

**BISHOPWEARMOUTH CHORAL SOCIETY  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019, 7.30 p.m.  
at Sunderland Minster.**

Minutes of last year's AGM have been published on the Society website – under Members' News. Anyone without access to these can request a paper copy from the Secretary (Tel: 522 7721) as long as this is made before the meeting. Nomination Forms for the elections are also available from the same source.

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Conductor's Report
7. Election of Officers
8. Election of Representatives
9. Any Other Business

## **BISHOPWEARMOUTH CHORAL SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 2017/2018 SEASON**

This was held at Sunderland Minster, on Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018. The meeting began at 7.30 p.m. with Christine Alder in the chair and 42 members of the Society present.

**Apologies for Absence :** GW, SR, JB, LT, JK, CL, SW, KC, AC and LG.

**Minutes of the last A.G.M. :** These had been previously circulated and were unanimously accepted as a true record after being proposed by ES and seconded by VV.

### **Matters Arising :**

The following reports were presented at the meeting and are reproduced below.

### **The Chairman's Report :** This report was presented by C.A :-

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am happy to deliver this report covering our sixty ninth year. I have a few statistics for you. Number of concerts performed, six. Number of rehearsals, thirty eight, and our concert programme ranged over three centuries. Our audiences seemed to really engage with us, and obviously greatly enjoyed what we offered, and our soloists and accompaniment, thanks to David, did us proud! So I think that we can describe last season as busy, varied and successful, being a season where we really tried to take our love of singing to a wider audience, with the Citizenship Ceremony, the concert at Whitley Bay, and our performance at The Tall Ships.

The more that we can show that in this Society there is a home for singers who love to make music, of many genres, the better we will flourish and grow. The fact that this season has been so successful is that all of us, members, patrons, David and Eileen, have been so committed and hard working. Thank you all.

Underpinning all of this is the work of the Committee. My thanks go to them all and especially to Jeremy and Cathy who have completed their Reps. term of office. And underpinning the work of the whole committee is the extra work undertaken by officers and postholders. No job is too burdensome, and responsibilities are carried out efficiently and always with a good grace. Thank you.

So we come to our seventieth year. A milestone which we should be very proud to have achieved. May I thank you all for rising to the Chairman's Challenge. We have indeed put together another busy year, with more social activities than the norm. Nevertheless, we have three fantastic concerts, about which I am sure David will tell you, and our exciting Singing Day with Aidan Oliver, "An Exploration of Creation". Because of the generosity of donors, we think that we will be able to offer members this day at no cost, which is fantastic for you. However, in order to do this, we shall need to attract singers from elsewhere in the region, who will of course pay! Aidan is one of the country's leading choir directors, and will take up a new post as chorus master of Edinburgh Festival Chorus in 2018. Our hope is that the performance of Creation, in March, a replica of our very first concert, will be of an exceptional standard, and one worthy of our place as an eminent Choral society in the region.

But no society is perfect, and it would be very remiss of me not to encourage the sopranos to firm up their event in the calendar, and for you all to give some thought to David Cox's plea for better awareness and speed in getting on to the stage after the interval.

This year we have been very fortunate to have Chris and Phil (courtesy of Liz White) to put up the concert staging, and our thanks to them. Thanks also to those who stay behind after the concert to dismantle it. I know that it is nice after the concert to bask in the glory of the evening with friends and family, but spare a

thought for those who are dismantling. There are jobs suitable for all, and the more who know what to do, the better.

The other report you will have read is from Kay Atkinson our Patron's Officer, who has done a superb job this year, and I thank her. Kay has a great gift of communication and has quickly made the job her own. Patronage of the Society is not only a tangible way of support, but you also get a comfortable seat! Please encourage your family and friends to think about this type of membership.

And so we start tonight to prepare for our first concert of the season. We have a special logo for this year thanks to Liz White, and you will all have your copies from Angela who works tirelessly to "sniff out" copies of music. There is no raffle this week, but next week Vera will be after your money. This helps to pay for the hire of the church for rehearsals, so please do buy a ticket.

