



Salisbury Musical Society

www.salisburymusicalsociety.org.uk



ANNUAL REPORT

AND

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2018

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 02 OCTOBER 2018 at 7.30 pm** for the following purposes :-

A G E N D A

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 2018
4. To receive the Statement of Accounts for that year
5. To appoint an Independent Examiner
6. To elect the Officers (nominations will be published on the website)
7. To elect Ordinary Members of the Committee (nominations will be published on the website)
8. To consider the Revised Programmes for Seasons 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 and the choice of Works for Season 2020/2021
9. To appoint the Voice Representatives
10. To elect a President of the Society
11. To vote on a further proposed amendment to the Constitution regarding a possible change of name (see next page - 1a)
12. To consider Any Other Business

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

Sue Blyth

(Secretary)

6 September 2018

(Date)

Item 11 : Proposed Resolution for a Change of Name

Notice is hereby given that, at the Annual General Meeting aforesaid, the Members will be asked to vote on a further proposed amendment to the Constitution, following adoption of Issue 3 at the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 4 September 2018.

Clause 1 of the Constitution currently reads :

1. The name of the society shall be the Salisbury Musical Society hereinafter referred to as "the society".

The Resolution the Members will be asked to vote on is :

"Clause 1 of the Constitution shall be changed to read :

1. The name of the society shall be Salisbury Choral hereinafter referred to as "the choir"."

Discussion

At the 2017 AGM it was agreed that the Committee investigate a change of name for the society. The main argument for a change of name was that the current name does not resonate with the general public and does not describe what the choir does, which is to sing choral music.

The Committee sounded out views of the Members by way of a survey in the Spring of 2018. The results indicated that 2/3rds of those surveyed would vote for a name change. The preferred alternatives were :

- Salisbury Choral Society
- Salisbury Choral

The Committee were asked to vote on which name should be put to the Members of the choir. The majority selected "Salisbury Choral" and it is this name that is included in the Resolution.

Those Members unable to attend the meeting in person are invited to appoint a proxy (who may be any performing member including the Chairman) by post or e-mail to the Secretary : Sue Blyth at 20 Wiltshire Road, Salisbury, SP2 8HS or sue_blyth@ntlworld.com confirming their voting decisions, by 8.00 pm on Monday 1 October 2018.

SALISBURY MUSICAL SOCIETY

The Committee presents its Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2018.

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 18 Nichol Road, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire, SO53 5AS.

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 14 - 20 of this Annual Report

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Members of the Committee (being the Charity Trustees) who served during the year ended 31 July 2018 were :-

<u>Officers</u>	Mrs J Burridge	Chairman
	Ms C Spencer	Treasurer
	Mrs S Blyth	Secretary
<u>Ordinary Members</u>	Mrs H Bache	(From 03-10-2017)
	Mr C Edgar	(From 03-10-2017)
	Mrs M Hollywood	(From 03-10-2017)
	Dr H Ingram	(From 03-10-2017)
	Mr L Rose	(From 04-10-2016)
	Mrs D Verdon-Smith	(From 06-10-2015)

All the Officers and Ordinary members will retire at the conclusion of the forthcoming Annual General Meeting. Mrs Bache, Mr Edgar, Mrs Hollywood, Dr Ingram and Mr Rose 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 **25 September 2018**. Nomination forms can be obtained on application to the Secretary.

CO-OPTED COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mrs Lorraine Blakey	(IT Administrator)
Mrs Lindsay Devine	(Librarian)
Mr Nick Stiven	(Concert Manager)

ADVISERS TO THE COMMITTEE

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

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

Sue Blyth
..... (Secretary)

6 September 2018
..... (Date)

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SALISBURY MUSICAL SOCIETY HELD AT SOUTH WILTS GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, SALISBURY ON TUESDAY 03 OCTOBER 2017

The Chairman, Mrs Jane Burridge, opened the meeting and welcomed Members and Patrons present.

