

BURY CHORAL SOCIETY
Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, 4 June 2019 at Holy Trinity School, Cecil Street, Bury

A total of 32 members attended - list attached as Appendix 1.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Susan Allen, Keith Ball, Paul Brown, Dorothy Cooper, Tina Dixon, Laurette Evans, Lesley Frost, Norma Garry, David Gremson, Virginia Hinde, Hilary Johnson, Marion Kaufman, Susan Neining, Melody Neal, Roberta Pattison, Clona Porter, John and Maureen Price, Chloë Ratcliffe, Richard Smith, Kathleen Smycki, Ronald Thatcher.

2/3. MINUTES OF AGM 2018 had been circulated and were taken as read. The Treasurer corrected a small error on the balance sheet, after which the meeting approved the minutes unanimously as a true record and they were signed by the Chairman. There were no further matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - a full copy is attached as Appendix 2.

Graham Bolton opened his report with a very complimentary quote from the critique of *Christmas Festivities* concert, reminding members that our constitutional purpose and that a good review is one of the means but which we can judge whether we are achieving that purpose. Audience numbers are another means, and we had poor attendances at both our Spring and May concerts; it is incumbent on us all to distribute publicity, inform family, friends, colleagues and people at large, enthuse them about music and choral singing and engender new audiences.

Our first concert, *The Great War: Armistice*, was the culmination of almost six years of planning. A century on, the relevance of that terrible event was poignantly brought home by the knowledge that relatives of a number of our members had served in that conflict, some having survived, others paying the price. In December we presented our customary *Christmas Festivities* concert, which was once more very well-attended and well-appreciated, and in the New Year we set to work on two pieces new to the choir, both rarely performed, Cherubini's *Requiem in C Minor*, and Purcell's *Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary*. The review noted that "*The choir, well supported by Bury Camerata and directed by Juan Ortuño, conveyed this beautiful music with aplomb, registering the dynamics of the mass, and occasional uncommon Latin phrases.*" Jonathan Ellis also gave us a remarkable performance of Mozart's Piano Concerto no. 26, *The Coronation*.

Our final concert of the season was Handel's oratorio *Judas Maccabeus* which deserved a large audience. In the Chairman's opinion this was one of the best performed concerts we have given.

Next season's programme would be exciting and varied, ranging from the Baroque of Mozart's *Requiem* to the modern *Missa Criolla* by Ramirez and up-to-the-minute music of Ole Geilo. We had been scheduled to perform Elgar's *The Apostles* in November but there were problems that necessitated changing the programme.

Over the season we managed 6 events, including a welcome return of quiz night and a further Come and Sing, *Messiah from Scratch!*, in conjunction with Emmanuel Church, Holcombe, scheduled for early July. These, together with the concerts, help spread knowledge of the Society and encourage people to join or attend. Unfortunately, we had not been able to arrange another Compact Concert which is a good way of making choral music more accessible. However, overall the number of members of the Society have increased this year and we have continued to improve under Juan's direction.

We should pursue new ventures including carol singing, which we do well and would immediately raise our profile, take up the offer to sing services in one of our cathedrals, and possibly a tour.

We are most privileged to welcome Sir Mark Elder as our new Chief Patron. Also, over the year we have addressed data protection and health and safety issues and also addressed the problem of getting our reviews into the Bury Times.

Finally, Graham thanked various people for their hard work and particularly our Secretary and Treasurer. He also expressed his appreciation to Members of being elected as Chairman to our august choral society, which had been both a privilege and honour.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT – a full copy is attached as Appendix 3; accounts sheet attached as Appendix 4.

Rosemary Artley reported that we were comfortably off, having funded four concerts over the season, which has been varied regarding content and financial impact. Our Armistice commemoration attracted a large audience of about 150, and although costs amounted to £2,500, the loss was below £500. Our Christmas concert was again popular and appreciated by audience and performers. The cost of £1,000 was comfortably exceeded, raising a profit of nearly £690, due in part to raffle takings of £400+. The voluntary collection for 'Red Door', a Bury charity for helping the homeless, produced a further £200+. The March concert was much enjoyed by those who attended, but heavy rain, leading to flooding and road closure reduced audience numbers considerably and resulted in a loss of about £950. Our final concert, 'Judas Maccabeus' was popular with the choir, but despite our efforts to avoid clashes with other performances, we lost some audience members to Mozart's *Requiem* in Middleton. Numbers were similar to those in March, and despite the higher ticket price, the costs were also higher, and resulted in a substantial loss of £1,200+.

