



Salisbury Musical Society

www.salisburymusicalsociety.org.uk



ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2016

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Salisbury Musical Society will be held at **SOUTH WILTS GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, STRATFORD ROAD, SALISBURY** on **Tuesday 04 OCTOBER 2016 at 7.30 pm** for the following purposes :-

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To consider and approve the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting
3. To receive Reports from the Chairman, Conductor, Assistant Conductor and Treasurer in respect of the year ended 31 July 2016
4. To receive the Statement of Accounts for that year
5. To appoint an Independent Examiner
6. To elect the Officers
7. To elect Ordinary Members of the Committee
8. To consider the Revised Programmes for Seasons 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 and the choice of Works for Season 2018/2019
9. To appoint the Voice Representatives
10. To consider Any Other Business

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

Sue Blyth

..... (Secretary)

25 August 2016

..... (Date)

SALISBURY MUSICAL SOCIETY

The Committee presents its Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2016.

CONSTITUTION

The Society was founded in 1923 by Sir Walter Alcock and is registered as a Charity with the Charity Commissioners under the Number 266461. The Society is governed by a Constitution adopted by the Members on 12 October 1999. The Registered Office of the Society is 5 Netheravon Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3BJ.

PRINCIPAL OBJECT

The principal object of the Society is to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of music in all its aspects by the presentation of public concerts.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The review of the activities of the Society during the year is given in the separate reports of the Chairman, the Conductor, the Assistant Conductor and the Treasurer which are included on pages 11 - 16 of this Annual Report.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Members of the Committee (being the Charity Trustees) who served during the year ended 31 July 2016 were :-

<u>Officers</u>	Mrs J Burridge Mr R Bexon Mrs S Blyth	Chairman Treasurer Secretary
<u>Ordinary Members</u>	Mrs N Bond Dr H Brown Mrs S Locke Mrs J Podkolinski Mr N Stiven Mrs D Verdon-Smith	(From 07-10-2014) (From 07-10-2014) (From 07-10-2014) (From 07-10-2014) (From 07-10-2014) (From 06-10-2015)

All the Officers and Ordinary Members will retire at the conclusion of the forthcoming Annual General Meeting; Mrs N Bond and Mrs S Locke are resigning from the Committee; Dr H Brown, Mrs J Podkolinski, Mr N Stiven and Mrs D Verdon-Smith will be eligible for re-election as Ordinary Members and can be nominated. As regards Ordinary Members there will be six vacancies to be filled. Nominations by Members of the Society for any appointment as an Officer or Ordinary Member must be made in writing, supported by a seconder and delivered to the Secretary by not later than **27 September 2016**. Nomination forms can be obtained on application to the Secretary.

CO-OPTED COMMITTEE MEMBER

Mrs Beth Smith served as a Co-opted Member of the Committee as Assistant Secretary/Minute Secretary during the year ended 31 July 2016.

ADVISER TO THE COMMITTEE

Mr D Halls, the Conductor and Mr I Wicks, the Assistant Conductor, attended meetings of the Committee during the year in an advisory capacity.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

Sue Blyth

..... (Secretary)

25 August 2016

..... (Date)

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SALISBURY MUSICAL SOCIETY
HELD AT SOUTH WILTS GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, STRATFORD ROAD, SALISBURY
ON TUESDAY 06 OCTOBER 2015

Mrs Jane Burrige, the Chairman, welcomed Members and especially those Patrons present.

1. Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were received from eight Members and eight Patrons.

2. Minutes of the Last Annual General Meeting

(a) Mr John Powell proposed and Mrs Ann Harries seconded a motion that the Minutes, as published in the Annual Report, should be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. This motion was carried by a show of hands.

(b) Matters Arising. None.

3. Reports from Chairman, Conductor and Treasurer

The Treasurer said he had nothing to add, but two things to explain : Accounts for Season 2013/14 - £250 refunded by the Cathedral following the fire alarm going off at the end of the June concert. Closure of War Loan - £255+ that had been in our accounts for years, now cleared.