1. Apologies

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

2. Minutes of the Last Annual General Meeting

(a) Mr John Powell proposed and Mr John Foster 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, Assistant Conductor and Treasurer

Neither the Chairman, Conductor, Assistant Conductor nor the Treasurer had anything to add to their Reports.

Adoption of all four reports was then proposed by Ms Sonia Woolley, seconded by Mr Ian Colvin and carried by a show of hands.

4. Adoption of the Statement of Accounts

The Treasurer reported that two years of Gift Aid had been collected this year, he also said Gift Aid can be collected on small sums, including the concert retirement collection. He said audience size and concert costs were still a problem, figures show - compared with 1980/1981 - everything has increased by a factor of 10, except the size of audiences. Mr Bexon reported that a further £4,200 of Gift Aid was received last week; the Season added £4,000 to our value, so we are holding our own but only just.

There were no questions for the Treasurer.

Adoption of the Statement of Accounts was proposed by Ms Christa Spencer, seconded by Mr Colin Reed and carried by a show of hands. The Chairman thanked Mr Bexon for steering the Society through another Season.

5. Election of Officers

The Treasurer took the Chair; he thanked Mrs Burridge for the work she does for the Choir, saying it is an onerous job. Mr Bexon reported that only one nomination had been received for the position of Chairman.

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Mrs Jane Burridge	Ms Christa Spencer	Mr John Foster

The election of Mrs Burridge was accepted with acclamation.

Mrs Burridge resumed the Chair and reported that only one nomination had been received for the position of Secretary.

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Mrs Sue Blyth	Mrs Jane Burridge	Ms Christa Spencer

The election of Mrs Blyth was accepted with acclamation.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Blyth for the enormous amount of work she does on behalf of the Society and for carrying on "one-handed" recently, having broken her left arm.

The Chairman reminded the Meeting that Mr Roy Bexon was standing down as Treasurer, after 43 years service; she said she had researched the position of Treasurer : The Lord Treasurers position began in 1707. Roy had started in 1974 : beginning of 3-day week, Harold Wilson, CAMRA Good Beer Guide; SMS concerts - Dream of Gerontius, The Creation and Belshazzar's Feast. She said Roy was in good company - Gordon Brown was the longest serving Treasurer (Chancellor) since the Reform Act of 1832!

As Chairman, Mrs Burridge said she (and she suspected her predecessors) had never had to worry about the finances of SMS because there has never been any doubt that they were handled with total competence. Mrs Burridge said it had been a pleasure and an honour to work with Roy; she presented him with a cheque in token of the Society's gratitude and appreciation of everything he had done for the Choir over the past 43 years.

Mr Bexon said he had not intended to serve for over 40 years as Treasurer; he said he had only been in the Choir for two years and an Assistant Treasurer was required. No one approached the Treasurer, so in a moment of madness he went to see him and asked what was involved : "Just counter-signing cheques" - so he took it on. The following year the Treasurer resigned and here he was!

What has it been about? It is now not just signing cheques; in his time he had signed over 2,500 cheques; spent over £1.5M of SMS money; been co-author of the Society's Constitution and Rules; attended about 200 Committee Meetings;

submitted Grant Applications to Southern Arts; been on the Regional Committee of the NFMS (now Making Music) to get a full understanding of how to get a grant; raised sponsorship around the City of Salisbury; been involved in the organising of the major tours to Berlin; produced, with Stephen Lycett, the Society's first website and kept it updated until recently; negotiated regularly with the Cathedral authorities about the costs of concerts; paid bills on time, including paying every soloist on the night; been on the organising Committee of the Salisbury Vespers project and dealt with the Charity Commission, Inland Revenue/HMRC and Making Music on SMS's behalf.

