

Côr Dyfed Choir
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting – Oct 5th 2021

Held in the Sports Hall, Bloomfield, Narberth at 7.30pm.

1. **Apologies** were received from, Christine Davies, David Child, Sarah Jellicoe, Russ Evans, Anne Jones, Jennie Palmer and Gillian Parker.
2. **Minutes of the last AGM** had been sent out and their acceptance was proposed by Ann Thair, seconded by Margaret Jones and unanimously approved.
3. **Matters Arising** – None.
4. **Treasurer's report** – See Annex A. The accounts had been circulated in advance and acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Jane Hodges and seconded by Marian Addison and unanimously approved.
5. **Appointment of an External Examiner.** Joy Green is happy to remain on as the choir's external examiner.
6. **Review of Subscriptions.** After discussion with the committee Andrea proposed that the subs for the year 2021/22 would remain the same at £155 for the year. Subs can be paid in 1 of 3 ways: In full, in 2 instalments of £80 then £75 or in 3 instalments of £55, £50 & £50. It was emphasised the whole year needs to be paid for whether or not you attend every term.

Keeping subscriptions at their current rate was proposed by Rose Bowen and seconded by Clare Carter and was unanimously approved.
7. **Chair's Report** – see Annex B.
8. **Music Director's Report** – See Annex C. Luke gave a short address to the choir. He told us how delighted he had been to be asked to be Musical Director of Dyfed Choir and gave a brief introduction on himself for those who had not meet him (all of which is now on the choir website). Luke said that he is very much looking forward to this term and the concert in December. All soloists and orchestra have been booked.
9. **Election of Officers.**
 - a) **Chair:** Sue Russill was voted in and assumed the chair.
 - b) **Ex-Chair:** Kathy was thanked for her work as chair over the past year and invited to remain on the committee for a third year as Ex-Chair and was presented with a bouquet of flowers.
 - c) **Vice Chair:** Jane Hodges has volunteered to become Vice Chair. She was nominated by Margaret Jones and seconded by BetiLyn Alwyn-Jones.
 - d) **Soprano Rep:** Maggie Body has agreed to stand for an additional year. This was unanimously approved.
 - e) **Alto Rep:** Anne Jones has agreed to stand for an additional year. This was unanimously approved
 - f) **Tenor and Bass Rep:** Dai Stacy was nominated by BetiLyn Alwyn-Jones and seconded by Clare Carter and approved as the new T/B rep.
 - g) **Treasurer, Secretary and Librarian** -Andrea, Hannah and Lynn were all willing to stand again and were nominated by Jane Hodges, seconded by Dai Stacy and unanimously approved.
10. **Any Other Business.**

Charles Clewitt won the 100 Club.

Annex A – Treasurer's Report

What another strange year. Even with no concerts, there are still a large amount of financial transactions that occur to keep this choir going.

Other than no concerts, the main change this year was with the subs. A decision was made to not charge a sub for the autumn term and to charge only £110 for the remainder of the year. Thanks to everyone for playing their part in paying this sub to help keep the choir moving forward. This enables us to have confidence to put on concerts where it is highly likely we will make losses due to the on-going uncertainty and public nervousness of COVID-19.

So, what happened this year? Overall, we have made a profit of £2,340.

So, how did we arrive at this profit?

Looking at the Concert sheet, there is 1 charge, which was a deposit payment for the orchestra for the planned performance in Dec 2020 (made before lockdown became a reality). Obviously, this concert did not take place, but due to the conditions of the contract we lost the deposit.

Looking at the expenditure sheet, we paid £3,944 in Operating expenses. This is low because of paying Oli and Stuart less for Zoom rehearsals than face-to-face rehearsals and not having to pay for the room hire at Bloomfield.

Including other expenses (such as 100 Club and concert loss) the total expenditure this year was £5,215.

Looking at our Income sheet, we received less subscription money this year (and hence less Gift Aid).

We have again received money from both Easyfundraising and Amazon. Thanks to the choir members that have utilized these platforms to raise money for the choir, it is very much appreciated and has brought in £37 – and every pound helps. Overall, from subscriptions and donations we received £6,503.

Our fundraising activities were limited due to COVID-19, but several members managed to fundraise to cover some of last year's website development. As the 100 Club had to change from a cash based system to cheque, the fundraising amount does include £520 that covers the monies collected for 2021 as well as the 2020 payments that were won in Sept 2020.

Overall, with Bank Interest of £232, our income was £7,555.

Finally, looking at the Financial Reserves, we have £13,772 in a 1 year bond. Interest rates are starting to pick up, so I am hopeful that next year, the income from this will be better.

Our current account at the end of the financial year had £9,998 and the Reserve Account had £2,274.

Together they give us a reserve of £26,044 which (when compared the reserve at the end of the last financial year of £23,704) takes us back to our profit figure of £2,340 for the year.

Are there any questions or clarifications required?

Annex B - Chair's Report

Just about every cliché that exists has been used to describe the last 18 months between 2020 and 2021. But it really has been an odd time.

When I volunteered for the post of vice chair to Lesley, in my wildest dreams I could never have imagined that soon after it would have been illegal to sing!

So, my first thank you goes to Lesley for her support and guidance with instructing me how to run the Zoom sessions which have been the mainstay of the choir during the last 18 months. Lesley also started the practice of the newsletter which I have continued throughout my year. Hopefully these have helped to keep those unable to Zoom in touch with the rest of the choir.

Thanks to the heroic efforts of Oli and Stuart, who had thankless tasks, conducting and playing on Zoom while unable to hear us singing. However, it wasn't all bad - Oli told us we sounded great!

