

North Kingston Choir 7th AGM

Monday 3rd February 2020, 9pm

Fern Hill Primary School

Attendees

Committee members: Penny Hamilton (PH, Chair), Georgi Vaughn (GV, Secretary), Lesley Keirle (Membership Officer), Nello Bearzatto (Events Officer), Tristan Bate (Communications Officer).

Choir members: Darlene Ahmed, Åsa Bäckman, Diccon Bate, Mohd Norizam Bin Che Yim, Alex Buss, James Clack, Hannah Deveson, Neil Gowe, Vanessa Hartley, Nicky Hinde, Corinne Ingram, Shira Keshet, Ken Lambatan, Marcus Le Brocq, Yvonne Nichols, Sandra Pfister, Mark Singleton, Katie Treagust, Helen Trott, Alan Waterman, Rebecca Watson, Barbara Widden, Fiona Williams.

Also attending: Jessica Bate (Musical Director).

Proceedings

1. Welcome by Chair and introduction of existing committee members

PH opened the meeting and introduced the existing committee members: Chair, Penny Hamilton; Secretary, Georgi Vaughn; Treasurer, Sue Manson; Events Officer, Nello Bearzatto; Membership Officer, Lesley Keirle; Communications Officer, Tristan Bate; Social Secretary, Sally Winter.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Jasmin Andrade, Lucy Aurelius, Ellie Bate, Linton Broadley-Stace, Kyla Furness, Ellie Giffard, Jem Goddard, Karen Goddard, Rob Hicks, Lu Luo, Rachel Mahoney, Sue Manson, Paulene McCaul-Clarke, Phil Meir, Maike Rentel, Susanne Rehbein, Emma Richards, Caroline Whitehead, Sally Winter, Ed Young.

3. Chair's summary of existing committee members' reports for 2019

PH presented the annual report for 2019 (attached hereto) and thanked the outgoing committee members.

4. Elections of 2020 committee

Proxies from Emma Richards, Rachel Mahoney, Ellie Giffard, Karen Goddard and Jem Goddard were received and passed to the Chair. All choir members present voted unanimously in favour of the nominees and the members of the 2020 committee were elected as follows:

- Chair: Penny Hamilton
- Secretary: Georgi Vaughn
- Treasurer: Sue Manson
- Events Officer: Nello Bearzatto
- Membership Officer: Sally Winter
- Communications Officer: Shira Keshet
- Social Secretary: Phil Meir

5. Motions

There were no motions.

6. AOB & thanks

GV thanked PH on behalf of the committee and choir.

(Attachment 1)

North Kingston Choir Annual Report 2019

North Kingston Choir had a packed programme of events and activities during 2019. The committee met three times for official committee meetings (minutes on the NKC website) as well as communicated regularly via email and WhatsApp, sending out key information about NKC activities via the weekly newsletter.

We also updated our charitable constitution this year as we now have an operating turnover of over £5k.

1 Events

The NKC schedule of events for 2019 has seen us yet again expanding our reach and participating in some new fantastic singing adventures!

The highlight of the summer was a performance at **Hampton Court Garden Festival** (previously known as Flower Show) on 7 July, an event drawing crowds from all over the UK and beyond. It was a beautiful sunny day, providing a great day for singing and the unusual venue for the warm-up session turned the rehearsal into an event in itself!

NKC branched out this year as a support choir to the British singer songwriter and rising star **Tom Speight**, accompanying him at two trendy London venues, the Omeara on 2 June and the Bush Hall on 21 November.

Back from the summer break, in the autumn term we concentrated our efforts on preparing our "own" event and a first for NKC – the **Cabaret Night** on 2 November at the Vera Fletcher Hall in Thames Ditton. The event was expanded into two performances, a matinee and an evening performance, and – after a few fraught preparations – it turned out to be a lovely event, with the opportunity to spend the day with family and friends in a relaxed and informal setting, tasting the delicious food of Orindi's Deli and enjoying some drinks whilst listening to the choir and many of our talented (and brave!) soloists.

We concluded the year – and the decade – with another *grand finale* at the **V&A Museum** with our Christmas performance on 14 December. The magic of the place hit again with its splendour, acoustics and atmosphere and with Hallelujah, Christmas Lullaby and Bob Chilcott's Mid Winter added to the repertoire alongside O Holy Night, there were very few dry eyes in the house...

We also ran two separate workshops for choir and non-choir Members this year. The first was a **Soul & Gospel** workshop on 2 February and the second was **Back to the 80s** on 12 October. The feedback from both of these workshops was incredibly positive with those who attended all leaving on a music high!

From time to time, we also have rehearsals delivered by external musicians and on **18 March**, we had a workshop with **Dominic Stichbury**, who is well known for working with male choirs, and he introduced us to the song The Book of Love, a choir favourite.

We should all be proud of the growth and achievements in 2019 and we can look forward to starting another year and decade of ever greater singing and friendship at NKC.

2 Treasurer's Report

For the year ending 31 December 2019

The accounts for the year, show a surplus of income over expenditure of £1,623. This surplus compares to £1,887 for the previous year. The choir subscription was reduced in 2018 to reduce the amount of surplus being accumulated by the choir. The only significant changes in 2019, as reflected in the accounts, was that we received a higher amount of Gift Aid of £2,116 from the HMRC on subscriptions paid by individuals in the choir, compared with last year £998 and we spent more on concerts in 2019, £1,157, compared with net income of £395 in 2018.

