



Elizabeth Patterson (photo by Steve Sherman)

Singing to the Glory of God: Brian Robins talks to Elizabeth Patterson

Elizabeth Patterson is the director of a remarkable choir, *Gloriae Dei Cantores* (Singers to the Glory of God), based in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. It is also the name of the disc label on which the choir's recordings appear, and one that tells much about GDC's objectives. These are strongly based on propagating an interdenominational religious message and, in their words, "promoting peace and understanding among peoples of different nations and cultures."

The choir is remarkable simply because its present high standards have, as Elizabeth Patterson puts it, "sprung out of a rather different situation from the one most choirs grow from. It was a church organization that sang terribly. It was just abominable. So, at the request of people who were in a situation to make such requests my husband and I started to work with them to try to produce some better singing. Just to give you some idea of where we were starting from, it was so bad that we couldn't even get a unison doxology. So the first thing we did was to set up community events, because we discovered that the moment you got into anything informative they sort of shut down as people, and you really couldn't start with any information. We found they were much better at anything connected with their own faith. If this was an expression of their faith then they wanted to be part of it. That was the first thing. The other was this thing of 'If anyone hears me they'll think I sound terrible, because I think I sound terrible.' So there was a lot to overcome, but the more we could reassure them that everybody was too involved in their own part to listen to them the better it became. Out of that community start with about 80 to 100 people there were a few who decided they wanted to pursue it with a bit more involvement, and that's really how the choir started."

Anyone who owns one or more of the 26 discs that have followed in the wake of such inauspicious beginnings will doubtless have been as intrigued as I was by listings that announce some of the soloists as "Sister" or "Brother." I asked Elizabeth Patterson to explain. "The church [that of the Holy Paraclete in Orleans, MA] is at the center, the core in which there are a lot of families involved, but there are also two orders, one of monks and one of nuns. So it's a sort of triple-headed setup which has its routes in the past, as we discovered. England used to have a lot of



Gloriae Dei Cantores (photo by Steve Sherman)

monasteries where there were lay people involved in addition to monks and nuns. Such historical precedents meant that it was nothing new, just a novel idea for this century. So it is an ecumenical establishment of people wanting a greater involvement of faith in everyday life than just going to church on Sunday. The requirement for the choir is to be actively involved at that level."

Indeed participation in the choir demands a high level of commitment. Although nominally amateur, the choir makes professional demands on the men and women it accepts. Compulsory rehearsals are held daily, one hour during the week, one and a half hours on weekends. In addition, both Saturday and Sundays require attendance at ecumenical services held in the church. The 44 choir members are also expected to attend bimonthly master classes. And just to complete the picture there are tours, which can take choristers away from home for up to two months. All of which, I suggested to Elizabeth Patterson, suggests a pretty rigid regimen. She laughs. "Who have you been talking to?" "I haven't been talking to anybody, I've just been reading the publicity material I was sent! Anyway there's nothing wrong with having stringent requirements if they get results." Another burst of infectious laughter spans the Atlantic. "Well, I suppose I do have to plead guilty to being probably a very demanding choir director. One of the things that has fueled that is that if we are going to do it at all we are going to try to give back to God the very best of what we are. That demands a certain progress in terms of excellence and involvement. So the group has gone through an amazing development to reach its present level."

That is clearly audible on the GDC discs that I've heard, as is the obvious commitment to the religious texts the choir sings. When I commented on this I originally referred to "Christian texts," but then recalled that the choir had also recorded Jewish settings. Elizabeth Patterson needed little prompting to take up the topic. "As the group solidified and showed more serious involvement, it became very apparent, not as some sort of directive, but as something that arose from the choir itself, that one of the things that is missing is an understanding of the faith of others. We tend to get into our corner and push our own experiences to the detriment of relationships between us. So what came out of that was a desire to first of all communicate the whole literature from the past up, starting with chant, which of course is where the roots of everything are. And secondly there is a tremendous neglect of what we call the subtext, that is to say the text under the text. What is the inspiration of it, what is it really saying? What is its history? What were the attitudes of the people of that time?"

