

Whitehall Choir Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting held on 16 September at St Stephen's at 6.30pm

Present: Jonathan Williams (Chair), Paul Spicer (Music Director), Patrick Houghton (Treasurer), Joanna Tomlinson (Secretary), Ruth Eastman (Publicity), Mark Graver (Librarian), Martin Humphreys (Publicity), Daniel Lambauer (Bass Rep), Alistair Tolley (Tenor Rep), Alison Williams (Alto Rep)

Apologies: Kate Goulden (Soprano Rep), Richard Grafen (Webmaster)

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
Minutes of 17 June 2013	JW reported that there would be no Come and Sing in May because of the choir's busy schedule at that time	
Possible Future Events (1) Bob Porter's choral festival (2) Hotel venue	(1) JW had had a brief discussion with Bob Porter about the possibility of involvement in his festival. His principal venue is St Martins-in-the Field and of the satellite venues only St Clement Danes would be suitable for the choir - a cappella or with organ. The choir would support its own costs and he would promote it and keep the ticket revenues. Under these terms the choir would lose money. However it was felt that Bob was an important contact to keep. The choir had not used him much recently because of a change in its repertoire. It was agreed that JW should pursue this, confirm the terms and revisit the use of one of Bob's venues in due course. (2) JW reported that Suzanne Dickinson at 1 Whitehall Place was interested in the choir giving a ticketed performance at the hotel. As yet there were no ideas of a programme but it might be a carol concert. It was agreed that JW should follow this up and arrange to see the venue, and discuss how to cost it etc.	JW: confirm terms with Bob Porter JW: to meet with hotel to pursue the idea
Approval of AGM Minutes	Subject to a few minor amendments the minutes were approved. They would go onto the website prior to members agreeing them.	JW: amendments to AGM and posting on website
New Concert Manager role	The committee had been circulated with Katherine Herzberg's (who had volunteered to take on the role) thoughts on what could be included in this role. The committee agreed that the main gap in resources was front of house issues at the venues on the day of concerts rather than issues such as contracts and liaising with soloists where an extra pair of hands might serve to complicate arrangements. Jackie Houghton, who does not sing in the choir, had been developing a team of volunteers to help on concert days and PH reported that she was happy to formalise this arrangement and come to a committee meeting to discuss further. PS/PH thought it important that a non-singing volunteer take on the concert management role from rehearsal to the end	JW: to speak to Katherine Herzberg about Concert Manager role

	<p>of the concert. Ideally she would work jointly with a choir member. It was important that it all be as professional as possible. JW would talk to Katherine to explain the committee's conclusions and ask if she would be interested in working as Joint Concert Manager along these lines.</p>	
<p>Summary of Financial Outcome 2012/13 Season</p>	<p>PH had circulated his summary. There was a surplus of nearly £6,000. The balance sheet included the Composition Competition costs of £2,500 in that they were earmarked from last year. A very satisfactory result especially given the expenditure costs for the CD. The St Margaret's Westminster and St John's Smith Square concerts did much better than anticipated. There had also been a very good result from the Verdi Come and Sing. PH asked for prompt comments on his summary so that it could be approved in order to go to the Auditor.</p> <p>PH asked whether there was sufficient return on the cost of newspaper inserts. He felt flyers were a more effective way of advertising. MH said that the Banqueting House concert was unusual in that there were 2 inserts in three newspapers. He was happy to try cutting back to only The Daily Telegraph and Guardian and maybe take fewer lines and try new ideas. Each concert needed a different strategy and in future he would create a publicity plan for each and circulate it to the committee for comment. RE suggested using local magazines and newsheets.</p>	<p>ALL asap: comments on Financial Summary</p> <p>MH: future concert by concert publicity plans</p>
<p>Outline Budget 2013/14 Season</p>	<p>PH requested MH's publicity budget. A lot would hang on the Jephtha concert. The concerts would cost £2,000-3,000 out of subscriptions. The Jephtha figures were based halfway between the best and worst SJSS results. He would rethink the publicity spend for SJSS. St Albans and HTSS were set to break even. Only one orchestral concert would be possible because of the recording costs. PS suggested holding a Come and Sing later in the year. The committee voted to approve the Outline Budget.</p>	
<p>Review of Banqueting House anniversary concert 1 July 2013</p>	<p>PS had talked about this at the AGM. JW thought it was a good event for the anniversary and that the party afterwards was enjoyed. PS very much liked the venue though it needed a very particular programme for which there was a limited repertory. He suggested using it every other year. RE suggested a concert of opera choruses with piano accompaniment and maybe another instrument. PH commented that the venue was not good financially although we had loaded costs on this time.</p>	
<p>St John's Smith Square, Handel Jephtha 15 November 2013</p>	<p>PS was concerned about rehearsal times which were currently 2-5 pm. He would talk to Peter McCarthy and anticipated a 12.30-1.30 rehearsal for the recits.</p> <p>MH would contact SJSS to see if the flyers could go out in the October Friends' Mailing and also check it was in the national papers.</p>	<p>PS: discuss rehearsal times with Peter McCarthy</p> <p>MH/RE would check when mailings go out</p>

