

Mevagissey Male Choir - Minutes of 41st Annual General Meeting

Held at Mevagissey Social Club on 3rd December 2015

Present: Nick Nicholls (Chairman), Steve Flavell (Vice Chairman), David Leeson (Treasurer), Tony Scarratt (Secretary), and 33 Choir Members

- 1. Apologies:** Humfrey Stobart, Andy Gill, Cedric Bray, Phil Johns, Alan Dibb, M. Dooling, P. Pearce, S. Sandy, D. Way, C. Cudmore, B. Roberts, M. Coombe, G. Hoskins.
- 2. Minutes of meeting Thursday 5th December, 2014**
The Minutes, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record, proposed by D. Honey and seconded by George Phillips, nem con, and signed by the Chairman.
- 3. Matters Arising Nil**
- 4. Reports**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015

It was on Wednesday 18th March of this year when I found I was to step up from vice chair upon the resignation of my predecessor Graham Rundle. This was also the funeral day of our long term, indeed founder member, David Foard.

The choir has enjoyed a reasonably successful year, with some interesting singing venues like the Lemon Street Market where we sang for two children's charities, the Cornish Mutual building in Truro for Red Nose Day and the Plymouth Guildhall where we sang with the Plymouth Military Wives Choir.

However, the outings which particularly stick in my mind and which illustrate the commitment which most members have, are firstly the Fish Quay concert for the blessing of the fishing fleet here in Mevagissey (where Matt so ably stood in for our MD) at an afternoon concert in lovely sunshine and also when Roger Mitchell conducted us at Charlestown Songs of Praise in the presence of several RNLI dignitaries. The truth is that usually wherever we sing we are praised for our singing and attention to detail. This is no accident and much recognition must go to Graham Willcocks our MD and Matt Fox our accompanist. Without them where would we be?

Add to this a hardworking, resourceful and very supportive committee plus several other stalwarts who put up banners, print programmes, shift and transport risers and the electric piano and several other people who remind me about things I have forgotten or not even thought about. I consider myself a very lucky chairman to have around me such a team of people, so I thank them roundly on behalf of the choir and also from me personally. I really do feel that I could ask any of the members of this choir for help and get a positive response. I feel too, it is important to point out that although Graham is no longer on the committee he has continued to be very supportive of what we are trying to do and is putting a lot of work into the forth coming Cyprus trip. No sour grapes there!

One other high spot for me was our recent joint concert with Canoryon Lowen at Tywardreath in aid of the hospices. It was an excellent concert and we did a bit of good as well, just like the concert on the quay to raise funds for the Nepalese disaster in July.

This is what I believe this choir is all about, enjoying what we do, doing it to the best of our ability and to help others whilst we're doing it.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT 2015

I apologise for my absence tonight but I was not able to get cover to keep an eye on my parents as my brother who would normally carry out such duties in my absence is currently sailing on board a cruise ship through the Suez Canal so I have asked Mr Secretary to read this report.

The past year has been as exiting and enjoyable as it has been traumatic, I can honestly say our singing quality and levels of audience entertainment has been consistently high, from our first concert in Lemon St. Market Truro through to our last concert in Probus Church where I think the MC Brian, a singer with Pelynt choir soon regretted the bad remarks he made at my expense in his opening remarks, he was very complementary at half time and even more effusive at the end.

The highlight of the year for me has to be our performance in the Plymouth Guildhall; we did what we usually do and showed our strengths in front of the biggest audience of the year. There were a lot of people there that I knew well from male and female Barbershop clubs, Plymouth G and S etc. I received a lot of feedback from these people all very positive saying how much they enjoyed the whole evening and our performance in particular.

Our concert with Nick Hart and Canoryon Lowen was another that stands out for me, it was with great pleasure that I chose to sing two of Nick's arrangements that evening and he was very complementary about our performance, I have got to know Nick well over the years he certainly knows what he is talking about and when he complements you it comes from a huge depth of knowledge.

