

Bingham and District Choral Society

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 17TH MAY 2017 AT CARNARVON SCHOOL, BINGHAM

1. Attendance and Apologies

About 55 people were present, including Committee members John Bannister (Chair), Sally Ashton (Vice-Chair), Huw Cadwallader (Treasurer), Valerie Morgan (Secretary), Barbara Cobb (Programme Chair), Margot Anderson (Librarian), Judy Unell (Publicity), Janet Chapman (Membership), Tim Connery (Box Office), Brad Poulson (Website), Alison Marriott and Pam Jones (Ordinary members), and Guy Turner (Musical Director).

Apologies were received from Chris Castleden, John Barber, Clive Evans, Patrick Mountford, Jenny Cook, Elaine McGarva, Val Caunt, Claire Winsor, Deborah Winson, Edwina Cosgrove, Anneliese Morgan, Lyn Toon, Pauline Woodhouse, Audrey Bell, Christina Warrington and Christine Frymann, Pam Brooks.

2. Minutes of AGM 11th May 2016

There were no amendments. Proposed by David Atkins, seconded by Barbara Cobb, and accepted by all as a true record.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes of AGM 11th May 2016

There were no Matters arising.

4. Treasurer's Report: Huw

In this exciting year for the choir, our three concerts were well received. The Anthony Goldstone and Caroline Clemmow, concert made a profit of £398, It has been a successful year financially, with a profit of £6,278, much of it from the John Rutter Day. This in a year when we have invested in setting up our excellent new website reflects the hard work done by many members on fundraising.

On 31st March our assets were over £31,000.

The 2016 Spring Concert with Southwell Choral Society in the Minster was sold out. We had a full orchestra and soloists, but our loss was only £1,406. The Winter Concert had a smaller orchestra with soloists and lost £1,525, again an acceptable amount. The Christmas Concert made a profit of £594.

In future we shall be employing a team to collect and set up the staging.

Thanks to **Richard Joyner**, who set up and organised the Goldstone/Clemmow concert; **Andrew** and **Valerie James**, whose Open Garden raised £310, plus Valerie's sales of various items; **Guy**, who led the Quiz Night, making £496; **David Atkins** for the 100 Club, which made a profit of £375; **Jeff Crampton**, for the tea and coffee - £375 profit this year. Also to all the others who have contributed to funds.

Thanks also to **John Beaumont**, our Patron, for his generous donations, and to **Joy Holbrook** and **Paul Skelton** for theirs; to all the committee members who work hard to make fundraising events a success, especially those involved in the Rutter Day. Thanks to **Hugh Holbrook** and **Pam Brooks** for examining the accounts; and to **Barbara Cobb** - the Programme Committee has been very enjoyable, and our interesting programmes and excellent musicians have been a credit to her leadership.

Next year will be my last as Treasurer. I would like to resolve the issue of online banking, as we are increasingly being asked to pay by online bank transfers. For online ticket-buying we will also need this facility. The banks require there to be just one signature for this but at present, the Constitution states that we must have two. I think we should have a single signature for the current account, which could be restricted to a maximum of £7,500, but not for the savings accounts. Our insurance cover is for up to £2,000 for losses due to dishonesty. I propose that we add to Clause 6.3 of the Constitution "For the

Society's Current and Reserve accounts, which should hold less than £7,500, only a single signature from a trustee is required".

From the floor: *What was the profit from the Rutter Day? About £400.*

Robin Coles said that he had knowledge that Lloyds Bank have a system of 2 signatures for online accounts. Huw agreed to investigate this.

It was suggested that the Charities Commission needed to be informed if there were any changes to the Constitution. Note of this taken by the Chair.

It was also suggested that becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation could absolve the Trustees of any personal responsibility for finances. See Chair's report below.

It was agreed that in view of the possibility of a two-signature account with Lloyds Bank, Huw's proposal should be held over.

