



**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY 3rd September, 2018
BALFRON CHURCH**

Present Kirsty Allan, Ken Allen, Amy Anderson, Pat Ashworth, Joyce Begg, Liz Brander, Alison Brown, Roy Burdon, Colin Cameron, , Catherine Davidson-Carr, Mark Evans, Catherine Frew, Philip Gaskell, Madeleine Gorham, Richard Green, Karen Heron, Peter Hunt, Ian James, Mary Lawson, Moira McKendry, Sharon McCrudden, Moira McKendry, Jenny McNeely, John Moreland, Judith Neil, Shona Nicolson, Bill Noblett, Anne Parker, Fiona Renfrew, Annette Rogers, Jackie Savery-Pope, Hans Schutten, Molly Schutten, Rosie Series, Isobel Shaw, Heather Smith, Melanie Smith, Elspeth Smith, John Smith, Catriona Stewart, Max Taylor, Ewing Wallace, Penny Watson.

1) Apologies: Julia Cross, Victoria Glasse-Davies, Christine Hunter, Sue Kerr, Jennifer Lunn, John MacDonald, Sheena McLean, Carol Omand, Carole Young.

2) Minutes of the AGM on 4th September 2017:

Adopted as correct: proposed by Melanie Smith; seconded by Liz Brander

3) Matters Arising:

As agreed at the AGM 2017, Rosalind MacGowan and Helen Barclay were invited to become Honorary Members of the Strathendrick Singers. They were both delighted to accept.

4) Chairperson's Report:

Cast your minds back to 2nd May 2017 when we, our Friends, and past members gathered in Culcreuch Castle to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the choir. It was great to see so many people there, and it was a hugely enjoyable evening. A lot of folk put in a lot of hard work to make it happen, and I note a particular thanks to the clarsach quartet from Douglas Academy who entertained us before and during the meal. The after-dinner musical contributions from a wide range of choir members past and present was particularly memorable.

Fast forward to Christmas 2017 when we sang at the Killearn Country Market, Gartmore Village Hall, and Killearn Kirk. Among the stand-out pieces were James MacMillan's *O Radiant Dawn*, Bob Chilcott's *Wenceslas*, and, of course, Joyce's Christmas message.

We started the Spring season rehearsing two exciting pieces of music, Fauré's *Requiem* and John Rutter's *Magnificat*. Our annual Musical Coffee Morning was hit by the 'Beast From The East', and postponed until 28th April. The Spring concert, on 25 March, was a big success, with excellent organ accompaniment from John Gormley.

After that, it was a question of preparing for our Highland Tour, but I'm not allowed to tell you about that until our next AGM!

The Friends of Strathendrick Singers continue to make a valuable contribution to the life of the choir – thank you Alison for your continuing commitment to organising and motivating them. Choir membership has fallen slightly across the year, so recruitment, particularly of younger singers, remains a priority.

And finally... none of this would be possible without the work of your committee who keep me on track. A huge thank you to Moira and Kirsty for their splendid work leading the catering over the past four years. They step down as of tonight, and will be replaced by a team including Christine Hunter, Phil Gaskell, Julia Cross and John MacDonald. I'm delighted to say that Annette Rogers has agreed to join the committee as the Alto representative. Once again Adam Urquhart has very kindly audited our accounts. And of course, we've again been led by Mark with flair and ambition, and accompanied by Penny with her quiet determination and considerable talent.

5) Treasurer's Report:

Bill had previously circulated the Financial Report to the choir members and said that he felt it was self explanatory. He noted items showing a significant variance from last year, one of which was the increase in income from Gift Aid which was due to the increase in subscriptions. The Coffee Morning income also showed an increase, possibly due to the fact that the event was held in warmer weather after Easter instead of early March. He informed the choir that the sundry items of expenditure included a set of steps to make access to the stage easier for choir members, and 2 external hard drives for storing all the choir files.

Adoption of the Accounts was proposed by Philip Gaskell, seconded by Alison Brown, and they were duly adopted.

Colin thanked Bill for all his work.

6) Music Director's Report:

My thanks to you all again for another year of super music making, for your unending enthusiasm, encouragement and support!

Christmas Concert 2017

O Radiant Dawn! What a fantastic opener to our Christmas concert. Such a simple piece but so effective and the sound of it is still ringing in my ears! I enjoyed the look on the faces of the quartet in front of me (all of whom knew the piece very well) as you began – they were not ready for what they heard.

The concert seems like such a long time ago with so many notes passed since then.

The new piece by Chilcott, Wenceslas, seemed to be well received by audiences and I certainly enjoyed learning it. Something a little different but Chilcott's formula did not disappoint. My thanks to Rebecca and Ross, the soloists from the RCS, who did a splendid job, both in that piece and also in their solo contributions. Keep an eye out particularly for Rebecca – a name to notice in the future.

Well done to the choir for their a cappella contributions in Dulci Jubilo and Lo How a Rose, lovely additions to the concert. We need to do more a cappella repertoire – I keep saying that - perhaps this year?

