



WHITEHALL CHOIR

**Minutes of an Annual General Meeting
held at St Stephen's Church, Rochester Row, London SW1
on Tuesday 10th July 2007 at 6.30 pm**

- 1 The Chairman opened the meeting at 6.35 pm.

Apologies

- 2 Apologies were received in advance from: Marion Paul, Jean Orr, Jean Robinson, Lis Warren, Helen Audaer, Christopher Boustred and Lis Anastasi.

Minutes of 2006 AGM

- 3 The minutes of the 2006 AGM were adopted as a true record, proposed by Lesley Raymond, seconded by Simon Lawson (minor amendment to clarify individuals in AOB).

Secretary's Report

- 4 The Secretary delivered his report on the 2006–07 season (Annex A). There were no matters arising. Sam thanked Jonathan for his work as Secretary over the year.

Conductor's Report

- 5 The Conductor delivered his report on the 2006–07 season (Annex B).

Discussion:

Lesley Raymond asked if we can know more about the idea of a choral scholar? Paul explained that some amateur choirs do this by providing a fee for a singer. They would belong to the choir for a year. Sam indicated that the Committee would look into this idea, but of course funding is always an issue. Rachael Salisbury asked if there will there be another audition round and Paul answered - yes, it is currently every 3 years. Liz Walton suggested that it would be helpful to do some sight singing practice by singing unseen music. Paul answered that the problem is how to fit it in, and it is perhaps best done through a workshop day rather than in regular rehearsal. Monica Darnborough asked if there are good people on the waiting list (Sam and the part reps confirmed the answer as yes) and would it be possible for them to attend rehearsals with us. Paul commented that this would be unfair if they can't then sing in the concert. Sam explained that we do keep in touch with people on the waiting list, and try to be very fair in administering the lists and those subsequently invited to join. Michael Growcott made an observation on the demonstrated commitment of those sitting on the waiting list versus those

in the choir who don't turn up on time or attend enough rehearsals. Should we raise the minimum attendance requirement? Sam answered that the committee will continue to manage the wider situation of attendance et al, but that there is certainly an option to become more strict in this regard if we wish to. Patrick Haighton asked, with regard to the choir improvement - are we looking to train the singers we have or get new ones? Paul said both - he would like a few more choral leaders in the parts, but stressed that “new” faces are also essential to keep the Choir fresh. Margaret Lauder commented that there is no guarantee that good singers will stay. Liz Walton commented that we don't want the choir to become too competitive and less friendly.

Sam invited a straw poll on whether members would like the Committee to address attendance and quality issues more aggressively (eg more regular re-auditioning, stricter attendance requirements et al), or to remain as we are, but with the Committee doing everything possible to encourage improvement incrementally – which is the current approach. The result indicated that, of the 38 eligible voters present, 68% of those present wanted to stick with the status quo (but with the Committee actively managing the situation); the remainder either voted to increase the requirements for members (19%); and the remainder abstained (13%). The Committee will take these views on board.

Treasurer's Report

- 6 The Treasurer delivered his report on the 2006–07 season, (Annex C).

Discussion:

Michael Growcott commented that the figures don't show our opening and closing balances and it is useful to have these for context. Ken explained that these figures are submitted in the audited statements for Charity Commissioners, but not routinely for in-year monitoring purposes. Liz Walton observed that we made £500 on the Come & Sing event - what can we learn from this to do even better? Ken replied that we had budgeted to break even and we did better because more people came than we expected. We will be charging more this year, given both the popularity of the day, and the large effort that it takes the Choir to put on such an event.

The three recommendations at the close of Ken's report were taken separately under Financial resolutions below. Ken was warmly thanked for his work as Treasurer, especially as the “turn over” of the Choir had been over £80k for the Season.

