

Jeremy Lingard: Conductor.....and more besides

Music has been a major part of Jeremy's life: he was playing the piano by ear long before he had lessons, helped others of his age to make music in his own style and sang in the school chapel choir, visiting Cambridge at one point to hear King's College Choir. These experiences were a major influence in his developing love of choral music.

Jeremy began conducting at Lady Hawkins School Kington, where he was Head of Science. The school choir had ceased to exist and there was no orchestra. Jeremy resurrected the choir and started an orchestra. Meanwhile he was invited to become Music Director of Kington Choral and Operatic Society (KCS). In his first concert with the Society he conducted the Messiah with a scratch orchestra of a mixture of professional and amateur players. With no training and limited experience, Jeremy has often wondered how he got away with this, but he subsequently took professional lessons and with the KCS conducted many of the best known orchestral and choral works. He then moved to the Halcyon Singers where he was able to broaden his repertoire to include many of the shorter, unaccompanied works for choir. In his last role as Director he conducted the joint choirs of Halcyon and Cantorion in a performance of the Mozart Requiem with Birmingham's Asklepios Orchestra. After a long self imposed break from conducting Jeremy was asked, in 2018, to take over Cantorion Llandrindod after the sad retirement of David White.

Part of Jeremy's appeal is that he has always had interests outside music. From the age of 12 he had a menagerie of wild animals including a tame weasel with which he appeared on television making several appearances on "Animal Magic". During his teens he was the 'nature correspondent' for local newspapers and this encouraged him, at the age of 22, to write a book: "Zoo in the Garden: a sort of autobiography" which was published here and in the USA. Whilst Jeremy's fascination with Biology was the driving force behind his 30 years in teaching, he has always regarded this as something of a paradox: his stronger talents always being on the arts side, including for many years a love of oil painting resulting in commissions to paint large, landscape canvasses.

He now lives on a small farm with his wife and some livestock – alpacas in particular. But he has never ceased to practise music: he has been composing and arranging music for a good deal of his life and loves to have his works performed. In his first concert with Cantorion we sang some of his pieces which were very popular with Choir and audience. We look forward to a fruitful and successful period with Jeremy as our Conductor.