

**COSTANZI CONSORT**  
Annual General Meeting  
*Monday 10 May 2021 at 8pm*  
*Zoom Meeting*

Attending  
Martin Warren *Chair*  
Kate Lewis *Secretary*  
Suzie Leech *Publicity*  
Adele Reynolds *Committee*  
*Member*

Clare Atyeo  
Luisa de Gregorio  
Anne Kershaw  
Max Klatt  
Tony Moorby  
Gui Rego  
Rebecca Thurgur  
Piri Uitz  
Pauline Kemp  
Harriet Potter  
Elizabeth Spiller  
Naomi Hickman  
Mary Lockwood  
Polly Beck  
Ilana Wigfield

1. Welcome

MW thanked everyone for joining the Zoom meeting, noting that these were exceptional circumstances.

2. Apologies

Peter Leech, Jill Tolley, Kathy Fear, Paul Westwood-Gould, Mark Westwood-Gould

3. Matters arising from Meeting on 18 May 2020

Plans including an outdoor photo shoot and an outdoor concert had been put on hold due to the pandemic

4. Chairman Report on the year to 31 March 2021

Appendix 1

5. Music Director Report and plans for next year

a. Appendix 2

6. Treasurer's Report and endorsement of financial statements

a. Appendix 3

b. MW thanked Kathy Fear for independently verifying the accounts.

Accounts accepted unanimously in favour (Nominated – Bob. Seconded – Ilana)

7. Election of Committee

The committee was re-elected unanimously in favour (Nominated – Elizabeth. Seconded – Max )

8. Responses to written questions received

No written questions were received

9. Update on Data Protection Policy

The Data Protection Policy was updated mid-way through last year and is on the members area of the website

10. Covid protection arrangements for rehearsals in June

MW confirmed that members would be invited back to rehearsals using the same format of social distancing as was adopted last autumn.

Ilana suggested members take a Lateral Flow test 36 hours before the rehearsal and this was supported by other members.

11. Dates for diaries

Monday 10 May - Zoom rehearsals resume

Monday 21 June - Rehearsals at All Saints resume

Saturday 26 June - Choir party at Claire Rangeley's at 2pm

Saturday 3 July - Recording at All Saints 10am - 5pm

Monday 13 September - Autumn term begins

12. AOB

None

### **Appendix 1 - Chairman's report**

During the period covered by this meeting 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 we performed precisely No concerts. The previous year ended as the Covid pandemic eventually stopped us singing at all after our last concert on 14 March. Ironically we now have a full complement of singers in all parts and it would be good to get you all together before too long. During the year Paul & Mark joined us as members.

We have stoically kept meeting and singing each week on Zoom with Peter trying all sorts of approaches to keep us awake and challenge us with both known and unknown repertoire.

I must again pay tribute to the enormous hard work by Peter researching the repertoire and producing editions from which we sing. This does not happen overnight and his tremendous enthusiasm each Monday on Zoom helps to maintain such a happy band of singers.

We did in fact manage to have 7 in person rehearsals in the Autumn before we were locked down again. We have explored every opportunity to resume singing together and I will let you know as soon as we can meet again. At the moment that looks as though it will be from 21 June but if we are permitted to meet before that we WILL.

Martin Warren Chairman

### **Appendix 2 - Musical Director's Report**

Firstly, I take the opportunity to thank Martin and the committee for their solid-gold support during what has been one of the most difficult years of my freelance career. Secondly, I thank the choir as whole for continuing to support me, especially when the traditional role of a musical director has been changed beyond recognition from what it was before the pandemic. Many of you will be aware that a large portion of my musical directing has evaporated in the last 15 months. Were it not for Costanzi carrying on, I would have been deprived of yet another musical directorship, so I am very grateful indeed. Thanks again to Martin for all his hard work.

Needless to say, we are all acutely aware of the challenges that have been presented by Zoom rehearsals in particular, and although I have been to a few workshops on this, it would appear that the severe limitations on the real-time format are enduring, regardless of how much technical development there might have been on the pre-recorded side of the coin.

Singers across the spectrum all report the deficiencies of Zoom, but at least it enables some form of rehearsal to continue, even if the fundamental aspects of rehearsing which enable us to develop as an ensemble; blend, tuning, real-time interaction, mixing voice parts, timbre, pronunciation, speed, tempo flexibility, style (in short, pretty much anything and everything to do with being in a choir, short of simply 'singing a part alone'), are literally thrown out the window. At least by

accepting all of this, and continuing to exist, we have not allowed Zoom and Covid to obliterate us as a going concern, something which has sadly happened to many choirs who may never be able to be reconstituted in the form in which they had existed before March 2020. I fully realise that I probably don't make the grade as the best Zoom rehearsal technician in the way that so many prominent and notable conductors have been able to do, but at least we have kept our repertoire alive, and I have also had the impetus to edit, when time allowed, new works to keep individual sight-reading going. I do hope that those who were not able to take part in the Zoom rehearsals will not lose faith and be with us again once more.

At least we had one lovely workshop last September, from which the lovely Casali Scapulis suis clip came, and then some rehearsals at All Saints, from which we have the Bortnyansky Dostynno clip. It was heart-breaking to have to stop rehearsals yet again, just when I felt our collective momentum (albeit in a socially-distanced manner) was picking up, but at least a few of us were able to take part in the one-off combined carols with Harmonia Sacra, a service which I know was hugely appreciated by a vast number of people, and which raised such a handsome sum for the RNLI. It may only have been the traditional old book repertoire, but it was a super event.

Given that we have no concerts after March 2020 to look back on, this is certainly one of the strangest AGM reports to be having to make, but I'd rather look at it in terms of what might be coming up, rather than what has passed. (That being said, the Victoria Requiem of 14 March 2020 will go down as one of my most memorable concerts ever.) I hope and pray that we have much to look forward to, in whatever form that may take, and that we will all be together again soon doing what we all love to do every Monday evening.

### **Appendix 3 - Treasurers Report**

Again I have kept the accounts as simple and clear as possible. I am grateful to Kathy Fear who has cast her eye over my records to provide an independent check that all is well. Most of the items on the sheet you have are I hope self-explanatory. As I mentioned it is for a period of 12 months ending 31 March this year. A few points for clarity:

#### **Income**

You are a generous and committed bunch and most of you have continued to pay your monthly subs. For that I am very grateful and it has allowed us to continue to pay Peter his regular monthly fee.

Performance income was zero of course and we did not pursue Friends subscriptions in the circumstances with nothing to offer them in return.

Please note the Museum have already paid in advance for our next concert there whenever that may be.

#### **Expenditure**

The decrease in our Director's fees is related to the loss of additional concerts

We will need to rebuild our audience when we can resume singing together. As you know our first concert will be recorded and streamed at a later date.

The overall financial situation is sound and optimistic for our Casali recording, which we envisage will be more expensive than originally forecast. Only time will tell. Thank you all for your continued support.

