



Some members of the Seaway Valley Singers following the 2018 Christmas concert. From the left are Aria Whisselle, Margaret Whisselle (accompanist), Robert Jones, conductor, Heather Garlough and Andy Van Leyen. (The Leader/Gibb photo)

In Dulci Jubilo with the Seaway Valley Singers ushers in Christmas

W. Gibb – Leader staff

IROQUOIS – Iroquois United Church was packed as members of the community came out to enjoy one of the highlights of the Christmas season, a concert presented by the Seaway Valley Singers, Sunday, December 2.

Following nearly 12 weeks of rehearsals, the Choir presented *In Dulci Jubilo*, with Dr. Jerry Rosenquist as the master of ceremonies.

The 42 voice choir, directed by Robert Jones, with Margaret Whisselle as accompanist, delivered a program that was a delightful mixture of traditional, sacred pieces from the season as well as some unexpected, upbeat Christmas favourites.

The audience was also invited to join in the singing of two well loved hymns.

Although, as Rosenquist pointed out, “many songs were written to supply specific liturgical needs in the church calendar” several of the pieces, through the years, have now become music we specifically associate with Advent and the Christmas season.

The choir delivered a beautiful rendition of David Meece’s *One Small Child*, with the quiet refrain “One small light/In the endless night.” They also did full justice to *Pavanne for a Silent Night* by Maurice Ravel, with a beautiful, and plaintive recorder solo by Annette McCrae interwoven with the voices.

In honour of the Festival of the Lights, also celebrated at this time of year by Jews around the world, the choir presented a rousing old

Yiddish folk song, *The Humukkah Song*.

The latter half of Singers’ concert delivered some very light-hearted (indeed “unusual”) Christmas songs.

No one really expects King Kong to appear in a carol, but if P.D.Q. Bach could write *O Little Town of Hackensack*, there is no doubt that he could write a carol about an 80 foot Ape featuring a syncopated chorus of “Squish! Squish! Squish!”

Frosty the Snowman, a la the Beachboys, brought the house down with its boisterous “You da Snowman, Frosty!”

The concert drew to a close with an a cappella rendition of *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, showcasing all the voices in the choir and bringing the audience of well over 200 to its feet.