

NANTWICH CHORAL SOCIETY

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **2008**

Held at Malbank School on Wednesday 24th September 2008

Anne Barnard opened the meeting at 7.06

EGM:

Apologies: Liz McCrone, Cynthia Gorton, Suzanne Edwards, Eileen Robertson, Maire Pedder, Gwyneth Rollins, Lucy Kibble, Jean Nurse, Angela Greaves, Joyce Clegg, Jan Brown, Jonathan Layfield, David Foster.

Present: The Chairman, Secretary, Musical Director & 59 NCS members

Committees Proposed Amendments to the Constitution: The proposed new constitution was circulated to all NCS members with the summer newsletter. Ron Kelley (RK) explained the reasons for the review in light of new legal requirements & in line with the Charity Commissioners Stipulations & over the last year, he & Peter Barnard(PB) drafted the new constitution which was presented to the committee in July & then to the members in August.

RK detailed the changes to the meeting & then took questions – Wal Kaye asked who would be responsible in the event of the Society becoming insolvent. RK responded that technically it would fall to the Executive Officers who are equivalent to the Trustees. Mike Moores wanted clarification of the rules on setting the Annual Subscription. The committee set the rate – If the members are unhappy they can vote the committee off/stand for election themselves, but it is not in the interest of the committee or the Society to lose membership. Previously the membership mandates the Committee to run everything except subscriptions which they felt was anomalous. Other societies subs are set by the committee. Never have the members voted against the proposed subscription rate. Roger Boulton enquired re the loss of the category of Non-performing members. They have been incorporated into the Ordinary members category & as such have a vote.

Adoption of New Constitution: Proposed by Diane Wheatley, Seconded by Roger Boulton, all agreed. Anne Barnard thanked RK & PB for all their hard work & closed the EGM

AGM:

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 26th September 2007 had been distributed by & were accepted as an accurate record – proposed by Christine English seconded by Barbara Shone & were duly signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising: nil.

Chairman's Report: Anne Barnard (AB)

The chairman noted the numerous hours spent on the Constitution, falling mainly on the shoulders of RK but hopes the new document will enable future committees to administer the society more openly & smoothly. Financially the society is in a healthy position & maintains a reserve fund of £8000. The 2-tier system of subscriptions has been abolished, with one rate now of £90/year & where chosen the deferred payment system is in operation. The annual expenditure on concerts inevitably has increased & unfortunately we were unsuccessful in our application to Awards for All for a grant towards our next concert. Hopefully the introduction of the 200 club will assist in fundraising. In addition to our usual 4 concerts we also took part in a charity concert at Winsford Civic Hall & sang Carols at 2 local hotels on Christmas Eve, the latter 2 raising funds for the Society. AB thanked all those involved on such a busy evening. We also had the pleasure of sharing in John Naylor's 60th birthday celebrations in April.

Changes – we have purchased music folders for use at some concerts, our Box Office in Nantwich is now ‘Think About IT’, Hospital St. & our venues continue to change – St. Michael’s, Coppenhall & Nantwich Civic Hall this year!

Socially we have enjoyed the post concert refreshments organised by Joss Cooper & Vanessa Layfield, Pub night continues on the First Wed in the month & an annual lunch in the spring.

Jock Knight has been offered Honorary Life Membership in recognition of his contribution to the choir – presentation of this will occur near the concert date.

The website is now in the capable hands of Sue Briscoe & Roger Boulton & they would welcome input from the choir.

Thanks to the editors of the Summer Newsletter – Judith Dooley & Ann Ferguson – an important form of communication but at considerable cost of production & postage. In future therefore an electronic newsletter will be issued termly, edited by RK but hard copies will be available to those who do not have e-mail.

Finally AB thanked all members who help towards the smooth running of rehearsal nights, concerts & special events. A particular thanks to Bob Pugh (librarian) & to all the committee for their support, John Naylor for his advice on both musical matters & business planning & Andrew Mildenhall – our gifted accompanist who shows such patience & humour

Secretary’s Report: Rachel Pentecost (RP)

The secretary reported that it had been another year of bookings & letters.....

As announced last year, RP is standing down as secretary & is pleased that Kath Wilks is to take on the role, she will however remain as Minute Secretary & another post of Membership Secretary is to be added to spread the work load.

Treasurer’s Report: Ron Kelley (RK) in the absence of Liz McCrone

The society’s finances continue to grow – ending the year with a balance of ~£21,500. £8000 is held on reserve for worst case scenarios eg concert cancellation. Concert losses of £5400 are within budget for the year. Attendance has exceeded 900 over the year & other than Bunbury being a poor Winter venue, audience figures don’t seem to be affected by the venue.

