

# MINUTES

## CHIPPING NORTON CHORAL SOCIETY

*Annual General Meeting – held Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016*

Sarah Cobb welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **APOLOGIES:-**

Apologies had been received from Roger & Marian Stein, Liz Leffman, Linda Mottram, Wendy Preece, Ros Richardson, William Haddon, Rosemary & Edwin Wilson, Vivian Woodell and Rosemary Watts

### **APPROVAL AND SIGNING OF AGM MINUTES HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015**

After circulation, it was proposed by Doreen Phillips and seconded by Naomi Brookes that the minutes be signed as a correct record and all were in favour of this. The Chair duly signed the minutes.

### **MATTERS ARISING:-**

There were three specific areas for action by the committee following the 2015 AGM:-

1. Gift Aid, the Treasurer will explain more but gift aid claims were not possible from the sale of tickets
2. The revised constitution – a change to the draft constitution that a member could be removed with the agreement of two thirds of the committee rather than all of it.
3. The issue of starting a concert with prayers – whichever side of the debate one agreed with, Rev. James Kennedy did an excellent job welcoming the choir last December without including prayers.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – SARAH COBB:-**

- Membership numbers remain high with 100 paid up members. Eight new singers joined in September 2016. Forty members remain on the database.
- The Charity is financially stable compared to many other choral societies. Sarah thanked everyone who made this possible by selling tickets, buying raffle tickets, supporting the Sing Day and giving donations.
- Tickets on the door will stay at £15.00 and £12.00 in advance. Programmes will cost £1.00. Ticket sales are the major source of income.
- Subscriptions were not increased in September 2016 but the committee has agreed to propose a further modest increase of £5.00 per year from September 2017 – The Treasurer shall explain why.
- Election of Committee – Significant changes this year due to the revised constitution – three members will leave – Sarah (Chair), Beth (Secretary) and Caroline (Librarian, poster designer and programme editor) – between them they have served on the committee for over thirty years.
- Caroline joined in 2006 – the job of librarian is enormous and Caroline's posters designs have been fabulous and a lot of time is spent producing the programmes – thank you Caroline.
- Beth has been secretary since 2003, producing minutes, booking venues and ensuring that actions were completed.
- Sarah has been Chair for ten years and had been a fabulous Chair!
- All three were congratulated and Caroline & Beth presented with gifts as a thank you.
- All remaining members are willing to stand again and were thanked for all the hard work that goes on "behind the scenes".
- A further person is required to join the committee, particularly, with regard to publicity.
- Thanks went to all those who acted as concert stewards, concert clearer-uppers, to Rosemary and Hilda for organising refreshments and servers and to Jenny for her sterling work on the raffle.
- Finally, thanks to Peter and Bernard who make membership such a pleasurable experience, where everyone feels that they learn something new every week.

*QUESTIONS – None - Andrew Vaile reiterated that Sarah had been a tremendous Chair and the whole choir thanked her for taking on this role for the past ten years. She will be sorely missed.*

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT – Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 – NICK WATKINS**

- The draft accounts had been posted on the website.
- *Messiah* – The band and soloists were expensive – Total expenditure was over £6,500.00 but with a full church, the concert made only a loss of £1,500.00 which was better than expected.
- *Spring Concert* – Costs were just over £2,600.00 and an £800.00 profit was made.
- *Summer Concert* – Costs were £558.00 with a revenue of £548.00 resulting in a £10.00 loss.

#### **Summary of Accounts:-**

- Subscriptions are a fraction lower than last year.
- Subs will be increased in September 2017 as Peter and Bernard's fees are underpaid by national choral society standards so the increase in subs will pay towards the increase in their well-deserved fees. They will both be receiving a pay increase during this financial year.
- Concert receipts increased by 20 % due to the *Messiah* concert and the £15.00 price for on the door tickets.
- Raffle income had increased and thanks went to Jenny and Hilda for organising this, as well as to all those who donated prizes and bought tickets.
- Refreshments made a profit of £230.00 and thanks went to Rosemary and her teams for this.
- Programmes made a loss of £140.00.
- Music Hire & sales made a profit of just £11.00
- There were no donations this year but the new income stream from Vocal Coaching that Peter provides resulted in £200.00 towards the Charity.
- Another year of Gift Aid has been missed due to changes at the HMRC who did not recognise the Charity as being active (despite receiving a Corporation Tax return) – hence, the deadline was missed.
- In conclusion, funds have increased by £1,981.00 and the balance stands at £15,778.00.

*QUESTIONS – Naomi Brookes – would it be possible to have the programmes ready for choir members to buy at the Friday evening rehearsal? Yes, this is an excellent idea and will be done!*

- Sarah explained that a cash box at the Spring concert had been taken from under her coat which was most unfortunate and rather worrying. It was never found.

