

## Minutes of 42nd Annual General Meeting

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### Mevagissey Social Club on 5th December 2016

**Present:** A Nicholls (Chairman), S Flavell (Vice Chairman), D Leeson (Treasurer), A Scarratt (Secretary), and 39 other Choir Members

- 1. Apologies:** H Stobart, J Gill, R George, A Dibb, G Hoskins, G Willcocks.
- 2. Minutes of meeting Monday, 5th December, 2015**  
The Minutes, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record, proposed by Stephen Gibson and seconded by Chas Bailey, nem con, and signed by the Chairman.
- 3. Matters Arising:** None
- 4. Reports**

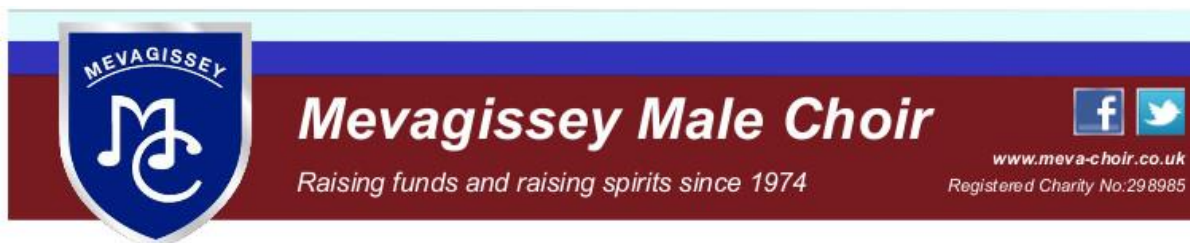
### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016

Good evening Gentlemen. This is the end of my second year as chair of this fine choir and, as expected, it has been a bit of a roller coaster ride. Probably most important is the fact that we have managed to recruit several new members. This is essential for the health of the choir, and we are both glad and proud to welcome them to our ranks.

We have continued to enjoy the services of Graham our M.D. who continues to lead us with vigour and panache to make us sing well, and Matt our outstanding accompanist, who this year has provided us with a large number of teach tracks which has proved to be so useful to so many of us, especially to new members and those of us with poorer memories!

Our extra Christmas Concert this year brings to a close a hugely successful year for us and will help publicise our new Christmas C.D. That will hopefully be a nice earner for several years to come. The superb concert with the Plymouth Military Wives at The Hall for Cornwall in September, which, for me, was one of the best MVC concerts I have ever attended, let alone take part in. This was followed by a very successful tour to Cyprus in October --- enjoyed by all who went and for which we must record a huge thank you to Graham Rundle for all his hard work and meticulous attention to detail in planning and leading so well.

The Minack concert in late spring was also memorable, but let us not forget that, in addition to these major events, we also supported many local functions for charities like Fishermen's Mission Blessing of the Meva fishing fleet on the Fish Quay and the hospice fundraiser at the Seahorse Centre at Pentewan. It is also notable that we often get a sizable audience at many of our Monday practices as well as a fair few that come to listen to a smaller



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number in the Fountain Inn after practice, where we now usually pass around a collecting bucket for choir funds.

All these things do not just happen by chance. I consider myself to be very lucky to chair a committee of very dependable and hardworking people. I shall be sorry to lose some of these, and I thank David Leeson, Tony Scarratt and Bernard Hocking to pick out three stalwarts for their excellent and sterling service to the choir. Everyone has pulled their weight and more.

Peter Bowker must be mentioned for his ability to extract money from innocent bystanders and unsuspecting businesses, Thank you, Peter. Thank you also to Mike Thompson, our webmaster, who has given us a useable website to be proud of and works tirelessly keeping it up to date. Most importantly it is user friendly.

