

REVIEW by Brian North

Angmering Chorale

16th December 2017

at

The Angmering School

“A Choral Christmas”

An evening of carols, old and new, featuring singers and soloists from the Chorale, plus seventy-five children, drawn mostly from local infant and primary schools, with extra oomph provided by the robustly jolly Patcham Silver Band.

Accomplished accompanist (Piano) – Alison Manton

It takes a lot to drag me away from my wood burning stove on a midwinter’s evening (Especially on “Strictly .. “ night), but knowing the quality of this talented local group and their reputation for having FUN, I needed no persuasion on this occasion.

Under the entertaining baton of Musical Director, George Jones, we plunged into “See amid the Winter’s snow” with gusto, the audience responding brilliantly to George’s ever cheerful encouragement.

A stream of pieces followed, some old favourites, some soon to be. Sometimes sung by the Choir, some by the children, some by the audience – all with infectious bonhomie, aided by a merry rendition of “Who is he?” and “Breezing down Broadway” by the Patcham Silver Band, under their versatile Musical Director, James Benka-Coker.

The Choral followed with “Away in a Manger”, then with a lively 16th Century French version of “Ding Dong Merrily on High”, in which they managed to strike their dings and their dongs in just the right places – no easy feat.

A combined singing of “O come all ye faithful” led us to interval time, with free drinks to refresh for the challenging second half. This began with a communal “It came upon the midnight clear”. Then the Choral sang “My Lord has come” by Will Todd, and the delightful 15th Century “Adam lay ybounden”, for contrast.

After a communal “Silent Night”, George persuaded all the children to follow him, Pied Piper-like, round to get a closer look at the Band, which thrilled them with an energetic “Ticket to Ride” and “All I want for Christmas is you.”

The children loved all this, all three hours of it, not least when, later, a rousing ensemble of the “Twelve days of Christmas” (With actions) was energetically controlled by Oliver Martin, allowing George to recoup for the finales. A goodly dose of “Hark the Herald Angels

sing" finally sent us all home with smiles on our faces, songs in our hearts, and an inner glow, I am glad to say, matched by the welcome of my trusty wood burner at home.