

MUSIC IN FELIXSTOWE REPORT TO FELIXSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL 2023

We have had a very busy year doing music for the Felixstowe community.

Our two major projects were the schools project "Noah's Ark" in a Day, and The Free Proms on the Prom..We also visited a dementia group on several occasions, Felixstowe Library and a couple of care homes.

The musical version of Noah's Ark involved 100 children from three local primary schools, also a teenager portraying Noah, and 2 girls to dance the roles of the dove and the raven. This they choreographed themselves and was accompanied by music from Noyye's Fludde by Benjamin Britten.

We used a small band of professional musicians for the show and a director for the action. The schools each chose a group of animals and a song to go with that species. It was very entertaining - they sang Everybody Wants To Be a Cat, I'm The King of The Jungle and the Birdie Song!

They learnt other songs to sing together, including a number from Noyye's Fludde. The orchestra played various pieces of mostly classical music to underscore the action but slipped in Pirates of the Caribbean during the storm scene.

Some of the children at one school had said they could only do the dress rehearsal in the afternoon, but having got into the joy of being part of the show, turned up again in the evening along with all their parents. Some of these parents said afterwards that they didn't realise how much they enjoyed classical music and how good the musicians were. There was no charge to come in. This particular school has underprivileged children and it seemed wrong to charge to come in. The cost of the show, including the hire of the Orwell Hotel ballroom, was over £2,000 and just when we were despairing a grant came in from the Belacqua Trust to whom I'd applied 2 months previously.

Our other free event was the Proms on the Prom. This was even more successful than last year and attracted upwards of 1,000 people over the course of the day. It was heartwarming to feel the good nature of the crowd, even more so as we had really lovely weather.

The cost of this was over twice that of the Children's Show and we have received no funding from other sources this year, so the Council's help was much appreciated.

Our regular concert series is well supported although generally running at a small loss. As I write, we are about to put on our popular Last Night of the Proms concert. We have mostly a retired audience which is why our two free events are very important in attracting younger and unwaged people.

We hope to continue doing these events. Any funding ideas would be gratefully received.

Hattie Bennett September 2023



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Report from December 2023 to March 2024

At Christmas we gave a performance to “Open Space” group at Felixstowe library, this is always a popular occasion as we have Xenia Horne on the harp and also take in a small table harp for the people to try out. They love it.

Since January we have twice visited “Home Instead” a special group for those with dementia and their carers. This is always a lovely occasion – it’s wonderful to see the afflicted people responding, singing and dancing.

We also took a professional busker, Pete Hartley, who is a violinist into one of the primary schools we have a connection with. They again, absolutely loved it. One small girl said "this was the best day of my life” Our photos show Pete playing to the children at Kingsfleet School and to a somewhat older audience at the Orwell Hotel.

Our two major projects are in preparation – the schools project "Around the World In 80 Minutes, to take place in July were the schools project “Noah's Ark" in a Day, and The Free Proms on the Prom...

Hattie Bennett March 2024



Photos from top left:- Entertaining Open Space group at Felixstowe library

Home Instead group at Trimley

Violinist at Kingsfleet School and Orwell Hotel

Finale of last year's schools production