



MINUTES

Wareham Choral Society

AGM

Monday 2nd November
2015 7.15pm
at URC Wareham

1 Welcome to everyone attending:- Committee Judith Price, Jennifer Haworth, Bob Newnham, David Edgington, Hilary Goodinge, Peter Davenport, Nigel Groome, Sarah Welton, and members.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from David Kemp and Christine Kemp.

3 Minutes - 27/10/2014

These had been distributed prior to the meeting.

4 Matters Arising

None

5.Chairman's Report

Judith Price reported the following:-

“This has been some year!

We have extended our previous schedule of a Christmas and Spring Concert to include a summer concert plus a Come and Sing event. We have been innovative, ambitious and, supported by Nigel's unfailing good humour and expertise, raised our profile and increased both our membership and audience size.

Each event has contributed to a learning curve from which to go forward.

There was real enthusiasm from you all for the traditional Christmas concert last year. With the support of our Beckenham choir friends, especially Susannah, we were able to include a section from the Messiah and songs by Michael Head. With our stock of candles we were able to perform by candlelight amidst holly and ivy which enhanced the ambiance. Many thanks to those that helped, especially Nicky Hann, who created a charming archway of winter greenery over the entrance.

We concentrated on poster and banner publicity and attracted an estimated audience of over 170, among which there were new faces and some young people. Was this because there was free admission? We received only £477 in the retiring collection against something over £1500 from what would have been ticket sales. We did make a donation to the Mayor's charity.

This year the committee have decided that we will sell tickets which will be available from this evening.

The Come and Sing event on March 16th exceeded expectation in attracting 33 guests. We concentrated on free advertising in church magazines, on-line web sites, posters and, most remarkably, on Radio 3, (thanks to a contact of Nigel's). The committee decided that the church was not the best place to receive visitors and, because a keyboard was required to move to this room, Bob and Peter researched and purchased a bargain instrument for £476. John sealed

approval of the deal and declared it an excellent purchase. . Hilary procured more cake than could possibly have been consumed –but this helped to convey a warm welcome to new comers.

Using this room proved so successful that we asked for, and were given permission, to use it each week as our rehearsal space.

The calendar of musical events in Purbeck is vast and varied. Competition for choir members is as great as for an audience. We have attempted to meet this challenge by planning programmes offering a professional standard of musicianship and creating further interest by incorporating other arts. For our spring concert, modern dance and bell ringing were included.

The Hammig Quartet impressed the audience with a performance of Eine Kleine Nachtmusik and their accompaniment of the Coronation Mass boosted the performance of the choir.

We are,as ever, indebted to Nigel for engaging players and vocalists of a standard that we could not otherwise afford.

The Lytchett Minster School dancers exceeded my expectation in their novel interpretation of the quartet but it was a pity that limiting sight lines in the church impaired the view for some sections of the audience. I was concerned that the dancing might distract the quartet and was relieved to learn afterwards that the opposite was the case and that they felt more relaxed because the eyes of the audience were not fixed on them.

The excellent LSM Bell ringers provided an interesting finale and enabled us to flag up their existence as a valuable community asset.

Involving young people does not necessarily increase our audience size – parents will come as taxi drivers but few will stay! I observed the emptying of the back rows at our concert and also when the Lytchett Minster choir preformed with the Gabrielli Consort in the Purbeck Festival.

Our summer concert transcended the tortuous planning period. It was particularly gratifying to showcase the individual talents of our choir members, to draw in other friends, and to demonstrate the breadth of our repertoire.

The weather promised much before mid-day and then slumped into wind and rain; so much so that when hopeful people ignored the 'sold out' notices we were allowed to take pity, fit them in, and increase our profit.

I was particularly grateful to the ladies who helped with the hulling and serving of the strawberries. We overestimated the demand - some people not having planned their pre-concert picnic with these things in mind. However, some strawberries were donated by Sainsbury's and we were able to sell off some for jam making. Our very grateful thanks are due to Peter, Bob and their wives Chris and Sheila who prepared and dispensed the Pimms.

Financially the concert was a success and we were able to donate a handsome £300 to Jack's House in Swanage.

There was a warm buzz about the event and I feel sure that if we repeat the experience it will be similarly successful. Do we want to do this again and will they have us? Having cracked the problems it would be rewarding to repeat the venture!

The committee continues to discuss ways of attracting young people into the choir. Nigel has discussed possible links with the Head of Music at the Purbeck School and I have spoken to both the Headmistress, Leanne Symonds, and Giles Sturdy, a retiring Governor, who is setting up an

enrichment programme to promote opportunities beyond the standard curriculum. There is no lack of willingness all round so if you have any ideas as to how we might realise this ambition please let us know.

How do we continue to make progress and build on past success?

Well, coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is success and I have been pleased to notice more people contributing to WCS in many ways. I would like to thank all the committee members, but particularly Bob and Peter who worked so closely with me through the dark times prior to the Summer Concert. And there are the stalwarts who are still with us, reliable and knowledgeable - Jack and Jennifer Haworth, Jane Yard and the husbands of several of our members:- Margaret and David Harris, Nancy and Graham Baines and please forgive me if I have omitted anyone.

Finally, we are led by a most accomplished and professional conductor and accompanist.

Please can we start on time, do carry pencils (preferably with rubbers on the end because conductors are known to change their minds).

We are all open to suggestions from you as to what we could do better – directly or through David Edgington who is your rep.

