

## **HARROGATE CHORAL SOCIETY (1164776) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 JULY 2021 BY ZOOM DUE TO CORONAVIRUS CRISIS**

**PRESENT:** Paul Jackson, Amy Moseley, (Co - Chairs), Gill Walsh (Treasurer), Ruth Pridmore (Secretary), Marilynne Davies & Tom Moore (Deputy Music Directors) & 28 members

**APOLOGIES:** were received from Jill Chadwick\*, Caroline Jackson, Lynn Morrison, Celia Selway\*, Jo Trigg, Jane Burniston\*, Christine Collier\*, Louise Dexter, Ann Shovelton\*, Susan Skinner\*, Judith Yeats, Simon Berger, Robert Brown, Bryan Dexter, Norman Fulton\*, and Christ Shovelton\* (those marked \* had nominated Ruth Pridmore as their proxy for any votes making the meeting quorate)

**MINUTES** of the Annual General Meeting held on 1 July 2020 been distributed by email with the agenda. Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Sally Jackson, seconded by Kate Rogata and approved unanimously. There were no matters arising.

### **MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

As we currently have no MD there was no report. PJ noted that in a week or so we will be able to send more information to the choir about the two remaining candidates who will be taking rehearsals in August.

### **DEPUTY MUSIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Report from Marilynne Davies - Deputy Music Director for the Season 2020-2021.

"I began my report for the season 2019-2020 with the statement that this was the first report I had ever made in a lockdown situation. At that time I had no idea that we would be having our second AGM on Zoom or that we had not be able to get together to rehearse! However I am hopeful that that situation will soon be rectified.

During this season we have rehearsed on Zoom and I am greatly indebted to Tom Moore, Francis O'Sullivan and to Robert Brown for their unfailing good humour, their technical expertise and their patience with a "techno luddite" which made it possible for this to happen. However I am sure that we are all agreed that nothing quite replaces getting together to sing. I am sure that you would want to send our best wishes to Robert Brown who is recovering from surgery in HDH.

Beati have got together on Zoom throughout the season and although we have not sung together it has been good to see each other and chat. Beati will be singing at their first Wedding this season in August socially distanced and only 6 voices!

Assuming that I was retiring in 2020 Beati very kindly presented me - at the Tewit Well on the Stray - with an original stained glass picture which had been made by Hilary Holmes in the first Sopranos I will cherish it greatly. Thank you so much.

As you are aware we have been in touch as a Society through the good offices of the Executive committee Paul, Amy ,Gill and Ruth. Thank you to you all.

I look forward with hope to the next season when we will begin, if we are allowed, a new chapter in our history which will build on the legacy left us by Andrew and embrace the challenges of a new Music Director.

Marilynne Davies

There were no questions.

### **CO – CHAIRS REPORT**

"It falls to us to report to the Society at the end of the first season in our choir's long history that has seen no performances. Happily, all being well, our choral drought is about to break.

All has not been gloom and doom. The Society is solvent, we have been able to protect HCS assets whilst also providing a subscription break to members and also paying both Andrew, until the date of his retirement, and Tom.

Choir numbers have not dropped off, in terms of existing membership, and we continue to receive new membership enquiries. Sixteen, and still counting, during the lockdown period.

The mission to appoint a new MD is on track, with much representative choir involvement, albeit that the process has been impacted upon by Covid delays.

We have since the last AGM secured Tom's commitment to HCS as Deputy MD and we could not have hoped to appoint anyone better than Tom to that role.

We have continued to rebuild the Committee in terms of numbers, Alastair having joined us recently. Ruth has agreed to stay on in her role of Secretary. We need her experience during this period of uncertainty. Marilynne has postponed temporarily her own retirement and we remain as ever grateful both to her, and to Ruth, for all that they do for HCS.

We were very grateful to Marilynne, Tom and Francis for the online rehearsals which did so much to keep us in touch with our *raison d'être*.

