

# St Albans Cathedral Ex-Choristers Association

THE CATHEDRAL AND ABBEY CHURCH OF ST. ALBAN

Affiliated to the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers Associations

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## Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting

Held at midday on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2022, in the Chapter Room in the Deanery. Attendance was made up of those present in person in the Deanery, and those who attended remotely using the Zoom teleconferencing software.

We were delighted to meet the new Dean of St. Albans, the Very Rev'd Jo Kelly-Moore. Jo introduced herself to those attending in the Deanery, and opened the meeting with a prayer and contemplation about our mission.

### Welcome and Apologies

The meeting was chaired by Peter Jeffs, Interim Vice-chair.

#### Attendance in the Deanery:

Malcolm Bury, Nick Coleman, Chris Cutts, David Ireson, Trevor Jarvis, Peter Jeffs, Tony Price, Mat Taylor, Simon Trott, Ian Woods.

#### Attendance via Zoom:

Dr Barry Rose, Prof. Stephen Darlington, Paolo Baroni, Nic Gibbon.

#### Apologies

 had been received from:

Jeremy Meager, Mike Hurford, John Tournay, Richard Lilley, Andrew Parnell, Helen Charlston, Andrew Shepstone, Geoff Ward, Laura Hicks, Andrew Lucas.

### Statement from the Secretary

ST read the following statement to the meeting:

*Our Chairman, Richard Lilley contacted Tony and me in October 2021 to advise that he wished to withdraw temporarily from his ECA duties, explaining that the pressures of his professional life and other responsibilities had become overwhelming. Richard's wish to step back was respected by the committee, and we therefore voted to adopt our committee member Peter Jeffs to accept the role of 'Interim Vice Chair' in order to enable ECA business to be managed effectively.*

*Peter's temporary term concludes with chairing this meeting, and I would like to thank him for his willingness to apply his wisdom and expertise to the ECA in this role. Sadly, Peter has asked to stand down from the committee after this meeting, completing 12 years' service as our 1960's representative.*

*Following the AGM, the committee will be active to adopt another willing and capable ECA member for a further temporary term, while allowing Richard to remain 'nominally' as our Chair.*

ST made a small presentation to PJ.

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2021

The minutes from the 2021 AGM were circulated to members in advance of this meeting. (These are routinely published on the ECA website, under 'governance'.)

There were no issues put forward, so the minutes were adopted as a true statement of that meeting by PJ, seconded by MB.

### Chairman's Report

Delivered by PJ.

*Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you for joining us for the AGM today.*

*I am standing here on behalf of Richard Lilley, our chairman, to cover for his temporary absence. Your committee 'co-opted' me to the role so that we could continue our activities as smoothly as possible.*

*We have endured a very challenging 2 years and are finally returning to normal, I believe, though I fear we will take some time to fully recover from the impacts of coronavirus, lockdowns and forced isolation.*

*The world is now coming to terms with the many new and additional circumstances which will surely impact all of us to varying extents in the future.*

*I am pleased to be able to report that your Association has managed to continue to function and has maintained activity during the last year albeit in a slightly different form.*

*We welcomed our new President, Stephen Darlington, last year. He provided us with his own introduction for the Spring issue of Alban Notes. I am also pleased to welcome Rev Joanne (Jo) Kelly-Moore, 10th Dean of St Albans as our new Patron, and thank her for joining us today.*

*Thanks to the increased use of Zoom, as well as meetings in person, your committee have remained in touch and kept on top of events. In particular, I would like to thank Andrew Lucas for his regular updates on choir activities, Moira Dean for keeping the committee informed on many wider cathedral matters, Tony Price for the preparation of the 2021 Yearbook (Sponsored by the Hurford family) and facilitating our technology and website maintenance, as well as Simon Trott, our Secretary for his untiring attention to correspondence, minutes, reminders. Without these invaluable contributions we would struggle to exist.*

*The activities of Exquire have been curtailed a little through inevitable difficulties during lockdowns, and more recently though insufficient volunteers able to sing at events as we all return to more normal activities. Tony Price has ensured choir valedictions during the year received a warm welcome to the ECA. We continue to work on member privacy and are in Liaison with the FCOCA to ensure we comply with regulations protecting our members details, though it appears our current position complies with GDPR and equally important works.*

*It is with much sadness that we lost Peter Pearson a long-serving member of the choir and ECA in the new year, and more recently we have learned of the death of Simon Preston a former Director of Music here. Our sincere condolences go to the families of both gentlemen.*

*Activities on our work with Archive material and liaison with the cathedral archive have been affected by lockdown but work is in hand to collaborate with the cathedral archivist to support our archives and avoid duplication.*

*The summer edition of Alban Notes is in preparation, with a Royal theme for the Platinum Jubilee. The next major event in September is the commemorative service and plaque for Peter Hurford in Luccombe Church. Simon will have more to say on that matter later in the meeting.*

*The FCOCA annual meetings continue, this year at Ely on 10th September. We are members of FCOCA and we plan to be represented at proceedings.*

*I would like to place on record my thanks to Simon and Tony and all the committee for all the help and support they have offered me during the year. You will have noted that I am standing down from the ECA committee after today's meeting. I have enjoyed my time on the committee, but the last few months have presented many challenges, both family and business, and I need to spend time readjusting.*

*Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen.*

## Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement

ST read out an email from our Treasurer detailing our financial position. In summary:

|                                                       |               |
|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Opening balance:                                      | £1,725.52     |
| Expenditure:                                          |               |
| RL for 50 x St Albans Cathedral cards (and envelopes) | 33.60         |
| FCOCA subscription                                    | 20.00         |
| TP for web hosting (2 payments)                       | 74.00         |
|                                                       | -----         |
|                                                       | £127.60       |
| <br>Closing balance at the bank (31 May)              | <br>£1,597.92 |

ST noted that there has been no income in the year. MT asked if the ECA can receive digital payments, and discussion generally agreed that we are now living in a 'cashless and chequeless society'. TP replied that the website invites donations, but has no facility to receive money digitally from donors. It was agreed to publish our bank details on the website (account name, sort code and account number) to enable this.

