

# Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus

## Annual General Meeting – 9 November 2010 Membership Officer's Report

The statistics reproduced below in this report are derived from a combination of last year's manual record keeping and the new computerised Chorus Database. In general they follow the pattern established some years ago by Miriam Gilchrist with some extensions.

### Composition of the Chorus

As at the date of compilation of this report (18 October 2010) there are 186 singing members of the Chorus (October 2009 – 188) and 65 Honorary Members (2009 – 63). Of the 186 singing members 9 (October 2008 – 17) are on an authorised Leave of Absence and 2 have joined during this current season and are therefore not included in the statistics below.

The Chorus breaks down as follows:

	2009/10		2008/09	
1 <sup>st</sup> Sopranos	36	(1 on LoA)	37	(4 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sopranos	32	(1 on LoA)	33	(1 on LoA)
1 <sup>st</sup> Altos	28	(2 on LoA)	27	(2 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Altos	25	(1 on LoA)	24	(2 on LoA)
1 <sup>st</sup> Tenors	9	(1 on LoA)	10	(3 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tenors	11	(0 on LoA)	11	(0 on LoA)
1 <sup>st</sup> Basses	25	(2 on LoA)	25	(3 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Basses	20	(1 on LoA)	21	(2 on LoA)

### Re-auditions

Re-auditions continue on the usual three yearly cycle. The alto sections were re-auditioned over ten days in June and I am very pleased to be able to report that every member of those sections was successful.

Gentlemen members of the Chorus are due for their triennial re-audition session in the Spring / Summer of 2011 and I shall be very grateful if section members will sign up for their slots when advertised as soon as possible in order to keep the number of 'catch up' re-auditions to the very minimum.

I would remind all members that if they have not been heard after they have been called for re-audition then they may not sing in subsequent concerts without obtaining specific permission from the Music Director.

### Resignations, Retirements and Deaths

During the year 2009/10 19 members retired or resigned or were written off the record due to unexplained absence for more than a year (2008/09 – 12) comprising:

	2009/10		2008/09	
1 <sup>st</sup> Sopranos	5		3	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sopranos	3		2	
1 <sup>st</sup> Altos	2		3	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Altos	1		1	
1 <sup>st</sup> Tenors	2		0	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tenors	0		1	
1 <sup>st</sup> Basses	3		1	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Basses	3		1	

Two members, Peter Clarke, a 1<sup>st</sup> Bass, and Tony Ball, a 1<sup>st</sup> Tenor on LoA died during the year.

## Honorary Members

There were 2 new Honorary Members approved by the Committee during the year (2008/09 – 7):

Linda Cummings  
June Wray

I have not been made aware of the deaths of any Honorary Members during the year.

## New Members

During the year 2009/10 12 new members and 1 returning member (2008/09 – 9) were successfully auditioned and joined the Chorus comprising:

	2009/10	2008/09
1 <sup>st</sup> Sopranos	1	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sopranos	2	1
1 <sup>st</sup> Altos	3	0
2 <sup>nd</sup> Altos	2	0
1 <sup>st</sup> Tenors	1	1
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tenors	0	1
1 <sup>st</sup> Basses	4	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> Basses	0	2

## Concert Attendance

A detailed breakdown of the concert attendance statistics is attached to this report as an appendix.

Just a few points may be highlighted.

- 1 The Star Wars Concerts are unrepresentative of overall attendance percentages because only approximately 60 members of the Chorus were required to sing by the promoters. They have been excluded from the comments below.
- 2 Chorus Members who have sought a formal Leave of Absence are excluded from the figures. Casual apologies are counted as absences.
- 3 The overall average Chorus attendance at Concerts for the whole season was 86.22% of those Members currently available.  
(2008/09 – 72.11%)
- 4 The best attended concert was the Brahms Requiem concert on 8 May 2010 at 88.8%  
(2008/09 - Elijah at 82.7%).
- 5 The worst attended concert was the Armed Man in Birmingham on 18 April 2010 at 79.5%  
(2008/09 Beethoven 9 at 64.9%).
- 6 The best section attendance at a concert was the 1<sup>st</sup> Sopranos at the Christmas concert at 97.0%  
(2008/09 2<sup>nd</sup> Altos at the Elijah concert at 95.7%).
- 7 The worst section attendance at a concert was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tenors at the Armed Man concert at 45.5%  
(2007/08 - 1<sup>st</sup> Altos at the Beethoven 9 concert 50.0%).

## **Computerisation of the Records**

Darius and I have continued the work of establishing the Chorus Database on the FileMaker Pro 9 software and it is now up and running. I am extremely grateful to Darius for the time and energy which he has spent in writing the database system to make it convenient for me and my successors to be able to use in the administration of the Chorus affairs.

