

Bytown Voices Community Choir
Annual General Meting
Draft Minutes Approved

Tuesday, April 30, 2019
Chances R Restaurant, 1365 Woodroffe Ave, College Square, Ottawa

Attendees: Frances Baker, Irene Bakker, Bob Brocklebank, Kevin Burns*, Barb Clubb, Kerry Coulter, Jim Covert, Rosemary Covert, Barry Craven, Nancy Craven Judy Fagan, Joan Fearnley, Elizabeth Gluckstal, Lindsay Gowing, David Gowing*, Norma Grier, Anke Groeneveld, Faye Grinberg Rice, Jenny Morphew, Judy Taylor, Paul Taylor, Jon Jones, Lena Jones, Donna Lougheed, Nick Mainguy, Kathy Massoud, Linda Miller, Doina Popescu, Charles Pryce, Adam Przednowek, Sheila Purcell, Peter Rice, Lindsay Setzer, Helen Shaw, Heather Smith, Gloria Sorge, Pam Spurway, Morgan Strickland*, Ward Strickland, Pam Waddington, John Waddington, Sue Wheeler, Mary Heather White, Isabelle Yingling.
Absent with regrets: Tammy Chan, Helen Glover, Carla Klassen, Véronique Pourboix, Sandy Parsons
* Guest

- 1. Welcome:** President John Waddington welcomed all members and their guests to the 2019 Annual General Meeting and year-end dinner. He also welcomed Morgan Strickland, our guest soprano soloist for our most recent concert “*Feel the Spirit*” on April 28, 2019, and all accompanying persons.
- 2. Approval of Agenda:** the agenda was approved with a change of date in item #3 to 2018.
- 3. Minutes of AGM 2018 May 8:** the minutes, were approved as posted in the “For Members” section of the website.
- 4. President’s remarks:** The President thanked the executive team both elected and appointed members, for their hard work during the past year and for helping him ensure that everything ran smoothly. He announced that all elected members but two, had agreed to stand for another year but that we need a new recording secretary and a Marketing and Publicity lead (subsequently filled by Valerie Bryce during the meeting). He thanked Faye Grinberg Rice and Lyndsay Gowing for leading section rehearsals and Paul Taylor for making the Midi practice files available to all members. He noted that Paul also took on the task of ensuring the privacy of the choir’s membership list after a former member alerted us to the fact that an old list was still coming up on web searches. We all learned a great deal from that exercise. He thanked Barb Clubb and Rosemary Covert for the constant improvement to the website which is looking very attractive now. Finally he thanked our volunteer sound engineer Kevin Burns, for recording each of our concerts since the spring of 2013, to be used for archival and membership purposes.

The President recalled that at the 2018 AGM new guidelines for attendance and absenteeism were introduced and he hoped that they have been useful. He remarked that the executive had approved new job descriptions for section leads during the year. He also noted that there had been an unusual amount of illness and medical problems among the members this past year, and hoped that this would ease in the future. He acknowledged that St. Basil’s had had significant problems with the furnace and the vertical lift device (aka elevator) but had been told that these would be fixed by the fall, including the installation of an elevator.

Bytown Voices has been in existence since 1999. A list of all the music we have sung in concert has been produced by Barb Clubb and circulated to all members. In the fall, this will be followed by a list of members, season by season, since the inception of the choir. To celebrate 20 years as a non-

audition community choir, the executive has approved two celebratory concerts for the 2019-2020 year. For the 2020 Spring Concert a special budget of \$5,000 to hire soloists, additional musicians and a larger venue has been approved.

The President then presented a gift of wine to our director Joan Fearnley, in deep appreciation for her musical leadership of our choir. Because our accompanist Carla Klassen could not be with us at the AGM, she was presented with her thank-you gift following the concert at the Carlingwood Retirement Community. The President then presented our spring concert soloist Morgan Strickland, and our volunteer recording engineer Kevin Burns, with small tokens of our thanks and appreciation. He noted that the concert CD's were available from Jon Jones for pick-up and payment, if not already done.