We had a potential problem in getting scores out to everyone during Lockdown and we have librarian Lynn to thank for solving this. Lynn sorted, numbered, packed and labelled music for all Zoomers and with a band of willing drivers that could have put DPD to shame, delivered to all corners of Dyfed.

We were pleased to welcome a new Zoom member, Christine Davies, and who is now a fully fledged choir member. Also, one of the benefits of Zoom, an old friend and past choir member, Margaret Hurle, was able to join us for the year, even though she has moved away from the area.

To break up the Zoom rehearsals, we had some memorable Zoom workshops, with voice training by Sam Howley and another by Rachel Hickman. A highlight was a fascinating talk by our orchestral fixer Dave Danford who had turned into a real DPD delivery man during Lockdown! Many thanks also to Stuart for making our rehearsals more varied and rewarding by giving us some interesting talks on the composers of the pieces we were singing and the early instruments used.

Another first was the Zoom Christmas party.... with Christmas hats and BINGO! Much planning and printing of Bingo cards by Clare (our social planner as well as her other roles) and a flurry of home deliveries and postings around the counties. Great fun.....whatever will we do to follow that this year??

Perhaps my most poignant moment was our Zoom 'concert' where we sang all the music we had been rehearsing right through, as if in concert. When everyone appeared on the screen in concert dress I could have cried. It showed to me just how much we had all been missing our singing.

During Lockdown we still managed a small amount of fundraising, with Work for a Website which paid for a new website to be designed. Thank you Marian for working tirelessly on this and for keeping it updated for us. Also Maggie's marmalade continued to flow. And of course, Jennie's 100 Club. However, our major financial success was in being awarded a substantial Ty Cerdd Lottery grant towards our first return concert. Thank you treasurer Andrea for your work in securing this and much else besides, a treasured treasurer indeed.

Sadly, our major fundraiser was..... not putting on any concerts!

Throughout all this time, the committee have met monthly without fail and that has made me realise the meaning of the word 'committee,' ie committed. For this level of commitment, I'd like to thank our invaluable secretary Hannah, vice chair Sue, treasurer Andrea, librarian Lynn, and section reps Russ, Ann and Maggie. Special thanks go to our invaluable

concert organizer Rose and her assistant Clare, who have their work cut out for them now, organizing a Christmas Messiah with orchestra and professional soloists, at very short notice!

We are very grateful to Oli, who dedicatedly waved his arms around to an empty room and our thanks go to, and I quote Oli, our very own “treasure”.... our accompanist Stuart.

I'd like to say a special “Goodbye and Thank you” to Lesley who leaves the committee today after three dedicated years. And “Hello and Welcome” to the new choristers who have joined us this term and “Hang in there” to those on the waiting list. We hope to see you soon when numbers permit.

In June we were able to plan some real rehearsals at last, and I'm grateful to our Health and Safety officer BetiLyn for her work on the Covid Risks Assessment documents and the Track and Trace at rehearsals. We appreciate also the effort that Janine and Nigel, staff at Bloomfield, have put in. They have had the difficult task of enabling us to return to singing but at the same time needing to keep within the strict Community Centre rules by which they were forced to abide.

The end of last term brought the news that Oli was leaving us to take up a post in Selby Abbey, York, after 8 years of wonderful concerts and total commitment to the Dyfed Choir. Fortunately, we managed to meet for four real rehearsals at Bloomfield during which we were able to experience singing with him properly again, albeit 3 metres apart! We were also able to present Oli with some Pembrokeshire gifts to take up North with him, just to make sure he didn't forget us. But then we found Luke! Serendipity? Thank you Luke for taking us on and getting us off to such a great start. Now we move forward together with hope and optimism towards our first concert for two years.

There will never have been a more joyous performance of the Messiah.

Kathy Sleigh
October 2021

Annex C – Music Director's report

When completing my last report in October 2020, I don't think I imagined I would be writing yet another annual music report with the COVID pandemic as the dominating influence on all our lives, especially our musical lives! So sadly, for Cor Dyfed, in addition to the disrupted 2019/20 year, this time it was a whole year without a single live concert!

I know this was a very frustrating and sobering scenario for the choir to deal with. However, the choir's determination to remain active in the face of this adversity meant we continued with weekly “zoom rehearsals”, enabled and greatly enhanced by the ever willing talents of Stuart Evans as accompanist. Music included Elgar's paired settings of the Te Deum & Benedictus, Hubert Parry's Songs of Farewell, Finzi's Ascensiontide anthem: God is gone up, Handel's Messiah, Chandos Anthems, and Coronation Anthems.

With the prospect and then the impressively quick rollout of Covid vaccines in the UK, we were at least able to start looking forward to a gradual return of communal singing. And after much hard work, thinking and planning from the choir committee the day finally came in June when the choir could meet safely, with the added excitement of singing in the huge sports hall at Broomfield. We also discovered that, even though singing at great distances from each other, the hall had a magnificent ‘cathedral-like’ acoustic which enhanced our singing, experience and excitement still further!

In late May I announced I would be leaving as Conductor and MD of the choir to take up an appointment as Director of Music of Selby Abbey in Yorkshire. The choir gave me a very kind and generous ‘send off’ and much thanks and gratitude was expressed from me to the choir, and vice-versa for which I'm extremely touched. I've had a thoroughly enjoyable 8 years with my friends at Cor Dyfed and wish the choir every blessing as they get back to performing wonderful concerts again throughout Pembrokeshire and West Wales.

Oliver Waterer
15 July 2021