



# PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL OLD CHORISTERS' ASSOCIATION

AGM | Saturday 18 June 2022, 12:30

## MINUTES

### 1. Apologies

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Donald Allister, Bishop of Peterborough | 13. Rik Ludlow                       |
| 2. Christopher Bathurst                    | 14. Christopher Menheneott           |
| 3. Christopher Brown                       | 15. Simon Mold                       |
| 4. Anthony Davis                           | 16. Jim Percival                     |
| 5. Christopher Gower                       | 17. Alex Spires*                     |
| 6. Andy Halliday                           | 18. Chloe Spires*                    |
| 7. Julia Hamilton-Box                      | 19. Dave Stanley                     |
| 8. Stephen Hamilton-Box                    | 20. Andrew Torbell                   |
| 9. William Hamilton-Box                    | 21. Peter Watts                      |
| 10. Matt Hardy*                            | 22. Rowan Williams, Canon Precentor* |
| 11. Kevin Hollands                         | 23. Arnold Wills                     |
| 12. Tim Hurst-Brown, Chairman*             |                                      |

*\*PCOCA committee member*

All of whom give their best regards and warm wishes for today.

Louise Laprun read out a note received from Tim Hurst-Brown:

Dear Friends,

I am so sorry that I cannot be with you all today – this is the first reunion that I have missed since 1969! Unfortunately, my wife had a very serious asthma attack on Monday morning and we had to summon paramedics to attend her. She has a severe chest infection and also a viral bug, which is proving difficult to control. I was very much aware that I would have to leave her on her own for at least twelve hours on the day of the reunion, so I made the difficult decision to cancel my attendance. I know that the meeting will be in safe hands with Louise, and I wish you all a very happy and enjoyable reunion. Let us hope for better things next year!

Kindest regards,

Tim

### Attendees

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Samuel Barber, Hon. Treasurer*       | 6. Charles Cunliffe        |
| 2. AnnaMaria Barnes*                    | 7. Elizabeth Cunningham*   |
| 3. Alex Bastow                          | 8. Sophie Eser (via Zoom)* |
| 4. Tansy Castledine, Director of Music* | 9. Stephen Gilbert         |
| 5. Frank Close (via Zoom)               | 10. Vanessa Gilbert        |

11. Oliver Hamilton-Box, Hon. Auditor\*
12. Sebastian Harper\*
13. Louise Laprun, Hon. Secretary \*
14. Bradley Odep\*
15. Mark Robertshaw\*

16. Josiah Robertson
17. Olivia Timms, Music Department  
Administrator
18. Vaughan Townhill

*\*PCOCA committee member*

## 2. Minutes of last year's AGM

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 14 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record – proposed by Mark, seconded by Tansy, and endorsed by all.

## 3. Matters arising

N/A – see item 8.

## 4. Hon. Treasurer's report

Samuel Barber read his annual report:

Good afternoon, and thank you for attending our AGM.

I trust that you have had chance to look at the summary account documents that have been shared, which have been signed off by our Hon. Auditor Oliver Hamilton-Box.

Last year was a fairly steady year for us financially, with the OCA yielding a 'profit' of just over £2,000 for the year. This does include some donations made to the OCA that are reserved for specific purposes, such as the Dr Francis Strawberry Tea.

Our postage costs were once again zero due to the successful campaign Louise ran to eliminate this method of communication distribution in 2020.

Annual subscriptions in 2021 were down from 2020; we now have one less fee-paying member at £15 per month and two fewer at £25 per month.

Our liquid asset position at the end of the year has improved from £4,233.98 in 2020 to £6,499.64, primarily due to no donation to the Cathedral Choir being authorised at last year's AGM.