5. **Director of Music Report (Joan Fearnley):** The director of music thanked all members for their hard work over the past year. She then outlined the two 20th anniversary celebration concerts. While the programming has not been completed, the December concert will feature members' favourites over the years. The Spring Concert will feature Vivaldi's *Gloria* with a small orchestra and soloists. Because St. Basil's cannot accommodate an orchestra, negotiations are underway to hold the concert at Woodroffe United Church, 207 Woodroffe Ave., between Richmond Road and the Carlingwood Shopping Centre. Joan said that our 2019 Spring concert had been part of the preparation for the 2020 concert in terms of scope of music. In reviewing our recent concert, she congratulated the choir on performing Haydn's piece; the first time a complete work of that nature had been performed by Bytown Voices. She stressed that this had stretched our voices and that this is good for vocal development. She also observed that our heads were out of our scores more than usual ... also a good thing. In closing she acknowledged that the two parts of the Spring concert had been very different and some of the audience and choir members liked one part over the other, but that all in all, it had been a very fine performance
6. **Finance Report (Jon Jones):** The treasurer spoke to his interim report which had been circulated by email. He noted ticket sales for the 2019 Spring concert had been 230 and for the 2018 fall concert had been 284. The only extraordinary expense had been the used filing cabinets which are now located in St. Basil's Resource Room. It is a securely locked room and Bytown Voices has code access. The final year-end financial report is attached to these minutes and also posted separately on the "For Members" section of the website.
7. **Other reports:**
 - a. **BV Concert Coordinator (Doina Popescu):** The coordinator expressed a huge thanks to all the member and external volunteers who had worked so hard to mount two smooth flowing concert experiences this past year. This year the position of "front-of-house" person was instituted.
Doina Popescu
Concert Coordinator
 - b. **Outreach (Kathy Moussad)**
We had our winter Outreach concert at the Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre, 1750 Russell Road on December 11, 2018. Our concert was well received by the residents. Our performance was shorter than usual as there was a double booking; Bytown Beats, a similarly named choir, was also there at the same time. After the concert, we adjourned to the Canal Ritz for a festive meal and a brief wrap up of our fall session and presentation of thank-you gifts.

Our spring Outreach concert was performed on April 30, at a new venue - the Carlingwood Retirement Community, on 200 Lockhart just north of the Carlingwood Shopping Centre. The residents thoroughly enjoyed the program we offered including guest soloist Morgan Strickland

in full concert dress. The choir received \$125.00 as an honorarium and they would like us to come back. They very kindly loaned us their microphone equipment to use at Chances R restaurant immediately following ,where we held our end of year dinner and 2018-19 AGM meeting.

Kathy Massoud
Outreach Coordinator

c. **Membership Report 2018-19 (Charles Pryce)**

Membership has been stable for both sessions this year and slightly above the average for past years. Over the past few years membership has generally been between 55 and 60 for each session. Typically there would be a slight drop in membership for the winter season. The practice of paying registration fees by email transfer to the Treasurer Jon Jones was instituted.

This year there were 63 members registered for the fall session consisting of 23 sopranos, 26 altos, 8 tenors and 6 basses. The winter session ended up with 61 singers registered consisting of 25 sopranos, 23 altos, 7 tenors and 6 basses. This meant we averaged 60 singers for each session and very little drop off in registrations for the winter session.

One area where I have been somewhat delinquent concerns name tags. Everyone should have a name tag. For the next session, if you do not have a name tag or if you have lost it please let me know so that I can provide you with one. Contact me at charles.pryce@sympatico.ca

Charles Pryce
BV Membership

d. **Marketing and Publicity 2018-2019 (Valerie Bryce)**

The committee for marketing and publicity was composed of Helen Glover and Valerie Bryce. Much appreciated help in carrying out various tasks was provided by Barbara Clubb, Elizabeth Gluckstal, Rosemary Covert and Helen Shaw.

Notices about the December 2018 and the April 2019 concerts were submitted to the Ottawa Citizen's Annual Arts supplement in September as well as "Our Town" just prior to each concert. On-line sites utilized were Classymusic.ca; Classicalottawa.com; Apt613.ca; City of Ottawa Spotlight Events Calendar and Ottawa Choir Events Hub. Notices were also in The Glebe Report and the Ottawa South community newspaper just before each concert. There are few community newspapers now and even on-line ones will only advertise events in their immediate neighbourhood. CKCU 93.1 included information in their weekly Arts Report.

Bytown Voices is included with a link on CAMMAC's web site on information about local choirs. Concert posters were displayed in St Basil's Church, Trinity Church and the Notre Dame Basilica. All this is taking advantage of whatever free public advertising is possible.

Not part of the jobs of this committee but probably more effective in drawing in an audience is the MailChimp list maintained by Rosemary Covert and Barb Clubb. A poster and announcement for each concert is mailed out to everyone on the list. Copies are also emailed to all members.

The part that neither Helen nor I had the expertise to carry out was social media. This year the Facebook element of social media has been handled by Barb Clubb and Rosemary Covert. A request made by our committee and the Communications team for a volunteer to carry out this means of getting our name into the community. So far nobody has come forward but hopefully there will be someone ready to do this next year.

Helen is stepping down from this committee and I am willing to take over as coordinator/spokesperson for this committee for the 2019-2020 singing year.

Valerie Bryce

in the unavoidable absence of Helen Glover but with her approval.

e. Music Librarian (Irene Bakker)

Irene reported that this past season had been an easy one for the music librarian as there were only three pieces to procure and distribute. Her main task has been beginning the process of rationalizing and moving the music library from the Coverts' basement to our new storage location in the Resource Room at St. Basil's. She expressed thanks to Jim and Rosemary Covert for their many years of providing space for our music and to John Waddington for helping to obtain second-hand filing cabinets to house the music when it is transferred to St. Basil's. This she estimates will be completed over the summer. The President noted that the BV music library is a substantial asset which can be shared with other local choirs as they do with us.

