

## Steventon Choral Society Concerts in 2000-2001

### Saturday 14th June: A Victorian Evening

Steventon Village Hall

Guest soloist: Leslie MacLeod Miller

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Guest conductor: Tim Sandford

Pianist: Robert Thomas

The choir entered into the spirit of the era and donned Victorian costume for this concert of music and songs from bygone days.



The concert began with one of the most well-known songs from the period, On The Road To Mandalay (words by Rudyard Kipling). This was followed by a selection from Iolanthe by those quintessential Victorian composers, W.S. Gilbert and A. Sullivan. Two choruses by the choir of fairies and peers complemented two solos (the Sentry's Song and When Britain Really Ruled) sung by Terry Pearce.

This was followed by The Holy City sung by soprano, Helen Pearce, and Beautiful Dreamer sung by tenor, Gerry Brewer. Jack Jarvis then sang about The Hymns My Mother Taught Me before the choir ended the first half with a folk song, I Will Give My Love an Apple, and probably the most well-known Victorian song of all, Come Into The Garden Maud.

The second half began with choir singing The Lost Chord and Passing By before the first performance of the evening from our guest soloist, Leslie MacLeod Miller, who sang two sentimental Italian songs, Torna a Surriento (Come back to Sorrento) and Catari (Calling for you).

Hymns were a great favourite with the Victorians and the choir sang two favourites, Abide with Me and Eternal Father Strong to Save, as the Victorians would have done with loud and soft phrases within each verse. Rebecca Russell then sang the sentimental ballad, My Own Pretty Boy, and John Hunt told the story of young Albert Ramsbottom and his trip on the Runcorn Ferry. The choir came back to sing Home Sweet Home before Robert Thomas (resplendent in his soldier's uniform) on the piano marched us along with the Double Eagle March. Helen Pearce returned to sing O Mio Babbino Caro and the choir continued the theme of love with Love's Old Sweet Song. For his second appearance, Leslie Macleod Miller sang a group of three songs - I'll Walk Beside You, Come Smiling Through and My Little Welsh Home - all typifying Victorian melancholy and sentiment. The audience was then invited to join the choir in singing the choruses (the verses are long since forgotten) of eight popular songs including Daisy, Daisy, After the Ball and Goodbye Dolly Grey. The concert ended with the choir singing about A.A. Milne's most well-known character – Christopher Robin in Saying His Prayers.

### Saturday 9th June: A Victorian Evening

Abingdon Baptist Church, Ock St, Abingdon

Guest soloist: Leslie MacLeod Miller

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Guest conductor: Tim Sandford

Pianist: Robert Thomas

This concert of Victorian music and songs raised £300 for the new MS Therapy Centre at Milton Park.

The programme was the same as the concert at Steventon on June 14th (details above).

### **Saturday 21st April: All in the April Evening**

St Mary's Church, Streatley

An Easter concert of popular classical music and songs

This concert raised over £400 for church organ fund.

Choral favourites in the first half of the concert included Faure's Cantique de Jean Racine, How Lovely are Thy Dwellings by Brahms, an arrangement of Agnus Dei, Sanctus by Schubert, an arrangement of O Rejoice that the Lord has Arisen from Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana and All People that on Earth do Dwell by Vaughan Williams.

The second half featured well-known choruses and solos from Mendelssohn's Elijah: Helen Pearce (soprano) sang Hear ye Israel and Rebecca Russell (mezzo-soprano) sang O Rest in the Lord. The concert ended with Hugh Robertson's ever-popular All in the April Evening.

The choral society is very grateful to Tim Sandford for conducting the concert in the absence of our musical director through illness. The organist for the concert was Robert Thomas.

### **Sunday 8th April: All in the April Evening**

St Michael & All Angels, Steventon

An Easter concert of popular classical music and songs

This concert raised £250 for the Team Youth Worker Project.

The programme was the same as the concert at Streatley on April 22nd (details above). The choral society is particularly grateful to Tim Sandford for stepping in at the last minute to conduct the concert in the absence of our musical director in hospital. The organist for the concert was Robert Thomas.

### **Saturday 31st March: Sing-in of Stainer's Crucifixion**

St Mark's Church, Cold Ash, near Newbury

The sing-in was led by members of Steventon Choral Society, who were joined by some 20 other singers from the area. A retiring collection was taken in aid of the Indian flood disaster.

Guest conductor	Tim Sandford
Organist	Robert Thomas
Tenor soloist	Tony Selby
Bass soloist	Terry Pearce

### **Saturday 16th December and Thursday 21st December: Christmas 2000**

Steventon Village Hall

A concert of Christmas songs and traditional carols

The first concert raised £350 for [Diabetes UK](#).

Highlights of the first half of the concert included Happy Christmas, a song by John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Winter Wonderland, Gustav Holst's arrangement of Christmas Day and three 'local' carols – Goodwill to Men (music composed by the father of Phil Cook, one of our bass's), Stannington (composed by the mother of our former pianist George Dyson) and Do Something Kind this Christmas (composed by a former Assistant Musical Director, Tim Sandford). The second half opened with We Wish You a Merry Christmas followed by a song made famous by Cliff Richard, Mistletoe and Wine. The audience joined in for O Come All Ye Faithful, It Came Upon the Midnight Clear and Hark the Herald Angels Sing - and listened to a 15th century carol, Myn Lyking, and two Cornish carols, Lo! He Comes an Infant King and Hail Sacred Day. The ever popular Christmas Song was followed by the Hallelujah Chorus (from Handel's

Messiah) before the choir brought the concert to a close with a traditional Irish song, Irish Blessing.

During the concert several choir members sang solos: Rebecca Russell sang a Scottish folk song, Balulalow, and Helen Pearce sang Gounod's famous, Ave Maria. Debbie Jordan (mezzo-soprano), Helen Pearce (soprano) and Terry Pearce (bass) sang the solos for Christmas Day. A little-light relief was provided with a monologue, The Jubilee Sovereign, by John Hunt and by a collection of humorous anecdotes from Jack Jarvis.

**Sunday 17th December: Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols**  
St Michael & All Angels, Steventon (with the church choir)

**Saturday 14th October: Sing-in of Handel's Messiah in aid of Sobell House, Oxford**  
St Michael & All Angels, Steventon

With other singers from the area, we led a sing-in of Handel's Messiah on Saturday 14th October 2000 as part of the BT Voices for Hospices 2000. This was a network of some 500 simultaneous performances in over 40 countries throughout the world to support the Hospice Movement. Our efforts raised **over £1000** for [Sir Michael Sobell House, Oxford](#).

The performance was conducted by our musical director, Terry Pearce, with guest accompanist Ian Miles at the organ. On this occasion, our two resident soloists, Helen Pearce (soprano) and Rebecca Russell (mezzo-soprano) were joined by guest soloists Andrew Kennedy (tenor) and Leslie McLeod Miller (bass). The evening began with a welcome from Rev Colin Patching, the vicar of St Michael & All Angels and ended with some words about the needs of Sobell House from its development director, Edwin Macadam, who had sung with the bass section for the performance. All singers received a commemorative programme.