



The Choral Society's visit to Norway

# Norwegian highnotes

## Newbury Choral Society's visit to Trondheim, Norway

**AS a result of a friendship that began in Germany in 1958 between a schoolboy from Norway and another from England, Newbury Choral Society were invited to join with the Trondheim Male Voice Choir (Trondernes Mandssangforening) and three other Norwegian choirs to celebrate Children's Day in the Bishop's Palace Hall on Saturday, October 26, and a Choral Concert in the beautiful country church at Melhus on Sunday, October 27.**

Newbury Choral sang English works by Rutter, Tompkins, Purcell, Britten and Tavener and in tribute to Norway's great musical tradition included Edvard Grieg's *Ave Maris Stella* and a beautiful contemporary work by Ola Gjeilo, *The Ground*.

The final piece, with the combined choirs, certainly roused the audience as together they sang Parry's *Jerusalem*, under the baton of the society's musical director Cathal Garvey.

Trondheim Children's Choir drew

attention to the difficulties that those who have impaired hearing experience when attending choral concerts. These six- to eight-year-olds performed their songs beautifully, using voice and signing to communicate their words to all.

At Melhus Kirke on Sunday, the choirs were joined by local organist Christine Goedecke and pianist Eva Holm Foosnaes. The concert began with an organ work by Stamm, *Rondo alla celtica* followed by the NCS programme of which Gjeilo's *The Ground* and Tavener's *Mother of God* became instant favourites of both audience and choirs.

Local choir Melhus Songlag, conducted by Ingrid Ostvang, performed works by

Uusberg, Havroy and Forde. Trondernes Mandssangforening followed with Biebel's *Ave Maria* and Brahms' *Rhapsody*, with soloist Maria Moen Nohr in magnificent form.

The 40-strong Newbury choir arrived on Friday and were greeted by their Norwegian hosts, many of whom provided accommodation in their homes. The Trondheim Male Voice Choir have their own city centre rehearsal cellar where they royally entertained the visitors with post-concert festivities.

At their recent rehearsal, NCS chairwoman Liz Wallace paid tribute to the two organisers Sinead Hall and Monica Huddie who had arranged all the travel and rooming.

Newbury Choral Society's next concert, on Saturday, December 7, (7.30pm) at St Nicolas' Church, Newbury, will feature a performance of Rheinberger's *Star of Bethlehem* with other seasonal music, with the London Ulysses Orchestra, conducted by Cathal Garvey.

PAUL HIGH