

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE TYNDALE CHORAL SOCIETY
HELD AT 7.30PM ON WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2007,
IN THE UPPER SCHOOL HALL, DURSLEY TABERNACLE**

1. Present:

John Ewer (Chairman), Lorna Lane (Treasurer), Julia O'Connor-Beach (Secretary), Ian Harrold (Musical Director).

Liz Barnes	Clare Harrison	Marion Miller	Anne Shipton
Catherine Bennett	Marjorie Harrison	Brian Neale	Dick Skinner
Jill Brown	John Hicks	Frances Neale	Val Skinner
Mike Chambers	Diana Hobbs	John Palmer	Joyce Theaker
Fiona Chandler	Alastair Macleod	Lisa Randell	Wendy Thomas
Mavis Church	Lynette Magnone	Kate Reeves	Sandra Tucker
Jenny Coles	Derek Manning	Miriam Salman	Lesley Wrangmore
Glenis Ewer	Doreen Manning	Audrey Sewell	Andrew Young
Peter Harney			[36 members]
Apologies had been / were received from:			
Frank Andoh	Christine Gourd	Angela Pendlebury	Eve Tudgay
Brian Bolsher	Jacquelin Hill	*Julie Phillips	*Ros Wakefield
*Phil Butcher	Estelle James	*Indigo Redfern	*Sue Walshaw
*Jenni Culverwell	Brian Kitching	Wendy Richardson	*Vanessa Weaver
Jean Dabinett	Sally Lamerton	Helen Roberts	Geoff Whiley
Anne Glanville	Caroline Marshall	Alexandra Tomlinson	*Elaine White
Jonathan Golding	Anne Nuttall	*Lesley Townsend	Elizabeth Young
Also James Corbett			[28 members]

* Alterations to ruling document require two-thirds majority, ie 42 members. 36 members were in attendance, and 9 absent members (marked above with asterisk) had registered their agreement by email with the agenda items regarding committee quorum and adoption of policy statements, giving a total of 45.

2. Welcome

Chairman John Ewer welcomed all to the meeting, and introduced Reverend Tim Heaney of St James' Parish Church. The Chairman presented a cheque in the sum of £439.26 being a half share of the proceeds of the September workshop. Rev. Heaney offered his thanks on behalf of the Church, and explained that the roof works had been well supported by grants, but that the second half of the project, to re-order the rear of the Church to provide better facilities, would have to be funded by many home-grown events.

3. Minutes of the last AGM

It was proposed by Audrey Sewell and seconded by Sandra Tucker that the Minutes of the 2006 AGM be approved as a true record. All in favour.

It was proposed by Anne Shipton and seconded by Wendy Thomas that the Minutes of the General Meeting held on 16th April 2007 be approved as a true record. All in favour.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Links to Schools

Anne Shipton reported that once again she had written to local schools, inviting students to join the choir on an apprenticeship basis. No response had been received – either from staff or students. One young lady had approached via the website, but had misunderstood what was involved. The Apprenticeship Scheme will still be available in 2007, and we will continue to promote it. Anne asked all members to mention the scheme to any young person they might know. They would be most welcome to come to any rehearsal to see what is involved. Anne had also been CRB checked during the year, and policy documents prepared, so we are up to speed with child protection issues.

5. Chairman's Report

“This has been a very successful musical year, both our summer and autumn concerts were well attended and, more importantly, thoroughly enjoyed by both the audience and the choir.

Cotswold Care Hospice has benefited by £384 and wish to be involved in tickets sales in the future. They commented that the people involved had not attended any of our concerts in the past and would not miss them in the future.

Our workshop was once again well attended and raised £860 to be shared with the St James appeal. There were some anxieties as the date approached with respect to numbers, but sufficient registered in the later days to make it the success it was, and we owe much to Ian for his leadership of the afternoon and evening. In addition, the food served between rehearsal and performance was highly praised and our thanks are due to Julia, her friend Freddie Kee, Wendy’s partner Colin Levine, Audrey, and the other helpers who were involved.

Other fundraising events, such as Dursley cake sale and Wotton teas, were well supported by our regular stalwarts but we would welcome others to share the load. Sadly two activities did not get the support that they deserved; the Amberley garden party had to be cancelled and the Cromhall Cinema was restricted to just one showing of the Titfield Thunderbolt. The latter lost some support because it had to be postponed due to the heavy summer rainfall, but those who did attend had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon and evening with the film and picnic.

There are many individuals who make our society work. Your committee members take on their various tasks with great thoroughness and enthusiasm, often involving spouses and partners in their tasks. Committee meetings are always an enjoyable as well as productive experience, and again we would welcome new blood and new ideas so that the choir continues to develop.

Then there are those who, week in and week out, commit themselves to various fundraising tasks and activities; Elizabeth and Ros running the bookstall, Glenis in the kitchen, Jill organising the raffle, and those who contribute crosswords/brain teasers to frustrate the rest of us.