We have kept our generous patron, the Bramall Trust, to whom we remain very grateful, updated as to our position.

We have an exciting start to our 2021/2022 programme in prospect. The brothers Moore will be accompanying us in our Brahms concert in November, our President Brian Kay is to conduct us in this year's Messiah and Andrew is returning to lead us in the Rossini/Puccini in March.

As is already known we have in place a provisional date for indoor rehearsals to recommence and for outdoor rehearsals to take their place if we cannot rehearse indoors.

The above all said, one of our greatest concerns remains that if we are not allowed to return to 'normal' rehearsals, and concerts, from this Summer/Autumn onwards then there will be a significant risk that we will remain in a state of limbo until the Spring of 2022. That would arise even for example were the Government to withdraw the mandatory wearing of masks and social distancing, but make it *advisory* instead. Our insurers would want us to follow Government advice. We would feel constrained in any event follow to such advice.

A concert at the Royal Hall with an orchestra and soloists but with audience numbers limited by 360 degree distancing would be challenging to say the very least for our finances. We must hope that *all* required *or* advised restrictions *and* mitigations are lifted once and for always on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

Conversely, another concern is that at the moment we have, arguably, too much money. As evidenced by the accounts prepared by our Treasurer, Gill. To whom we are grateful for her investment of time and her counsel on these issues.

We are past the halfway point of the five year period of funding from the Bramalls and we have, as a result of the lockdown, funds that would otherwise have been spent. Those excess funds *will* be spent during what will be in any event an expensive season due partly to a previously postponed concert returning to the schedule, but we do have something of a balancing act to perform.

We cannot expect to continue receive generous sponsorship if existing funds are not being used. Equally we must remain solvent. Further Covid interference, see above, would cause our season to become dangerously expensive. Had we been performing over this past year or more, it should be said that even with our sponsorship and subscriptions income, we would have had to dip into our reserve anyway and this issue requires to be reviewed.

This is not the time however for setting out plans for the future over and above simply getting back to the glorious basics as soon as possible and that is our overwhelming priority.

Thank you all for your support throughout this challenging period.  
Paul and Amy"

Paul added that we wait with bated breath for the final announcement of lockdown ending which will come on 12<sup>th</sup> July, the advice to keep wearing facemasks may prove problematic but he will be meeting with the administrator at Christ Church to discuss how we might use the Hall or the Church with spacing and adequate ventilation.

Questions – Val Saunders asked for confirmation that once we start rehearsing at the end of July we will continue until the season starts properly, this is the case,

Liz Wearing thanked Paul and Amy for all that they do for HCS.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Gill noted that we would normally announce the new season membership fees figures at the AGM but at the moment with so much still uncertain she hopes members will understand that the committee may not be able to confirm the fees until the formal start of the new season in September.

She also noted that there is no real point in doing the usual comparison with last season or even the one before as so much has been very different!!

