



Annual General Meeting of the 6th June 2016

Time: 7.30 pm; Venue: St Michael the Archangel, Alcombe

MINUTES

Present: David Yates (President and Acting Chair), Audrey Beach (Librarian), Penny Brown (Secretary) Marcus Capel (Musical Director), Sue Donovan (Accompanist), Jill Strong, Val Stuart (Treasurer) and Laurie Hambrook (Minutes Secretary)

Apologies: Jacky Butterworth, Margaret Don, Andy Fletcher, Rosemary Gaitskell, Bill Griffiths, Fiona Hobdell, Beryl Keay, Caroline Lytton, Ros Owen, Gordon & Dot Niccols, Beverley Sanchez, Peter Thompson

Minutes of the AGM 2015: These are posted on the Society's website for access by all. Their acceptance was proposed by Jill Strong, seconded by Chris Pereira and passed *nem con*.

Matters Arising: There were none.

President's Address: After saying how sorry he was to have missed the last concert, David went on to read his account, a copy of which is attached.

Reports:

- (a) *Treasurer:* The detailed accounts are attached to these minutes. In presenting these to the meeting, Val drew attention to the fact that the last two concerts had made a loss but that this had been expected as both had entailed the use of an orchestra and soloists; the soloists now getting paid more. She pointed out that membership was down and so perhaps we should consider raising the membership subscription. Also attached are details of tickets sales from November 2011 to November 2015. Val ended by thanking Marcus and Sue for all their work. In turn, the meeting expressed its thanks to Val for all her work.
- (b) *Secretary:* The full report, which Penny read to the meeting, is attached.
- (c) *Director of Music:* See the attached report, which Marcus read to the meeting.
- (d) *Librarian:* Audrey began by commenting on the aggravation caused by the library in Carlisle not sending the music for *Carmina Burana* to Yeovil in good time. When the music was released she and her husband went to Yeovil themselves to minimise the delay in getting the scores to the choir. Audrey went on to record her thanks to Rita Cramp, June Luker and Alison Andrew, for help with distributing the scores to choir members, to her husband, David, and to Jill Strong for dealing with the orchestral parts while she, Audrey, had been hospitalized.
- (e) *Making Music:* There was nothing to report at this time, but Jacky was thanked for all her work.

Elections:

1. Officers: Chairman (Gordon Niccols), Director of Music (Marcus Capel), Treasurer (Val Stewart), Secretary (Penny Brown), Librarian (Audrey Beach). All holders of office indicated their willingness to continue so their re-election was proposed by June Luker, seconded by Meigan Lyons and passed *nem con*. The meeting took the opportunity to thank Gordon for discharging his duties as Chairman so ably.

2. Committee: The current members Jacky Butterworth, Sue Donovan, Laurie Hambrook, Dot Niccols and Jill Strong too were willing to continue but it was pointed out that there was room for three more members. Whereupon Rita Cramp was proposed and she accepted. Another possibility was Mully Wollmer but, as she was not present her acceptance could not be sought. So, it was proposed by Marcus Capel that the current members plus Rita be elected to serve for the year 2016-2017. This was seconded by Audrey Beach and passed *nem con*.

As Peter Thompson, who had always organised the concert programmes, had resigned the meeting was asked if there were any volunteers to take his place. None came forward and so the matter concerning the production of concert programmes was referred back to the Committee for discussion.

Plans for 2016-2017: For the Autumn concert it was decided to put on the ever-popular *Messiah*. The date will be 26th November. For the Easter concert in 2017 the Society will perform Mozart's *Missa Brevis, K194*, along with, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*. The November 2017 concert will be devoted to another evening of opera choruses while for Easter 2018, the programme will comprise *The Armed Man* by Karl Jenkins and Elgar's *War Songs*, to commemorate the ending of World War I. Andrew Vidamour had been approached about the possibility of the Society offering to join with the Avenue Methodist Church in a Carol Concert on Saturday, perhaps either on the 9th or 10th December. A reply was awaited as Andrew needed to consult with the church's management committee.