Finally, as I said at the beginning I now say again. I have had a very happy year as Chairman, and my thanks go to you all.

**The Treasurer's Report** : The Treasurer, SR, was not able to attend and her report was presented by CA making the following points :

- We have ended the year with slightly more than we started with. However one or two bills have had to be paid since the 30th June. Again we have had some generous donations from members which are much appreciated.
- The concert income looks better than last year's but we had no ticket income from the Sage concert so are looking at tickets sold at 3 concerts this season instead of 2 from last season.
- Stephen has made up for last year with more than 30 times the income from the Hire Library coming in this session. Thank you for the hard work put in to make this happen.
- Raffle donations have gone down. Please support this if you can as the raffle and coffee takings go a long way to paying the weekly Minster hire cost. Vera and Linden work hard every week to keep these running smoothly.
- Administration costs have risen. A lot of work was needed with the new Data Protection regulations coming into force, with all members and Patrons requiring to be contacted.
- The expenditure for the Sage concert in July 2017 was £595 as the number of tickets sold was less than anticipated.
- Subscriptions will remain at £100 for 2018-19 with a £20 student concession available. Please ask if you want to pay in instalments. The number of members paying online has increased and this is helpful as the queue in the Bank gets longer every week!
- Finally, Thanks to all who give their time to the Society to keep everything running smoothly.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for all her quiet and diligent activity to ensure our financial circumstances are acceptable.

The accounts were unanimously accepted.

## The Conductor's Report was given by D.M :-

It is a sign of the end of the summer holidays when I sit down and write this report. It brings with it therefore a mixture of feelings – some regret that it's the end of the holiday, but also a great feeling of satisfaction when looking back over the achievements of the previous season with this choral society.

And this year is no exception. A series of three very different but very high quality concerts emerged from weeks of hard work and preparation from a large number of people. One of the things I will remember about the season just gone is that I spent a long time writing orchestral parts. This is particularly time consuming and laborious but also I find it very creative, and I enjoy the process of making what is often a basic keyboard score into something much bigger, and also crafting a piece so it is tailor made for this choral society. More of that anon.

Before giving my resumé of the concerts, I would like to give my thanks to everyone who works so very hard to make this choral society the ongoing success that it is – as Philip Sanderson in the March crit said 'in this choir what a jewel Sunderland has in its midst'. Thanks especially to the Committee for all their meticulous planning, thanks to everyone who helps with tickets, front of house, staging, David for his organization of seating and so on and so on. And of course to Eileen for her superb musical accompaniment and for sharing in the training of the choir, making her very much more than a choral repetiteur.

It started with a very Christmassy programme – following on from the box office success of the previous December concert which was also very Christmassy. The first half contained, I thought, a delightful and varied selection of music by twentieth century English composers, including local lad Will Todd. The central piece was Britten's Ceremony of Carols, always a challenge in its four part arrangement, performed with the original harp accompaniment. The combination of the small sweet sound of the harp and Britten's testing harmonic language always causes pitching problems, especially in 'In freezing Winter Night', and we did have problems right up to the end with that. But we got away with it in the concert. The second half was Bob Chilcott's 'On Christmas Night', a piece I had already performed with Ryton Choral Society in its original version for organ harp percussion and woodwind. It's a brilliant little piece, and I have to say that standing in front of the ensemble that evening was a really wonderful experience. The sounds and textures were really exquisite, some of the most beautiful sounds I've ever heard. The performance was a hit on several levels: it enabled us to provide our own home grown soloists, Cathy and Chris who performed wonderfully. And there were several readers who came from the society to share out the readings which intersperse the carols settings. The organ part was converted into string parts for this performance, and far be it from me to say such a thing but this definitely enhanced the textures and density of the scoring. And last but certainly not least, the Bishopwearmouth Young Singers were in tip top form. The children's choir part, which features so prominently all the way through the piece, was sung really beautifully by them. And don't forget they had their own performance of my Christmas Carol a couple of weekends later to do as well, so this made it even more impressive.

So it was in my view a really wonderful concert and one which truly entered into the Christmas spirit.