this, or do it all herself? "Well, I have a wonderful man who comes to help different members of the choir with technical problems related to specific repertoire. The stylistic problems we really do our best to sort out for ourselves, although we're not too proud to go and talk to experts to try to get as good an understanding of that style as we can, and particularly to get last-minute details of recent musicological research. I will be after Steven Cleobury or, if it has to do with Spanish music, David Hill, and consult with Mary Berry if there is some chant route that I'm going out on." "And, of course, that is one area where you have specialized." "Yes, that for us is the grandfather of it all, and interestingly enough Russian music has similar roots in the chant." "And I guess where the recording of Russian music [*Sacred Songs of Russia*; GDCD 100] is concerned, you must have had a fair amount of background work to do, not least with the pronunciation?" "Yes, and before we went to Russia we had some exercises to grow a little muscle so we could manage to sustain the lines in the way the Russian people do, because we were not really strong enough. Their history and their lives have made them very sturdy and strong physically."

The subject of recordings prompted me to ask how the idea of recording the choir's work initially came about. "It started simply because people who came to our concerts were starting to ask if we had recordings of what they'd heard. So we began by making tapes, but then we began to see the advantage of recording the music of a particular composer or country, so it just grew from that." "And now of course you've built up quite a substantial catalog." "Yes, and perhaps in that respect I could make a personal point here, because I don't know whether the choir shares this. One of my particular ambitions, particularly in this country, is be part of the movement that helps to build church music back to some kind of more laudatory level. There has been a lot of decay, and that has been of particular concern to me. So, that's why we do things like the William Matthias, because it is within the range of some choirs to do if they will commit themselves. We're also trying to do that in the American psalmody series, to bring to attention works that it is possible for other choirs to do, and so put good music back into the service." I tell Patterson that Matthias, hardly a high-profile figure in Britain either, was an interesting choice. The disc devoted to his music [GDCD 026; 22:4] is one of two recently issued GDC discs, the other being *Make His Praise Glorious* [GDCD 025, 22:3], the first of a major series devoted to American psalmody. It includes a performance notable for some beautifully controlled *pianissimo* singing of Charles Ives's splendid, but far from easy, setting of Psalm 90. One can't but help think that Elizabeth Patterson is perhaps being rather optimistic if she believes such a work to be within the capabilities of a choir less accomplished than her own.

I went on to ask whether the psalmody series was likely to be extensive. "Yes, it will be. There are so many American composers who are tilling in a fairly bleak landscape, and they go largely unnoticed." "Do you mean specifically in the field of church music, and if so does this stem from the poor choral situation you mentioned, do you think?" "Yes, I think it does. I hesitate a bit, because I'm just one person, and obviously not fully in touch with what is happening right across the country, but from my outlook I would say, yes, the choirs here in this country have been very poor. I'm certainly not alone among my compatriot musicians in trying to struggle with this. But I do see hopeful things happening, not the least of which is the fact that we do seem to sell recordings of American composers here. So I think people are gradually finding out what is available."

We turned to the future. I wondered whether there were further exotic tours in the offing or whether the choir had already been involved in one yet this year. "No, we haven't done a tour this year. We've just spiraled out of doing a whole series of concerts with the Boston Pops, so we're just getting our heads back to what we're going to do. But we are going to do a Bach recording for the anniversary, and in 2000 we're looking forward to releasing a Copland disc to celebrate the centenary of his birth. That may also include some Virgil Thomson. Then we're doing a concert in Boston in October. That's about it for the moment." And I'm sure it is, given the regular commitments of *Gloriae Dei Cantores* and their hardworking director. When, as an early-music man, I first listened to some of their Renaissance polyphony and early Baroque recordings, I did so with a certain sense of disappointment; from that viewpoint they inevitably fall short of the work being done by more specialist groups. Yet having talked to Elizabeth Patterson, I realize that what she and her highly accomplished group are doing is something of wider importance—nothing less than achieving their objective of spreading harmony and understanding in a big, bad world.

So when we go to do a recording we do a fair amount of scratching around. So we really do try to go after that."

"So what I think you are trying to do is balance the musical demands with a certain degree of proselytizing. Would that be a fair observation?" "Well, I don't think our aim is to proselytize as much as it is to make paths of understanding between people. In other words if we're singing Russian Orthodox music, we're not lobbying for people to become Orthodox. What we are doing is to say that this country has had an experience of faith, and as Americans we need to review, respect, and understand that experience. In the past so much offense has been given from not understanding, looking down and saying that what we have is better. Well, you can't really make that statement until you've understood. I think it was Lincoln who said that if you really want to understand a man's situation, then you must walk in his shoes."

