

Derek Z

**Minutes of the 77th Annual General Meeting
held at St Mary's School, Amersham
on Monday 10 July 2006**

At least 65 members attended. Roger Connor was in the Chair.

1. Apologies were received from the following members

Margaret Couling, Ingrid Chapman, Norman Chapman, Susan Anderson, Jenny Hatton, Jan Lemos, Barbara Southgate, Terry Neale, Pat Whitworth, Elizabeth Scott, Jeanette Cash, Ray Wainwright, Steve Hodson, Margaret Bartram and Cyril Dashwood.

2. Minutes of the last AGM and matters arising

It was confirmed that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2005 had been approved by the Committee.

3. Hon Chairman's report

This is attached

Hon Secretary's report

Liz Okey mentioned that Steve Hodson had sent an email thanking the committee, and particularly Ian, for the opportunity to perform the St Matthew Passion, and commenting that the society is in a fortunate position to be able to afford such a performance. This view has been endorsed by several members of the choir. During this season the voice training day with Neil Mackenzie had been enjoyed by many and therefore the committee was planning further days – Paul Spicer would lead a Mozart workshop on October 7 and a further voice training day may be booked for the following session.

We were indebted to Kristine Davies for organising our successful Christmas party and Liz sought to remind members that we would need a new social secretary for the forthcoming season.

Finally, we had been very pleased to welcome many new members this season, Liz hoped that someone would volunteer to look after our web site since this attracted so many enquiries.

Hon. Treasurer's report.

The accounts were circulated to the meeting.

The treasurer summarized these accounts as follows:-

She noted that the most striking feature of the accounts this year was the deficit of £5,126 -00 arising from a combination of factors including:-

- The funding of the Lascelles Bursary
- The provision for the voice training days (free to members)
- The cost of providing new music stands, since we are no longer able to borrow Challoners' stands

- The funding for Ian's 25th anniversary concert –the St Matthew Passion

We would, no doubt, all agree these have all been extremely worthwhile.

Avril detailed the expenses of the concert as set against the ticket sales and also the other expenses of the choir in paying for the hire of the rehearsal halls and payments to Ian Hooker and Mary Knight

Our income from subscriptions and from the Friends of Amchor has remained steady but other income has reduced, i.e. that from the raffles, scarves, *Tutti* and the Christmas party.

Avril thanked all those involved in fund raising activities for the choir.

She mentioned the investment fund interest, Halstan sponsorship, additional sponsorship, staging hire and wedding choirs as providing useful extra income. Also some profits from the hire of music and the Westminster Abbey trip, although these were not primarily fund raising activities.

Avril proposed that membership subscriptions be increased from £50 to £60 which it was felt was still a reasonable price to pay for members and less than similar choral societies' fees. This increase is necessary because the committee believed

- The amount raised from subscriptions last year did not even cover the basic cost of rehearsals. Each one costs a member less than £2 which is extremely good value!
- We need to keep our reserves high so that we can continue to benefit from the boost to our annual income given by the interest.
- We must try to cover the basic costs of running the society without using the capital.

A question was asked as to whether we were in receipt of any grants This was answered by Colin Kennedy (our 'Making Music' representative) who explained that 'Making Music' has made us grants in the past but now money is centralised and we do not merit grants by virtue of the type of music that we perform, which is considered "elitist." Colin informed the meeting that therapeutic singing clubs, which benefit Alzheimers patients for example, can raise as much as £100 sponsorship a month for those societies which participate. Whilst we hold Lascelles Bursary money we do not qualify for Council grants.

The increase in subscription was proposed by Colin Wills and seconded by Derek Brown and unanimously approved.

Following Avril's report, Roger Connor also proposed that we also raise the price of our concert tickets, which currently include the considerable cost of producing the programme. A ticket price of £12 was therefore proposed by Roger Connor and seconded by Avril Spence and carried nem.con.

4. Election of Officers

The election of the following officers was confirmed by unanimous agreement at the meeting. The chairman was pleased to welcome Derek Zeitlin who had volunteered to take on the role of publicity officer.