Financial resolutions

- 7 That the member subscriptions stay the same, proposed Monica Darnborough, seconded Andrew Hyde, carried unanimously

That the CD receipts to date be put into the Jubilee Fund, proposed by Kate Goulden, seconded by Jacky Erwtaman, carried with one abstention

That the report be approved, proposed by Michael Growcott, seconded by David Wedmore - carried unanimously

Gentleman's dress for concerts

- 8 The motion to move to black shirts, dress trousers et al (no jacket) was proposed by Martin Humphreys and seconded by Jonathan Williams. Comments from the floor: if men wear black then everything will be black, why not white shirts instead of black, what about coloured scarves for the ladies. Answer from the Committee: all black is becoming the modern concert dress. The motion was passed with over 76% of those present voting yes, 13% no and 11% abstaining.

Funding of choir tour

- 9 The motion “That future tours by members of the choir should be organised on the basis that all costs associated with the tour, including professional costs (which for the avoidance of doubt include the travelling expenses of the conductor, accompanist and any additional persons invited to take part), are met by participants in the tour and that no charge should fall on Choir funds (including, for the avoidance of doubt, Jubilee funds) except with the prior assent of no less than three quarters of the members of the Choir in general meeting” was presented and then proposed Keith Long, seconded Nicola Kirkup.

As Secretary, Jonathan gave the following reply on behalf of the committee:

The committee appreciates that:

- A choir tour is a significant financial commitment for the choir
- Not all members, for various reasons, go on tour

However:

- The financial management of the choir is a complex task
- The financial year is managed as a whole with a “big picture” view with regard to gains and losses on individual events
- Not all members sing in all concerts, or take part in all extra activities, eg the Come & Sing events and workshops. In addition, not all members take part in extra fundraising activities, such as Carol singing at the Ritz.
- Our professional musicians are engaged for all the activities of the choir and we have a continuing responsibility to them
- All events benefit the profile and well-being of the choir in some way and the tour is no more special than any other

The committee takes the view that:

- It has delegated responsibility for planning the financial resources (general fund, not Jubilee fund which is managed separately) of the choir
- It aims to maintain a fair and reasonable balance in the use of its financial resources
- It wishes to maintain the right to manage the costs of all events, including future tours, always with the view that members should always cover their own costs of travel and subsistence but that other costs associated with publicity and professional fees should be managed appropriately
- All committee deliberations and conclusions are recorded in minutes and these are freely available to all members

It was also noted that whilst this is not a vote of no confidence in the committee, it would be setting a new precedent to micro-manage individual elements of the Choir's budget.

A vote was taken with 11% in favour of the motion, 66% against, 23% abstaining – motion not passed.

Election of Officers and Committee

- 10 Before handing over the chair of the meeting for the elections, Sam gave warm thanks to Monica (for liaison with the church, being the key holder etc), Philip (for being concert manager), Tamsin (for managing the website), Anne (for producing programme Notes), Ian, Lesley & Jean (for providing rehearsal refreshments), David and others (for door keeping), Michael Hope & Michael Growcott (for putting out chairs and locking up et al), Monica and Lis Warren (for helping to search for future concert venues); and as ever, the unlucky alto who has to open the door for latecomers each Tuesday...!
- 11 Monica Darnbrough was appointed Returning Officer (Philip Pratley being delayed and unable to fulfil this function). No other nominations for posts having been received, the following officers of the Choir were elected unopposed for the 2007–08 season:

	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
Chairman	Samantha Foley	Michael Growcott	Penny Prior
Treasurer	Ken Holmes	Patrick Haighton	Colin Altman
Secretary	Jonathan Williams	Lis Warren	Yvette Street

Passed unanimously

- 12 No other nominations having been received, the following Committee members were elected for the 2007–08 season:

	Nominee	Proposer	Seconder
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Asst Sec	Rachel Salisbury	Imogen Davies	Ruth Eastman
Publicity	Ruth Eastman	Sue Vincent	Jacky Erwtman
Publicity	Martin Humphreys	James Chute	Laurence Grace
Librarian	Rose Chandler Laurence Grace	Becky Moore	Ruth Soroko
Business	Katherine Howes Miranda Douce	Monica Darnborough	Tamsin Cousins
Sop Rep	Kate Goulden	Simone Nauerth	Gill Carruthers
Alto Rep	Liz Walton	Caroline Price	Becky Moore
Tenor Rep	Colin Altman	Danny Tomkins	Ken Holmes
Bass Rep	Malcolm Todd	Andrew Hyde	Brendon O'Keefe
DBERR Rep	Nicola Kirkup	Sue Vincent	Lis Anastasi

