually do the solos that are picked each time. Everybody else is just a backing and I think this is great. I think it helps the individual very much to develop.

Contractual trust (Hargreaves, 2003) is also manifested through choir and community expectation of a certain standard of performance from the

Community Choir and soloists and a performance of a certain range of repertoire. There is a sense of meeting obligations to the community and the keeping of implied promises that the Community Choir will give a good performance. Implicit in this is a sense of reciprocity. If the choir members continue to have exposure to challenging music and an enjoyable experience then they will continue to attend and will work to maintain and improve the performance of major works. If the Community Choir maintains the standard of its performances then the audiences will attend the performances. If the Community Choir gets good, appreciative audiences then they will be encouraged to continue, and to continue to improve. Choir members appreciate that this contract with the members and the community exists and value it and value the community's enjoyment of it. The following examples illustrate the educational value of Community Choir performances, the expectation of joy in participation and joy in listening to the major works they perform, and the expectation that the Community Choir will be a focal point of any significant community or civic event:

> Olivia: I think that Milton and the north west coast has a lot of musical expertise, and I think that the people are starting to really listen and look for it, and expect things from the Milton choir as part of the community, something that has been there for so long. There are a lot of people with a fine or profound interest in music and I think that the choir is contributing to that. Almost educating people to the love of music, and to listen, and to expect.

> Oliver: In Milton... it is the only choir that can do oratorio like *The Messiah* and *Creation* and such works, Mozart's *Requiem,* and I get a lot of joy belonging to it and I think we give a lot of joy to people who come to hear us.

> Daniel: I think they [the choir] are a tradition. I think people expect them to be in ceremonies and occasions in the town. I think people look for the Milton choir and they expect them to be there, if there is an occasion or celebration or certain times of the year. They expect the choir to be doing something somewhere. If there is a festival, they will expect the choir to be there.

Although the Community Choir is seen as an integral part of the community, it does not attract young members. When the Community Choir was linked to the college, it attracted younger members through the choir's association with the music department at that college. Now that the Community Choir is no longer associated with the college the ties have broken, the college no longer has a high quality choir, and the Community Choir no longer gets young people from the college. In this instance, it may be seen that the contract with the community for a type of music and standard of performance may actually be inhibiting the involvement of young people in the growth of the Community Choir and illustrates the effect of breaking another contract:

> Sarah: I think it is an integral part of the community. I heard about it when Dad was there. Jane used to be accompanist, didn't she? I hear about what it does. It has given a focus of a level of music in the community that, I think, leads into a certain level in the community, Tom. And maybe that is why it doesn't always embrace the younger people.

Participation, interaction and involvement in civic and local community activities are important to many members of the Community Choir. The demographic survey (Appendix 3) highlights the large number of community groups to which the Community Choir members belong. Membership of other organizations facilitates the development of networks where membership overlaps different groups. The reasons for participating in

community groups are many. Just as Henry remarked that he participated because he was brought up that way, another Community Choir member saw his motivation to participate as the offshoot of values gained as a child:

> Luke: I think you catch it. Well I don't know whether you do or not, but it is perhaps also an offshoot: of the values that you absorb as a child; and, the values of people as valuable in themselves and in their own right; the values of caring; and, being a member and a responsible member of the community. I think if you have these understandings and beliefs, you will be involved, and hence I think I am involved.

Others are active members of service clubs or volunteer their services to the community out of a personal sense of wanting to make a difference, or out of a sense of dedication to the community:

> Joseph: I got into Lions because I felt that it was a more effective way of perhaps helping people than just making a donation. You could have some say in what physical effort to put in rather than just putting some money in a box. Henry is in Lions as well, so we have met due to Lions and there is another organization that we belong to, The Retirees. Before that, it was scouting and cubs, and [with] each thing we have done, you are meeting a different sort of person, and group of people, but basically people who want to do something. They don't just want to curl up in front of the television at night.

As has been seen above identification with the community is a feature of Community Choir social capital. The choir members have an urge to be involved, to participate actively in the community. By being involved with other groups, choir members maintain an active link with the community at large that helps to maintain a 'big picture' view of community opinions and

attitudes and facilitates good social interaction. The choir members populate many community groups, a fact not lost on some of the members:

> Grace: As I look around the choir, they are all involved in other things apart from singing so therefore there is a good social [interaction].

The development of networks and connections within the community is manifested through the members' participation in community groups and organizations outside the Community Choir. Networks within the Community Choir that link to these external networks facilitate choir performances. Many Community Choir members are also members of churches and use their networks within the churches to provide venues and performance opportunities (community social capital development) for the Community Choir. Indeed one member identified a link between the Community Choir and the community through networking that demonstrates bridging social capital in action:

> Meg: I guess if somebody from the choir was in Apex or whatever, and with the Christmas parade coming up, and they need a choir, the obvious thing is that they are likely to come to the organizations and music groups that they are involved with, or that they have heard of, or know of.

Community leadership has been identified as a social capital indicator (Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Saguaro Seminar, 2001). Many choir members not only hold formal positions within an organization but also demonstrate willingness to show leadership in other ways over a period of time. For example, many Community Choir members act as secretary, chairperson, treasurer, or committee member in local groups. The choir members appear to perform these roles as a service to the organization, rather than from a need to be recognized as a leader. Luke accepts that sometimes leadership is thrust upon

one and that for an organization to function well someone has to take on the mantle of leadership on occasions:

> Luke: All my life I have been prepared to take on jobs involving coordination or organization and I am quite happy to continue doing that so I see myself in that sense as, well, I suppose you would have to use the word, one of the leaders of the choir. I don't think I want to be a leader of the choir, but there is a job there to do so I do it.

For others, membership of an organization entails certain obligations to the community. Taking on leadership roles within that organization leads to greater involvement with the community:

> Lily: I have done a lot of hospital visitation because I was a member of the Legion of Mary for years, secretary and treasurer at the church.

> Andrew: I'm secretary for Milton Probus and secretary for the Madison Male Choir, and 'minutes secretary' for a Catholic men's group called Knights of the Southern Cross.

Political involvement is regarded as an important facet of social capital (Foley & Edwards, 1996; Putnam, 1993, 1995). However, the members of the Community Choir are very busy, community minded people who manifest little overt interest in political activism. Many expressed a willingness to sign a petition if it was easy to do or was for an issue they valued, 'a worthy cause' as William puts it. However, active political involvement through action groups (Bullen & Onyx, 1998) or conventional political participation such as party membership or rally participation (Saguaro Seminar, 2001), is not a major feature of their lives:

> William: I would not be into a political party. I am not interested in that at all. I make my own mind about those things and I am not interested in joining political groups.

Some were very interested in politics when they were much younger. For example Charlotte was a founder member of the 'Young Liberals in Tasmania.' This same member now shows little inclination to become a political activist:

> Charlotte: I don't suppose I will go to any protest meetings unless it was something that really hit home.

Many members are not uninterested in politics, but politics is not a priority. They are too busy making a difference to the community by being active within the community, but many still feel a need to keep in touch:

> Amelia: For instance, they are starting to get the Art Gallery Association going again and, as I said, I was secretary of that in the first instance. Being secretary of something is very, very time consuming, so usually, if they have meetings at a time when I am teaching and I am interested in it, I will send an apology so that I get information coming into the house about it, so that I am informed.

Knowledge of information about the community (knowledge resources), community identities (identity resources) and community infrastructure (consolidated resources) have been identified as social capital indicators (Falk & Harrison, 2000) and choir members, most of whom have a long history with Milton, are people with these resources.

Many of the participants were able to describe to me the major non-musical organizations in the town and knew the people who ran the organizations.

The significance of the organization varied from participant to participant according to their interests. Luke identified organizations such as Meals on Wheels and the Uniting Church's 'Crossroads'. Both Luke and Lily identified the Salvation Army and St Vincent de Paul. Lily and others mentioned service organizations such as Lions and Rotary. All of the participants were able to name significant musical organizations and the 'movers and shakers' within the town (such as Jordan Waters).

Caring for and valuing others is an identity resources indicator of social capital (Falk & Harrison, 2000) that is important to many members of the Community Choir, for example some do hospital visits, another leads the local Hospice Association. The Community Choir secretary sends a card to sick members and other members will 'ring up people to find out how they are and to make sure they are OK' (Laura). The interest in other members goes further than just a telephone call. Often members will take the responsibility upon themselves to:

> Meg: ...pass on information if someone is not there. I guess there are bits and pieces that if there is a performance coming up, or [we] had a cancelled practice or something like that, and somebody is not there when the decision is made, I guess it is the other choir members' role really to make sure that everybody knows, and to pass on any information that they may need.

Benjamin shows that he and his wife care about others in a very practical way, not through joining a service club, (an activity he admires), but through personal involvement in the life of another:

> Benjamin: We have a World Vision sponsor child. We have had this commitment for about 25-30 years, that's a monthly sponsorship. I have friends in Rotary and a friend in Lions. They are the sorts of

> clubs that I always consider to be the sort of organizations that if you were appropriately dedicated to the community, you should be in.

The Community Choir as a whole forms a network, which helps individual members to improve their performance abilities, their induction into the Community Choir, and their feelings of comfort with their performances. However, despite the many comments about support from others in the Community Choir, some members feel that social capital through the manifestation of support is lacking occasionally, especially when new members are having trouble with the music. This indicator of valuing others is illustrated by Claudia and Meg:

> Claudia: I think one of the worst negatives is the fact, and I don't know how many people there are who can't read music and who have not had any musical training, but for them it must be very hard to learn something when they are just sort of looking at words and looking at notes and don't know how far up or down to go. And we don't really stop and ask them, 'Has anyone got any problems?' I can't read other people's minds, but some people are scared about saying because they might be thought of being below par or stupid if they do say something. Not everyone is quite as up front as others and it is threatening for him or her to have to stand out alone and say they don't understand and need to be shown. I think it is only that when you have been in the choir for a long time and know everyone well enough to know that they are not going to be thought badly of.

> Meg: I mentioned when someone said that nobody spoke to them when they came. I guess in one way the choir probably should look out for new people and just work with them.

Feeling valued by the community one belongs to and valuing others in the community are social capital indicators common in the Community Choir. As Laura said, 'Well they have made me feel like they do [value me].' This type of comment is common among the participants. Choir members assume they are valued because they feel as if they are valued and seem to expect that no one will tell them how valued they are:

> Daniel: I think they value me. I suppose they do in a way because they would simply ask me to leave if they didn't, and I don't want to. Nobody has ever said that, and I don't feel that they will. It is very hard to judge yourself as to how valuable you are.