The Chairman had the following to add to her report : 'Come and Sing' - what a great success with 350+ singing and 200+ in the audience, with an estimated profit of £1,600. Mrs Burrige thanked Mr Wicks for being such a good Conductor and Teacher, she also thanked Mr Halls for "hitting all the right notes" in the Widor Toccata, and said what a good programme it was. Mrs Burrige announced that another 'Come and Sing' would be held next year, on Saturday 3 September to sing the Mozart Requiem. Reference our recent concert audiences, the Chairman said we still are not getting enough people attending concerts, in fact, the numbers were lower than for the same works in previous years. She made the suggestion that each member sells or pays for two tickets - saying that other Choirs do this - we do not, but may be we should make it our aim. Mrs Burrige announced that she, Mr Stiven and Mrs Verdon-Smith had been on a recce to Saintes, with a view to SMS going there to sing (possible date end of May 2017) and for the French Choir to pay an exchange visit to Salisbury sometime.

The Conductor had nothing to add to his report.

Adoption of all three Reports was then proposed by Mrs Mandy Hollywood, seconded by Canon Andrew Warner and carried by a show of hands.

4. Adoption of the Statement of Accounts

There were no questions for the Treasurer.

Adoption of the Statement of Accounts was proposed by Mrs Beth Smith, seconded by Mrs Clare Tawney and carried by a show of hands. The Chairman thanked Mr Bexon, on behalf of the Society, stating he had been Treasurer for 40 years and had done such a great job in keeping the Society afloat over those years.

5. The Appointment of an Independent Examiner

The Treasurer confirmed that Mr Harry Brockway was willing to continue. His appointment as Independent Examiner was proposed by Mr Jon Hampton, seconded by Mrs Anita Boakes and carried by a show of hands.

6. Election of Officers

The Treasurer took the Chair; he thanked Mrs Burridge for guiding the Society through another Season. Mr Bexon reported that only one nomination had been received for the position of Chairman :

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Mrs Jane Burridge	Mrs Elizabeth Wicks	Mrs Caroline Probert

The election of Mrs Burridge was accepted with acclamation.

Mrs Burridge resumed the Chair and reported that only one nomination for each of the positions of Secretary and Treasurer had been received :

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Mrs Sue Blyth Mr Roy Bexon	Mr Malcolm Sturgess Mrs Sue Blyth	Mrs Dell Warner Mrs Jane Podkolinski

Their election as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, was accepted with acclamation.

Mr Bexon stated that in his 40 years as Treasurer there had been seven Chairpeople; four Secretaries; £1M spent; 3,000 cheques signed; 250 Committee Meetings attended and the Society's Constitution and Members Handbook revised. He said that after careful consideration the time had come for him to stand down, may be at the 2016 AGM but definitely at the 2017 AGM, thus giving two years notice. Mr Bexon said he would also like to relinquish overseeing the SMS Website.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bexon for giving the Society so much notice, which was very much appreciated, she said that someone should be identified to take over in October 2017, but "shadow the Treasurer over the 2016/2017 Season to learn the "ropes".

The Chairman thanked the Secretary, Mrs Sue Blyth, saying Sue goes about all her work for the Society very quietly, she is an amazing lady and we are very lucky to have her.

7. Election of Ordinary Members of the Committee

The Chairman thanked Elected Members of the Committee - Mrs Nicki Bond (Wine and Nibbles); Dr Hilary Brown; Mrs Sarah Locke (Wine and Nibbles); Mrs Jane Podkolinski (Librarian); Mrs Chris Sprott (Award Scheme and Fund-raising) and Mr Nick Stiven (Concert Manager).

The Chairman thanked :

Mrs Heather Bache (Orchestra Hospitality); Mrs Mandy Hollywood (Seating Plan); Mr John Clipson (Concert Programme - now retired after 25 years); Mr John Foster (Music Stand); Mr Ian Davidson (The '100 Club' - now retired after 25 years); Mr Stephen Lycett (Programme Editor and Posters); Mr John Powell (Tickets); Mrs Caroline Probert (Hosting our Soloists); Mrs Beth Smith (Asst Secretary/Minute Secretary); Mr Di Verdon-Smith (Publicity); Ms Sonia Woolley (Warm-ups).

