

**Norvic Concordia at Salthouse Church, Norfolk
13th July 2013**

Report by Peter Ayers reproduced here for the people of Salthouse



Norvic Concordia

Margaret Ledger, Kevin Mitchelson, Mary Dent, Jayne Buckingham & Peter Ayers

Whereas most reports of accordion events in this magazine are from accordion clubs, where the audience is well acquainted with the instrument, almost all of Norvic Concordia's performances are to the general public, most of whom rarely hear the live sound of accordion music. We have given a number of public concerts already this year, but the one at Salthouse was rather special. The village is on the north Norfolk coast and is a favourite place for a seaside holiday in a rural setting. Consequently there are a number of holiday homes, some of which are second homes. The evening was on the hottest day of the year (so far) and the church was a superb venue for a concert, with its fine acoustics and lofty 15th century perpendicular architecture. We were fortunate, in that the concert organiser, Andrew Wigley, took a number of photographs with which I can illustrate this report. As his wife plays the accordion, perhaps that is why he chose an accordion group for one of the church's concerts. Unfortunately his wife has ME, and so was not able to be present.

Due to the church's fine acoustics and natural light, it regularly holds concerts and art exhibitions, and Andrew told the audience that this was the first time the accordion had been heard in the church.

The items were introduced by Kevin, who has an entertaining style of delivery and myself, who chooses to talk about the music that we play. I suppose you could say Kevin puts the emphasis on entertainment and I just concentrate on education.



Kevin amuses the audience whilst explaining how the accordion works



I explain the background to Johann Pachelbel's Canon in D major

Our programme has a very wide range of different styles from straight forward classical pieces through light orchestral, dance band music, musicals, arrangements of folk tunes, popular song and we even played three pieces by accordionists – Otto Eckelmann’s *Dance Palace 1922*, George Scott-Wood’s *Shy Serenade* and Graham Romani’s *Tango de Montmartre*.

During the interval it was interesting to talk to members of the audience, to most of whom our music was a revelation. One lady said that she only thought that she would enjoy French music on the accordion, but she enthusiastically said she enjoyed it all very much, as the arrangements were so musical. One man said that he was so surprised that we did not move our bellows more when we played loudly, saying that at times they hardly seemed to be moving. I had to assure him that we used no electrical gadgets, even when we were playing our loudest. Our dynamic range was entirely dependent upon our control of the bellows operated solely by our left arms. His wife said that we would be interested to learn that an accordionist had, that very morning, been on the Radio 4 programme *Saturday Live* and was interviewed by the Rev Richard Coles. When she said that the accordionist had won *Lithuania’s Got Talent* I knew that this must have been Martynas Levickis, who had performed at Accordions International 2011. She said that he had played an Italian piece used in a Cocoa-Cola advertisement. I thought that this must be Verdi’s *Force of Destiny Overture*, and after I sang a bit of it, she said that this was correct. Martynas has just released his first CD in the UK and is quoted in *The Daily Telegraph* as saying, “People underestimate the accordion. It has this image of being all folky-folky. I’m trying to create a new identity for it. It’s interesting to explore all the music genres, and the accordion can play anything.” I certainly agree with him here and the people at our Salthouse concert will know this. It is a task that Norvic Concordia has been doing ever since its formation 22 years ago. Let us hope that Martynas, with his youth, energy, high ideals and virtuosity goes a long way to achieving his aims.

Some of the photographs that Andrew took during our performance will appear on a Salthouse village website, so we must be grateful to him for taking them. Here are just two more.



Margaret, Kevin & Mary



Jayne & Peter

After the concert the Chairman of the Friends of Salthouse Church told us that they regularly have concerts involving Bach choral music, conducted by Angela Dugdale, who is “mad about Bach’s music”. Described in *North Norfolk News* in 2010 as “priest and musical dynamo Rev Angela Dugdale MBE had worked tirelessly to spread joy through song for more than 55 years. She would be celebrating singing or performing Bach for 60 years on the trot at a Good Friday concert at St Nicholas Church, Salthouse, when she would be conducting the Kelling Consort and Orchestra performing Mass in B Minor.”

He said that he found this music too highbrow for his taste and yet he was surprised to find our performance of Bach’s *Echo* from *The French Overture* his favourite piece of the evening. This is a fast and very dynamic piece and this he probably found exciting. As we left an enjoyable evening’s music making I was asked whether, after receiving a number of favourable comments, we would like to return some time in the future. I certainly hope that we can return one day.