Some members value the others as having something special to offer the group:

> Grace: When I look around the faces, they have all got something, a talent to offer, and they are all pretty well singing in tune, and obviously, that is what they want to express.

'Appreciated' is another way members express feelings of value towards other members because of what they contribute to the Community Choir, in quality, quantity or just by being who they are:

> Joseph: I don't know if valued is the right word. I think appreciated because of regardless of your skill or lack of it; you are in there giving it a go. You have to be able to add to what is already there. So if you can fit in and do that, then you are appreciated.

Faith based engagement is suggested in the literature to be a social capital indicator (Putnam, 1993, 2000; Saguaro Seminar, 2001). Church involvement is seen as an opportunity to develop political skills (Putnam, 1993), and

community and leadership skills (Ammerman, 1996). For joiners like Luke faith based engagement provides just such opportunity. Luke is strongly committed to the organizations of which he is a member and desires to play a leadership role. In the following excerpt, Luke is enthusiastic when describing how he sees himself as a joiner:

> Luke: I am in the church for reasons that I believe in the church and that is my faith but even within the framework of the church, I am a joiner in that I am prepared to join this or that sub grouping or become involved. Usually, of course, in the church it is organizational but not all of it so I am a member of the choir in the church, again because of what it can offer me and what I can offer it. And I guess there is a lot in saying that I believe that I have something to offer, and when I go to meetings, I am always one of those who do the talking. But damn it, if I haven't got something to say, there is no point in going to the meeting. If I have got something to say then I believe it and I will use every trick I know to make sure it is adopted, because if I don't have an opinion I should not be there, and if I do have an opinion, then I have it backed. So I don't know whether they are the characteristics of a joiner but that is the way I see myself fitting in.

Another member talks about specific roles she plays in the leadership of her church. Her active involvement in church activities requires leadership across several churches within the parish. Claudia draws on her keyboard skills to benefit the church communities and on her organizational skills to benefit others:

> Claudia: If I happen to be playing the piano at West River, I leave our own church service in Milton early to go out there and play, like I did last Sunday and will do next Sunday. It happens quite frequently because we are on a roster, which I make out with the blessing of the

> people concerned. Samuel often goes off preaching somewhere and he goes in one direction and I in another and it is a joke in our church that if we do turn up in the one car you chalk it up on the wall, because so often we are going in different directions for different reasons. I am heavily involved in our local (Crossroads) group here. I do all the publicity; it is keeping in touch, and sending out the newsletters each month and keeping people in touch with what is happening.

Meg suggests that her involvement with other organizations such as churches can facilitate Community Choir/community interaction. Her own church occasionally asks for performances from the Community Choir and Meg recognises that others have similar networking capabilities and use them for the mutual benefit of Choir and community:

> Meg: I am involved with a youth group, church groups, of course and the choir occasionally has been asked to sing at St Paul's, which they have taken up. Some of the other members of the choir have things with other churches and it is easy enough to organise a venue. I think some people have links with the Brass Band and if you want to do a choir (performance) with them, like we have done with the Brass Band, or even the concert band, then it is easier to coordinate and, as I said, I think they know what is going on.

Social capital has been seen as the determining factor in how easily people work together (Paldam and Svendsen, 1999). Collaboration and cooperation for mutual benefit is fundamental to social capital (Blakeley, 1997; Cox, 1995; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Putnam, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2000; Schuller, 2000; Sirianni & Friedland, 1995). Participants identified a willingness to collaborate and cooperate with others as part of a team and suggest that they gain great enjoyment from the product of their collaboration. In the following comments of Joseph's, about a successful

performance, one can hear the manifestation of collective efficacy (Bandura, 1997):

> Joseph: The best [feeling] is when everyone is giving their best; everyone is trying; everyone is paying attention and even if you can't sing well, it is all going well because of that feeling of everyone coming together... the fruition, I think that is something special. I keep coming back to the teamwork type thing when we are all finishing together and we are all on the right note and everything, that is a wonderful sound and a wonderful feeling.

Shared norms and values are considered a major social capital cornerstone, as such features of community lead to a common bond (Blakeley, 1997; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Fukuyama, 1995; Grootaert, 1997; Paldam & Svendsen, 1999; Putnam, 1993; Schuller & Field, 1998). Shared norms and values are the internal and informal rules and practices that are adopted by the Community Choir and help to develop that feeling of belonging, unity, and, binding together mentioned by various study participants. Indicators of social capital (networks within the Community Choir and outside the Community Choir, acceptance of, and willingness to adopt the norms and values of the organization, trust in others, community and civic involvement), are some of the social capital norms and values indicators that demonstrate that social capital is present within the Community Choir. A feeling of sharing of norms and values emerges very strongly from the interview data. Participants emphasize norms of attendance, the Community Choir doing well, soloists improving, positive comments about others in the Community Choir, and about the way the Community Choir is organized and rehearsals are run, motivation to attend the Community Choir. Such positive emphases act as sanctions on members and encourage further positive attitudes and comments. Sarah expressed these aspects as follows:

> Sarah: You get to be able to share things. And that way, you kind of develop a level of sharing, which is not necessarily deeply intimate, but you get a level of sharing that binds people together, sharing common interests and common values. A love of music in its various forms and a sharing of common values, perhaps. Certain levels of expectations, standards that you have in the community, yes, I think it can. And I think that when you talk about the social thing, I think that could help to develop that. That little time of social[ising] after the meeting the other night, I was quite rapt. I just sat there. I hadn't moved and then these various people passed by and Ruby and I had a bit of a chat. And I had known Ruby from the Kelsey Choral Society, years ago and it was just like we had made that contact again, you make contact on a different level than just the singing, a personal level perhaps.

Shared norms commonly expressed by the participants are those of taking part and participating with others, 'I like to take part. I like to see the choir doing a good job. If I can help rather than hinder then I am there' (Daniel). As Claudia expressed it, 'I enjoy singing. Just making music with other people is a good pastime.'

For another the experience is deeper than merely a pastime. Olivia is a very devout and committed Christian and music is a meaningful expression of faith for her. Even when she first joined, and the difficulty of the music nearly scared her away, her love of singing as an expression of faith helped to involve her in the Community Choir and to grow through this membership:

> Olivia: I guess [I get] a very, very deep and spiritual and satisfying feeling from taking part. We came in on the *Magnificat* and I nearly ran away. But even the *Magnificat* now, you know, I can listen to it and appreciate it. Maybe not in a highly educated fashion but it is part

> of what my life is about. I like to sing and I like to go along and sing. I get annoyed when most of the time we are talking, because I come to sing. I like it best when we can just go ahead and sing and sing and sing. I like it when it is something that we are reasonably familiar with and I really enjoy the *Gloria*. I love that but there are many things that I have come to love that I never thought I could ever appreciate so much beautiful music, and I just like to be part of it.

It is suggested in the literature that there is a strong connection between learning and social capital (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Schuller & Field, 1998). Learning takes place in social capital rich societies through interactions between people. It may be that the learning processes of the Community Choir have been 'oiled by the social capital of the community' (Kilpatrick et al., 1999, p. 142.) Informal learning often takes place in community groups such as the Community Choir, especially if there is high social capital as manifested by trust, reciprocity and common norms (Schuller & Field, 1998). The availability of social capital to individuals and groups depends on the quality of the interactions and the knowledge and identity resources, which are inherent in the participants in the interactions (Balatti & Falk, 2001). The social capital developed through such interactions facilitates learning and use of skills and knowledge and 'promotes active and sustainable learning' (Falk, 2000, p. 2). Learning is a social capital indicator and manifests itself in several of the participants' narratives. The Community Choir provides opportunities for members to participate in a variety of learning experiences. Many members appreciate the opportunity to continue learning, and value the experience.

Different types of learning experiences including: informal learning such as learning through informal tuition, learning through observation of the skills and experience of others; language development; context knowledge; individual and collective skill development; personal growth in confidence

and self-esteem; repertoire extension; and, lifelong learning (Aspin, 1998) are identified by participants. In the following illustration, Laura explains how informal teaching through interaction with other choir members enables her to participate in the Community Choir:

> Laura: My musical ability, as far as being compared to theirs is next to nothing. I can't read music for a start as you well know, and when they find out I can't read music, they are quite astounded some of them. And so I say to Rebecca, 'I know when the note goes up there, it is going up and when it is coming down it is coming down, but Tom talks about that middle E or F or whatever it is.' So they always help me, which I am very thankful for.

In Lily's case, the learning experience of choral participation is part of lifelong learning in that:

> Lily: ...education and learning too [are important]. And that is building knowledge in the community and, of course, they all discuss it [the choir]. And their conversation is on a higher plane than mundane things of what sort of jam you made yesterday, or what sort of tea you buy, or what Mrs. So and So's kids are doing. So it [the choir] is a very rich experience actually and a process of learning. It is important to always be aware that you are forever learning and that you don't stop. And I suppose that is so in everything, because life is a complete learning program right through, isn't it?

For another, the learning experience is satisfying and has added a new dimension to her life, 'I have learned a great deal from you and from the choir. It is a very large and very satisfying part of my life' (Olivia).

Other choir members remark on the progress in confidence that others have made both in rehearsal and in public performance. The Community Choir members develop a degree of understanding of their or other people's competence as singers by informal comparison with those others. By learning from interactions with others, members learn from people who have a different approach to the music and performance (Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan & Hopkins, 1998). This progress has been made possible in the opinion of one member because of the feelings of support and fellowship that that member gains from the Community Choir. For some, the benefits of learning are seen as so great that they will attend rehearsals even through the most inclement of weather. There is no perceived threat. The learning experience is shared, supported by others, and seen as empowering:

> Lily: I am amazed sometimes, on very, very bad nights, you know when you have inclement weather, and they come. They are still joyful...and they are looking forward to it, and I think it is because they are learning. They are also gaining confidence. It is something that they can do with people around them to give them that confidence because they are not doing it alone. It is participation and they are doing it together and if you have got somebody standing to the left and right and front of you, supporting you, it is a support system, the choir. I love to learn and that is one of the reasons that I like to be in the choir.