The Chairman reported that six nominations for the six vacancies had been received :

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Mrs Nicki Bond	Mrs Di Verdon-Smith	Mrs Caroline Probert
Dr Hilary Brown	Mrs Sue Morgan	Mr Malcolm Sturgess
Mrs Sarah Locke	Mrs Susan Daniell	Mrs Jenny Morgrette
Mrs Jane Podkolinski	Mrs Anne Foster	Mrs Di Verdon-Smith
Mr Nick Stiven	Mr Malcolm Sturgess	Mrs Sylvia Roseaman
Mrs Di Verdon-Smith	Mr Roy Bexon	Mrs Barbara Smith

The Chairman invited them to stand to identify themselves.

The Election of Ordinary Members of the Committee was carried by a show of hands. The Chairman thanked them all for standing.

8. Revised Programme for 18 June 2016 and 19 November 2016 concerts and Proposed Works for Season 2017/2018

Mr Halls set out the revised programme of works for 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, and the proposed works for 2017/2018, as follows :

Season 2015/2016 - Revised Programme

21 November 2015	Bach CPE Blake Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra	Magnificat Passion of Mary
12 March 2016	Verdi Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra	Requiem
19 March 2016	Verdi Guildford	Requiem
18 June 2016	Jenkins Mozart Salisbury Symphony Orchestra	The Armed Man Vespers
3 September 2016	Mozart	Requiem : Come and Sing

Season 2016/2017 - Revised Programme

19 November 2016	Durufié Vaughan Williams Butterworth Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra	Requiem Toward the Unknown Region The Banks of Green Willow
01 April 2017	Elgar Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra	The Kingdom
24 June 2017	Mendelssohn Salisbury Symphony Orchestra	Elijah

Proposed Works for Season 2017/2018

18 November 2017	Vaughan Williams Handel Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra	Sea Symphony Zadok the Priest
17 March 2018	Bach Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra	St Matthew Passion (In English)
16 or 23 June 2018	Monteverdi Salisbury Symphony Orchestra	Vespers of 1610

Mr Halls said all the above recommendations from the Music Sub-Committee had been displayed on the Notice Board.

The Chairman put the recommendations to the Meeting : Mrs Beth Smith proposed and Mrs Di Verdon-Smith seconded that the Revised Programmes for Seasons 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 and the Proposed Programme for Season 2017/2018 be accepted. This was carried by a show of hands.

Mrs Burrige said that when we sing The Armed Man in June 2016 we are going to invite others to sing, without an audition, on payment of one term's subscription, with the hope that we may attract a few new members.

Mrs Burrige thanked Mr Halls and Mr Wicks for all their work with the Choir over the past Season and said we appreciated having two different styles of conducting.

The Chairman thanked the Patrons for their loyal support; Mr Peter Grove our Accompanist and Mr Chris Daniel and his Team of Stewards.

9. Appointment of Voice Representatives

The Chairman reported that all the present Voice Representatives were happy to continue for another Season. She thanked them all on behalf of the Society.

10. Members who had left the Choir during Season 2014/2015 :

S1 - 3; A2 - 5; T1 - 3; T2 - 1.

11. Any Other Business

(a) Mr Philip Corp (T1) asked that we consider reducing ticket prices for Students. The Chairman asked for a show of hands for the idea that under-18's should have unreserved tickets at a reduced price : virtually all agreed. The Chairman said the Committee would discuss and decide actual price.

(b) The Chairman asked those Members present if we should still hold social events, as ticket take-up for such events over the past few years had fallen a lot : there was a reasonable show of hands in favour. Mrs Burrige said the Committee was always open to suggestions for the sort of social event we should hold and any different venues.

The Meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

Sue Blyth

..... (Secretary)

27 October 2015

..... (Date)

Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/members of

Charity Name
SALISBURY MUSICAL SOCIETY

On accounts for the year ended

310716

Charity no (if any)

266461

Set out on pages

9 — 10 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

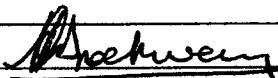
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~*):

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:



Date

20/8/16

Name:

HARRY C BROCKWAY

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

Address:

11 JUNIPER DRIVE
SALISBURY
SP1 3RA

SALISBURY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Receipts and Payments Accounts