He said he had always tried to balance conflicting pressures - £130 subscription is extremely good value for money; kept ticket prices within the reach of local people; to reward the Conductor, Asst Conductor and Accompanist appropriately; find the money that the Conductor requires to meet his vision of what the Choir should perform; paid the Soloists on time - and given each one a "thank you" card; encouraged the Choir to be as professional as possible and perform to the highest quality. Mr Bexon said it had been a privilege to be Treasurer of SMS and a member of the Choir, which allowed him to sing music he never expected to perform, in places he never expected to sing; working with some very energetic and committed people from within your number who have really put themselves out for this Choir. He said he did not intend to mention people by name - but would mention just one - his wife Carole - she above all has put up with him being Treasurer and helped him weather some of the bleaker and blacker times in this role, so to her and the rest of you, thank you for your support over the last 43 years. He said he would carry on as a singer and learn to moan like the rest of you! He stated he had every confidence in Christa as the new Treasurer and wished her every success in her 43 years of tenure!

The Chairman reported that only one nomination had been received for the position of Treasurer.

	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Seconded</u>
Ms Christa Spencer	Mrs Jane Burridge	Mrs Sue Blyth

The election of Ms Spencer as Treasurer was accepted with acclamation.

6. Appoint of Independent Examiner

Ms Spencer explained that the Independent Examiner must be someone who is not a member of the Choir - he/she looks at the Accounts and examines them for accuracy. Mr Brockway has retired after at least 10 years as the Examiner, for which we thank him. Ms Spencer stated that an Accountant she knows, Mr Gary Cook, is happy to do it for free. His appointment as Independent Examiner was proposed by Mr Les Rose, seconded by Mr Campbell Edgar and carried by a show of hands.

7. Election of Ordinary Members of the Committee

The Chairman thanked Elected Members of the Committee :

Dr Hilary Brown; Mrs Jane Podkolinski (Librarian); Mr Les Rose (Website); Miss Christa Spencer (Assistant Treasurer); Mr Nick Stiven (Concert Manager); Mrs Di Verdon-Smith (Publicity).

The Chairman thanked :

Mrs Heather Bache (Orchestra Hospitality); Mrs Lorraine Blakey (IT Administrator); Mr John Foster ("100" Club and Music Stand); Mrs Mandy Hollywood (Seating Plan); Mr Stephen Lycett (Programme Editor and Posters); Mr John Powell (Ticket Manager); Mrs Caroline Probert (Hosting Soloists); 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 Heather Bache	Mrs Jo Naish	Mrs Clare Tawney
Mr Campbell Edgar	Mrs Di Verdon-Smith	Mr John Foster
Mrs Mandy Hollywood	Mrs Anita Boakes	Mr Jon Hampton
Dr Hadyn Ingram	Mrs Sue Blyth	Mrs Rowena Ingram
Mr Les Rose	Dr Hadyn Ingram	Mr Philip Corp
Mrs Di Verdon-Smith	Mr Campbell Edgar	Mrs Jane Burridge

The Chairman asked them 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 Programmes for Seasons 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 Proposed Works for Season 2019/2020

Mr Halls extended his thanks to Mr Bexon for his stewardship of SMS finances and said it had been a pleasure working with him. Mr Halls said as Mr Ian Wicks (Assistant Conductor) was leaving, the appointment of a new Assistant Conductor would be considered. The revised Programmes for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 and the proposed works for 2019/2020 were set out by Mr Halls.

Season 2017/2018 - Revised Programme

23 June 2018 Concert - Mr Halls considered Monteverdi's Vespers too complicated for a new Assistant Conductor and suggested something easier : Rossini - Petite Messe Solonnelle with Salisbury Symphony Orchestra, plus an orchestral piece.

Season 2018/2019 - Revised Programme

10 November 2018 Britten War Requiem
Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra

13 April 2019 (tbc)	Mozart Bach Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra	Mass in C Cantata 182
22 June 2019	Haydn L'Estrange Salisbury Symphony Orchestra/Jazz Quintet (Mr Halls - Programme may change)	Paukenmesse Zimbe

Proposed Works for Season 2019/2020

16 or 23 November 2019 (See Note 1)	Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra
28 March 2020	Elgar Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra
20 or 27 June 2020 (See Note 2)	Will Todd Vivaldi Salisbury Symphony Orchestra
	Mass in Blue Gloria and/or Kyrie and/or Beatus Vir

Note 1 : Possible joint project with Guildford Choral Society in Guildford and Salisbury Cathedrals?

