The Caulfield City Choir celebrated its tenth year in 1956 with a party held at the Caulfield Park Bowling Club, and its next decade followed the pattern firmly established during those first ten years. There was only one Subscribers' Concert each year now but, as in previous years, the choir participated in the annual Four Choirs Festival held at the Melbourne Town Hall (given the 'less restricting name' of The Choral Festival from 1965 onwards), entered one or two eisteddfods each year, regularly performed at the Caulfield Council's ANZAC commemorations, Carols by Candlelight and Naturalisation ceremonies, gave several concerts every year at small local venues (for which the choir charged £5/5- per appearance), could be heard singing on a couple of ABC radio broadcasts each year, and cheered up patients at the Convalescent Hospital once or twice a year with song and socialising.

As if that wasn't enough, this decade saw several new ventures entered into, all at the instigation of the ever-energetic conductor, David Plummer. In December 1956, the first Christmas Festival of Music delighted the audience in the Melbourne Town Hall. This was to become a popular feature of the Christmas musical landscape in Melbourne for many years to come. David Plummer had been corresponding with the renowned English conductor, Sir Malcolm Sargent, with a view to putting on a carol concert along the lines of the annual Royal Choral Society concerts held in the Royal Albert Hall in London. A copy of the letter sent to David Plummer from Sir Malcolm praising the new venture was displayed proudly on the back of the programme for the inaugural Melbourne festival.

Caulfield City Choir was joined in this first concert by the choir of MacRobertson Girl's High School, the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works Choir and the City of Mordialloc Philharmonic Society. Each of the choirs sang a solo segment and there were items sung by the 'Men of the Choirs' and the 'Women of the Choirs' as well as some by the massed choir. The audience was invited to sing along to a few well-known Christmas carols.

Over the following years these concerts were very well-attended and were an excellent revenue-earner for the participating choirs. Other choirs which took part at times in the festival during this decade included the choir of Catholic Ladies' College, Postal Institute Choral Society, Melbourne Musicale, Box Hill Choral Society, the Frankston Branch of the CWA, and Orpheon Choristers, but Caulfield was there at every performance. Often the concerts were enlivened with some of the performers acting out Christmas stories. On one memorable occasion, the Box Hill Choir conductor became a very creditable Good King

Wenceslas for the duration of that carol, and was ably assisted by some children of one of the choristers.

For the festival, the Melbourne Town Hall was always decorated with Christmas trees, and in 1958 Tom Floyd, from Caulfield City Choir, designed and painted an imitation stained-glass window, and the annual report notes that 'through the discreet use of lighting on this window and the decorated Christmas trees, some impressive effects resulted'. Tom Floyd was an active member of the choir, serving as Bass Representative and Vice President and regularly chairing committee meetings. He even presented a talk on watercolour painting as part of a programme to add more social activities to the choir's year. This multi-talented man was made a Life Member in 1961 but sadly died three years later following a long illness.

Another of David Plummer's bright ideas was the establishing of a Folk Song Festival in 1961. This was held again in 1962 and 1963 but there is no record of it continuing beyond this date. The 1962 festival was amusingly titled 'Music from the many works of Anon' and included American folk songs, negro spirituals, sea chanties and British folk songs.

1957 saw the debut of the Caulfield Youth Music Festival, a competition for local school choirs (and in later years, solo singers and instrumentalists as well) sponsored in its entirety by Caulfield City Council but organised and presided over by Mr Plummer. Caulfield City Choir would often perform at this festival and choir members would assist in the running of the event. Schools reported that 'music has become a more enthusiastic part of school life as a result of this annual festival.' There was no festival in 1958, but from 1959 to the end of this decade under the spotlight, the Youth Music Festival saw sometimes as many as sixteen local schools taking part. In 1963, Caulfield City Choir assisted in the establishment of a similar festival for Moorabbin schools, and performed some items on the last night of this new festival.

1957 was also the centenary of the City of Caulfield. David Plummer was appointed Director of Music for the centenary celebrations, and took on this role with his usual energy, enthusiasm and with a head brimming with musical ideas. Indeed, it was as part of the city's celebrations that the first Youth Music Festival was conceived. Mr Plummer also created a Centenary Choir, which included Caulfield City Choir, local singers, and church choirs from the area. This choir performed in Caulfield Park on a beautiful afternoon as part of an open-air festival of celebration.

The Caulfield City Choir was in high demand during these ten years and Mr Plummer was proud to declare that the choir 'is regarded as one of the leading choirs in Melbourne'. The choristers would sometimes sing at a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon (or PSA), an occasional, but charmingly-named entertainment, which took place mostly at Wesley Church. The PSA's, originally founded in Britain in 1870, were very popular in the first part of the twentieth century in Melbourne, and included concerts, talks, dances, etc., but with a main focus on social reform. The occasional one still pops up today.

This decade witnessed several important events locally and internationally to which the Caulfield City Choir contributed. They are:

1956 Melbourne Olympic Games, the first Olympic Games to be televised live around the world. Twenty-nine members of the choir (chosen from those who hadn't performed for the Queen's visit in 1954) sang in the Olympic Games Choir at the Solemn Opening to the games in the Melbourne Town Hall, performing the 'Olympic Hymn' and Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens', accompanied by the Victorian Symphony Orchestra. Caulfield choristers also sang at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

The **1959 Purcell Commemoration Concert**, celebrating the composer's tercentenary, was performed in the Melbourne Town Hall, Caulfield City Choir being joined by the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works Choir, the Orpheon Choristers, organist Norman Stringer, and the strings of the Zelman Memorial Symphony Orchestra. The programme covered the whole range of Purcell's works from the charming rounds and catches (a type of round or canon) to anthems, and excerpts from 'Dido and Aeneas'.

The **1964 Subscribers' concert** recognised two important commemorations - the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth and the 100th anniversary of Stephen Foster – with music suitable to both celebrations.

1965 – The Churchill Memorial Concert in the Myer Music Bowl. Caulfield, along with regular running mates, the Postal Institute Choir and the Sandringham City Choir, accompanied by the RAAF Band under the baton of Squadron Leader Hicks, performed music closely associated with Churchill's England, to honour the statesman who had died in January. David Plummer was compere at this event.

The Beatles, the Kinks, and the Rolling Stones all toured Australia during this time and there were several royal visits. The Sidney Myer Music Bowl was opened in 1959 and a year later Dame Joan Sutherland was made Australian of the Year. There was nuclear testing at Maralinga, the Vietnam War, the opening of the ABC studio at Ripponlea, and the arrival of the miniskirt! The debut of television in 1956 prompted David Plummer to say that this would cause many choirs to feel nervous of the future, but added that he felt that television 'would not appeal to those who were actively-minded'.

In 1956 there were 70 members of the choir but by 1966 this had declined to 46, well short of Mr Plummer's hopes of seeing 100 singing members. Annual subscriptions were 25/-, and the Council grant had risen to £125 per annum. Bernard Law remained the pianist throughout this decade with David Plummer the conductor. Betty Emms was now efficiently filling the dual role of Secretary/Treasurer.

During the thirteenth Annual Meeting of the choir, in April 1959, David Plummer declared that he 'felt assured that a happier choir did not exist in Victoria'.