

**BISHOPWEARMOUTH CHORAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 7th September 2016, 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 – 2014/2015 SEASON

This was held at Sunderland Minster, on Wednesday the 2nd September 2015. The meeting began at 7.30 p.m. with Christine Alder in the chair and 37 members of the Society present.

Apologies for Absence : LW, NP, SR, KC, AJ, SW, WC, VS, LW, and DC.

Minutes of the last A.G.M. : These had been previously circulated and were unanimously accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising :

- A question was raised as to why only initials had been used in the last minutes made available on the web-site and it was explained that it was to provide data protection to individuals in reports being made available publically.

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

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

Welcome to our Annual general meeting of 2015. Thank you for coming, and thank you for your support, enthusiasm and skill over the past year. We gave our audiences and ourselves a very varied programme, and one which I am sure we all enjoyed, not least the Sage experience of Verdi's "Requiem", which was for me an even more satisfying experience than "Carmina" two years ago.

Your committee has continued to work hard throughout the year and each member plays their part. You will have read most of their reports already, and I thank them all. This year I should like to say a special word of thanks to the section representatives who have perfectly fulfilled their role as a conduit between choir and committee. Eileen and Sheena, in their roles as Secretary and Treasurer, have worked tirelessly to ensure that the wheels run smoothly, and it would be very remiss of me not to thank Rev. Sheila Bamber and all the Minster staff for their continued support and encouragement.

The society continues to flourish musically under the masterful baton of David ably accompanied by Eileen, and the standard of our concerts is exceptional. I had the opportunity to hear both St. Matthew Passion and Verdi Requiem at the Three Choirs Festival this year, and I have to say that they were no better than ours. (They did have the good sense to have Matthew Brooke as Christus in the Passion).

As promised at last year's meeting, a Finance sub-committee was formed of the officers and Graeme Wright and Martin Richards. We agreed that our first priority was to try to increase membership, so to raise our profile, a pop-up concert took place in the Bridges. Graeme in particular worked extremely hard to enable this to happen. Whilst the commitment of you and David made it enjoyable for both performers and listeners, it did not result in any interest in membership. Not to be deterred, we hope to try again near to Christmas in a different venue, so watch this space! Gaining little reward from such effort is frustrating, but I hope that this group will continue.

Quite a large part of our work this year has been to examine and amend our constitution. It is many years since this was last done, and after last year's discussions it felt timely to bring it up to date. You will have

received a copy of the proposed amendments, and these will be voted on later in this meeting, when I shall explain the thinking behind them.

Our last task this year has been to revisit the Five Year Programme with David. This is an integral part of the work of the committee, as we try to provide a balanced and varied programme both within each season and over several seasons. Verdi Requiem had been pencilled in for April 2017, so obviously had to be amended. As soon as minor details are confirmed the proposed programme will be for all to see on the noticeboard and website. The programme for this year is unchanged; "Sea Symphony" on Dec. 5th, "Mass in B flat" by Hummel on March 19th. 2016, and "Side by Side" by Sondheim on June 18th. 2016. The proposed programme takes us up to March 2019 (not quite five years) which is a landmark for the Society. Bishopwearmoth Choral Society was formed in the Autumn of 1948 and gave its first concert, "Creation" by Haydn in March 1949. To celebrate this our seventieth anniversary we propose to replicate this concert and sing "Creation", almost to the day. To be in existence and to flourish is a great achievement, and obviously we shall be making plans to mark that special year. All suggestions for how we can celebrate will be welcomed.

I started by reflecting on last year's programme, one of great variety and wide appeal, and I finish by suggesting to you that this year's programme follows the same pattern. We have opportunities to interest friends, neighbours and colleagues of all musical tastes, to come to at least one of the concerts, and it is possible to reach new audiences if we try. I know that the Sage is somewhat easier to sell than the Minster, but we must try to encourage people to be proud and appreciative of us, of what we have, and what we can achieve together in our own city.