Such paths of understanding are appositely illustrated by an anecdote relating to one of the choir's many tours, engagements that have taken them not only to more obvious destinations but also to such countries as Siberia, Albania, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. It emerged after I asked Elizabeth Patterson whether the choir ever tackled secular music. "Oh, yes. You can't keep a good group down," she chuckled. "I was thinking only the other day of this little secular folksong we did when we went to Bulgaria. It's called *Dilmano Dilbero*, and is a sort of hidden national anthem. We had cottoned on to this from a girl in Toronto when we did a tour of Canada, and she told us that we must go to her country, where everyone sings. So I said, 'In case we ever do, can I have your name and come back to you for some ideas on what the Bulgarians would want to hear of their own music?' Sure enough these things came to pass, and this was one of the things we did when we were on tour there. Having done our chant and early music, we then did this folk song. The reaction was amazing—they actually rose to their feet, shouting and stamping. Now we know what it feels like to be the Beatles. So, yes, we do secular music!"

Such tours have obviously played an important educative part in the life of the choir, despite their being achieved "not without some sacrifices as regards cost." "But," Patterson continued, "we do it willingly because as we take to them the result of whatever study and commitment we've been able to give, doing some of their music as a way of saying we're trying to understand you. The amazing thing that comes out of that is that then they open wide out, and want to know what America is like. That is what we have become interested in. It just started with wanting to give back the best of what we were and to sing praises that were worthy. But it has opened up a whole new horizon of being able to reach out to people and understand how God works in other countries."

During the course of their work the choir covers an enormous range of repertoire of sacred music that spans the entire spectrum from Gregorian chant (performed by a smaller group called the Schola) to contemporary American composers. It is obviously a formidable task to reach high standards in attempting to encompass such a wide stylistic gamut. I asked Elizabeth Patterson what special training (if any) there was to cope with very different demands of, say, Charles Ives's setting of Psalm 90 as compared with a Renaissance motet. Does she bring in any expert outside help on

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■ CHORAL MUSIC ■

Gloriae Dei Cantores debuts at Jordan Hall

BY ANNA CREBO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Most concert choirs begin building their reputations close to home, gradually extending their field of renown until, at last, comes the day they are ready (and financially able) to embark on international tours.

But Gloriae Dei Cantores (Singers to the Glory of God) — the 40-voice professional chorus based at Orleans' Community of Jesus — has done it in reverse.

Originally founded as a resident choir for the ecumenical group's religious services, Gloriae Dei Cantores, under the leadership of founder-director Elizabeth Patterson, already had several international tours under its belt before making public appearances in the Boston area, beginning in the early 1990s.

The warm praise garnered by the

In Concert

- **What:** Gloriae Dei Cantores
- **When:** 8 p.m. Friday
- **Where:** Jordan Hall, 30 Gairoborough St., Boston
- **Tickets:** \$11-\$30
- **Box office:** (617) 536-2412
- **Information:** 255-3999

choir's programs of sacred music at Boston's Church of the Advent and Holy Cross Cathedral, in addition to other East Coast metropolitan appearances, led in 1996 to Gloriae Dei Cantores being invited to sing at the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra's annual holiday concerts in Symphony Hall, as well as on the East Coast portion of its tour. (The choir alter-

nates with Boston Symphony Orchestra's Tanglewood Chorus for this extended series of holiday concerts.) This year will mark the group's fourth season with the Pops.

Debut at Jordan Hall

And next Friday evening, Gloriae Dei Cantores will achieve yet another milestone: its debut concert at New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall, as renowned for its history and traditions of fine music-making — especially choral music — as for its superb acoustics.

In keeping with one of the organization's stated aims of promoting high quality contemporary sacred music, the choir will present mostly American, British and Russian sacred works composed in the last decade. The exception will be J.S.



STEVE J. SHEAL

Gloriae Dei Cantores will perform at Jordan Hall on Friday.