Passed unanimously

Any Other Business

- 13 Question from the floor: What are we getting from the DBERR (ex DTI) relationship? We currently benefit from a programme printing facility plus a small subsidy from the sports & social committee (plus an “emergency” rehearsal venue if required at 1 Victoria Street).
- 14 Sam thanked everyone for their contributions and invited them to join the Choir’s Social Wing in the Green Coat Boy pub after the meeting.

Close of meeting

- 15 The meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

Jonathan Williams
Hon. Secretary
August 2007

ANNEX A - Report of the Secretary on the 2006-07 Season

Looking back at last year's report, I see that I commented that it had been an exceptionally busy year. Little did I know that this year would set new standards. Our first "official" event was the Come and Sing day last November at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Clapham. It is some years since the choir held such an event and it proved to be a very successful occasion. With 120 external singers, 45 choir members and 60 in the audience, it was a very busy day. Our two Pauls put much enthusiasm into the rehearsal and performance of the Mozart Requiem and we had lots of positive feedback from the participants – some have even joined us full time! I am pleased to say that we have another Come and Sing scheduled for this November.

Our main event of the first term was a performance of a mixed Bach, Elgar, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Parry concert at St Paul's Knightsbridge. The concert turned out to be rather a battle of logistics with no heating and dysfunctional lighting. However, we put on a creditable performance and our efforts were enhanced by Paul Plummer's excellent playing of Parry's "The Wanderer". The term was rounded off by our now usual concert of Christmas music here at St Stephen's - with one of the Readings kindly provided by our new President, Brian Bender - and our customary six appearances at the Ritz Hotel.

By the return to rehearsals after Christmas, our big project of the year, the CD recording of the Bruckner Mass in E minor and Spicer Deciduous Cross was well underway. What had started as a conversation between Sam and Paul over the summer had, during the autumn, become a firm commitment from the choir for a recording session on 27 and 28 January at St Mary-le-Bow in the City. The first rehearsals of term were devoted to revision of the two works, performed just under a year previously and behind the scenes, there was much preparation going on for the big weekend. For me, it was a fantastic experience, working with Paul, Martin Cotton the Producer and Tony Wass the recording engineer and members of the Brandenburg Sinfonia to produce the very best performance that we could of these two works. It was an uplifting, if somewhat exhausting, experience and I have certainly never seen the choir so focussed before – or since? The result is a very respectable recording and a great achievement for the choir. Many people put a lot of effort into making the recording possible including Monica who carried out all the negotiations with the venue and Malcolm who investigated and resolved all the copyright issues. Above all it was Sam who kept the whole project going, overcoming many obstacles on the way and keeping everything on track (!) until the CD and booklet were finally available.

Having completed the recording, our attention turned to the Bach St Mark Passion in its recently constructed form by Andor Gomme. This work was an interesting contrast to the more usual Matthew and John passions and the novelty value certainly attracted a good audience at St John's, Smith Square. We were pleased to have Andor in the audience as well as his daughter as the Soprano soloist. He was very enthusiastic about the whole performance: *"What an uplifting and heartwarming evening that was on Friday! A tremendous performance, and I felt really honoured that you had all put so much thought & - obviously! - such hard work into it. The choir was superb, wonderfully accurate with a full rich sound which at the same time enabled one to hear the inner parts as well as the mass. I was especially impressed*

by your skill in switching from the sensitivity of the chorales to the snarls of the hostile crowd. I do hope we'll have a chance to hear you again before long... And we're very much looking forward to listening to the Bruckner/Spicer CD."

