

MINUTES

Chipping Norton Choral Society

Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 24th September 2008

APOLOGIES:-

Pauline Walker; Andrew Vaile; Tish Nicoll; Graham Canning; Mo Browne; Roger & Marian Stein; Vicki Pike; Hilda Reed

APPROVAL & SIGNING OF LAST YEAR'S AGM MINUTES:-

Matters Arising:-

- Fund-raising concert – now not needed for Churchill Church as they are fully insured to cover the damage from last year's fire
- For any choir members not singing in an actual concert, it is requested that they do not attend the last choir rehearsal of term
- Peter now has his rostrum and it is excellent

Minutes proposed by Brian Jones and seconded by Martin Root – duly signed by Chairman, Sarah Cobb

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – SARAH COBB

- Two tremendous concerts – The Armed Man by Jenkins in December and Puccini/Vaughan-Williams in May. In addition, we participated in the Music Festival in March.
- The music committee and committee have planned and booked venues for the programme up to and including December 2011 – responding to comments from members and audiences, the concert pieces will include Brahms German Requiem; Elijah and Verdi Requiem and, in Spring 2009, the Nelson Mass and Te Deum to mark the 200th anniversary of Haydn's death.
- With this ambitious programme the Society needs to be cautious regarding the costs of the professional orchestras and soloists – we no longer receive any grants and have to fund everything ourselves.
- Our finances are far healthier than ten years ago due to the excellent work started by Betsy Tyler-Bee and Brian Jones and continued by Denis Wynn and Brian Jones, seeking Gift Aid tax rebates where we can, in addition to the prudent investment of surplus funds in an interest-bearing account.
- Although not in danger of running out of money yet, because the orchestras and soloists are costly we must maximise our revenue. The committee is keen to maintain ticket prices so as not to discourage potential audience members so the selling of these is paramount.
- The committee and Peter are discussing the possibility of a fund-raising summer concert in 2009 to boost the Society's finances.
- The raffle shall continue from next week – we raised £55.00 towards Venice in Peril from the raffle last term in memory of Jean.
- In order to minimise costs further, we shall email information to members in order to reduce postage and stationery costs. Members are encouraged to provide e-mail addresses to Sarah or Brian please.
- Election of committee – all the current committee members are prepared to continue for another year, which will be our third consecutive year with the same members which is excellent – the committee members are myself as Chairman; Toby Blundell, Vice Chairman and concert Manager; Denis Wynn, Treasurer; Beth Sinclair, Secretary; Brian Jones, Subs/Membership; Andrew Vaile, Tickets; Helene Barratt, Publicity; Graham Pike, Assistant Concert Manager and Friends; Vicki Pike, Librarian; Caroline Johnston, Assistant Librarian and Poster Designer and Jo Rigg, Assistant Librarian and Raffle organiser.
- We still need additional helpers around concert time, especially organising refreshments.
- This term we have started with nearly one hundred members on the database – this includes a good influx of new members and we welcome you all.
- On behalf of the committee thanks goes to everyone else who helps on the day of the concerts and throughout the term with a variety of jobs from Leading Notes to mailing lists and much more.

- A previous Chairman commented back in September 2001 that our greatest strength, in his opinion, was Shauni's ability to get those top soloists and players and Peter's professionalism in conducting them and us. To these strengths we can now add Bernard for his superb playing throughout the year and thanks go to Peter and Bernard – I wish to thank all of you, our members, and our ambitions for making CNCS what it is today and look forward to the future.

QUESTIONS:-

No questions asked.

