

SUSSEX HARMONY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 8PM ON THURSDAY 30TH JANUARY 2014 AT CHRIST CHURCH, PRINCE EDWARDS ROAD, LEWES

Present: Milly Murphy, Rachel Jordan, Jan Green, Mike Cooper, Dave Green, Nick Hall, Paula Nicholson, Robin Nicholson, Mike Lane, Jocelyn Derwent, Elisabeth Stern, Kath Holden, Marsden Holden, John Wilson

1 Apologies for absence had been received from Keith Macdonald, Anne Hughes, Ursula Cleaver and Edwin Macadam. Dave said that Keith was not entitled to be at the meeting so his apologies should not be given or recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Milly and Jan replied that, although Keith was an associate and not a performing member, he was entitled to attend the meeting but not to vote and that his apology was therefore valid and should be recorded. Milly commented that notice of the meeting had been circulated to all members.

2 Minutes of the previous annual general meeting were agreed once an error had been amended at the end of the Music Director's report, and then signed as a true record.

3 Matters arising

6+7 Treasurer's report and presentation and adoption of accounts – Milly said that she had researched the cost of hiring other premises. Christ Church was £9 per hour; St John sub Castro £10 per hour for block bookings, £12 per hour for single bookings and £25 for concert bookings; St Thomas's was £10 per hour; Southover church was £6.50 per hour discounted rate for sacred music bookings and Malling church was £10 per hour but we got a discounted rate of £6.50 per hour.

9.4 Website – Robin reiterated his plea for information and photographs for the website. Please email to Robin and copy Milly in.

9.5 AGM – Robin asked whether the Committee had considered his comments at the previous AGM and what conclusion they had reached regarding combining the AGM with a practice evening. Milly referred to paragraph three of the Constitution and said that AGMs had been combined with rehearsal evenings in the past but that the meetings had got too long to do this. Robin said that reports could be circulated in advance and then any issues arising from them could be brought to the meeting. Robin asked whether this could be put to the vote. Mike Land and Nick agreed with his suggestion. Robin therefore proposed the motion "That the Quire AGM be combined with a regular rehearsal evening in January at our normal practice venue". Mike Land seconded the proposal and voting was taken by a show of hands. There were ten in favour, two against and two abstentions. The motion was therefore carried. It was pointed out that any issues could be brought to the quire's attention in any normal rehearsal evening if necessary.

4 Chairman's report

Milly sang her report to the meeting – copy of words and music attached to the minutes. She commented that she couldn't have done this in advance! Everyone applauded her musical 'first'.

5 Music Director's report

Rachel said that she was unable to sing her report but she could do reading. The quire had a very busy year, although outside events had not begun until April. We had honoured all our commitments and taken on more above and beyond the call of duty. We began with Kingston WI in a very small space and with strange acoustic. We had a worrying time with Robin when he suffered a stroke and then in July Jan had an accident at the barbecue. However they both showed a wonderful fighting spirit and were soon back with us. Rachel thanked them both for gritting their teeth and carrying on. We had welcomed two new members – Kath and Marsden – and hoped that they had enjoyed their first few months with the quire. It was lovely to have Ursula back with us again. Since the August break we had been called in to help with several occasions. Friends Rosemary and Kate had joined us for the funeral of Eileen Dee, whose husband, Rene, had contacted us to sing at her funeral because they loved our music, having heard us at the Harveys Old Ale thanksgiving service. The coffin had a single blue hydrangea on it, which was what she had carried at their wedding. Next we had become the organ replacement service for St Anne's, which was something we didn't usually do. Some of us had also joined St Anne's choir for the induction service of the new rector and that had been very interesting and different.

During the year Rachel had been busy transcribing the McDermott manuscripts. She said that the music was not always as good as you thought it might be! At Burgess Hill we had found that Mr Meads probably would have known John Wells. Highlights had included the Birthday Weekend, with many old friends joining us for lots of singing and a tour of Harveys Brewery, courtesy of Miles. Rachel thanked everyone for their support throughout the year and for all the things various people did for the quire, especially Nick for supporting both her and the quire, making tea etc.

Robin moved a vote of thanks to Rachel for all that she did for the quire members. There was loud applause.

6 Treasurer's report and presentation and adoption of the accounts

The annual accounts had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and Mike said that he thought they were self explanatory and invited questions.

Paula said that at the previous AGM it had been agreed that Rachel should receive £20 towards her telephone costs and suggested that she should receive a similar sum for the current year. It was agreed that Rachel should receive a sum towards her telephone costs on behalf of the quire, and that she should also claim for her mileage costs when visiting venues for the quire.

John asked about the expenses for Miles. He was advised that this amount was for the cost of the presentation copy made to him of the 'ode' that Rachel had written.

Rachel proposed adoption of the accounts, Nick seconded and the adoption was agreed.

7 Election of Officers

Chairman Milly was proposed by Mike Lane, seconded by Mike Cooper and elected unopposed.

Music Director Rachel was proposed by Milly, seconded by John and elected unopposed.

Treasurer Mike Cooper was proposed by Marsden, seconded by Nick and elected unopposed.

Secretary Jan was proposed by John, seconded by Robin and elected unopposed.
Librarian/ Jan said that Milly had been doing this job as well and was very good at it.
Archivist Milly was proposed by Jan, seconded by Mike Cooper and elected unopposed.
Publicity Paula had been filling this role without taking a place on the Committee and said that she was happy to continue in that vein. Elisabeth proposed that Paula should continue and Jocelyn seconded. Paula was elected as ex officio publicity person.

8 Any other business

- 1** Paula quoted paragraph 9 of the Constitution and said that she thought £250 was too much to pay out for one item. There was discussion and Jan pointed out that the Constitution could only be changed by another general meeting. It was agreed to leave the paragraph as read.
- 2** John raised the issue of the annual subscription. Mike said that he considered there was no need to change the subscription amount in view of the healthy annual accounts. John asked whether it should be reduced to £30. Mike said that he would prefer to keep it at £35. There was some discussion and most people felt that it was good value and should remain at the present level. This would be reviewed next year.
- 3** Milly asked Jan to read through the list of the coming year's events. This was done, although some events still had to be confirmed with dates.

Several people then paid their subs and Milly closed the meeting at 9pm.