

Bearsted Choral Society - AGM 2008

Winter 2007 - December 8

Vivaldi Magnificat

Maggie Bloor - Soprano/David Clark - Tenor

Vivaldi Gloria

Maggie Bloor - Soprano/Frances Coppola - Contralto/David Clark - Tenor/Brian White - Bass

Carol - O come all ye faithful

Gardner Cantata for Christmas

Maggie Bloor - Soprano/Frances Coppola - Contralto/David Clark - Tenor/Brian White - Bass

Carol - God rest you merry gentlemen

Lullay my Liking; Torches; Rejoice and be merry

Carol - The First Nowell

Spring 2008 - April 5 (Leeds) - June 14 (Wissant)

Arise Shine - John Rutter; For the Beauty of the Earth - John Rutter

All things bright and beautiful - John Rutter / Cantique de Jean Racine - Gabriel Faure

Rhythm of Life - Cy Coleman

Nous irons à Valparaiso Chanson à virer / Luc Guilloché

La mer Charles Trénet / Jean-Claude Oudot

Si les bateaux Gilles Vigneault / Alain Langrée

Vivat flamand Traditionnel / Francis Rappart

La Source H. Djan - D. Faure - G. Bonnet / Henri Dumas

Bring back César Geoffray / Georges Prost

Hail Holy Queen M. Shaiman - R Emerson - Armelle Ebel from the film Sister Act

Don Léon F Coulonges - C.H. Vic / J.M. Vaccaro

Il est 5 heures, Paris s'éveille J Lanzmann - A Ségalen - J Dutronc /J. Gauffriau

Dans la troupe Traditionnel / Raphaël Passaquet

Le complexe de la Truite Franz Schubert, Francis Blanche, P Philippe /J. Gauffriau

Down to the river to pray Sheldon Curry

from the film O brother where are thou?

Easter Hymn Pietro Mascagni - from Cavalleria Rusticana

Messiah Choruses - George Frideric Handel

Behold the Lamb of God; Lift up your heads, O ye Gates; The Lord Gave the Word;

Their sound is gone out; Hallelujah

Summer 2008 - July 12

Only You - V. Clarke arr Patrick Allen / El Condor Pasa (If I could) - Milchberg & Robles

Loch Lomond - David Overton

Young Performer Platform - Fraser Bowles - Violoncello : Sonata in B Flat Major - I Largo, II Allegro -

Vivaldi; Sonatina - 1st Movement - Jardanyi; Tarantella - W.H. Squire

Linden Lea - R Vaughan Williams; And can it be - Tune: Sagina arr by Jeffrey Howard

Serenade to Music - R Vaughan Williams / The Turtle Dove - R Vaughan Williams / Silent Noon

- R Vaughan Williams (Maggie Bloor - Soprano) / 5 Mystical Songs R Vaughan Williams

Organ Prelude on Rhosymedre - RVW / Toward the Unknown Region - R. Vaughan Williams

Grateful thanks must go to our sterling accompanists who have supported the society this year: Rehearsal accompanist - Maggie Bloor; Concert Pianist/Organist - Martin Hogben; Occasional rehearsal & Wissant Concert accompanist - Stefan Catto

What a wonderful year marked with outstanding performances and musical challenges testing everyone's nerve! Vivaldi's Magnificat and Gloria set the scene for a remarkable concert which included Cantata for Christmas by John Gardner. A work stretching the society to new levels of complexity and harmonic dissonance. All the more exhilarating by the presence of the composer on the night. Rarely has the choir felt so excited and frightened at the same time! Ably supported by our 4 soloists and with a superb audience enjoying their own contribution, this set the scene to be developed across the year.

Early in 2007 I asked Graham Mason if he would pursue the potential of linking with another society in the Par de Calais region of France. This would be the first time for the society to associate itself with a continental link. We were very fortunate that Chorale des 2 Caps heard of our wishes and one dark night in the autumn of 2007 Graham and I went over to Wissant to meet their conductor Jean-Marie Fondeur and see them in a rehearsal in the community hall. Neither of us had confidence in speaking French, but true to form there were French people able to translate sufficiently for us to believe we had a similar group of singers but with a different style of music which would compliment our own. Jean-Marie has a very warm and charming manner and the members of the choir were excited and kind to both of us. We immediately realised that this had the potential of developing into a good relationship. By Christmas we had confirmed two opportunities in performing together, Chorale des 2 Caps would come to England in April and we would go to Wissant in June. A similar programme of music was decided which included 2 joint items - Hail Holy Queen from the film Sister Act and the Hallelujah chorus, Handel. We decided to perform at Leeds Parish Church, St Nicholas which by chance is the name of their own church in Wissant! I must pay tribute to the local audience at Leeds as this was our second performance at St Nicholas and we had a full house, every seat in the building was used! It was a very exciting evening with such a variety of performances all the more enhanced by the fact that our French visitors sang without copies.... An exhilarating evening finishing off a lovely spring sunny day; nobody was ready for the depths of winter that followed and the significant snow fall the awoke us on Sunday morning, however, we were able to make the most of an afternoon of singing in Rochester before saying goodbye to our newly formed friends. Our return trip in June was memorable by the superb hospitality received over the weekend. St Nicholas church was again the venue, but now in Wissant. Space was very limited and we were not able to perform together for our joint items, however, Jean-Marie cheerfully said that we should sing in a big circle enclosing the audience. The packed church heard a performance of significance and one I will treasure for some time. When we came to the last 2 items both societies joined together alternating singers and spread around the building - this was a performance of a lifetime! A standing ovation followed and truly deserved. The next day, for those who were able to stay (no snow anywhere to be seen!) we were feted all afternoon, dragging out every minute before the last dash to the ferry!

The Summer Concert was soon on the horizon and pressure was mounting to cover all the music in time. I had challenged the choir to revisit a composition by RVW - Toward the Unknown Region, similar to the start of the year a difficult, complex work demanding all the resources the society could muster. Having performed a variety of styles and with the added bonus of Fraser Bowles, our young performer on the cello, the chorus sang their hearts out and gave the best rendering of Toward the Unknown Region I have ever experienced and even today I am truly grateful for this.