I have also now established a computerised system where I am able to email an updated record of Chorus members' attendances each week to the Voice Representatives. The purpose of this was laid down by the Committee last year when they decided that the Voice Representatives should stay in touch with the members of their sections so as to be able to bring it to their attention if someone's attendance record was likely to fall short of the Minimum Attendance Requirement for each concert and to point out to them the necessity of obtaining Darius' approval to sing in the concert should it actually do so. In this way no-one should be faced unexpectedly with being unable to sing in a concert without having had prior warning of their situation. I am very pleased to say that system seems to be working exceptionally well and the Voice Reps are able to feed back to me a great deal of information about members' intentions which I am able to record. I am very grateful to each and every one of them for the effort they put in to this project every week.

I did mention in last year's report that I was hoping to introduce an automatic 'signing in' system based on bar coded membership cards. This was delayed because of computer problems but fortunately these have now been resolved and the necessary hardware has been purchased. It is my intention that Membership Cards will be issued to Chorus members as and when they pay their subscriptions in the next few weeks and I will then explain exactly how they will be used to speed up registration.

## **Conclusion**

May I remind members that they undertake to sing in **all** concerts and should attend at least three quarters of rehearsals for each. Please make concert dates a priority and let me know well in advance if you are unable to take part. In the event of an illness or other emergency please telephone me before 11:00 am on the morning of the concert or inform another Chorus member so that I can adjust the seating plan. My telephone numbers are 0114 230 4815 and 07711 846571 and my email addresses are either [john@johnmspence.plus.com](mailto:john@johnmspence.plus.com) or [membership@sheffieldphil.org](mailto:membership@sheffieldphil.org). All this information is prominently displayed on the website. Please also continue to inform me of changes of address and illness of members that come to your notice.

I should also remind members that, in the event that they do not complete the required three quarters of rehearsals, I do not have the power to waive the requirement under any circumstances. This can only be done by the Music Director on direct application to him.

Finally, may I express my sincere thanks for your support, kind messages and your willing co-operation over seating arrangements which I know on occasions have been very complex.

**John M Spence, October 2010**

**APPENDIX**

	<b>S1</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>T1</b>	<b>T2</b>	<b>B1</b>	<b>B2</b>	<b>Concert Average</b>
<b>27/11/2009</b>									
<b>Haydn Creation - City Hall</b>									
Attended	31	28	19	18	6	9	19	17	147
Total available	33	31	23	22	7	11	21	19	167
%age	93.9%	90.3%	82.6%	81.8%	85.7%	81.8%	90.5%	89.5%	88.0%
<b>12/12/2009</b>									
<b>Christmas Concert - City Hall</b>									
Attended	32	26	21	21	4	10	19	15	148
Total available	33	31	23	22	7	11	21	19	167
%age	97.0%	83.9%	91.3%	95.5%	57.1%	90.9%	90.5%	78.9%	88.6%
<b>10/3/2010</b>									
<b>Star Wars - Sheffield</b>									
Attended	9	9	8	8	3	5	9	7	58
Total available	32	31	27	23	8	11	21	18	171
%age	28.1%	29.0%	29.6%	34.8%	37.5%	45.5%	42.9%	38.9%	33.9%
<b>15/3/2010</b>									
<b>Star Wars - Manchester</b>									
Attended	10	10	6	8	3	4	5	6	52
Total available	32	31	27	23	8	11	21	18	171
%age	31.3%	32.3%	22.2%	34.8%	37.5%	36.4%	23.8%	33.3%	30.4%

	S1	S2	A1	A2	T1	T2	B1	B2	Concert Average
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**2/4/2010**  
**Star Wars - Birmingham**

Attended	9	9	8	8	1	3	7	6	51
Total available	32	31	27	23	8	11	21	18	171
%age	28.1%	29.0%	29.6%	34.8%	12.5%	27.3%	33.3%	33.3%	29.8%

**6/4/2010**  
**Star Wars - Newcastle**

Attended	8	6	5	5	2	3	8	5	42
Total available	32	31	27	23	8	11	21	18	171
%age	25.0%	19.4%	18.5%	21.7%	25.0%	27.3%	38.1%	27.8%	24.6%

**18/4/2010**  
**The Armed Man - Birmingham**

Attended	29	29	20	19	6	5	13	15	136
Total available	32	31	27	23	8	11	21	18	171
%age	90.6%	93.5%	74.1%	82.6%	75.0%	45.5%	61.9%	83.3%	79.5%

**8/05/2010**  
**A German Requiem - City Hall**

Attended	29	27	25	20	6	8	19	17	151
Total available	32	30	27	23	8	11	21	18	170
%age	90.6%	90.0%	92.6%	87.0%	75.0%	72.7%	90.5%	94.4%	88.8%