President

Dame Felicity Lott DBE

Vice President	Carol Gray
Chairman	Roger Connor
Director of Music	Ian Hooker
Accompanist	Mary Knight
Hon Secretary	Liz Okey
Hon Treasurer	Avril Spence
Hon Publicity Officer	Derek Zeitlin
Hon Librarian	Jane Micklem

5. Election of Members of the Committee

The Chairman proposed an amendment to the Constitution removing the ban on electing members of the committee from standing for election for a second term after serving the first three years, since the two currently retiring members wished to stand for election again. This was carried with agreement of over two thirds majority of those present.

An election was held between the four (duly proposed and seconded) candidates for the two places on the committee and David Starmer and Jan Lemos were elected to the committee.

6. Report of the Director of Music and programme for 2005/6 This is attached

7. Report of the Friends' Committee

This report was given by Colin Kennedy, Chairman of the Friends' committee, in Margaret Couling's absence.

Colin Kennedy was happy to report a good year with many friends being generous in their support. The Friends continue to limit their numbers to 45 members but due to the resignation of Jennifer Harland and the sad death of Dr Margaret Mortimer there were two vacancies. Jennifer's letter was read to the meeting and Colin passed on her good wishes to the Society. He also read a letter he had received from the Rector of St Mary's church who was especially complimentary about the St Matthew Passion and wondered if the choir would consider repeating this at Easter 2007.

Colin mentioned that the Friends made £198 in raffles and thanked Margaret Couling, Audrey Begg and Kay Wooster who organised and assisted in this respectively. The ladies requested that the continuation of the raffle be discussed at the annual meeting.

The Friends arranged another trip to Westminster Abbey during the season which took place on the 17 June, which about 50 people attended.

A.O.B

The following issues were raised.

- A) John Halsan~~n~~ volunteered to take on the updating and care of the Anchor website, which was warmly welcomed by the committee and all those present.
- B) The raffle was discussed and those present at the meeting were in agreement that it should be discontinued

- C) Christopher Tyrer was thanked for organising the visit to the Royal Albert Hall to sing the Verdi requiem. At this visit some altos met former member Pauline Belton who passed her good wishes to Amchor.
- D) Gill Wills confirmed that the ladies of the choir were largely pleased with the change in concert dress and the choir had received complements on its appearance.

The AGM meeting was closed at 9:50 pm and Ian Hooker cut a cake baked in celebration of his 25 years service which was shared amongst the members present.

Chairman's Report 2005/6

I should start by pointing out that, for reasons connected with the requirements of charity law and of our new Independent Examiner, the format of the written report accompanying the accounts is somewhat more formal than has formerly been the case, which is why it contains, for example, a list of the members of the Committee, a short essay about the duties of trustees and matters of that sort, which I suspect most of you will pass over rapidly.

This has, I think, by whatever test you wish to apply, been a successful year.

Musically – we have had two very successful concerts – I will say a little more about those in a moment.

So far as **membership** is concerned, having in recent years had a blip in numbers, membership is increasing and we currently expect 12 new members to join us in September.

The **Lascelles Bursary**, (Ian Hooker's idea) has proved to be a great success, as was amply demonstrated by our rehearsals under Will Dawes and the performance under his direction of the Vivaldi Gloria last December. We hope that we shall be able to make another grant of the bursary before our new season starts in September.

Financially, we have spent quite a lot more money than we have received – the Treasurer will, no doubt, say more about that in her report.

However, I am sure that the Major General and his wife did not leave us

money simply so that we could leave it in the bank. It was, I am sure, intended that it should be spent on music making and the promotion of music and, this year, some of it has been spent on the Lascelles Bursary (of which I sure Major General and Mrs Lascelles would have approved) and on two splendid concerts, one of them, whilst very expensive to perform, was quite outstandingly successful.

We have suffered a little as a result of the absence throughout the year (as it has transpired) of our **Publicity Officer**. However, we owe a considerable debt of gratitude to Derek Brown who, often at short notice, has preformed many of the functions of that office. I am delighted that Derek Zeitlin has agreed to take on the post.