Note 2 : With Will Todd, Bethany Halliday and Jazz Ensemble

Mr Halls stated that the above recommendations from the Music Sub-Committee had been displayed on the Notice Board for the past few weeks.

The Chairman put the recommendations to the Meeting. Mr Paddy Hartigan proposed and Mr Tom Davis seconded that the Revised Programmes for 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 and the proposed Works for Season 2019/2020 be accepted. This was carried by a show of hands

Mrs Burridge thanked Mr Halls and Mr Wicks for all the work they do behind the scenes - not just conducting the Choir : Auditions; Re-Auditions; considering works to be performed; selecting Soloists.

The Chairman thanked the Patrons for their continued 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 have left the Choir during Season 2016/2017 :

S1 - 2; S2 - 1; A1 - 4; A2 - 2; T1 - 1; B1 - 1; B2 - 2.

11. Any Other Business

Mr Tom Davis - The way we present ourselves on our publicity, to indicate Salisbury Musical Society is a Choir/Chorus, so that it is clear that we are a Choir and what we are performing is a choral work. Not changing our logo but something that suggests SMS is a Choir.

Comments were taken from the floor : How long since a name change was suggested? If we become Salisbury Choral Society or Salisbury Choral, we will lose our logo; SCS is "what it says on the tin"; Choral sounds more business-like; Name (Salisbury Musical Society) was anachronistic.

A "straw poll" indicated about half of those Members present thought we might change the name of the Society.

The Chairman suggested the subject was discussed at the next Full Committee Meeting.

Mr Tom Davis proposed and Mr David Felgate seconded a motion that the Committee should discuss then come back to the Choir. This was agreed by those Members present.

The Meeting closed at 8.30 pm

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE

Sue Blyth (Secretary) *21 October 2017* (Date)

SALISBURY MUSICAL SOCIETY

Year Ended 31 July 2018

Receipts and Payments Accounts

Performance Account	Payments		Receipts	
	V Williams	Bach	V Williams	Bach
Soloists and conductor	2,200.00	6,532.00	7,063.16	7,983.80
Orchestra	4,290.00	4,350.00	861.15	756.34
Printing & advertising	1,156.40	1,318.00		513.77
Cathedral Hire	3,801.00	4,399.59		
Music hire (orchestral)	136.53	274.00		
PRS	341.54	-		
			4,201.16	8,133.45
				3,622.67
				443.82
				16,401.10
	<u>11,925.47</u>	<u>16,873.59</u>	<u>11,925.47</u>	<u>16,873.59</u>
				9,770.04

Loss on: V Williams

Bach

Rossini

Advertisements re all concerts

16,401.10

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General Account

Conductor's honorarium	1,900.00	15,669.00
Assistant conductor's honorarium	1,050.00	2,407.00
Accompanist's honorarium	1,920.00	1,150.00
Miscellaneous honoraria	425.00	2,192.50
Making Music membership fee and insurance	482.00	534.00
Hire of rehearsal rooms	2,349.00	1,058.97
Music hire/purchase	778.08	200.00
Annual Reports	115.00	150.68
Secretary's expenses	166.30	273.73
Photography	150.00	3,936.32
Orchestral music 2018-19	796.50	3,015.37
Web site hosting and development	4,191.89	558.55
Youth Award	135.00	
Miscellaneous expenses	42.00	
		2,515.00
	2,933.80	
	16,229.25	
	<u>33,663.62</u>	

Net General Account receipts

33,663.62

Summary of net receipts and payments

Balance as above:	
General account net receipts	16,229.25
Performance Account net payments	(16,401.10)
Total Net Loss for the year	<u>(171.85)</u>

