

Grosvenor Chorale

Trustees' Report 2022-2023



At our AGM, held at the home of one of our members, Sarah Gray, on 5th June 2023, our Musical Director gave the following summary of our year.

Chairman's 2022-2023 Report

The "reimagining and re-engaging" focus on the 2022-23 Season was very successful in many ways. To begin our year of performances, we were able to provide some welcoming music to the evening marriage celebrations of Sarah and Phil Rogan, an event long anticipated because of all the COVID disruption. With much light music focused on to begin the year and the moving solo of A Deer's Cry performed by Alex Bell, it was an excellent way to begin our first complete and 'normal' season since the disruption.

We were able to take up the opportunity to sing on one of the major stages in the Province and in front of a large audience as part of the Festival of Remembrance in November. We enjoyed our largest congregation at the Festival of Nine Lessons with Carols along with a total charity donation of £1500 to the work of Marie Curie Hospice, Belfast. We were also able to perform again with our friends in Downshire Brass, which also gave us the opportunity to return to a more 'purple' look as our appearance in recent years had become more muted. On the whole, this looked much better. We also had the opportunity to record the title music to the Television detective series, Dalgleish, which was a fresh challenge and rewarding to hear.

Much of the re-engagement with the public has come through the sustained efforts of social media posts, particularly videos, energetically driven by Andru Kyle. The benefits of this personal style are well within the Grosvenor ethos and don't require us to simply follow the styles and methods of other similar groups.

The winter and spring of 2023 afforded us time to look at some new music or music that had been given a little attention some years previous. Time was also spent preparing Christmas music for a recording session of 6 pieces, and this event was given excellent support and enthusiasm on the day with a very focused 3-hour session; well done, and thank you to Michael Alcorn for his producer ears and efficiency. We shall see how best to progress this in light of Michael stepping down as Downshire's Director of Music. The following weekend we were able to gather informally with our families for the afternoon at our home, where the children could enjoy a bouncy castle or the scavenger hunt and there was food aplenty for everyone not to mention the Ice Cream Van which seemed to cause a few of the adults to regress 40 years to their childhood in the scramble to be first in the queue! It was one of the most special times in recent years with everyone mingling and getting to know each other and our families a little more.

With the summer concert in our sights, we prepared a rather moving programme, in a way which aimed to bring the audience with us through various texts and timbres as if enjoying a full music album – Serenity. Our guest soloist, Harry Douglas, was an excellent addition to the evening and I hope it won't be the last time we get to perform with him.

We would like to thank both Stephen Hamill and Darren Day, who have accompanied us at various events, and we hope they know how appreciated their support and efforts always are.

Thank you to our committee, to Andru, Peter, Sarah and Lucy. A very special thanks to Ros who was co-opted early on in the year after Lucy had to step down. The drive which Ros brought to the group has been excellent and I'm so grateful for all the work that she has done behind the scenes. Sarah took on the role of Secretary, and I know she responds to a lot of emails each week. Peter has kept the show on the road with attendance, helping plan availability for concerts or recordings as well as liaising with the rehearsal venue and completing all the administration for the charity commission. Andru records each rehearsal and we appreciate those who make good use of them as necessary. The work Andru has done on social media and trying to get more of you involved has already been mentioned. Thank you to them all.

If, since the COVID disruption, we have moved through seasons of 'Regrouping and Reconnecting' to 'Reengaging and Reimagining' this next season, in which we will be able to celebrate our 30th birthday in October 2023, we should focus on 'Responsibility and Reliability'. At our last AGM, we discussed much and have made many of those suggestions happen. But we also asked "What would make our rehearsals to be unmissable, that you and I would move mountains to be there each week and not ever want to take a week off from everyone? What small things can we do to build secure foundations so that we can enjoy this for years to come and continue to stand by each other? What needs to be reimagined to mean that we all feel it is worthwhile and that together we are making progress?" According to our attendance statistics, even with a little kind tweaking, we don't seem to have improved here. As much as last Friday evening was excellent in many ways, some areas of reliability and responsiveness both on the night and in the run-up to it gave evidence to us, although hopefully not our appreciative audience, that we 'just about got away with it!'

Reliability in attendance, in knowing our music (not just the notes) and in the consistency of effort where we all have equal responsibility with no one in the group assuming greater importance than anyone else. If you're part of Grosvenor, we cannot do without you.

There will be little things that you may not be strong at, but there must then be others that you do give more. Perhaps you don't like recording video clips for social media, but perhaps you could write an insightful, personal or funny blog-style post? Perhaps you are not the strongest sight-reader, but you will endeavour to spend the time listening and following so that the next week, you are confident enough to stand alone. Perhaps you just couldn't attend a rehearsal, but know it is good to let the others in your section know you will be missing and that the couple of hours spent in rehearsal are made up before the following week – but that missing a rehearsal is just not in our mindset if in any way possible. Perhaps there is a bit you just can't get, but someone else carries you through it, yet it's best to seek help early rather than wait until a rehearsal when they aren't there, and you fall flat without them.

Being responsible and reliable so that in performance we are responsive and resonant with excellence in all that we put our collective minds to. To continue the "Re" expressions just one more time, if in a rather evangelistic way, I am essentially urging Reform and Revival. To consider what we can do together next year and, if you are willing to take up that challenge for the year, by semi-quoting Ronan Keating, "living the year as if it's our last."

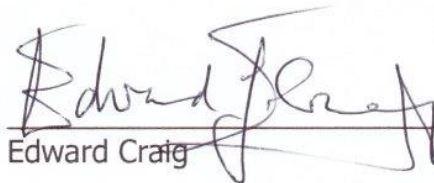
Treasurer's Report

We have been a little bit busier than last year, with a few more concerts gathering in a few pence. Subscriptions are looking good, but around £500 of this figure are late payments from last year! The Waterfront Remembrance concert and Downshire Christmas concert brought in a few pennies, as did the Dalgliesh performance and the wedding party at the start of the year. We raised £1500.00 at the Carol Service for Marie Curie but they dealt with that collection themselves.

Outgoings remain fairly stable, although about £1500.00 is owed to CPC - I'm still waiting for the final bill.

The above reports form an accurate summary of our 2022-2023 year, and the Trustees extend thanks to our Committee, Treasurer and particularly our Musical Director for their continuing hard work, enthusiasm, and encouragement.

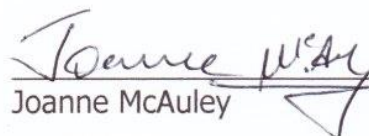
Trustee:


Edward Craig

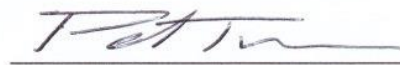
Trustee:


Stephen Glover

Trustee:


Joanne McAuley

Trustee:


Peter Turner