Photo by CONCERT JB-2

Concert: Choir to sing in Boston

continued from B-1

Bach's 1727 motet, "Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied," S. 225 ("Sing to the Lord a New Song"), the program's opener. Other works include Samuel Adler's "A Psalm Trilogy," William Mathias' seldom-heard four-part cycle "Rex Glorae," and Georgi Vasilevich Sviridov's six-movement Russian Orthodox-oriented "Inedible Mystery."

"Jordan Hall is just an all-round very good performance venue — one of the finest in Boston," says organist and assistant conductor James E. Jordan, principal accompanist for the group's concerts and extensive CD recordings.

"And New England Conservatory has such a famous history in connection with sacred music — especially American music. Many of its directors were organists or composers," Jordan says. "We are thrilled to be able to take the message of this

Samuel Adler's music

The music of German-born American composer Samuel Adler in particular is being explored in depth by the choir, Jordan says. Among the composer's many sacred choral works are several collections of music written expressly for traditional Jewish Havdalah services.

"Last spring, Adler worked with us for several days on a number of his own compositions," says Jordan, "and we concluded with a Havdalah service at the end of the Sabbath right here in the chapel (Chapel of the Holy Paradise in Orleans)."

Next Saturday, following the preceding night's Jordan Hall concert, Gloriae Dei Cantores will travel to Providence to sing Adler's music at an 8 p.m. Havdalah service at Temple Beth-El. "It's exciting for us to tap back into our Jewish roots," Jordan says.

On Wednesday, the choir will

"Classics in the Morning" program in connection with its upcoming Boston concert and the group's latest CD releases. (To date, Gloriae Dei Cantores has made 27 digital recordings, many of them at historic Methuen Hall in Methuen.)

In addition to seven performances from Dec. 26 through Dec. 30 at Symphony Hall, Gloriae Dei Cantores will make three additional New England appearances with the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra: Dec. 12 in Worcester, Dec. 14 in Providence, Dec. 18 in Durham, N.H. (The group will also travel with the orchestra to Chicago, Toronto, Ottawa, and West Point, N.Y.) For Pops holiday concert tickets and information, you may call (617) 266-1200.

Gloriae Dei Cantores seeks spiritual growth in music

By Richard Dyer
GLOBE STAFF

One New England-based performing organization has produced an impressive catalog of nearly 30 CDs over the last few years — and it is probably not the first ensemble concertgoers would think of on hearing this statistic.

That's because *Gloriae Dei Cantores* is not primarily a concert group, though it has reached a high level of artistic accomplishment; performed a vast, significant and under-served repertory in 16 languages; toured throughout Europe and Asia; and frequently sings holiday concerts with Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra. That's in addition to recording all those CDs. The principal activity and responsibility of the group is to serve the spiritual needs of its members and the nonsinging members of the ecumenical religious community attached to the Church of the Holy Paraclete in Orleans, on Cape Cod.

Gloriae Dei Cantores means "Singing to the Glory of God," and the ensemble sings in the church at evensong every Saturday, during regular Sunday services, and chants throughout the week. Most of its concerts are not at home in Orleans but out on the road, on tour. *Gloriae Dei Cantores*, which has sung in Boston during the Holiday Pops season and at the Church of the Advent, makes its Jordan Hall debut Friday night at 8.

Last week the 44 singers of *Gloriae Dei Cantores* traveled to Methuen to record a new Bach CD. Late in the afternoon before the first recording session, conductor Elizabeth C. Patterson came to the telephone to talk about plans for this week's concert — and about the unusual ensemble she leads.

"The church in Orleans had been growing steadily since about 1965, and the community was officially incorporated in 1970. My husband and I arrived two years later, and the director of the community said to us, 'Our singing needs help,' and he wasn't kidding. At that time, it was difficult to get a unison doxology. But my husband and I learned a valuable lesson from those first early

days. All the members of the choir had arrived with strong faith convictions, strong enough for them to have uprooted themselves from the places all across the country they had come from. Many of them did not have positive attitudes toward music, or toward themselves as musicians. So we could not start to work with technical or musical language; instead we needed to start with the reason we had gathered in the first place, and to work from commitment to the text. We began with community singests, and out of that there grew a group of people who wanted to commit themselves to something larger, people who found that music was a way of giving praise to a God for whom their love was growing. That's how GDC was born."