Concerning refreshments at rehearsals, these had been organised by Tina Salter and Vicky Borland. However, while Vicky willing to continue with this (at rehearsals only) Tina felt that it was time for her to give up. Following the ensuing discussion about a possible replacement for Tina it was decided that perhaps we should look for someone who was not a member of the choir. This would be pursued elsewhere.

Annual Subscriptions: Val Stuart suggested that we keep a working balance of £5,000 to cover the costs of concerts. This year there had been an overall deficit of £4,054.20 in the accounts, due mainly to the cost of mounting expensive concerts. Thus, the costs of putting on the last two concerts had amounted to £10,126 while the takings had been £3,038.39, so the loss incurred amounted to £7,087.61. To cover this amount on a regular basis would require a rise in the membership subscription to £80; not an increase that we could really contemplate. Therefore, there would need to be more 'in-house' performances in the Methodist church with organ accompaniment only. This would off-set the occasional performance involving the expensive use of orchestra and soloists. Much discussion then ensued concerning possible sponsorship arrangements and the role of "Friends of Minehead Choral Society." It was pointed out, also, that the total membership had not risen but had decreased somewhat so reducing income. The possibility of re-engaging with lapsed members was discussed and this was deemed something to consider. Eventually, Joe Passmore proposed that the membership subscription be raised by £10 to £55. This was seconded by Meigan Lyons and accepted by the meeting.

Date, time and place of Next Meeting: Tuesday 6th June 2017, at 7.30 pm in St Michael's, Alcombe.

Any Other Business: Rita Cramp asked what being a 'Friend' entailed and she was directed to the Society's web page, where all would be explained.

It was suggested that, perhaps, we should try to maintain contact with those members who had for one reason or another ceased to come to meetings and rehearsals. A request for a volunteer to make contact those members who were known to be ill or who, for some other reason or other, had ceased to attend, just to let them know that they had not been forgotten. Rita responded and her offer to take on this role was gratefully accepted.

Finally, all those present were thanked for coming to the meeting.

President's Address to AGM -June 2016

Mr Chairman, fellow members. It has been a privilege and honour again to be your President. Two things stand out for me this season. Singing with the Taunton Sinfonietta is always a pleasure and to have our lovely and now regular soloists with us for Carmina. And to miss the Spring season rehearsals and concert. I think it's only the second time I have missed a concert since 1980. Some said I could have made the effort to pop back from Sri Lanka to sing.

I am sure Marcus will comment on the concerts. I will say on your behalf a huge thank you to Marcus and Sue for all the efforts they put in to preparing for the concerts. Carmina in the Regal was a triumph. It was a great programme and very exciting to sing. We all enjoyed the opera choruses and it was good to hear Taunton Sinfonietta on their own. The report said 'the ladies of the choir should be particularly proud of the fine tones they produced throughout the evening'.

The other concert contained some of my favourite music and I was very sorry to miss it. Highlighted in the report quite rightly were Sue who 'played with aplomb and Marcus for his 'musicianship, hard work and dedication' and the chorus who were 'excellent in ensemble'.

I also on your behalf want to thank the hard working committee for all they do in the planning and preparation and in particular to Peter Thompson who has been such a stalwart over the years. The Society owe him a great debt of gratitude.

Thank you very much for the honour of allowing me to be your President.

Treasurer's Report

It has been a very good year musically but not so good financially. However this was anticipated by the committee who knew the concerts this year would be expensive to perform but felt it would be worthwhile.

The bank balances are as follows:

Lloyds Bank current account	£1490.90
NS&I deposit account	£7381.89
TOTAL	£8872.79

The deficit for the year is £4050.20. (Last year £275.76). The main reason for this is the increased orchestra and soloist costs.

Our membership stands at 78 (80 last year).