Year Ended 31 July 2016

	Receipts		
Performance Account	Blake	Verdi	Jenkins
Soloists and conductor	4890.00	2960.00	2150.00
Orchestra	4015.00	3840.00	1585.00
Printing & advertising	826.00	1017.40	1183.80
Cathedral Hire	3824.00	3574.70	3212.00
Music hire (orchestral)	148.80	162.00	789.55
Miscellaneous	231.25	87.43	19.28
PRF	276.59		
Net profit	<u>14211.64</u>	<u>11641.53</u>	<u>872.14</u> <u>9811.77</u>
Loss on:			
Blake	7480.16		
Verdi	1431.71		
Advertisements re all concerts			872.14
			<u>8129.98</u>
			<u>9002.12</u>
General Account			
Conductor's honorarium		1825.00	14798.50
Assistant conductor's honorarium		1275.00	1950.00
Accompanist's honorarium		1830.00	2025.00
Miscellaneous honoraria		75.00	113.00
NFMS membership fee		475.00	421.00
Hire of rehearsal rooms		2100.00	585.20
Music hire/purchase		1080.26	1414.55
Sub repayments		175.00	36.00
Saintes trip		239.00	513.73
Annual Reports		128.10	237.47
Secretary's expenses		132.58	
Flowers		45.00	450.00
Orchestral music 2016-17		166.50	590.00
Web site hosting		168.00	1040.00
Licence		21.00	450.00
Verdi reception			4371.00
Less tickets	1984.50		
	<u>370.00</u>		<u>1385.00</u>
			<u>1391.20</u>
			<u>2776.20</u>
			<u>1594.80</u>

Verdi Guilford coach	590.00	
Less choir payments	<u>300.00</u>	290.00
Music C&S 16	450.00	
Publicity C&S 16	77.00	
Net General Account receipts	13867.31	
	<u>26034.25</u>	<u>26034.25</u>

Come & sing 2016 1755.00

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Summary of net receipts and payments		
Balance as above:		
General account net receipts	13867.31	50655.01
Performance Account net payments	<u>8129.98</u>	<u>5737.33</u>
Total Net Gain for the year	<u>5737.33</u>	<u>56392.34</u>
		<u>56392.34</u>

Net Assets - 31 July 2016
(subject to Notes 2 and 3)

Notes

- The Cash Balances at 31 July 2016 were held at:

Lloyds Bank on Current Account	24645.83
Lloyds Deposit Account	5029.78
Lloyds Fixed Term Deposit Account	20000.00
COIF Account	<u>6716.73</u>
	<u>56392.34</u>
- No account has been taken of:
 - subscriptions due but not received from members
 - income tax recoverable in respect of years ended 31 July 2014, 31 July 2015 and 31 July 2016..
 - the value of a rostrum and stocks of ties, stationery, folders and music
- No provision has been made for PRS Fees still payable for the year.
- The Charity's Policy on Reserves is to hold sufficient cash to cover the cost of the coming Season's concerts..

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE



Roy Bexon
(Hon Treasurer)

20 Aug 16

TREASURER'S REPORT

I will start my penultimate report to you as Treasurer by dealing first with business that overlapped from Season 14-15, namely the Come & Sing. We had some income and expenditure for this in last year's accounts, amounting to a net income at 31 July 2015 of £784.87. When we take into account the net income from that event falling in this Season (£1594.80) we made a very respectable profit of £2379.67. Singer and audience numbers were very large for this event. A sum of £1594.80 shows in this year's accounts in the General Account Receipts side.

Now to the "normal" season. As usual I have prepared a Table of results for the previous five Seasons. Season 15-16 was characterised for me by three things in particular: we made a profit on a concert, we had significantly larger audiences (600+) at two concerts (Verdi & Jenkins), and we had a sponsor. The costs of the Blake concert were very high because the composer wanted us to use Patricia Rozario – whose fee is well beyond our normal level. We discussed this with him and he very generously gave us sponsorship of £1500 for that event. Even with the sponsorship that concert on its own was responsible for about 90% of our concert losses for the Season. That was because we had income of over £9000 for each of our other two concerts (compared to about £6500 in recent times). I know that I

