



MINUTES

Wareham Choral Society

AGM

Monday 27th October
2014 7.00pm
at URC Wareham

1 Welcome to everyone attending:- Committee Judith Price, Jennifer Haworth, Bob Newnham, Jack Haworth, Sarah Welton, and members.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from David Kemp, Christine Kemp, Mike Lewis, Val Bartlett, Peter Davenport and Margaret Harris.

3 Minutes - 28/10/2013

These had been distributed prior to the meeting.

4 Matters Arising

None

5.Chairman's Report

Judith Price reported the following:-

“In November last year we continued with our plan to attract new members by participating in community events. We visited the Hemsbach Society to sing carols at their Christmas supper and participated in the Christmas Tree fund raising event for Julius’s House Hospice at Kingston. The Christmas Concert The Renaissance Re-visited, accompanist Richard Hall, was interesting. The choir made an excellent stab at Britten’s Ceremony of Carols but the Courtlye Music Group engaged to make an ‘in period’ contribution was variously received. The presentation, part performance, part lecture, was not in the contract and suited some more than others. We attracted a slightly smaller audience but made a profit of £300. An unfortunate confusion over John and Jane’s availability meant that we did not have our own end of term mulled wine and mince pie gathering.

Jane had proposed rehearsing for an early summer concert in addition to the DGS performance of Elijah during the Spring Term. With awareness of the national commitment to a nationwide commemoration of the start of WW1 it was agreed that this would be an appropriate theme and a June date agreed. The impact of Richard Marchant’s retirement as a co-opted member of the committee was being felt, particularly by Jane. His assistance in programme planning and engagement of soloists had left a gap so Richard Hall came in as an early consultant regarding the choice of music. As the term progressed enthusiasm for Elijah increased fostered by the DGS joint rehearsals. Simon Lole, the master of cool, made all things pleasurable and achievable.

At this time we were meeting our objective to get ahead of the game with concert dates, Summer concert June 8th, Christmas Concert Dec. 6th 2014 and Spring Concert April 25th 2015. However the Purbeck Arts Festival beseeched us to relinquish the June 8th date because they had engaged the Gabrielli Consort and wished to use LSM as the venue. In the interest of co-operation we agreed and changed the date of the WW1 concert to November 15th. To keep ahead we now need to agree a date for Christmas 2015.

The possibility of a Heritage lottery Grant to finance the WW1 concert became apparent. I approached Carol Turner and suggested that if there were other organisations in the town planning commemorative events then a combined bid would make sense. A meeting was held attended by the church, The British Legion, the Flower Festival and WCS and as a result of Maurice Turner's dedication and hard work a successful application was submitted

All through the spring term Jane was feeling increasingly less positive. She enjoyed her role as choirmaster but the responsibility for programme planning and the engagement of soloists and accompanists she found onerous. Despite suggestions for support in these areas Jane finally resigned.

We must consider ourselves incredibly fortunate that Simon Lole put us in touch with Nigel. In July I had the pleasure of hearing Nigel's Beresford Choir sing Evensong in Salisbury Cathedral – the anthem was Greater Love and I was overwhelmed not just by the beauty of the singing but the possibilities for the choir if we secured Nigel as our Musical Director. I could not wait to get the contract in the post for signing.

Nigel, you have impressed us week by week with your choral training expertise, patience and wit – it is a privilege to work with you.

In John we have an excellent accompanist who is an accomplished pianist and organist. I might add here that a comment from one who would know who attended the Durufle Requiem in LSM recently was that the organ played by John had never sounded better.

We now have the most professional team ever!.

The choir has a bright future and the standard we reach and the degree of satisfaction and pleasure we give and receive in both weekly rehearsals and concerts depends on our individual commitment. I would urge you to be punctual, to look at the music at least once in the week so that we begin each rehearsal at the level of competence reached the week before and please be prepared to make a contribution to the choir beyond your termly subscription. We need to attract more members to balance the books and strengthen each section. Share with your friends and acquaintances the pleasure that singing gives and share with us any ideas you may have for the expansion of the choir. I hope that the coming concert will put WCS on the map locally and as 'the choir' for the Town of Wareham.

Many thanks to those people who have already helped in publicising the event and selling tickets BUT there is still work to be done here. Please encourage attendance at the FREE exhibition in the Parish Hall 2-7 and encourage locals to visit in the afternoon because 300 people visiting prior to the concert would create a problem.

Through Nigel we have engaged some excellent soloists from the Beresford choir and a young Polish violinist Piotr Kopec to play the Lark Ascending. Last Tuesday I went to meet the group of Air Cadets who are going to recite a poem for peace in the concert. I am incredibly impressed by them. Sincere, enthusiastic and really up for 'choral speaking' which I imagine is not an activity at the top of the wish list for most young men

Last year a change in start time of 7.30 p.m. was proposed and rejected, as was 7.15. Punctuality has improved but are there people who find 7 p.m. too early? Please let us know if you have a particular problem with a later start.