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Cash balance at 31 July 2017	60,138.70
Less Net Loss for the year	(171.85)
Net Assets - 31 July 2018	<u>59,966.85</u>
(subject to Notes 2 and 3)	

Notes

1. The Net Assets comprise cash Balances at 31 July 2018 held at:

Lloyds Bank on Current Account	8,101.64
Lloyds Deposit Account	25,037.10
Lloyds Fixed Term Deposit Account	20,000.00
COF Account	6,758.11
Cash float - music sales	50.00
Cash float - ticket sales	20.00
	<u>59,966.85</u>

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2. No account has been taken of:

- a. subscriptions due but not received from members
- b. income tax recoverable in respect of years ended 31 July 2018.
- c. the value of a rostrum and stocks of ties, stationery, folders and music

3. No provision has been made for PRS Fees still payable for the year.

4. 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



Christa Spencer
(Hon Treasurer)

2 August 2018



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Salisbury Musical Society		
On accounts for the year ended	31 July 2018	Charity no (if any)	266461
	Set out on pages		
	10 and 11		

**Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the 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 applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 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.

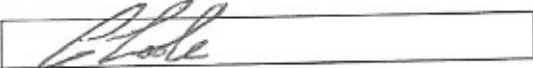
**Independent
examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which 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:** 10/8/18

Name: Garry Cook

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

Address:

14 Hunts Close

Colden Common

Winchester SO21 1FX

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

TREASURER'S REPORT

In my first annual report to you as your Treasurer, I should first take this opportunity to thank Roy Bexon, my predecessor, for all the guidance and support he has given since I was appointed at the October 2017 AGM. His have been big shoes to fill, and it will take me a little while to have the depth of knowledge of the choir and its finances that he had developed over his 43 year tenure!

It is disappointing that, in my first year in post, we have (not quite) broken even, as you will see in the table below – we made a small loss of £171.85, the first since the 2005/06 season. There were a couple of one-off events which put particular stress on our budgets, but thankfully, we had solid accumulated cash balances to cover this.

Item	Season 13/14	Season 14/15	Season 15/16	Season 16/17	Season 17/18
Ticket Sales	19,068.37	14,696.18	23,522.66	19,667.06	20,680.56
Retiring Collections	1,871.76	1,344.33	1,730.41	2,023.37	1,931.26
Concert Income	20,940.13	16,040.51	26,753.07	22,440.43	22,611.82
Concert Expenses	34,517.44	25,198.76	34,792.80	34,040.13	38,569.10
Of which soloists	8,782.00	6,515.00	10,000.00	8,245.00	12,202.00
Performance Loss	13,577.62	9,261.37	8,129.98	11,873.71	15,857.28
General Account Surplus	15,612.43	14,533.98	13,867.31	15,620.07	16,229.25
Profit/(Loss) on Season	2,034.81	5,272.61	5,737.33	3,746.36	(171.85)
Cash assets	45,280.90	50,655.01	56,392.34	60,138.70	59,966.85

We opened the year with our Come and Sing Haydn's Creation, whose prime purpose was to fund raise and bring in some new members. Sadly, only around 200 people came along to sing or listen, so we made a net loss on this event of £800, when taking into account related costs incurred at the end of the previous season.

Our overall performance loss for our termly concerts was £16,401, some £4,500 worse than last season. This was largely attributable to the loss of over £8,000 we sustained on the Bach concert. No real surprise when you consider we had six soloists, a continuo and the choristers on top of our normal expenses, but such a superb performance warranted a much larger audience than the 530 tickets we sold, albeit this was our largest audience since 2016! Ten years ago our audiences numbered 650+ on average, but in June our Rossini concert barely achieved 350, putting considerable pressure on our finances.

Our concert losses were, largely, covered by the healthy excess on our General Account. While audience numbers have dwindled, we have continued to welcome enough new members to balance the leavers, with subscriptions remaining steady. We are also grateful for the continued generosity of our patrons who support us through donation and by attending our concerts, as well as the kind bequest from the estate of the late Miss Snelling.

