

Steventon Choral Society Concerts in 2006-2007

Thursday 7th June: Showtime Concert

Steventon Village Hall

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Pianist: Robert Thomas

A full hall enjoyed a concert of showtime favourites from across the years at this light-hearted summer concert. The choir began with songs from Rodgers and Hammerstein – Oklahoma and Oh, What A Beautiful Morning from Oklahoma followed by 16 Going On 17, Climb Every Mountain and Edelweiss from The Sound of Music. Wendy Moore and Salma Craig then sang By My Side from Godspell before the choir ended the Rodgers and Hammerstein sequence with Some Enchanted Evening from South Pacific. Any Dream Will Do from Joseph and The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat moved us forward from the 1940s to the 1960s. As an interlude John Hunt performed a Stanley Holloway monologue, Sam Sam Pick Up Tha Musket, about a soldier in the Duke of Wellington's army on the night before the Battle of Waterloo, before the first half ended with Love Changes Everything from the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical, Aspects of Love, and The Cachuchu from The Gondoliers by Gilbert and Sullivan.

The second half opened with a return to Rodgers and Hammerstein with June Is Bustin' Out All Over from Carousel. The ladies then told us what they thought about men in Men Men from Calamity Jane. Moving back to the beginning of the 20th century, Helen Pearce (soprano) sang Vilia from The Merry Widow by Franz Lehar. The choir returned with two numbers on a 'dream' theme – the Ivor Novello favourite, We'll Gather Lilacs from Perchance to Dream, and I Dreamed A Dream from Les Misérables. Helen then joined her husband, Terry, to sing the duet Wunderbar from Kiss Me Kate by Cole Porter. The final section of the concert featured the choir with You'll Never Walk Alone from Carousel, a medley of three ABBA songs (Mamma Mia, Super Trooper and Money Money Money) and the rousing Black Hills of Dakota from Calamity Jane.

At the end of the concert the chairman presented Ray Brewer with honorary life membership of Steventon Choral Society in recognition of his services as librarian, chairman, committee member, programme designer, carpenter and stage designer.

Saturday 21st April: A Spring Concert

[Trinity Church](#), Conduit Road, Abingdon

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Organist: Robert Thomas

Guests: Leslie Macleod-Miller (bass-baritone) and Christine Baugh (cello)

Proceeds from the concert of almost £500 to the Trinity Church Organ Refurbishment Appeal. The Church hopes to overhaul its splendid Victorian pipe organ built in 1881 by C. Martin of Oxford and which was last refurbished in the late 1970s.

The main work of this concert of sacred music was a performance by the choir of The Armed Man (Choral Suite): A Mass For Peace by [Karl Jenkins](#). The Armed Man was commissioned for the Millennium by the Royal Armouries and is dedicated to the victims of the Kosovo crisis. The full work had its world premiere in April 2000 at London's Royal Albert Hall and the CD was released on 10 September 2001 the day before the tragic events in the USA. The Choral Suite consists of:

- Krie
- Sanctus
- Benedictus (with cello solo)
- Agnus Dei
- Hymn Before Action

The first half of the concert began with two pieces from the choir – a setting by Camille Saint-Saens of Ave Verum Corpus and John Rutter's anthem Look At The World. Helen Pearce (soprano) then sang the

first of three settings of Ave Maria in the concert; this one was the famous version by Schubert. A selection of solos from Mendelssohn's Elijah followed: Rebecca Joise (mezzo-soprano) sang O Rest In The Lord and our guest, Leslie Macleod-Miller, sang Lord God of Abraham, Is Not His Word and It Is Enough. The choir ended the first half with the anthem Lord, For Thy Tender Mercy's Sake (attributed to Richard Farrant) and the famous setting by Hubert Parry of words from Psalm 122, I Was Glad, sung at all Coronations since Edward VII's in 1902.

