



# Lympstone Entertainments

## DRUMBEAT

*essential reading for those who don't want to miss the best of What's On in Lympstone*

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### OUR TICKETING ARRANGEMENTS CLARIFIED

Apart from regular sell-outs, like the Village Concert, we never refuse to sell tickets at the door. **But we very much prefer audience members to buy tickets for our shows in advance**; not least because we then know how many chairs to put out and how many ice creams/bottles of beer/ cups of tea to cater for! And we are so lucky that Demelza Henderson allows us to use her centrally located house in the Strand as the LympEnts Box Office. But she's a very busy lady and cannot be on permanent standby to answer the door or pick up the phone in case someone wants to buy tickets for our next presentation. So, to make it easier for all concerned, simply ring Demelza's landline number (01395 272243) and if she doesn't pick up the phone, leave a clear message on her answering machine, including your name and phone number. Demelza will call you back as soon as she can. Or you could put through her door the correct money in an addressed envelope, stating your requirements.

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come and hear  
**THE  
 ZEPHYR  
 DUO**  
 AT 4PM ON  
**SUNDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY**  
**IN LYMPSTONE  
 PARISH CHURCH**  
 when their programme  
 will include familiar  
 and hidden gems of the  
 flute and harp  
 repertoire with music



by Benjamin Britten, John Rutter,  
 William Alwyn, Vincent Persichetti and Irving Berlin

Ruth Molins was born in Exeter and read Music and English Literature at Cardiff University. She has played in many settings throughout the South West, including here in Lympstone, and teaches privately and within three schools. For Ruth, music is a vocation and every day through her teaching, practice and performance, she searches for the best ways to develop and share her love of music and the flute.

Sally Jenkins studied Music at Bristol University and then at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and has since enjoyed performing with orchestras around the country and touring in chamber ensembles. Sally held Director of Music roles at Clifton High School and the Royal High School, Bath. She now concentrates on her first love, playing and teaching the harp, both in local independent schools and privately.

**Tickets at £8 adults, £1 under 16s from the LympEnts Box Office  
 c/o Demelza Henderson, 2, Brookfield Cottages, the Strand  
 Telephone/Answerphone 01395 272243**

## A FULL HOUSE WAS THRILLED BY THE HERMITAGE ENSEMBLE

which more than justified the complex logistics involved in getting them here!

Rosemary Bethell reviews the event for us:

*‘While with an eye made quiet by the power of harmony, and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things.’*

Lines written by Wordsworth a few miles from Tintern Abbey.



And so we, the audience in the parish church, were ‘translated’ that night! These five men enthralled us by the quality of their performance, their voices finely tuned, rich in tone and precise in nature; voices that ranged from that of counter-tenor to basso-profundo. It looked and sounded all too easy! But, of course, we are all aware that to achieve such a level of expertise requires years and years of training, having a natural aptitude for making music, and the physique enabling them to produce such beautiful sounds.

Shazhenik Dmitri, whilst singing the second tenor part, conducted with subtlety, setting the pitch by just hitting a tuning fork against the side of his head, then gently raising the level of the book containing the sheet music or by the lowering and halting of his hand to control pace. If you were not looking out for these movements, they could easily have remained un-observed. Quite magical!

The first half of the programme was devoted to Russian Orthodox Choral Music, which was, for 70 years, censored following the Revolution; it almost became forgotten. Thankfully, now due to professional musicians devoted to this genre, it is experiencing a revival, and is heard again across Russia and Europe. Ensemble members Absolutinov and Boris are current members of the chorus at St.Nicholas Monastery in Saratov.

The Ensemble’s opening piece was ‘God’s Own Son-the only begotten son’, with the music composed by Alexandr Grechaninov; it was sung in a celebratory mode heralding that which was to come later. The closing of the first half of the programme came after the exquisitely powerful and pleading rendering of ‘ Dear Lord, strange and immortal, forgive us’ composed by Pavel Tchesnokov.

In between, we listened to simple, beautiful compositions; one comes to my mind, ‘The Lord’s Prayer’, composed by Tchaikovsky. Another, ‘The Eternal Council’ enabled us to hear in dominance the glorious basso-profundo voice of Nikolai, harmoniously backed by the other four singers, which produced a wonderfully contemplative piece. Pavel Chesnokov, the composer of it, was a specialist in conducting, including some performances at The Bolshoi Theatre and Moscow Academy. When in 1933, Stalin ordered the demolition of Christ the Saviour Cathedral (where Chesnokov was Choral Master) so that a skyscraper could be built, he ceased composing altogether.

Following the interval, during which refreshments were provided for performers and audience, and for the sale of CDs, we effortlessly ‘changed gear’ from the sacred choral music to the secular side of the programme; this consisted of folk songs, which form an essential part in Russian life, culture and music; many have played important roles in works by famous Russian composers like Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and Prokofiev.

Everyone loved, because we were familiar with them, ‘Kalinka’, the ‘Volga Boat Song’ sung with contrasting moods between the First Tenor and Basso Profundo, and ‘Midnight in Moscow’ deliciously soft in tone, exquisitely harmonious and romantic.



So far, I’ve not really said any thing about Grankvist Sergey, the counter-tenor. When we came to ‘The Evening Bells’, which is very popular in Russia, its lyrics written by Thomas Moore, Grankvist came into his own as the soloist. Here, we heard the full range of his voice reaching from the highest register down almost to where Nikolai Kolesnikov, the basso-profundo, was providing the tolling bell; all done with such skill, control combining with beauty.

The evening drew to its end with the Ensemble singing an encore ‘Can’t help falling in love with you’ which brought people to their feet. Our thanks are due to Lymphstone Entertainments for such a feast of music making, brought to us after so much complicated negotiation and logistics!

## STILL MORE TO LOOK FORWARD TO

LympEnts will be playing its part on 11<sup>th</sup> June when the village celebrates the Queen's birthday – or rather we're sponsoring that excellent local group of jazzers, *Just Misbehavin'*, to play in Candy's Field. The Team will be around to talk about our glorious past and, hopefully to let slip a few secrets about what we're planning for the autumn and beyond. See you there?

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## The Cygnet Theatre will be back on 16<sup>th</sup> July with their new production of Shakespeare's timeless tragi-comedy **THE WINTER'S TALE**



another magical al fresco performance in the Telfer's garden  
(start planning your picnic!)

all the details will be found in the next issue of Drumbeat

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## HERMITAGE POST SCRIPT

Also in the audience for the recent concert was retired academic Ted Neather, himself possessor of a fine bass voice often enjoyed in these parts. Here are his thoughts on the performance:

Russian male voice choirs are something very special, as I've experienced on past visits to Russia. So when I read in the local press that Lympstone Entertainments had invited the five members of the Hermitage Singers to perform in the Parish Church, I immediately rang and booked tickets. I was not disappointed.

There is something very special and rather unique about Russian male voices. Russian bass singers are, of course famous for their depth and range, and Nikolai Kolesnikov produced magnificent tone and power. Baritone Boris Totokin was younger with a lighter quality to his voice. The quality of the tenors in the group was astonishing, but particularly in the case of countertenor Sergei Gramkvist. In his upper range and with astonishing volume, he was electrifying. Timur Absolutinov sang with a pure, clear tone and the whole group were directed and led by another tenor, Dmitri Skazehenik (right).



For the first half of the concert the group sang a selection of works from Orthodox church music including the moving and magnificent hymn to the Virgin, "Bogoroditsye Devo" from Rachmaninov's Vespers. The second half of the concert consisted of folk songs including the well-known "Kalinka". It was an enormously rewarding evening of song, much appreciated by the capacity crowd.