

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2003
IN THE PARISH CENTRE, ST JAMES, DURSLEY**

Present:

Anne Shipton	Chairman
Michael Power	Conductor
Kate Reeves	Treasurer
Angela Sinton	Secretary

and about 35 members.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Brian Bolsher
Peter Kirvan
Elaine White

Minutes of the last AGM

It was proposed by John Ewer and seconded by Joyce Sirett that the Minutes of the 2002 AGM be approved as a true record. All in favour.

Matters Arising

Society Piano

Anne Shipton reported that the Society's piano which had previously been kept in Stinchcombe Village Hall has now been moved to Jacquelin Hill's home. Jacquelin Hill had very kindly agreed to house the Society's piano until further notice and for this, the Society was very grateful.

Acoustics of November 2002 Concert

There had been an issue last year regarding the acoustics in the November concert. Anne reported that she had not received any adverse reports this year and felt this was probably due to the fact that the orchestra positioning had reverted back to its usual position. In addition, the timpani were placed further back from the audience and the conductor's podium was positioned further from the chorus. It was acknowledged that members of the audience seated right in front of the orchestra could not hear the chorus so well. However, as in all venues, there are bound to be pockets of 'poor' seating. A query was raised as to whether it was possible to move the pulpit in St James but Anne pointed out that the pulpit was fixed.

Chairman's Report

Anne took the opportunity of welcoming everyone to the 2003 AGM and remarked that an AGM was a time when we could celebrate all that is good about our Society and make plans for the future. This was also the occasion when we would celebrate 15 years of music making with our Musical Director, Michael Power.

Although Anne felt this had been a good year for the Society, it had not been problem free. The change of venue seemed to cause some people problems initially but that this had seemed to settle down and the move had overall been a beneficial one, allowing us to rehearse in warmth and comfort. Anne went on to thank John and Glenys Ewer for always being available to open the church and for making sure that everything was tidy afterwards. She also expressed her thanks to the church itself for

allowing us to store the registers and noticeboards there, which meant that these did not have to be transported on a weekly basis.

Anne thanked all the members of the Committee for all their hard work in 2003 and pointed out that it would be good to see more members offering to serve on the Committee to ensure that we always have a fresh turnover of ideas.

Anne commented on how much she was looking forward to our fundraising Christmas concert which was a new venture for the Society and which, she hoped, would become part of the Tyndale Calendar of Events. She asked members to support this venture, either by singing or selling tickets or both! It was particularly important that we raised some money at this concert as unfortunately our Jumble Sale had not been a great success. Although the Sale had been well supported by members there were not, unfortunately, many buyers. For 2004, we would therefore need to re-consider our publicity of such events.

The Cotswold Care Hospice Tree of Light service now seemed to be firmly in the Tyndale Choral Society's calendar and, although usually a cold evening, is enjoyed by those members who attend. This event does present the Society with an additional opportunity for people who may not come to our concerts to hear us sing and is important, therefore, in raising our profile.

Anne concluded by saying how she felt that last Saturday's concert was one of the best she had ever taken part in. Knowing we were all so well rehearsed had led to a greater feeling of confidence and relaxation. As this had been Michael's last formal concert with the Society as Conductor, she felt that this concert had been a wonderful end to his 15 years. Many people who attended our Concerts had often remarked to Anne that it was evident that our Conductor is a singer himself as the choir always had such good diction and sings with great sensitivity. The Society has gone from strength to strength under Michael's leadership and the legacy of his musicianship would remain with us in the future. Anne thanked Michael for his patience, commitment and, most of all, his friendship.