Our Gift Aid rebate from hmrc was £728.62 (£672 last year) which is a good increase on last year and I would like to thank all those who were able to sign up for this. I would also like to thank our 'friends' who very kindly donated £120 (£165 last year).

Income from advertisements in the programme amounted to £330 (£350 last year). Many thanks to Daphne Midwood for dealing with the businesses and collecting the money due.

Many thanks to Marcus Capel and Sue Donovan who are always so professional and cheerful (even at our dress rehearsals!) The choir appreciate your hard work and dedication.

Thanks also to Kevin Creston for auditing the accounts.

There follows, over page, a breakdown of tickets sales from December 2011 to March 2016.

Table 1

Concert		Ticket sales	Ticket cost	Concert costs
		MATA	£495.00	
		On the door	£587.24	
December 2011	Karl Jenkins Stella Natalis & carols	TOTAL	£1082.24	
		MATA	£224.60	
		On the door	£378.00	
Easter 2012	Stalner's Crucifixion & Peterson's No Greater Love	TOTAL	£704.60	
November 2012		MATA	£1362.75	
		On the door	£397.00	
	Handel's Messiah	TOTAL	£1759.75	£9.50
Easter 2013		MATA	£545.80	
		On the door	£587.50	
	Howard Goodall's Eternal Light & Gounod's Messe Solennelle de St Cecile	TOTAL	£1133.30	£9.50
July 2013		MATA	£581.87	
		On the door	£396.00	
	Patriotic Proms	TOTAL	£977.87	£7.00
November 2013		MATA	£664.89	
		On the door	£760.00	
	Faure's Requiem & Rossini's Stabat Mater	TOTAL	£1434.89	£10.00
March 2014		MATA	£957.32	
		On the door	£625.00	
	Lloyd Webber's Joseph	TOTAL	£1582.32	£8.00
December 2014		MATA	£419.69	
		On the door	£472.00	
	Vivaldi Magnificat & Haydn's Te Deum + carols	TOTAL	£891.69	£8.00
Easter 2015		MATA	£500.00	
		On the door	£540.00	
	Mendelssohn's Elijah	TOTAL	£1040.00	£10.00 £3950.00
November 2015		MATA only	£1715.00	
	Carmina Burano /Opera /Orchestra	TOTAL	£1715.00	£10.00 £5889.00
March 2016		MATA	£708.39	
		On the door	£615.00	
	Mozart Requiem, Vivaldi Gloria & Faure Cantique de St Racine	TOTAL	£1323.39	£10.00 £4237.00

Secretary's Report

Welcome to you all on this lovely June evening and to this, my first proper Secretary's Report!

Another successful year has gone by for the Choral Society. It continues to have a healthy membership, with a few new recruits, and it has worked hard throughout the year, resulting in two memorable concerts which have left both ourselves and our audiences buzzing. I was singing bits from each for days afterwards, much to the amusement of customers at work! But I'd like to take this opportunity to remember those members who are no longer with us, both recently and in previous times - they have left us a legacy which I hope we are doing proud!

The Autumn Term started with many people thinking we were possibly being a tad too ambitious in singing Carmina Burana, with a relatively short rehearsal period. But, accompanied by Taunton Sinfonietta, and wonderful singing as ever from our "extended family," we more than pulled it off, even with all the antics of getting a rather larger than normal orchestra & ourselves on and off the Regal stage. And how lovely it was to hear Mary Eades playing the Mozart Violin Concerto in G - a real highlight! In all it was a night that will long remain in my memory.

March brought us a programme we thought we all knew, but soon into rehearsal realised that there was a lot we didn't. We were accompanied once again by Taunton Sinfonietta, with our soloists Stuart, Krystal and another husband/wife team Ryan, & Sian. And didn't they do well! The "Cantique" and "Vivaldi's Gloria" seemed effortless and were pure joy to sing, and both complimented Mozart's Requiem superbly. Another night to remember!

I am sure you would like to join me in thanking Marcus for guiding us expertly through these concerts, and to Sue for ably accompanying us, not an easy job!

