

Voices of Exmoor Christmas Concert, 9 December 2023

Christmas...at last! It was a real pleasure to hear the Voices of Exmoor perform their Christmas concert on 9 December after the previous three Christmas concerts had to be cancelled (all for well-known reasons!). And what a joyous concert it was, attended by a packed audience at the Dulverton Town Hall. Musical Director Amanda Taylor has a knack of presenting really interesting and enjoyable programmes and this year was no exception. The choir were on fine form and opened the concert by processing in singing the rousing 16thC carol Gaudete. This was followed by John Rutter's arrangement of "We wish you a merry Christmas", his own "Nativity Carol" and an arrangement of a 15thC carol by Hubert Parry, all beautifully sung by the choir with real feeling for the music. The audience were invited to join in with three well known carols which tested our own singing abilities! Interspersed with the choir items were readings, John Betjeman's "Christmas" and "Remembrance of Christmas Past" by Judith Viorst, both beautifully read by members of the choir. As well as traditional carols, the choir showed their versatility and enjoyment of singing with renditions of "I believe in Father Christmas" and "Let it be Christmas". The whole programme was thoroughly enjoyed by a very enthusiastic audience who demanded an encore - and we got one in the form of Slade's classic hit "Merry Christmas Everybody" which had everyone rocking in their seats! Supporting Amanda's musical direction throughout was the wonderful and expert piano accompaniment of Joke Routledge and her sensitive playing is a real asset to the choir. We look forward to hearing the Voices of Exmoor perform in 2024.

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