We can look forward to an exciting Spring Term – participation in the Purbeck literary Festival in February , a 'Come and Sing' Stainer's Crucifixion on Passion Saturday in Bere Regis church – ideally positioned to attract singers from points west and south and then the DGS programme of rehearsals and concert with Simon Lole."

6.Music Director's Report

Nigel reported as follows:

"I have always maintained that there are many similarities between choirs and football – and explicitly between choirmasters and football managers.

Sometimes your team is on form, sometimes not. Key players may be out injured or voiceless which makes a difference to the overall performance.

The stadium in which we perform can create a good atmosphere, or it may be intimidating or dead.

The crowd we play to can also add to the atmosphere, or not.

And of course, there is always someone who thinks they can do better!

The football connection was very much in evidence at our World War 1 commemoration when we sang Silent Night – a huge success and a fabulous opportunity to connect with the local community.

So may I offer on behalf of everyone a massive vote of thanks to the club chairman, Judith. She has done a fantastic job in keeping us in order, stimulating us with ideas and addressing the fans with confidence and conviction.

Also thanks to the club secretary Bob, who makes sure that fixtures are well advertised, that programmes have plenty of team news and notes, and keeps you all regularly informed of dates for training sessions.

Also thanks to our team treasurer Peter, who makes certain that money comes in from the turnstiles and that management expenses are paid on time. I am extremely grateful for that!

Well, I have now spent a full season with you and thoroughly enjoyed it. Team spirit seems good, and we have not enjoyed too many injuries during the year.

The home match at our home stadium of Lady St Mary's was great fun and the supporters were very much behind us. Our performance was most pleasing, and the chanting from the terraces was also noteworthy. It was good to have a couple of loan players for this match!

In the spring we decided to allow the public to one of our training sessions. Some came to view with interest, and a few came on trial. I am delighted to report that as a result of this, a few more players were added to the squad. Building a squad is important to a team such as ours, and so I hope we may be able to repeat this exercise.

Our main fixture of the year was an international one playing against an Austrian team managed by W A Mozart. We received added support from a London team – the Hammig - and our fans were very pleased with the result. It was good to have royal representation from the Coronation.

And so the season finished with an away game in the refurbished stadium at Tyneham, where we played to a more than capacity crowd. There were some problems in the staging of the fixture and the army became unnecessarily involved. Fortunately we were able to strengthen our attack and defence with Price, Davenport and Newnham, resulting in the army team scoring an own goal. Thanks especially to our cheerleaders – the Strawberry Girls – for their sterling work in gee-ing up the fans.

And so to a new season, with new opportunities and new challenges, and new excitements. As manager, I am so grateful to the first team coach John for his encouragement, support and natural flair and skill. Without him our control would waver!"

7.Treasurer's Report

Peter Davenport presented a brief summary at the AGM. The full accounts were then presented at the first rehearsal of 2016, and those present voted to accept them. These minutes record the full yearly accounts below.

It is noted that PD has now assumed full responsibility as Treasurer; the interim transition period with JeH is now over.

The choir wishes to thank Jennifer for her work as Treasurer over the past 18 years.

This report covers Four Concerts and three periods of Rehearsal. There was a new Treasurer appointed from Jan 1st 2015.

Expenditure:

General:

Dorset Guild of Singers Sub	675.00
Making Music Sub and Insurance	144.60
New Keyboard	476.00
Musical Director and Accompanist for rehearsals	4,180.00
URC for rehearsals	600.00
Help for Heroes*	235.05
Mayor's Fund *	100.00
ATC*	25.00
Misc Expenses	157.64

(* = charitable contributions)

Losses on Concerts:	WW1	895.37
	Christmas	210.56
	Spring	662.55
	Summer	114.49
		1,882.97
	Total Expenditure	£8,476.26
Income:		
Subscriptions (three terms)		5,945.00
Contribution from Nat Lottery		1,671.71
Gift Aid reclaimed		732.71
Interest from Deposit Account		2.18
Collection - Help for Heroes		235.05
Total Income:		£ 8,586.42
Balance:	(Surplus for year)	£ 110.16
Assets:		
Money in Bank:	Sept 2015	August 2014
Barclays Bank Community Account	£ 1,363.65	£ 1167.92 (+ £195.63)
Barclays Bank Deposit Account	£ 4,009.20	£ 4007.56 (+ £ 1.64)
Liabilities: one cheque unpaid (Landmarc for Tyneham) £156.00 (paid in 24/11/15 - will appear in next year's accounts).		
Signed:		
Peter Davenport Treasurer.		
I have examined the Accounts of the Wareham Choral Society for the year ending 31st July 2015, together with the books, records and information supplied. I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the same are correctly drawn up in accordance therewith. I have not carried out an Audit.		
S.J.Fowler, Independent Examiner 25.09.2015.		

8. Election of Officers and Committee

The current officers (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) were all prepared to stand again, as were the other members. There were no other nominations. All were duly proposed, seconded and re-elected.

Eve Baker has indicated her willingness to join the publicity sub-committee, and her expertise will be much welcomed. She was duly elected.

10. A.O.B

Margaret Harris observed that our concert clashed with that of Questa Voce (advertised by PANT, the Purbeck Association of the Natinal Trust). This led to a brief discussion about how to avoid such clashes (difficult!) and a suggestion that PANT should be approached to advertise our future concerts.

11 Thanks

The meeting thanked Judith Price for her vision, hard work and commitment over the past year.
At the Christmas Party, Jennifer Haworth was presented with a certificate bestowing honorary membership of WCS in recognition of her services to the Society over many years.

Bob Newnham, January 14th 2016