The Treasurer's Report : The Treasurer, SR, in her Financial Report to the Society presented a number of points :

- I am pleased to tell you that our income in the last season exceeded our expenditure for the first time in several years. This was the result of extra donations to the Society over the year. Special thanks to our anonymous donor giving £5000 and to Jeremy Cripps for allowing us to raffle a holiday in his cottage. Thanks also to Cathy Lennox for the Barbecue.
- The December concert income covered the costs on the night costs resulting in only a small deficit. Our agreed share of the Sage deficit was 25%, with Ryton and ourselves covering the modest soloists' accommodation costs. If we had staged the Verdi Requiem in the Minster, the costs would have been substantially higher.
- Other means of fund raising are still giving us steady income, weekly raffles and coffee and the two coffee mornings as well as the Hire Library. We also profited from the Christmas DVD sales.
- We have invested in new staging legs, allowing more flexibility with the platform heights. The website continues to be good value and I'd like to thank Peter Watson for administering this for the Society. Donations were given to the Minster towards Piano repairs and to Living History North East who kindly lent us costumes in December.
- Society members' subscription to remain at £90 per season.
- The Social fund stands at £62 and is still available for Section Reps to use for gifts, cards, flowers etc. sent on behalf of Society members.

- Angela has brought to our attention “The Giving Machine”. At no extra cost, goods can be purchased from many well-known retailers by going onto the website www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk and a small commission will be given to the Society. Leaflets are available with further details

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for her weekly unfailing cheerfulness and great skill, which was so important to the Society. A question was raised on the Treasurer’s Report about how much the hire costs were for regular rehearsals (£3,500) and comment was made about how many of the rehearsals had been cold due to problems with the Minster heating. It was accepted that this problem had not been the fault of the Minster and that we were sensitive to the fact that no additional charge was made for the storage of our staging and library. The accounts were unanimously accepted.

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

This was, by any standards, a spectacular season for us all. I do hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. It had everything – variety, new departures, a fantastic concert in the Sage to end it, but above all it had running through it performances of excellent quality. I think before I ruminate on it I need to thank everyone for making it so special. I’d like to thank Eileen for her great job as repetiteur and co – trainer of this choir – she does a really fantastic job. And I’d also like to thank her this season for doing such a fantastic job with the young singers for their amazing contribution to Christmas Carol in December.

I’d also like to thank Christine and the Committee for all the really terrific work they do to keep this Choral Society running so well. A lot of the work is unglamorous and unseen for the most part, but absolutely vital. They support me 100% in all the artistic decisions I make and I simply could not achieve these artistic goals without them.

And of course I have to thank you all in the choir for all your hard work and for continuing to rise to the occasion time after time: but rising to the occasion is only really possible with regular, committed, rigorous rehearsal, and I know that you take that just as seriously as I do. I think we’re all here to enjoy ourselves primarily, but a central part of that enjoyment is being able to produce the sort of performances we’ve had this season, performances of the very highest quality we are capable of.

Well way back in September 2014, we embarked on a double bill of a Christmas Messiah and my 35 year old piece ‘A Christmas Carol’. The material contained in the latter piece I knew wasn’t terribly challenging and I was slightly nervous that you would learn it easily and then be bored. Messiah is never easy and there’s always room for improvement and polishing with that – but we were only doing a small part of that. However as things went along it became obvious to me that whilst we could do fairly straight performance of the Messiah excerpt, it was going to be very attractive to stage Christmas Carol. We had two long sessions with Miranda Wright on this – who did a brilliant job, and changed the nature of the experience for all of us I think. You were clearly enjoying yourselves, and clearly becoming theatre animals almost by the minute. The most spectacular achievement of the lot was that eventually the whole piece was performed off copy. It was an absolutely brilliant performance – we have the DVD to prove it (many thanks to Michael Ghahari for his excellent work in producing it). Everyone worked their socks off and I know a lot of trouble was taken with producing and providing props, costumes etc.