The autumn concert in particular requires a great deal of organising and, hopefully, keeping everybody happy. Catherine and Lisa have done this brilliantly along with husbands and friends. Andrew Young, Anne Shipton, Clive Orchard and others have manhandled the staging, built the supports, later dismantled it and returned it to Lister Hall. We are grateful to the Male Voice Choir for its loan. Dick Skinner works very hard in the background to produce two newsletters and our programme notes for both concerts, for which we thank him.

Our website, the envy of many nearby societies, has been set up and maintained by John Hicks and our name is known by folk from well beyond Gloucester, resulting in increased ticket sales and attendance at our workshops.

Finally, I cannot praise Julia enough, however much it may embarrass her. She has been/is a fount of new initiatives, in particular liaising with other choral societies and her hard work in the kitchen. I am looking forward to the workshop in September 2008 and please keep this date and our concert dates free, except for emergencies.

Our numbers, though still low on tenors and basses, has retained fairly stable. Sadly we lost Judith Taylor to cancer, Wenna Hills, who moved to Essex, Betty Hebditch temporarily to the USA, and Shelagh Fitzarthur has mobility problems. We have welcomed Liz Barnes, who collected much of our advertising material, Jonathan Golding, and the return of Julie Phillips and Frank Andoh. We hope that they have enjoyed this season and look forward to seeing everyone in 2008.”

6. Treasurer's Report

The receipts and payments report to 28 November 2007 was distributed and the Treasurer commented as follows:

“Membership: we had 61 full members with 5 joining us for only one term. Subscriptions at the normal rate realised £2587.50 and 8 members paid an extra amount of £117 bringing the total to £2750.50 Members were invited to pay at least £10 extra if they thought the subscription too low or if they didn’t wish to join in any fundraising. Some members donated to actual fund raising events.

Friends: we have 12 singles (£25) and 4 doubles (£40). It is possible for members to buy a Friends package as a present for a beloved relative or friend.

Fundraising: see breakdown. The cake stall is hard work for a few members, possibly having to stand in the cold or wet on a Saturday morning. Town Hall Teas: this is a good moneyspinner and it is possible to ‘sell’ the Society here. Cinema: this lacked support and became a non-profit making afternoon out for a few members. Workshop: this is a good fundraiser. We shared the surplus with St James’ Church. It would be nice if even more members participated

[50%]. Quizzes: only 50% of members bother to participate. We still have 6 mugs which re on sale tonight. Christmas cards – still some packs left which are on sale tonight. Website shop: this is a good fundraiser, is painless and a majority of members could help by buying via the website page. Music hire: The total is expected to be £116. Sales stall and refreshments: a very good result, but again the work falls on the few and not everyone supports it.

Donations: £200 received from Renishaw. £500 received from Mr Michael Stone.

Tax Refund: this has now evened out. If we attract additional members, then amount of refund could increase.

Concerts: see breakdown. The summer concert was an improvement on 2006, but we still need to sell more tickets. The autumn concert had a larger-than-usual audience. I wonder if the sale of tickets in advance at a reduced price encouraged audience to commit to buying tickets rather than promising to pay at the door?

The £5 miscellaneous expenditure refers to the CRB check (youth programme).

Overall: although we have had an expensive year this year, thanks to £705 in donations, £500 from the sale of the piano and £800 from the Elgar Society, we have managed to secure a surplus of £1592. However, these donations were 'one-offs' and it unlikely that we will be so fortunate over coming years. At present we have a healthy balance and with care we can make this carry us through the next three years without having to worry about fundraising and securing huge donations.

We must continue to 'sell' the Society by being enthusiastic about our performances, and therefore selling tickets, and by recruiting new members and making them feel welcome.

Recommendations:

The joint Friends subscription only just covers the price of tickets and interval drink; I propose that it be raised from £40 to £45.

Fundraising so often falls on a minority of members, and often attracts the support of only half the choir. I propose that some of the activities be dropped, particularly those that eat into rehearsal time. The cake stall, cinema, quizzes, and draw are the ones I would drop.

I propose that subscriptions be raised to £45 next year (£46 for late payers from 5 May). By raising subscriptions, every member is involved which, I think, is a much fairer method of increasing revenue."

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for her report and a discussion on the proposals ensued.

Fundraising activities:

There was considerable support expressed for the quizzes, cake stall, and draw; it was felt that they not only raised funds, but were fun and also helped towards the cohesion of the society. The secretary commented that this enthusiasm was at odds with her experience when selling quiz sheets, and that the work involved and the cost of prizes (usually born by the quiz setter) were not justified by the amount raised; the expressed enthusiasm was also at odds with the fact that no-one had volunteered to be Fundraising Co-ordinator. Liz Barnes, Wendy Thomas, and Jill Brown declared themselves willing to continue with the Dursley cake stall. John Hicks suggested as a compromise that we should not budget for these smaller events, but should not discourage anyone from organising them if they were so minded.

