

# Cornwall April 2015

You've heard of Poldark, Jamaica Inn, Doc Martin, John Betjeman and now, Shepshed Singers; just some of the delights of Cornwall.



After many months of meticulous planning and rehearsing, the majority of the choir, with a good number of supporters, including Dawa the Newfoundland, were off to the South West to perform at four beautiful venues, St Tudy Church, Truro Cathedral, Falmouth Methodist Church and St Swithin's, Launcells, for the warm and welcoming people of Cornwall.

Our programme of sacred and secular pieces, some old and some new repertoire, had been chosen to reflect the springtime, the sea and to celebrate Easter. Alleluias abounded and were put to best effect in Truro Cathedral, where its vastness gave the singing a heavenly quality. The full sound of the double choir singing Croce's 'Regina Coeli' made an impressive start to the concert, as the two halves competed and then reunited to create an exultant final 'Alleluja'.

A selection of early sacred music from Tye, Taverner, Palestrina and Byrd, fittingly chosen for the ancient churches of St Tudy and St Swithin's, Launcells, was much appreciated, but the smiles came when we launched into the familiar sing-alongs, 'Mermaid' and 'I do like to be beside the seaside', even clapping along to 'The angel rolled the stone away'. Throughout, Dawa, our canine supporter, lay peacefully spread across the aisle at St Swithin's, giving a wonderfully relaxed atmosphere to the occasion. Indeed, they're a hospitable bunch in Cornwall, providing drinks, sandwiches and cake to sustain us, and for our convenience, a composting toilet.



'When the weather is fine, you know it's the time, for messing about on the river.' With stunning views of the coastline, our boat leisurely chugged along the Fal River to join 'Eight in a Bar', the local male voice choir, at Falmouth Methodist Church. They sang with both gusto and sensitivity and it was a real treat for us to sit back and enjoy their harmonious singing. I don't think they thought we were too bad either! Our old favourites, Vaughan Williams' Folk Songs were well received and, despite our groans, 'Sacramento' was enjoyed by audience and performers alike.

The tour was a great success and we have some happy memories to treasure. We are indebted to Richard for his expert guidance, his exuberance and expressive conducting; to Jo for finding such wonderful venues; to the whole committee, and especially our tireless 'Saint Jeni', who put everything into making sure the tour ran smoothly and enjoyably for everyone. So finally, to you all, 'Meur ras', a special Cornish thank you from the bottom of our hearts.