

Angmering Chorale: Carols for Christmas

What a fun filled action packed evening it was on Sat 10th December, when Angmering Chorale along with the Patcham Silver Band and children's choirs came together at Angmering School for Carols for Christmas. Although the Chorale were hosting, it was undoubtedly the children who stole the show. A combined choir of 61 pupils from three schools (Rose Green Primary; Towers Convent School and Swiss Gardens Primary) delivered a repertoire ranging from Mary's Little Boy Child to Rock Around the Shops. Each carol was sung beautifully with infectious enthusiasm. The remarkable thing is that the children had only sung together as one choir on the Saturday afternoon rehearsal, that they should sound so wonderfully in tune with one another must be attributed to their teachers, Sarah Lloyd of Rose Green, Michelle Woodward from Swiss Gardens and Heidi Gray, Nicky Hanks, Kate Woodard from The Towers Convent School. The time and skill commitment of all those involved certainly paid off because as George Jones, Musical Director of Angmering Chorale, said 'this was the best singing from children's voices he had heard in a long time'

In addition, the other accolade of the evening must go to Patcham Silver Band who not only accompanied all the audience carols but also got our feet tapping and our hands clapping with their renditions of Amarillo, a lovely solo cornet performance in a Winter Fairy Tale, Jingle Bells and a Christmas Swingalong. It was a joy to see everyone enthralled by the lively rhythms of the band aided by guest drummer Tony Hanks who came to accompany the children's choir, but was persuaded to play with the band as well.

As has come to be expected Angmering Chorale did not disappoint. Their carols introduced some lesser known songs including an enchanting lullaby from China, Shiao, bao, bao (meaning Little Precious). The Chorale is celebrating its 40th Anniversary this year and this concert came hot on the heels of their triumph in November when they performed Verdi's Requiem. It is a testament to the choir's talent and leadership that they can adapt so readily from Requiem to carols in a matter of two weeks.

Throughout the evening, George Jones, as well as conducting, kept everyone amused by interspersing choral items with tongue in cheek comments such as a reported' health and safety notice for shepherds tending their flocks'

The evening was rounded off when chorister and stage manager, Oliver Martin, managed to get everyone not only to sing but also join in actions to The Twelve Days of Christmas.

Alison Manton was a constant presence, accompanying all the carols, a very talented and gifted pianist to whom the Chorale are totally indebted.

An evening of first class entertainment where everyone could enjoy themselves, sing traditional carols, hear some unfamiliar ones and be delighted by a children's choir and a Silver Band. What's not to like. Well done everyone.

Check out Angmering Chorale's versatility by coming to a very special, 'Jazz at the Cathedral' on 25th March 2017 at Arundel Cathedral. Tickets are now available from The Chorale Box Office 01243 554501

Diane Kearsey December 2016