

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY,
HELD AT MALBANK SCHOOL ON THE 17TH SEPTEMBER 1986.

Present: Mr J Watson AGM Chairman in the absense of M M Buckley.
Mr T R Moulton Secretary
Mr J Knight Treasurer
Mr S Buckman
42 members

1/ Apologies.

Apologies were received from Mr and Mrs J Burton,
Mrs B Waters and Mr M Buckley.

2/ Minutes.

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 25th
September 1985 were read and approved and signed by the
Chairman.

3/ Matters arising

There was a vote of thanks to Mr Adrian Percy for his work
undertaken during the year of selling 100 tapes of the Carol
Concert, a further 100 tapes have been produced of which 80
still remain.

4/ Chairmans report.

The AGM Chairman read a report produced by Mr M Buckley as
follows:-

In contrast with the uncertainties of the 1984/85 season
of which you will have been reminded by the minutes of the
last AGM, I am pleased to report that the season 1985/86
has progressed predictably to plan and has been a period
of consolidation for the chair. Looking back on our
programme for the past year it has been an impressive
achievement both quantitatively and qualitatively- Brahms's
Requiem, Handel's Messiah, Christmas Carol Concert, Bach
B Minor Mass, Vivaldi Gloria plus Handel's Coronation
Anthems and Orff's Carmina Burana. Six concerts, all with
significant Choral content, which I feel we have performed
to a consistently high standard and which have given much
pleasure, certainly to us and I think also to our audience.

Even though none of these works was completely new to
the choir it says much for our capability that we have
executed such a programme so competently and we have much to
be satisfied about.

Two of our concerts were performed outside Nantwich at
Bunbury and Beckenham and both were most enjoyable and
successful. The possibility of travelling to Europe has also
been raised through invitations we have received, and our
conductor has made a reconnaissance visit to Vienna, Stephen
will give you an account of his discoveries later in the
meeting.

A further initiative that your committee has floated

is a choral competition for local junior schools with the twin objectives of encouraging choral singing in the young and heightening our visibility in the local community. I would like to thank Henry Curry for undertaking the job of communication with the schools to get this event off the ground. The first competition will occur in October and we hope annually thereafter, with the winners being invited to participate with us in our Christmas Carol Concert.

The only serious problem we have had in the past year has been financial and the subject will be dealt with fully in the treasurer's report.

There are two main reasons for our problem:- firstly, your committee decided to double the Conductors travelling expense allowance to a level which still does not meet his full costs, the committee was confident this move had the backing of the whole society; and secondly, the rising cost of soloists and musicians has not been matched by a rising income in concert ticket sales, despite urging by myself and others that you all need to sell six or more tickets for every concert. Consequently your outgoing committee is recommending that the present subscription rates should be doubled for season 1986/87 with the opportunity allowed for payment in two halves in September and January. You will have an opportunity to discuss and vote on this proposal later in the meeting.

I should point out that even with the proposed level of subscription there is likely to be a need for additional fund raising at a higher level than we have ever achieved in the past and to that end I commend to you the example of Jean Atkin who staged a "restaurant style" fund raising dinner at her home. Other initiatives of this nature will be needed and I am sure that there are many other good ideas in your minds that could be unlocked to good benefit. Please go to it and raise some monies. You don't have to wait for the committee to lead you.

In closing I would like to extend thanks, firstly to Stephen Buckman for leading us through a rewarding and satisfying musical year; also to our treasurer and secretary who have the most time consuming of committee tasks; to all outgoing committee members both elected and co-opted, but particularly to Jane Rowsell and Joe Watson who (like myself) have served their three year term and most conscientiously and efficiently have they done so; and finally to Eileen Robertson for so reliably providing refreshments every Wednesday.

Finally I apologise again for my absence tonight. It was not contrived to leave Joe Watson "in it" but I am in Scotland on a trip booked a year ago, and as you hear this I shall be taking a wee dram to absent friends.

5/ Treasurers report.

Copies of the Balance Sheets for the year were distributed, the treasurer thanked Peter Jones for auditing the accounts free of charge.

There was a £776.26 excess expenditure over income for the year, in addition the Beckenham concert costs were not recovered.

Forty members covenanted their subscriptions last year which raised £212.85 from the Inland Revenue.

An estimated balance sheet for the 1986/87 season was also distributed for members attention.

Tim proposed and Jean Atkin seconded a resolution that the accounts be accepted, the proposal was accepted without dissent.

5/ Conductors report.

Mr Stephen Buckman reviewed the season as follows:-

a) Review of 1985/86 season.

6 concerts German Requiem (Brahms)
Messiah (Handel)
Carols for Choir and Audience
B Minor Mass (Bach)
Carmina Burana (Orff)
Vivaldi and Handel in Beckenham

A demanding programme of concerts by any standard.

