

Join in praise for super choir

I HOPE you can join me in shouting 'Well done!' - six times for the Nantwich Choral Society concert on March 26.

Well done! This choir has the courage to perform a Vaughan Williams piece that has not been heard in this country for some time. The audience was large enough to fill the centre of the nave of Nantwich Parish Church and was amply rewarded. The two pieces 'An Oxford Elegy' and 'Dona Nobis Pacem' are well worth turning out to hear.

Well done! The choir had the sense to hire a good orchestra to support them. It was wonderful that I did not have to notice their ability to play and to hear all the right Vaughan Williams spine-tingling orchestrations.

Well done! to the choir for their singing. The performance was at times thrilling and beautiful.

Well done! to the narrator in the 'Oxford Elegy.' Colin Bromilow had a difficult task. He had to read the poetry of Walt Whitman clearly but with meaning, he had to be heard through the complex fabric of the music and he had to cope with the Nantwich cathedral echo.

Well done! the soloists, who heaped even more riches upon the audience.

Well done! for the discipline of the choir. There were those who had missed a couple of rehearsals and chose to stand down. Members who know when not to sing are a great asset

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Contrasting moods

NANTWICH Choral Society will be performing once again at St Mary's Parish Church, Nantwich, on Saturday, March 26 at 7.30pm.

The choral music chosen for this concert is by R Vaughan Williams - *An Oxford Elegy* and *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

They represent two contrasting examples of the composer's

capacity to deliver a powerful and uplifting message.

The serenity and melancholy beauty of *An Oxford Elegy* is set against the combination of misery, despair and ultimate optimism, and confidence in a new heaven on earth that is found in *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

Angus Gibbon

leads Musikfreunde, with Catrin Ley (soprano), Philip Ravenscroft (baritone) and Colin Bromelow as speaker.

Joy Roberts will be at the pianoforte with Stephen Buckman conducting.

Tickets are available at £3 (£2 for OAPs/students) from the tourist Information Centre, Nantwich or at the door.

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Entertain Two works of great beauty and contrast

TWO works of great beauty, performed by the Choral Society at Nantwich Parish Church, showed their composer, Ralph Vaughan Williams in contrasting moods.

An Oxford Elegy set to the poem *The Scholar Gypsy* by Matthew Arnold relied on the words to shape the music. Voices are used as part of the orchestral tapestry and a spoken voice carries the line of the poem. From the first note the musicians and audience fused together to become part of the mood of the piece. It was a performance of great heart.

The *Dona Nobis Pacem* was a larger and more disturbing work, composed with a musician's foreboding of horrors to come. It was partly written in 1911 and added to in 1936 for the beginning of two World Wars.

The poems of Walt Whitman were set so sincerely by Dr Vaughan Williams that the listener became part of them. The choir sang well; it has developed a lovely ringing sound so necessary for this work.

The Student Orchestra Musikfreunde from the Royal Northern School of music, under the leadership of Angus Gibbon, was superb. Their knowledge of this style of music was so positive we hope they will come again.

Conductor Stephen Buckman and society pianist Joy Roberts were, as always, faithful to the wishes of the composer. That is one of the strengths of the society.

Nantwich Choral Society



R. VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
DONA NOBIS PACEM

and

AN OXFORD ELEGY

Saturday 26th March 1988



The Parish Church of St. Mary, Nantwich
at 7.30 p.m.