Music has thrived in the community. In addition to the core choir, there are additional singers who come in for larger works; there is also an orchestra of 60 community instrumentalists, a 100-member band, and a hand-bell ensemble.

"There are 300 people in the community," Patterson says, "and it's the rare person who isn't tooting an instrument or singing. I'm the dreamer, and one of my dreams is to get a crack at some of the oratorio literature with orchestras, and I think it's on the way — the orchestra is really coming along."

A serious approach

The choir takes its work seriously. It rehearses daily, and participates in regularly scheduled workshops. "When you've got a ready group," Patterson says, "you can start to crack down, and as soon as I saw my opportunity, I did just that. We worked through the music-theory course books from the Royal College of Music in England, and individuals and small groups have done special studies which they have shared with the whole group. Many of the singers have decided to work on their solo voices, and when they've gone as far as the community can take them, they have gone on to study at Juilliard or the Eastman School of Music."

The members of the choir are between 18 and 60 years old, and most of them hold jobs independent of the



PHOTO / STEVE J. SHERMAN

Conductor Elizabeth C. Patterson says the ensemble tries to "see the face of God" in song.

religious community, although tours can take them away from Orleans for as much as two months at a time.

"We've been very lucky," Patterson says, "that most of the people have been able to find jobs where their employer is willing to make the necessary concessions. When a person brings this level of commitment to music, that spills over into everything else they do. I believe that musical discipline does affect every other dimension of life. I keep coming back to something one of my teachers said to me years ago, that the first sign of a declining society is that they get rid of the arts."

For members of *Gloriae Dei Cantores*, music has also become an instrument for spiritual growth. This became apparent almost immediately and later became an articulated part of the ensemble's mission. "After our first seven years, my husband and I had been given a year off, and we elected to take that year in Cambridge, England, where we experienced the Anglican body of church music in an up close and personal way. The choir then came for two weeks, and that opened the door to exploring the different literatures of the church. We use music to try to see the face of God as others have

seen it through mastering the music of other centuries and different religious traditions."

Patterson points out that some choral conductors caution against the kind of musical diversity that *Gloriae Dei Cantores* rejoices in; choirs, some conductors believe, should specialize, the way solo singers usually do. "We sing in a large number of different styles, but it has been worth it to us; it is more important to us to take the trip around different religious and musical traditions than to be bound by the norms of excelling in one kind of literature," she says.

The lessons of chant

Gloriae Dei Cantores has won special praise, internationally, for the way it sings Gregorian chant. "Chant helps develop the voice, when it is done right," Patterson says. "And as the grandfather of all Western music, it has an awful lot to say about the execution of later music; chant lies behind, is the bass line, of a much larger body of literature, and this has made it easier to cross over from one style to the next because we have started from the place everything else came from."

Patterson's biography is not prominently featured in the extensive publicity for *Gloriae Dei Can-*

tores, but she is not reluctant to talk about it. "My husband and I come from the Midwest, and I graduated from Millikin University in Decatur, Ill., with a keyboard major and a minor in organ. I took various school jobs while my husband was pursuing a doctorate in music at Columbia in order to help pay the bills, first as a kindergarten teacher, and later as a music supervisor for the elementary school system in Newton, N.J. When we started our family — our daughter is now 30 and our son is 26 — I taught music-appreciation courses in night school until we moved to Orleans to join the community.

"My husband is no longer directly involved with the choir, because he's branched off into chant." (Another activity of the community is the publication of chant recordings through the Paraclete Press.) "He left me with the whole nine yards of the choir, but this was a joint decision. There is still a lot of breaking information about chant, and it is helpful to have an expert consultant!"

The program for Friday night's concert reflects several recent concerns of *Gloriae Dei Cantores*. "We will begin with a couple of Gregorian chants, including one of Psalm 84, and then we will sing the 'Psalm Trilogy' by the American composer

Samuel Adler, a real gem that is not often done, and it needs a good public hearing. We will sing the 'Rex Gloriae' by the Welsh composer William Mathias, a Bach motet, because we will have just finished recording it, and then the 'Ineffable Mystery' by Georgi Sviridov, who died about four days before the choir arrived in Moscow last year.

"Do you know the way he would compose? He would sit outside his dacha near Moscow and take two or three notes, almost like a mantra, and then play them over and over. Then he would pick up a pencil and write the composition, and at the end he would put the pencil down and never touch the music again. His music sprang out of the essence of who he was, his wrestling with life, and his grip on it."