When we performed Bach's St John Passion a few years ago, I found it a very satisfying experience. The St Matthew Passion turned out to be far more than that, it was an emotional bombshell and we were extremely fortunate in the orchestral players, soloists, both instrumental and vocal who took part in the performance and of course, the performance hinged on our conductor and director of music, Ian Hooker. It was, I suspect, an extremely good way to mark the conclusion of his 25 years with us. We should, of course, be grateful to him not only for all he has done for the Society over those 25 years, but for having the inspiration to suggest the work for performance at this juncture.

There are, of course, many others whose efforts have contributed to a successful year. As in the past, rather than attempt to mention them all by name, I shall simply say that we are extremely grateful to them all.

The Society is, I believe, in good heart.

Amersham & Chesham Bois Choral Society

AGM 2006 he band

Music Director's Report

I started becoming involved with Amchor when I arrived at Dr Challoner's Grammar School in 1972.

I played continuo organ in St Matthew Passion for Michael Pelloe and piano in a performance of Rossini's *Petit Messe Solonelle* along with Julian Larkin. I was then asked to step in for Michael at rehearsals when he couldn't be there. I owe Michael a lot – he was very supportive, and when he died he left me his scores and record collection – I shall always remember him with great affection.

My first concert as conductor of Amchor was on 5th December 1981 in Dr Challoners School Hall – it was Mozart's C minor Mass and it also included a performance of Mozart's Piano Concerto in C major (K.503) performed by an ex-pupil of mine at Dr Challoners – Tim Dean (He is now Head of Opera at the Royal Scottish Academy in Glasgow) – I stayed with him and his wife whilst examining there last December.

I was anxious to explore new repertoire and fortunately most of the members seemed happy to have the challenge of new, demanding works. So the second concert in May 1982 saw a performance of Michael Tippett's *A Child of our Time*. – a very difficult piece for everyone. Some friends from the BBC Symphony Orchestra 'fixed' the orchestra and the soprano soloist was young Felicity Lott (and it was her birthday that day).

In 1995 I spent a year in York University doing an MA in Music – during that time Chris Grant took over the reigns. On my return in 1986, we launched in on Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* and Britten's *St Nicolas* with Andrew King and the young alto, Andrew Cannon singing Britten's Canticle *Abraham and Isaac*.

In 1989 I persuaded the committee to move the concert venue from Dr Challoners School Hall to St Mary's Church. A good move – and Colin Cowles was very good about it – seeing as he had just built staging for the Challoners Hall!!

Anyway in my 25 years we have done most of the standard Choral repertoire as well as some unusual pices:

Britten's *Spring Symphony*

Monteverdi *Vespers* (twice)

Szymanowski & Poulenc's *Stabat Mater* (in the same programme)

Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*

Britten's *War Requiem*

Delius *Sea Drift*

Finzi *Intimations of Immortality*

As well as the more well-known repertoire – *Messiah*, *Carmina Burana*, Masses and Requiems – in fact the only thing that has stops us tackling some works is the lack of space in the church – its bad enough doing Verdi's *Requiem* in St Mary's – we couldn't tackle Walton's *Belshazar's Feast* everything would be is just too loud!

Throughout my time, I have always been impressed by the dedication and commitment of the members of the Society. I would especially like to remember the contribution of my accompanists over the years: Ruby Woodcock (briefly) then Doreen English, Hugh Clark, Craig Nathan and of course, since 1995, I think, Mary Knight.

I have been very lucky in having very supportive secretaries also over the years. They have organised me well.

Sheila Fry was the first, then Jennifer Harland, Val Cannon, Jean Newhouse – who very kindly spent a lot of time preparing a submission to the then NFMS for some kind of award for me – well I didn't get it – there were more deserving cases than me – but I am very grateful for her Jeans efforts and her belief in me at the time. After Jean, Sheila Gohns took over and then, of course, Liz Okey – all have been very supportive.