	JW mentioned that Penny and Katherine would begin selling tickets 8 October	and the closing dates.
Le Manoir Carol Concert 9 December 2013	<p>This was limited to between 25-30 singers. 35 members of the choir had expressed a desire to sing: Basses x 8; Sopranos x 12; Tenors x 6; Altos x 9. It was agreed that a safe number to take would be 30, thus allowing for illness etc. PS was happy with the balance of voices. JW would mention the need for the choir to stand for the entire concert - about an hour.</p> <p>The part reps would give their lists of singers to PS in case numbers were too high. Hopefully only a handful of choir members would be disappointed. PS tabled the programme. PS would speak to Ian about the size of the organ and appropriate pieces for it.</p> <p>MG would source music and order it soon</p> <p>PH had pencilled in the coach and would confirm the pick-up point - probably outside St Stephen's. It would take about 15 minutes to load the coach.</p> <p>JW confirmed that concert dress would be DJs. £100 had been provided by Le Manoir to buy sandwiches for the choir.</p>	<p>DL/AW/KG/AT: give PS list of singers wanting to participate</p> <p>PS: speak to Ian about organ</p> <p>MG: organise music</p> <p>PH: confirm coach, arrange pick-up point.</p>
St Stephen's Christmas Concert 10 December 2013	PS said that Le Manoir programme would form the basis of this. In the absence of a vicar, we would need to know who from the church would like to do the first reading.	JT: enquire about 1st reader
St Alban the Martyr Passiontide to Ascension Concert 4 April 2014	<p>PS had decided to replace the final item on the programme with Finzi's God is Gone Up.</p> <p>MG thought it best if the choir were to buy any of the pieces that could not be printed off CPDL. The music would be needed over a longish period. JW cautioned against laying too much expense on choir members. MG would cost it up. The committee agreed the ticket price at £15 with no concessions</p>	MG: cost up the music
Composition Competition and Recording Project 2014	PH reported that there were 29 entries from a broad age range, several countries and with astonishing credentials. It would be necessary to keep them in touch with progress and also ask them how they had heard about the competition. PS/MH though much had come from tweeting and our Facebook page. The adjudication would be in Oxford in October 2014 and had been booked.	PH: keep competitors in the loop
Holy Trinity Sloane Square 4 July 2014	<p>PS had decided the programme as follows: Elgar: Give unto the Lord; Stanford: 3 Motets Op.38; Organ pieces; Kodaly: Laudes Organi; Brahms: 3 Motets Op.110; Rheinberger: Cantus Missae Op.109</p> <p>The committee agreed ticket price at £15 with no concessions</p>	JT: inform HTSS of programme
Outline for future Choir	JW thought it a long time since there had been a tour. He suggested that to save much of the hard work that goes into	

Tour	organising a tour a nice city and venues be found (eg Vienna) - choir members book their own hotel from a list - choir members arrange their own transport. Venues outside the city could be added on. DL suggested joining with a local choir who would do the publicity and draw a better audience. There was not a lot of choice of venues inside Vienna and there would be better audiences outside the city where choral concerts were less common. PS/JW the downside to two choirs was that it was “high maintenance” especially as a return tour would be expected. JW - participation would be encouraged and would need half the choir to be viable. MG/DL suggested participating in a festival. PS suggested the format of a concert along with singing a service. He would rather not combine with another choir. He thought it was important to rehearse, perform and have a good time together as a choir whatever the audience size. JW suggested taking the recording repertoire so that there would be CDs to sell. Maybe think of this for 18 months time (around March/April 2015).	JW/DL: work on the idea of a tour
Future concerts 2014/2015	It was agreed that St John’s Smith Square should be the venue for a 2015 Maundy Thursday concert given the success of the B Minor Mass in 2013. JW/PH/JT would start working on this.	JW/PH/JT: booking and programming
Committee Dates	November 11th; January 20th; March 17th; May 12th; June 23rd AGM 8th July	ALL: put in diary

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm

Date of next committee meeting: Monday 11th November 2013, 6.30pm St Stephen’s