EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES

Up to £1 where sold

Ukrainians uplift all in Epsom evening of culture

12 November 2023



On Saturday 11th a choir of locally settled Ukrainians crowned an evening of their nation's culture at **Epsom Methodist Church**. Several folk songs preceded a rousing rendition of the National Anthem of Ukraine, bringing the audience to their feet, right hands on hearts.

Cllr. **Kieran Persand** (Conservative: Horton Ward of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council) welcomed all. He said "*In the face of adversity, the world has witnessed the unwavering spirit of the Ukrainian refugees. They have been forced to leave behind their homes, their loved ones, and the familiar landscapes of their homeland. It has been incredible to see how our community has stood with and welcomed them in and that should be celebrated too. Hosts who have offered shelter, compassion, and a sense of belonging – I thank you. It shows what can be achieved when communities come together.*"

The social and cultural evening was opened by **Diana Zadorizhna**, a young vocalist, accompanied on the piano by her mother, **Natalia** (also the Choir's director). Along with Diana, young **Nika Vlasova**, who played the violin, will enter the first round on Tuesday 14th November, of the Rotary Club of Great Britain's annual music competition, taking place at Epsom College.

Maria Zhornikova, a professional pianist, played several pieces by Ukrainian composer Valentyn Silvestrov. **Yulia Komyshan**, a regular performer at the Ukraine music evenings, delighted once again with varied pieces played on the Ukrainian bandura instrument.

Young **Daniel Stets** read a poem in both English and the original language by the Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko.

The Ukrainians expressed their gratitude to **Nina Kaye** and **Jo Sherring** and all in the **Epsom Refugee Network**, that they lead, for the relief they have brought to their lives.

If you wish to be informed of future Ukraine cultural evenings please contact the organiser **Lionel Blackman** at epsommusicsoc@gmail.com

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