Although I am, as Hon. Treasurer, still concerned about the asset level of the association, I am confident we can once again look to donate to the Cathedral Choir and recommend a donation of £1,000 be approved today. Any more than this may risk us becoming unable to organise large events either as reunions or directly as fundraising efforts for the Cathedral Choir due to poor cash flow. However, personally I would like to see the Association be able to continue to support the current Cathedral Choir both in the short term, and for future generations. I believe that many members would agree with this sentiment.

Assuming this £1,000 donation is approved, I would like to send personal thanks to members Dave Stanley and Anne McDonald, without whose generous donations this would not have been possible.

I would remind members that if we all paid our £25 membership, we could donate over £10,000 pa to the Choir.

The Executive Committee, in particular Louise and myself, have made efforts to ensure that every event organised by the Association makes a profit or breaks even, thus ensuring that any donation made by members, including annual subscriptions, can end up reaching the Cathedral Choir. Louise and I make every effort to use free or ultra low cost platforms to provide updates, bookings and all services to our membership wherever possible to help further this aim and keep wasted expenditure as low as possible. This, I hope you will agree, is reflected in the account's expenditure.

On this note I will now end my report and now take any questions regarding my statement, after which I propose we vote on a suggested donation to the Choir of £1,000.

All present were in favour of the £1,000 donation towards the Cathedral Choir. Tansy Castledine gave her grateful thanks on behalf of the Music Department, and said it was a lovely surprise and would be put to good use.

The adoption of the Hon. Treasurer's report was proposed by Elizabeth Cunningham and seconded by Sebastian Harper. Louise thanked Samuel for his excellent stewardship of the OCA accounts, and Oliver for his role as Hon. Auditor.

## 5. Hon Secretary's report

Louise Laprun read her annual report:

Welcome to the first OCA AGM in person since the pandemic began! Thank you for joining us today, especially those who have travelled from afar.

As many of you are aware, we held our last two AGMs remotely. Although it was a great shame that we were unable to meet in person as usual for Choral Evensong and the Reunion Dinner, we enjoyed meeting online with a variety of members from across the world! In fact, we've also provided a conference call link today so that those who are unable to join us in Peterborough can still participate.

Because of lack of venue availability this year, our usual schedule of events is rather different today. We are hopeful that our reunion next year will return to its usual format, but the committee is open to our members' suggestions and feedback.

We were pleased to hold an Old Choristers' Evensong at the Cathedral on Sunday 17 October in place of a reunion last year, with 20 of our members joining forces with the Cathedral Choir and Cathedral Youth Choir for a splendid service of choral classics by Hadley, Stanford and Balfour Gardiner.

We look forward to singing under the direction of Tansy Castledine again at Evensong today, after lunch, and we're really grateful to Tansy, the music department and clergy for hosting us today – especially Olivia, whose help has been invaluable. Thank you for setting up these delightful refreshments for us.

A few dates to note in your diaries are Sunday 03 July for the St Peter's Day Eucharist and Valediction Evensong, and Monday 04 July for a farewell Evensong to Darren Ayling, retiring Head Teacher of The King's School.

Finally, my warmest thanks to everyone who pays their £25 annual subscription. Please do consider giving this amount each year (or £2.50 a month, if that's more manageable) if you don't do so already, so we can support our Cathedral Choir. As Samuel mentioned already, if everyone did so, we could donate £10,000 every year – think of the difference that would make! Details of how to give and why can be found on our website, and in OCA correspondence.

Thank you.

The Hon. Secretary's report was proposed by Charles Cunliffe and seconded by Bradley Odep.

## 6. Election of officers

The current officers were all happy to stand for another year. The committee was re-elected en bloc, proposed by Vaughan Townhill, seconded by Josiah Robertson, and all present were in favour.