5. Chair's Report: John

We have had three successful concerts over the past year, and choir membership has been high. In June, some of us sang at Gill Skelton's memorial service with members of Newark Choral Society. In September, **Anthony Goldstone and Caroline Clemmow** gave a delightful concert, with words read by Guy. We were sad to learn of Tony's death in January, and though ill, he showed great character in wishing to perform. Thanks to **Richard Joyner** for organising this, and writing to Caroline on the choir's behalf. Thanks to **Guy, Val Morgan, Sally Ashton** and **Huw Cadwallader** for organising an entertaining Quiz Night with fish and chip supper, with Guy as quizmaster. In March we had the very successful John Rutter Singing Day. John is much in demand, and we were fortunate that he gave his time. Thanks to **Derek Tabron** and **Judy Unell** as the main movers for this, and to **Ed Turner**, our brilliant accompanist.

The committee has worked on a number of items this year. We looked at becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, but decided our budget is not large enough to warrant this. We discussed setting up a "Friends" group, but decided instead to collect the email addresses of those who would like to be informed of our activities. We have looked at issues with staging, and after obtaining quotes, we will now pay for assistance with our own staging, under **Jeff Crampton's** management.

The BDCS Prize and Bursary for young classical musicians is progressing, sponsored by our Patrons **John** and **Barbara Beaumont**. Thanks to **Richard Joyner** for his work on this.

In January, we had the exciting prospect of a trip to Groningen to sing with the Concertkor there. Guy and the committee spent time adapting our programme to fit theirs, as well as working out transport options and costs. However, sadly, in March Groningen decided to pull out. Thanks to **Guy** and the former MD at Groningen, **Linda Hunter** and her friend who started this.

We have considered how we welcome new members, and we are grateful to our mentors for welcoming and helping new people to settle in. However, most of us like to sit in the same place next to friends, and we need to mix up more, especially at the beginning of term.

With ticket sales, we used to have a system of giving each member 2 tickets to sell. As we now have reserved seating, this is not so easy, but at least one ticket per member should be sold.

Thanks to **Guy** and **Ed** for their enthusiasm in bringing out the best in us. Thanks to **Hugh Holbrook** and **Pam Brooks, Jeff Crampton, Beryl Cottrill, Robin Aldworth**, and **David Atkins** for their work on the choir's behalf, as well as all the others who have helped raise money this year.

I am indebted to the committee for their hard work. **Sally Ashton** for picking things up when required, **Brad Poulson** and **Judy Unell** for work on the website and publicity; **Val Morgan, Janet Chapman** and our Librarian, **Margot Anderson** quietly get on with demanding work. **Huw Cadwallader** keeps our finances in good order, and **Tim Connery** has done some tricky negotiation to bring the Newark concert to fruition. Thanks too to **Pam Jones** and **Alison Marriott** for their work. They will not be seeking re-election.

Sincere thanks go to **Barbara Cobb**, who has been our Programme Chair for many years, and is ending her second stint. She has brought great knowledge and not a few connections to the role, and will be missed by the committee. (A bouquet of flowers was presented to Barbara at this point).

Next season's programme includes: *Haydn Creation*, **Saturday 25th November** in Southwell Minster with Mansfield Choral Society; *Christmas Concert*, **Saturday 16th December** in St Mary and All Saints, Bingham; *Verdi Requiem*, **Saturday 12th May 2018** in Southwell Minster with Mansfield Choral Society.

Our first rehearsal is on **Wednesday 6th September**.

From the floor: There were no questions.

6. Membership subscriptions for 2017-2018

John said that this question must be taken together with the resolution proposed under **no. 7** below.

7. Resolutions

With regard to Summer Singing, the **Chair** proposed the following, seconded by **Tim Connery**:

'The AGM of the Bingham and District Choral Society agrees to integrate a "Summer Singing" schedule of four weeks following the Society's AGM in May into its annual activities. The sessions may be complimented by a performance of the music rehearsed.

To fund this, there will be an increase in subscription of £10 per ordinary member per annum. For the 2017-18 season this would total £105.'

An amendment was proposed by **Richard Joyner**: 'That if the resolution is passed, the increase be deferred for one year'. This was seconded by **Barbara Cobb**.

After discussion by the meeting, mainly around whether the longer period would be confined to a four week period of singing at the end, as at present, or whether this could simply extend the choir's year and eventually result in more flexibility as to when our concerts were held, and how many concerts we might have in a year. Many other choirs rehearse until the end of June. It was also pointed out that this would give access to a wider variety of music. There was concern from some members about being 'forced' to participate in the longer period, and whether 'outsiders' could still apply. Some asked about a selection of lighter music, or an *ad hoc* concert, but it was pointed out that anything performed under the BDCS name must be done to the best of our abilities.