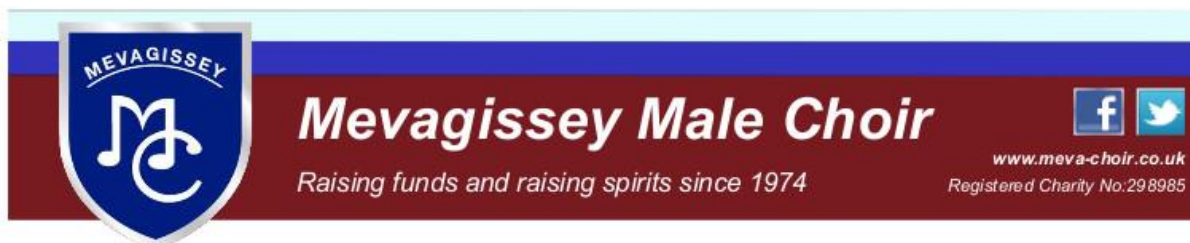
Finally, I would pay tribute to Graham Hoskins, half a world away at present, but not before he had printed all our programmes and carol sheets for our forthcoming Christmas Concerts prior to leaving for Hawaii to visit his family.

Gentlemen, you have enjoyed the services of a group of hardworking people, some quietly in the background like Cliff Burnett and Graham Alee, carting risers and gear around for us, to the more prominent ones in the spotlight. They are all equally important, and not least by any means the choir membership who support our decisions --- or tell us when we get it wrong! Thank you. I am proud to be chairman of this outfit.

### MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2016

Good evening gentlemen. Please accept my apologies for not being with you tonight. For the second year running circumstances dictate that my absence is beyond my control. I find myself repeating some of the sentiments I reported on last year. To repeat, the past year has been as exciting and enjoyable as it has been traumatic. I won't go into the personal lows but I think you can all guess where they lie. The highs, well they were all there too. The year opened for us at The Minack with the Culdrose Military Wives Choir, and a great time was had by all.

The memories I have of singing in the Hall For Cornwall are all full of tension and certainly not a great deal of enjoyment. (Understatement of 2016?) Then came the day of the 'big one' 10th September 2016. The stage crew worked miracles. We were positioned in front of the steel fire curtain and an acoustic shell. Gentlemen, we rocked that night. The atmosphere was electric, Bishop Tim was a hoot and the PMWC entertained the audience as only they can. Am I allowed to say how much I enjoyed the quartet that night? The sound man was a miracle worker. He made us fill the hall with sound without making us sound



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amplified. Steve the stage manager had the patience of granite, nothing was too much trouble. Everything we asked for was delivered by him and his crew cheerfully, efficiently and without complaint. Steve told me after the concert how much he had enjoyed the evening. He complimented us on our content, entertainment value and quality. Compliments indeed coming from a pro in his position.

Now I come to the event that has to be the highlight of the year by some considerable margin. Our trip to Cyprus. Obviously, I can't speak for anyone but myself and Denise and I can tell you we had a great time. All the work put in by Graham and the organisers in Cyprus did us proud. Even the weather decided to be good to us. The first concert with The Achord Ladies Choir was a huge success. The afterglow will take some beating too. The only small dent in the whole trip came when we sang in the magnificent 2,000-year-old amphitheatre in Akrotiri. I was determined not to let it show but I was having kittens. I could not hear the overall sound from the choir. The sound I could hear was pretty awful. I was distraught come the end, then I spoke to Den and several of our supporters and they said we sounded great over the sound system. I couldn't believe it. Den is our biggest fan and our harshest critic and if she says it was good then fine, it was good! Relief flooded in and I boarded the coach a happy man.

Once again, I have to say that overall our performances this year have been excellent. Great entertainment for our audiences, and that has to be our objective. Entertain with quality while enjoying ourselves at the same time.