An opportunity to witness the skills and experience of soloists as they rehearse their piece in front of the Community Choir can be a valuable, informal learning experience. This opportunity often leads to awareness in participants of personal growth in their skills and those of others. This growth in skill may lead to an urge to experience new things, 'Sometimes when you are looking for solos it would be nice to hear 'right Oliver, you do it''. For others, the singing of a solo part is a terrific experience that boosts their self-

esteem, the collective efficacy of the Community Choir, and fits in with the norms of the Community Choir:

> Luke: I very much appreciate the opportunity to sing as a soloist. I enjoy singing as a soloist, as I have said before, and I am given the opportunity, and, I hope, I rise adequately to the challenge. I think others do too and I know jolly well that others too do appreciate that opportunity. There are some who would voice the opinion that we ought to bring in soloists, but I feel that would be almost contrary to principles of a Community Choir.

For some of the singers the outcomes of their learning are demonstrated through personal development, growth in self-knowledge, and an increase in confidence. Individual choir members indicated that they have either experienced increased confidence in themselves as singers, or now feel that they are able to achieve things that they were previously unable to achieve. For some, mastery (Bandura, 1997; Ford, 1992) of the music is important, and singing solos often gives an opportunity for growth and mastery:

> Isabella: The times that I have had a chance to sing a solo I can't tell you what it has meant for me in my own growth. So, I know that you will be aware of the nucleus of the choir that do solos, new solos, and that will boost their confidence. I think, Tom, that I'm getting more confidence now. I can remember listening to different choir members and thinking, 'How are they doing that? And what were they doing then?' I can almost do it now.

For Lily, learning is a personal growth experience, even after many years of performing, accompanying and conducting choirs in her own right. The following comment highlights the continuing nature of education:

> Lily: You have to look intently into the music to know what the composer's intentions were and even now, I am discovering, this morning with Rebecca, we discovered something else about that page and a half that she has to sing. Just slightly, minimally longer on one note before you travel to the next and every note is so important. Putting them all together is the culmination.

For another, learning, and the joy of regaining her singing voice has led to changes in her self-esteem:

> Sarah: Interestingly enough my voice wasn't that strong. I had virtually lost a lot of my singing voice. I could still keep a reasonable tune but it is actually getting stronger, feeling stronger. And the sense of confidence in me as I learn the music, [and] also a sense of strength that is in my voice that wasn't there before has returned.

Choir participants talk about contextual learning in terms of the experience of actually learning about the style, the composer and the structure of the music as they did when the Community Choir belonged to the college. The Community Choir still learns these things, as it is important to know about the music they are performing if they are to do it well:

> Luke: I think the best part of rehearsals [are] is the times when we get down to actual tuition as to why something. Now this fits in with what I said before about it being a teaching choir, and people not being professional musicians. And I think it is this imparting that is good, because people do grow and learn, and you can feel, over the ten years that I have been in the choir, that there has been this growth.

Indicators of social capital building may include the development of shared language and experiences, personal development, learning to trust others and

identification with the group. Many examples of shared language and a shared understanding of what the language means are manifested in the interview data. We saw the examples of Ruby and Charles using one of my expressive terms, 'oomph' for power and volume. In the next examples Sarah and Lucy describe the feeling of 'getting it right' and Lucy then links this to group identification:

> Sarah: But I like it when I actually get it right. I do love when we have had a successful performance and you feel that the audience are not just clapping you, but they really received something.

> Lucy: The best parts? probably towards the end of anything when we get it right. I mean *The Messiah* at the moment is just like going to sing *The Messiah* every week, I mean it is just incredible. I get such a buzz from that because we are getting a lot better and with those basses that support from the bass! And the worst part about practice is not being able to get it right. Frustration, when you can't get something right or it doesn't sound right, I get very cross with myself if I can't get it right.

Other members use similar language to express the same, shared, feelings resulting from successful performances:

> Daniel: ...but just the general sound when everybody is right on the ball and counting well and are in good voice and tune, and everything else, the result is a tremendous lift. You know you have done something that is good. In fact, it is probably the best that you can do. That has to be a pretty uplifting experience. And you know that the audience is enjoying it, and you can tell just by looking at them.

> Joseph: ...but to be part of it, I find it to be exhilarating and challenging all the time. It is great. And you have mentioned a couple of times the mental alertness, you are kept on your toes. And I know I find I am trying, I am gradually beginning to know some of what is required, and that in itself, it is not just getting the right note, it is reading the music and getting the beat and everything like that. I find that really great. It is like a puzzle all coming together. When it happens ...I think it is very rewarding. It is a good feeling [like the end of a successful voyage] and I sometimes feel like that, when we get to the end of a piece of music and we are all in tune, and on time, and there is a smile on the conductor's face.

Shared experiences contribute to the development of the shared language and shared understanding. The same good performances that create exhilaration and lift, serve to boost Rachel's self esteem when she says, 'I feel really good and I feel that I can do it, which is really good for me.' For another, the success of getting it right acts as a stimulus and an encouragement:

> Isabella: Getting it right, when you wish you weren't coming away. You wish you could do it all over again, just going on and on.

Fellowship as a social capital indicator (Hanifan, 1916) has largely been ignored in recent literature. Within the Community Choir, fellowship evolves from and, in turn, facilitates friendship, mutual support, working together and the development of relationships. To some choir members, fellowship is as important as the music as it provides a focus for their attendance. Indeed, for Matthew, fellowship is the main thing in the Community Choir. When asked what he would tell someone about the Community Choir if he wanted to get that person to join he said:

> Matthew: The feeling I get from being a part of that organization is the feeling of fellowship there, of contributing to something that is, to me, something that is really worthwhile and there is a great sense of enjoyment if you really commit yourself to it.

Matthew goes on to link together the fellowship aspect of the Community Choir with the feeling of the challenge that he gets from the music:

> Matthew: From a social point of view, the general fellowship of it, to me has been very enriching and it's presented me with challenges as well through the sort of music that is done. I enjoy their company and their fellowship in general, really.

Fellowship appears to provide a mechanism for informal networking, knowledge sharing, caring and developing feelings of trust evidenced by the comments about solos or chorus sections. Fellowship also provides an opportunity to learn about other members. By learning about others, members appear to forge a bond with them, to the mutual benefit of the Community Choir and of the members themselves. When asked to comment on her motivation to participate in the Community Choir, Lily responded:

> Lily: It is a learning and friendship thing and also they wish to support one another. Because your friend's going, you will go too. So friendship among the members of the choir is very important and you get to know people. One of the choir in the front row had an antipathy towards another member, and now that that other person is actually standing next to them and singing. And they have come to like [each other]...they have come to understand [each other] because they can hear them singing and in between, they chatter. Choirs chatter. You come in loaded with the baggage of today or the week and women especially, have to offload.

Lily's comments cover a range of social capital indicators including learning, involvement with friends, and knowledge resources. Olivia, who has been a member of the Community Choir for a number of years, considers the Community Choir to be, 'a bit like a family,' and appreciates that long-term membership helps the fellowship within the Community Choir. Olivia appears to be using fellowship not only in the secular sense of friendly feelings that exist between people with shared interests, and companionship, but also in the deep feelings that exist between people with mutual interest that are both spiritual and temporal. In her comments she, perhaps, expresses her own feelings towards the others, when describing the fellowship of the Community Choir and the benefits of that support:

> Olivia: A lot of them have been here for a lot longer than me and it has a very strong fellowship, a very strong caring, loving attitude to one another plus there is a lot of humour there and we really enjoy being together and look forward to our Monday nights. And it is not just the singing, although the singing is a priority thing, but I think we enjoy being together; we enjoy the chatter; we enjoy the socialising and I think we could make a lot more of that ... because we have known each other so long. And there is that sense of community and caring, and it is not just while you are at choir, people get together socially during the week, like Bernice and Rachel, they play tennis together and they have morning teas together. But I think this has come out of their fellowship in the choir. It is a very durable and strong, it is a life support, isn't it?

Members show a willingness to work as a team or cohesive unit in order to further the ends of the group and to ensure success. For some fellowship might be seen as camaraderie, that feeling of goodwill, sociability and

comradeship, that grows from familiarity. The benefits of camaraderie lead to good feelings and personal improvement:

> Oliver: I think we all get a sense of camaraderie from it. I just think that generally we like each other. There is not much acrimony amongst members of the choir and then there is always the love of the music that we are doing and the sense of achievement when we have done something and done it well and given other people pleasure.

Some members are committed group members who have spent much of their lives in situations of working as part of a group or organization and value the strength of such an arrangement and the benefits that it can bring to the group as a whole:

> Joseph: I have always thought of myself as being a bit of a team type person and I enjoy being part of a team and I enjoy being in the choir and part of a team and occasionally, just occasionally, getting things right, and [when] I don't need to be prompted by Henry or Luke who frown when I go a bit astray. And I really enjoy that camaraderie... and being part of a team...that is not a sport. And if by my efforts I am adding to the quality, I get a good feeling from it and in the same way with the Madison Male Choir and, yes, there is a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction.

The Community Choir as a catalyst for community cohesion

If social capital is seen as the glue that holds communities together (Blakeley, 1997; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998; Fukuyama, 1995; Grootaert, 1997; Serageldin, 1999) then the Community Choir appears to embody social capital. In the words of Daniel:

> I think it [the choir] is a form of cement, if you like. It is a central point for musical expression in one way, or one phase of it anyway, in that people will join together either to do the particular piece or to listen to it. I think it has adhesive effect, if you like.

William echoes this view of the Community Choir as a centre for people who want to focus on a particular area of common interest, and as an indicator to interested parties such as the town Council, that at least one part of the community is prepared to do things on its own:

> William: I think it keeps a group of people together. It is a focal point for that group of people in particular and I think it is a very important focal point; otherwise, those people probably, probably may not have the opportunity to sing that kind of music. In that way, it is very important to those members of the choir and I think it is very important to people of Milton, Council and bodies like that that see something like that going on within their area. And I am sure they are appreciative of it. I think it is a very important part of the community.

The social capital of the individual member expands to broaden and develop the social capital of the Community Choir that, in turn, contributes to the development of social capital in the community. This is shown in the Community Choir's willingness to benefit the community with the product of its learning via concerts and other public activities. Choir performances generate sufficient goodwill and trust within the community that the choir is often approached to perform for particular events, not only on its own, but also in conjunction with other community groups.