The Harrogate Choral Society						
report for 1 July 2020 to 30 Jun 2021						
	HCS	Brahms	Harrogate Prom 2020	Rossini Puccini	Majestic Dinner	TOTAL
<b>Income</b>						
Admissions				£ 230.00		£ 230.00
Donations	£ 200.00					£ 200.00
Friends	£ 15.00					£ 15.00
Membership	£ 1,439.99					£ 1,439.99
Other					£ 750.00	£ 750.00
Other Income	£ 10.00					£ 10.00
Sponsorship	£ 11,000.00					£ 11,000.00
Sundry income						£ -
Amazon Smile	£ 9.60					£ 9.60
Easyfundraising	£ 151.58					£ 151.58
Gift Aid	£ 323.25		£ 545.00			£ 868.25
Interest	£ 646.11					£ 646.11
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 13,795.53</b>	<b>£ -</b>	<b>£ 545.00</b>	<b>£ 230.00</b>	<b>£ 750.00</b>	<b>£ 15,320.53</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Accompanist	£ 250.00					£ 250.00
Accountancy	£ 720.00					£ 720.00
Charity Donations			£ 545.00			£ 545.00
Deputy Music Director	£ 5,440.20					£ 5,440.20
Friends Expenses Admin	£ 6.00					£ 6.00
Office/General Admin	£ 315.65					£ 315.65
Making Music (membership/ insurance)	£ 740.32	£ 28.00				£ 768.32
Music Choral				£ 260.00		£ 260.00
Music Director	£ 4,315.00					£ 4,315.00
Music for Orchestra				£ 15.59		£ 15.59
Office/General Administrative Expenses	£ 44.45					£ 44.45
Printing, Postage and Stationery	£ 17.15					£ 17.15
Purchases	£ 5.48					£ 5.48
Refund Admissions				£ 230.00		£ 230.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>£ 11,854.25</b>	<b>£ 28.00</b>	<b>£ 545.00</b>	<b>£ 505.59</b>	<b>£ -</b>	<b>£ 12,932.84</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>£ 1,941.28</b>	<b>-£ 28.00</b>	<b>£ -</b>	<b>-£ 275.59</b>	<b>£ 750.00</b>	<b>£ 2,387.69</b>
<b>Assets:</b>						
Barclays Bank current account	£ 24,656.34		as of 30th June 2021			£ 20,418.78 on 30
United Trust Bank	£ 21,040.33		£ 354.55 interest added			
Cambridge & Counties	£ 21,392.61		£ 291.56 interest added			
a) need to take this season with last season to get a clearer picture of income/expenditure						
b) we have been charged for the extension hire of Rossini/Puccini scores until the March 2022 performance (£260)						
c) Majestic refund from venue deposit paid in previous season - cancelled event						
d) depreciation on Clavinova not yet included in expenditure, no new assets purchased						
e) we currently have 5 prepaid Royal Hall deposits for future concerts totalling £ 3,600						

Gill further noted that the Accompanist line refers to fees paid to Christine Alp as Tom is now our Deputy Music Director. There has been a huge reduction in gift aid as of course we have not been collecting membership fees. Gill also explained that we had been able to claim the gift aid on all the £10 fees paid by the proms guest singers. There has been an increase in choral music costs as we have had to extend the hire period for the scores for the Rossini and Puccini concert (originally planned for March 2020 but now in March 2022), there may be additional music costs for this concert. However our sponsorship will continue for another two seasons and we are in a reasonably healthy state.

There were no questions and David Cork proposed that all the reports be accepted, this was seconded by Dawn Hey and approved by all.

## **APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINEERS**

Scrutineers were not needed for the election of the Executive Officers or Committee members.

## **ELECTION OF TRUSTEES FOR 2021/2022**

Details had been circulated with the agenda. There being no further nominations David Hutton proposed that the nominations for the Trustees be accepted. This was seconded by Liz Wearing and accepted unanimously.

## **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS**

We have been paying the Barker Partnership in Ripon to support Gill Walsh and to be our independent examiner. Ruth Pridmore proposed that we continue to use them for the 2021-22 season, this was seconded by Geoff Smith and approved by all. Gill noted that she hoped for a reduction in their fee this time as there are far fewer transactions to check!

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

At 8.05 pm Paul Jackson thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting

## **An EGM was convened at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 6 April 2022 to approve the final accounts for the 2020-21 season**

Gill Walsh highlighted the fact that for the season there were no membership fees, just a few kind donations, we retained our £11k sponsorship from the Bramall Trust, we had no concert costs. Our only outgoings were the payments made in respect of the online learning. We ended the season with a £2k surplus to carry forward, thus making our total bank holdings in the region of £70k with £44k held in savings accounts.

Stephen Murdoch proposed that the accounts be approved, this was seconded by Judith McKenna and approved by all present (72 members).

Paul Jackson presented a certificate and flowers to Elizabeth de la Hoyde (Alto 1) who had reached 50 years of membership during the lockdown period.

The rehearsal then continued as normal.