So the performance started with a lovely Christmas Messiah with our four local soloists all doing their bit. You wouldn’t have thought it but it was Ana Fernandez’ first Messiah. She was absolutely fantastic. The Christmas Carol followed and was received – for the only time that I can remember in the Minster – with a standing ovation. It was spectacularly successful. I of course was hugely delighted especially as it was my piece, and I was so grateful to everyone for taking it on trust and bringing it to such a satisfying conclusion. What an

amazing experience. And rather like my reaction to when we did the piece at Ryton the previous year, I can remember thinking that it sort of worked itself out without too much input from me - it seemed to take care of itself really quite easily .

Not so the next programme, however! This was going to be a tough programme. Elgar's *The Music Makers* was going to be a tough cookie - its one of the trickiest pieces in the repertoire. And it so it was. But I did get the impression that despite its trickiness there was a love of the music here, which was felt by us all. Its an astonishing work – Elgar at his greatest. So although it was tough to work at, it was very engaging getting to grips with English choral music at its very best. The *Bavarian Highlands* was a great contrast, showing Elgar in a much lighter vein. They were great tunes – some of them dance like and some of them more lyrical, but all in a salon style. Scored for a piano trio they would have been perfect in the pump room at Bath.

The other great work of Elgar on the programme that night was the *Sea Pictures*. And we had a great soloist to sing them. Sarah Pring was more than equal to the vocal challenges of these settings. Demanding a very wide vocal range, they are scored quite heavily so the mezzo has to soar above full orchestra on top G's as well as cut through it on notes below the treble stave: She did this with ease, and had some of the finest, clearest diction I can remember hearing. She also had the same ideas about the music as I did and loved the songs as much as I did which all helped. This has always been a very tricky group of songs to bring off in performance but this felt easy and natural, and the orchestra played wonderfully.

It was a great concert – everything went wonderfully well, and actually inspired Martin Hughes, our great leader, to say how impressed he was with the passionate and committed singing of the choir. I couldn't have agreed more. You did sing absolutely wonderfully, and actually the orchestra supported wonderfully. All the hard work paid off and we were in that very nice place where because the preparation had been thorough and rigorous, there was an increased confidence and commitment in the performance. No sense of hanging on by a thread: really bold and committed singing. Terrific.

And then in the summer the long awaited and long in the planning collaboration with Ryton Choral Society and Orchestra North East for our performance of Verdi Requiem in the Sage Hall 1, or now as it is known, Sage 1. Well there were quite a few problems with this. It was worrying for me because there wasn't a lot of rehearsal time between starting up after Easter and the performance. Our previous collaboration had worked towards a concert in July – much more comfortable. Fortunately for us all, the operation was being masterminded by Peter Chester on behalf of Orchestra North East. He didn't miss a trick. When the Sage, true to form, omitted the concert details from the brochure he was quick to complain and was instrumental in getting them to do a sort of electronic mailshot about the concert. He also did a terrific job on the publicity front, making sure the event was flagged up in the local press etc. But at one point, when Michael Druett became indisposed shortly before the event, he did exclaim "this concert is jinxed!" It did become apparent, however, by the time we got to our first joint rehearsal that things were pulling together nicely and although the Sanctus fugue was a little hair raising, we did manage to get through without collapse even though some planes were noticeably dropping off the radar! It was very clear that the Sanctus was going to be the big challenge – everything else was well in place and confident. Thank goodness with about 10 days to go to the performance.

The rescheduled rehearsal in Gateshead Old Town Hall was interesting. (We were there rather than in Hall 2 due to another Sage mess). We had some woodwind principals missing (I think that was an Orchestra North East misunderstanding somewhere down the line) so that was interesting. And it was extremely crowded and the choir position was not exactly the best. Although when I walked in we were about 40 choir seats short so it was better than that. But it was fine, everything was sounding good.

The rehearsal on the Sunday afternoon was something I'll find hard to forget. I knew that our good friend James Black would have lined up a fine team of soloists. And I knew by their price tags that they were going to be a bit special. But nothing had prepared me for that wall of beautiful sound on my left hand side all the way through the afternoon. It was actually a bit distracting – I was so enthralled by it I really had to work hard to try and blot the effect of it out to concentrate on what I needed to do. Everything worked pretty well – even the scary off stage trumpet bit, with its characteristic delay was fine and chillingly effective.

