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Silloth Gospel Choir



Report by:
Marjorie Pickering

Easter Saturday saw the debut performance of the Silloth Gospel Choir, and what a debut it was. Ok, I hear you say, you were part of it so you would say it was good. I'm telling you it was good.

Organised by Rebekah Byrom, the choir was made up with people from different church and non-church backgrounds and enjoyed the challenge of singing with people they had perhaps not sung with before.

The programme started with 'A Great and Mighty Wonder', the music written by Rebekah, and followed by 'When I was Lost' and 'Have you not known', new songs to us all. There followed a short film introducing the work of Tear Fund for whom any donations on the night were going to. 'Go down Moses', a traditional American song arranged by Rebekah, was sung by Sandra and Josie Morgan and Christine Partington, with

Marjorie Harrison on the flute and Rebekah on piano. The final song before the interval included the audience in that old favourite 'Amazing Grace'.

After some fine refreshments (thank you ladies), June Randall and myself kicked off the second half with a lovely song called 'When I lift up my voice', joined by the choir for the chorus, and this was followed by 'Oh Happy Day', wonderfully uplifting with audience participation. Rebekah showed us more of her exceptional talent when she performed an arrangement she had put together – 'Give me Jesus/You are Awesome', and continued with a recital from Beethoven's Pathetique Piano Sonata. The evening finished with the choir singing with great feeling another arrangement by Rebekah – 'Were you there?/Oh Happy Day'.

It was a lovely concert enjoyed by the choir and audience alike and those who missed it, really did miss a treat. Don't be disappointed though because we're going to carry on so watch this space for future concerts!

Our thanks have to go to Rebekah whose idea it was in the first place, whose arrangements were superb and whose patience kept us all on track. Thanks also to the rest of the choir. It is a privilege to be part of such a talented group.

Tip for the Top

Spring is most definitely the season of change and that applies to your hair too. There's no better time to start afresh with a great new cut or colour.

Claire and I have just completed two days training with International Stylists looking at new skills and techniques.

Come in for a free consultation and see the fantastic new 'Chocolate Heaven' colours. Be first to have the new Zonal Colour and Cut. Expect the unexpected.

See you soon.
Sammy at Peter Josef



Happy Bee
by
Erin Henderson
aged 5
from
Silloth Primary School

Can You Help?

Silloth's greatest sporting champion, Cecilia Leitch, was born in 1892 in Monimail, the family home in Criffel Street, of Dr. John Leitch, the local doctor. She and her elder sister, May, taught themselves to play golf on the narrow strip of land between the Skinburness Road and the shore – marking out their own course on the paths and tracks leading down to the sea, and lining the holes with empty tins of Lyle's Golden Syrup.

The two girls were admitted to the Golf Club as junior members around 1900 and steadily developed into first class players. Cecilia, now known by her familiar name of Cecil, entered the Ladies' Championship at St. Andrews as a seventeen-year-old in 1908 and surprised everyone but herself by beating several international players in reaching the semi-final, where she was narrowly beaten by the eventual champion.

Cecil took on and defeated, the men's professional match-play champion, Tom Ball, in 1909, round his own course at Blundellsands, near Liverpool. And the following year, she played the celebrated amateur, Harold Hilton, in a 72-hole contest over Walton Heath and Sunningdale. Hilton won the Amateur Championship four times, the American Amateur Championship once, and the Open Championship twice, – so he was a great player. But he wasn't good enough for Cecil, who came from behind in familiar Silloth conditions of wind and rain, to win by 2 and 1.

Cecil went on to win the Ladies Championship four times, which is still a record, the Canadian Ladies' Championship once (by a huge margin of 17 and 15) and the French Ladies Open Championship five times (again a record). For a period of about ten years, she was, by some distance, the best lady golfer in the world.

Cecil always said that she never had a golfing lesson, and disliked practising – saying that she had learnt her golf under natural conditions over her beloved Silloth course, and that she had no need for artificial help. She loved to play in the wind, and was said to have changed the way ladies played golf – hitting hard when previously they had swung prettily. She was a big hitter and another great Silloth Champion, Alfie Greive used to recall her driving regularly off the first tee, 250 yards up to the 'horseshoe' in the middle of the fairway.

After Cecil retired from Championship Golf in 1927, she had the great thrill of scoring a 66 round Silloth, in a match against local member Freddie Fisher. Her caddie, Tommy Wallace, described it as 'perfect golf'.

Through her great playing record and influence over the way ladies play golf, Cecil Leitch can properly be described as one of the best women golfers of all time, and certainly, Silloth's greatest-ever sporting champion.

John Pearson is currently preparing a biography written by Cecil Leitch herself in 1947. It contains much interesting detail on her childhood in Silloth between 1895 and 1905. John is looking for views of Silloth from around this period, to include in the book. He also asks if any local residents have photographs of any of the following characters: Mr Thomas Bulman, Abbeystown, (grocer); Mr Gass, blacksmith; Mr Thompson, joiner; Mr Bewlay, poulterer and game dealer; Mr Nichol, wildfowler from Skinburness; Mr Finlay, shrimper; Mr Selkirk, railway guard on the Carlisle train; and Dr. Charles Crerar, successor to Dr. John Leitch as the Silloth doctor.

Contact John at: 8 Newton Terrace, York, YO1 6HE or 01904 628711