

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Friday 23 September 2016
Whipney House, Greenmount, Bury

Present

Officers: Graham Bolton, Chairman; Tina Dixon, Vice Chairman/Website; Jean Seymour, Secretary/Programmes; Rosemary Artley, Treasurer, Flowers and Gifts

Committee: Chris Babbs, Trustee; June Bowker, Programme Advertising; Dorothy France, Minutes Secretary/Membership; Tony Patten, Concert Seating (Assistant); Rachel Riley, Concert tickets; Geoffrey Stokes, Rehearsal Seating; Sarah Taylor, Facebook/ Website.

Ex officio: Juan Ortuño, Director of Music.

Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting at his home.

Apologies were received from Naomi Jahoda after her recent bereavement.

Minutes of last meeting Tuesday 21 June 2016 were accepted after a slight amendment. These had been circulated in advance.

Chairman

The Chairman announced the departure of Gordon Jones from the choir after the first rehearsal. He had moved to the North East after a rapid sale of his house. Gordon looked after advertising so this role needed to be filled. Tony felt that a number of members could be approached to take over; however, June agreed to take on the advertising role.

Graham also announced that Maureen Price had resigned as Treasurer and from the Committee.

Maureen would remain a member of the choir; Rosemary Artley had agreed to take over as Treasurer and the Trustees had agreed that she should be appointed for this year.

Creation

Soloists had been booked - Sarah Woan (formerly Johnson - soprano), Matt Kellett (bass) and John Elliott (tenor).

Juan had found an orchestration of *Creation* that includes 7 wind and 5 string players without organ or piano. The parts would cost £145 to hire plus £15 p & p. Graham said that the space at Bury Parish Church is limited but there should be room to fit them in. Mike Cawley would investigate moving the front pews or erecting staging and would report back later.

Graham asked if there would be cuts in the score. Juan would consider though he was reluctant; perhaps some arias could be cut.

Tickets, programmes and posters – Graham will continue for the present to prepare the flyer/poster.

Tickets would be available shortly.

Rosemary said the estimated budget is £3,075 and a loss would be expected. This was usual and extra income was normally generated by the Christmas concert. Ticket sales last year were 24% down on the previous season, and we need to improve on this.

Rachel would take over ticket sales and would liaise with Dorothy re Season tickets and choir obligations.

Gordon had sent a list of contacts for advertising including *Lancashire Life* and *Lancashire Living*.

Community News would also be a good source.

Haydn Creation - Second concert?

As part of the outreach and desire to widen the membership and audience of the choir, flyers had gone to every church in Bury and Bolton and also Bury Grammar Schools and Holy Cross to invite people to come and sing with Bury Choral. Holy Cross has a chamber choir and we could possibly do a concert with them.

The proposal for a possible second concert is part of that outreach taking the choir to new (but nearby) places to raise our profile, attract a new audience and singers too.

Choir members had been asked whether they would be willing to sing a second performance of *Creation* on Saturday 12 November with the majority of the choir in agreement. The Chairman had asked about changing the time to 5pm - there was a less clear majority. The 2 venues in mind had been St Mary Le Baum or St Aiden's churches in Rochdale which both put on regular concerts; however, St Aiden's is not available for any Saturday in November. Tony was concerned that *Creation* may be too long a piece for a new audience and maybe *The Armed Man* would be more suitable. Chris said that on reflection a second concert later in the year, such as *The Armed Man*, would be better and the concert could be shorter/more compact. It was agreed to plan the second concert for March, with the main concert on Saturday 11 March

as planned and the second performance could be Sunday 19 March, potentially in the afternoon, as it was thought that Saturday should be avoided and Friday night would be unworkable as the piece needs the participation of an Imam. Chris would look at venues and report back. He would also enquire at Mosques to see if the Imam would sing the Call to Prayer.

11 March 2017 - The Armed Man

Juan would book a small orchestra including 1 flute, 2 horns, 2 percussion organ and strings. This group would not be suitable for Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* so he has asked Jonathan to play Mozart's piano concerto no 4 (around 15 minutes). The concert would open with Finzi's *In Terra Pax* which lasts around 15 minutes, including a small choral part and soprano and baritone soloists. *The Armed Man* would form the second part of the concert.

Christmas Concert

Juan would like to reprise pieces that the choir had done before and include new items. The audience feedback suggested they would like more participation and this would be arranged.

May Concert - Victorian Anthems

Tony reported that the sub-committee had not been able to meet due to Keith's absence on holiday and Naomi's bereavement but they would meet shortly. An initial programme of short anthems had originally been suggested but this would be augmented.

Future Programme 2017/18

Juan had mentioned last year that the Gorton Philharmonic Orchestra is performing *Carmina Burana* at the RNCM on 21 October 2017 and Bury Choral Society could join them. The concert could include the Beethoven *Choral Fantasy*. There would be 7 weeks rehearsal time if we started as usual on the first Tuesday of September, the 5th; if we take up this opportunity, there would be time to prepare another work to be performed at Christmas instead of carols. There might be issues with ticket sales and subscriptions, and the financial arrangements would need to be sorted out with the Gorton Phil. Despite the short rehearsal period, and bearing in mind that the choir had recently sung *Carmina Burana*, it was agreed that the choir should join with the orchestra to perform at the RNCM on Saturday, 21 October 2017.

The March 2018 concert could be a Viennese evening on Saturday 10 or 17 March. The May 2018 concert could be a major work – Juan mentioned Elgar's *The Apostles*, and Richard Youngman had suggested Rossini's *Stabat Mater*; Tony suggested looking at the list of members' suggestions, including *Judas Maccabeus* or *Samson*. Juan will review.

Socials

A Christmas quiz night, to be arranged by Tina, had been suggested and it was agreed that this would be on Saturday 10 December at Greenmount Cricket Club. Tina would think of ideas for a summer event.

Graham had suggested a "Come and Sing" day which would advertise the choir and encourage people to join in. We could learn more than a single piece, to reflect different styles, and perform them in the evening. Ideas of venues and pieces to be included would be needed and Jonathan would be asked if he was available to accompany the choir. This could be held before the March concert; lunch could be included. A small charge could be made.

Website

Tina and her husband are modernising the website and a photograph of the choir had been taken at the last rehearsal to be included. The Committee Minutes would be available to access in a section for Members only. The website could include a regular feature with a link to a favourite piece of music. A video camera would be useful to record concerts and Tina would price them.

AOB

Dorothy asked Jean to email her the updated database for 2016/17 so that she could enter subscriptions and ticket money as it came in. Dorothy would send the database to June, Rachel, Graham, Jean and Rosemary.

Some members stay at the concert venue between the rehearsal and concert at Stand church in May and a shared tea was suggested.

Date of next meeting - to be announced.