

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus  
Minutes of Meeting 15th September 2009

Present

Julie Smethurst; Ruth Jones; Els Pearse; Pamela Leon; John Spence; Sally Turnbull; Kate Reece; Jenny Swann; Sue Pennington; Jim Monach; Helen Kirk; Richard Salt; Frazer Jarvis.

1. Apologies

Margaret Brugger; Angela Argenzio; Dan Spicer; Janet Bower.

2. Minutes of 2nd June 2009 meeting  
were signed.

3. Matters Arising

- i) music bags. Helen will promote these again over the next few weeks. We need about 50 orders to make it worthwhile.
- ii) Janet will take over Ruth's role as chorus administrator.
- iii) Julie will speak to Darius about the matter of an agent.

4. Membership Matters

The idea of having photos of all chorus members was discussed. It would involve a lot of work to set up a system and to keep it up to date. Decided to look at it again when the database is fully working.

John circulated a report ahead of the meeting detailing the results of the soprano re-auditions. Results are not final as the process is not yet complete owing to illness and other issues. Briefly the current position is that there are 62 singing soprano members compared to 73 at this time last year.

There are 21 auditions due or overdue now, including 6 sopranos.

There was discussion about the advisability of closing soprano entry for a period and taking names for a waiting list instead. Several people reported strong feeling amongst members that this should be the case. If new sopranos continue to be accepted the process of a "cull" will need to be repeated very soon and it caused much upset.

There was a vote of thanks to Julie, Ruth & John for dealing with this difficult matter over the summer.

Warren Gilchrist and Judy Pickles are to be offered honorary membership.

5. Financial Matters

i) Coach Banners.

The old coach banners will be disposed of. Janet to speak about the advantages of the new ones at the next meeting.

ii) Friends of the Philharmonic.

2 honorary members have approached Julie with positive ideas for this. Julie to encourage them to come up with ideas.

iii) Pamela circulated a draft report for the finances for the past season. They show a small profit. Subs to go up only in line with inflation. When this has been agreed at the AGM there will only be a short time for all subs to be in if members wish to sing in the 27th November concert.

#### 6. Access Issues

Julie circulated a lengthy report ahead of the meeting outlining activity during the summer on this issue. The report is available on file. Briefly it deals with discussions which have taken place regarding both the rehearsal venue and the City Hall.

Decided to move the rehearsal next week to lecture theatre 1 in the Dainton building to try it out as a possible venue. Access is very good. There is no piano. If we wish to use this room on a regular basis we will need to obtain one and will ask for ideas from chorus members.

Discussions are still on-going about access to the City Hall chorus seating area. A demonstration of a stair climbing system is being set up at the City Hall.

#### 7. 2009/10 Concert Season

##### i) Carol Concert.

Julie had circulated a report. The Academy choir will sing. The concert is likely to be broadcast by radio 2. Ann James, (sops,) will decorate the stage table used by Ian McMillan. There was a strong feeling in the committee that the programme should include Darius' arrangement of "O Holy Night" which was so well received last time. We would also like to make a recording of this and other items.

ii) Relationship with Halle Concerts Society A meeting has been set up for 27th September between Geoff Owen (Artistic Director, HCS) and SPC. Julie, Ruth & Pamela to go. Darius to draft an input. There was discussion regarding conduct of the meeting. It was noted that the SPC representatives carried a big responsibility and it was suggested that they exercised caution with regard to making formal agreements at the meeting.

iii) Sing for your heart (8th -15th December) We will sing carols at the station on Thursday 10th December. Julie to liaise.

iv) There will be a 5.45 series this season.

#### 8. Booklet on Chorus

This is almost complete. It will be at the printers by the end of the month.

#### 9. 75th Anniversary Celebrations

Proper discussion of this was held over until Angela's return. A sub-committee was proposed to include Angela & Margaret, (both voted on in their absence,) Jenny & Helen.

#### 10. Chorus Accompanist

Nigel Gyte is to be offered the job with the proviso that he will not be asked to deputise as music director. Rachel & Chris to be asked if they would be available in case of an emergency. There will be no probationary year.

#### 11. Maintenance of Website

Frazer is taking leave of absence until at least Christmas. We need someone new on this team to support him. Kate is feeling the strain in the publicity department. She wants to continue with leaflet distribution but would like web-site support for advertising. Ask for volunteer at next week's rehearsal.

#### 12. Date of AGM

Tuesday 3rd November. At AGM Ruth to step down from all official Chorus work for a year.

#### 13. AOB

- i) John reported that the attendance records have now been transferred to the database. He is using the manual and computerized systems together for this season and will use just the database from next year. The log-in system using the bar-code reader of membership cards will be in use after subscriptions have been paid and cards issued.
- ii) It was decided to offer the honorary position of president to Rachel in recognition of her huge contribution to the chorus. There will also be flowers for her at the AGM.
- iii) Janet Hoyle has been working at organising the Bochum visit in June. She will speak to the chorus about this shortly.
- iv) The committee wishes to record a formal vote of thanks to Ruth for her wonderful work as chorus administrator for the past 2 years.

#### 14. Dates for Future Meetings

Julie will circulate some suggested dates.