Item	Season 11/12	Season 12/13	Season 13/14	Season 14/15	Season 15/16
Ticket Sales	19964.49	18957.67	19068.37	14696.18	23522.66
Retiring Collections	1854.47	2099.11	1871.76	1344.33	1730.41
Concert Income	21818.96	21056.78	20940.13	16040.51	26753.07
Concert Expenses	35005.86	36250.64	34517.44	25198.76	34792.80
Soloists	8913.60	8999.10	8782.00	6515.00	10000.00
Performance Loss	12386.90	14167.06	13577.62	9261.37	8129.98
General Account Surplus	4548.32	10002.66	15612.43	14533.98	13867.31
Profit (Loss) on Season	-7838.58	-4164.40	2034.81	5272.61	5737.33
Cash assets	47410.49	43248.09	45280.90	50655.01	56392.34

have bleated on about this for about 25 of my 40 years as your Treasurer but an audience of 600+ makes all the difference, as you can see! So the Performance Loss for this Season was £8129.98, significantly lower than 12/13 and 13/14. Season 14/15 was an odd one in that we did only two concerts but it still incurred a higher loss.

The General Account showed a surplus of £13867.31. There are a few reasons for this value. Firstly, we had fundraisers – the Hundred Club, Summer Social, Gift Aid from the Brooking Memorial Service collection, the Come & Sing 2015, and the Three Pianists recital – totalling about £3705. We also received £2025 from singers who joined us just for the Jenkins. On the worrying side was the income from Members, down to £14798.50 from £16283 last year. We need more Members!!

On the Payments side we subsidised the coach to Guildford and also paid for a reception in the Cathedral. We have yet to receive an invoice for Web Site Maintenance for the year. Otherwise it was a fairly routine year for the day-to-day running of the organisation.

So overall I am really pleased with our financial progress over the last two years which has put us back with reserves at the level we had over 5 years ago. The Annual Subscription of £130 represents extraordinary value for money and is a good deal less than comparable choirs.

The coming Season will be an interesting test for us because the mix of works is less “box office” than last Season but we have seen that a 600 audience is there to be attracted to our concerts.

My thanks go especially to those who have worked so hard to raise money for us this year and also to those who have worked tirelessly to make our presence known in the City and hold our costs down at the same time.

Roy BEXON
Hon Treasurer

Governance Statement

The Trustees have taken note of the Charity Commission’s Guidance on Public Benefit in undertaking its activities. They have also assessed the risks to which the Charity is exposed, including operational and financial risks. In the opinion of the Trustees the Charity has established resources and review systems which, under normal conditions, should allow the risks identified to be mitigated to an acceptable level in its day to day operation.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Our numbers are the lowest they have been in a long while and we are especially short of Tenors and Basses. The performance of *The Armed Man* in June, which was a huge success, attracted 44 'Guest' singers - eight have requested to join the Choir and so far five have passed their audition to join in September. *The Armed Man* also improved our finances as each 'Guest' paid a term's subscription of £45.

The 2015 "Come and Sing" : *Fauré Requiem, I was glad, The Hallelujah Chorus* and David's wonderful performance of the *Widor Toccata* also attracted new members and boosted the coffers. It was universally agreed to be a great success; we had a choir of 300+ and an audience of around 200. Consequently, we decided to repeat the event, and this year singing *Mozart's Requiem* and, at the request of many singers, we have arranged an afternoon rehearsal. We are very grateful to Ian for conducting and training the massed Choir. Everyone plays a part in the "Come and Sing", but I would especially like to thank Nick Stiven and Chris Daniels for the concert management, Jane Podkolinski for organising the music and Sue Blyth for the ticketing.

SMS is more than just a Choir - we are after all a 'Society'. This year we have again hosted other events : a very successful Piano Recital given by David, Ian and Peter and a Summer Party, for which many members made a contribution either by providing delicious food or magic/musical talent. Both events were held in the lovely venue of the Cathedral School Drawing Room.

As you know we were planning a visit to Salisbury's twin city of Saintes and much effort from Di Verdon-Smith and Nick Stiven especially, went into planning it. Sadly, however, we could not make it work; partly because of a lack of commitment and enthusiasm from the Choir of the Abbaye aux Dames and partly through problems making the 'Twinning' system work, without both of these we were reluctant to commit ourselves. Instead though we had a highly successful exchange concert with Guildford Choral Society, our combined Choirs gave superb performances of the *Verdi Requiem* in Salisbury, conducted by David and at the 5-Live concert hall in Guildford under Jonathan Willcocks. Those of us who sang there thoroughly enjoyed the different venue and singing with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. We are hugely indebted to members of the Choir who made the exchange happen, especially Nick Stiven who masterminded the operation superbly (except may be next time we could have a bus for grown ups!!). We are now planning the next exchange with GCS, which may possibly be in London.