After Easter, the choir tour was next on the horizon. As is the way with tours, this had been a long time in planning and special thanks go to Moira for all her hard work liaising with the tour company. There were two concerts at the Notre Dame de Jonquière, Lisle-sur-Tarn and the Basilique Notre Dame la Daurade, Toulouse with a programme of works by Bach, Faure, Elgar and Parry. I hear that a good time was had by all and I am sorry that I was not able to be there. The tour also marked the departure of our accompanist, Paul Plummer, after three years with the choir. Paul is a very talented musician and the choir has benefited from his playing at many of our concerts and his insight into music during rehearsals. He was very supportive of the choir, taking part in many of our extra activities such as choir workshops and assisting us with our ad-hoc informal rehearsals. We wish him all the best in his future career.

Just after returning from the tour, the choir were shocked and deeply saddened to hear that Kate Ashbridge had died suddenly at the age of 23. There had been no warning of her illness. Kate was a very enthusiastic member of the choir, volunteering for many activities and had recently joined the committee. In particular, she will be remembered for her beautiful solo in the Parry *Hear my words, ye people* at St Paul's Knightsbridge last November. We are extremely grateful to Jacky Erwteman for being such an effective and sensitive contact with Kate's family during this sad time and for, alongside other members, representing the choir at her funeral.

The last lap, on what has been a really busy year, was our performance of Mozart's Mass in C minor at St John's Smith Square. For the second time this year, we were performing a recently published edition, this time the completion of the mass by Robert Levin. Altogether seven movements have been added to complete the mass setting. Whilst not Mozart, the new additions give the work a greater scale and we had much enjoyment out of rehearsing them. Our preparation for this concert was rewarded with a good and enthusiastic audience (considering competing events such as Wimbledon, Hampton Court Flower Show and the Tour de France) and we were complemented by fine playing by the London Baroque Sinfonia and fantastic singing by four young soloists. A very uplifting end to the year.

Of course in the new Season we will be joined by James Longford as our new accompanist, and we look forward to welcoming him to what I anticipate will be another year full of exciting challenges and enjoyment of singing.

ANNEX B - Report of the Conductor on the 2006-07 Season

This has been an action-packed season with some real highlights. For me, it has also been a season which has confirmed our strengths and weaknesses as a choir – of which a bit more later. But there is most definitely and observably a trajectory upwards in standards and confidence, too, I think, and that is exciting and rewarding.

The season began with [*NOTE from the Secretary: recording was actually in January 2007*] the recording of the Bruckner Mass and my Deciduous Cross. Sam Foley had come to visit me in Lichfield the previous summer and we hatched this plan over a nice outdoor lunch at Ask. She felt, and I wholeheartedly agreed, that the choir needed a big and exciting project to get its collective teeth into. We felt that the Bruckner/Dvorak/Spicer concert had gone so well and had been so well received that it was the ideal programme to record. A short run of rehearsals at the start of term put us in fighting form for this big new experience for the choir. The Bruckner, in particular, is a very tough nut to perform, and I feel that the choir has come out of this very creditably. I have little idea what the critics will say when it is reviewed, but as a stage along the road we are travelling together, I reckon this is no mean feat and I get plenty of pleasure in listening to it. You all took my piece to heart, for which I am really grateful, and produced an outstanding performance and one which I am proud to get people to listen to. I have no qualms about this. So congratulations to one and all, and of course warmest thanks to all those, particularly Monica, for her stirring work in sweet-talking the workmen on the local building sites and, as always, Sam, for putting aside her day job for the duration! It was a huge logistical exercise, and everyone pulled their weight. Mention must be made of Ruth, too, who did all the booklet work which turned out so well.

As a result of this project we started on our main season rehearsals slightly later than normal. It was another tough nut of a programme with Bach's complex motet *Jesu, meine Freude* at its heart. I was perhaps a little over ambitious in the programming here as we also did big double choir motets by Brahms and Mendelssohn. These big pieces are difficult for us with our current strength of tenors, in particular, but I am unrepentant about this as these challenging pieces help to keep our reading and self-reliance levels up. The big Elgar and Parry pieces went well and it was, as usual, good to be able to field two excellent soloists from the choir in the Parry, Michel doing the great 'Clouds and Darkness' solo with aplomb, and the late and very much missed Kate Ashbridge, singing the other. We feel her loss very deeply.