I have been back through the minutes and the venue has been a matter of discussion since July 9th 2011 when it was agreed that the seating needed to be more flexible. Two years ago I explored all other rehearsal possibilities and there was none other than The Furzebrook Hall. The recent vote resulted in a majority in favour of a move to the end hall but with a large number of people who

did not mind. So we need to revisit this issue in the New Year bearing in mind that the cost of a keyboard, which would be a necessary purchase if we moved, is under £600 but it would then be available should we wish to perform anywhere else.

It has been a challenge for Nigel to pick up the WW1 concert and to rehearse for the Christmas Concert on Dec. 6th. Time is running out and we would like to gather suggestions for an event possibly other than 'a concert' to discuss in committee.

Jack Haworth is retiring from the committee. He will be sorely missed. He is an extraordinary mix of sensible advice and good humour. It is an enormous relief to know that he will continue to work with the very small team involved in obtaining and setting up the staging for concerts and so many other things. I do hope that someone will 'step-up to the plate' and take on his role as 'the Members Representative'.

Jennifer will also retire shortly as our Treasurer and we are pleased that Peter Davenport will succeed her - but more on this when it happens.

We all need to thank Sarah for the work that she does for the Guild both as our representative and on the publicity committee. The Guild provides us with an opportunity which is unique for small choirs to perform large scale works with an orchestra in a venue the size of the Lighthouse and it is the hard work of Sarah and people like her over many years that has ensured the survival of the organisation.

This brings me to Bob Newnham. His energy and competence as Secretary, Librarian, IT specialist, and provider of all reasonable and some unreasonable requests is phenomenal and only exceeded by the charm and good humour with which each job is delivered. Bob, thank you!

Please do consider joining us on the committee so that the choir can go forward on a sure footing."

6. Music Director's Report

Nigel's report was necessarily brief, since he had only been in post for a few weeks, but he looked forward to continuing the rapport he had established into the future, and wished us a merry Christmas!

7. Treasurer's Report

Jennifer Haworth presented the accounts.

Income		Expenditure	
In Bank September 2013	£1222.29	Music Hire	£266.00
		Insurance	£207.93
Subs	£4375.00	Expenses etc.	£93.50
		Amplifier & piano repairs	£1120.06
Gift Aid	£676.76	Organ Fund	£150.00
		Dorset Guild Provision	£690.00
Concert	£355.61	Rehearsal room inc. URC & LSM.	£530.00
		Musical Director	£2210.00
CAF	£60.00	Advertisements	£122.50

		Accompanist	£1200.00	
B A/c	£1000.00			
		Sub total	£6589.99	
		In Bank September 2014	£1099.67	
<u>Savings Account</u> In Account	September 2013 Interest Transfer to C/acc June 2014 <u>£7689.66</u>	<u>£5004.84</u> £2.18 £1000.00 <u>£4007.02</u>	<u>£7689.66</u>	
Dec 2013 CONCERT				
Income		Outgoings		
Ticket sales	121 @£10.00	<u>£1210.00</u>	R Hall	£50.00
			Organist	£50.00
			MD	£65.00
			Printing & Advrtng	£193.77
			Wine & Flwrs etc.	£95.62
			LSM	£100.00
			Courtly Music	£300.00
			Surplus	<u>£355.61</u>

David Edgington proposed, and Brian Wilkins seconded, that these accounts be accepted. The meeting voted to do so.

8. Election of Officers

The current officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) were all prepared to stand again, as was Sarah Welton as Dorset Guild representative. There were no other nominations. All were duly re-elected.

9. Election of Committee

JP reminded the meeting that nominations were sought for Members Representative, Publicity and Promotions Officer and Social Secretary.

David Edgington was prepared to stand as Members' Representative, proposed by Jack Haworth, seconded by Carole Lehman. Carole Lehman, proposed by Jack Haworth and seconded by Horace Plyte, stood as Publicity and Promotions Officer. Hilary Goodinge was proposed (Jane Yard) and seconded (Talia Pope) as Social Secretary.

All the above were elected.

10. A.O.B

The meeting briefly discussed the start time of rehearsals. 7pm might be too early for younger members who were still at work; on the other hand, starting at 7:30 or 7:15 would mean a later

finishing time, which some members would find inconvenient. No decision was made to change the time.

We also discussed what to do about the Christmas concert. The consensus was that we should hold a concert, which would be free, and use carols and other music with which we were familiar. Appropriate Christmas excerpts from Messiah were suggested; many members have their own copy of the score.

Lydia Farrow has with great regret decided to give up singing with us. On behalf of WCS, JP presented Lydia with a citation commemorating her contribution to the choir and conferring honorary membership. The words of the citation are given below.

Lydia has been a loyal and valued member of WCS for many years. Above and beyond her musical expertise, she has contributed artwork for programmes and posters and delighted our audiences with her recitations. Wareham Choral Society is pleased to recognise her achievements by awarding her honorary membership.

Lydia remarked that she had joined the choir in 1958, had married one of the basses, and was leaving only because she had no voice left. She promised to come to our concerts!

11 Thanks

The meeting thanked Judith Price for her vision, hard work and commitment over the past year.