

# LEST WE FORGET

## THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S WW1 REMEMBRANCE CONCERT

And so our journey began...

On the bus heading for the Lest We Forget Concert at the NEC in Birmingham early on Saturday 3rd November, some of our pupils played games with their friends, listened to music and chatted excitedly. It was a long journey and as we neared our destination some of the nerves set in.

"I felt nervous because I knew there would be thousands of people there." - Christopher

"Finally we arrived and I was so excited." - Sylvester

When we arrived at the NEC's Genting Arena we had to get to our seats which took rather a long time as there were lots and lots of other schools all arriving at the same time. It was amazing to see just how big the arena was! We were all given red, black or white t-shirts to wear (that was a lot of t-shirts as there were about 2,500 children attending the event!)

To warm up our voices we all sang 'Three Blind Jellyfish' which some of the children already knew having sung it at church.

"I really enjoyed singing about the blind jellyfish with all the different pitches." - Josh

"We had actions to go with the warm up song, which made us laugh and feel less nervous." - Riley

Following the warm up we began to rehearse the concert. We began to see how the concert would come together and it was really interesting to see what the other schools were doing...and how well they had practised. There was an enormous screen at the back of the stage showing lots of different pictures about the war.

### The Concert

After all the parents, friends and families had arrived, the concert finally began and it felt like a really special and moving occasion.

The show began with a girl reading an extract from 'Elsie Atkins' diary. She was incredibly worried about the war and how her brother might have to go off to fight, meanwhile the screen showed many propaganda posters and how the war was spreading to involve lots of other countries.

"The orchestra then played 'Mars' by Gustav Holst - it was absolutely amazing!" - Finlay



Then it was our turn. All of the school choirs were ready to sing together.

"I didn't feel nervous at all because there were so many of us singing together. I knew my parents were watching and that they would be really proud." - Finlay

There were dancers, brass bands and even a youth pipe band (Mrs Julian was particularly excited at this point so watch this space...there may be bagpipes in school before too long!



Just before the interval, we sang 'Altogether Now' whilst The Scouts paraded flags that represented the nations who were involved in the war.

"Following a short interval, we began part two, which kicked off with our songs from the trenches medley. The lights dimmed as everyone prepared. A choir sang, a brass band joined in, there were many different elements and it was all going so fast...too fast! The brass band was playing again—this time to a piece called 'At Sea' accompanied by dancers in sailor uniforms.

Finally it was time for us to sing—YES! This was my favourite medley, a medley about women at war. The lights came up and we all sang simultaneously to the conductor's baton. Sadly our time to sing passed all too quickly.

We learnt many heart-breaking facts about how animals contributed to the war and just how many died, which I found rather upsetting. We learnt about 'The Christmas Truce' and young soldiers. There were more choirs and orchestral pieces and another excerpt from 'Elsie's Diary'.

The finale was a song, written by the concert's organiser Dawson Morgan in which we all performed. It was called 'Lest We Forget' - Arya



By the end of the concert we were happy but exhausted. We piled out of the arena and back on to our coach ready for the long journey home. Some of us played games. Lots of us slept!

"We arrived back in Crich at 10.30pm. I felt quite calm because I had been watching the lights go past in the dark. The piece I enjoyed the most was the bagpipes." - Christopher

"I felt really thrilled to have been part of such a special event." - Joshua



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