The performance itself – well what can I say? Janet Baker was being interviewed recently about what makes exceptional performances. She said something along the lines of if everything is well in place, you've done all the necessary work, you might be a little bit lucky and then something else happens as well. The performance moves on to another level. Not that I am comparing ourselves to Janet Baker. But it's clear that something of the sort did occur, and the feedback we've had from everyone who was there confirms this. It was another level, and although yes we did have professional players in the orchestra, a great leader, a great first cello etc, and a team of soloists to die for, most of the people on stage that day were amateur singers and players. And we produced a completely professional level of music making. That takes some doing and I have to once again thank everyone involved for making it such a very special event. We'll have to do this collaboration again, it's a must. Trouble is, how do you follow the Verdi Requiem? We'll have to have a think when the dust settles. So the end of a spectacular season full of happy memories.

So what comes next?

Well this Autumn, for me, is a seminal moment. Because it marks the occasion of returning to the first work I did when I conducted the Society. It was a long time ago. It was in 1993. As I remember the phone rang and you asked me if I'd take over the Society from about January onwards as far as May towards a performance of Vaughan Williams's Sea Symphony. You were in a bit of a pickle. There's been a big fall out with my predecessor. You had the concert booked, orchestra booked, soloists booked. But no conductor. A bit tricky really. So I did and it went very well, and then you asked if I would take you on as you thought I wasn't too bad. And I thought you weren't too bad either. And the rest is history. We both found out the truth (Joke). No it's been a great privilege to be associated on I think a happy and successful basis for all of that time and we've produced some great music making together.

Now, trip down memory lane finished, back to the Sea Symphony. It's a fantastic piece. And it's one of the shining examples of text – in this case by Walt Whitman – being completely transformed by being set to great music. And – dare I say it improved beyond all recognition?! It's not easy of course, and it has a huge orchestra – actually the same size as for Verdi Requiem. But scored rather less well. Scored before VW realized he could do better with scoring and took himself off for those lessons with Ravel in Paris. But we'll get over that with our strong team of fine players who can and will play quietly.

To go with this piece I want to do the most brilliant piece which I heard at the proms last year. It's the newly arranged orchestration of George Butterworth's A Shropshire Lad. I thought the piece was pretty amazing in its original format for baritone and piano, which I've done many times, most memorably with Sir Thomas Allen. But this gives it a whole new dimension. The poems of AE Housman are wonderfully evoked, and one is left with a real sense of the tragic and futile losses in every sense resulting from the horrors of the first world war. And as we have a baritone soloist to sing the Sea Symphony – why not? I hope that qualifies for the title of intelligent programming!

The New Year sees us embarking on a very nice programme that I tried out a couple of years ago with Ryton Choral Society. It was a bit of an unknown quantity then, and I wasn't at all sure about the wisdom of tackling the Hummel Mass in Bb as it is really a bit off the beaten track. Hummel was a contemporary of Beethoven, and a very fine one. His music is well crafted, tuneful and full of lovely moments. He suffered badly, poor chap, because he married someone that Beethoven had taken a fancy to, and I think his career prospects may have been a little compromised by this. The work is very fine, and Ryton absolutely loved it. There is an ulterior motive in this programming, in that the piece is scored for a small orchestra with only token woodwind, and it has no soloists. In other words it is not expensive.

The Mass is only one half of the programme of course, and we are filling the second half, as indeed we did with the Ryton concert, with all sorts of standard repertoire which we are used to singing with piano accompaniment, but because we have the luxury of an orchestra we can be accompanied orchestrally. So we have Mozart Ave Verum Corpus, Faure Cantique, Franck Panis Angelicus, Schubert The Lord is my Shepherd and Goodall The Lord is my Shepherd, and Rutter All things Bright and beautiful. The orchestra will play a piece on their own, probably the D Major Divertimento of Mozart. It should be a delightful programme, and it should be good for the bank account.