Thanks also to the string quartet, as ever, from Douglas Academy, for whom coming to Killearn is now as much a tradition as it is for us to have them. I spoke to the quartet today and they are already booked for this December!

Thanks also to Joyce, for her fabulous letter!

Spring Concert 2018

Well done again. A lot of notes.

This had a more sombre first half, a feeling that some audience members fed back, but we did sing a Requiem after all, so I am not sure what they expected. I enjoyed the Faure a great deal, especially the way the choir engaged with the music, not just the notes, and it was at times very exciting and similarly moving.

The Magnificat in the second half was full of energy and the audience really enjoyed this. Many did not in fact know the piece and commented on how accessible it was on a first listening. I love this piece, and have performed it several times now. From the energy of the opening phrase of the Magnificat to the sensitive Of a Rose the lyrical Et Misericordia and the final Amen! The piece has something for everyone in it. The energy in the final Amen was spectacular – putting the copies away makes such a difference.

Catriona Clark, our soprano soloist, whilst not on her usual form due to illness did sing beautifully in both pieces, and of course we had our baritone soloist for the Faure, Euros Campbell with a most impressive sound!

Just using organ was a slight departure I know, and certainly I would agree that the Magnificat at times does not have the same energy and punch as with orchestra and percussion. I did feel that we had a good rehearsal in the afternoon with the choir without the added pressure of the orchestra and it also allowed us to perform as we would on the tour to Strathpeffer. I know there were also varying comments from the audience regarding this but as ever, we shall never please everyone all of the time. Thanks though go to John Gormley for negotiating the tricky score on organ so wonderfully!

Highland Tour

And so to the tour... This was a great opportunity – socially and musically and thanks to the committee for their hard work in the organisation of this. It was a great weekend of music making and socialising, helped by the fabulous weather most of the time.

It is always a little bit like heading into the unknown on this kind of trip, especially for me not having heard the Dingwall Choir before, and we held our own, performing to a small but select audience in the pavilion. And what a spread afterwards!

The Sunday concert at Newtonmore was in a lovely space and there was, as the previous evening a lovely sense of community even though we hardly met the other choir at all.

With reduced forces, we really sang well and having the opportunity to sing the repertoire repeatedly is very satisfying. Thanks to Kristine Donnan who came along with us to accompany and did a sterling job.

Music for 2018/2019

Christmas Concert: to include Vaughan Williams *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*, and Cecilia McDowall's *A Winter's Night*.

Spring Concert: I want to do something meaty and I keep coming back to Haydn's *Creation*, considered his finest piece written, composed late in his life. As the title suggests, it is the story of the Creation - full of joy and elation, scored for 3 soloists, chorus and orchestra. It is an incredibly exciting piece from the opening *Let there be Light*, arias such as *With Verdure Clad*, chorus numbers such as *A New Created World*, *Awake The Harp* and *The Heavens are Telling*. It is all manageable for a choir like us and I think it will be popular with the audience. Given the size of the work it would be the only piece in the programme and whether we would do the whole piece, I am not yet sure.

Thanks

My thanks go to the Committee, Ewing, Penny and all the choir.

7) Committee:

Colin informed the choir that, after 4 years of service, Moira and Kirsty were stepping down from the catering and a team including Christine Hunter, Philip Gaskell, Julia Cross and John MacDonald would be taking over and sharing the duties. One of this team will attend each committee meeting.

Annette Rogers has agreed to become the alto representative on the committee.

The Committee for 2018-19 will be:

Chair: Colin Cameron

Treasurer: Bill Noblett

Secretary: Judith Neil

Librarian and Making Music Representative: Ewing Wallace

Alto Representative: Annette Rogers

Catering team member (one attending from Christine Hunter, Philip Gaskell, John MacDonald and Julia Cross)

8) Future Events

The *Come and Sing* at Balfron High School, planned in conjunction with their Music department, which was provisionally planned for September 15th 2018 has been postponed. It was felt there was not enough time to organise it or publicise it adequately. This will be discussed at a committee meeting next Monday 10th September when new plans will be made, as well as a date for the Coffee Morning. The choir will be informed.

There will be Carol Singing at The Smiddy at Blair Drummond this year (as the Killearn Country Market is no longer running).

December 8 th 2018	Carol Singing (The Smiddy, Blair Drummond)
December 9 th 2018	Christmas Concert in Gartmore
December 14 th 2018	Christmas Concert in Killearn
March 24 th 2019	Spring Concert in Killearn

9) AOCB

Bill informed the choir that there was a sum of £717.50 surplus after the choir trip in May to Strathpeffer.

He put forward various options, including returning £21.74 to each of the participants, deducting it from their subscriptions or donating it to choir funds (these would be individual decisions). John Moreland suggested that, alternatively, the total amount could be put into a separate fund to be used for future choir trips. This was met with approval, proposed by Heather Smith and seconded by Moira McKendry. Colin said that it was unlikely there would be a trip in 2019, but 2020 was a possibility.

Ewing made a plea for members to take care of their musical scores and to return them to him promptly after concerts. He also announced that it is his intention to step down from the post of librarian at the end of this 2018-19 choir session.