In addition to the personal religious journey each member of *Gloriae Dei Cantores* has embarked upon, Patterson also feels the group can pursue a specifically musical and cultural mission. "I feel that most choirs in American churches can achieve a higher musical standard than what they do. I do appreciate what most directors are facing. They no sooner get the Christmas pieces ready than the tenor announces he's going home for the holidays! I hope we can help choir directors not to lose heart, and to say to the general churchgoing public, 'You really can do this.' We have let music become a 'spectator sport' as if music were something like brain surgery, and only a specialist art."

Patterson is also concerned about the fate of the vast body of glorious musical literature, much of it written for churches that are no longer particularly interested in it, at least in this country. "If music is unknown, it is lost," Patterson says. "Our job is to bring it alive, and when people hear it, they become sold on it. I know we are not going to start any great wave of interest in religious choral music, but if we can assist anywhere, we're happy. We want to put the music onto CDs in creditable and committed performances, so if somebody is interested, they can find out more about it. It's a way of serving the church and society."

TELEGRAM & GAZETTE

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WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

ENTERTAINMENT

Pops delivers the gift of cheer

By Richard Duckett
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF

WORCESTER — The Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra spread some holiday cheer yesterday at the Worcester Centrum Centre.

In the arena where three days earlier there had been tributes and tears, the orchestra evoked the spirit of the season while also taking the time to honor the six Worcester firefighters who lost their lives Dec. 3.

Music Review

Added to the program as a tribute to the firefighters was Bach's beautiful "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." Conductor Keith Lockhart said the piece was being offered "in honor of the heroes who fell" and in the hope that the holiday season and coming year will "give peace and resolution to the community." The playing of the orchestra, and the singing by the guest choir *Gloriae Dei Cantores* of Cape Cod, was intent and intently felt.

But this was a holiday concert, and one that appeared to be thoroughly enjoyed by an audience of about 12,000 people, who rose to give the orchestra, singers and guest soloist Susan Powell a standing ovation at the end. There were seasonal favorites, a sing-along, a rendition of "Twas the Night Before Christmas," and a visit by Santa, who shared a few jokes with Lockhart.

The annual Boston Pops holiday concerts in Worcester (this was the 18th, according to Lockhart) have gotten more audience-friendly over the years; this time, Lockhart and company seemed to be going out of



Conductor Keith Lockhart leads the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra yesterday during a holiday performance at the Worcester Centrum Centre.

their way to reach out to the people in attendance.

HIGH STANDARDS

The concert began with a contemporary arrangement of "Gloria" that established the high performing standards of the afternoon. The orchestra had a particularly rich sound to it, while the singers were clear and pitch-perfect. There also was a good balance between the orchestra and the 48-member choir, even if the arrangement itself was not especially outstanding musically.

Bizet's "Farandole" from "L'Arlesienne," in contrast, is always an outstanding piece of music to listen to, with its famous regal opening and frantic finale. The brass began matters in an appropriately stately

manner, and the strings were quick and crisp. The only quibble, however, might have been that the brass (at least from where this reviewer was sitting) tended to overpower the strings at the end.

Powell, host of "Home Matters" on the Discovery Channel and a former Miss America, revealed a powerful, operatic soprano voice when she stepped forward to perform "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." But she could also adapt her voice to the material, and had some fun in the process. Powell sang a fast and humorous rendition of "Jingle Bells," then put in an earnest effort on behalf of a new song, by David Friedman, titled "Just in Time for Christmas."

The guest narrator for "Twas the Night Before Christmas" was Dr.

Charles S. Mills, associate medical director for the Fallon Healthcare System. It is not a misdiagnosis to report that Mills was wearing antlers and a red nose. Still, he proved himself to be an able storyteller, keeping his vocal cadences in sync with the orchestra.

The sing-along rounded out the official part of the program, with Powell leading the audience through such favorites as "Winter Wonderland," and also taking the baton from Lockhart to conduct the orchestra.

Two encores — "Sleigh Ride" and "White Christmas" — saw everyone, including the audience, in good voice.

Suddenly, it seemed like Christmas in Worcester.

T&G SW/MIKE CASTAGNARO