The summer sees us returning to one of our great successes of recent years, and that is Side by Side by Sondheim. Those of you who did this will remember that this is not at all standard choral society repertoire. In fact it's not repertoire for choral societies at all. That is one of the reasons I like doing it so much. It is a review which first hit London in the 1970's when I was still living there, and I remember it knocking me sideways. It is scored originally for three solo singers and two pianos. Oh, and a compere. The original team was Virginia McKenna Millicent Martin and David Kernan and Ned Sherrin was the compere. It was a story of Sondheim's career to that point, with lots of amusing anecdotes. Of course he hadn't written a lot of things then – including Sweeney Todd and Into the Woods so there's no mention of them. But it's a brilliant parade of his greatest work to that point. Those of you who don't know how we do this may be asking where does the chorus come in? Well of course some of the numbers are ensemble numbers written for the three soloists, but they work very well with full chorus. And I hop off the piano stool at that point and conduct you, whilst Eileen copes on her own. I do remember there was a point at the end when we didn't do this: i.e. I didn't conduct and just kept playing. Perhaps we'll do a bit more of this now you're flushed with the success of having to cope without a conductor in Dido and Aeneas last season. Anyway this is going to be a really tremendous venture, and lots and lots of fun.

Once again I'm very much looking forward to another year of great music making with you all.

The Chairman expressed everyone's thanks to David but said that that really does not show the measure of how grateful we are to him.

GW suggested that the secondary piece should be more favorable to listeners to bring in more of an audience. The Chairman assured him that the Society set out to appeal to as broad an audience as possible across each season.

Several reports had been previously provided via the web-site (and not presented verbally) but the Chairman noted them and made some comments on each.

The Bishopwearmouth Young Singers Report was prepared by E.B. :-

This has been another good year for the Young Singers. In December they performed Scrooge with the Choral Society in the Minster, where their role was crucial and in no small way contributed to the success of the performance.

We lost some of our older singers after that concert, which of course had a considerable effect on such a small group of singers, although it was very gratifying to see them progressing into the Choral Society. Subsequently, we did gain some new members and now have a rather younger group of very loyal and committed young singers.

We gave our summer concert in Ewesley Road Church in July, with guest artists, in which some of our young singers played and sang solos. The concert was very successful and was well supported by family, friends and members of the Choral Society.

As ever, new members are always welcome; anyone interested in joining should contact our highly efficient secretary, Eileen Watson, for further details.

The Chairman commented that the last BYS concert had been a great treat and thanked EB for her work and enthusiasm with the Young Singers, noting that it was hoped that the Young Singers would be able to take part in the Spring concert.

The Patrons' Officer's Report was prepared by C.L.

Contrary to my prediction and expectation in the report for last season, the number of our Patrons has increased to 39. This can be accounted for by the support of Society members either by becoming Patrons themselves or encouraging others to become Patrons. It is a pleasure to see we now have two Schools supporting us; Holley Park Academy and Sunderland High School.

The breakdown of our Patrons is as follows:-

Life Patrons	16
Senior Patrons	18
Adult Patrons	3
Family	1
	1 School

It was a sadness to hear of the death of Ron Bell early this summer. He had been in ill health for many years but continued to renew his subscription, always showing an interest in what we were doing each season. One Patron did not renew his subscription because of ill health.

Patrons' ticket sales throughout the year still represent about a third of the audiences we attract.

December 2014 we sold	38 tickets
March 2015 we sold	32 tickets

Patrons did buy tickets for the June Concert through the Society but others bought directly from the Sage.

At the point of reporting Patrons' fees remain unchanged.

Senior Patrons	£12
Adult Patrons	£24
Family	£36
School	£50
Life	£120
Corporate	£150

The Chairman expressed her thanks to CL for her hard work in getting this important work up and running with increasing numbers.