We now have two new songs to learn The Way We Were, a personal favourite and Every Time I Feel The Spirit, a more traditional choir piece. The music team is trying to keep the mix of traditional and modern though the traditional pieces are becoming fewer, I also have Nick Hart re-working Peter Bowkers arrangement of Home Loving Man waiting for when we are ready, thank you Peter for your input and your hard work on this piece. Please keep the suggestions coming guys, ideas are always welcome.

Also my thanks to our soloists, it's great to have Saul back in the fold providing a contrast to our resident second tenor Paul, you both do a great job guys, Terry and Dom also play their part in We Rise Again and of course Terry alone for The Rose plus John's small but invaluable contribution in Going Home, I also have to mention Mike Thompson (the Baritone one) for filling the sizeable shoes of Robin within the Quartet, quite a task to undertake I can tell you and he is doing a fantastic job, my thanks to you all.

What can I say about our Matt? I suspect nothing you don't already know I so much appreciate his huge talent and lovely personality, having him around is a joy and a privilege.

There are a lot of people who make this choir tick, the likes of Graham and Cliff constantly lugging around risers and the Keyboard, a thankless task but where would we be without your help.

We have a great committee who keep the whole organization running smoothly, my grateful thanks go to all who play their part and let me concentrate on the music.

Den and I last had what I call a real holiday too many years ago and that was in Cyprus We are looking forward to going back and reviving some great memories I think the level of organization work done by Graham Rundle has been exceptional. The printed updates really help, so that I can give them to Den and don't get moaned at for not keeping her up to date with developments, thanks Graham.

Now to the traumatic event I spoke of earlier. That can be nothing other than the sad passing of Robin. Chris, John and I sang in quartet with Robin for over twenty years, Dom for not so long though he knew him well from choir, Quartet and socially. None of us had a clue as to what he was going through he hid his depression well from us all. I can only speak of the effect his death had on me and I don't mind admitting that it was fairly severe; I would wake at night after images on him in my sleep. I keep questioning and blaming myself, why didn't I notice something? I have been told by others that they had similar emotions. My experience with depression is limited to a six month spell of unipolar depression and that was bad enough though mild compared to Bi-polar, the torment poor Robin must have been going through is unimaginable, my heart goes out to him and of course to Rose and all his family.

To conclude this very short and at one time very sad report, may I wish you all a merry Christmas and a very happy and harmonious new year,

TREASURER'S REPORT 2015

I am not empowered, or even qualified to assess the Choir's year as a whole, but as a singing member (I use the phrase loosely), I have had a great time and am in the fortunate position of having the opportunity to thank all those who have given me so much pleasure. Thank you to every one of you! I am, however empowered, though not very well qualified, to assess the Choir's year in financial terms, and, gentlemen, I am very sorry to have to report to this meeting that we have made a loss of £25.78. The good news is that it wasn't as bad as I anticipated. If you remember our last AGM budgeted for a loss of £67.00! Our membership subscription is still where we set it in 2011, and our present concert fee was set in 2008. We are a charity, and I am not advocating an increase in either; but rather drawing your attention to how successful we have been in meeting our charitable objectives of bringing male choral music within reach of as many people as possible (both performers and audiences), and raising as much money as possible for charities. Let no one be in doubt that this has been achieved through the making, and marketing of our CDs, for which we owe a debt of gratit-

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ude to our M.D. for not accepting anything but our very best, and, of course, those members and supporters who never miss an opportunity to sell one – or more! As you can see from our spending plan from last year, my estimates get worse, but you still keep re-electing me! Members' Subs, Quay Concerts and Gift Aid were about the only headings where outcome came anywhere near estimate. I think 2014 concert income went to our heads after the Minack and the Eden Gala, but we were back to real life this year. Web sales of tracks, I am sure, will grow (they'd better – we've just bought a licence to do it legitimately!), but they are not there yet. Selling programme adverts is a skill – I know, because I've been the Fund Raising Officer and tried and I can't, so our thanks to those who took up the challenge. As for Easy Fund Raising – It's an opportunity for every member to help the choir, but we all know the old adage about taking a horse to water... on the other side we have Mike's idea of asking for donations instead of setting a Friends' membership fee. Boy did that work well! We underestimated the potential by £700.00! Thank you Mike! CD sales were amazing –another £700 more than anticipated. Mevagissey Bay must be good! Thank you Graham!

