

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

*Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Regents Park Theological College on Wednesday,
25th September 1996 at 7 p.m.*

1. **Apologies:** Doreen Sillitoe, Tracy Roberts, Isobel Hope, Louise Fordham, Brenda Morris, Jean Nurse, Sheila Pemberton, Bob Pugh, Jock Knight, Joyce Foster, John Howard.
2. **Minutes of the A.G.M. 27th September 1995.** The minutes of the 1995 A.G.M. were accepted as a true record.
Proposer : Patrick Campbell; Seconder: Joe Watson; Carried.
3. **Matters Arising**
 - (a) Shirley Burton commented that the lighting of the rehearsal room, though improved, was still not ideal. Jane Lincoln replied that the committee would see if anything further could be done.
 - (b) Robert Oliver enquired whether a trip to Vienna was still a possibility. Jane Lincoln replied that the committee were still investigating.

4. Chairperson's Report.

Jane Lincoln began her report by describing the preceding year as successful and enjoyable musically, the highlight having been the performance of the Bach St. Matthew Passion. She thanked Stephen Buckman for his vision and commitment in general, for enabling us to perform that particular work and for the opportunity to sing with the Horsham Chamber Choir.

The Chairperson thanked all the members of the retiring committee for their work. She also thanked Herbert Rowsell, Joy Roberts, Jean Atkin, Bob Pugh and Jock Knight for the responsibilities they had undertaken over a period of years and Barnabas Pettman for continuing to audit the accounts.

Fund raising was mentioned as an important factor in maintaining the high standard of the choir's performance. All amounts whether small or large were important. The success of the David Campbell concert was noted with thanks to those taking part.

The Chairperson noted that sponsorship was expected (though still to be confirmed and received) from the Harding Trust (thanks to Christine English for introducing us to the Harding Trust), Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council and Nantwich Town Council. Banks had unfortunately refused sponsorship and Rolls Royce were unable to contribute this year. Suggestions for potential sponsors were requested.

The Chairperson then spoke about the social events. Although it was difficult to assess the choir's preferences (Wally Kaye's questionnaire returns will be helpful this year), there had been three successful events: Lunch at Rookery Hall, a Garden Party and a Bowls evening.

The important role of the section heads in maintaining the administrative work of the choir was mentioned and those people thanked for their efforts.

The Chairperson closed her report by looking forward to the coming year as a successful one, albeit a little shorter.

5. Treasurer's Report.

Diane Wheatley reported as follows:

Thanks to Barnabas Pettman for auditing the accounts, to Herbert and Jane Rowsell for help in various ways, to Jock Knight for his work with covenants and to choir members who had helped in fund raising, paid subs. promptly and sold tickets, handing money in *before* concerts.

The Treasurer commented on the continuing high cost of concerts and the need therefore to maximise income from ticket sales, covenanting and fund raising. An appeal was made for subscriptions to be paid promptly to cover the cost of the next concert.

The Treasurer commented briefly on the Statement of Accounts for year ended 31.08.96. These showed that the choir had ended the year with a positive balance of £1,800.76

The Statement of Accounts was accepted by the choir and some questions followed.

Wally Kaye enquired about the apparent approx. £200 increase in the cost of rehearsal room hire. The Treasurer explained that this was due to payments made to Malbank School for our previous rehearsal accommodation.

The increase in the "Hire and purchase of Music" was questioned. Stephen Buckman explained that this was due to Christmas Music bought and paid for out of choir funds. This amount would be reimbursed to choir funds as members paid for their copies.

Anne Barnard questioned the apparent vast reduction in advertising and marketing expenses. The Treasurer replied that general advertising, including brochures and mail shots, had been included in the concert account figures this year.

Mike Buckley asked about the soloists fee shown against the carol concert. This fee was, in fact, for the accompanist, Joy Roberts.

The Treasurer ended by thanking other committee members for their support during her three year term of office. She wished her successor good luck and looked forward to handing on the 'ceremonial' clipboard which she advised should be treasured as an invaluable aid at concerts.

6. Conductor's Report

The conductor, Stephen Buckman, began his report by noting that the 1995 / 1996 season had been a 'catalogue of success'.

A resume of the season's concerts then followed. The Mozart "Mass in C Minor" (18th November 1995) had been a particularly convincing and exciting performance. The "Messiah" (2nd December 1995) was felt to be our best performance of this work so far and benefited from an excellent orchestra. The Carol Concert (23rd December 1995) had a large audience but not many children were present.

Our first ever performance of the Bach "St Matthew Passion" (30th March 1996) was performed with the Horsham Chamber Choir and Newcastle-Under-Lyme School Chamber Choir. A very large audience attended. The conductor noted a memorable performance by Robin Green but was unhappy with some insensitive orchestral playing.

Our last concert of the season (29th June 1996) contained works by Parry, Vaughan Williams, and Dvorak (Mass in D Major), complemented well by organ works by Howells.

The Conductor noted the success of the recital given by David Campbell and accompanist Miho Ebinhara.

The Conductor indicated that although the policy in the constitution was to admit no members under 16 years of age, he was keen to encourage any 14/15 year olds who were interested in singing.

Foreign travel was still a possibility. A trip to Vienna would need to be booked well in advance. It might be possible to obtain a favourable deal through Barnabas Pettman's travel company.