The Christmas concert went well this season and was well attended. It is always fairly remarkable that this concert goes as well as it does on so little rehearsal! Next season we have an extra rehearsal! These are always happy occasions, though, and seem to be much enjoyed and appreciated by the church and the audience.

We moved, next, onto Bach's *St. Mark Passion* in the reconstruction by Andor Gomme who attended the performance. This was a little bit of a musical gamble for me as I wasn't 100% sure how it would turn out as there is a lot of music in the work which is not Bach's. In the event, however, by making sure that the pace was kept up

and the turbae choruses were as dramatic as possible, it really worked. We had a large and interested audience who seemed very enthusiastic. I felt that you performed with real energy and commitment which helped the performance to connect vividly with the audience.

Never letting the grass grow under our feet, we moved on straight away to our tour material. Using some of the repertoire from the first concert of the season and adding the Faure Requiem and Parry's I was Glad we headed a long way south to Toulouse for a couple of concerts in and out of town. With a smallish choir and a phalanx of lady tenors we landed in the middle of the Presidential elections and the French bank holiday. Both these things reflected in our first concert where we ran the gauntlet of outside protesters/revellers – I'm not sure quite which, but in the middle of a serious programme of emotionally-charged music this was a little ruffling. Anyway, we sang to a small but seemingly enthusiastic audience and Paul Plummer managed manfully (and brilliantly) on the recalcitrant organ miles away. We then went out to Lisle sur Tarn on a day when, finally, the sun shone and we sang our hearts out to a large and very warm and enthusiastic audience. Once again, Paul Plummer did wonders with an organ which barely worked at all! It was lovely for me to have my nephew, Mark Opstad who lives and works in Toulouse, with us for some of the time and he was extremely helpful on several occasions, not least in helping Paul out with organ management.

Tours such as these are extremely good for the choir on all sorts of levels, socially, musically, and, of course, for our reputation when we do things well.

Finally, we moved on to the Mozart C minor Mass in Robert Levin's fairly recent completion. This is a very tough piece indeed, rather in the manner of Bach's B minor Mass. However, we took it apart seriously and put it back together again and what came out in the wash last Saturday was a real tour de force of a performance. I was really pleased – thrilled on occasions. Certainly musically very uplifted by the end of the evening. The orchestra was, of course, superb and we were hugely privileged to have Cat Macintosh leading for us. She is one of the most respected musicians on the circuit. More than that, however, were the world-class group of soloists and especially the two wonderful sopranos. I had had this very team at the RCM when we did it with Mackerras earlier in the year and I booked them straight away! What sheer musical delight. But, I was seriously pleased by your singing, lest you think I was just thrilled by the purchased elements! There were one of two slightly weak moments – those double choir bits in the Qui Tollis which we had such problems with last Tuesday, were still not as good as they could – or should – have been. But this was a small blip in an otherwise outstanding performance. The audience reaction at the end of the concert demonstrated their feeling, and it reflected mine too, so congratulations.

This leads me to a few reflections in a kind of 'state of the nation' moment.

- I am very concerned about the level of 'dropping out' that goes on during a term. Of course there are personal situations which occur and over which we have little or no control. However, it becomes very difficult for me when I

think I have a choir with a particular strength of people and then find that we are actually seriously down on those numbers. This is especially galling when we have a waiting list of good people not able to sing with us because we have to restrict our numbers because of stage sizes.