Audiences have been better this Season and there are two reasons for this. Firstly, our decision to have a balance between popular and more challenging programmes. Secondly, to improve our publicity, and I need to thank the Committee, the Choir and most importantly Di Verdon-Smith for the huge effort she has put into that. But we still need to attract bigger and new audiences. We therefore conducted a survey to find out from our audience what advertising brings them to our concerts; the answer was clear, it is 'word of mouth', especially hearing about concerts from someone in the Choir. So it boils down to you, the Members, to sell tickets and the effort you put in to publicising our concerts is what determines how many people attend.

The Award Scheme, something that I have always believed in, has not attracted many applicants over the past few Seasons, but this year there had been one applicant who is hoping to join us for the 2016/17 Season. The problem is that our local schools, unlike in many other places, provide excellent experience for students to sing great music, so it is probably most important to publicise the Scheme outside schools, among Salisbury Hospital staff, for example. If anyone is interested in promoting this Scheme I would love to hear from them, there is an important and rewarding job to do here.

Using Information Technology (IT) more effectively. This is something we really need to do and we need someone from the Choir, who has IT experience, to use it on our behalf and take on the role as SMS IT Manager. We need someone to maintain and improve our Website, create a better mailing system to enable us to communicate more effectively with Members and a better publicity system, both of the Choir and our concerts, that utilises not only the Website but also takes advantage of Social Media and makes links with other Websites. I am sure there is someone in the Choir who has these skills and we very much need them to take this on. It is not a huge job, but a very important one.

Roy Bexon has been Treasurer of SMS since 1975 and at the 2015 AGM he announced that he would be standing down in 2017. In his wisdom and generosity, he agreed to remain in the job until we could find a replacement - not an easy task, but I am delighted that Christa Spencer has agreed to 'shadow' Roy for the 2016/17 Season and then stand for election as Treasurer at the 2017 AGM. Christa is a very experienced Accountant and we are very grateful to her for her willingness to use that experience for the benefit of SMS.

Thanks go to Gillian Gailey for running the '100 Club' so efficiently this Season and thank you to John and Anne Foster for agreeing to take it over for the next Season. As always I would like to use my Annual Report to thank those members of the Choir who do so much to make it work and whose efforts are often taken for granted. Your Committee works hard to run the Choir, but the key people who keep SMS 'on the rails' are Roy Bexon and Sue Blyth, and I thank them for the huge amount of time they contribute, without them the Choir would not function. I would like to thank Jane Podkolinki who, as Librarian, is doing a brilliant job; Stephen Lycett who continues to design and produce our publicity material and the concert programme and Jon Hampton for Gift Aid and writing the programme notes. These people and others I have not mentioned contribute greatly to the running of the Choir, but we need more people to play a part. We would like your ideas and your help, so please do not hesitate to speak to me or anyone on the Committee - we would really welcome your support. If there is one challenge that SMS faces at present, it is increasing our numbers, especially in the Tenor and Bass sections; so, if you have any ideas about how we can do that, the Committee would love to hear about them.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your continued support to me over the past Season, which has made being your Chairman so enjoyable and rewarding.

Jane BURRIDGE
Chairman

CONDUCTOR'S REPORT

The "Come and Sing" *Fauré Requiem* which started off the 2015/2016 Season was an enjoyable event with the several hundred singers working hard under Ian Wicks' direction. Richard Hooper and Jake Lacey were the two soloists and after the short rehearsal on some tricky sections, the performance was fluent and controlled.

The November 2015 concert featured two works; a setting of the *Magnificat* by CPE Bach and Howard Blake's *Passion of Mary*. The Choir coped extremely well with both of these unfamiliar pieces. The Bach contained some genuinely difficult passages which were negotiated with considerable success, while the *Passion of Mary* had different challenges, including pitching discords and general intonation. The performance was a fine one, and the composer (who was in the audience) was delighted with it. The soloists, in particular Richard Edgar-Wilson, William Briggs and Matthew Brook, were excellent. Both works deserve to be heard more.