The Community Choir contributes to broadening community social capital and developing networks, through joining with other groups to present community wide activities such as *Carmina Burana*, *Messiah*, *Braddon - a*

place of our own, and *Those were the Days*. Choir members value this contribution and often make similar comments to Rachel's: 'I think the more we can do together the better the town will be.' Choir members also consider that the events foster network development through bridging social capital as they bring a variety of people together that might not otherwise meet:

> Lucy: When we have something like *Carmina Burana* or the one you have just done, all these little groups come out to join forces. The orchestras and concert bands all come out and I think it is wonderful. I think the coast has such a lot of little groups and big groups that have such a lot to offer. I have got to know a lot of people from other choirs and places. I have got to know people who I haven't seen for years, so it has been good.

Members report that the Community Choir has a particular link with the community through its rule of only using community members for the chorus and for solo performances:

> Laura: Everyone seems to get on pretty well with one another and in the community. I always have quite a lot of feedback about the choir through church or friends and they have always got nice things to say. Good things, how nice it is, and the nicest thing is that they all appreciate the fact that the people are just ordinary members of the community who can join the choir, and I like to see that.

Charlotte was able to use her networks to provide a performance opportunity for the Community Choir, and a benefit to one of the other groups of which she is a member. Charlotte has been a member of Hospice for a long time and tries to do something special for the organization on the 'International Day for Hospice', each year. Through her links with the Community Choir, she is

able to provide an opportunity for the Community Choir and members of the public to come together for mutual benefit:

> Charlotte: I think one of the best was when the choir came to sing for 'Voices for Hospice' last year, and having the congregation join in the *Hallelujah Chorus*. It was good.

By linking the Community Choir's shared values of love for good music, love of singing together and valuing the fellowship of being with others with those of the community, Charlotte is describing valuable bridging social capital.

Shared values help to create a feeling of community, a sense of 'belonging,' and help to provide cohesion within groups (Falk, 2000). The music performed and studied is a very important aspect of the Community Choir, and is a shared value that acts as one of the factors that holds the Community Choir together. One member considers that 'probably our biggest value is good music' (Oliver). The vehicle for that music is, according to another, singing, 'I simply enjoy singing and that has to be the basis of it all, and I always have' (Daniel).

Summary

Members of the Community Choir manifest social capital in the ways that they act towards each other and towards the community. Their actions provide the manifestation of indicators for the presence of social capital. Certain indicators, such as political involvement, do not figure greatly in the narratives of the Community Choir. On the other hand, membership of strong repositories of social capital such as faith based organizations (Putnam, 2000) feature powerfully.

Forms of social capital in the Community Choir

The data suggest that the Community Choir possesses strong bonding social capital. The homogeneous nature of the membership fosters the building of a strong internal network. The members are highly supportive of each other, care for, and value each other. The Community Choir often uses bridging social capital to link with other organizations in the community to facilitate the staging of a major event such as *Carmina Burana*. Joining together with other groups is identified by some choir members as being important for the development of a strong community. Linking social capital is used rarely by the Community Choir. The self-supporting nature of the Community Choir suggests that linking vertically to groups or individuals in order to access funding or other services is not a typical feature of the Community Choir activities. However, occasionally the Community Choir will use linking social capital to create a link with organizations that may be able to provide music or suitable rehearsal and performance venues.

Indicators

The data suggest that the Community Choir manifests many of the indicators of social capital identified in the literature. Individually and as a group, the Community Choir has strong social networks created between people who are 'like them' and have shared norms and values. Members indicate a willingness to trust each other. All choir members are involved in civic and community activities. Long time active community membership suggests that choir members know about the community and its leaders and have strong knowledge and identity resources. Cooperation between individuals and with other groups is strongly identified in the data and acts as a mechanism that facilitates community activity. Choir members are leaders in the community in a variety of organizations both secular and sacred. The social capital indicators of obligation and reciprocity are obliquely manifested through the

expectation that certain behaviours and attitudes will be reciprocated. Choir members indicate a strong sense of caring for and valuing others. For many this happens not only through interaction within the circle of family and friends and the Community Choir but also in faith based involvement. For many choir members the social capital indicator of learning features strongly. The Community Choir acts as a vehicle for personal development and for the development of self-esteem. Members value the opportunity to learn about the music being rehearsed, and equally value the opportunity to learn solo parts.

A re'new'ed social capital indicator

Fellowship, as a social capital indicator, has been neglected in the social capital literature since Hanifan (1916), but the data from this study suggest that fellowship is significant in social capital and group development. Within the Community Choir, fellowship creates an environment in which friendship, successful cooperation, trust, and shared norms and values flourish. As described in the data in this study, fellowship may be understood as:

> That feeling of trust, camaraderie, togetherness, friendship, warmth, support and deep appreciation of the feelings and needs of members within a group, organization or community for other members of that group, organization or community. That feeling of fellowship is derived from shared interests, experiences, norms and values.

A community of common histories

The data reveal a new community, a *community of common histories.* Membership of this community is characterised by a propensity to participate in music groups and community organizations. The data suggest that Community Choir members were brought up to participate as children and

have continued to participate ever since. The 'common histories' of the choir members develop *Gemeinschaft* (Tönnies, 2001) qualities such as fellowship, comradeship, support for one another, trust, and friendship. As described in the data in this study, a community of common histories may be understood as a community whose members share common attitudes, interests, norms and values derived from common histories of life experiences and socialization regardless of diversity of cultural and geographic backgrounds.

Coda

As I read through the transcripts that form the basis of this research I realized that most of the choir members interviewed had essentially the same story to tell as I. Most began their interest in music as a small child with music in the home, school or church and often all three. Most can still name the music teachers they had when younger and can describe in great detail activities and events they participated in during their lives. They all continue to give to their community as a whole and to organizations such as the Community Choir within the community.

Many of the comments reflect choir members' perceptions of the 'grass-roots,' MiC, nature of the Milton Community Choir. Members tell of the enjoyment they get from participating with others. The voluntary nature of the choir is highlighted in descriptions of members meeting together in friendship and camaraderie.

Their activities are characterized by the formation of networks to facilitate action, the establishment of norms and values by which they and their groups and the community can function, trust in others and in themselves, long-term association with organizations, community pro-activity and leadership, close links with family and friends, and interest in the welfare of others and in furthering the best interests of the community. None of these

characterizations are overt, nor are their activities performed with thought of reward other than, maybe, a thank-you. However, these people along with hundreds of others in the Milton community enjoy working, using every means at their disposal, to further their organizations and the community in general.

My Story

It seemed to me that with the exception of my mother, all of my close family played instruments or sang. My grandmother had a piano in the living room and I was encouraged to play the piano from the moment I could sit upright. My grandmother, father and uncle were all pianists, they could all read music and could all sing. My father also played accordion and could strum chords on a guitar. I remember singing with them from a very young age, and playing for them when I was able. If the family is the fundamental unit of social capital then the glue that held the family together was applied in these family get-togethers.

As a young child still in primary school, in Dinnington, Yorkshire (a village with a population of about 38,000), I was encouraged to participate in community activities both musical and nonmusical. I remember attending Salvation Army Sunday School and being fascinated by the sounds of the Salvation Army Brass Band, a sound that has captivated me ever since.. Carol singing, accompanied by the band was a great experience both as a small child, and later when the school choir would sing with the band on the cold and snowy streets of Dinnington, in the days leading up to Christmas.

When I started at the large high school in the village (about 2,500 students) my parents arranged for me to have piano lessons from the head music teacher at the school, Mr. Drinkwater. This was, in hindsight, a turning point in my life. He encouraged me to join the school choir, learn to play all the brass instruments, the viola, violin and classical guitar, develop a working knowledge of almost every orchestral instrument, and taught me to arrange and compose music for these groups and instruments. I was encouraged to perform whenever and wherever the opportunity arose and, like Rebecca, this included hospitals, old-peoples homes, and for various community clubs in the village. Having had the opportunity to participate in community groups

centered upon the Salvation Army, I was now being provided with the opportunity to join other groups within school to specifically make music.

My experiences in the school choir and membership, whilst still in school, of the local Anglican Church choir, Dinnington Choral Society, and the Aston Madrigal Group shaped my love of choral music. Many of the major works my choirs have performed in my teaching life were works that I first learned in these choirs. The church choir, choral society and Concert Society were all directed by Mr. Drinkwater. The church choir provided me with a love of the 'four-square' harmony of Hymns Ancient and Modern, and the sound of (in my organ teacher's words) a, 'proper organ playing proper church organ music' – Bach! The choral society performed *Messiah* and Bach cantatas and Passions as well as more modern works by Benjamin Britten. My experiences with the local madrigal group introduced me to the magnificent works of the English and Italian Renaissance.

As well as learning piano I learned classical guitar, and had begun to have lessons on the pipe organ at the local Anglican Church. As a school student I was a member of the local Prize Silver Band (euphonium/baritone) and an occasional member of the orchestra (violin/viola/trombone) for the local operatic society. Many of these groups had members in common, and used their networks to further their organizations' activities by borrowing members from other groups to boost numbers, or provide skills that were desired. By the end of my secondary schooling I had, through Mr. Drinkwater's contacts with the community, begun singing lessons with a teacher of many local well-known singers, who also was an ex-concert pianist with the BBC. I had also achieved what, I suspect, my parents had dreamed of, 'letters after my name, and a 'cap and gown''.

Perhaps most of all, this teacher and my parents showed me that there was a life outside of the coal-mining village and a job down the mine. Mr.

Drinkwater and my father were determined that I should become a music teacher, if that was what I wanted. My parents and he supported me in this metamorphosis from working-class secondary modern schoolboy from a coal-mining village in the West Riding of Yorkshire, into a middle-class, educated, teacher/musician with aspirations to 'succeed'.

I succeeded Mr. Drinkwater as organist and choirmaster at the church and went to his old teacher training college to become a music teacher. On graduating I went back to Dinnington High School to work with Mr. Drinkwater on the music staff, and continued to be involved in local musical activities. I continued a close association with Mr. Drinkwater and his musical activities until migrating to Tasmania in 1976. I still visit him when I return to England.

My life in Tasmania has continued in the same fashion as in England. I continue to teach music, study, and be involved in community activities, as a participant in some activities and as a leader in others. This involvement culminated in the organization of the Milton Festival, a free ten-day community festival, which ran for nearly ten years. The festival succeeded because the only charge was to the social capital account of the community. As people drew on the social capital account the social capital of the community grew. The festival has now evolved into a high-profile concert series in which top professional performers provide concerts, and are supported by local music groups.

I continue to enjoy the friendship and fellowship of the other members, and enjoy contributing to the social capital of the Community Choir and of the community. Looking back over my life I can see that it is possible that I participate in community activities because, in the words of 'Luke', I may have 'caught it' from my family, and from my music teachers. Or, maybe I participate because, in the words of 'Henry', 'I grew up that way'.