- Tenors: we have recently had an almost embarrassment of riches in the tenor dept and equally quickly we found that they all left us! Another very galling situation. I am, of course, enormously aware of the pressure put on the remaining and loyal tenors. The tour demonstrated just how short of tenors we are being able to field only three men and having, as I said earlier, to draft in three altos to help out. It has helped to have a new young and strong tenor from the RCM (he's not a first study singer) who is actually going to stay with us for a while having enjoyed this last term. It helped even more with the addition of the other young tenor brought in for the concert last week. This leads me to wonder if the concept of a Choral Scholar scheme for the choir might be something worth considering? It would cost us money to run it, but I feel sure that the benefits would greatly outweigh the costs involved. The difference it makes to my perception of the general sound is huge. Current tenors **MUST** not take this as a slight in any way at all. It is balance and blend which concerns me most of all, as well as the knowledge that if someone is away it isn't a catastrophic situation.
- Recruitment: whilst the choir is technically 'full' we must try to keep a serious lookout for excellent new singers to join us. I feel that we still need leaders in various parts as it is rather too obvious what happens when one good singer is ill or away. This really isn't good enough.
- Repertoire: I feel that this choir, as currently formulated, is extremely well-suited to works like the Bach Passion and the Mozart Mass we recently performed. You really shine in these pieces and find a confidence which is sometimes lacking in more challenging a cappella repertoire. Whilst I am obviously very keen to develop to the group, I am also very keen that when we perform we do so at a very high level of attainment. I have said this before, but it does neither my reputation nor the choir's any good when you are patently feeling your way round the music in a concert. I feel that we need to develop through singing music in which we can be confident and produce a beautiful sound with enthusiasm and energy as we did last week. I am sure that both Saul and the Monteverdi Vespers next season will do this for us. But we need to be careful of the repertoire we choose so that we are not overstretching ourselves for our numbers and our level of attainment. When you are making suggestions to the committee for repertoire which you would like the choir to sing you need to bear these things in mind. I want the choir to build a reputation for being amongst the best of its kind for its size and type in London. We will only do this by the consistency of standard of our performances and by word of mouth advertising from satisfied audience members.

I want to end by thanking everyone on the committee for their hard work and commitment to the choir. Everyone works hard and takes special responsibility roles and this really helps everything to run as smoothly as it does. But two

people, as always, need special mention: Ken Holmes, who is a remarkably steady hand on the financial tiller. He is an exemplary choir Treasurer and we are very lucky to have him in this role. And of course, Sam, who is, I think, one of the very best choir chairs (ghastly, but then so is person, and I'm not allowed to say 'man'...). She is brim full of ideas, has energy, enthusiasm and the ability to take everyone with her. She is an exemplary chair in meetings, keeping them to the point and trying hard to cut down the rambles(!). She is also on the case ALL the time. I don't know how she does it with her busy and responsible job, but she does and it's really what is helping this choir to become the animal which is gradually is. Long may her reign continue as far as I'm concerned!

Finally, thanks to all of you who make up this choir. It is perhaps worth saying that in my early days as your conductor I nearly resigned several times as I found the pace of development so slow and people's attitudes so against change. However, I now positively look forward to Tuesdays (well, usually!) and more often than not get a real kick out of the concerts – especially when they are as good as last Saturday's. Let's go on really growing together and trying to make this choir better and better on all levels.

ANNEX C - Report of the Treasurer on the 2006-07 Season

INTRODUCTION

Even the Treasurer believes passionately that the financial tail should never be allowed to wag the musical dog! Looking after the money is a means to an end. The stated aim of the Choir is, to educate the public in . . . the art and science of music, by the presentation of concerts, the promotion of choral singing, and other activities'. (Whilst that's put rather grandly to ensure we can claim charitable status, it also happens to be why we all sign up in the first place.)

Purpose of this report is to tell you how committee has discharged the responsibilities you have given us to fund our musical activities throughout the season. (There will be a further opportunity next season – after accounts have been finalised and externally examined – to assure yourselves that we've acted with both financial probity and due regard to Charity Commission rules.)

At the end, I'll be asking you to:

1. Accept the **report**
2. Accept a recommendation on **subscriptions** for next season
3. Accept a recommendation on what to do with **CD sales receipts**

COMMENTARY ON ACCOUNTS (Overall, Concerts, Recording, Tour)

Jonathan says it's been a busy season – also an expensive one – and it hasn't quite finished yet (and the last concert was only 3 days ago), so these are draft accounts!

Total cost of Choir's activities has been only a little short of **£80,000** – compared with less than **£34,000** in my first full season as Treasurer in 1999/2000!

That total is almost double the total expenditure figure of c.£41,700 shown on the General Account. It includes the costs of the CD project (£14,000+) and of the French tour (£25,000+), of which only the net costs to Choir funds are shown in General Account.

