

## Steventon Choral Society Concerts in 2008-2009 (50th anniversary year)

### Thursday 11th June and Saturday 13th June: Grand Anniversary Concert

Steventon Village Hall

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Pianist: Robert Thomas

Guest soloist: Sam Murray (contralto)

This special concert of light music celebrated 50 years of Steventon Choral Society 1959-2009.

It began with the choir singing the rousing Negro spiritual, Michael Row the Boat Ashore followed by three songs from around the British Isles – Prince Charlie's Farewell (a song immortalising Bonnie Prince Charlie's retreat from Manchester in 1745), Loch Lomond and Land of My Fathers (first verse sang in Welsh by Rebecca Joisce, soprano).



Guest soloist Sam Murray – a member of [Five Voices](#)

The recent 65th anniversary of D-Day prompted a selection of songs from World War II beginning with the choir singing an arrangement of a Vera Lynn favourite, A Nightingale Sang in Berk'ley Square. Helen Pearce (soprano) then led the audience in another famous song by Vera Lynn, There'll be Bluebirds Over the White Cliffs of Dover. Guest soloist, Sam Murray (contralto) completed the tribute with the chorus of the Anne Shelton favourite, Coming In On A Wing and A Prayer. Sam continued with a comic piece, Mother's Advice, and then an American jazz song, Mama Morton, from the hit show Chicago. John Hunt then entertained everyone with some jokes and two comic poems on the theme of growing old. The choir returned to sing an arrangement of the 1960s Ralph McTell song, The Streets of London, by Terry Pearce who accompanied on his guitar. This was followed by The Goslings, a witty but poignant tale of love with words by F E Weatherley set to music by Sir Frederick Bridge (organist at Westminster Abbey from 1898 to 1918). The first half ended with an American trilogy made up of Dixie, The Battle Hymn of the Republic and All My Trials - a medley dedicated to the choir's American member.

The second half featured excerpts from eight of Gilbert and Sullivan's famous Savoy operas:

|                     |  |  |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Iolanthe            | When Britain Really Ruled<br>the Waves | Choir  |
| Patience            | I Hear a Soft Note                     | Small group – Alex Freeman, Trish Napper, Caroline Miller, Sam Murray, Gerry Brewer, Jack Jarvis, Bert Branker and Tom Hartley               |
| Trial By Jury       | The Judge's Song                       | John Hunt (tenor) and the choir  |
| Pirates of Penzance | Ruth's Song                            | Sam Murray (contralto)   |
|                     | Poor Wand'ring One                     | Helen Pearce (soprano) and the choir   |
|                     | The Policeman's Chorus                 | Choir  |
| Yeomen of the Guard | Strange Adventure                      | Small group – Alex Freeman, Trish Napper, Helen Pearce, Caroline Miller, Sam Murray, Gerry Brewer, Jack Jarvis, Bert Branker and Tom Hartley |
| The Mikado          | Tit Willow                             | Choir  |
|                     | Brightly Dawns Our<br>Wedding Day      | Helen Pearce (soprano), Sam Murray (contralto) and Terry Pearce (bass)   |
| The Gondoliers      | On the Day That I Was<br>Wedded        | Sam Murray (the 'Duchess') with Terry Pearce suffering as the Duke   |
|                     | Dance the Cachucha                     | Choir  |

The concert ended with in rousing style with You'll Never Walk Alone from Rodgers and Hammerstein's Carousel and two patriotic favourites from the Last Night of the Proms – Rule Britannia (verses by Helen Pearce) and Land of Hope and Glory.

### **Sunday 5th April: Mozart's Requiem**

St Michael & All Angels, Steventon

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Organist: Ian Miles

Soprano: Helen Pearce

Contralto: Val Cooper

Tenor: John Buckley

Bass: Leslie Macleod-Miller

Proceeds from the concert of £124 were donated to the Church Refurbishment Fund

### **Sunday 21st December: Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols**

St Michael & All Angels, Steventon (with the church choir)

Organist: Robert Thomas

### **Thursday 18th December: A Christmas Celebration**

Steventon Village Hall

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Pianist: Robert Thomas

The programme featured all the carols and Christmas songs on the new CD, Holy Night, recorded by Steventon Choral Society in October 2008.