CHAPTER SIX

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

CHAPTER SIX

Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction: 'The findings'

In addressing the main research question 'How is social capital manifested in a Community Choir?' several findings have emerged. Firstly, I suggest that a largely unrecognised social capital indicator, *fellowship*, is an important component in the creation of social capital in the Milton Community Choir. Secondly, I have identified a 'new' community, a *community of common histories* that has significance in terms of understanding why members of the Community Choir participate.

Thirdly, I suggest that community music may be separated into two forms. The first of these, Community Music (CM), is characterised by its funded, interventionist nature and its use as a tool in community development and social inclusion. Used in this way, CM may create initial bonds between participants, and encourage the development of *Gemeinschaft.*

The second, Music in the Community (MiC), is characterised by a community driven, 'grass-roots' approach to music-making that focuses on activity primarily intended to meet local interests and to give pleasure to the participants (Cahill, 1996). Often MiC grows out of CM activities and, on occasions, vice versa. I suggest that a MiC group such as the Community Choir builds on *Gemeinschaft* and uses the bonds formed within the group to further its own ends.

I suggest that whilst both forms of community music can generate social capital, the social capital generated by MiC is more sustainable.

The study suggests that social capital is manifested in and through the Milton Community Choir by overt actions of the choir members and via stated beliefs. In examining how social capital is manifested in the Milton Community Choir, a number of subsidiary research questions were addressed, specifically:

a) What social capital indicators are evident in the Community Choir?
b) How is social capital created in the Community Choir?
c) How is social capital used in the Community Choir?
d) What are the choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in their lives?
e) What are the choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in the community?

Social capital indicators evident in the Community Choir

The analysis of semi structured interviews conducted with 27 participating Community Choir members demonstrates that a number of social capital indicators are present in the Community Choir (subsidiary research question a.), both as individuals and as a group. In particular, the Community Choir manifests the social capital indicator of trust. The indicators of participation and interaction in civic and community activities with involvement with friends, collaboration and cooperation as integral components of the participation and interaction are also evident. Other indicators evident in the data are networks and connections, leadership, knowledge and identity resources, caring for and valuing others, membership of faith based organizations, shared norms and values, learning, involvement with families and friends, obligations and reciprocity, and, importantly, fellowship.

The creation of social capital in the Community Choir

The Community Choir data suggest that social capital is created in the Community Choir (subsidiary research question b.) through interactions between individual Choir members and with the wider community, and as a group through interactions with other community organizations.

Participation and interaction in civic and community activities

Putnam (1993) observes that community involvement (in activities such as community choirs) is significant in that it strengthens community social fabric, otherwise known as social capital. Coleman (1988) suggests that community involvement often produces social capital as a by-product. Such analysis is useful in that it identifies the significant role community participation plays in developing social capital. However, I suggest that the propensity of Community Choir members to participate is also an important aspect of understanding community participation.

Specifically, the data suggest that Community Choir members have a propensity to participate in community groups because they were brought up that way (Henry; Luke; Rebecca). Individual members of the Community Choir belong to many groups and organizations with Milton and the surrounding area (Appendix 3). Through participation in the Community Choir, members collaborate and cooperate with others, and in doing so create connections with others that lead to the formation of, 'social networks, norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them' (Putnam, 2000, p. 19).

Networks and connections

Putnam (2000) suggests that social networks facilitate the achievement of mutually beneficial goals, through cooperative action. For Putnam (2000),

social networks are characterised by: shared norms and values, trust, civic and community involvement, knowledge and identity resources, leadership, obligation and reciprocity, caring for and valuing others, faith based involvement, cooperation between individuals and groups, and, learning. Networks are developed and used by the Community Choir members to further the interests of themselves as individuals, the Community Choir as a whole, and the people and organizations within their personal networks.

Performances by the Community Choir during community and civic events may facilitate the development of supportive community contact and bridging social capital. This in turn creates more networks and strengthens the links between the Community Choir and the community. Organizations such as the Milton Community Choir may also foster the development of a close knit community. Connectivity is optimised as Community Choir members are also all members of other organizations, and have other networks. These interlinked networks bond and bridge the community together and facilitate the sharing of resources, community knowledge, and social inclusion.

Involvement with families and friends

Involvement with families and friends as a social capital indicator (Putnam, 2000, 2001) is manifested extensively by the Community Choir. A review of the data reveal that this involvement takes a variety of forms, the most common of which is supporting family by attending activities performed by family members. These activities can be as diverse as martial arts grading examinations, or musical activities such as concerts. Others support family members through difficult personal times such as illness. Constant communication with family via telephone, or other means if family does not live locally, is a common feature of stories.

Moreover, involvement with friends, such as fellow choir members, also features strongly in the stories of the College Choir members and may develop into even deeper relationships such as feelings of 'family'. Perhaps due in part to the relatively small local population, the contacts which individuals make through volunteering, or membership of other associations, enable close friendships to be formed with participants in those activities.

Indeed, organizations such as the Milton Community Choir can take the place of family in some cases. Australia is a physically isolated country and Tasmania, in turn, is isolated from mainland Australia. The North West region of Tasmania is considered to be 'remote' within Tasmania. In addition, many of the Community Choir members (for example Matthew, Lucy, Oliver, Rebecca, Laura and Liz) are migrants; others are descendents of migrants, or from other parts of the state or country. Some members indicate that the Community Choir, for them, is like a family (Olivia; Rebecca). In this way, the Community Choir again reflects its *Gemeinschaft* nature. I suggest that the 'weak voluntary associations' (Fukuyama, 1995, pp. 28-29) that may result from strong family ties are therefore less evident in the present case, because the Community Choir operates like a family, with strong bonding social capital.

Obligations and reciprocity

Obligations and reciprocity as social capital indicators (Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Fountain & Atkinson, 1998) are not manifested by Community Choir members in any formal manner, nor do these indicators appear overtly as 'enlightened self interest' (Fountain & Atkinson, 1998). In their interview responses, Community Choir members do not express any feeling of being indebted to audiences, or others, for any services or favours received; nor do the members express any overt expectation of reciprocal acts.

However, many members convey a sense of moral obligation and reciprocity. Community Choir members support each other (for example when someone sings solo), and expect that they will be supported in turn. Remarks about involvement and regular attendance within the choir also hint at feelings of reciprocity and obligation. Likewise, there is an implicit expectation that the Community Choir 'will' perform at a member's church if requested, or meet a particular community need, as identified by Community Choir members or other members of the community. Community Choir members also support each other by attending functions or events organised by those members. Such a reciprocal approach develops further trust and encourages networks to become expansive rather than defensive (Kolankiewicz, 1996).

Trust

For Community Choir members, trust may also grow out of civic and community involvement (Sirianni & Friedland, 1995), which has been shown to be an important social capital indicator (Putnam, 1993, 2000) and a significant feature in the lives of Community Choir members. The data suggest that the Community Choir, as a group of individuals, trusts that certain actions and norms (such as supporting each other and attending rehearsals regularly) will occur. For many, trust may grow out of other shared norms such as religious values, and codes of behaviour (Paldam & Svendsen, 1999).

Shared norms and values

Shared norms and values are a significant factor in group cohesion, as norms and values regulate the conduct of the individuals in a group or community (Coleman, 1988, S104). In the Milton Community Choir, the formation of trust between the members depends on co-operative behaviour amongst the members of the Community Choir, regulated by shared norms (NCVER,

2004). This study suggests that as a consequence of the common histories of the members of the Community Choir, similar norms and values have been developed in the members individually and in the Community Choir as a whole.

Knowledge and identity resources

The social capital indicators of knowledge of the community (knowledge resources), community identities (identity resources), and community infrastructure (consolidated resources) (Falk & Harrison, 2000) are evident in the narratives of the *community of common histories* that is the Milton Community Choir. Community Choir members such as Henry typify the knowledge held by Community Choir members, when he remarks that he knows members of service clubs such as Lions and Rotary in Milton and neighbouring towns, and, 'I taught at Kelsey so I know all those fellows, and all the choirs and the churches'.

In many cases Community Choir members have known 'those fellows' in the community all their lives. Long term membership of a wide range of community organizations (see Appendix 3) typifies the membership of the Community Choir, and creates a valuable resource of in-depth community knowledge (Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999).

Learning

Learning, either formal or informal, has been identified by many authors (Balatti & Falk, 2001; Falk, 2000; Falk & Kilpatrick, 1999; Field & Schuller, 1997; Schuller & Field, 1998) as a social capital indicator that results from learning interactions. For some Community Choir members, learning is 'personal growth' (Isabella). Community Choir members express interest in self-improvement via learning, including studying repertoire, and learning to

master their voice. For some (Isabella; Luke), the personal growth experienced through Community Choir membership shines through their narratives and encourages further personal development.

Membership of faith based organizations

Membership of faith based organizations is a significant social capital indicator (Ammerman, 1996; Putnam, 2000; Saguaro Seminar, 2001) and is evidenced by many members of the Community Choir (Appendix 3). The individuals who make up the Community Choir generally play a major part in the activities of their churches. For these members, the church provides a significant environment for the development of leadership skills, such as being lay-preachers, choir members, or parish council members. Active participation in faith based activities also fosters an environment of *Gemeinschaft.* I suggest that a key strength of *Gemeinschaft*, bonding social capital, lies in its transferability. Individual members who feel empowered to assume leadership roles in the Community Choir may also feel empowered to do the same in other arenas.

Leadership

Leadership, as a social capital indicator (Blakeley, 1997; Bullen & Onyx, 1998; Saguaro Seminar, 2001) is manifested in the actions of many who are both formal and informal leaders within the Community Choir, and within other community and voluntary organizations. Within the Community Choir, such individuals may be section leaders, committee members, the publicity officer, relief pianist or accompanist, or act as liaison person with venue providers. In other community organizations, they may serve as office bearers or produce newsletters, and voluntarily help where they (by virtue of their in-depth community knowledge) identify a need.

Some members commented that they would only be part of groups to which they could make a significant contribution or make a difference (Henry; Luke). These members therefore arguably extend the notion of leadership to encompass a sense of social responsibility. This may be evidenced by expressing opinions, taking positions of responsibility within committees, or by contributing help when needed often behind the scenes so that, 'no-one knows that it's done, but it's done' (Henry). For some, leadership may manifest itself in support for others. In turn, supportive actions on the part of some members may encourage others to assume leadership roles that they may not otherwise have undertaken.