Performed to a satisfyingly high standard.

Three new features- start of annual performance of Messiah
Link with Bunbury
First performance in London

b) 1986/87 Season.

7 concerts (i) 27/9/86 at Bunbury parish church
Vivaldi and Handel
(ii) 15/11/86 at Nantwich parish church
Cantata no 6 (Bach)
Noels pour les instruments (Charpentier)
Messe de minuit pour Noel (Charpentier)
(iii) 6/12/86 Nantwich parish church for NSPCC
Messiah (Handel)
(iv) 20/12/86 at Nantwich parish church
Carols for Choir and Audience (two performances)
(v) 11/04/87 at Nantwich parish Church
Little Organ Mass (Haydn)
Organ Concerto (Poulenc)
Nelson Mass (Haydn)
(vi) 27/06/87 at Malbank school
Music by Purcell and Britten
Features- concert for a national charity.
Repetition of programmes - Vivaldi and Handel
Carols

c/ Vienna.

Nantwich Choral Society invited to perform in 'Advent Celebrations' by Austrian Tourist Board.

d/ Holland.

Possibility of Nantwich Choral society participating in an exchange with a choir and orchestra in Holland.

- e/ Some people are happy to rehearse and never perform. This is not the function of the Nantwich Choral Society. Nantwich Choral Society exists to promote the cause of choral music in the community. We are fulfilling our aim with our ever-expanding repertoire and performance commitment. Fine sentiments, but what lies behind them? We all need to re-assess our contribution to the Nantwich Choral Society, and seriously consider what else we have to offer the Society.

Certain things can be identified immediately:

- 1) 100% attendance at rehearsals
- 2) Homework on scores -- every week.
- 3) Selling double the number of tickets for concerts that you sold last season, except the members who sold none at all.

To those people I can only say "Get off your backsides and start selling tickets".

I do not believe anyone is genuinely incapable of selling any tickets at all.

This breath of fresh air needs to be felt in every nook and cranny of the Nantwich Choral Society machinery.

Because I have made such appeals as these before, which have been largely ignored, I am introducing an incentive to help you help yourselves :- AUDITIONS.

I have informed the committee of my intention to take up my option to audition every singing member of the Society. There will also be periodic re-auditions.

Nantwich Choral Society is getting a reputation- a very good reputation.

We therefore have a duty to constantly improve our standards of performance.

Auditions are the first step along that road.

Auditions will enable me to tighten standards, vet new members, and plan programmed more efficiently.

To members of the committee, I give advance notice that I have a challenge to put to them to restructure the administration of the Society.

The back-room workings of the Society need to be streamlined.

I have taken expert advice in this matter and have put together a package for consideration.

More of this after the committee have had a chance to discuss my proposals.

f/ Thank you.

- 1) To the whole society for welcoming me back at the beginning of last season and for your continued support throughout the year.
- 2) To the committee for providing some really excellent behind the scenes work, particularly for taking over a lot of the dirty jobs that were previously mine. Thank you all very much.

- 3) I would like to propose , in absentia, a specific vote of thanks to Mike Buckley. Mike has been Chairman of the society for three seasons, and has certainly earned the peaceful retirement for which he now qualifies. The job of Chairman is not an easy one. Despite all the headaches Mike has come out on top and deserves the gratitude of the whole Society.
- 4) To Eileen, for interrupting my rehearsals every week in such a welcome manner.
- 5) To Joy for her constant support to me personally and to the Nantwich Choral Society as a whole.
She never misses the opportunity to sing the praises of the Society and to promote the cause, an example to us all.

7/ Conductor.

Mr Joe Watson noted that Mr Stephen Buckman was willing and able to continue leading the Society for the 1987/88 season this offer was gladly accepted by the members present. The programme outlined by Mr Stephen Buckman and the approach that he was proposing to take in the coming season were then accepted by the Society.

8/ Subscription,

The Chairman put the proposal that the subscription should be doubled for the coming season to £24, payable if required in two parts in September and January, this was seconded by Mrs Joyce Clegg.

After some discussion Mrs Sue Munks proposed, and Mrs Jean Atkin seconded a counter proposal that a subscription of £25 should be payable.

The counter proposal was voted on with 42 members for, 1 against and three abstentions. The counter proposal for a subscription of £25 was therefore carried.

The covenant forms require amendment and Mr Jock Knight will supply new forms for members to sign.

8/ Election of Officers.

There was one nomination for Chairman, Mr Adrian Percy who was therefore elected to the position.

Mr Ray Moulton was elected unopposed to the position of secretary as was Mr Jock Knight to the position of treasurer.

There were five nominations to the committee with only four places.

After a vote Mr Howard Jones, Mrs Jean Atkin, Mr Bob Pugh and Mrs Shirley Burton were elected to the committee, Mrs Sue Munks being unsuccessful.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.23pm.