The new year saw a very different challenge. The combination of two very demanding works from the pens of Maurice Durufle and Francis Poulenc was always going to be a little scary. But you all rose to the challenge wonderfully. The learning was consistently good and you coped with the very different challenges of these two masterpieces with great confidence. The pieces are very different from each other and therefore there is a stylistic difference as well when the two pieces are put together in the same programme. There was a huge orchestra needed for this programme. I tried very hard to keep costs down but the cost for the hire of

orchestral parts was astronomic, and no way to avoid it. I did economise on players as much as possible,. For example, I sent series of multiple text messages to the cello section. No way was I hiring four cellists to play four separate cello parts just for one movement. So we – as they say in the music business ‘cooked’ it and together with some organ support it sounded fine.

Also I did not hire top flight soloists as I thought a combination of an experienced local baritone, in the form of Richard Gooding, who has sung for us many times, and the young voices of two of Miranda Wright’s pupils, would fit the bill very nicely. I was right. But it wasn’t without a certain amount of drama. I had rehearsed with Isobel Chesman, the mezzo, for her solo in the Durufle and that was all fine. The soprano soloist was rather a different kettle of fish. She had come to rehearse the Poulenc and had sung the Domine Deus very nicely. Unfortunately that was all she had prepared and she seemed unaware there were another two movements to sing. Never mind she went away and arranged to come again on the next Wednesday – this is the Wednesday before the concert. She sent a rather last minute text to say she had to go back home as there had been a family emergency. By this time alarm bells were ringing. I was driving to Morpeth on the Thursday evening to play in a music festival when I was aware of another text message from her. When I got out of the car ready to play for some of my wife’s pupils in the Wansbeck Music Festival I read with horror that she was pulling out of this concert at two days notice. I spent a considerable amount of time in between performances at the music festival on the phone to various people including Miranda, who of course was horrified. Quite quickly, in fact in the space of two hours, we had found a replacement in the form of a very young soprano who had just embarked on her course at Durham university. I remember Miranda saying that she had a very pure voice, that she was a very bright girl, and she was an excellent sightreader. All looking good. By 11.30 that night I had scanned a copy of the music across and she had received it. The next day she learnt it. And the next day was the Saturday of the concert and she sang it wonderfully. I think one of the most beautiful performances of the piece I can remember. Her name was Rosanna Wicks and we should all be eternally grateful to her.

Apart from all that going on –as if things weren’t dramatic enough – I had a very late night text on the Friday evening from my first flute saying her mum had just died that evening and she wasn’t sure she was going to be able to cope with doing the concert the next day. This was all I needed – I had already struggled to get the three flutes I needed. But of course I totally understood and asked her to sleep on it and give me a ring in the morning. I made plans to collect the music from her and reshuffle the other two flutes so we had flutes 1 and 2 covered and we’d just have to dispense with the piccolo part. But being a total star and of course being a professional musician she called to say that she was up for it. Another person to be extremely grateful to.

I think most you will remember the impact that the orchestral texture made on this music. I had been trying to prepare you for it by saying for several weeks before the performance that this was a big big orchestra. But the huge sound was overwhelming. Thrilling and a little terrifying. I’m happy to say that phase you it did not – all of those weeks of careful and painstaking preparation paid off, and from the first moment in the afternoon rehearsal you were confident and very strong. We had very few balance problems despite the size of the orchestra and the performances of the two pieces were very very good indeed. As the crit said the singing was haunting and evocative in the Requiem and jubilant and exuberant in the Gloria. This concert was a real triumph, not only in terms of the performance itself, but also in terms of being able to deliver two such compelling performances of these hugely demanding works in the same programme. Congratulations all round.