Caring for and valuing others

The social capital indicators of caring for and valuing others are strong in civil societies (Putnam, 2000). These indicators are reflected in the activities undertaken by the participants in their everyday lives, as expressed in their narratives. Some members (for example Charles and Ruby) are intimately involved with caring for individuals in their community, another, (Benjamin), sponsors a child overseas through World Vision. Whilst these caring and valuing activities are often linked with faith based activities, other members (such as Henry and Rebecca) are more directly involved in service organizations such as Neighbourhood Watch, Rotary, Lions, or charities such as Hospital Auxiliary and Hospice.

Fellowship

A key finding in this study is that *fellowship*, largely unrecognized in the literature, is an important indicator of social capital in the Milton Community Choir. More particularly, fellowship creates an ambience for successful cooperation within this group, thus facilitating social capital development. Members enjoy the company of each other because of their common

experiences, values and knowledge. The majority of members are of similar age, social class, and professional mix. In this way, fellowship of a temporal nature may be created. As the majority also attend a church of one kind or another on a regular basis (Appendix 3), it could be conjectured that common involvement in faith based activities provides common ground for the development of fellowship of a spiritual nature. As one member observed, 'birds of a feather flock together' (Henry).

Missing indicators

Finally, it is noteworthy that not all of the indicators of social capital identified in the literature are evident in the narratives. As an example, social capital indicators relating to work connections (Bullen & Onyx, 1998) do not figure strongly in the data. This may be due in part to the majority of Community Choir members being retired from work. However, some members, for example Henry and Luke, maintain networks formed at work, even in retirement.

Since social capital appears to be strong within the context of the Community Choir, I argue that it is not necessary for all indicators of social capital to be present for social capital to exist, be maintained, and developed. Indeed, the data from this study demonstrate that social capital is context specific and its continued existence is contingent upon the maintenance of place and connection.

In the case of the Milton Community Choir, the place, (Milton), is inextricably linked to social capital development within the Community Choir as a MiC organization. The common histories of the members facilitate the connections, which are an important part of the development of social capital.

The creation of social capital in the Community Choir

The data identify a new community, a *community of common histories,* and this study explores the nature of this community. The identification of the Community Choir as a *community of common histories* has significant importance for understanding a) why individuals participate in community groups; and, b) how social capital is created in community groups such as the Milton Community Choir (subsidiary research question b.).

Further, I contend that Community Choir members, as members of a *community of common histories,* have been encouraged from childhood through adulthood to have a propensity to participate with others in community and civic organizations. All Community Choir members appear to be 'joiners,' as all are members of other community or civic organizations. The stories of Henry and Luke infer that social capital may be enhanced in our communities if we can bring up our children to participate in community activities, and to experience the joys of participating with others whether it is on a stage, in the sporting field, or in another context.

The suggestion is implicit that if we instill in the young the habit of joining something, the habit may stay with them throughout their lives. Their narratives feature participation in school choirs and/or church choirs as children, church, community and civic activities during early adulthood, and, finally, service and charity organizations (such as Lions and Hospital Auxiliary) in later life. I also suggest that the propensity to participate in and of itself facilitates creation of group related social capital indicators such as participation, network building, and, common norms and values.

The common histories therefore create the common knowledge, skills, and competencies that comprise human capital (NCVER, 2004), and build strong social capital at individual and group level. These common histories enable

the group to grow and, in turn, facilitate the building of stronger social capital within the group, which is capitalised upon for the mutual benefit of the choir member, the Community Choir and the community. This cyclical process thus creates an environment in which more social capital may be built, more civic and community involvement may develop and more opportunity for the creation of common histories may arise.

In Chapter One, I described how the Community Choir, as a MiC organization, built upon the bonding and bridging social capital that had been created when the Community Choir was a CM organization. As a CM organization, the Milton College Choir was heavily involved in civic and community activities. Its activities highlighted education for life, inclusion and access, the development of performance skills in choir members, and bringing the community to the college as the audience. These activities, together with the Community Choir's civic and community involvement, led to social capital creation and development and community building, which in turn, led to further social capital development.

The use of social capital in the Community Choir

Social capital is used in the Community Choir (subsidiary research question c.) in a number of ways. During the CM phase, CM indirectly showed the Community Choir and the community what experience was possible. The strong bonding social capital resources created as a CM choir in part empowered choir members to take ownership of the Community Choir. Thus, CM choir members were able to develop the Community Choir into a self-managed, independent, Music in the Community (MiC) choir (the Milton Community Choir), when the association with the college ceased. The goodwill generated between the Community Choir, as a CM group, and other community groups continued seamlessly when the Milton College Choir became the Milton Community Choir. Occasionally, the Community Choir

developed strong bridging social capital when it combined with many other regional groups, both choral and instrumental, to create large scale community musical events, such as *Braddon – a place of our own* and, *Carmina Burana.* Successful Community Choir activities led to further involvement in the community, the strengthening of links between MiC groups, and, the creation of further social capital.

I suggest that the Community Choir uses social capital to create *Gemeinschaft* qualities including community of spirit, a willingness to work together for the same end and purpose, friendship, and, a 'comradeship of minds [that] comes alive through the medium of artistic sympathy or creative purpose' (Tönnies, 2001, pp. 27-29). *Gemeinschaft* works in similar ways at the group level as bonding social capital does at the individual linking level. Social capital creates, and is in turn created by, a close knit *Gemeinschaft* organization. *Gemeinschaft* also provides a secure foundation for the Milton Community Choir to bridge and link through to other groups and organizations, as the members see themselves as part of something larger than the Community Choir.

In this way, bridging social capital is used by the group to create horizontal links between the group and other organizations. Linking social capital is used by the Community Choir to create links with groups or individuals that are perceived to have higher status or power and may be in a position to help the Community Choir in some way. For example, linking social capital may link the Community Choir with a specific church or civic organization such as the local Council that, in turn may lead to use of free rehearsal or performance venues.

The data highlight the nature of the Community Choir as a *community of common histories*, and suggests links between that 'community' and the generation and use of social capital. Choir members' stories highlight the

sense of a supportive, caring, *Gemeinschaft* community whose members have common histories. The data suggest that the common histories of the choir members, and the presence of the social capital indicators of collaboration, cooperation, and fellowship, may in part create a sense of unity and bonding social capital. Thus, bonding social capital embedded within common histories continues to hold the group together after a specific goal, such as a performance, has been reached.

The data also suggest that fellowship amongst the members is used to foster an environment in which social capital indicators such as trust, faith based engagement, caring for and valuing others flourish. The data further suggest that fellowship contributes significantly to the supportive ambience of the Community Choir by providing, 'a very strong caring, loving attitude to one another' (Olivia) and a safe environment for individual learning and personal growth. The friendly atmosphere of the Community Choir enables members to connect and build on these connections to develop what one member refers to as, 'sense of camaraderie' (Oliver).

The Milton Community Choir also uses social capital to sustain itself. As a self-supporting MiC group, operating funds are often low. The Community Choir uses social capital to solve such consequent problems as limited available repertoire or access to new published music. For example, various members of the Community Choir have composed music or brought in favourite music for the Community Choir to sing. Networking takes the place of funding when dealing with advertising, and venue provision for rehearsals and performance.

Choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in their lives

Many members of the Milton Community Choir consider that the Community Choir plays a major role in their lives (subsidiary research question d.). The Community Choir provides an opportunity to sing, socialise, and experience personal growth as the members learn new skills. The social capital indicator of spending time with friends and family is evidenced in the interview responses of many Milton Community Choir members. For Community Choir members such as Olivia, the Community Choir provides an opportunity to 'enjoy being together' with friends who have, 'a very strong caring, loving attitude to one another'. Olivia suggests that the strength of the Community Choir 'has come out of their fellowship in the Community Choir. It is very durable and strong, it is a life support, isn't it?'

As a MiC choir, the Milton Community Choir meets the needs of members. Singers participate in the Community Choir because they love to sing. Luke suggests that members particularly love to sing oratorios and similar music, with others. Participants such as Olivia and Charles observe that Community Choir members enjoy the fellowship of people 'like them' out of which emerges social capital. Comments from other members support the view that in the safe, trusting, and supportive *Gemeinschaft* choir environment, members manifest social capital indicators as they learn musical, leadership, networking, and other skills that satisfy personal development goals. In Chapter Five, Isabella remarks on the personal growth that she has experienced through performing as a soloist in the Community Choir. Further, Isabella makes indirect reference to the impact that informal learning has had on her when she comments that, 'I'm getting more confidence now. I can remember listening to different Community Choir members and thinking, 'How are they doing that? And what were they doing then?' I can almost do it now'.

Choir members' perceptions of the role of the Community Choir in the community

For many members, the Community Choir has an important role in the community (subsidiary research question e.). Through participating in community activities the Community Choir develops community cohesion, and a sense of place and pride in the community. A number of members mentioned an apparent community expectation that the Community Choir will play a major role in charity, civic and major community events (Charlotte; Daniel; Olivia). In many instances these events involve the Community Choir in bridging social capital development when performing for and with other musical and community organizations (Meg). Community Choir participation in these events Rachel suggests plays a central role in bringing the community together.

Conclusions

This study suggests that choirs and similar organizations are strong community resources that are crucial in the creation of social capital that benefits the whole community. Choirs that embody the features of MiC (including strong community connection, individual autonomy, bonds, and, fellowship) greatly enhance the chances of successful creation of social capital, by binding together people of similar interests and backgrounds to create an environment of mutual cooperation, friendship, and, goodwill. Milton Community Choir members expressed the wish for more social activities so that they can get to know new members better and find out more about their fellow Community Choir members. These activities create an environment in which fellowship develops. Time spent developing a social program for this group may therefore prove to be advantageous.

Identification of a new community, the *community of common histories,* is important to this case study as it identifies a prime reason for the propensity to participate exhibited by Community Choir members. Similar backgrounds create similar attitudes, norms and values. The backgrounds of the participants were rich in musical experiences, volunteering, and community and civic involvement from childhood. In a sense, the Community Choir members were brought up 'primed to participate'.

The mix of common histories and fellowship creates the behavioural characteristics that we identify as social capital indicators. Social capital, as developed in the Milton Community Choir, has proven longevity and resilience. The more that the Community Choir is called upon to fulfil a civic and community role and hence expend its stocks of social capital, the more social capital is generated, and the greater its stock of social capital becomes. In such a way, through MiC, the whole community can capitalise on community music.