We have continued to benefit from the government Gift Aid scheme, reclaiming some £7,500 from HMRC for seasons 2015/16 and 2016/17. We will shortly be claiming for the 2017/18 season which should add around £3,500 to our funds. If any of you have yet to complete a Gift Aid declaration, but you are a UK taxpayer, please do so – we can claim a 25% boost to any donations (including subscriptions) you make.

Our general costs have remained similar during the last year, with the exception of the costs of redeveloping our website www.salisburymusicalsociety.org.uk. This included a ground up redesign, and has enabled us to start introducing new functionality such as the facility for members to order scores on line and access the data we hold on their behalf, as well as future options to sell tickets online. We also added a new email system to enable us to more efficiently communicate with our supporters and members, as well as comply with the new GDPR regulations. Despite this one-off cost, our net General Account receipts were around £600 up on last year.

I mentioned at the start of this report that this was the first loss we had sustained for some years. There were exceptional reasons why this year was particularly tight – it is right that we periodically perform monumental works such as St Matthew Passion, for instance – but if we are to avoid a need to increase our excellent-value subscriptions in the near future, we all need to do everything we can to sell more tickets and bring in the larger audiences that our hard work merits.

Finally, I'd like to thank those who work so hard to keep the show on the road. Until I joined the committee, I had only an inkling of the amount of work it takes to look after choir matters behind the scenes, and in particular to make our concerts a success. The amount of time and energy you give to SMS is beyond measure – thank you!

Christa Spencer
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

This year we welcomed John Challenger as our new Assistant Conductor. John is Assistant Director of Music at the Cathedral and has the same amazing musicality, enthusiasm, commitment and attention to detail as David. He led us with great skill in the Rossini, winning very complementary reviews : '*a most successful debut*' and '*SMS found their form in the Gloria and remained on top, with a particularly moving Sanctus*'. It was a great pleasure to see John grow in confidence and authority during the Summer term and we look forward to him conducting us next Summer in Haydn's Nelson Mass and Vivaldi's Gloria.

Bach's St Matthew Passion was, of course, the great highlight of the year and Richard Godfrey's review reflected our outstanding performance '*The sheer stamina of the performers, who had already rehearsed during the afternoon, was amazing - in fact the SMS choir seemed to reach a peak of beauty, balance and precision in the last three big choruses. The Sopranos in particular shone brightly*'.

Working backwards here, in the Autumn of 2017 we performed Vaughan Williams's Sea Symphony. A favourite work of mine, a love I share with the late Edward Heath, who chose it as one of his Desert Island discs many years ago.

While the standard of the Choir continues to be as high as ever we very much need to attract new members. We remain smaller than we have ever been and are at risk of not having sufficient strength to perform some of the great major works; I appeal to all of you to encourage new members. Introducing our 'Rehearsing Members' scheme has been very encouraging; it was introduced because quite a few people said they would love to sing with us but nervous of the audition. Singing with us for a term before auditioning seems to have given people confidence and we have had three new members who have done that.

As well as welcoming John Challenger we are also extraordinarily lucky that Christa Spencer took over the reins as Treasurer from Roy. A hard act to follow, but Christa's long experience as an accountant has proved extremely useful and we can be confident in the professionalism she brings to the job. Having worked this last year with Christa I have realised more than ever what an important and demanding job it is to be Treasurer of SMS. It is much more than simply managing the money, the responsibility and influence extends across all aspects of the Choir. Thank you Christa for your hard work and inspiration.

Last year we also said goodbye to Jane Podkolinski who had done a fantastic job as Librarian. Lindsay Devine, with support from Allannah Daniel and Anna McElwaine, has taken over seamlessly and we look forward to their job being made easier through our online ordering of music.

Our Website is now up and running well and in 2019 we shall be able to buy tickets directly through our own Website rather than having to make the link through the Playhouse.

