

Melbourne Staff Songsters Weekend

Delacombe Victoria

Saturday 24 July 2010

GOD IS..... what to you? Something, many things or nothing?

GOD IS..... is the theme for the Melbourne Staff Songsters forthcoming tour of the United Kingdom in September this year

It was with great excitement and anticipation that the group performed a sample of their new work for the Saturday evening concert as guests of the Delacombe Corps in the Western Victorian Division (Majors Doug & Erica Kollmorgen).

The evening was presented in two distinct parts the first being a more traditional Salvation Army concert format and the latter a musical drama written and directed by Staff Songster Julia Roper that intertwines storytelling and song. For some of the slightly more “mature” members of the group it brought back memories of presenting the gospel through the Gowans & Larsen’s productions!

The MSS opened with the gospel number “Send It on Down” (soloist Wendy Adams & choreographed by Karen Webb). This number aptly prays God’s Holy Ghost to “come on down” and bless everything that is done in his name throughout the evening.

Following words of welcome & prayer the group presented what has become their song of “introduction” “Inhabit Our Praise”. This song is cleverly used to allow each member to say a couple of lines to briefly introduce themselves while the talented rhythm section vamp behind the intros until the group finally progresses to the conclusion of the song.

The spiritual “Lord Listen to Your Children” (soloist Julia Roper) followed & flowed perfectly to the youngest member Cassie Magor who shared a moving testimony. The sensitive male voice arrangement of “Give Me Jesus” followed the testimony and the silent applause could be heard in the stillness of the audience’s response at the conclusion of this number.

Major Judith Soeters (Executive Officer for the MSS) introduced the musical drama theme using Psalm 100 before the group concluded the first half with “More & More”, “When I Don’t Know What to Do” & “Alleluia”

A quick change saw the group ready to take the stage to present the second part of the evening’s programme.

Now while I don't want to give away too much to future audiences in relation to this new work because that would be similar to giving away the plot to a murder mystery! – I must comment on the outstanding commitment from the whole group in bringing the power of this drama to life. The group's sensitive support behind the key characters was commendable as any distraction from the centre stage action could have destroyed the impact of the message.

Congratulations to Staff Songster Leader Brian Hogg for having the vision, courage and confidence to take the MSS into ground breaking territory.

Some comments from the packed audience:- "I was so moved" – "Wow , that really made me stop and think" – "That was brilliant!"

But don't take their word for it. Find out for yourself and come along to the Staff Songsters United Kingdom's Farewell Tour Concert to be held at Box Hill Salvation Army, Nelson Rd, Box Hill - 28 August 2010 starting at 7.30pm.

Sunday morning worship focused around "Sometimes you've got to get your feet wet!" Vocal contributions to worship from the songster were "How Great is Your Love" – Bless This House of Worship" – "Let All the World in Every Corner Sing" & "You Alone" (soloist Julia Roper).

A children's story told by staff songster Karen Webb, entertainingly demonstrated to the children how they are precious to God.

The songsters concluded the meeting with the beautiful Rutter benediction "The Lord Bless Thee & Keep Thee".