

Back to those wartime days

By Ifon Payne

REVIEW

ANNE Shelton and the New Squadronaires presented a D-Day anniversary concert at St David's Hall on Saturday.

The older average age of the audience, the regimental ties and rows of medals indicated that the concert was perhaps more of a social than a musical evening.

In the first half the New Squadronaires ran through charts from the books of the likes of Basie, Glenn Miller and Neil Hefty.

The band was under-rehearsed and saddled with a square rhythm section that kept the feet of the music firmly on the ground.

The announcement that "now we'd like to bring back memories of the war," was followed by a musical salute to the Pathfinder Squadron, upon which the auditorium was plunged into darkness while searchlights probed the air and the horrifying roar of aircraft, bombs and machines guns filled the hall.

Then on went the lights again and the band

bounced unconcernedly into *When You're Smiling*.

A smaller ensemble of the New Squadronaires started the second half with a tight version of *St Louis Blues*, and this was followed by the entry of Anne Shelton.

Although, to judge from the polite reception of the audience, most of the evening seemed bogged down on the landing beaches, the concert finally moved on to a more spirited level when, towards the end, the audience started calling out for their favourite songs.

The high point of the evening was a fine rendition of *My Yiddishe Moma*, in which, free of the intonation problems that beset her most of the evening, Anne Shelton held the audience in the palm of her hand.

Again at the end we heard how *The White Cliffs of Dover* has become an anthem for nostalgia.

The audience response at the end seemed to have adjudged the evening a success as a social event.