

**Minehead Choral Society, Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2013**  
**Summer Festival Concert**

**Patriotic Proms**

**Programme**

1. **National Anthem** – arr. Britten      (*please stand, choir only first verse*)
2. Zadok the Priest – Handel
3. Ave Maria – Bach / Gounod
4. Panis Angelicus – Franck
5. Better is Peace - Jenkins
6. Sanctus – Schubert
7. God So Loved the World - Stainer
8. Ave Verum – Mozart
9. **Jerusalem** – Parry
10. **Land of Hope and Glory** – Elgar
11. Fantasia on British Sea Songs – arr. S. Jackson
  - 1) Fanfare
  - 2) The Saucy Arethusa
  - 3) Tom Bowling
  - 4) Sailors Hornpipe
  - 5) Spanish Ladies
  - 6) Home Sweet Home
  - 7) See, the conqu'ring hero comes
  - 8) **Rule Britannia**

**Programme Notes:**

We are delighted tonight to be celebrating 50 years of the Minehead & Exmoor Music festival. I have chosen for the programme a selection of choral classics, together with some traditional proms favourites and hope you will join in with patriotic fervour and flag waving. Have fun!

**1. National Anthem – arr. Britten**

Written in 1961 for the Leeds festival, Britten's arrangement is conceived as a single crescendo, building powerfully from a simple pianissimo opening to a resounding fortissimo close. Please stand to enjoy listening to the choir sing the first verse and feel free to join in enthusiastically with the second!

1.  
*God save our gracious Queen,  
Long live our noble Queen,  
God save the Queen!  
Send her victorious,  
Happy and glorious,  
Long to reign over us,  
God save the Queen!*

2.  
*Thy choicest gifts in store,  
On her be pleased to pour,  
Long may she reign!  
May she defend our laws,  
And ever give us cause,  
To sing with heart and voice,  
God save the Queen.*

## **2. Zadok the Priest – Handel**

This is one of the four Coronation Anthems composed by George Handel (1685-1759) for the coronation of George II in 1727. The words were first heard at the coronation of Edgar in 973 and have been included in all coronations since. This anthem is traditionally performed at the sovereign's anointing.

## **3. Ave Maria – Bach / Gounod**

Charles Gounod (1818-93) added this beautiful counter-melody to the Prelude in C from the first book of Bach's collection of keyboard pieces known as "The 48". This arrangement fleshes out the harmonies in a way that preserves the solemn dignity of the original.

## **4. Panis Angelicus – Franck**

The mystery of God made man, who becomes the bread of life in the sacrament is the subject of this communion motet and this setting by Cesar Franck (1822-90) is one of his best-known works. This arrangement by Kenneth Downing retains the simplicity of the original whilst allowing all parts to enjoy the melody and rich counter tunes.

## **5. Better is Peace from "The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace" – Jenkins (b.1944)**

The Minehead Choral Society were thrilled to perform The Armed Man in its entirety a few years ago and we are proud to sing tonight this movement, a plea for peace and understanding amongst all people. The whole work was commissioned by the Royal Armouries for the millennium and is a contemporary example of a mass based on the 15<sup>th</sup>-century French song "L'Homme armé". With words from Malory, Tennyson and Revelations 21:4, this powerful movement celebrates peace in dramatic form, culminating in an incredibly moving last section.

## **6. Sanctus – Schubert**

We will be performing this part of Schubert's German Mass in its original German. Simple but beautiful, we are privileged to sing this in the perfect setting of the Avenue Methodist Church.

## **7. God So Loved the World - Stainer**

A deservedly-popular part of "The Crucifixion" written by John Stainer (1840-1901), this movement is profoundly moving as a result of the divine simplicity of the setting. Stainer incorporated congregational hymns into his "Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Holy Redeemer" with the intention - like Bach with his passions - that all people should be involved with the story. This is a fine example of the choir set pieces that form the rest of the whole work.