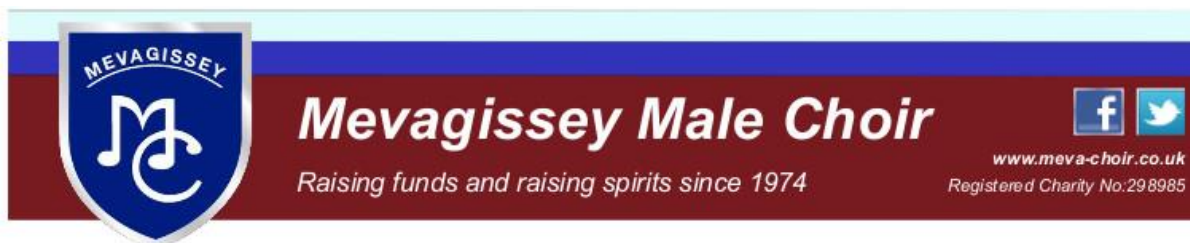
I'm so pleased to be able to say that the new Christmas CD has proved to be a great success, Sales have been good and you should be happy with the end result of our labours, (a bit like the labours of giving birth, a long, slow, painful experience!) Our thanks must go to The Mevagissey Ladies Choir for their input and help in making this CD. We have new music lined up once we have finished learning 'Lean on me' and 'And So It Goes'. Details to follow.

So here endeth the shortest report I think I have ever made with thanks to our Matt for all his help at rehearsal, standing in for me on the odd occasion, making all the teach CD's and for somehow being able to predict where I want to go back to in the music when restarting during the learning process. Thanks Matt. You're a star.

Looking forward to seeing you all on the 9th, 12th and 17th for our Christmas extravaganza.

### TREASURER'S REPORT 2016

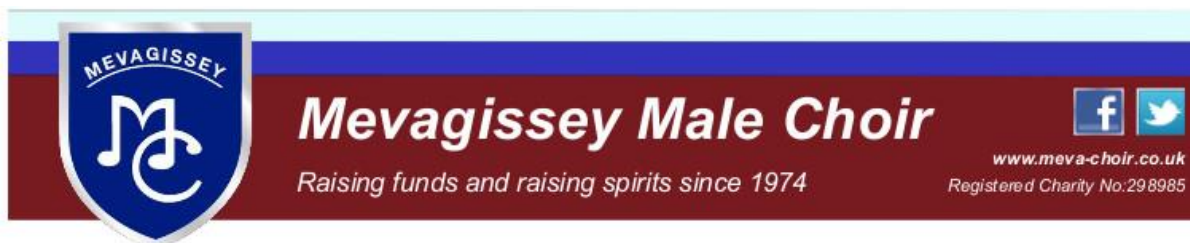
This year has been quite an eventful one for the Choir, both musically and financially. In fact, some financial aspects were the conclusion of events which carried over from our



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previous year. We were saving for a long time to go to Cyprus, and carried members' monies over in our funds from last year into this, so last year's figure of £15k in the High Interest Account included money we were keeping in trust. This year, what you see in the accounts is very nearly all ours, so we haven't rashly depleted our reserves by £5k in one year, we just paid it back to the members who went to Cyprus. Our cash assets are now in the region of £21k and, as you can see from the balance sheet, we have about £10.5k worth of equipment. Our reserves, when I took office, were in the region of £30k, thanks to my predecessor's alacrity in responding to the local FE College's initiative to take advantage of European Funding for Further Education. This resulted in us becoming an off-shoot of the College. Our MD became a lecturer and submitted lesson plans each term, and we kept an attendance register in exchange for which we were rewarded with £2.00 every time any member attended any practice or concert. Needless to say, the initiative did not last long, but it gave us a considerable nest-egg, which I regarded as somewhat excessive for a registered charity. It's not the role of a Charity to hoard money. My predecessor's parting words at this meeting 11 years ago, were "Spend it wisely". You will know from our Constitution that the Objective of this Choir is to educate its members and the public in the Arts and Sciences, particularly the Art and Science of Male Voice Singing, and I have always borne this in mind in deliberations with respective Executive Committees. We spent nearly £6k on the grand piano in the chapel, and £30.00+ on a heater to keep it dry and in tune, for which the chapel, incidentally, pays the electricity bill, and we bought a keyboard. We have also bought a printer so we can print our own programmes, thanks to Graham Hoskins, and later upgraded it, and bought speakers to enhance our performances, and a digital recorder, which I think is used in the production of our teach tracks. We've bought banners to help us publicise our concerts. We subsidised members' visits to The Albert Hall, to Derbyshire, to Scotland, to Bideford, Budleigh Salterton, Bath, and, of course, more recently, Cyprus. We bought ourselves a notice board, which we didn't like, so we bought another. We spent a lot of money on our 40th Anniversary Concert at Eden, and wasn't it a wonderful experience for all those that took part. I think that, Thanks to Des, the Cornwall Symphonia will NEVER AGAIN accuse this choir, of missing a bar – The very Idea! We have started the tradition of hosting the congregation after the Harvest of the Sea Service. We have entertained visiting Choirs to the International Festival, and funded afterglows for them. We are at the moment addressing the issue of a Safety Rail at the back of the risers, which is a Health & Safety "MUST", but is not cheap. We raised funds for Mousehole Choir when a fraudulent tour company relieved them of an awful lot of money. Over the same eleven years our charge for a concert has only risen from £100 to £150, and our subs from £45 to £70.