Treasurer's Report

Kate introduced the accounts which she had handed out to the meeting. The accounts were largely self-explanatory but Kate went on to highlight some of the key points. There were still more details to be included, such as the money from the AGM lunch, the raffle and the profit we would hopefully make from the Christmas Concert at Amberley. The Summer concert had made an overall profit of £315.55 but, as expected, the Autumn concert had made a loss of £2003.75 despite the fact that the concert was well supported and that we made more on ticket sales than last year. The loss was due in the main to the very large costs of the orchestra and the soloists. With regard to fundraising, Kate pointed out that the stall had not raised as much money this year as last. The total raised was £172 (which was a drop of £65 from last year). However, the refreshments had made a net profit of £228.96. Whereas the cake stall had made a good profit of £115.50, the Jumble Sale had only made a profit of £55.35, which was not much return for a lot of hard work. The photographs of the choir had not broken even and so far, the Society has paid £36.32 towards the cost of these. Following a suggestion by Jacquelin Hill, it was agreed that these would again be made available for members to order at both the Amberley rehearsal and again at

the beginning of next season. We had only sold two of the Tyndale mugs this year and it was agreed that these should be on sale at the Christmas Concert in Amberley. As could be seen from the balance sheet, so far we have not yet broken even on this year's accounts but we have yet to include the fundraising from the Amberley concert. Next year we will have the continuing large expense of the rehearsal hall, possibly less donations coming in and increased costs associated with the new conductor.

Kate therefore recommended that subscriptions should increase by £1 to £38 next year (£39 if paid late).

This was proposed by Sandra Tucker, seconded by Jacquelin Hill. All in favour.

Kate also reported that discussions had taken place in committee regarding raising the Patrons' fees – it was likely that this would rise to £22 (but this would depend on ticket prices and/or include a free drink). A gift aid form would also be sent out to all the Patrons next year.

Kate also proposed that the price of tea and coffee should rise by 50p and this was agreed by all present.

Kate also recommended that the Society undertake another large fundraising event next year.

Kate advised the meeting that as Lloyds no longer gave interest on Treasurer's Accounts, she planned to have only one current account (and close the other). She would then open a deposit account, which would pay interest. Any members who paid their subscriptions by standing order would therefore need to make sure that they have the correct bank details.

The accounts would be finalised over the next month and then passed to the auditor.

A query was raised as to why the Gift Aid claim was so different to last year. Kate explained that this was due to the fact that last year's amount included the back claim for previous unclaimed years and that this year's amount was for one year only. It was also asked whether it was necessary to re-submit Gift Aid forms after a period of time and Kate advised that this was not now necessary.

Kate was asked to ensure that she highlighted the need for all members who paid tax to complete Gift Aid forms. Kate confirmed that she does have a list of who has already completed the forms and would be able to check for members who are unsure. It should also be possible for back claims to be made for those people newly claiming Gift Aid.

John Ewer suggested that the Section Representatives encourage their own Section members to complete the forms and this was accepted by the Committee.

John Hicks also pointed out that one of the problems regarding Gift Aid was that currently the Society did not provide receipts for this. Kate agreed to look at a means of addressing this.

Secretary's Report

Angela thanked everyone for attending this AGM, particularly as this was the last with Michael Power as Conductor. Although this had been a challenging year for the Society and the Committee (a new venue, new accompanist and search for a new Conductor), she reported that the Committee had been successful. The new venue, Dursley Methodist Church had proved an excellent choice, as had the appointment of James Corbett as the new regular accompanist. She thanked James for agreeing to join the Society and for providing such a high standard of accompaniment. Angela confirmed that Ian Harrold had been appointed as the new Conductor for 2004 but expressed how sad she felt at losing Michael at the helm. Over the 15 years that Michael had been with the Society as Conductor, he had made a tremendous commitment, improving the quality of the singing and raising the level of our concert performances. She formally paid tribute to Michael's commitment, drive and sense of humour and thanked him for his musical direction. Like Anne, Angela also expressed how pleasing it was that our performance of Haydn's 'Creation' had been such an outstanding success and felt that to finish on such a high was the perfect parting gift for Michael and a fitting tribute to all his hard work over the years.