Accumulated reserves at 31st December 2019 (i.e. unspent income from 2019 and earlier years) amount to £5,090.

At 31st December 2019 NKC's bank balance amounted to £4,476 (last year end £3,032).

The choir's bank account was moved this year from Metro Bank to Barclays as a precautionary measure after reports in the media of Metro Bank having problems.

3 Membership

As of 31st January 2020, we had a total of 49 members (34 ladies and 15 men), with two potential members coming to future taster sessions. We currently have 49 ladies on the waiting list and no men.

Our member numbers have remained virtually static throughout the year as at the last AGM we were 48 members but we have had some movement within the choir with 2 ladies leaving and 3 joining this year and 2 men leaving and 2 men joining this year.

4 Social Events

2019 has been another year dense of social events at NKC.

We kicked off the year with a Karaoke Night at **Firecracker** on **8 February** for food and rousing singing!

We continued with a small but perfectly formed gathering of relaxing drinks and shared plates at **The Prince of Wales**, Hampton Court on **29 March**.

There was then fun and laughter at **The Grey Horse** comedy nights on **7 June** which seemed to have an unusually high turnout of men.

To celebrate the end of another great year of singing at NKC, we had our **Summer Party** on **12 July at The Anglers** in Teddington.

To start the new term, we gathered at the **Black Horse** pub on **27 September** for food and drinks.

And finally we rounded off the year and the decade with the traditional **NKC Christmas Dinner** at the **Canbury Arms** pub on **20 December**.

And of course, throughout the year every concert has been an occasion to enjoy some drinks and food after the performances, like in December after the performance at V&A.

5 Communications

There have been a number of communications activities undertaken to support the choir in maximising support at events and raising our profile, including:

- We have used some Facebook ads to market the workshops which has had the added effect of raising the profile of the choir and seem to be very cost-effective.
- We have continued to grow our public Facebook, Twitter and Instagram profiles, sharing and linking to other choirs' events to help build links.
- We continue the use of MailChimp to handle our supporters mailing list (currently 59 subscribers) and choir members newsletter.
- The Committee now manages all its files through DropBox and in the new year specific email addresses for each Committee member will be used in line with GDPR regulations.
- Finally, thanks to Asa, Maciej and everyone else who has helped take photos and videos of our events.

(Attachment 2)

Musical Director report 2019: Jessica Bate

The choir has continued to flourish over 2019 with new performance opportunities and the very welcome addition of our new bass player, Tom Dortel, to the choir band. I am proud to witness the ongoing commitment of our singers who have regularly attended rehearsals, arranged additional sectional rehearsals and embraced the challenges of more difficult repertoire and learning music from memory.

This year, we held two public singing workshops which were very well attended. The first was in February 2019 with a soul and gospel theme followed by the 80s workshop in October 2019. The band have been key in making these workshops a unique opportunity within the local community. March 2019 saw a guest workshop led by Dominic Stitchbury who leads the Chaps Choir. He introduced the choir to the song "Book of Love" which has since become a firm favourite.

Our first public performance in 2019 was in July at the Hampton Court Garden Festival. This was the first time we had performed at this prestigious event. We drew a large crowd who were very appreciative of our performance and even joined in with some dancing. The atmosphere was relaxed and the choir and band rose to the challenge of an outdoor performance in a confined space. We performed two sets and the choir sang without music which made for a very special performance. Henry joined us on the piano and our band was complete with Tom on bass, Tristan and Jem on guitar and Steve on drums.

In November 2019, the choir held our very first cabaret night at the Vera Fletcher Hall in Surbiton. This event stemmed from previously successful bandeoke events where individuals or duos performed songs with our wonderful band. This time we invited an audience for both a matinee and evening performance. We added to the evening experience by arranging an Italian meal with bring your own alcohol. The whole event was a huge success and we received very positive feedback from performers and audience alike. This event was challenging to organise and a number of people worked very hard to make it run smoothly. The band surpassed themselves by having to learn a large number of new songs and Corinne did an excellent job of arranging backing vocals for the event.

Our Christmas performance this year took us back to the Victoria and Albert Museum where we performed a number of our favourite Christmas songs but also added a few more classical ones including Rutter's "Christmas Lullaby" and Chilcott's "Mid-Winter" – both of which sounded beautiful.

I would like to pay tribute here to the wonderful NKC band – they are all immensely talented musicians who give their time freely and are very dedicated to NKC. They have regular band rehearsals and spend considerable time and effort working out the best accompaniment. Furthermore, they have the mammoth and often stressful task of setting up before each concert. The choir are extremely grateful to all of them: Jem, Tristan, Tom and Steve. There are a number of other talented musicians in the choir who have taken up roles as section leader, leading sectionals, warm-ups and recording parts. A huge thank you to Georgi, Maike, Rachel, Corinne, Ellie Bate, Kyla, Sally, Linton, Diccon and Tristan.

At the start of another year, it is always humbling to reflect on the triumph that NKC has become. However, it would not be possible without the dedication of the committee who work so hard to ensure the smooth running of the choir. My heartfelt thanks to each of them: Penny, Georgi, Sue, Lesley, Sally, Tristan and Nello.

I look forward to 2020 with excitement!