The Vice-Chairman's Report was prepared by D.C :

1st Concert: Christmas Messiah and Scrooge

The extra legs the society purchased to increase the flexibility of the staging proved to be very useful for this concert. In the first half the chorus toggled out in their traditional gear sang the Christmas parts of the Messiah finishing with the Hallelujah Chorus. There then followed an interval in which the chorus chairs were moved and the stage set up for Scrooge, while the choir donned their costumes. The change went smoothly and Scrooge was sung semi – staged, I even got the midnight chime in the right place! This was out of my comfort zone though the audience loved it. The Young Singers excelled themselves along with other members of the cast who acted and danced!! Thanks to all who helped to move everything in the interval and those who provided costumes, props etc. or just joined the general Victorian theme. It was certainly a departure from our usual fare. *'God bless us. Every one!'*

57 members sang in the concert. 23 Sopranos, 14 Altos, 8 Tenors, 12 Basses.

2nd Elgar Bavarian Highlands, Sea Pictures and Music Makers

In contrast we were back on song with the Elgar programme. A large orchestra was necessary and in the stage set up we used the extra legs to avoid erecting the highest level. The concert was excellent from all involved although the size of the audience was disappointing. The chorus rose to the challenge of Music Makers with its constant changes of tempi and dynamics.

The chorus numbered 51 singers; 23 Sopranos, 12 Altos, 8 Tenors, 8 Basses

3rd Verdi Requiem in the Sage

The combined rehearsals proved a seating challenge for the chorus in various venues because the work called for firsts and seconds in parts and a double chorus in the Sanctus. Getting everyone into four rows worked reasonable in the Minster and at Thorpe school but the Town Hall Gateshead proved an almost impossible task. Once we were at the Sage rehearsal things went much more smoothly and changes at the interval of the rehearsal ironed out some problems. Thanks to everyone who followed instructions and came on and off the Sage chorus area in rehearsal and performance in a very neat, professional manner. Thanks especially to the sopranos some of whom were involved in musical chairs at each rehearsal. Nevertheless a fantastic concert, a great sing with a full orchestra, a very LOUD drum and at the end no need to clear away, just walk out and let the Sage clear up!!

Combined choir was 104 singers; 42 Sopranos, 23 Altos, 17 Tenors, 22 Basses.

Firsts for the society

So the last season saw the society make a big departure from their usual style with the semi staging of Scrooge, sung without copies (well some did cheat!!) and we rehearsed in Gateshead Town Hall, an experience not to be repeated with an 70 piece orchestra!!!!

Observation from concerts

In general concert etiquette was well observed, I saw only one bottle of water on the Sage stage – please remember it does look bad if, when the chorus sits and the soloist sings, members of the chorus immediately start to swig from baby's bottles!!!

'Singing is good for you'; I thoroughly enjoyed singing in the concerts once I got over stage fright in Scrooge, and managed to toll the midnight bell in the right place. It was great to sing Music Makers and wonderful to sing the Verdi in a great concert hall with a full orchestra. Congratulations to both choirs on their professionalism and commitment to their societies!

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 27 Sopranos, 13 Contraltos, 9 Tenors and 12 Basses a total of 61.

I look forward to a challenging 67th season starting with Vaughan Williams Sea Symphony, perhaps we should get out the lobster pots and keep the whale!!! (Minster joke!) and Sondheim - well just *Send in the clowns!!*.

I would like to thank David and Eileen for their hard work and patience. 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 and ready for Sunday morning worship. Also those who make the rehearsal interval coffee; run the weekly raffle (*You have to be in it to win it!!!*), those who make the concert interval refreshments and Young Singers supporters, those who sung in the Bridges, 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!

Finally – well – I just know you're waiting for some humour, so here are some *rules* for ensemble singing!

Everyone should sing the same piece.

Take your time turning pages.

Do not worry if you do not have perfect pitch - you may find singing less stressful without it!

The right note at the wrong time is the wrong note.

The wrong note at the right time is still a wrong note.

A wrong note sung timidly is still a wrong note.

A wrong note sung with authority is an interpretation.

A true interpretation is realized when not one note of the original remains.

If you happen to sing a wrong note, give a nasty look to your neighbour.

If everyone gets lost except you, follow those who get lost.

If you are completely lost, stop everyone and start an argument about repeat marks.

Strive to achieve the maximum notes per second - that way you at least gain the admiration of the totally incompetent.