The summer term saw us taking on once again my arrangements, and a chance to revisit three medleys which we have not sung for a long time. The Great American Songbook was, I thought, a fitting title to this concert, celebrating as it did the classics of George Gershwin and Jerome Kern and contrasting that with the more modern songs of the Carpenters. The copies for all of these were very dated and I seized upon this concert as

the opportunity to have them all republished in nice new smart copies. I was very pleased with them. I wasn't pleased that my proof reading had missed various errors. The learning was fun and the music making very enjoyable. Some of my arrangements, the Kern and the Gershwin in particular – are really rather tricky but they didn't phase you. The piano parts also are really rather tricky but they didn't phase Eileen. Actually the Kern parts were written for her all those years ago and she played them wonderfully. And although there was a lot of work entailed in the learning of this music, it wasn't quite a full programme, so we dipped into the songbook to make up a full concert, as well as hiring Ben Laxton to sing some Cole Porter , Rodgers and Hammerstein and Bernstein.

For many weeks there was an elephant in the room. Well in my room anyway. String parts. I had hired 5 very fine string players and in May, the month before the concert, I hadn't written a single note for them. It was getting worrying. May is the busiest time for me with lots of student performances to accompany and all the pianists at Newcastle university to assess. I had to do something about the string parts. I was having nightmares literally, like waking up thinking it was the day of the concert and there were still no string parts. That is a nightmare.

So I carved out a few days in what has always traditionally been my sailing week. I stayed at home didn't sail and wrote string parts at very very high speed. I got through them in an intense two days. But they were very scrappy and unreadable. So my Sibelius person who makes beautiful scores and parts out of all this had to take on the task of creating said scores and parts in also a very short space of time. Again my proof reading wasn't great and there were mistakes, but once again on the day of the concert everything was ready – the string players had actually had the parts to look at for about 10 days, the scores were also ready – massive, but very readable. And most important of all they string parts worked despite the high speed of the writing. Once again everything in the choral texture was expanded and enhanced by the presence of the string texture and the arrangements sounded glorious. It was a most enjoyable concert, full of beautiful songs and the choir sounded really great. Bold singing but also very relaxed, and the sense that you were all enjoying yourselves could not fail but be transmitted to the audience. As it said in the crit, the singing was tender, occasionally passionate, always exquisite. Another triumph, and with Ben showing a real flair as a bit of a crooner – different to the sort of thing he is usually engaged in – he provided some really slick performances in his two solo spots with a real range of styles.

It was nice to be able to repeat this concert in St Mary's as part of my concert series there. The acoustic was wildly different to the Minster which took a bit of adjusting to, but we accommodated and again the concert was wonderfully received – at a recent meeting at St Mary's it had proved one of the most popular of the season, and of course it was a perfect summers evening. This had had an extra beneficial effect: the sales of white wine had completely gone off the scale and a result their finances were boosted considerably.

And it was also nice to be able to perform this programme for a third time at the Tall Ships event in July. I was especially proud that we could just turn up without any rehearsal about two weeks later, and sing in a completely new, outdoor venue and still deliver a really terrific performance. The small audience were extremely appreciative, and it was nice to be able to be involved in this rather special event. So there we have it, the end of a really great season.

And now on to the next season. This is a very big season with some very large concerts ahead of us. It has to be like that as it is the 70th anniversary season, in which we must all pay tribute to Clifford Hartley who founded this society all those years ago. Some of you will remember him as you sang in the chorus in those early days. I was lucky enough to meet him when I first took over as conductor. He was quite a character and I am sure that those of you who worked with him will have your own fond memories. But you probably don't

have this one. I taught a lady called Angie Robley for some time – she studied for her B Mus degree with me for a few years. She had gone for piano lessons as a young girl to Clifford. She recalled how she had played her piece him once day, and was particularly pleased with how it had gone. She turned round at the end expecting at least some faint praise. He said 'Well lass, you made a right pig's ear of that didn't you?'. It is gratifying that 70 years after his idea came to fruition, here we all are thriving and making music at such a very high level.

What have we in store. The first term sees us tackling a very large programme, which has, appropriately, two works which plead for peace after the impact of war. Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* is a wonderful work which is very obviously a personal plea to end all wars, in the aftermath of the first world war. That was a war in which he saw the most terrible things as he served as a stretcher bearer. His passionate appeal through this piece, on texts by Walt Whitman, John Bright and passages from the bible, was for the cessation of war, and it stands up there with Britten's *War Requiem* as one of the great English works of the twentieth century to address this issue.