At last Bank Interest exceeded expectations! I understand it's all about confidence. If you estimate low enough for long enough, it will eventually exceed expectation. It's been a long wait! On the expenditure side, estimates were similarly wide of the mark. Have we bought a lot of music! We were nearly right about uniforms – well – nearly. One thing about fewer adverts – less printing costs. Not quite swings and roundabouts, but some consolation. We were realising that we were going to have to be proactive in arranging concerts, but in the end did not have to hire as many venues as we feared. With fewer concerts there were less transport costs, which was just as well because we didn't anticipate having to place an order for another 1000 Mevagissey Bay CDs! So, yes, estimates for both Income and Expenditure were way wide of the mark, but, strangely, by a very similar amount, so the estimated outcome was only out by about £40.00 – and on the right side too! No one can say we're not lucky!

Our Proposed Spending Plan for 2016 is on the other side of the sheet, unless you haven't understood anything I said, in which case, don't turn over! As I previously proposed, I have estimated Subscription income based on 55 paying members @ £70.00. With forthcoming concerts at the Minack, Hall for Cornwall and Carnglaze Caverns, and bearing in mind that the last Minack Concert gave us £4k+ before costs; I have thrown caution to the winds and estimated we will take £7k. As we have a number of probationary members at the moment, I propose to leave the estimate for Uniform income at £250 (i.e. 5 new members), and have amended the expenditure column accordingly. Based on last year's results I am hoping for

£350 from web and Track sales, though we have to increase our allowance for donations, subs etc. from £400 to £500, to cover the cost of the £154.80 license fee. Programme advert income I am leaving as at present, but I had proposed raising the estimate of income from donations (Thank you Mike!) from last year's £200 to £500 – still well below what was achieved this year, but in the light of Monday's donation of £1k in memory of Robin, I have increased this by £1k to £1.5k. I propose to drop expectations from Easy Fundraising from last year's £50 to £20, but I'd be very happy to be pleasantly surprised. I'm raising expectations regarding Bank Interest in the light of last year's results to £80. With CD sales, where, I think, with a number of high profile concerts, we may still find some demand, I have only reduced our expectation of £2k.

On the expenditure side, we know we shall be subsidising the Cyprus trip to the tune of £6,820.00, and I am mentioning it first as it is an important consideration despite it being at the bottom of the page under Transient Funds. Subject to decisions made here this evening, I am holding the allocation for Honoraria at its present level, and on the assumption that we shall have to stop restocking with music soon, I am leaving the Librarian's allocation at £1k. Uniforms, and Donations, Subs, Licenses etc. I've already alluded to. Printing, I propose to leave unchanged, and as proceeds of The Minack, HfC, and Carnglaze will take account of the venue hire, I am leaving £1k towards any other venues we may seek to hire. All three high-profile concerts we are planning for next year will have transport implications, so I have increased the allocation to £1.5k. If, and it's a big IF, this budget should work out, the balance of Income over Expenditure would be £3.6k, or just over half of the subsidy the choir is providing for the Cyprus Trip. I would love to believe that I am seriously underestimating our Concert Income for the year, but can't quite bring myself to be more optimistic, so am anticipating an overall loss of about £3.2k, which would bring our reserves down to about £12k. Whether we are taking our former treasurer's parting advice to spend our nest-egg wisely, I'll leave you to decide.