Generally our financial position is a healthy one.

Acceptance of the Officer’s Reports was proposed by Wal Kaye & seconded by Tracey Robertson.

Musical Director’s Report: John Naylor (JN) summarised the season - 5 major concerts & Singing Day, high musical standards maintained, budgets achieved, a management team who continue to work well & a successful year all round!

1. Mozart requiem – Duncan Druce completion with excellent choral singing, fine orchestra & soloists, good audience, challenges of the Benson Choral Suite were mostly met, some problems with the Bunbury venue.
2. Winsford Carols – V good singing by NCS with no rehearsal in a difficult venue. Good to work with a Junior Choir & Band however the concert was rather too long! NCS reputation was enhanced.
3. Family Carol Concert – The church was full! Good to involve Nantwich Young Voices. Confident performance of Vaughan Williams Fantasia, enjoyable performance of Andrew’s ‘I saw three ships’ - a very well sung programme of seasonal music.
4. Brahms Requiem – a very convincing & moving performance of one of the most challenging pieces in the choral repertoire. The 2 piano accompaniment worked really well. David Butt Philip’s Brahms songs were a real delight & the refreshments afterwards were most welcome.
5. Opera Gala Evening – Really enjoyable after initial misgivings & good to explore repertoire that is unusual for a Choral Society. The soloists were outstanding & the handbells added a new dimension! Bunbury is a much better summer venue. A great response from the audience.

The Good in 2007/8 – True success in overcoming the challenges of difficult works.

Choir always rises to the occasion.

Lovely phrasing & light & shade in the Brahms

Fun in the summer concert

Real enthusiasm from everyone of give of their best in both rehearsal & performance.

Social activities & after-performance get together.

The Less Good in 2007/8 – Orchestra struggled with the Choral suite despite advice – NCS much better prepared

Unfair crit of Brahms Requiem

Length of the Winsford concert – not under our control

The Coming Season - Bach Bmin Mass at Coppenhall, Family Carols at St. Mary's, Messiah at the Methodist Chapel, Singing Day at Acton, Gounod/Rutter at St. Mary's, The Seasons at the Civic Hall. 2009/10 – Dream of Gerontius in Chester Cathedral & Romsey Abbey with Romsey CS, Border Singers & the Lydian Singers – plans developing. Gerontius can be accommodated within our budgets but the rest of 2010 may be constrained.

? a strategic alliance with Barnby Choir & Cheshire Sinfonia to do Verdi's Requiem in 2010

JN requested that we continue to suggest works we'd like to perform.

End of term reports: Sopranos – 'What a lovely sound you make when the blend works – the Brahms was stunning. Please continue to work on listening to the overall sound you all make. Possibly need to rebalance 1st/2nd split.

Altos – Tuning definitely much better & blend improving. Not enough 1st altos – rebalancing required. Some BRAs step forward?

Tenors – Thank you for another fine year – numbers still continue to grow very slightly. Thank you for the extra work you do between rehearsals. Perhaps some more work on multi tasking?

Basses – Another good years work. Do I detect more confidence, less reliance on one or two key singers? 1st/2nd balance might need adjustment.

Attendance at rehearsals by some members has been erratic – please attend consistently when you can. Once again JN posed the question re building on our core audience in Nantwich using St. Mary's with the difficulty of accommodating an orchestra of a reasonable size?

JN finished with thanks to the enthusiastic & hard working committee, particularly AB, other members who help in so many ways to make the season a success, Andrew Mildinhal – a brilliant accompanist & wise & supportive colleague & to all the members for their commitment, enthusiasm, skill & support.....& JN looks forward to continuing to make great music together.

AB thanked JN for his report & work over the year.

AOB: Rita Davies thanked Eileen Robertson for all her work as Concert Manager.

<u>Election of Officers:</u>	Chairman – Anne Barnard	)	
	Treasurer – Liz McCrone	)	Re-elected – proposed by Erika Letts
	Minute Secretary – Rachel Pentecost	)	seconded by Joyce Foster
	Concert Manager – Eileen Robertson	)	
	Committee Members – Joy Guest	)	
		Ron Kelley	)
		Maire Pedder	)
		Jonathan Layfield	)
		Vanessa Layfield	)

Secretary – Kath Wilks proposed by Rachel Pentecost/ seconded by Liz McCrone

Membership Secretary – Graham Wilks proposed by Liz Mccrone/ seconded by Anne Barnard

Vice Chairman – Roger Boulton proposed by Bob Pugh/ seconded by Anne Barnard

Committee Member – Sue Briscoe proposed by Roger Boulton/ seconded by Ray Butler

The meeting closed at 8.12pm.

Rachel Pentecost, Honorary Secretary.