**Chairman:** Mr Tim Hurst-Brown

**Hon. Secretary:** Ms Louise Laprun

**Hon. Treasurer:** Mr Samuel Barber

**Hon. Auditor:** Mr Oliver Hamilton-Box (*Once a Chorister* representative)

**Committee:**

- Ms Tansy Castledine, Director of Music\*
- Revd Dr Rowan Williams, Canon Precentor\*
- Miss AnnaMaria Barnes (junior representative)

*\*ex officio*

- Miss Chloe Spires (junior representative)
- Ms Elizabeth Cunningham
- Dr Sophie Eser
- Mr Matthew Hardy
- Mr Sebastian Harper
- Mr Bradley Odep
- Mr Mark Robertshaw
- Mr Alex Spires

## 7. Next year's reunion

Louise welcomed ideas for the 2023 reunion. Several ideas were discussed regarding the time of year, day and format:

- June is busy with weddings/events on Saturdays, and is also within the exam period for GCSE and A-level students.
- Sunday, rather than Saturday, would be easier to fit into the Cathedral Choir's schedule. If held on a Sunday, the reunion would need to involve a lunch, rather than dinner.
- Holding a dinner in the evening means staying overnight in Peterborough for those who don't live locally, which works well for some but is unaffordable or impractical for others.
- Friday would also be possible, but is more difficult for people who work on weekdays and live further away.
- Christmas is a very popular time of year, and holds cherished memories for Old Choristers. Singing carols is enjoyable, but some members appreciate two events per year.

Louise agreed to ask for further feedback, and that the committee would consider all options.

## 8. Dr W. Stanley Vann memorial

Louise reported that the Fabric Advisory Committee had unfortunately turned down the new plaque proposal, but described Tansy's alternative idea: a 'Director of Music' gold leaf inscription on the 1890s carved oak choir stall in which the Director of Music sits every day at Choral Evensong.

Tansy stated that her role is in the statues of the foundation, and that there is also a precedent for this; other lay positions such as Headmaster and Mayor are already named in the choir stalls.

Mark Robertshaw commented that the OCA might end up with a surplus, depending on the fees for an architect/designer and heritage craftspeople. Various ideas were suggested by Sophie, Frank, Tansy and Elizabeth, including a named bursary for singing lessons, a set of music, or a chorister medal.

Louise suggested that Tim might like to manage this project, and seek advice from the Cathedral Architect and Fabric Advisory Committee.

Oliver proposed that this item could be moved to AOB for the next AGM, as it hopefully will have been resolved.

## 9. AOB

### In memoriam

Louise Laprun passed on the following news:

#### Peter Nicholson

We were sad to learn of the death of Revd Canon Peter Nicholson OBE MA on 6<sup>th</sup> June at the age of 96. Peter was Precentor at Peterborough Cathedral from 1962 to '67, and is fondly remembered by the choristers and congregants of the time. Please contact [Tim Hurst-Brown](#) (07734 510 815) directly for funeral details, which are to follow.

Tim had passed on a message that Canon Peter Nicholson was a dearly-loved gentleman, and knows from the many e-mails he has received how much the choristers of that time valued his kindness and warm pastoral gifts.

### Newsletter

Louise encouraged members to send in their news for Tim's annual newsletter.

### Once a Chorister

Oliver Hamilton-Box reported on the Federation of Cathedral Old Choristers' Associations (FCOCA), which has now been rebranded as "Once a Chorister" – the name of its existing publication.

Peterborough is a founding member, contributes £20 each year, and is highly considered among Old Choristers' Associations. The organisation, led by Chairman Nick Hodges of Warwick, now wants to look beyond cathedral choirs, and include churches, chapels and abbeys which have choristers and choral foundations.

The next festival is being hosted by our neighbour Cathedral in [Ely from 09 to 11 September 2022](#). Oliver reminded everyone that details have been sent out, and urged members to book.

Peterborough Cathedral Old Chorister Arnold Wills is Vice Chairman of Once a Chorister, and Development Officer along with Oliver, and liaises with the Cathedral Music Trust.

### Zoom

Frank thanked Samuel for setting up the Zoom call.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 13:19.

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*Minutes submitted by Louise Laprun on 20 June 2022*