Chairman's report proposed by Betsy Tyler-Bee, seconded by Brian Jones and all members voted unanimously

TREASURER'S REPORT – DENIS WYNN

- Copies available for all members
- Thanks to Betsy Tyler-Bee who left the accounts in an excellent condition when she finished on the committee.
- Thanks to Betsy and Brian monies received from Gift Aid was £1,300 last year and a further £1,200 is expected from the Inland Revenue this year
- Thanks to Brian for collecting the subs so efficiently
- Thanks to Mike Howes, the independent examiner, for finalising the accounts
- Expenses – last year the choir made £6,000 surplus – this year we have a deficit of £3,218 due to concert expenses for the Puccini concert and there has been an upsurge in rehearsal costs

QUESTIONS:-

- Vivien Woodell – query regarding ticket prices – should they be increased and what is the value of the early bird discount – do more people come as a result of the EBD or do we take less money?
- Sarah commented that the EBD helps the committee plan numbers such as how many programmes to produce and refreshment requirements – would people pay more? Probable answer is “no”
- The Committee discuss ticket prices for each concert in great detail
- 70 % of tickets bought are the EBD tickets
- ? Should subscription costs increase – subs have been the same for six years – Brian Jones commented that in comparison with other Societies, we offer a very competitive price.
- Query whether choir members have dropped and whether “Friends” membership has decreased. There has been some confusion due to a previous (small) wrong allocation of funds between subs and friends. However numbers have remained roughly constant over the last couple of years.
- Query with what is meant by “rehearsal costs” – this is Peter and Bernard's fees and the room hire
- Query do we make a profit from hiring music and purchasing the music – yes, a small profit

Treasurer's Report proposed by Betsy Tyler-Bee, seconded by Toby Blundell and voted unanimously by members

CONDUCTOR'S REPORT - PETER HUNT

- A great year – thanks to everyone for being such good company – very gratifying and everyone very enthusiastic
- Thanks to committee for being such an active and willing one who trust and facilitate my ideas and suggestions
- Society prepared to be bold and adventurous
- Some exciting concerts coming up – must use finances wisely as next two to three years will be expensive
- Warm welcome to new members – please ask if have any questions
- Thank you to Bernard for such ability at the keyboard
- Peter will contact school regarding the piano in the hall which badly needs tuning
- Thanks to Shauni for covering and for all her help with regard to soloists etc.
- Thanks to everyone for the rostrum which is excellent!

- KARL JENKINS – ARMED MAN – DECEMBER 2007 – a thrilling concert and was good to work with the Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra again
- PUCCINI MESSA DI GLORIA and VAUGHAN WILLIAMS SERENADE TO MUSIC – MAY 2008 – a delightful concert – Adderbury Ensemble were very good with great soloists. Lovely to do some Vaughan Williams, particularly in a celebration year, and the Puccini was a luscious romp!
- Apparent how expensive the concert with the costs of the orchestra and soloists – important to keep selling tickets
- CHIPPING NORTON MUSIC FESTIVAL – Distinction with Bernard West – well done and thanks to the few who sang (extract from Armed Man and Gloria) – moving the choral class to a Saturday seemed not to be popular as our numbers were down dramatically – can we be more supportive next year? This year was the smallest group of choir members ever and we need to support the Music Festival.
- Generally the Society continues to do well – numbers are consistent, performances are strong and fully committed and intonation is always good.
- How much preparation do people do? I will plan in advance to allow for this.
- What can we do about recruitment? Is it healthy enough to ensure continuity?
- We are discussing a Singing Day next summer to raise awareness of the Society and to encourage new members
- Thanks to Caroline and Vicki for their librarian work
- Thanks to the Committee and to everyone for a very good year

QUESTIONS:-

- One member had just joined and looked up “British Choirs” on the web but under Oxfordshire, CNCS was not listed – **Sarah Cobb will look in to this**
- Date of next Music Festival – Saturday 7th March 2009

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE:-

- Re-elected “en bloc” – proposed by Peter Barber and seconded by Howard Hicks – committee duly re-elected for another year
- Thanks went to the Committee for all their hard work

AOB:-

- Various members live in Charlbury – suggest a party for everybody to get to know more members – not many people go to the pub after rehearsal as they have to drive etc. Feel that a social party would be very beneficial.
- Query about organising a trip to Hook Norton Brewery – too many members for this
- Society had a party about 10 – 15 years ago – need bigger venue
- Suggest that someone other than the committee organises
- All agreed excellent idea – Juliet Craig agreed to arrange this
- Peter Barber – has put together all past copies of Leading Notes – realises that the cost listed is £1.00 although has always asked for 50 p!

Meeting ended 9.20 pm with thanks by Sarah to everyone for attending