

Festive show will be conductor's swan song

MONTEVERDI'S Christmas vespers will be performed in the appropriate setting of Nantwich Parish Church by Nantwich and District Choral Society, for their Christmas concert on Saturday, December 18, starting at 7.30 p.m.

The Vespers, originally written for performance at the church of St. Mark, in Venice, are a series of choral pieces for soloists, two choirs and instruments. And the Nantwich performance will include instruments of the period, among them baroque violins and sackbuts, precursors of the present-day trombones.

To add to the festive spirit there will be free wine and mince pies for the audience at the interval.

The occasion will also have its sad note, for it will be the farewell concert for Michael Bridger, one of the choral society's conductors

since its foundation ten years ago.

The society has extended its repertoire to many major and varied choral works, including Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610, the Bach

Mass in B Minor and Vaughan Williams's Sea Symphony, under his baton.

Admission to the concert is by ticket (£2.50) with a reduced price for students and senior citizens.

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BATON WAVE GOODBYE



TEN years of music-making, with Nantwich Choral Society, came to an end for Mr. Michael Bridger, at the Society's Christmas concert, at Nantwich Parish Church.

Mr. Bridger has been one of the Society's principal conductors since its foundation 10 years ago, but is now having to sever his link with the highly successful choir as he is leaving his music post at Crewe and Alsager College, to take a new ap-

pointment at Middlesex Polytechnic.

Appreciation of his work with the Society was expressed by chairman, Mrs. Ruth Miller when she presented Mr. Bridger with

a volume of the complete works of Shakespeare, as a farewell gift (PICTURE).

Some of his choristers and friends are pictured at the presentation.

Compelling power from Singers

NANTWICH Parish Church was an appropriate setting for the Nantwich and District Choral Society's Christmas concert — a performance of Monteverdi's Christmas Vespers and Magnificat in the edition of Denis Stevens.

This is a little-known work of undoubted genius and compelling power and it was given an exultant performance under Michael Bridger's direction.

The choir was at its best, producing a full, rich tone in the big chordal passages, and showing precision and delicacy in the contrapuntal sections and "echo" effects. There was some good plain-song singing, especially from the ladies.

The conductor had chosen an outstanding team of instrumentalists and choral singers. Edward Hewison (organ) and Geoffrey Wallis (bass) provided the sure foundation on which the work is built.

The performance was a splendid finale to the ten years of conducting by Mr. Bridger, during which the choir has performed many fine and unusual works.

A.R.J.