And I'd like to continue with my thanks for those who very quietly and very proficiently get on with the jobs that make the Society run smoothly:

Jackie Butterworth for maintaining the membership list and the attendance records; Tina Salter & Vicky Borland along with volunteers from 'Save the Children' for organising the Orchestra teas, our rehearsal and concert interval refreshments; Daphne Midwood and Val Stuart for organising the advertisers for the programme and for Laurie Hambrook for ably stepping into the shoes left behind by June, in producing our Minutes. But the time has come for some to move onto pastures new, so a big thank you to Tina, and to Peter Thompson, who is stepping down from the committee after 12 years, and whose shoes I will never fill!

And there are big thank yous also to those outside the Society: Sue Watts, and Lyn Carter, who book and organise the players for the orchestra, Andy Coward from ISOK, who prints all our posters and programme, and the husbands and wives who get volunteered to do the odd job or two, or more! But we can always do with more help - you do not have to be a member of the committee to do many of the tasks required in the running of the Society.

Finally, a big thank you to you, the Choral Society members, for providing Minehead with diverse/entertaining/moving and downright enjoyable programmes of music - you are what makes it all worthwhile!

Musical Director's Report

Ten years and 22 concerts together! As always, the challenge is to maintain and indeed exceed our high standards of performance. We keep setting the bar higher with each programme and I am very pleased and excited with the range of choral works we are tackling.

I have had a lot of feedback from members and audience who all appreciate the professional orchestra and soloists that greatly support and enhance our own hard work. I am aware that this is a considerable expense but majority opinion is that this is worth paying for. Without getting too cosy and comfortable, our regular use of the Taunton Sinfonietta has made final rehearsal infinitely easier as we get to know each other's idiosyncrasies. Similarly, our regular soloists, with the occasional substitutions, continue to impress and amuse us all.

The challenge of the performance day gives us all an extra dose of adrenalin, sometimes meaning that our best work is in the afternoon rehearsal and many are tired by the evening – however, our supportive audience usually give us that much-needed lift! I am open to suggestions as to how to improve the Saturday rehearsal length and format, the choir's practice and rehearsal at home in the weeks beforehand pay dividends in minimising the stress on the day -even if the final Tuesday rehearsal has not gone to plan.

A quick review of our last two concerts:

Carmina Burana was a very difficult work to tackle and I was very pleased with our performance – a huge work to bring to Minehead. The contrast with the orchestral and opera work in the first half was good and our soloists, as always, enjoyed the opportunity to showboat in front of a very appreciative audience. The Regal theatre was perfect and enabled the audience to really appreciate the sound and visual effect of all of us massed on stage.

Our Spring concert was a collection of real favourites. The Cantique was sublime (so good I had my eyes closed and drifted away for the bass entry – well done chaps for easing in so beautifully!) and I enjoyed the Vivaldi with its contrasts of rousing choral work and quieter reflective moments. I was particularly pleased with our performance of the Mozart Requiem. It is always hard to present an audience favourite that is so well know. I believe our interpretation really complemented the exquisite music and I was very proud of the performance. I'm still playing the recording on loop in the car!

Our next performance this autumn is of "Messiah" – the first time we have repeated a whole work in our ten years together. The last performance was only four years ago and was a tremendous success, we have set ourselves the challenge of equalling and surpassing this! The following seasons' are still to be confirmed, I hope that we will be able to support the Methodist church with a nine lessons and carols service as a way of saying thank you for years of providing such a good rehearsal and performance venue. Next year, we have planned for an evening of Mozart and Puccini, followed in the autumn by more opera highlights. In 2018 we will have a concert to commemorate the end of the First World War, with Elgar and Jenkins' "Armed Man."

I am very proud and honoured to be your musical director and extend my heartfelt thanks to the committee for all their hard work and support and to Sue for her unfailing optimism and humour.

Marcus Capel, June 2016