**ACTION ST/TP**

## Election of Committee Members

No nominations for committee members had been received by the secretary.

PJ has decided to stand down from the committee after 12 years' service.

PJ therefore proposed that we re-elect the committee 'en bloc' for the next term, seconded by DI.

The committee is therefore now made up as follows:

|                |                                              |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Richard Lilley | Chairman                                     |
| Vacancy        | Interim Vice-Chair                           |
| Jeremy Meager  | Honorary Treasurer                           |
| Simon Trott    | Honorary Secretary                           |
| Tony Price     | IT and Communications Manager                |
| Trevor Jarvis  | Representative for the Cathedral Choir 1950s |

|                 |                                              |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Nicolas Gibbon  | Representative for the Cathedral Choir 1960s |
| Nick Coleman    | Representative for the Cathedral Choir 1970s |
| Paulo Baroni    | Representative for the Cathedral Choir 1990s |
| Helen Charlston | Representative for the Abbey Girls' Choir    |
| Laura Hicks     | Representative for the Abbey Girls' Choir    |
| Nina Vinther    | Representative for the Abbey Girls' Choir.   |

## Hurford commemorative weekend in Luccombe

ST brought the meeting up to date with planning with this statement:

*The main ECA event for 2022 will be the weekend gathering in and around Luccombe on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September this year. All members and their families are invited to enjoy some fellowship in these glorious Exmoor surroundings.*

*The central event of the weekend is the choral Evensong in Luccombe church at 3:00 pm commemorating our past President Peter Hurford's long connection with the church from his formative years as an organist, as well as the decades of summer choir camps held in the village. Our former precentor, Very Rev Keith Jones will deliver an address, and the service will be sung by an ECA-based choir directed by David Ireson, with Andrew Parnell playing the organ. The village will be providing refreshments in the Village Hall afterwards.*

*Part of the liturgy will be the unveiling of a special commemorative plaque for Peter in the church. The exact wording for the plaque is still under discussion with the ECA and the Hurford family following feedback on our initial proposal from the Bath and Wells Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC). Samples and quotes for the engraving work have been provided by Brunel Engraving Ltd in Clevedon.*

*Other events being planned are for a reception gathering on Friday afternoon and early evening, probably in Dunster, as people arrive in the area. A variety of possible outings await us on Saturday, in addition of course to the traditional hike over Dunkery Beacon: West Somerset Railway; open top bus ride to Lynmouth; the intriguing new Arts Centre at Watchet; Dunster Castle (National Trust); etc, etc. On Saturday evening we are arranging for dinner at a local venue.*

*A field will be prepared for anyone interested in camping or caravanning in Luccombe. Otherwise, I have been offered favourable BB and DBB rates at the Yarn Market Hotel in Dunster for which I'm happy to provide details.*

*I hope to finalise numbers soon, so if you are interested, I encourage you to contact me on my official email address ([simon.trott@stalbanseca.org.uk](mailto:simon.trott@stalbanseca.org.uk)).*

DI asked when the choir rehearsal would take place. ST said that this is currently planned for 11:45 on the Sunday to allow the Rector Rev. Anne Gibbs to travel from Porlock church after the 9:30 Eucharist service. Anne has expressed a wish to take the role as Cantor, and thus attend rehearsal. DI prefers an 11:00 start which would still allow Anne to join us, and allow an adequate lunch break for singers before the service.

**ACTION: ST**

## Archive

PB stated that work on cataloguing the collection of choir archive material has been curtailed due to the pandemic, due particularly to problems gaining access to the Switch Room high up in the cathedral. MB advised that the Cathedral Music Department is taking its own initiatives for collecting and storing material from the choirs' current activities. Discussions are needed to agree a cut-off date for when the Music Department's material starts, so that work on the ECA-held material can be co-ordinated appropriately.

TJ pointed out that our archive material needs to be stored in a location which is accessible by all interested members.

TJ has some material to add to the collection, including some photographic slides.

**ACTION: PB & MB.**

## Publications

The meeting's attention was drawn to several recently published books likely to be of interest to ECA members:

- Dr Barry Rose's memoirs 'Sitting on a Pin: A Musical Memoir', including chapters about his years at St Albans.
- Recollections of a St Albans Abbey Chorister (Charlesworth Press), by Trevor Jarvis
- Alban Notes: The choirs and Musicians of St Albans Cathedral, by Malcolm Bury

Trevor Jarvis and John Henderson collaborations from RSCM:

- The Royal School of Church Music: The Addington Years
- Sir William Henry Harris – Organist, Choir Trainer and Composer
- They Fly forgotten, as a dream. Some lesser-known church musicians from the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Includes a CD.

## Simon Preston CBE 1938 - 2022.

SD advised that Simon Preston's funeral took place at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford the previous day (June 10<sup>th</sup>), and included contributions from James Bowman and Howard Goodall, with Palestrina's Missa Papae Marcellae, and an anthem in tribute to his connection to the annual Edington Festival.

A memorial service will be held in Westminster Abbey in November, where his remains will be interred.

The meeting closed at 12:43 pm. Members attending in the Deanery stayed on to enjoy refreshments and chats together.

As his parting duty in the chair, PJ was able to formally invite the new Dean to be the ECA's new Patron following Choral Evensong that afternoon.

**ACTION: ST** to contact Jo to thank her, and to elaborate on the role.

End.