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I hope you, the membership, are satisfied that your committees over those years have acted responsibly. We have certainly done our best, but I think the time has come when our reserves are no longer excessive, but are about sufficient to replace all our uniforms – once!

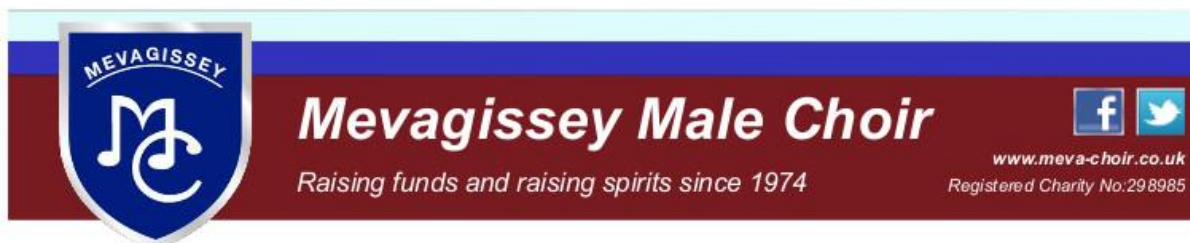
I apologise for this preamble, but a relatively new member of the Executive thought it would be helpful to newer members to know how we came to have a nest egg in the first place, and just how finite it is. In the days before the nest egg, we resorted to Annual Auctions in the Jubilee Hall, Barn Dances in Ivor's Barn, and Harvest Festivals at the Polgooth Inn to supplement our concert, and record sales income, and some of our members (Johnny Jones, Jim Hunkin, Ivor, Derek, John Lewis, and later, Mike Watson come to mind, but there were many others, and some of you are sitting here) worked jolly hard to keep us afloat. Eleven years ago, sale of records income for the previous year was £1,454.10. This year with web sales, you can see that it's £4,155.00, (nearly 3 times as much) and that's partly because of the investments the committees have made with the nest-egg, and, also, thanks to so many people who've helped us improve our performance, (Thank you to our M.D.) enhance our image, market us, record and promote our CD's and hold us together as a group. We, gentlemen, through careful management by a succession of responsible committees, have become not only a very good choir, but quite a large, intricate, and financial operation.

I think that brings us neatly back to the second page of the Auditors' Accounts where you can see where our money came from, and where it went, and I'll allow you a few moments to look at that and ask any questions that I may be able to answer.

To move on to last year's spending plan, (That's the mainly black and white one) as it looked at the end of our Financial Year. The Estimate column is what I thought would happen, and the Actual Column is just that. We received a lot more money than I expected, thanks to a donation from the Feast Week Committee in memory of Robin, to Peter Bowker's prowess in selling advertising space in our programmes, to amazing CD sales, and to good August weather which facilitated good collections at our Quay concerts. I am sure you will have noticed that we received no Gift Aid, and that, I am ashamed to report, is because I failed to complete the application form correctly, and had it returned to me! I am relieved to be retiring, and also to report that I have since returned the form completed as required, and we have received our Gift Aid payment, but too late to be included in the figures under consideration tonight.