Our income had been supplemented in various ways:

- we have been fortunate again to have received generous donations. While we must use this money wisely, it was there to be spent in fulfilling our aims as a society when we identify a really worthwhile project.
- Interest payments were greater, more season tickets were sold and advertising revenue had remained substantial.

- A Quiz Night had made a small profit, with donated items for the raffle adding to the entry charge.
- Refreshments at rehearsals had brought in regular small sums, as had the hire of music to other groups.
- We had been fortunate once again to have received generous donations. While we must use this money wisely, it was there to be spent in fulfilling our aims as a society when we identify a really worthwhile project.

Our total income had been more than £25,460, and despite concert costs for an extra concert compared with last season, we would end this one with nearly £22,000 when the last cheques had been cashed.

Once again we had welcomed new members this season, but recruitment was still needed, especially in the tenor section. She reminded us that our annual subscription had not increased last September, and none was suggested for the coming season. However, she recommended that ticket prices should be set at £12 for concerts other than the 'Christmas Festivities'. A charge of £33 for the season ticket would still give the holders a saving of £1 per concert. She also recommended that the Director of Music's annual salary be increased by £100 and the weekly fee for the accompanist should rise to £52. [These were duly voted on, and readily agreed.]

In closing, Rosemary pointed out that it was difficult to reflect accurately in an accounts sheet what had happened in real life. The conductor might do extra work arranging music for us; the accompanist might become a soloist. A soloist last season had been unable to cash a cheque from last season, so that had appeared on this season's sheet, affecting the total. Early payments for next season might be received in the current one. Such matters could raise queries regarding apparent discrepancies, in which case she would attempt to clarify questions from the floor.

June Bowker asked whether Juan submitted bills for the extra work he does for us. The answer was 'not normally'.

Naomi Jahoda announced that donations for refreshments had raised about £200 over the season.

6. FUTURE PROGRAMME - at present, the following were in the process of being arranged:

Tuesday, 12th November 2019 at All Saints Church, Whitefield: Elgar - *The Apostles*

Tuesday, 17th December 2019 at United Reformed Church, Bury: *Christmas Festivities* - selection of seasonal music

Saturday, 14th March, 2020 at Bury Parish Church: Mozart - *Requiem*

Saturday, 16th May, 2020 at St Margaret's Church, Prestwich: *Glorious Rhythm* – to include Ramirez – *Misa Criolla*; Lambert – *Rio Grande*; Hallfer – *Three Epitaphs*

With regard to *The Apostles*, the Chairman informed the meeting that Juan wished to engage an orchestra rather than the organ accompaniment with which we had performed the work previously. As an instrumental accompaniment does not seem to exist, he had expressed a willingness to make the arrangement himself, which would take some time. He suggested that we should contact the Elgar Society regarding the possibility of a grant toward producing a 'reduced orchestra' version, which could be published and in the future generate money for the choir and/or for Juan. Naomi Jahoda proposed the pursuit and outcome of this to Juan and the Officers, which was accepted by the members present.

7. SOCIETY RULES - No requests for a change had been received.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE AND CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTED TRUSTEES

Christopher Babbs, who had been installed as Chairman Elect at last year's AGM, was confirmed as the incoming Chairman.

Rosemary Artley was willing to continue as Treasurer and Jean Seymour was willing to continue as Secretary. Both were re-elected unopposed.

Graham Bolton would become Vice-Chairman by right. Tina Dixon would become a committee member.

Two retiring members were seeking re-election to the Committee:

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| June Bowker | proposed by | Maureen Price | seconded by | Susan Neinger |
| Rachel Riley | " " | Virginia Hinde | " " | Dorothy Cooper |

Both were duly elected and would serve until AGM 2022.

June Bowker, Tina Dixon, Naomi Jahoda and Richard Youngman were confirmed as the non-officer Trustees for the coming season

9. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER OF THE ACCOUNTS

David Owen was thanked for his services this year, and had indicated a willingness to continue. The offer was gratefully accepted.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS and NEXT SEASON

June Bowker asked whether someone else could relieve Tina's husband, Peter, of the task of recording the concerts. Helen Hoath suggested that her husband might oblige.

Richard Youngman acclaimed Graham upon completing his 3rd year as Chairman, and offered thanks to the other officers and committee members/trustees.

The Chairman announced the date of the first rehearsal of the next season as Tuesday 3 September 2019, 7.30p.m. at Holy Trinity School. The AGM would take place on 2nd June 2020. There being no further business, the retiring Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 p.m. and invited members to stay for refreshments and socialising.

I certify that these minutes are a true record _____ Chairman 2 June 2020