# Birmingham choir founder wins prestigious national award

**Monday 27 November, 2017**

**Making Music's Lady Hilary Groves Prize given to Clare Edwards, founder of Birmingham-base choir *notorious*, for 20 years of service creating music opportunities for all**

- **National prize** awarded by **Making Music** for Edwards' imaginative and enthusiastic championing of musical activities over several decades
- Edwards has led unique concerts featuring everything from **Mozart to Madness** in venues as varied as a **coffin factory** and a **local tip**
- Award was presented on Saturday 25 November at **20th anniversary concert** at **Birmingham Town Hall**

Dorothy Wilson, Chair of **Making Music**, presented **Clare Edwards** with the organisation's **Lady Hilary Groves Prize** for 2017 at a concert this Saturday. Awarded to one individual in the UK each year, the Prize is presented for outstanding contribution to music in the community.

In 1997, Clare (newly returned from studying music at Sheffield University) decided to found a new kind of choir, specifically aimed at reaching the busy, working twenty-something professionals often missing from choral societies.

20 years later, under her baton the choir - ***notorious*** – has performed more than 120 concerts in 65 different venues with programmes blending contemporary and classical repertoire (including pairing Mozart with Freddie Mercury) in venues as varied as a coffin factory (on Halloween), a cave (with the audience on barges), and a local tip (joining with the Bishop of Birmingham to promote reducing waste at Christmas).

Making Music, the UK's organisation for leisure-time music making, chose Clare from a large number of nominees put forward by its member groups across the country.

**Clare Birks**, Making Music Vice-Chair said:

*"Clare Edwards has initiated many musical events and activities, and sustained them over a long period, continually pushing at the boundaries and adding new excitements. We were particularly impressed by the imagination and enthusiasm she has put into making music accessible. This has enabled her activities to reach people who would otherwise have little or no opportunity to enjoy music. 'Reaching out' chimes very much with Making Music's own direction and so we are very pleased to recognise Clare's contribution and achievement."*

**Rosemary Dyson**, of *notorious* choir said:

*Notorious quite simply is Clare - her artistic vision, her passion and her sheer zest for music and life. Without her, the choir would not exist and 20 years of exciting, eclectic and inclusive music making would not have happened. Her contributions to music making both locally and in the wider community mean we cannot think of a more deserving winner.*

**---Ends---**

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For more information or to arrange an interview with Clare Edwards, please contact Ollie Mustill, Marketing and Comms Manager, Making Music: ollie@makingmusic.org.uk / 020 7939 6038

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Registered Charity in England and Wales no. 249219 and in Scotland no. SC038849

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Birmingham :: Lady Hilary Groves :: Clare Edwards :: Choir ::

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**Making Music**

Since 1935, **Making Music** has championed leisure-time music groups across the UK with practical services, artistic development opportunities and by providing a collective voice for its members.

The organisation now represents over 3,300 groups made up of around 180,000 musicians of all types, genres and abilities. We help them run their group so they can get on with making music!

www.makingmusic.org.uk

**The Lady Hilary Groves Prize**

Established in 1990 to commemorate conductor Sir Charles Groves' 75th birthday, the national prize marks the contribution of Lady Hilary Groves to Making Music as both Vice-President and an ardent supporter of leisure-time music-making in the UK. The prize, a certificate signed by Making Music's patron the Duchess of Kent, is presented annually to an individual member of an affiliated organisation who has made an outstanding contribution to music in the community.

www.makingmusic.org.uk/our-work/awards/groves-prizes

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