**Richmondshire Choral Society**

**Minutes of the AGM held in Richmond methodist Church at 7pm on Monday 25th September 2023**

1. **Apologies:** D Clague, S Baker, J Webber
2. **Minutes of last AGM:** Approved
3. **Matters Arising:**

* Under Item 5, no formal report will be given.
* Notice will be given of a formal tribute to Janet Hall
* Clive World attended the Elijah concert and complimented the choir

on the magnificent sound produced

* Item 6, it was decided that men’s concert dress would be black

trousers and jacket together with a black open necked shirt.

1. **Any Other Business:** Kate, Kitty, Dorothy and Cathy have volunteered to share tea break duties. Tea and biscuits will be available from Monday 2nd October at a minimum cost of 50p per person. Donations of more than 50p would also be very welcome. Members are asked to bring along their own mugs, as there is not enough crockery for everyone in the kitchen. Using our own mugs will also significantly shorten washing up time for the volunteers, enabling them to rejoin practices more quickly.
2. **Reports:**

* **Chair:** This has been a difficult year beginning with the sad death of our Chair, Janet Hall. Choir numbers were low at the start of the year and were causing concern. This trend has now been reversed, numbers are looking healthy once again, and it is a delight to see the return of some old faces and to welcome new members.
* **Secretary:** The secretary regrets that she will be forced to step down this year due to continuing health problems which will enforce long absences from her duties. The secretary outlined the duties which would be expected and encouraged anyone interested to put their names forward. Over the last 5 years, many of these duties have been much simplified, and any new secretary would be assured of a warm welcome and a wealth of experienced support. Merrin Froggett, who stood in as secretary earlier in the year commented that the current secretary’s handover notes are very clear and easy to follow.
* **Treasurer:** The bank balance is showing a figure of £21,000 and we made a slight surplus last year. These figures would imply that we are in good financial health. This conclusion would be incorrect. Had we not been the beneficiaries of a second legacy and a contribution from Mayfest towards our Spring Concert, we would have lost a sum of £2,200 over the year. At this rate of loss, the legacy will not last for long.

The Committee has decided that the legacy should be conserved in order to cover concert losses, rather than used in the day to day running costs of the choir. Running costs should be met from the income provided by choir subs. Rehearsal space has doubled in cost this year while subs have not increased since before Covid. An increase in subs of £20 per year has been made and can be paid as an annual amount or in two separate termly payments. These payments are likely to rise year on year to meet rising costs.

Subs from performers in the Messiah concert did make a positive difference to last year’s income. Members are urged to sign Gift Aid forms when paying subs.

D. Cartwright asked whether it was still the case that fees must be paid for the whole year. The Treasurer replied that it is still possible to pay termly.

A suggestion was made that fees could be paid monthly in a standing order of £12. This would be helpful to members who find it difficult to pay out large lump sums for membership. This suggestion came from more than one member and will receive consideration at further committee meetings.

D. Cartwright asked that concert dates should be publicised earlier because she likes to book holidays two years in advance. She also pointed out that the auditor should write a statement to verify that the accounts are in order at the conclusion of each audit.

HS asked whether there was any plan to use our financial assets, rather than leave them in the bank. The treasurer replied that funds should be used to subsidise concerts rather than being spent on running costs. HS suggested that mor energy should go into selling tickets. This was agreed. While some members sell several tickets, others don’t manage to sell any. She also made the suggestion that some of our funds should be spent on new chairs which do not squeak. JM said that this was a good suggestion, but we would need the agreement of the church authorities before replacing the chairs. New chairs could possibly be more difficult to fold and store in the available space.

Members approved the rise in subscription fees.

* **Conductor:** The Choir sang really well at last year’s performances, and the male soloist for Elijah was particularly impressive. Thanks were also given to Andrew Christer for his hard work and outstanding performance at this concert and to the committee for their work throughout the year.

The planned performance of CarminaBurana has been deferred until May 2025 as there is insufficient space at this year’s venue to accommodate the number of musicians required for the performance. This May, we will be performing John Rutter’s ‘Feel the Spirit’ and Verdi’s ‘Four Sacred Pieces’.

Since the legacy has helped to transform the choir’s finances, it is essential that there should be some public acknowledgement of this fact.

It is very pleasing that the tea break has been reinstated.

1. **Election of Officers:**

* **Secretary:** There were no volunteers or nominations to take over the position of secretary.
* **Treasurer:** D. Barraclough was proposed and seconded . Approved
* **Membership Secretary:** Marian Ginnever proposed and seconded. Approved
* **Librarian:** Mark Harrison to stay on as Librarian
* **Social Secretary:** Judy Weeks will continue as Social Secretary
* **Website:** Merrin Froggett will continue to run the website
* **Tickets and Programmes:** Kay Marriott will continue to produce tickets and programmes.

1. **Social Event:** JM proposed that the Choir should schedule a social event, which would possibly take place at Richmond Golf Club during the week beginning 6th May 2024. This proposal was approved .
2. **Any Other Business:** There will be a committee meeting on Monday 9th October at 2pm.
3. **Meeting Closed:** 7.25pm