She reported that at the last minute, due to illness, the Society's President, Dr John Sanders, OBE was now unable to attend the Farewell Luncheon and formally passed on Dr Sanders' apologies to the meeting. She also passed on his message of good wishes both to the outgoing Conductor, Michael and to the incumbent, Ian Harrold.

Angela went on to quickly review the Summer Concert which had comprised the Brahms Love Song Waltzes, Vaughan Williams 'Five Mystical Songs' and a concert performance of Salad Days.

The current membership levels were reported as 65 (down 4 on last year) and made up of:

21 Sopranos (22 in 2002)
23 Altos (26 in 2002)
9 Tenors (6 in 2002) and
12 Basses (15 in 2002)

Whilst there had been some minor movements in the various voice parts, it was still evident that more men were needed for the Tenor and Bass sections and Angela asked members to encourage any singing friends and relatives to join us next season.

On the matter of fundraising, there was much better news to report this year compared to last. The cake stall had been a huge success and Angela revealed that the Committee planned to follow this up by arranging a "Town Hall Tea" in Wotton under Edge next May. Although the second fundraiser, the Jumble Sale, had made a small profit, it had been an awful lot of work for such a small return. At the time of the AGM, there was still one more fundraising event to go – the Carol Concert in Amberley Church on 11th December 2003 and Angela encouraged as many people as possible to attend.

Angela concluded her report by extending thanks to various members of the Society – in particular, she thanked Dick Skinner for his continued work in producing the newsletters and concert programmes; those members of the Society who offered hospitality to soloists and the Conductor on concert days; to Elizabeth and Ros for their continued commitment in running the stall each week; Lesley and Jacquelin for

organising the refreshment service; and to Lorna Lane for agreeing to organise the tea/coffee rota in 2004. Angela also thanked the Committee for their hard work this year and in particular, Anne, as Chairman, for her leadership and direction. She also paid tribute to the outgoing members of the Committee who this year, were Marion Miller, Mavis Church and Brian Kitching.

The Secretary was also asked to record the members' thanks to Elizabeth Power for filling in as an accompanist during times when James was unavailable.

Conductor's Report

Michael began his report for 2003 by saying how he had scores of happy memories of his time with the Society and of the encouragement he had received from Mollie Neale, the Society's founder. Mollie had always been very supportive of his efforts as Conductor of 'her' choir. Following Mollie's death, the Society was pleased to welcome Dr John Sanders, OBE, as their new President and in his first year as President, we performed his work "The Cotswolds". Michael went on to say that this year's Summer Concert performance of Slade and Reynolds' "Salad Days" had also been a trip down memory lane for both himself and Tina – Tina had taken the part of Jane and Michael had been the Musical Director in a staged performance at the Church Hall in Worcester Park, Surrey many years before. Later on they performed "Free as Air" by the same authors and Ian Harrold had appeared in the cast. Michael felt that everyone had entered into the spirit of the performance at Wotton and that there were many individual performances, which demonstrated the wealth of talent within the Society. In the same performance, we had undertaken the Brahms "Love Song Waltzes" with style and sensitivity – despite the demands of singing 18 waltz time movements with many different speeds and styles. Michael paid tribute to the pianist and organist for that concert, Christopher Boodle, who had been a tower of strength on so many occasions. Michael recalled that the Society had been delighted to commission Christopher to write "Death of a Martyr" to help us celebrate the quincentenary of Tyndale's birth and that the Society had performed this in Dursley, Oxford (at Tyndale's old college) and in Gloucester Cathedral (at a special concert to raise money to renovate the Tyndale Monument at North Nibley). Still on the subject of the Summer Concert, Michael paid tribute to the second pianist for the Brahms, Geoffrey Mann, and also to Philip Webb who sang the solo part of the Vaughan Williams' "Five Mystical Songs" with great musical style and care.

Michael felt we had been helped in our rehearsals by two factors this year – firstly, our very able accompanist, James Corbett (who also played continuo for us at the Concert performance of "Creation") and also the change in rehearsal venue to Dursley Methodist Church, although he had noticed that it had taken a while to find the best seating plan which had caused him to wonder why seating plans always cause so much aggravation.

