

Young choristers shine at St Peter's



THE Promenade Youth and Junior Choirs gave their Easter concert on March 22 at St Peter's Church in Hersham on March 22.

The choirs were outstanding in a demanding and challenging programme featuring major choral works by two British composers, Henry Purcell and John Rutter.

The concert was brought to life by an exciting professional orchestral ensemble conducted by the choirs' director, Christopher Goldsack.

Purcell's celebratory ode for the birthday of Queen Mary, written in 1694, *Come, ye Sons of Art*, was a bold choice, giving many young singers from the choir an opportunity to shine as soloists.

Particularly notable was Esther McNamara's beautiful and delicate alto voice in *Strike the Viol*. Esther was joined by Lottie Buchanan in a lively rendition of the celebrated duet *Sound the Trumpet*.

Michael Smith is a young baritone who is making his name as a performer to look out for in the future. His rousing performance of the aria *These are the Sacred Charms* was outstanding.

The second half brought the programme right up to date with a performance of Rutter's *Feel the Spirit* - seven contrasting American spirituals arranged into a complex choral cantata, with a delightful orchestral score and a demanding mezzo-soprano solo.

Here the young singers

came to life, bringing a fresh and clear tone to a sparkling and committed performance. The lively opening song, *Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho*, set the scene for a truly impressive performance. The choir responded to the vibrant colours of the orchestra with energy.

From the second song, the choir was joined by Janet Shell, a local professional singer of distinction.

In this and the next four songs she held the audience entranced by her dramatic power as much as her beauty of tone and sense of humour.

Her unaccompanied solo in *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child* will long stand in the memory of all the audience.

In the final chorus of *When The Saints Go Marching In* the audience was invited to join the choir in the final verse - a joyous way to end what was a very special evening.

The promenade choirs have been bringing music to the young singers of Elmbridge since they were founded in 2008 by Christopher Goldsack.

His energy and experience as a singer and teacher makes this a remarkable ensemble and a wonderful opportunity for the singers in the community to share in the experience of choral singing.

The choirs have benefitted from the support of the R C Sherriff Trust and the Charity of Robert Phillips.

June Whittle