To get the audience in the mood the concert started with the choir singing an arrangement by David Willcocks of the traditional carol Deck The Hall. This was followed by All My Heart This Night Rejoices (17th century carol composed by Johann Ebeling), Hark the Glad Sound (music by Thomas Jarman) and the Walford Davies setting of O Little Town of Bethlehem. Following two carols for the audience to join in, the choir sang We Three Kings with Jack Jarvis, John Hunt and Tom Hartley as the kings. Rebecca Joice then sang a 17th century lute song, Sweet Was The Song, accompanying herself on her electronic harp. The choir returned to sing It Came Upon The Midnight Clear arranged by Richard Willis and the John Rutter favourite, Angels' Carol. Robert Thomas then played a provided a piano arrangement of [I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free](#) – a song written by Billy Taylor and Dick Dallas – and used as the theme for the BBC TV show, the Film Programme. Three audience carols followed before the choir ended the first half with A Bit of Holiday Cheer – an arrangement by Teena Chinn of a medley of popular American Christmas songs.

The second half began with John Hunt telling a selection of short anecdotes with a Christmas theme and performing the Marriott Edgar monologue, Albert's Return, which tells the story of what happened after Wallace the lion ate young Albert Ramsbottom. The choir then sang an arrangement (also by Teena Chinn) of Frosty The Snowman and, in complete contrast, the traditional List Our Merry Carol. In a break from Christmas, Helen Pearce (soprano) sang My Hero from [The Chocolate Soldier](#) by Oscar Straus ('finding' a 'hero' from the audience to participate). Returning to the Christmas theme, the audience enjoyed joining in with O Come All Ye Faithful and the choir sang two well-known lullabies – In the Bleak Midwinter by Harold Darke and Rocking (arranged by David Willcocks).. The spotlight then turned to Terry Pearce on the guitar who began by singing the Benny Hill song, Harvest of Love and then, accompanied on the piano by Robert Thomas, [I Believe In Father Christmas](#) by Greg Lake. The next item was, Angels Sing, an arrangement by Terry Pearce for Steventon Choral Society of the three Christmas favourites Silent Night, Mary's Boy Child and While Shepherds Watched. This piece was accompanied by Frances Brightman (guitar), Rebecca Joice (harp) and Robert Thomas (keyboard). A further audience carol, Once in Royal David's City, brought us to the final items for the evening – the well-known Christmas anthem, O Holy Night, by Adolphe Adam (soloist: Helen Pearce) and the traditional West Country carol We Wish You A Merry Christmas (arranged by Arthur Warrell).

A big thank you to all choir members who sang in quartets and small groups for part of various items: Martin Blogg, Diana Bowder, Bert Branker, Gerry Brewer, Frances Broadbent, Ann Cannon, Lindsey Fellingham, Alex Freeman, Tom Hartley, John Hunt, Mo Hunt, Joyce Huddleston, Jack Jarvis, Rebecca Joice, Emily Longhi, Caroline Miller, Janet Money, Carol Mytton, Trish Napper and

Francoise Pierard  
Audience carols

| <i>First half</i>              | <i>Second half</i>         |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| The First Nowell               | O Come All You Faithful    |
| God Rest Re Merry Gentlemen    | Once in Royal David's City |
| Of the Father's Heart Begotten |                            |
| Hark The Herald Angels Sing    |                            |
| Good King Wenceslas            |                            |

**Saturday 13th December: A Christmas Celebration**

Steventon Village Hall  
Musical director: Terry Pearce  
Pianist: Robert Thomas

Proceeds from the concert of £544 were sent to Ward 1 Abingdon Community Hospital  
Programme as for the concert on Thursday 13th December with two changes – Rebecca Joice was ill and unable to perform her solo and Terry Pearce's first song was Tommy Cooper's Don't Jump Off the Roof Dad.