

Chairman's Report 2020

I first drafted this report a few weeks ago. My goodness – how our world has changed in the interim (and will probably have changed further by the time you read it!). It is really sad that we are now effectively locked down and have no social activities in our diaries whatsoever.

So, let's just look back at the pleasure we had in 2019 with like-minded people making glorious music.

Trinity Singers' 20th Birthday Year kicked off with a joint concert with Churchill Academy at All Saints on 1st March. Yet again it was a huge privilege to work with the CA team and their young musicians in the wonderful acoustic of All Saints.

Our Birthday concert at Shipham on 28th April was a first, being an afternoon event, and it was wonderful to perform with the Lochrian Ensemble and Alison Blundell in a lovely celebration of our first 20 years. I was really pleased to see a large number of former singers, together with so many family members, at this joyous event.

Yet again Roy Stickland managed to produce a remarkable array of quality plants and advice, which formed the centrepiece of our Plant Sale on 4th May. Thanks to him and everyone else who worked hard to make this a success.

Another first, was our concert at Christchurch Clevedon on Tuesday 7th May. This was the first visit to that venue, and the first time we have taken part in North Somerset Arts Week. It proved to be a good venue and produced a good audience.

Another Evensong was sung at Holy Trinity in Burrington on 23rd June, and feedback from the congregation and PCC were very positive. This was our first liturgical event without robing, recognising the views expressed by members, and was accepted without comment by the church.

Our annual concert at St Michaels was very much appreciated, and it is rewarding to see the enjoyment on the faces of our audience. This was followed by a very enjoyable evening of chat and socialising over a meal at the White Hart in Cross, organised by Margaret Avery.

Into the Autumn and preparations for our Shared Concert with Churchill Academy Chamber Choir at Shared All Saints on 9th November. Yet again – a lovely, and inspiring, experience singing with the young people under the direction of Paul Harrison.

An unexpected event for some of us was to sing at the Weston Hospicecare "Light up a Life" event at St Paul's in Weston on 9th December. This was a really moving experience and gave us a chance to see another possible venue for larger concerts.

The busy Christmas period continued with our Christmas Supper Concert on 14th December, where our logistical challenges were reduced by hiring some new staging at the Wrington Memorial Hall. As ever, the audience enjoyed this start to Christmas and many thanks to all who contributed in any way.

The following day we reprised some items at the Carol Service in Burrington which is always a lovely event, involving the Primary School and lots of candles! Another first was to bus in some of the choir to mitigate the parking problem, and this was much appreciated by the Burrington Churchwardens!

So ended another year in the life of Trinity Singers – a rewarding mix of music, fund raising, socialising.

The year saw a number of changes of personnel and it is great to see new faces, but we are now rather thin in the tenor and bass sections. Can we achieve the same sort of reduction in average age that we have managed in the ladies sections, by finding some younger tenors and basses - they must be out there!

Right at the end of the year we acquired our own lights, something which has been suggested for a few years, but was not as simple as first thought! We will be using them for the first time at Clevedon, and I hope that this will prove satisfactory!

We have also purchased a CCTV camera, cable and small screen, which will enable us to ensure that an organist can see the MD despite the best efforts of church architects to place pillars and pulpits in the way! This is yet to be tested in anger but all simulations suggest that it will be a good addition to our armoury.

Although technically after the year end, it was a huge joy for me to attend the Churchill Music Young Musician of the Year competition in January, and to hear the music these talented young people were able to perform for both audience and adjudicators. The Ursula Dornton Vocal prize, funded by Trinity Singers, went to a very deserving young singer, and it is good that we can continue this association with both Churchill Music and Churchill Academy

Keeping up with the advance of technology, we are now using “online ticketing” and can also take payments using a “chip and pin” device, both at rehearsals and concerts.

Whilst we are performing high quality music, and financially well placed, I have to express some concerns regarding attendance and commitment to future concerts. As ever, there is a danger of “preaching to the converted” here, but it is very frustrating for Andrew and, more importantly, to fellow singers, when it is necessary to go over notes and markings in repeated weeks, because of a lack of consistency in attendance. Of course illness and unexpected events happen, but please try to set Trinity Singers rehearsals as the absolute priority for Tuesday nights.

Equally, we do try to advise dates pretty well in advance, so it can be disappointing when we have “withdrawals” from concerts when rehearsals for an event have started.

End of Chairman’s moan!

Your committee has met on many occasions (and exchanged hundreds of emails – as they will tell you!) in order to ensure that Trinity Singers runs smoothly and I want to say a huge thank you to all of them. The only real time we can hold meetings is after rehearsals which makes it a very late, and tiring, evening. Nonetheless all members of the committee contribute and I hope that you feel that they do a good job! My thanks to all of them.

It would be very beneficial to be able to spread the load in some areas beyond the committee. For example, dealing with poster printing and distribution, ticketing, refreshments at concerts. If you feel able to take on any of these functions please let it be known.

Some time ago we did establish a system of Voice Representatives, as a way of feeding back to the committee. For better or worse, nothing really came of this and, frankly, I can’t find a record of who they were! If you are, or would like to be, a Voice Rep please let me know.

Andrew continues to challenge, and excite, us with a varied selection of music of all ages, and with his own style of humour, education and encouragement in rehearsal and performance. On your behalf I thank him for his huge commitment, his humour, and his dedication to Trinity Singers.

Finally, thank you all for making Trinity Singers the choir it is.

I do hope that you all stay safe and well and that we will manage to resume our rehearsals in September.

Bob Shapland

March 2020