

FARINGDON SINGERS

Minutes of the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
5th October 2023
7.30 pm United Church Hall



1. APOLOGIES –Jonathan Mapley, Sarah MacElvogue, David Willey, Carol Griffin, Heather Aries, Richard Maw, Maria Jukes, Angela Brame, Richard Benwell, Sophie Stainer, Meg Greenwood, Jo Allan, Peter Martin, Vicky Medcalf.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM - The Minutes of the previous AGM held on 6th October 2022 had previously been made available to all on the Faringdon Singers website, and were all agreed.

3. MATTERS ARISING : none that aren't covered below.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT (Carol Griffin- Treasurer, audited by Jonathan Mapley)

Faringdon Singers Accounts for the Year to 31st August 2023

Income		Expenditure		
Subscriptions	£4,760.00	Hire of Hall		£555.75
Summer Social	£727.00	Fees		
less expenses	£728.50	Music Director	£1,980.00	
	-£1.50	Accompanist	£50.00	£2,030.00
		Insurance		£184.34
		Hire/purchase of Music		£485.20
		Printing		£80.00
		Presentations		£168.90
				£3,504.19
		Surplus for the year		£1,254.31
	£4,758.50			£4,758.50
Opening balance	£407.58			
Surplus	£1,254.31			
Closing balance	£1,661.89			

Independent Examiner
Jonathan L Mapley FCA (retired)

5. MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Clare Woodall)

When I was first invited to join the Faringdon Singers as their new musical director, I was promised that this was the friendliest choir in Oxfordshire and I have not been disappointed! It has been an absolute pleasure to become involved in a choir of wonderful musicians who have been so generous in their welcome. Thank you all. I am also very grateful that Terence has been willing to stay on as our accompanist, which he does with enormous skill and sensitivity.

Our Christmas Concert 2022 was held in Blessed Hugh Catholic Church. We opted for one concert that term, which in retrospect was fortunate since nearly a quarter of the choir were sadly absent due to illness. Nonetheless, it was a lovely concert of familiar Christmas repertoire as well as some beautiful Advent pieces including Vilette's Hymne a la vierge and pieces by Bruckner and Byrd. Meg Greenwood recited two lovely poems and there were the usual carols with the audience. It was a very enjoyable first concert for me as MD.

Our Spring Concert included more ambitious repertoire, on the theme of 'A journey through the Psalms'. We covered pieces from the early Renaissance to the present day, including John Rutter's 'The Lord is my light and my salvation' with clarinet obbligato by Vicky Lewis. The second half of the concert included Monteverdi's Beatus Vir, which was accompanied by two violin soloists, Anna Nemchuk and Katherine Payne. Anna and Katherine also delighted us with a performance of Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor and Shostakovich's Five Pieces for Two Violins and Piano, both accompanied by Lynette Stulting. We held two concerts, one at St Mary's Uffington and one at St Mary's Buckland and the audience were warm and appreciative at both venues.

Faringdon Singers has had a long-standing association with John Ridgway and it was therefore a pleasure to be invited by Phil Johnson to perform at John's retirement concert at the Parish Church in Wantage on 29th April. We performed two pieces that John composed/arranged for FS and 'Tomorrow shall be my dancing day' with the Wantage church choir.

Our final concert of the year was held at St Mary the Virgin, Longcot, on a beautiful summer evening. Our theme was 'Dreams of the Countryside' and covered music by Vaughan Williams, Saint-Saens, and various arrangements of folk songs. Richard Benwell (tenor) and Sophie Stainer (soprano) performed the beautiful duet As Steals the Morn Upon the Night by Handel, accompanied by Debra Warner (piano), Vicky Lewis (clarinet) and Lyn Williamson (bassoon). We also heard two exciting pieces by Peter Warlock, Pretty Ringtime and The Lover's Maze, performed by David Willey (tenor) and accompanied by Debra Warner. There was a particularly poignant moment in the concert when the choir performed an encore of Sure on this shining night by Lauridsen. This was dedicated to the memory of Diane Blease, whose husband, Dennis, welcomed us to the church. I am delighted that Phil Singleton, local composer and conductor of the Marlborough Concert Orchestra, is going to be taking on the role of Musical Director while I am on maternity leave. I am certain that the choir will continue to go from strength to strength under his leadership. I would also like to say a huge thank you to the committee, especially Sjoerd, for everything they have done behind the scenes, and to each member of the choir for making this first year such an enjoyable experience.

6. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Sjoerd Vogt)

2022/23 HIGHLIGHTS

- Clare – Welcome – and Terence supporting!
- Subscriptions dragged into the real world...
- Choir grows from 30ish to 40ish
- Our finances – on a firmer footing
- Christmas Concert – NOT cancelled!
- Virtuoso violinists & instrumentalist/soloists from within the choir
- A new era in imaginative Concert titles
- Clare expecting – congratulations!

It's clear from the chattering (pre-post-practice and whatsapp in particular) that our choir members continue to really enjoy being part of Faringdon Singers, and much of the credit for this must go to the Musical Director! Clare not only immediately immersed herself in the minutiae of running a choir – such as our library, our finances and our online teaching aids (thank you Clare & Spotify...) , but she also manages to help us to improve - using humour and positive feedback – even when we don't deserve it.

THANKS

My heartfelt thanks not only to the Committee, but also to all who help in so many other ways; putting out the chairs, tidying up, carrying the piano around. Special thanks go to Sarah Green and her dad for the staging that was so effective in Uffington, Buckland and Longcot this year. (Sarah – hope you're enjoying Maputo, and looking forward to welcoming you back in 2026!) My thanks also to our four HOST venues; in this case Blessed Hugh Faringdon, St Mary's Uffington, St Mary's Buckland, and St Mary the Virgin Longcot – all were very welcoming.

DONATIONS TO CHARITY

Our four concerts were all well attended, and as always also raised money for worthy causes. The Buckland-St Mary's Concert (for Ukraine) stood out in particular – raising more than £1500!

Sjoerd Vogt - October 2023

7. THE COMMITTEE FOR 2023-2024:

All committee members have indicated that they are willing to continue in their current roles. There being no other nominations, this is the committee going forward. Proposed: Lyn Williamson, seconded: Val Chapman. Phil Singleton will be providing maternity cover during the Spring and Summer terms:

Musical Director	Clare Woodall	07810-675245	clare_woodall@yahoo.com
Chairman	Sjoerd Vogt	01367 241707	sjoerd@vogt.org.uk
Treasurer	Carol Griffin	01367 718090	griffinCarol@btinternet.com
Publicity	Karen Vogt	07527-256308	karen@vogt.org.uk
Secretary	VACANCY		
Committee Member	Jonathan Mapley	01367-615009	mapleyjonathan@gmail.com
Committee Member	Terence Carter	01865 863379	tjtcarter@btopenworld.com
Choir Library	Richard Maw	07738 696549	rpmaw2@btinternet.com
Music Loans	Janet Sheil	01367 870276	janetstmaursheil@gmail.com

8. AOB

Unanimous agreement that starting the Spring Term a week earlier - on the 4th January – was absolutely fine. Concert weekend would then move forward by one week – so that it's on the weekend before Palm Sunday. Similarly- general agreement is that it's fine to start the Autumn terms a week LATER so that people can enjoy their holidays without feeling guilty!

Val Chapman thought that the Summer Social this year was not as good as it could have been. Expensive for what you got, and low attendance. Could we perhaps think of something different for 2024? Janet Sheil mentioned that the Committee had also been discussing this at the last meeting a couple of weeks ago – and a bring-and-share picnic format was suggested. Low cost, informal. Feedback was generally positive.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.57pm .