A vote was taken first on Richard's amendment: 34 for, 6 against.

A vote on the resolution was passed at 38 for and 10 against, with 2 abstentions.

However it was agreed that next term an EGM could be called at rehearsal when the whole choir was present, to discuss the motion again.

The subscription for next year therefore stays at £95 (see **no. 6** above).

Honorary Life Membership

Richard Joyner proposed that life membership be offered to **Barbara Cobb**, in recognition of her contribution to the choir. This was agreed unanimously.

8. Appointment of examiners

Both **Hugh Holbrook** and **Pam Brooks** have agreed to do this again.

9. Musical Director's Report: Guy

Our Autumn Concert had a well-balanced programme, mixing choral and orchestral pieces. The Vivaldi *Beatus Vir* is rarely done. but enjoyable; the Pergolesi *Magnificat* always a joy. We gave an excellent and spirited performance of the Mozart *Vespers*, although the unfamiliar Latin words took time to get to grips with. Our soloists were excellent, especially **Harriet Astbury** in the Laudate Dominum.

The carol concert was a great success, with a full church. **Becky Cowling** and the **Carnarvon School Choir**, and **Bingham Brass** with **Colin Smith**, as well as **Peter Siepmann** were excellent to work with again. They are all signed up for next year.

The Spring Concert last Saturday with Newark was slightly solo-heavy in the first half, as originally we were going to include Elgar's *Great is the Lord*. As **Marcus Farnsworth** was the soloist, I think everyone was happy. The acoustic of St Mary's caused the *Pray for the Peace* section of the Parry to go flat, which it hadn't done in rehearsals. The *Antiphon* included a lot of the details which many choirs lose. Marcus and **Ruth Massey** were the soloists in the Duruflé *Requiem*, and **Rod Varty** played the cello part in the *Pie Jesu*. Though every detail I wanted was not there, the performance packed a real clout, and the audience were impressed. Finally, **Ed Turner** accompanied the whole concert, including the difficult Duruflé.

I'm looking forward to the Summer Singing, and the lunchtime concert at St Mary's, Newark. We shall be singing: Parry *I was Glad*; Mendelssohn *Hear my Prayer* (including the solo *O for the Wings of a Dove*, sung by the Minster's head chorister; Fauré *Cantique de Jean Racine*; Elgar *Great is the Lord*; and perhaps Mozart *Ave Verum*. It's not too late to sign up for Summer Singing. I have ideas for the future if this becomes a regular feature – I hope so.

This year I have also enjoyed being part of the wider activities of the choir – the Goldstones concert, the Quiz and the Rutter Day, all superbly organised by your efficient committee.

Next season we will be in the Minster twice – for Haydn's *Creation* under Mansfield's new conductor **Ellie Martin**, and then for the Verdi *Requiem* under me. With these two great works in one season, I hope this will attract some new members.

Plans are also afoot for a concert with **Caroline Clemmow**, and another with a small string orchestra, a Brahms *Requiem* and Elgar's *From the Bavarian Highlands*.

Thanks to everyone for their hard work and friendship.

10. Election of Officers and Committee members

The following were elected unopposed for the year 2017-2018: *Chair John Bannister; Vice-Chair Sally Ashton; Treasurer Huw Cadwallader; Secretary Valerie Morgan; Programme Chair Peter Iley; Librarian Margot Anderson; Membership Secretary Janet Chapman; Publicity Officer Judy Unell; Fundraising Chair Vacancy; Box Office Tim Connery; Website Brad Poulson; Ordinary Members Beryl Cottrill, Tina Warrington and Janet Iley.*

11. Any other Business

There was no other business.

Members gave feedback on last Saturday's concert.

'Marcus's voice was beautiful, but perhaps the programme was a bit sombre'.

'I recently joined the choir, and choral music was a big move for me – but I have really enjoyed it'.

'My friend rang to say how she enjoyed it and how wonderful it was'.

'Neville has sent his congratulations to the choir'.

'An email from Mike Wilson of Newark CS said they enjoyed the concert and singing with us very much'.

Jeff mentioned that he had been looking after the staging for about 20 years, but the time had now come to get others to do it; but he will still be there to supervise its erection.

The meeting ended at 8.52 pm.