The findings of this case study have applicability primarily for this Community Choir. However, the findings may also be transferable to other choirs and other group settings, especially when such groups also consist of members with similar backgrounds.

Recommendations

This study highlights opportunities for further research in several areas. Little research has been undertaken on the social capital indicator 'fellowship' since Hanifan (1916) included fellowship in his description of important elements in peoples' lives nearly a century ago. The significance of fellowship to the Milton Community Choir suggests that its presence or absence may play a significant role in the success or otherwise of other organizations and communities, particularly with regard to social capital generation and

development. Further research is needed to explore the ways in which fellowship is manifested, banked, drawn upon and developed in other organizations and settings.

Further study into the identification of MiC organizations may provide further insight into the importance of 'grass-roots', self-organised and owned activities for the development of sustainable social capital and sustainable community. For example, there is scope for further study into the relative strengths and sustainability of social capital generated by interventionist activity versus 'grass-roots' activity, particularly in fields such as community development.

Finally, studies into the nature and demographics of successful community groups may add weight to the notion of *communities of common histories* as an indicator of propensity to participate in group and community activities. Such studies may prove to be valuable for governments at all levels. In particular, participation in activities with others, together with the resultant boost in networking and friendship, has significant importance for community cohesion and policy areas such as community health (Bygren et al., 1996; Johansson et al., 2001).

Milton may not be Putnam's (1993, 1995b) Tuscany, and the number of choral societies in the city may have little bearing on support that individuals or groups get from the local council. However, the data suggest that it is important to participate, and to support participation, in MiC organizations for a number of reasons. Social capital and community well-being are enhanced in communities that have high community participation rates. Grass-roots driven activities such as MiC help to build communities. In addition to fostering musical skills development, MiC empowers participants to develop networks and maintain or improve their community connectedness.

MiC is also a powerful way to involve individuals of all ages in community activities. Community choirs such as the Milton Community Choir attract predominantly older, retired people. MiC provides a supportive environment for these older people to use talents and competencies (such as leadership skills) developed over many years of work and community involvement. The data in this study suggest that in MiC choirs, individuals may continue their education formally and informally in a safe and caring environment. Through MiC, participants keep active and meet people with similar interests and backgrounds. For individuals such as Ruby, MiC provides a focus for their lives on at least one evening per week, as, 'even if it is pouring with rain, Monday night has been choir night for 18 years'.

Ultimately, the social benefits of MiC may have other potentially important social consequences. The literature suggests that people who participate in community activities keep their minds and bodies active, live longer and stay healthier than those who do not (Bygren et al., 1996; Johansson et al., 2001). Accordingly, the benefits of MiC activities may have particular significance at government policy level in terms of addressing the health and well-being of Australia's aging population.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Thoughts on the choir

Thoughts on the choir

1. In a short paragraph describe the Community Choir

2. In a short paragraph describe yourself as a Community Choir member

3a. What I like most about the Community Choir

3b. What I like least about the Community Choir

3c. What do you bring to the Community Choir?

3d. What does the Community Choir give you?

4. What does the Community Choir contribute to the community?

APPENDIX 2

Demographic survey

Demographic Survey

Questionnaire. **Name** _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. If you answer No to part a) of any question please move to the next question without answering part b).

1. Please circle as appropriate:
   Male/Female

2. Circle the age range in which you fall
   20-30
   31-40
   41-50
   51-60
   61-65
   66-70
   Over 70

3. For how many years have you been a member of this choir?
   _____

4a. Were you a member of any choirs before joining this choir?
   Yes/No

   4b. If you answered Yes please list the choirs below
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5a. Are you currently a member of any other choirs? Yes/No

   5b. If you answered Yes please list them below.
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6a. Did you sing in choirs as a child? Yes/No

6b. If you answered Yes was it a school/church/community/performance choir?

7a. Do you play an instrument? Yes/No

7b. If you answered Yes please list them below.

_____
_____
_____
_____

8. If you have any music qualifications please the highest qualifications below

AMEB	Grade_____	Subject_____
Music Theory	Grade_____	Subject_____
Trinity College of Music	Grade_____	Subject_____
London College of Music	Grade_____	Subject_____
Music Diploma	A.Mus.A/L.Mus.A/	Others_____
Music degree	B.Mus/M.Mus/B.P.A/	Others_____
Music Major	_____	

9. Circle the voice type that most closely matches yours

Soprano
Alto
Tenor
Bass

10. Have you ever had vocal training? Yes/No

11. Other than music qualifications, what is your highest level of education? (Please circle).

Grade 10
Grade 11/12
TAFE Diploma
TAFE other
University degree/diploma
Other (please specify)_____

12a. Are you currently in the paid workforce? Yes/No

12b.If you answered Yes what is your current paid occupation?

_____

13. If you are retired please state your last paid occupation.

_____

14a. Do you work in a voluntary capacity? Yes/No

14b. If you answered Yes please list the voluntary work you do.

_____
_____
_____
_____

15a. Are you currently a student? Yes/No

15b. If you answered Yes please circle the appropriate response(s)

Part-time
Full-time
Tertiary
Secondary
TAFE
Adult Ed
Distance
Other (please specify)_____

16. What is your area of study? _____

17a. Are you a member of any other performance groups? Yes/No

17b. If you answered Yes please circle the group(s) to which you belong.

CWA Drama
Milton Wind Band
City of Milton Orchestra
Milton Brass
Other (please specify) _____

18a. Do belong to any non-performance arts groups? Yes/No

18b. If you answered Yes please circle the groups to which you belong.

Coastal Art Group

Lapidary Club
Other (please specify) _____

19a. Are you a member of any community organisation(s)? Yes/No

19b. If you answered Yes please circle the groups to which you belong.

Church or similar
Scouts or similar
CWA
Rotary
Lions
Soroptimist
Chamber of Commerce
Other(s) (please specify)_____

Tom Langston

APPENDIX 3

Demographic overview

Demographic overview

Of the 28 people surveyed 17 were female and 11 were male. There were 12 sopranos, five altos, four tenors and seven basses. None of the 28 was younger than 40 years of age. Seven of the 11 males were 61 years of age or over and ten of the 17 females were 61 years of age or over.

26 members answered the question relating to years of membership in the Community Choir. The average membership time was 11.25 years.

10 males and 14 females had been members of choirs prior to joining the Community Choir. Their previous choral experiences were mainly church choirs (the total of 34 for this response was derived from some members listing prior membership of several church choirs.) 23 responses showed prior membership of community choirs, 11 of school choirs and two of university choirs. 10 males and 10 females were currently in other choirs with 18 showing membership of other community choirs and 14, membership of church choirs.

24 out of 28 members indicated that they had been in choirs as a child, with membership of school and church choirs accounting for the majority of responses. This linking of participation in musical activities by elderly people with childhood musical interest agrees with the findings of Darrough (1992, p. 27.)

Several choir members had other musical training, six males played piano/keyboard and 12 females played instruments. Of the instruments played by females in the choir 11 played piano, three played organ, and several played guitar or orchestral instruments. Only one choir member (female) had a music diploma of any kind although several had passed AMEB examinations in practical and/or theory subjects. 13 females and five males indicated that they had had vocal training.

All male members had completed higher levels of education than grade ten, two females had completed education to grade nine, three females had completed grade ten and the rest had completed higher qualifications than grade ten.

As may be expected from the age range of the choir most were retired at the time of the survey. Five males and six females were currently still in the paid workforce and all worked in professional positions such as accountants, teachers, consultants, and managers.

APPENDIX 4

Tables

Table 1

Participants' gender, age, education

Number in choir (n)	28	
	Participants	
	n	%
Gender		
Male	11	39.3
Female	17	60.7
Age Range		
Male		
<40	0	0
41-50	1	3.6
51-60	3	10.7
61-65	3	10.7
66-70	2	7.1
>70	2	7.1
Female		
<40	0	0
41-50	1	3.6
51-60	6	21.4
61-65	6	21.4
66-70	3	10.7
>70	1	10.7
Highest level of education		
Males		
Grade 9	0	0
Grade 10	0	0
Grade 11/12	1	3.6
TAFE diploma	1	3.6
TAFE other	1	3.6
University degree/dip	9	32.1
Masters	1	3.6
Other	7	25
Females		
Grade 9	2	7.1
Grade 10	3	10.7
Grade 11/12	6	21.4
TAFE diploma	1	3.6
TAFE other	2	7.1
University degree/dip	0	0
Masters	0	0
Other	13	46.4
No answer	1	3.6

Table 2
Participants' years of membership of Community Choir and prior choral experiences

Number in choir (n)=28

			Participants n	%
Years of membership in the Community Choir				
	1		2	7.1
	4		1	3.6
	5		1	3.6
	8		2	7.1
	9		5	17.9
	10		4	14.3
	12		1	3.6
	14		1	3.6
	15		4	14.3
	16		2	7.1
	18		3	10.7
	20		1	3.6
Total	299 Years	Average = 299/27	11.1 Years	
No answer			1	3.6
Choral experiences prior to joining the Community Choir				
	Male		10	35.7
	Female		14	50
No prior choral experience				
	Male		1	3.6
	Female		1	3.6
	Unknown gender		2	7.1
Type of prior choral experience				
	Community choirs		18	64.3
	Church choirs		34	121
	School choirs		11	39.3
	University choirs		2	7.1
	CWA		2	7.1
	Other		3	10.7

Table 3
Participants' current choir memberships and childhood choral participation

Number in choir (n=28)

	Participants	
	n	**%**
Current membership in other choirs		
Male	10	35.7
Female	10	35.7
Unknown gender	1	3.6
No current membership in other choirs		
Male	1	3.6
Female	5	17.9
No answer	1	3.6
Kinds of (other) choirs in which members currently participate		
Community choirs	14	50
Church choirs	14	50
School	1	3.6
CWA	3	10.7
Childhood participation in choirs		
Male	8	28.6
Female	16	57.1
Did not participate in choirs as a child		
Male	3	10.7
Female	1	3.6
Kinds of choirs in which members participated as children		
Males		
School	7	25
Church	6	21.4
Female		
School	14	50
Church	9	32.1
Community Choir	3	10.7
Performance choir	3	10.7

Table 4
Participants' membership of other performance and non-performing arts groups