Expenditure for the year was not unduly above expectation if you take into account that we didn't plan to produce the Christmas CD this year, nor did we anticipate buying our Uniform stock from Robin's Shop, though we should have anticipated that.

Below the main fund totals, I have tried to indicate the fortunes of our shorter-term projects, and to the right of each item I have given some indication of how they fared over the year. It



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should be said that Leisurewear, the Cyprus Bus and the Barbeque have all received additional income since the end of the year we are considering.

If you turn over the page, you'll see I've tried to clarify the thinking behind the estimates (guesses?) for next year. Last year's estimates are in black, and the outcomes in red. The Blue figures are my guesses for next year. At this point, in fairness to my successor, I should say that I am not laying down any sort of plan for him, or the new committee, to follow. It is more a ready-to-hand reminder of what outlays the choir is committed to, and what income it can reasonably expect, which may then be helpful when considering any course of action with a financial implication.

Some of these guesses, Mr. Chairman, are dependent upon decisions to be made at this meeting. I am referring to the matter of Choir Subscription, which I have pencilled in as £100.00, being the figure with which I think, from the rest of my guesses on the chart, the choir could break even.

If anyone would like to query any figure on either side of this budget, I'd be very happy to elaborate on the reasoning which generated it.

On a personal note, I would like to thank you all for being so supportive and good humoured when I have reminded you of financial obligations, which, on occasions have been erroneous (My apologies are due in this respect to Des and Clifford, and maybe others whom I don't recall at the moment), but thank you anyway, and I would like to compliment the choir on having selected such committed and hard-working committees with whom to work. I have enjoyed my time as treasurer immensely, and not least because of the "Can Do" attitude of so many of my fellow committee members over the years.

But to come back to business, and my parting shot, Mr. Chairman, I propose an increase in subs to the equivalent of £2.00 per week – that is £100.00 per annum, payable by monthly instalments on a Bankers' Order, or in full by a set date, - I propose March 31st. - so that the incoming Treasurer knows what Income he can expect. The sum proposed, you will see from my guesses, will hardly cover the Honoraria, let alone hire of the chapel for our rehearsals, so I don't think it is an unreasonable figure.

I'm not a "scrooge", I just want the Choir to remain safely solvent.

Mr. Chairman, I conclude my report with that proposition.

At the end of the Treasurer's report, a vote of thanks to the Treasurer, who was retiring, was proposed by Des Honey, seconded by Mike Tate, and carried unanimously.

### 5. Appointment of Musical Director

Graham Willcocks was proposed by P. Bowker and seconded by A. Gill and carried nem con.



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It was proposed by the Chairman that the following items, Nos: 6, 7, 8, 9, be voted on *en bloc*. This was carried with one against.

### 6. Election of Executive Officers

The following nominations had been received:

Post	Nominee
Chairman	A Nicholls
Vice Chairman	S Flavell
Treasurer	G Hoskins
Secretary	M Tate

There were no other nominations.

### 7. Election of Choir Officers and other posts

The following nominations had been received:

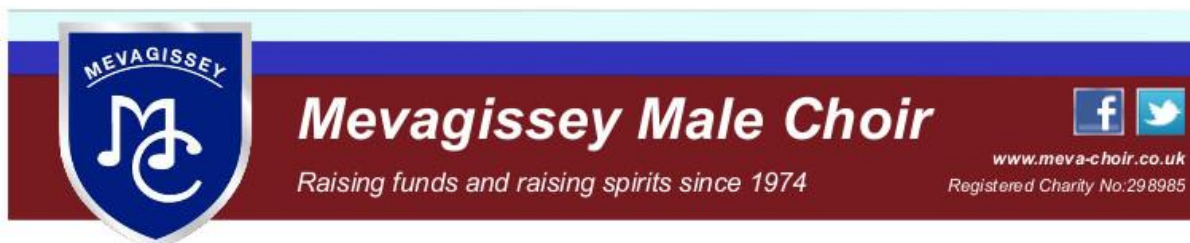
Post	Nominee
Concert Secretary	C Burnett
Publicity Officer	M Tate
Fund Raising / Sponsorship	P Bowker
Almoner	A Gill
Social Secretary	S Lawday

There were no other nominations, although Mike Tate indicated that he would wish to relinquish the post of Publicity Officer if elected Secretary. It was agreed by all present that, in this instance, publicity duties would be shared between members of the Committee.