Already we can have the rehearsal schedule downloaded to our calendars and any changes in venue will automatically update the calendar item. For me (I am not the only one who forgets when we are rehearsing in the Methodist Church) this is extremely useful. The Website has also been useful to people outside the Choir, who can see immediately how professional and well-organised we are and find out more about the work we are performing. We are very grateful to the team who managed its design, especially Les Rose; and to Lorraine Blakey, our IT Administrator, who now has an easier job of uploading information and sending e-mails to Members. We are also able to keep in touch far better with our audience through our database and this we hope will boost ticket sales.

On 10 November 2018 - the eve of the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day - we are performing Benjamin Britten's iconic 'War Requiem'. This concert will be very special and we are working closely with the Cathedral in this joint venture. We are hoping to fill the Cathedral.

Following our very successful performances of the Verdi Requiem in Guildford and Salisbury in March 2016 with Guildford Choral Society, we now have a firm commitment to join forces again to sing Elgar's 'Apostles' in 2020. As before we will give two performances, one in Guildford, conducted by Jonathan Willcocks and one in Salisbury conducted by David Halls.

I must say something about our proposed name change. You will remember at last year's AGM there was strong support for this and it has been discussed at length by the Committee and the Choir, including an online survey to gauge Members' views. At the end of this AGM we will know the outcome - whether or not we will be changing our name and, if we are, what we will be called. The process has been a difficult one and for some people a painful one.

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. Sue Blyth continues to hold the Choir together with her extraordinary dedication, energy and efficiency. We are indebted to her and must not take her for granted. Your Committee too works hard to run the Choir; they are an essential part of the organisation and it would be so good if more younger, newer members of the Choir would stand for election.

A few people who I want to give a special thanks to : Di Verdon-Smith for the huge effective effort she puts into publicising our concerts, Nick Stiven our Concert Manager, who has worked closely with the Cathedral in the mammoth job of organising the Britten War Requiem, John and Anne Foster for continuing to run the "100 Club", Jon Hampton for the work he does to ensure we make the most of 'Gift Aid' and for writing the Programme notes and Philip Corp who has stepped into Stephen's shoes in designing our publicity and concert Programmes. I also want to thank John Powell, who for so many years has contributed hugely to SMS in many ways and continues to manage ticket sales with great efficiency.

Sonia Woolley continues to provide us with excellent warm-up sessions - I think the work she does with us on diction is so important when we sing in English, when the words really do count.

There are other jobs that often go unnoticed, like those reliable people who come early to rehearsal to put out the chairs and contribute to our social events. By-the-way, we still would like new ideas for social events; we did not hold a Summer Party this year because the dates did not work out. Please tell the Committee of any ideas you have.

Finally, as always I would like to thank you, the Choir members, David and John, the Officers and Committee for your continued support to me over the past year.

Jane BURRIDGE
Chairman

CONDUCTOR'S REPORT

This Season started with a 'Come and Sing' Haydn Creation, conducted by Ian Wicks, with me at the piano. Although the number of participants was disappointing, there was a really good atmosphere at this event. This lovely work was brought to life by Ian's enthusiasm, some first-rate soloists and, of course, the hard work of everyone else who formed the chorus. I felt that the score would transfer better onto the piano than the Cathedral organ, and so it proved. The immediacy and more percussive qualities of the piano gave the participants plenty of support.

The first major concert of the Season, however, was in November 2017 and featured two works; the Sea Symphony by Vaughan Williams and, as a filler, the Lady Radnor Suite for strings, by Hubert Parry. The choice of the Parry as a concert starter was for two reasons. Firstly, I felt that the Choir needed to save itself for the Vaughan Williams, a notoriously big sing, and secondly, for the local connection between Parry and Lady Radnor. Helen, Countess of Radnor, was the wife of the Fifth Earl of Longford Castle, Salisbury and was a close personal friend of Hubert Parry. She commissioned this charming work for her seventy-piece chamber orchestra which she then conducted in a public performance in London. The Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra played it very well indeed and I think enjoyed it too. But the major work of this concert was the Vaughan Williams. As Walt Whitman put it, 'Steer for the deep waters only', is exactly what the Salisbury Musical Society, Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra and distinguished soloists did in this performance. There was always going to be a certain element of risk in, for example, the tempo of the Scherzo, but risks taken in the context of excellent rehearsals which gave the Choir a splendid confidence. It was a majestic performance, full of fine climaxes and real choral energy. The unaccompanied section at the end of the first movement was beautifully managed and the Altos in particular captured perfectly the sombre mood of 'On the beach at night'.

