

Prom classics stir rousing finale for conductor

THE Rotorua District Choir's *Not the Proms* concerts at St Luke's Church at the weekend were a resounding success.

Conductor Martyn Heath had chosen a magnificent programme of songs of quality and meaning from the British Isles, which are traditionally performed on the last night of that great London institution.

His stirring work in preparing the choir was evident throughout,

Details:

- WHAT: Rotorua District Choir
 - WHEN: Saturday
 - WHERE: St Luke's Church
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encouraging freshness and colour in their singing, and helped by Leonard Cave's scrupulous piano and organ accompaniment.

The choir's obvious enjoyment made the occasion come alive and the concerts seemed right for a New Zealand setting too, as such songs are part of our own heritage.

There was much to rouse the emotions, from the cheeriness of the 13th-century *Sumer is I-Cumen In* and the Beatles' *Ob-La-Di*, to touching folksongs and the stirring coronation anthem, Handel's *Zadok the Priest*.

Characterful singing gave vitality to the ensemble pieces,

three Elizabethan madrigals and selections from Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas*.

With *Jerusalem* at the end of the concert there was the traditional flag-waving as the choir and audience rejoiced in national pride and the great pleasure of singing.

There was some sadness too as it marked the departure from Rotorua of the much-appreciated conductor Martyn Heath.

— Hanno Fairburn

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