

NEW MUSIC MAKERS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2024

Well, what another great year we have had.

We kicked off with our Summer Spectacular in July last year, and as normal, this was a resounding success. We always seem to manage to sell out at this event. I think people enjoy the friendly atmosphere that we have against the more traditional atmosphere we have for our summer concert.

We then moved into our Christmas spirit ready for our Christmas concerts at the Hedge End Village Hall, and although our audience numbers were down on the previous year, we still made a profit which was used to purchase some new songs for our Summer 2024 programme. We were delighted to welcome the Mayor and Mayoress of Eastleigh for the afternoon concert, and when I saw them at another show in April this year they remarked how much they had enjoyed the concert and were very proud to have a choir of such calibre within the area.

We had been contacted by a member of the public who had come to our concert at the Royal Victoria Country Park in 2022 to enquire if it was possible to go and sing at a Christmas concert at Applemore College. I went to a meeting with the Head Teacher and their Drama Teacher and discussed a programme that included some of the pupils and staff playing instruments and singing together with our own songs, and on the 14th December we staged their Christmas concert at the college. I think the audience did not know what to expect, but once the concert was finished, there were glowing reviews from just about everyone, and the homemade sausage rolls with scrumptious.

Christmas came and went and we started into our summer season.

Bitterne URC had booked us for a Private Concert Party in April, and then we help celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Hedge End Methodist Church with a concert in May, which managed to raise over £350 for their church funds. We are the longest surviving group that uses their hall, and we were formed from members of the church back in 1970.

And then there was our Summer concert at KCC. This year, the committee decided to reduce the performances to one, in the afternoon, which was the right decision to make as we sold out in the end, and even had to put some additional chairs out.

Once again, our Summer Spectacular was a resounding success with virtually all of the tickets sold, we even had the Deputy Mayor and Deputy Mayoress from Eastleigh join us for the afternoon, who both thoroughly enjoy themselves.

On Sunday, a few of us went and helped St John's C of E Church celebrate their 150th Anniversary, and again, we were warmly received and thanked for organising the singing at such short notice.

Local Vocals are going from strength to strength, and we are virtually singing once a week. We have made some new contacts and they are proving to be very successful. The Dementia Support Group that we have been associated with at Snowdrop Place invited us to sing at their two Christmas Parties, one in Fareham and the other in Eastleigh, last Christmas, and they were so pleased with us that we have been asked to do the same again this year. They have also booked us up for the next two years to sing at their two homes that they use, Snowdrop Place and Florence Court. We have expanded our song list to 84 songs now, and thanks must go to Jerry Gamble for all the work he put into getting the music ready for us. Eunice has done a brilliant job of organising the Local Vocals and has put a lot of time and effort into it to make it the success it is, and sees it continue to grow.

Any group or society would not be able to operate without a Committee to ensure that everything runs smoothly, and I would like to thank the Officers and Committee for their dedication they have shown over the past year to make sure that the choir continues to be the success it is. I would also like to thank the Music Committee for all the work they do putting together the programmes for our Summer and Christmas concerts.

A lot of our success goes down to the Musical Director, Lillian Sediles. She has brought us on in leaps and bounds since she joined us, and a lot of the comments that were made at our Summer concert from the audience, is that we seem to get better each time, so many thanks for her hard work.

Also, thanks must go to Chris Allison, our Assistant Musical Director and Pianist, for the dedication he shows to us especially when Lillian is not able to make rehearsals and for the work he does for us at the private concert parties.

Lastly, I think I need to thank you, the members, for without you there would be no choir, and you continue to help make the choir the success it is. Our numbers have remained about same, with a few dropping out and new ones filling their places.

Well, that's all for now, so enjoy the summer break and I will see you all in September.

Regards

Eric Gerrey - Chairman