



St. Albans Cathedral Ex-Choristers' Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting Saturday 11th July 2009

Present:

Dr Peter Hurford (President), Malcolm G Bury (Chairman), David Martin-Smith (Honorary Treasurer), Maureen Adams (Minute Secretary), Mrs Patricia Hurford (Honorary Member), David Ireson (Honorary Member), Moira Dean (Honorary Member), John Adams (Committee Representative), Geoff Ward, Rogers Covey-Crump, Barry Smith, Nicholas Gibbon, David Ranger, Rhodri Pazzi-Axworthy.

1. Chairman's welcome and apologies:

1.1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and apologised that refreshments could not be provided because of the limited time available in the Crypt.

1.2 Apologies had been received from The Dean, Dr Jeffrey John, Dr Barry Rose (Vice-president), Bob Staten (Honorary Secretary), Simon Colston (IT Manager) and 39 members, honorary members and associate members.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes of the 2008 Annual General Meeting:

2.1 It was noted that John and Maureen Adams should have been included as attendees at the 2008 meeting.

2.2 The Chairman confirmed that the fund-raising concert planned for September 2009 had been postponed as the Bishop's enthronement took priority and no other date had been available in the Abbey.

3. Chairman's Report (See attached)

3.1 Discussion took place on points from the report, mainly responding to the Chairman's feelings that the development of the Association needed a broader focus in order to find a level at which to place itself within the past, present and future context of music at the Abbey.

3.2 Regarding social events, the Chairman regretted that the barbecue had been cancelled through lack of support. Barry Smith's suggestion that had a definitive deadline for intention to attend been given then members might have responded more urgently was accepted and recorded.

3.3 Regarding the website as a tool for publicity, John Adams reported difficulty in finding items under 'Events'. The Chairman said he would get this checked.

3.4 Rhodri Pazzi-Axworthy commented on the need for relevance to differing generations. The Association's fund-raising, and that of the present Choir operated separately and it would make sense to combine in some way. The Chairman reported that he was in touch with David Foxtton, a choir parent, who is active in fund-raising for the Cathedral and Abbey Girls' Choirs, and they are exploring opportunities of working together and specifically a cohesive plan of similar or related events.

That the Chairman's Report be accepted:

Proposed – Nicholas Gibbon

Seconded – David Ireson

4. Honorary Treasurer's Report (See attached):

David Martin-Smith presented the Income and Expenses Statement for the year.

4.1 The Chairman expressed regret that the catering for the 2008 reunion had been so expensive and disappointing in quantity and value for money. Catering for the next reunion would be more cost-effective.

Pat Hurford suggested that catering for the AGM and other social events could be provided from within the membership. The Chairman agreed and said the future committee would pursue this.

4.2 Nicholas Gibbon made the observation that the FCOCA affiliation fee was quite inexpensive. The Chairman explained that this includes one copy of 'Once a Chorister', but did not know how to circulate it effectively. The Chairman had written an extensive article which had been included in this year's copy.

4.3 David Ireson pointed out discrepancies in the arithmetic of the Financial Statement.
(Post meeting note: A corrected statement is attached and the Member's Equity/Cash at Bank remains at £222.18 as reconciled to the bank statement.)

That the Treasurer's Report be accepted (subject to the correction above):

Proposed – John Adams

Seconded – Moira Dean

5. Election of Committee Members:

5.1 The Chairman expressed his disappointment that there had been no nominations for committee other than those for the existing officers. With the exception of Susannah Brook who wished to stand down for personal reasons, the remaining committee members were prepared to continue in office.

5.2 John Adams suggested that in recruiting committee members it would be helpful to describe what is involved. The Chairman accepted the suggestion and would include an explanation in the next edition of **Alban Notes**.

That the present Committee be re-elected *en bloc*:

Proposed – Rhodri Pazzi-Axworthy

Seconded – Barry Smith

6. Any Other Business:

6.1 Rhodri Pazzi-Axworthy asked whether we could use the Abbey's charitable status in money raising. The Chairman replied that the association is not connected financially with the Abbey but the question was worth pursuing. David Martin-Smith will follow up Rhodri's suggestion of the web site for Just Giving.

6.2 Discussion arose on the nature and frequency of meetings and Nicholas Gibbon, prompted by his own situation, suggested attracting members from long distances to the AGM by holding an overnight event. The Chairman agreed but pointed out the difficulty in finding available dates for events and also the necessary ECA resources to manage such events. He had opened a dialogue with The Dean to make the focus of the biennial reunion a celebration of the 'Foundation of the Cathedral and Abbey Girls' Choirs' as well as a time to meet up with old friends.

6.3 In response to a question from Dr Peter Hurford regarding continuity for boys and girls when they leave the choir, the Chairman explained that they automatically become members of the association. He sees a progression of maintaining links through the Abbey Singers, through tertiary education to developing careers and family life and it is generally in these latter years that members tend to return to the association.

6.4 David Ireson questioned the motivation for newly-leaving choristers to attend events. The Chairman recognised that the social and working relationships with the present choir are quite different now. Contact is made solely through the Master of the Music and the Chairman expressed his gratitude for the continuing support from Andrew Lucas.

6.5 In closing the meeting the Chairman paid personal tribute to Peter and Pat Hurford for their encouragement which they so readily give and also to Moira Dean for her expert help and guidance with the cathedral authorities. In response Peter Hurford thanked the Chairman for his unflinching drive.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am