

MARKET DRAYTON CHORAL SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

Venue: Alexandra Rd Junior School, Market Drayton, Shropshire

Date: 23 March 2005

Time: 9.20 pm

Members present: 38

Apologies were received from P. Chevins, C. Lewis, S. Barthorpe, R. Duncan, J. Arbon and the Gibbon's.

Minutes of the previous AGM were read. Acceptance was proposed by I. Wells and seconded by N. Stewart

Musical Director's Report

Ken had been pleased with performances of the Mozart Requiem and previously, the Seasons last spring. The Mozart had enjoyed a good turn out, both in choir and audience numbers, and though the Haydn was not so well supported, the performance itself was enthusiastic and successful. Ken praised the standard of singing and the efforts of the choir to give of their best. He confessed to having a different approach to musical preparation than many Musical Directors, but justified his methods by the results. Ken thanked the choir for their continued good attendance and enthusiasm to tackle challenging material.

Items for the Christmas concert under consideration were Haydn's Creation or a group of the Bach family's works. Ken was open to other suggestions, within the limitations of the size of our choir. There was also a possibility of repeating the Winter concert with an amateur orchestra in the Crewe area.

The membership was exhorted to go out and sell as many tickets as possible for the forthcoming concert which had every expectation of being a great success.

The Musical Director's report was received with much applause.

Treasurer's Report (copies of the year's accounts were distributed)

The Treasurer reported that the Haydn concert had been disastrous financially - a large orchestra and small audience. A change of dates had contributed to the poor turn out, and orchestra numbers had crept up from the original estimate. Subscriptions would need to remain at a high level and expenses reduced to a minimum to salvage the situation. Musicians are the biggest expense, justified by their quality. The Mozart concert however, despite another large orchestra, made only a small loss of £21. The budget for the forthcoming concert (Janacek/Bernstein) was £700, and provided that ticket sales are good, this should return our finances to the black. John was a little nervous about having two loss-making concerts together, as it would leave us in a vulnerable position. The necessity to pay out orchestra members on the night (before ticket revenues are paid into the bank) prompted the Treasurer to renew the Overdraft facility of £3000. He acknowledged the financial support from our sponsors, Whitebridge Wines Ltd, as being invaluable.

The subscriptions for the autumn season having paid for one third of the concert's expenses, the Treasurer proposed no increase for the time being, but suggested that the situation may change if revenue continues to disappoint. Similarly, ticket prices are to remain at £8.50 for adults, which represented extremely good value.

The Society's accounts were with the auditor (thanks to Mike Craghill) at present.

Acceptance of the report was proposed by M. Hawkins and seconded by R. Fish.

Question from the floor: Who would be liable for guaranteeing the overdraft?

Chairman: Technically the members - the Committee in the first instance, and ultimately the

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wider membership.

Question from the floor: Are any grants available?

Chairman: We tend not to apply for grants when we have a healthy bank balance.

Question from the floor: With charitable status, are the Trustees liable?

Chairman confirmed that that was the case.

Question from the floor: Could subscriptions be Gift Aided?

Chairman confirmed that that was the case.

Charitable Status Update Report from Ian Wells

Ian reported that paperwork was presently with the Charity Commission for approval; he expected to hear the decision within two weeks. When this is confirmed, the committee intended to pursue membership of the National Federation of Musical Societies, who provided insurance cover for events, cancellations, Public Liability etc.

Members could look at services offered on their website: www.makingmusic.org

Chairman's Report

The Chairman began by thanking Ian heartily for all his hard work progressing the Society's change of status. He hoped that everything would be in place by the start of the winter 2005 season. As for the Society's finances, we were not here to amass a large bank balance, and having built up the programmes from one main concert with a small, lighter effort in spring to nowadays a more equal balance of more substantial weight, we must accept the risk that sometimes poor ticket sales may leave funds a little thin. The money we had accumulated in the bank was there to be used for just such eventualities and was there to be employed, not sat on gathering dust.

Francis hoped that a combination of selling more tickets and fund-raising events (more later) would soon restore our depleted finances. Thanks were expressed to Ian, John and Cynthia for the website facility.

Election of Officers

No changes were proposed to the committee, who all agreed to serve another year:

Chair	Francis Peel	Librarian	Ian Wells
Treasurer	John Upton	Social	Nancy Stewart
Secretary	Cynthia Dawson	Publicity	Harold Ousby

Proposed by C. Armstrong, seconded by L. Rowley, the committee was elected unanimously.

Any Other Business

Nancy Stewart has booked the Festival Centre for a Singing Workshop for 7 May 2005 (*date subsequently moved*) as a fundraiser, but primarily to share an exciting opportunity with Vocal Animateur Brenda Rattray from London. There would be no written music, but using familiar melodies in unfamiliar ways. The day would be open to the public and aimed at extending musicality in singers and non-singers alike. More details would shortly be available, pending application for support from Arts Council England.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.50 pm

Minutes available for inspection at: www.draytonchoral.co.uk