

Warwick and Kenilworth Choral Society

Annual General Meeting 2008

Chairman's Report

David Disbery began his report by thanking Dr. Tom Backhouse for presiding and by welcoming new members attending their first AGM, emphasizing that we were always delighted to have new members. He pointed out that this had been a particularly busy year with some major events.

Because of Ron's retirement as musical director a replacement had to be sought. Ron gave plenty of notice, and there had been a great deal of help from him and committee members. There was a good response to the advertisement and a very real competition. There was a happy consensus between the committee members and the choir in the final choice. We are sure that Andrew will be a worthy successor although he has very big boots to fill.

The other major event concerned staging. We had heard a rumour that it was unlikely to be available. An enormous amount of work had to be undertaken to find out what was happening. We are now investigating a replacement, and seriously looking at buying our own. We had our own staging up to about 10 years ago. We now have quotations and will be considering them at the committee meeting on Wednesday. We will also be meeting with the verger of All Saints discuss storing it at the church, which would solve storage and transportation costs. We would like to thank Roger, Ian and John for all their work on this problem.

It is customary to refer to the musical director at this point and it is particularly poignant at this time as it will be the last AGM for Ron. He has been our MD for 13 years and his final concert with us will be his 54th. Ron has given us support in so many ways, in music, committee work, sponsorship from his company, printing posters tickets, etc. However, his musical contribution has been the most important. He has tested us with demanding works, and sharpened our performance of old and favourite classics. We thank him for his leadership and direction over 13 years. Colin will continue to support us in rehearsal and concert performances, and we are very grateful to him for his skill and contributions.

The chairman also thanked the committee for their work. We are losing David Jones from the committee. He was an effective secretary and has even been helping in various matters over the last few months. There is therefore a vacancy on the committee but so far no volunteers have come forward.

Thanks should also be given to all the choir members who provide essential help, namely Helen Bolan as librarian, Pat Flather for library and ticket work, Malcolm Dineley for lighting as well as all those involved in front of house, provision of drinks and staging. The choir has a continuous need for help in various areas. One of these is the website, in which we have problems in keeping up to date. The present designer no longer sings in the choir. It is not an unduly onerous task, as it needs updating four times a year. Volunteers are invited.

Thanks should likewise be given to the people involved in fund raising and social events, Ron and Sue for the carol evening, Rosemary for the Annual Dinner and Ian for the Quiz evening.

Conductor's Report

Our MD began by thanking the choir for his obituary. He said that it was a sad occasion to be at his last AGM and deliver his last report, but that there would be a proper au revoir in December. He said that last year was his first time of conducting the Bach Christmas Oratorio. In March it was interesting to undertake new works. The Cherubini was a joy to conduct and the highlight was the Donna Nobis Pacem. The performance was fantastic and the choir brought it off so well. The performance of Handel's Alexander's Feast was a novel one with organ and harpsichord. He remembered the last time the choir undertook Carmina Burana. Then it had to be rehearsed, this time we can just knock it up, because of the enormous improvement in the choir. He said that he had never conducted The Music Makers before and that it was going to be fantastic. The Vaughan Williams Sea Symphony was going to be an enormous challenge next year, but he had huge faith in his successor.

Ron thanked Margaret Vickery for dealing with the orchestral parts, which could prove a huge problem, and also for the programme notes. He gave a very big thanks to Colin who had given tremendous support and was a consummate repetiteur.