In March 2016, SMS joined forces with our friends from Guildford Choral Society in a performance of Verdi's towering *Requiem*, with a second performance taking place in Guildford. Both the Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra and SMS were well drilled for this concert and the performance, despite a few lapses from the soloists, was electrifying. Much of the intonation was very accurate and the energy of the Choir in the *Dies Irae* was special.

Ian Wicks, who conducted the Choir for the June 2016 concert will comment further about this, but I would like to say, as a member of the audience, how much I enjoyed hearing SMS being put through its paces in the Mozart and Jenkins works. This concert made a huge impact on the large audience.

I finish by thanking the Choir, Jane Burridge, Peter Grove and the Committee for another enjoyable Season.

David HALLS
Conductor

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR'S REPORT

A new venture for SMS was the introduction of a "Come and Sing" event in September. This originally came about as there had not been the opportunity for a concert in June 2015 because of the Magna Carta celebrations.

The choice of the well known *Fauré Requiem* produced a large number of singers who were an impressive sight for your Conductor as he climbed aloft to a rather tall podium. Despite the limited rehearsal time available and the spread out seating arrangement of the Choir in the nave of the Cathedral, the singers produced an impressive sound and the ensemble was remarkably good. The notoriously tricky to tune Offertorium movement was sung very well and the sections for tenor and sopranos alone in the Kyrie and Agnus Dei in particular were well blended and showed good ensemble. The soloists Jake Lacey (Treble) and Richard Hooper (Baritone) sang with distinction. I am very grateful to David Halls for his ever supportive organ accompaniment which greatly enhanced the performance.

The Summer term was to see yet another innovation for SMS. Our programme of Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man* and the Mozart *Vespers* gave us the opportunity to invite non-members of SMS to join us to sing in this concert. This initiative saw 44 extra singers swelling our ranks leading to a more confident sounding Choir and an enhanced audience. Initially the rehearsals for the Jenkins and particularly the Mozart were slow-going but the pace quickened after half-term and we were able to begin to project an understanding of the words and the composers' intentions.

The curse of the mysterious fire alarm spiders struck again during our Friday evening rehearsal, which saw the Choir and the SSO evacuated firstly into the drizzle of the churchyard and then into the fortuitously placed marquee. This curtailed completely our rehearsal of the Mozart on that evening, which was a shame.

It was very gratifying to see a large audience for our concert which was a tremendous occasion. The Mozart *Vespers* went well, despite the reduced rehearsal, with perhaps the only casualty being the tempo of some movements being rather more conservative than I had hoped. Our Soloists Augusta Hebbert (Soprano), Andrew Stewart (Alto), Michael Bell (Tenor) and Richard Hooper (Baritone) all sang very well with a special mention for Augusta's sublime singing of the beautiful Laudate Dominum.

The Armed Man was given an excellent performance, full of drama and committed singing from the Choir and Soloists and fire from the Orchestra. The initial reluctance to sing the opening and closing movements from memory was banished with impressive engagement from the Choir with the audience and Conductor.

We were very fortunate to have the Salisbury Symphony Orchestra playing for our concert with their inspiring leader Rosamund Bromley. The Orchestra relished the textures in the Jenkins, producing a Hollywood score of lush strings and horns, challenging woodwind hornpipes to the trumpet fanfares and timpani crashes of the Battle. Throughout, the playing of all sections of the Orchestra was excellent and I thank them for the preparation that went into their performance. The beautiful playing of Lionel Handy in the stratospheric cello solo in the Benedictus was a high point as was, in more ways than one, the moving playing of Rifleman Ben Rowe of *The Rifles* in the Last Post from the west window gallery.

Finally, I close by thanking Peter Grove for his accompaniment of our rehearsals, the Committee for their tireless work and David Halls for his constant support.

Ian WICKS
Assistant Conductor

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 04 OCTOBER 2016 - **SMS Annual General Meeting
South Wilts Grammar School for Girls
Stratford Road, Salisbury at 7.30 pm**

CONCERTS FOR SEASON 2016/2017

Saturday 19 November 2016 : Elgar For the Fallen
Vaughan Williams Toward the Unknown Region
Durufle Requiem
Butterworth The Banks of Green Willow
With Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra

Saturday 1 April 2017 : Elgar The Kingdom
With Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra

Saturday 24 June 2017 : Mendelssohn Elijah
With Salisbury Symphony Orchestra

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