

MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT MALBANK
SCHOOL ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 th. 1988.

Present: President - Mr. H. Rowsell, Conductor - Mr. S. Buckman,
Chairman - Mr. A. Percy, Treasurer - Mr. J. Knight, Secretary -
Mrs. S. Munks, and 62 members.

1. Apologies: Mrs. J. Nurse, Rev. P. Sturdy, Mrs. K. Denning.
2. Minutes of Fifteenth Annual General Meeting were taken as read. Mrs. Clegg proposed their acceptance, Mrs. Rowsell seconded this, and it was unanimously agreed.
3. Matters Arising: None.
4. Chairman's Report.

Mr. Percy opened with an account of the Society's previous year. He spoke of the problems encountered with the concert in Alsager, and of the success of the November and March concerts. Messiah in December had been in aid of Cancer Research, and the 2 carol concerts had again included visiting school choirs.

Mr. Percy referred also to the visit to Vienna in November, the first time the Choir had performed abroad, and to the proposed exchange with Macon for 1989-90.

He drew members' attention also to the fundraising activities that had taken place and thanked all those involved. He then thanked the outgoing committee for all its hard work, and called on all members of the Society to give their full support, to raise funds and sell tickets in the concert season ahead.

5. Treasurer's Report.

Mr. Knight thanked Miss Wheatley for typing the accounts and Mr. P. Jones for auditing them, and all those who had contributed to the grand total achieved by fundraising.

By these means the year's deficit was only £312. It was to be noted however that the deficit on concerts was £1159: the Treasurer reminded members how expensive it is to put on concerts, union rates must be paid, etc., so everyone must make every effort to sell tickets.

There had been a grant of £248 from N.W.Arts, but some of this

had had to be paid back.

The Borough Council had given £250 from the Community Chest which had helped pay for staging.

Mr. Kaye asked whether we had to let N.W.Arts dictate to us, but it was felt that we need to be members of that association and their policy is in line with Arts Council policy.

Dr. Pugh pointed out that music scores had cost more because of the range of music performed and the difficulty of getting it.

A question was asked about sponsors - the Treasurer answered that he goes cap-in-hand to local businesses and if they sponsor us their names are on posters and programmes and they get free tickets. Mrs. Atkin pointed out that any member could seek sponsors, if they have contacts.

Messiah had made £292 for Cancer Research. Soloists get their fees as usual, though some may take a reduced fee.

Mr. Jones the auditor has declined to accept complimentary tickets.

Mr. Bateman urged that members sell more tickets - the record of those sold shows a very low average per member.

Mrs. Rowsell proposed and Mrs. Clegg seconded that the Report be accepted.

6. Conductor's Report.

Mr. Buckman began by commenting on the spreading fame of the Society, which he attributes to the imagination and dedication with which the Choir tackles its music. He praised the Choir's lively and hard-working approach and its professional attitude towards staging concerts, but added that this did not mean the Choir was open-minded in its approach.

Mr. Buckman then enumerated the changes seen in the Society during his 5 years as Conductor.

- a) the membership, the number of performances per season, and the size of audience have all doubled;
- b) the Choir has given its first performance in a foreign country;
- c) a working President has been appointed;
- d) the administration has been streamlined and made more efficient;
- e) the Society gets sponsors for concerts;
- f) the Society employs soloists of professional standard and where possible professional orchestras;
- g) the Choir's repertoire has broadened, with greater versatility and proficiency.

New for 1988-9 season - a competitive festival.

Mr. Buckman pointed out that he could not continue as conductor indefinitely and that he would hope to hand over to another professional conductor, such as he believes the Choir needs. But the Society would have to revise its ideas about 20th. century music if such another conductor were to be interested in it. The Society has not made use of Mr. Buckman's knowledge and experience of contemporary music - many opposed the Vaughan Williams works, which were so successful in the event, and the Peter Maxwell Davies work has had to be withdrawn from this year's programme because of opposition.

Mr. Buckman emphasised his point by saying, "You MUST not bury the Choir in a grave of middle-of-the-road musical wallpaper simply because you like a good tune."

Mr. Buckman congratulated the Society on some magnificent and at times deeply moving performances last season, and on the trip to Vienna. He then outlined the music for 1988-9.

Mr. Buckman thanked the committee for its work, especially those retiring after their 3 years, and above all Mr. Knight for his particularly dedicated hard work. He finally thanked Mrs. Roberts, who as accompanist makes his job possible.

7. Election of Officers.

The Conductor, Mr. Buckman, the Chairman, Mr. Percy, and the Secretary, Mrs. Munks, were re-elected unopposed.

Treasurer - Mrs. J. Rowsell was elected unopposed.

Committee - there were 7 nominations:

Mr. C. Bateman, Mrs. S. Pettman, Mrs. J. Weatherill, Miss L. Fordham, Mr. W. Kaye, Dr. J. Howard and Mrs. T. Kowalska.

There was a vote, and Mr. Bateman, Mrs. Weatherill, Mr. Kaye and Dr. Howard were elected.

8. Subscriptions

It was proposed by Mrs. Gorton and seconded by Mrs. Shone that this remain at £25 per year. There was discussion on raising it, but it was felt unnecessary to do this, especially as there was an extra 50p. to be paid for Nisi Dominus. The Treasurer pleaded that members pay promptly.

9. Any Other Business.

I. Covenanting. It was pointed out that the Society benefits more from

the subscriptions if people covenant them - the Treasurer gives all new members details.

2. Copies. Mrs. Luke asked why members should not pay for music copies. Dr. Pugh as Librarian explained that library subscriptions are paid annually so that music is hired at very little cost. It was pointed out that it is costly when members return music late. They may be asked to pay postage.

The Society's Grand Draw then took place, and the meeting closed
at 8.12.p.m.