*The accounts were proposed by Brian Leach and seconded by Hannah Cervenka. All were unanimous in this and the draft accounts for 2015/2016 were duly adopted. Andrew Carter asked that the choir be informed once the Independent Examiner had approved the accounts – the committee ensured this would be done.*

Sarah thanked Nick on behalf of the choir for the production of the accounts.

#### **MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT – PETER HUNT:-**

- Peter thanked Nick for the production of the accounts – it was the best Treasurer's Report he had ever seen – clear, concise and easily understandable. Everyone agreed!
- Peter thanked the choir for continuing to work so hard and being so committed. It is an outstanding choir – non-auditioned and inclusive.
- The weekly blog is helping with progress, as are the online practice resources.
- Mixing up the seating positions works well in improving the bass sound and makes the tenors more prominent. It is important to change seating positions after the break.
- Rehearsal attendance is generally good.

#### **CONCERTS:-**

- *The Messiah – December 2015 – Chipping Norton* - Excellent and hugely enjoyable with a stand out performance by the Bass Ben Bevan – Peter wished to thank Shauni for her continued role in booking excellent soloists for all the concerts.

- *Chichester Psalms, Fancy of Folksongs, Songs & Cries of London Town – May 2016 at Deddington* – It was an excellent evening all round with a full audience and lovely atmosphere. It was a great programme with the harp, folk song arrangements and the Guridi Viejo Zortzico was a perfect match for the Bernstein and Poulenc piano duet. The Folk Songs were well performed. Songs & Cries was very effective. The Chichester Psalms was well performed with a good atmosphere. Bernard was brilliant!
- *It is so important to have the Friday evening rehearsals in the venues.*
- *Publicity* – a big banner would be an excellent idea to promote publicity for the choir.
- *Thank yous* went to Bernard, the committee, Caroline for the quality of programmes, the librarian team and to Sarah for so much but particularly for her ‘minimalist approach’ to effective leadership. She has been a brilliant Chair for the past ten years.

*QUESTIONS – None*

#### **ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR’S REPORT – BERNARD WEST**

- Bernard reiterated Sarah and Peter’s thanks to everyone for all they did.
- The history of the choir’s concerts are on the website going back as far as 1989, thanks to Roger Stein. Any other information regarding concerts would be most welcomed to add to the website.
- The summer concert planning can be difficult due to the ever-moving date for Easter. Since 2009 the summer concert has involved a much shorter programme with only three rehearsals. *Summer 2016 was an eclectic mix of 19<sup>th</sup>-century repertoire in Churchill Church.* It was a small but very hard-working choir, not a huge audience but a wonderful organist and fabulous soloist. There was lots of good feedback and Bernard thanked everyone for this.
- Bernard, Peter and the committee will look at what can be done in Summer 2017 to encourage more singers and audience so any suggestions would be most welcome. In 2009 there were 25 singers which increased to 51 singers in 2011 with Faure.
- **It was agreed that increased publicity is required for the summer concerts** – Committee

*QUESTIONS - None*

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE:-**

- Several new members were Co-opted onto the Committee during the year – Liz Griffiths, Susannah Howe, Bria Leach and Mark Walters. Beth, Caroline and Sarah were standing down as Secretary, Librarian and Chair.
- Nick Watkins has agreed to become Chair for just one year and will do a great job.

*Proposed Committee for the 2016/2017 year:-*

- |                                         |                                    |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ➤ <i>Chair</i>                          | <i>Nick Watkins</i>                |
| ➤ <i>Secretary</i>                      | <i>Liz Leffman</i>                 |
| ➤ <i>Treasurer</i>                      | <i>Brian Jones</i>                 |
| ➤ <i>Librarian</i>                      | <i>Liz Griffiths</i>               |
| ➤ <i>Assistant Librarian</i>            | <i>Susannah Howe</i>               |
| ➤ <i>Concert Manager</i>                | <i>Keith Ravenhill</i>             |
| ➤ <i>Assistant Concert Managers</i>     | <i>Jon Drake and John Christie</i> |
| ➤ <i>Posters &amp; Programmes</i>       | <i>Brian Leach</i>                 |
| ➤ <i>Membership &amp; subscriptions</i> | <i>Mark Walters</i>                |

*PUBLICITY – vacant position*

The committee was proposed by Sarah Cobb and seconded by Andrew Vaile and all were in favour of this. The committee was duly elected.

**The names of the committee would be put onto the website – committee action**

AOB:-

- Doreen Phillips asked whether or not we would be singing at next year's Music Festival – YES – first Saturday in March 2017
- Beth, Caroline & Sarah were presented with gifts and thanked for all their hard work over the years.

With no other business to discuss, the meeting ended at 9.28 pm.