If I may make an addendum to this report, Mr Chairman, I would draw the attention of choristers planning to join the trip to Cyprus, to the schedule I recently put on the notice-board about payments. In order to have time to sell empty seats, which the choir will have to pay for, I am asking for all travelling members to have paid in full by May so that we have June to sell any places still vacant. If anyone would like to bring friends with them on the trip, please tell them to have their money ready on the dates specified on the notice, because the places will go to the first to give me the money. That, Mr Chairman, concludes my report, but I will try to answer questions.

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Treasurers report was proposed by T. Copland seconded by M. Collins voted and passed

5. Appointment of Musical Director

Graham Willcocks was proposed by P. Bowker and seconded by G. Phillips and was agreed nem con.

6. Election of Executive Officers

The following nominations had been received:

<i>Post</i>	<i>Nominee</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Chairman	Nick Nicholls	Tony Scarratt	Mike Tate
Vice Chairman	Steve Flavell	Bill Collins	Peter Bowker
Treasurer	David Leeson	Steve Flavell	Peter Bowker
Secretary	Tony Scarratt	Nick Nicholls	Peter Bowker

There were no other nominations and this was agreed by all present.

7. Election of Choir Officers and other posts

The following nominations had been received:

<i>Post</i>	<i>Nominee</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Concert Secretary	Clifford Burnett	Bill Collins	Nick Nicholls
Publicity Officer	Mike Tate	Tony Scarratt	Gill Blamey
Fund Raising / Sponsorship	Graham Hoskins Peter Bowker	Bill Collins M. Thompson	Peter Bowker B. Collins
Almoner	Bernard Hocking	N. Nicholls	G. Blamey
Social Secretary	Simon Lawday	B. Collins	G. Blamey

There were no other nominations and these were agreed by all present.

8. Section Leaders

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

<i>Section</i>	<i>Nominee</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
First Tenor	Philip Vellenoweth	Gil Blamey	Bill Roberts
Second Tenor	Roger Mitchell	Gil Blamey	Cliff Burnett
Baritone	Humfrey Stobart	Tony Scarratt	Stephen Gibson
Bass	Chris Williams	Steve Flavell	Saul Sunny

9. Confirmation of Other Posts

The following nominations had been received:

<i>Post</i>	<i>Nominee</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Choir Marshall	Humfrey Stobart	Bill Collins	Steve Flavell
Transport Manager	Cliff Burnett	Terry Coplin	Steve Flavell
Federation Rep	Chris Bale	Steve Flavell	Peter Bowker
CIMVCF Rep	Terry Coplin	Bill Collins	Steve Flavell
Librarian	Steve Flavell	Gil Blamey	Tony Scarratt

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There were no other nominations and these were agreed by all present.

10. Payments to Musical Director and Accompanists Payments to stay the same
Proposed D. Honey seconded S. Lawday

11. Subscriptions for 2016 Subscriptions to stay the same proposed D. Leeson seconded D. Honey
passed in full £70 payable now

12. Music Committee Discussion about who is on the committee, to stay as in the constitution, plus one person per section, the Chairman to follow this up with M. D. A lot of money has been wasted on music in the past that has not been made use of, a secretary or spokesperson is needed within the music committee to report back to the Committee. T. Coplin has taken on this responsibility

13. Any Other Business

G. Rundle gave thanks to Mike Thompson for the splendid work done on Website.

The AGM next year is to be on a Monday, proposed Peter Bowker seconded Ray George and was carried unanimous.

Bill Collins asked about Christmas C/D, the two pieces learned this year are to be added to the music recorded last year.

Simon Lawday asked if Bill and Lin from the Fountain could be invited as Choir guests to our Christmas dinner for all the help that they give to the Choir.

Chris Williams reminded choristers of the 2 for 1 Christmas special on Choir C/Ds, please see him as soon as possible, proposed George Phillips seconded P. Bowker, vote carried.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the 42nd AGM was set as Monday 5th December 2015.

Signed

Chairman

Date

The meeting closed at 20.54