Number in choir (n)=28

	Participants	
	n	**%**
Currently a member of other performance groups		
Male	0	0
Female	7	25
Not currently a member of other performance group		
Male	9	32.1
Female	8	28.6
No answer	4	14.3
Type of performance group in which members participate		
Female		
CWA Drama	3	10.7
Church choir	3	10.7
Milton Musical Society	1	3.6
Currently a member of non-performing arts group		
Male	2	7.1
Female	5	17.9
Not currently a member of non-performing arts group		
Male	9	32.1
Female	9	32.1
No answer	3	10.7
Type of non-performing arts group in which members participate		
Male		
Coastal Art Group	1	3.6
Milton Little Theatre	1	3.6
Milton Chamber Music	1	3.6
Kelsey Art Circle	1	3.6
Female		
Coastal Art Group	2	7.1
Arts Council	1	3.6
Victoria League	1	3.6
AIR	1	3.6
Exhibiting	1	3.6
Milton Embroidery and Patchwork Guild	1	3.6

Table 5
Participants' membership of community organizations

Number in choir (n)=28

	Participants	
	n	**%**
Currently member of community organizations		
Male	11	39.3
Female	15	53.6
Not currently a member of community organizations		
Male	0	0
Female	2	0
Organizations in which members participate		
Male		
Church or similar	8	28.6
Scouts or similar	1	3.6
Lions	1	3.6
Hospice	1	3.6
Probus	3	10.7
Neighbourhood Watch	1	3.6
Assoc. Ind. Retirees	1	3.6
Sporting group	1	3.6
KSC	1	3.6
Parish Council	1	3.6
Garden Club	1	3.6
Female		
Church or similar	13	46.4
Scouts or similar	1	3.6
CWA	3	10.7
Lions	1	3.6
Arts Council	1	3.6
Victoria League for Commonwealth Friendship	2	7.1
Assoc. Ind. Retirees	1	3.6
Art on the Coast	1	3.6
Rostrum	1	3.6

Table 6
Participants' currently involved in study

Number in choir (n)=28

	Participants	
	n	**%**
Currently a student		
Male	1	3.6
Female	5	17.9
Not currently a student		
Male	10	35.7
Female	11	39.3
No answer	1	3.6
Type of study		
Male		
Part time	1	3.6
Female		
Part time	2	7.1
TAFE	1	3.6
Adult Education	4	14.3
Area of study		
Male		
Music	1	3.6
Vocal	1	3.6
Female		
Theology	1	3.6
Writing	1	3.6
Miniature Art	1	3.6
Yoga	2	7.1
Workplace Assessment	1	3.6

Table 7
Participants' voice type, vocal training and instruments played

Number in choir (n)=28

	Participants	
	n	**%**
Voice type		
Soprano	12	42.9
Alto	5	17.9
Tenor	4	14.3
Bass	7	25
Members who have received vocal training		
Male	5	17.9
Female	13	46.4
Members who have had no vocal training		
Male	6	21.4
Female	2	7.1
No answer	2	7.1
Members who play an instrument		
Male	6	21.4
Female	12	42.9
Members who do not play an instrument		
Male	6	21.4
Female	4	14.3
Instruments played		
Male		
Piano	6	21.4
Other keyboard	1	3.6
Female		
Piano	11	39.3
Pipe organ	3	10.7
Recorder	2	7.1
Flute	1	3.6
Trumpet	1	3.6
Violin	2	7.1
Guitar	2	7.1
Piano accordion	1	3.6
Clarinet	1	3.6

Table 8
Participants' music qualifications

Number in choir (n)=28

	Participants	
	n	**%**
Practical music qualifications gained by Community Choir members		
Male		
AMEB Practical		
Grade 1-4	1	3.6
Grade 5-8	3	10.7
Subject		
Voice	4	14.3
Female		
AMEB Practical		
Grade 1-4	4	14.3
Grade 5-8	4	14.3
Subject		
Voice	4	14.3
Piano	5	17.9
Theory of music qualifications gained by Community Choir members		
Male		
AMEB Theory		
Grade 1-4	2	7.1
Female		
AMEB Theory		
Grade 1-4	1	3.6
Grade 5-8	3	10.7
Music diploma gained by Community Choir members		
Male	0	0
Female		
A. Mus. A/L. Mus. A	1	3.6
Music Major	2	7.1

Table 9
Participants' voluntary work

Number in choir (n)=28

	Participants	
	n	**%**
Currently working in voluntary capacity		
Male	8	28.6
Female	13	46.4
Not currently working in voluntary capacity		
Male	3	10.7
Female	4	14.3
Voluntary activities		
Male		
Music activities	2	7.1
Hospice	2	7.1
Soccer Club	1	3.6
Online Access Centre	1	3.6
Meals on Wheels	1	3.6
Lions Club	1	3.6
Neighbourhood Watch	1	3.6
School for Seniors	1	3.6
Church	2	7.1
Female		
Music activities	7	25
Church	5	17.9
Hospital/Community Health	.6	21.4
Victoria League	1	3.6
Youth Group	1	3.6
Blood Donor	1	3.6
Targa Tasmania	1	3.6
Parks and Wildlife	1	3.6
Support	1	3.6
Treasurer (3 organizations)	1	3.6
Teacher	1	3.6
No answer	1	3.6

Table 10
Participants' workforce participation

Number in choir (n) =28

	n	%
Currently in paid workforce		
Male	5	17.9
Female	6	21.4
Not currently in paid workforce		
Male	7	25
Female	10	35.7
Current occupation		
Male		
Financial adviser	1	3.6
Accountant	1	3.6
Computer consultant	1	3.6
Teacher	2	7.1
Female		
Teacher	1	3.6
TAFE librarian	1	3.6
Vocal coach	1	3.6
Private music teaching	1	3.6
Health Dept.	1	3.6
If retired – last occupation(s)		
Male		
Teacher	2	7.1
Metallurgist	1	3.6
Medical practitioner	1	3.6
Engineer	1	3.6
Registered nurse	1	3.6
Female		
Clinical Nurse II	1	3.6
Registered Nurse	1	3.6
Teacher	3	10.7
Secretary	1	3.6
Medical practice manager	1	3.6
Music teacher/pianist	1	3.6
Tutor – retail etc.	1	3.6
Parks and wildlife	1	3.6
Seal relocation	1	3.6
Assessment officer (Health)	1	3.6
Girl Friday	1	3.6
No answer	1	3.6

APPENDIX 5

Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

Part 1. Greeting and introduction

Purpose of the interview and outline of the structure of the interview.
Reminder of confidentiality of information.

Part 2. Demographics

Core question: Please describe yourself to me.
Sub questions, hints etc.

1. How old are you?
2. What voice part do you sing?
3. How long have you been in the Community Choir?
4. How many and what kind of choirs have you been in before joining this choir?
5. Are you in any other choirs currently?
6. What exposure to music did you have as a child?
7. How musical are you; do you play any instrument, for instance?
7. Have you had any formal music training? If yes, please describe it.
8. Please describe your education, highest level of education reached and so on
9. Please describe your last significant paid employment
10. How would you describe yourself in terms of the local community?

Part 3. The Community Choir as an entity

Core question: Describe the Community Choir as an entity and as part of the community.
Sub questions, hints etc.

11. Describe the Community Choir as if to someone who had never seen or heard it
12. Describe how you see the Community Choir in terms of its contribution to the local community
13. Do you think adult participation (in community music) leads to a greater sense of community? If yes, why, if no why not?
14. If you could change anything about the Community Choir culture what would you change?

Part 4. Choir members

Core question: Describe how you see yourself as a member of the Community Choir.

Sub questions, hints etc.

15. How would you describe the members of the Milton Community Choir
16. Describe why you participate in the Community Choir, your beliefs and values
17. What are the characteristics of a good Community Choir member?
18. How would you describe your attendance at rehearsals? Do you attend regularly?
19. Is your attendance affected by external or internal factors?
20. Why do you think others participate?
21. What do you think their beliefs and values are?
22. How do you see your relationship with other Community Choir members, do you know each other well; do you socialize outside of Community Choir? Do you feel valued by the others in the Community Choir?
23 How do you see your role within the Community Choir?
24. How do you think others see you as a Community Choir member?

Part 5. Interpersonal relationships

Core question: Describe yourself as a member of the community.

Sub questions, hints etc.

25. How well do you know your near neighbors, their names, family members, occupations and so on?
26. How would you describe your interest in the community, do you attend festivals, community events, theatre, how often?
27. Would you describe yourself as a 'joiner?' What do you see as the characteristics of a 'joiner?'
28. Do you act as a volunteer in the community? If yes could you please describe your involvement?
29. Do you attend any form of worship? How often, what kind?
30. Describe your attendance at community meetings, attendance regularity, kinds of meetings and so on.
31. Are there some kinds of community meetings that you wouldn't attend? Why?
32. Would you please describe your community political involvement if any? Do you sign petitions, attend meetings, write or talk to the local politician about community matters?
33. How would you describe the level of commitment to the community and care for the community of yourself, your friends, members of organizations with which you are involved?
34. Are you a 'family person', do you visit family and friends regularly?

Part 6. Motivation
Core question: What motivates you to participate in the Community Choir?
Sub questions, hints etc.

35. What are the best and worst parts of the rehearsals?
36. What are the best parts of performances?
37. If you were trying to get someone to join the Community Choir what would you tell them?
38. Does membership of the Community Choir have an impact on your self-esteem?
39. Did childhood experiences affect your motivation to participate?
40. Who/what has been the biggest influence on your motivation to participate?
41. Describe one of the best and worst moments you had as a member of the Community Choir?
42. What other activities affect your motivation to participate in the Community Choir negatively or positively?
43. What makes the Community Choir ' work'?
44. Is there anything else that you would like to say about your motivation to participate in the Community Choir?

Part 7. The community (social capital)
Core question: Describe the local community generally and musically.
Sub questions, hints etc.

45. Can you describe the local community? For example its nature and reason for being, the population, why people live here?
46. How involved is the community with social problems within the community? For example, are there local organizations that attempt to meet the needs of particular sections of the community?
47. Has there been a time when the community has banded together to face a significant problem?
48. Could you describe some significant community organizations?
49. Could you describe some significant musical organizations?
50. Who are the main 'movers and shakers' within the local musical community? How would you describe them in terms of the help and support they receive and give to community music organizations?
51. What social problems exist in this community and how do you feel that these problems may be solved?
52. How would you describe the involvement of other community members in community activities, and could it be improved?
53. Who participates – men, women, young people, employed, unemployed, what percentages or ratios of involvement?