Joint Friends Package:

It was proposed by the Treasurer, seconded by Andrew Young, that the joint Friends package for couples be increased to £45 per annum. Motion carried.

2008 Subscriptions:

The Treasurer's recommendation of an increase of £4 per annum to £45 was commented on: it would help meet increased overheads, it would go some way to ensure that all contributed, it was fair when compared to other societies' subscriptions, and represented very good value for 26 rehearsals and participation in two concerts. Andrew Young suggested that the ad hoc music hire charge (£2 per season) be dropped, and the subscription instead be set at £49. Andrew felt this would have the added benefit of increasing the gift aid tax refund and save the Librarian the work of collecting money.

Anne Shipton queried whether this vote was constitutional, given that the music hire had heretofore been separately charged, and less than the required two thirds of the choir were present. It was the feeling of the majority that such a vote was within the scope of the meeting, and should there be written representations in sufficient numbers from those absent, then the matter could be revisited.

It was proposed by Andrew Young, seconded by Frances Neale, that the annual members' subscription for 2008 be raised to £49 (penalty of an additional £1 for late payment after 5 May), and that separate score hire charges be dropped. The motion was carried by the majority, with 3 votes against. There were no abstentions.

Hon. Treasurer
Hon. Secretary

Lorna Lane
Julia O'Connor-Beach

It was proposed by Anne Shipton and seconded by Lynette Magnone that the above officers be elected to serve on the Committee for the year commencing 1 January 2008. The motion was carried unanimously.

9. Election of Committee Members

The secretary explained that the society rules require 3 officers and no fewer than 6 members to serve on the committee. We have recently had 7 members, each with a specific job. 3 were now retiring after their 3 year tour: Catherine Bennett (Concert Manager), Jill Brown (Fundraising Co-ordinator), and Friends Secretary (Frances Neale).

Kate Reeves had volunteered her services as Friends Secretary.

John Hicks had volunteered his services in his capacity as Website Manager.

Anne Shipton had agreed to be Concert Manager, but not to serve on the committee.

This would leave us without a Fundraising Co-ordinator, but with the required minimum 6 members.

The Nominations were therefore as follows:

Committee members:

Friends Secretary	Kate Reeves
Website Manager	John Hicks

It was proposed by Alastair Macleod and seconded by Lisa Randell that the above be elected to serve on the Committee commencing 1 January 2008. The motion was carried unanimously.

Non Committee position:

Concert Manager	Anne Shipton
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It was proposed by Alastair Macleod and seconded by Lisa Randell that Anne Shipton be confirmed as Concert Manager commencing 1 January 2008. The motion was carried unanimously.

The very important position of Fundraising Co-ordinator remains unfilled.

10. Committee Quorum

The Secretary reported that a search of the past AGM minutes had not revealed an agreed quorum for the committee. The committee proposes a quorum of six members out of a minimum of nine officers/members. **It was proposed** by Audrey Sewell and seconded by Marion Miller that the committee quorum be six. Motion passed unanimously.

11. Adoption of Policy Statements

The Secretary explained that the following policy statements were required due to the youth apprenticeship scheme and the CRB checking procedure. The documents had been based on templates provided by Bristol Choral Society and Making Music; the documents had been on the website and on the noticeboard for some months for members to inspect.

- 001 Data Handling
- 002 Equal Opportunities
- 003 Supervision of Young People
- 004 Recruitment of Ex-Offenders
- 005 Handling Disclosure

It was proposed by Miriam Salman and seconded by Anne Shipton that the above documents be adopted. The motion was passed unanimously.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Critique of King Olaf Concert

Dick Skinner asked if there had been any official critique of the performance and if same had been published in the

Gazette. Wendy Thomas (publicity) had been unable to secure the Gazette's interest in sending a critic. Making Music had nominated Maurice Bell to provide us with an official report on the evening. This had been received, the secretary had typed it up, and it will be made available to Dick for inclusion in the newsletter. In addition, we have a letter from Hywel Davies of the Elgar in Performance group of the Elgar Society, and emailed comments from Dr John Pickard – editor of the Elgar Complete Edition and Senior Lecturer in Music at Bristol University. Sandra Tucker quoted some very appreciative comments from a letter she had received from her friend, who had attended our concert and heard King Olaf for the first time.

12.2 Gazette Coverage

The secretary reported that she was in negotiations with the Gazette's Editor regarding a feature on the TCS and the ABC (Absolute Beginners Class).

12.3 Amberley Carol Concert

Sandra Tucker had £1 wine/mince pie tickets for singers and £6 audience tickets with her for sale. All are encouraged to bring friends to the concert.

13. Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 8.40 pm.

Note: After the meeting, Jill Brown and Liz Barnes very kindly offered to be joint fundraising co-ordinators in 2008, but did not wish to serve as committee members.