The Choir then moved onto one of the choral masterpieces of the Baroque Era, Bach's St Matthew Passion. The Choir was joined by the Salisbury Cathedral Choristers, the Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra once again and six soloists, of which James Oxley proved to be a superb Evangelist. His contribution was so important, not only as the narrator of the story but as an intelligent and skilful singer who frequently handed over to each choral interjection with such ease and clarity. The chorus sounded confident and never taken by surprise. One of the main challenges of this long work (and in this case with a long interval), is keeping the chorus alert and ready for the next short choral burst. I must say that I was delighted with the whole evening and thought that, once again, SMS gave an extremely musical and robust performance and this concert certainly proved to be the high point of my personal journey through Lent towards the triumph of Easter Day.

John Challenger will comment on his first concert conducting SMS, but I would like as ever to thank the SMS Committee for all its work on behalf of the Society, Peter Grove for his accompanying, several guest accompanists and, of course, all the singing members of SMS for an enjoyable Season.

David HALLS
Conductor

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR' REPORT

It was a huge pleasure and privilege to conduct my first concert with SMS. I have enjoyed getting to know SMS members over the past few years, owing to occasional appearance at rehearsals as deputy for either David Halls or Peter Grove, but it was especially good to be able to work with the Choir weekly during the Summer of 2018 and to conduct Rossini's '*Petite Messe Solennelle*' in the Cathedral on 23 June. It was also a great pleasure to work with Salisbury Symphony Orchestra, and we opened the June concert with Rossini's overture from '*L'italiana in Algeri*'.

I was interested to discover that Rossini's '*Petite Messe Solennelle*' was, in fact, the first work Richard Seal conducted for SMS upon his arrival in Salisbury, 50 years ago. Following the performance on 23 June this year, I was delighted to be able to join the SMS Committee and friends in saying a fond farewell and 'thank you' to Ann Harries and Malcolm Sturgess, after 50 years of singing with SMS.

As SMS members know, there is nothing either small or solemn about Rossini's '*Messe*', and the sheer scale of some of the choral movements requires a huge amount of energy. One often wonders where to sneak in a breath. The work is, mercifully, pervaded with solo movements, allowing the chorus time to compose itself. We enjoyed excellent solos from Laura Mitchell, Victoria Simmonds, Thomas Elwin and Henry Waddington. During Tuesday evening rehearsals, our learning of the '*Messe*' progressed rapidly and I am particularly grateful for the patience of all during the rehearsal of the final movement of the Credo, which contains many, many 'Amen's'. In my opinion, the Choir's performance on the night itself was the finest rendition and there was excellent control of phrasing and pitch in the unaccompanied sections.

I wish to thank Peter Grove for superb and skilled accompanying during our rehearsals, and to the Committee for their encouragement and support during preparations for my first concert with SMS. I am looking forward enormously to working with the Choir next year and thank all SMS members for their hard work.

John CHALLENGER
Assistant Conductor

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**Tuesday 02 OCTOBER 2018 - SMS Annual General Meeting
South Wilts Grammar School for Girls
Stratford Road, Salisbury at 7.30 pm**

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CONCERTS FOR SEASON 2018/2019

- Saturday 10 November 2018 : Britten War Requiem
With Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra
- Saturday 13 April 2019 : Mozart Mass in C Minor
Bach Cantata No 182
With Chelsea Opera Group Orchestra
- Saturday 22 June 2019 : Haydn Nelson Mass
Vivaldi Gloria
With Salisbury Symphony Orchestra

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