The piece we are performing with it in the same programme (this is going to be a tough programme, rather like the Poulenc/ Durufle programme) is Finzi's *In Terra Pax*, which as you may have deduced, shares the same theme. Finzi lost his father, three elder brothers and his beloved music teacher, all killed in action in the 1<sup>st</sup> world war. When he wrote *In Terra Pax* he was aware that, aged 50, he was dying of leukemia. It was almost the last piece he wrote. Despite all of this, he sets the piece in the English countryside and it contemplates the very first Christmas, with distant church bells representing an angel choir: it is a glowing, optimistic work of great beauty and sincerity which unites emotions, images and the familiar events of the Christmas story into a compelling musical narrative.

The New Year sees us performing Haydn's masterpiece *The Creation*. This was, I am told, the very first concert that Bishopwearmouth Choral Society performed under the baton of Clifford Hartley, so it is very appropriate that we commemorate our 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in this way. We have performed this piece on quite a few occasions and it remains an exuberant and triumphant account of the story, with all sorts of special effects, orchestral and vocal, which are simply startling considering that it was written as early as 1797. The work takes the *Creation* as described in the book of Genesis, and scores it for chorus full orchestra and three soloists. The soloists represent the archangels Raphael (bass), Uriel (tenor), and Gabriel (soprano). Later on in the piece the soprano and bass represent Adam and Eve. It has many many great choruses to get involved with and the music is delightful, witty and at times very dramatic. It is considered by many to be his absolute masterpiece.

Finally the summer sees us doing an American programme. Those of you with good memories will remember that this was the alternative programme to the Kern Gershwin and Carpenters programme we just did this summer. We start with two lively folksong arrangements by Copland: *Ching a Ring Chaw* and *Stomp your foot*. They are scored for two pianos and percussion. We also do Barber's own arrangement of the *Adagio* from his string quartet. This piece has become so popular that it is now more often played on its own as a stand alone movement, both by string quartets and by full string orchestras. It is truly sublime. I think if I may be allowed to be slightly cynical, that when Barber realized he had written a no.1 hit he made sure of its commercial success by firstly re arranging it for full string orchestra and then later for SATB choir. But I'm very grateful that he did as it allows us access to this great music. The first half is rounded off by Eileen and myself playing Bernstein's *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story* – all the great orchestral dance music from that show transcribed for the two piano medium. It's a great piece and despite its great challenges we love doing it. I can guarantee that you'll recognize every single tune.

The main work in this programme is Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*. Here again the scoring is for two pianos

and percussion, and the middle movement contains a counter tenor solo. The work was commissioned by the Chichester Festival in 1965, and I cannot help but wonder what on earth they made if when it arrived. The reason being that although it a setting of psalm texts in three movements, they are all in Hebrew. I cannot help thinking that this is not what the choirs of Winchester Salisbury and Chichester were expecting. The music is often spiky, with irregular rhythms and odd time signatures – the first movement is in 7/4. It is often very lyrical and beautiful as in the beginning of the second movement: this doesn't last long however and before long we are into scherzo led by tenors and basses only: here the text is challenging as its delivered at high speed. The slow movement proper is the final movement which is very beautiful. If Creation is Haydn's choral masterpiece, this is Bernstein's.

So an action packed year – I am not even mentioning all the different chairman's challenges that are going on as part of the celebrations, so I think its going to be a rather special year and as ever I feel very privileged to be involved in it.

The Chairman expressed everyone's thanks to David and said that she was sure that sometimes he was like a swan – serene on the top while paddling frantically underneath.

Two reports had been previously provided via the web-site (and not presented verbally) but are presented here.

**The Patrons' Officer's Report** was prepared by K.A.

Sadly, over the past year we have seen the passing of 3 of our Patrons - Norman Duncan, one-time Treasurer for the Society, Honorary Vice President & Life Patron, Mr J Riddle & Mrs Hilda Cawthorne. Their support will be missed.

