

MARCHWOOD ORCHESTRA CONCERT REPORT

Marchwood Orchestra recently gave a concert at St. Winfrid's Church, Totton in aid of Church funds. The capacity and enthusiastic audience enjoyed a wide range of works from home-grown chorale to Mendelssohn in addition to cream teas during the interval.

The programme commenced with former Marchwood Orchestra musical director Peter Alan Robson's "Chorale Prelude: St Anne". The original tune was used for the well-known hymn 'O God Our Help in Ages Past' however, Peter's multiple and, at times, quite complex variations were passed around the various sections of the orchestra like a musical merry-go-round finishing with a final flourish including the whole orchestra.

Next came two popular 'Slavonic Dances' (No. 10 in E minor and No.8). They were played with feeling and panache under the baton of conductor Simon Wilkins and evoked images of Fritz Kreisler in 'fin de siecle' Viennese coffee houses.

The first half concluded with Johann Strauss the younger's 'Kaiserwalzer' (Emperor Waltz) and successfully captured the flavour of royal courts in 19th century Europe .

The second half of the concert started with Ronald Binge's (of 'Sailing By' fame) 'Elizabethan Serenade'. This lovely lilting ever-popular melody was given a deft, light touch by the orchestra and gave little indication of what was to follow as the main work of the programme.

Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 5 has a loud blaring introduction by the brass and woodwind until the barely audible few bars of the 'Dresden Amen'. The fast melodic and rhythmic arpeggios of the first movement were punctuated most effectively by the forceful chord sequences with which they were

interspersed. The second movement comprised many fast runs which the orchestra tackled with relish. The following Andante was played with great control and sensitivity and led directly into the fourth and final movement

which is introduced with a flute playing the chorale 'My God is a True Fortress'. The pace quickened once again with the orchestra bringing the piece and the concert as a whole to a triumphant climax. The orchestra threw themselves into the symphony and delivered a magnificent performance.

It was good to see our patron and local MP, Dr. Julian Lewis among the audience at this particularly busy time and very much appreciated.

The next concert is on 15 October at St. Thomas's church, Lymington when Marchwood Orchestra will be playing with the St. Nicholas Singers. Details are available online at: marchwoodorchestras.org.uk