

Chairman's Report, Alton Community Choir, September 2012 – August 2013

The Alton Community Choir has had another eventful year. We sang at the Ceilidh run by ATTA to entertain their Italian visitors and other guests. I'm sure Don would join us in thanking all those who gave up their Saturday evening to help out the ATTA team.

Following this, the committee was heavily involved in helping Carolyn organise the Hampshire Carols Workshop. Even though it became apparent that we were not working for the benefit of the members of the choir, the committee still worked hard to ensure that the day was a success. All feedback that we received showed that the participants enjoyed their day.

Thanks to John Grace's connections with members of Alton Town Council, we were asked to sing for the switching on of the Christmas lights, an ever popular Alton event. It's fantastic that the choir has such a large repertoire that the Mayor was able to choose the Christmas Carols for us to sing. There was a great turnout from choir members, whose support was much appreciated. It's great to be able to do something positive for the community of Alton.

Our second winter concert in the Methodist Church, this time with the highly supportive team of Craig, Morgan and Robson, had a fantastic and appreciative audience, which ensured a healthy donation to our chosen charities. Special thanks to Judy and her team of bell ringers who, with only two weeks' notice, not only arranged the music for all twelve bells, but also managed to gather seven choir members for rehearsals to give a creditable performance. Thanks must also go to members of the Methodist Church, whose efforts ensured an excellent evening's entertainment.

It was lovely to sing (and ring bells) at Orchard House. Although the audience was small, they were wonderfully appreciative and gave yet another opportunity to give something to the community of Alton.

The New Years Eve Ceilidh went with a swing. A big thank you must go to the band, who provided the music, and appreciation to Carolyn who made it out of her sick bed to lead the choir as part of the entertainment. Another celebration ably organised by Judy and friends.

The concert for the Salvation Army was another event new to the choir. It was enjoyed by all, though maybe a little too long on our feet. It was lovely to have been provided with refreshment at the end.

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Next we come to the trip to Portugal. We had an amazing time with an agreeable group of people. A great combination of sightseeing, meeting the locals, relaxation and music. Our final concert in the charming theatre is a cherished memory. All participants are grateful for the enormous amount time and effort put in to organising the trip by Gill, Helen, her sister Jenny, Sue, Robin and Julia.

Finally, our summers would not be complete without our participation in the Alton Prom and of course the annual party at Judy's house in August, a chance to sing out our summer cobwebs.

I would now like to thank those members of the choir whose continued efforts ensure that the choir runs smoothly.

John Barnett, who regularly arrives much earlier than everyone else to arrange the furniture, and indeed to all those who put the furniture back at the end.

Alison Bucknall for the tremendous amount of effort she puts in to ensure the website is up to date.

Also Denise Lovett, who organises the weekly raffle, enabling us to raise a significant amount for our chosen charities.

We are all indebted to Don Hammond, Joanna Ridout, Penny Cushing, Haydn Chappell and Freda Lemmon, for their efforts in creating the new constitution.

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Finally, a big thank you to the retiring members of the committee, who have contributed so much time and effort to the choir over the past few years.

Freda Lemmon has been a loyal committee member. She has always been willing to help at events and has been a good contact with the staff at Gilbert White's House, enabling us to take part in a number of events. A particular memory was the Burns Night Ceilidh in the beautiful 16th century barn.

Judy Burt has always warmly welcomed us to her home and has provided her catering expertise to any event that has required it.

Sue Foulkes, our Membership Secretary who has efficiently maintained the waiting list. She contacts people when places have arisen and warmly welcomes all new members to the choir. She has always been willing to help whenever the need arises.

Robin Sturdy, a loyal member of the choir, has, for the past 6 years, capably looked after the choir accounts. Appreciation has always been given for his prompt settlement of invoices.

Susan Elverson, our Publicity Coordinator, has always quietly worked hard in the background, producing beautiful and appropriate posters and fliers for all occasions. The choir will miss her photographic skill, particularly demonstrated in the PowerPoints produced for the winter concerts. She also put a tremendous amount of work into the production of the CD, especially in designing the cover. Many of the sound files on the website have been provided by Susan, who also emailed them out on request and provided copies on CDs.

Gill Marsden. You all know how committed Gill has been to the choir. She has dedicated much of her time over the past few years working for the benefit of the choir and its members, with great success.

The current committee would like to wish the new committee all the very best for the future.

By Sally Bye

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Continuation of Chairman's Report by Gill Marsden

Sally Bye has been a loyal member of the choir for many years and for the past 3 years has been Chair of the ACC committee, steering committee meetings competently and always keeping in mind what is best for the choir membership as a whole.

Whenever there has been work to do Sally has rapidly stepped up to do it. She was fully involved in the workshops, purchasing food for the tutors & clearing up afterwards as well as keeping an eye on the hundred & one other things that needed to be done. She worked very hard for the Air Ambulance Ceilidh & this year helped behind the scenes with the organisation of the trip to Portugal.

Whenever Carolyn has been unavailable to conduct a particular event Sally has been ready to help which she did last year at the switching on of the Alton Christmas lights.

However, like Susan, she no longer feels comfortable belonging to this choir & has decided to leave.

I would like to thank both Susan & Sally for all that they have done for ACC & hope that they both find another outlet for their musical talents. We will miss them both and hope that they will stay in touch.