Happily, I can report we welcomed our new Honorary Patron, Reverend Canon Stuart Bain, Provost of Sunderland Minster in April. In addition, 1 new Life member plus 3 new Patrons' were added to our number making a Patrons total of 45. This year again there is a slight increase in numbers.

The breakdown of our Patrons is as follows:-

Life Patrons	21	among which - 1 School and 1 Honorary
Patrons	24	among which – 20 Senior, 2 Adult and 1 Family (=2 members)

The Patrons' Fees remain the same as last year.

2018-2019 Season Fees:-

Senior Patrons	£12
Adult Patrons	£25
Family	£36
School	£50
Life	£120
Corporate	£150

The new Data Protection changes for Patrons were introduced and implemented during May. The consent forms were useful in updating information as the most practical method of contact is Emailing information to Patrons. Any updates or indeed new email addresses are most helpful. If possible please forward these to me.

Finally, Patrons' support at the concerts was most pleasing. While attendance for the Easter concert was disappointing, the Patrons' section for the Christmas & Summer concerts exceeded the ticket allocations!

### The Concert Manager's was prepared by D.C :

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Concert – On Christmas Night

Many thanks to Chris and Phil who were volunteered, by Liz White, to put up the staging. Their help meant we were finished and ready for rehearsal in good time. However, taking down the staging at the end of the concert was slowed by the tightness of the clamps put on by the '*volunteers*'!

Keys are a regular problem for the church, finding the key to the Lounge door was problematic as it had not been returned to its original hook. I found out later that the key had been moved to a safer spot!

At lunchtime while I was retrieving the Harp from of the Sacristy someone wandered into the church and pocketed a key to the Choir Room. All this was later revealed on the Minster CCTV. Margaret in the office now has a selection '*Caught on Camera*' which she regularly shows the police!!

During the concert the external speaker of the nearby **The Rabbit** hostelry was blasting out '*music*' and proving to be disturbing the quieter music of the concert. Thanks to a member of the clergy (whose daughters are in the young Singers) the proprietors were prevailed upon to turn it off for the second half of the concert.

The Minster was cleared and returned to normal by 10.40pm – thanks to all who helped.

Lost property: 1 cushion and 1 reindeer bobble hat!!

52 members sang in the concert. 23 Sopranos, 10 Altos, 10 Tenors, 9 Basses.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Requiem – Durufle & Gloria - Poulenc

Whilst waiting for helpers to put up the staging, one of the dais light bulbs decided to explode and land on the edge of the dais. Luckily this did not happen during rehearsal or it may have been more serious. Lighting has been a problem for a while now as it is at its least effective on the dais.

During rehearsal an adjustment had to be made to the setup of the chorus. Best laid plans etc... Thanks to the tenors who moved to accommodate the changed setup.

Just before the rehearsal on the Saturday afternoon two workmen arrived to install a replacement oven in the Vestry!!!

I thought I had the going on and off the staging sussed, but I was proved wrong twice during the concert. After the interval it is really necessary for everyone to be aware of the line they are in on the staging and in the chorus!!

Clearing away was done quickly and the Minster was restored to normal by 10pm.

Lost property 1 scarf/wrap (reclaimed), 1 bag of concert music, wallet, credit cards etc!! (reclaimed!!), 1 woolly hat from previous concert.

Reminder to self – plumbing and installing electric ovens not my strong point!!

The chorus numbered 58 singers; 25 Sopranos, 13 Altos, 11 Tenors, 9 Basses

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> The Great American Songbook 23<sup>rd</sup> June Minster

Help from Liz White's *Elves* meant that the staging was put up quickly with the clamps not quite so tight. An accident to a member of the society during Friday rehearsal meant a visit to A&E and an entry in the Accident Book. The member took part in the concert after treatment. Getting on and off the staging for the concert was again delayed with some members just not ready in the correct place. Clearing away after the concert was slow because pews and patrons chairs needed to be returned to their original positions; thanks especially to Annick for her expertise in shifting pews!. The Minster was cleared by 10.30pm.