Michael felt we had benefited from the additional rehearsals in the second part of the season – the later date of our November concert had been determined by a variety of factors, including not wanting to clash with the Annual Bonfire and Fireworks Display. However, he acknowledged that this had caused problems for those singers who also rehearse with the Oriana Singers. Rehearsals for "Creation" had gone well and everyone knew their notes well, although he was glad to see some tenor reinforcements in the second half of the season. He paid tribute to the soloists, Jane Sherriff, Stephen Davies and Robert Clarke and to the excellent orchestra, led by

Simon Chalk, with Diggory on timpani, who had all played brilliantly with great accuracy and style. The chorus had been on top form and sang with clarity and conviction.

Michael reported that over the years he had been helped and supported by able and thoughtful members of the Committee. In his first season, Dick Skinner was the Chairman and Anne Shipton was Secretary. Dick has continued to help greatly over the years by producing the newsletters and the concert programmes and since Michael has been able to use the Internet, he had been able to send Dick the programme notes by e-mail. Keith Burgess had been Chairman at the time of Tyndale's Quincentenary and also when we performed the Rossini "Petite Messe Solonelle", which had included the soloist, Jane Irwin, a winner of the NFMS singing prize the previous year and now singing in Wagner opera. Wendy Richardson took over from Anne as Secretary and gave many years of support. Geoff Whiley had also acted as Treasurer for many years. He also thanked the present Secretary, Angela Sinton and the current Treasurer, Kate Reeves.

Michael concluded his report by saying he owed a great debt to the choir for all its fine singing over the years and said how much he would miss conducting us. He thanked everyone for all their singing and support over the years but felt that the time was now right for us to move forward under another Conductor and that Ian was the right man for this task. Ian too is a singer and also an orchestral player and a conductor and he hoped we would all enjoy working together.

Election of Officers

There were three vacancies to be filled on the Committee, namely, Concert Secretary, Publicity and Printing and Patrons Secretary. Nominations had been received as follows:

Concert Secretary:	Lynette Magnone
Publicity & Printing:	John Hicks
Patrons Secretary:	Katie Emsley

It was proposed by Dick Skinner and seconded by Brian Kitching that the above named be elected to the Committee for a period of three years from 2004. All in favour.

Any Other Business

Mrs Palmer asked if a combined summary of dates for concerts for all local choir events might be published as a collaboration between the various groups. Anne pointed out this used to be done in the local Arts magazine. It was agreed that the Committee would look at the possibility/feasibility of doing this.

It was also suggested that a list be placed on the noticeboard at the beginning of the 2004 season for people to write any ideas on for fundraising. This was agreed to.

Elizabeth Young asked the Committee to re-consider the timing of the November concert date for 2004 so as not to clash with the Oriana Singers' rehearsals. Anne explained that this year's concert date had been set as a culmination of a number of factors, beyond the Committee's control. It would still be the intention to avoid a

clash with the Bonfire/Fireworks night but unlikely to be as late as this year. An earlier date, say at the end of October, would clash with half term, which would be difficult not only for some of the Society's singers, but might also feasibly affect our audience figures. It was felt likely that the date for next year's November concert would be the 14th, although this was obviously subject to Ian Harrold's agreement / availability.

It was asked whether a list of member's details existed which could be made available to all in the Society. The Secretary confirmed that she did hold a list of current member's details but said that it had not been made fully available as she did not have the permission from each individual to release their personal details. However, it was agreed that a list of members' names by section would be made available early next season and, if possible, printed in the newsletter.

Jill Brown made the meeting aware that Keith Burgess was not well at this time and the Secretary agreed to send a card to him on behalf of the Society.

When asked if the critique was yet available for the November concert, Anne replied that this had not yet been received and would therefore be printed in the newsletter.