### 8. Confirmation of Other Posts

The following nominations had been received:

Post	Nominee
Choir Marshall	H Stobart



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Transport Manager	C Burnett
Federation Rep	C Bale
CIMVCF Rep	T Coplin
Librarian	S Gibson

There were no other nominations.

### 9. Section Leaders

The following have been selected by their respective sections to represent them on the committee:

Section	Nominee
First Tenor	P Vellenoweth
Second Tenor	R Mitchell
Baritone	H Stobart
Bass	C Williams

There were no other nominations.

Items 6,7,8,9 were taken *en bloc*, proposed by Peter Bowker and seconded by Des Honey and put to the meeting. The proposal was carried by a large majority.

On a show of hands, MWD Thompson, who, as web manager, had served on the Committee in 2016 as an *ex officio* member, was elected as a full Committee member.

### 10. Payments to Musical Director and Accompanists

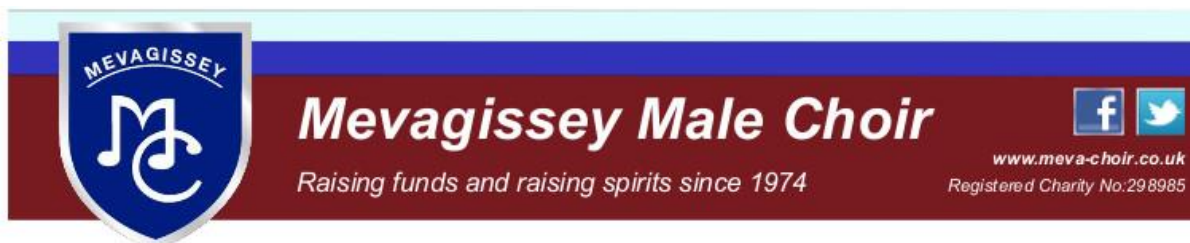
Payments to stay the same, proposed S Lawday, seconded G Blamey, carried unanimously

### 11. Music Committee

Confirmed that committee comprises T. Coplin, C Williams, M S Thompson, Cedric Bray, Graham Willcocks, Matthew Fox. Also confirmed that T Coplin has responsibility of reporting back to the Committee. Members wishing to propose new pieces should source music and contact section leader or member of the Music Committee.

### 12. Subscriptions for 2016





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P Bowker proposed increase in subs to £127 (approx. £2.50 a week) to cover annual music team exes and hire of St Andrews, seconded by J. Mitchell. This generated a lengthy discussion, followed by an amendment to the resolution, changing the annual figure to £90. The motion was put to the meeting and carried by 30 votes to 10.

### 13. Any Other Business

**Email Voting:** A change to the constitution was sought in order that the Committee be allowed to vote by email in emergency. However, all members must be given 28 days' notice. The Secretary was instructed to prepare a notice for the Choir's next meeting on 9th January.

**Christmas CD:** Proposal by D Leeson, seconded Bill Collins, that all Choir members should receive one copy of the new CD free of charge. Carried by 33 to 5.

**Subs Payments:** Proposal by P Bowker, seconded by B. Collins, that members can pay subs by Standing Order, at £9 a month, January to October inclusive. Carried with one against.

**Concert fees:** Proposal by P Bowker that concert fees be raised from £150 to £200. After some discussion, the proposal was amended – proposed D Leeson, seconded C Bale - to allow the Committee to decide on a concert by concert basis. Carried by large majority.

**Teach tracks:** A.Nicholls proposed that Matt Fox be presented with a gift in recognition of his efforts in preparing teach tracks for the website. Seconded M Tate. Carried unanimously.

### 14. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the 43rd AGM was left to be set by the Committee, in consultation with the MD.

The meeting closed at 22.06

Signed

Chairman

Date