The Chorus numbered 52 singers; 22 Sopranos, 10 Altos, 11 Tenors, 9 Basses.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> The Great American Songbook (2) 30<sup>th</sup> June St. Mary the Virgin, Whitley Bay**

Performing in a different venue throws up new challenges for everyone. I checked out the church with David Lax after David Murray had been to see what was possible. We could get 5 rows of 9 chairs in the chancel each with a cushion – such luxury!!! Beautiful day, lovely venue, appreciative audience, easy on and off performance area (even with a bit of cheating!!), hall to retire to before and at interval, lovely beach and cafes. The only complaints I had given to me were – poor sight lines as the choir were all on the same level and David not raised high enough. (I was fine despite being behind certain Tenors!!) and too hot!! You can't please everyone. I went home at the end thinking there was nothing to clear up, then, as I arrived, I found I had left behind the conductor's stand – thanks to Eileen who retrieved it.

The Chorus numbered 48(approx) singers; 23 Sopranos, 8 Altos, 9 Tenors, 6+ Basses.

#### **Extras**

In November many of us turned up to sing at the ***Citizenship Ceremony*** in the Civic Centre. Thanks to all who made it.

It is always an interesting event and this time was no exception!! We were seated in the Council Chamber and performed admirably a selection of ***parts*** of songs before being rushed through the ceremony.

Thank you to those of you who took up the invitation to support the Young Singers in their performance of '***Scrooge***' on 16<sup>th</sup> December. It made for a very busy lead up to Christmas.

Many of us also performed on the stage at the ***Tall Ships*** in Sunderland. Good weather again, no staging to put up, chairs were provided on stage and a good number, approx 40+ of the choir turned up to perform the songs. We did not have enough time to get as far as using a Kazoo but we put on a good show to a small but appreciative crowd.

#### **Observation from concerts**

*'Singing is good for you'*; and we have done loads of that this last season. So be ready at the start of rehearsals/concerts, learn the music, watch the conductor, keep with the beat and follow the conductor's interpretation in rehearsal and performance.

The Chorus at the last count consisted of 25 Sopranos, 13 Contraltos, 11 Tenors and 9 Basses a total of 58 with over 40+ members attending every event – well done.

I look forward to a challenging 70<sup>th</sup> season starting with *Dona Nobis Pacem* – Vaughan Williams and *In Terra Pax* – Finzi, Haydn's *Creation* 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert and *Chichester Psalms* - Bernstein for the third concert.

As always I would like to thank David and Eileen for their hard work and patience.

***Please, please, please*** make sure you are **not** the one who holds up the choir when getting on and off the staging.

**Make sure you are:-**

*In the correct line - in the correct place - ready to move - ready to sit down when prompted.  
This season the coming on off the staging has been particularly untidy.  
It needs everyone's full attention – the audience notice these things as it is their first view of the choir.*

I would also like to thank everyone who helps set up & **clear away** for rehearsals and concerts in the Minster; we pride ourselves in leaving the Minster neat and tidy, ready for Sunday morning worship. *With everyone's help we can clear away and setup in under an hour after the end of the concert. This is a huge achievement and relies on all members to play their part even if it is only moving a few chairs – it all helps.*

A huge thank you to the Minster staff for setting up the soft seating in the patron's area of the nave.

Also thanks to those who make the rehearsal interval coffee; run the coffee mornings, organise the weekly raffle (*You have to be in it to win it!!!*), those who make the concert interval refreshments and Young Singers supporters, in fact everyone who mucks in and helps in any way - these things don't happen by magic and all money raised keeps the society going, ready for its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

*Ps. Reindeer Woolly Bobble Hat not yet reclaimed!!!*

**Election of Officers** – These were conducted as follows :

For the post of		Proposed by	Seconded by	
Chairman	C.Alder	FG	ES	carried by meeting
Secretary	E.Watson	FG	ES	carried by meeting
Treasurer	S.Riddle	FG	ES	carried by meeting
Alto Rep.	Doreen Lish	CL	KP	carried by meeting
Tenor Rep.	Mike Foster	JC	MS	carried by meeting

**Any Other Business :-**

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.07 p.m.

Eileen Watson,  
Hon.Secretary.