The Conductor pointed out that a "Voices for Hospices" concert of the "Messiah" would be taking place on October 18th 1997 and might effect audience numbers for our own "Messiah" Concert. He put forward two possible options to counteract this: (1) to cut the Hospice "Messiah" to a shorter version and continue our own Nov/Dec concerts in full as usual; (2) change our December concert to the Bach "Christmas Oratorio" and give a less demanding, less expensive November concert.

The Conductor finished his report by thanking the following people for their contributions to the smooth running of the choir: Jean Atkin for organising orchestra members, Bob Pugh - our Librarian, Diane Wheatley - our Treasurer, Joy Roberts - our accompanist and all committee members.

Joe Watson asked whether the Hospice could do a work other than the "Messiah". Anne Barnard replied that this was possible but in any case the "Hallelujah" chorus must be sung.

7 Election of Officers

The following nominations for the committee were elected unopposed.

		Proposed	Seconded
Conductor	Stephen Buckman	J. Lincoln	D. Wheatley
Chairman	Jane Lincoln	S. Buckman	D. Wheatley
Secretary	Ray Potts	S. Buckman	D. Wheatley
Treasurer	Philip Jackson	J. Lincoln	D. Wheatley
Committee	Isobel Hope	S. Buckman	D. Wheatley
	Ian Robertson	S. Buckman	D. Wheatley
	Jacquie Weatherill	S. Buckman	D. Wheatley
	Jane Rowsell	S. Buckman	D. Wheatley

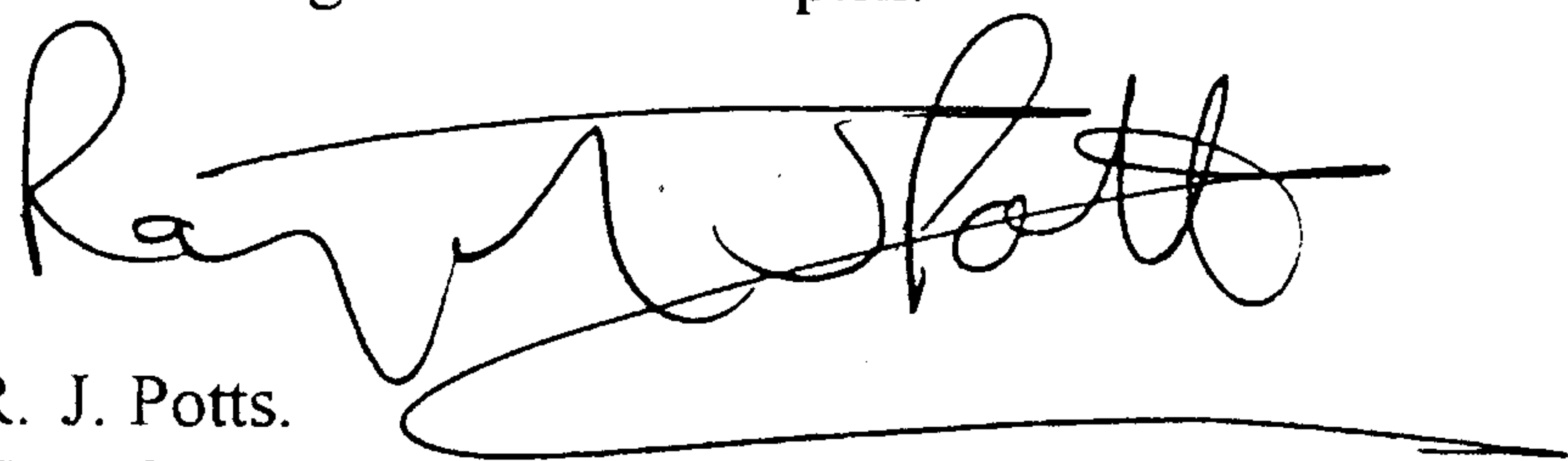
The election of members as above was proposed by Cynthia Gorton and seconded by Mike Buckley and carried unanimously.

8. Any Other Business

Subscriptions are to remain unchanged at £60.00 full membership. Proposed by Jean Atkin; Seconded by Sue Munks; Carried unanimously.

Some discussion followed concerning the relationship of younger people to the choir. Wally Kaye asked if we needed to alter the constitution in order to accept younger people (ie 14/16 years). Stephen Buckman felt we had some latitude over this despite the constitution. Wally Kaye thought we might need to alter the constitution in order to ensure legitimate public liability insurance cover. He wondered if children would be encouraged to the Carol Concert by being admitted free of charge. Stephen Buckman pointed out the current policy of admitting 2 adults and 2 children for £10.00. Jean Atkin wondered if the length of the Carol Concert discouraged children. Could children do their piece earlier in the concert? Patrick Campbell suggested we might contact primary schools direct to increase children in the audience. Joe Watson suggested perhaps organising a competition in schools - the winner to perform in our concert. Stephen Buckman felt there was a loss of interest on the part of schools and pointed out the importance of maintaining a high quality of performance. In reply to a suggestion that we approach secondary schools to take part, Stephen felt that this might be a way forward but was concerned that they might want too much time in the concert performance. Jane Lincoln wondered about the extent to which choir members were interested in having children performing at the concert. The choir indicated that they support the current format of the Carol Concert. Joe Watson suggested that we have further discussion on the subject at a future date. This suggestion was seconded by Lou Marsden - the choir indicated approval.

The Meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.



R. J. Potts.
Hon. Sec.