## **8. Ave Verum – Mozart**

This concise choral gem was composed right at the end of Mozart's short life (1756-91). It's apparent simplicity belies the perfection of its shape and substance with glorious melody, subtle modulation and the comfortable range of all four voices. A stalwart of church anthems, its astonishing beauty leads us to reflect on all the works that have been performed as we move into the next phase of the concert.

## **9. Jerusalem – Parry**

The text of 'Jerusalem' was written by William Blake in 1804 and comes from the preface to his epic poem "Milton". It is believed that Parry (1848-1918) set the Blake words specifically for a meeting of the women's suffrage movement: "Fight for the Right" in 1916. Parry himself conducted a performance in the Royal Albert Hall in 1918 as part of the Votes for Women campaign. Please feel free to stand and join in with gusto!

*And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the Holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?  
And did the Countenance Divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
Among these dark satanic mills?*

*Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire!  
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire!  
I will not cease from metal fight;  
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and pleasant land.*

#### **10. Land of Hope and Glory – Elgar**

Shameless patriotism with this wonderful piece of music, starting part-way through the Pomp and Circumstance March No.1 by Elgar (1857-1934) we enjoy our first hearing of the incredibly evocative tune as the largamente *Trio* is played simply on the piano. The famous words, written by Arthur C Benson (1862-1925) then come in with their first rendition in the *Molto Maestoso* – save some energy for later! We are missing out several chunks of orchestral accompaniment so don't hold back as we change key and sing the words again with ever increasing passion and volume. Get those flags out!!

*Land of Hope and Glory,  
Mother of the free,  
How shall we extol thee,  
Who are born of thee?  
Wider and still wider,  
Shall thy bounds be set,  
God who made the mighty,  
Make thee mightier yet!  
God who made thee mighty,  
Make thee mightier yet!*

#### **11. Fantasia on British Sea Songs – arr. S. Jackson**

- 1) Fanfare
- 2) The Saucy Arethusa
- 3) Tom Bowling
- 4) Sailors Hornpipe
- 5) Spanish Ladies
- 6) Home Sweet Home
- 7) See, the conqu'ring hero comes
- 8) **Rule Britannia**

The traditional end to the Last Night of the Proms: originally written by Sir Henry Wood as an orchestral Fantasia on national themes in celebration of the centenary of the Battle of Trafalgar in 1905. This vocal arrangement by Stephen Jackson allows for us all to enjoy the words associated with their

more famous tunes, whilst keeping the overall structure of Wood's movement. The opening "**Fanfare**" on the organ leads us into the jaunty "**The Saucy Arethusa**", where we unfortunately only hear two of the verses of this cracking yarn about an engagement in 1778 between the British Frigate and a French ship, Belle Poule. "**Tom Bowling**" is an elegy on the death of Captain Thomas Dibdin who was killed when his ship was struck by lightning in the Indian Ocean. Tonight the solo will be sung by Jackie Butterworth. The relentless *crescendo* and *accelerando* of the "**Sailor's Hornpipe**", otherwise known as "Jack the Lad", used to involve Henry Wood in a race with stamping Promenaders which he liked to win "by two bars, if possible". Jackson's comments in the score mention "it might be though ungallant to challenge a solo pianist in this way"...

"**Spanish Ladies**" was memorably set by Wood for a quartet of trombones. The following movement "**Home, Sweet, Home**" has been arranged as a piano solo with wordless choral backing as in Wood's original key, which Jackson wanted to keep, it becomes virtually unsingable. He was, however, happy to return to Handel's original key of G major for "**See, the conqu'ring hero comes**" in order to avoid Wood's top D, originally written for his solo horns. Written by Thomas Arne in 1740, "**Rule Britannia**" was first heard in London in 1745 and achieved instant popularity. Feel free to stand, sing and wave the flags as we finish our evening in true patriotic proms style!

***Rule, Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves!  
Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.***

***When Britain first, at heaven's command,  
Arose from out the azure main,  
This was the charter of the land,  
And Guardian Angels sang this strain***

Marcus Capel  
July 2013