Another setting of Ave Maria, this time one attributed by Jacob Arcadelt, by the choir opened the second half. In the absence through illness of one of the singers in the planned duet (see report of previous concert below), Diana Bowder (soprano) sang the aria Break in Grief from Bach's St Matthew Passion. Leslie Macleod-Miller returned with The Trumpet Shall Sound from Handel's Messiah, which was followed by another famous solo from the Messiah, I Know My Redeemer Liveth – sung by Helen Pearce. After The Armed Man (Choral Suite), Leslie Macleod-Miller performed Caccini's setting of Ave Maria and the concert ended with John Rutter's The Lord Bless You And Keep You – a setting of words from Numbers 6, verse 24.

Sunday 1st April: A Spring Concert

Parish Church of St Michael & All Angels, Steventon

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Organist: Robert Thomas

Guests: Leslie Macleod-Miller (bass-baritone) and Christine Baugh (cello)

Profits from the concert of £216 to the Church Refurbishment Fund – particularly the staging at the front of the church.

This concert of sacred music was a repeat of the one given at Trinity Church, Abingdon, on Saturday 21st April featuring The Armed Man (Choral Suite): A Mass For Peace by [Karl Jenkins](#). The only change was a duet by Julia Litt (soprano) and Alex Freeman (soprano) of The Souls of the Righteous by the 18th century English composer James Nares instead of the solo by Diana Bowder.

Saturday 16th December and Thursday 21st December: Sleigh Ride to Christmas

Steventon Village Hall

Musical director: Terry Pearce

Pianist: Robert Thomas

The proceeds from the Saturday concert of £500 were donated to the [Home Farm Trust](#) Oxfordshire at nearby Milton Heights. At the beginning of the concert, the manager of the Oxfordshire HFT unit at nearby Milton Heights thanked the audience for their support and told them something about the charity's history and work in the area.

Merry Merry Christmas, Here We Come A-Wassailing (one of the oldest of carols) and Hark The Glad Sound began the first half. After several audience carols, Helen Pearce (soprano) and Gerry Brewer (tenor) led the choir in O Holy Night. In memory of [Dr George Dyson](#), a long-time former pianist for Steventon Choral Society who died earlier this year, the choir then sang a carol written by his mother called Stannington. Rebecca Joisce (soprano) followed with some verses of a folk carol, All In the Morning, first written down by Vaughn-Williams in the 20th Century. Rebecca accompanied herself on her folk music harp. After List Our Merry Carol we had some more audience carols before the choir sang a varied selection of new and old songs and carols – Can't Believe Its Christmas, In Dulci Jubilo, Deck the Halls and Jingle Bells – to end the first half. The featured small choir in In Dulci Jubilo was made up of Julia Litt (soprano), Salma Azmeh (Saturday)/Caroline Miller (Thursday) (alto), Jack Jarvis (tenor) and Tom Hartley (bass).

During the course of the concert, Tom Hartley offered the audience and choir his light-hearted view of the six different sections of the choir – basses, tenors, altos, sopranos, pianist and musical director – with particular reference to the talents of Steventon Choral Society.

The second half opened with John Hunt and a very funny monologue about one Yorkshireman's visit to a performance of Handel's Messiah. The choir then performed, And the Glory of the Lord, the first chorus from this work. Three modern carols by John Rutter – Angels' Carol, Candlelight Carol and Love Came Down At Christmas – provided a musical contrast. After some more audience carols, the concert continued with Helen Pearce (soprano) and a song her grandmother had taught her – the Bells of St Mary's. The popular Christmas song, Winter Wonderland, preceded arrangements of two well-known carols – See Amid the Winter's Snow and It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.

A small group of singers from the choir then led the audience in Wobble, Wobble, Wobble – a song about a turkey – in which everyone's participation including actions was encouraged! Two popular Christmas songs, Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer and When Santa Got Stuck, completed the final chance for the audience to join in and sing.

Members of Steventon Church Choir then sang an arrangement of Silent Night and the concert ended with two rousing performances from the choir – Ring Out Wild Bells by Percy Fletcher and Handel's Zadok the Priest.

Audience carols: first half

We Three Kings
Good King Wenceslas
Hark the Herald Angels Sing
Mary's Boy Child

Audience carols: second half

O Come All Ye Faithful
Once in Royal David's City
In the Bleak Mid Winter