If a passage is difficult, slow it down. If it is easy, speed it up. Everything will work itself out in the end. Markings for slurs, dynamics, ornaments and breathing should be ignored. They are only there to embellish the score.

When everyone else has finished singing, you should not sing any notes you may still have left.

The Chairman noted that the rules for ensemble singing could be extremely useful!

The Librarian's Report was presented by AL :-

It's been a busy year, with copies of 6 different works to be found for the main concerts, and a selection of works for our "sing-out" in the Bridges. It has involved hiring in copies, using some of our own, and rummaging in David's attic for copies of his arrangements.

The copies of Verdi's requiem were in a pretty dire state, particularly the older edition; I apologise for that, and have brought it to the Yorkshire Music Library's attention. However, I also felt it necessary to rub out as much of the offending marking as I could before sending the copies back, leaving a couple to show them how bad they were.

The sight of these copies has provoked some thoughts on hire music:

- The music belongs to the hirer and should be treated with respect
- Nothing harder than an HB pencil should be used, and used only lightly
- If you feel it necessary to cross out parts other than your own, a single, light stroke should be sufficient – it isn't necessary to score or scribble it out
- To rub out your markings after the concert is a courtesy to the hirers and to the next user. If a person using it before you hasn't extended you that courtesy, it would be an added bonus if you were to rub their markings out too – I usually do that as we slowly go through the piece in the early rehearsals. I'd be happy to get the erasers out of the cupboard at any stage.

An extra thought is that hired copies need to be returned within a certain period after the concert, and so need to be returned as soon as the concert is over. Those who are unable to sing on the night must return their copies before the concert, so that I don't have to do any chasing-up, as I did after the Elgar concert.

Thanks for your cheerful cooperation throughout the year, and special thanks to those who have helped me sort and hand out copies.

The Chairman thanked AL for playing this important role. She said that her thoughts on hire music were very timely.

Modification of Society Constitution:

The Chairman explained that after considering some other example constitutions and careful discussion, the Committee produced a new amended draft. These suggested changes have been highlighted in red in the copies of the suggested Constitution which were circulated to members ahead of the meeting. The amendment to para. 4. simply removes the requirement to live in the old Borough. The change to para. 6a and following are to reflect the present reality. DC is now the Concert Manager and is happy to relinquish the Vice Chairman role which would be open to others from September 2016. The substitution in para. 10. of 40% for the original figure of 40 members better reflects the potential change in membership but still allows the AGM to function as intended.

FG proposed that the changes to the Constitution be accepted as outlined and this was seconded by MB and the meeting agreed unanimously.

Election of Officers – These were conducted as follows :

For the post of		Proposed by	Seconded by	
Chairman	C.Alder	E.S.	FG	carried by meeting
Secretary	E.Watson	E.S.	E.M.	carried by meeting
Treasurer	S.Riddle	E.S.	E.M.	carried by meeting
Soprano Rep.	JK	J.T.	L.C.	carried by meeting
Tenor Rep.	JC	has agreed to continue as Rep for two years in the absence of any other volunteer		
Bass Rep.	IW	has agreed to continue as Rep for one year in the absence of any other volunteer.		

Any Other Business :-

- Artistic Direction – JF presented a case for the membership to have a little more direct input into the choice of repertoire. His suggestion was that perhaps for one concert per season, the Musical Director and Committee could agree a range of possible works from which the membership could decide the concert content. The Chairman agreed to take this suggestion back to the Committee for consideration and possible implementation in the 2016/17 season.
- Making Music Call for Nominations – The Chairman shared an invitation from Making Music for members to apply to be part of the Making Music Council and help to plan the development of policies and plans. She noted that Making Music had very much shrunk in size as an organisation as it has lost most of its funding and this was an opportunity to shape its future.
- Late Summer Bash – The Chairman reiterated the kind invitation from CL to everyone to join in this party – with a collection for BCS and BYS. Volunteers were needed to assist with the BBQ, baked potatoes and curry. Also with the children’s games and prizes were needed for a Tombola.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.40 p.m.

Eileen Watson,
Hon.Secretary.