I have always praised the organisation of the Society - I have also been fortunate to have worked with excellent and adventurous committees that really work really hard and these have always been chaired by excellent people.

It was Charles Stobie who asked me to take over from Michael Pelloe. Since then Cyril Dashwood, Peter Harland, Irene Glyn-Jones and Roger Connor have kept me in order and 'up to speed'.

I'd also like to thank the various treasurers for making decisions as to how much I should be paid as well as agreeing budgets and taking adventurous risks with ambitious programmes: Rupert Salmon was the first in my time – then Avril Spence – Colin Wills, Derek Brown and now Avril again – they have been great – adventurous – fearless and generous.

The Choral Society has been centre stage, along with the boys and girls from the two Dr Challoners' Schools in several Albert Hall performances that I have conducted. Buckinghamshire County Council and David Chesterman have to take the credit for those experiences.

So enough of this - what about last season?: well I said it last year, but I will say it again: I believe that the society is going from strength to strength. The Lascelles Legacy (bless him) has led us to set up the Lascelles Bursary – a project that reflects my commitment to music education: to give opportunities to new, young talent. Will Dawes joined us again for the season and conducted Vivaldi's *Gloria* – the orchestra then played Haydn's Symphony No 73 – *The Hunt* and then we sang Haydn's *Theresa* Mass. Young soloistd from Royal Academy sang – it has been great to be able to give opportunities to these young singers – it is good that the Society goes along with this – the concert was

excellent and the choir sang with real assurance. The orchestra, also from the Royal Academy did us proud –

And so we come to *St Matthew Passion* – what can I say – it is such a difficult work to bring off, but I think we did. The evangelist Richard Edgar-Wilson was outstanding. The Christus, Simon Kirkbride, similarly was impressive. Of the other soloists, I particularly liked the alto, Loiuise Mott and the tenor, Daniel Auchincloss. The orchestra, continuo players again did very well – I hope people felt that the ‘bumpers’ in the choir gave added confidence – I certainly feel that the result was some really special choral singing, and an impressive performance of a really great work. It was very expensive to put on – my thanks to the committee and to Avril for taking the risk.

My thanks to all who made it happen – Of course to Roger and to Liz who do a brilliant job not only in committee but also on the day itself, Jan Lemos for the marvellous teas for the orchestra: Anthony Knight for lighting, Derek Brown for the programme and all sorts of other things, Jane Micklem for organising copies – Anne Hardman – who always collects up the orchestral music afterwards and sorts it out – we haven’t lost a part yet! Avril Spence who brilliantly sorts out payment to the orchestra members and soloists. Harriet Scott and her helpers who sort out seating on the day – Dave Starmer for organising lifts to the orchestra - I have probably forgotten someone – if so I apologise.

On this particular occasion – I must thank you all so much for the present that Roger presented to me: a beautiful silver salver – old silver as well – inscribed..... I was very surprised and touched by the thought – thank you

I finish by thanking Mary Knight again for her great expertise and patience – and thanking you all – for being so supportive and hard working.

The Society is in very good shape – the future is bright!

Thank you

**Amersham & Chesham Bois Choral Society
Programme for 2006/ 2007**

December 2006 concert:

'250 Years On - A Mozart Celebration'

1. Offertory in C: Benedictus sit Deus K. 117 (Sop Solo, 2000 : 2200 : Strings : Timp ; Organ)

9 minutes

Or:

[Te Deum K 141 (Coro SATB, 4 Tr, Timp, 2 Vl, Bc, [3 Trb]) - 11 minutes]

2. Symphony No 39 in E flat K.543. (1022 : 2200 ; Strings) approx 25 minutes

3. Requiem (last performed 1993)) - (SATB, 002Bhn/2 : 0230; T : Or: Str) 56 minutes

(Orchestra requirement: 2022 : 2230 : Strings ; Organ : Timpani)

May 2007

Messiah – Handel (last performed 1990) (SATB : 0202 : 0200: Timpani : Organ : Str)
100 minutes