Taking the net figure of **£41,700**, let's look what at what we spent it on:

- 56% on putting on 4 concerts in London – more on these later;
 - 17% on normal weekly rehearsals;
 - 13% on the CD project – more on this later;
 - 3.7% on buying/hiring music;
 - 3.1% on putting on the Come & Sing event;
 - 2.7% on the French tour – more on this later;
 - 1.7% on the costs of fundraising;
 - 1.4% on management & administration;
 - 1% on the website.
- Total = 96%!*

How did we fund it?

31% from subscriptions;
8.6% from tax refunds on subscriptions;
29% from London concert receipts;
8% from fundraising (including Ritz, rehearsal sales, & Hyperion sale)
4.4% from General Fund reserves;
4.4% from Come & Sing event (so it more than paid for itself);
4.3% from sales of our CD;
3.7% from music sales/hire charges (so they were self-financing);
3.5% from the Jubilee Fund (for the recording);
2.7% from interest on deposits;
0.7% from donations (other than for CD project). *Total = 103%!*

Choir is a mutual association; we can't expect to get out the same as we put on every aspect of what we do – either musically or financially (or even socially). But in past years, my rather crude attempts to illustrate what we've each put in seem to have been of interest – so I'll try again.

A total of 75 members have paid subs during the year – some for just part of the year, some at lower than the full rate, some by standing order at a slight premium. On average, however, we paid £175 in subs and enabled the Choir to raise a further £48 through GiftAid.

We each raised £48 each through fundraising, including £21 every night we sang at the Ritz.

So the average member – if there were such a body – raised £271 (not counting concert tickets or CDs sold) towards the general costs of running the Choir: a total of £20,325, or almost 50% of our total costs. Conversely, we each benefited from a payment from reserves of £25.

What did all that “buy”?

Eg: **£150** each on subsidising **concerts** (whether we sang in them or not);
 £95 each on regular **rehearsals** (no matter how many we came to);
 £8 each on Choir **administration**.

Two special activities this year – the CD project and the French tour – which I'd like to mention separately.

LONDON CONCERTS ACCOUNT – net cost (4 concerts): £11,291

We continue to make an average loss of c.£4,500-5,000 a concert with a band and soloists, c.£200 with keyboard-only accompaniment. We are pretty good at predicting and controlling our costs, less good at predicting revenues (mainly ticket sales). We can never expect to make any money on band-accompanied concerts – but every £1 extra you bring in ticket sales means at least 82.5p less of a deficit.

RECORDING PROJECT – total cost £14,187

On average, we raised **£96 each** in **donations and fundraising** – magnificent sum;
a further **£23** came from GiftAid **tax refunds**;
we took **£52** from General Fund **reserves**;
we received **£20** from **Jubilee Fund**.

FRENCH CONCERT TOUR – total cost £25,339

Tourers (members and friends) paid full costs of their travel, accommodation, and meals: £492 (sharing) or £592 (single accommodation) each;
tourers also paid £23 towards costs of rehearsals and professionals' costs;
all members paid (through a payment from General Fund) £15.45 each;
total professionals' costs equated to <£1,000 a concert/rehearsal, or slightly less than we expect to pay them for a concert in London.

As Treasurer, I take full responsibility for advising the committee that it was appropriate for Choir funds to be used to help pay *Choir* (as opposed to individual) costs for a *concert tour by the Choir* – indeed, I believe there is a strong argument for *all* non-personal costs to be met from Choir funds. It is always the *Choir* that's on display. (For comparison: Riga 2003, £1,231 from Choir funds; France 2007, £1,150.)

THANKS . . .

To all who have helped us raise money or save money throughout the season – all selling tickets; all for the magnificent recording appeal result; Ian, Jean, & Lesley and others doing interval refreshments; Keith doing the Hyperion sale yet again; Paul getting us very good soloists for very good prices – and getting us grants for them as well, etc, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommend report for your acceptance

Recommend that we do not increase subs (inflationary increase is the default position) – deficit on season no problem, as we started with £7,000 in the bank (not inc. Jubilee Fund).

Recommend that CD sales receipts are put into Jubilee Fund.