Irene Bakker

Music Librarian

f. Communications (Barb Clubb and Rosemary Covert)

Communications encompasses the website, the Google account for electronic files and email, social media, some elements of concert promotion and concert recordings.

Website: The website is hosted on a platform called Yola and is managed by Barb Clubb with assistance from Rosemary Covert. We try to keep it current with frequent updates. A major objective has been to increase the visitor count by making it more attractive and easy to navigate but avoiding the expense of a professional web designer and service provider. The website had a total of 858 visits in the last 6 months, which is up 49%. There were 193 repeat visits, also up, by 44%. The average time spent was 1 m 43 sec. The Yola platform has an SEO (search engine optimization) service at an additional charge; we are investigating this as a way to increase our reach.

A major initiative for the website this year has been to add music practice tools to the "For Members" page (which is not accessible by the public). All tools - midi files, web links and YouTube videos etc., have been gathered into one place with the goal of making home practicing easier and means that members do not have to download the tools onto their personal computers.

In addition, a 20-year list of all the music that Bytown Voices has sung from 1999 to Spring 2019 has been added to the "For Members" page as well as to the "Thinking of Joining a Choir" public page. In the fall, a list of members for each season from 1999 to present day will be posted to the "For Members" page. Finally, some work this year has also been done to re-organize the resource files (e.g. photos) on the Yola website platform so that they are easier to access and use.

Google: Because Bytown Voices uses Gmail as its email system, we also have access to a Google drive. In the past year we have continued to re-organize and repopulate the file structure of the drive so that all of our official documents and photos are available electronically, are easily accessible for executive members, and exist in one place as much as possible. This continues to be a work in progress.

Social Media: Notwithstanding the controversy that Facebook has been experiencing, it still remains a valuable communications tool for not-for-profits such as Bytown Voices. We have been investigating how it could be used more effectively to broaden our audience reach. The Facebook

ad for the most recent concert reached 541 people in the Ottawa area—which means they looked at the event posting. We did what is called “boosting the ad” which cost \$1 a day for 12 days. To get even more coverage, choir members who are on FB themselves are encouraged to share the BV post, which can be done for free. This would increase the choir’s reach as well as remind all our friends, family and acquaintances about the event.

There are an increasing number of websites and electronic platforms to promote choral and other musical events in Ottawa. It is a challenge to keep track of them all. This coming year, we will work closely with the Marketing and Promotion team to ensure that these options are leveraged as effectively as possible.

Mailing List: Bytown Voices uses a free email marketing platform called MailChimp to send out electronic messages about our two annual concerts. Our MailChimp subscriber list is standing at 344. The names have all come from choir members, and recipients can easily unsubscribe if they no longer want to receive our emails. The email advertising the most recent concert had an “open rate” of 53% (up from 46%), in comparison with the general musician “open rate” of 17%. Only 2 people unsubscribed. This means that people are reading our email notices and we are not losing many subscribers. Over the next 12 months, this program could also be used to send information about our 20th anniversary celebrations. Please send any new names of your family, friends and loved ones, complete with email address, to Barbara Clubb barbclubb@gmail.com or Rosemary Covert, rjcovert@sympatico.ca to add to the mailing list. Be sure to ask their permission first.

Concert promotion: Rosemary Covert continues her work as the designer of our wonderful concert posters. This year we experimented with getting the Spring poster out to members and the public much earlier than in the past. For the first time we purchased the main image used in the poster. Once we had legal possession of the image, Barry Craven was able to use it for the basic design of the concert tickets.

Concert recordings: Since the Spring of 2013, all our concerts have been recorded by volunteer Kevin Burns. The recording becomes a permanent audio record of our concerts, and the master recording of the complete event (speeches, coughs and all) is added to our official archives after each concert. Kevin then uses the master file to create CDs for members at a modest cost of \$5/CD. Barb Clubb creates the insert, listing the concert program and the choir members and using the concert poster as the basis for the graphic. The goal is always to have the CD available for distribution at the outreach concert following the main concert. Because Bytown Voices does not purchase copyright permission to make the music publicly available for sale, the distribution of the CD must be restricted to members and our guest performers for educational and archival purposes. A concert snippet is always posted to the website home page.

Rosemary Covert & Barb Clubb

Communications

g. Archives Report 2018-19 (Jo Saunders)

Good news. Bad news. The good news is the archives did not get wet. The bad news is the condo locker in which I store the files, leaked. I love being Archivist of the Bytown Voices for it is virtue rewarded. Twice a year I collect the CD, concert program, ticket and poster of the season’s concert and throw them in a box. For this meager task, I am given the grandiose title of Archivist! I must say, however, that this year was extra taxing as I had to dig out a couple of old programs in preparation for the 20th Anniversary Best Picks – wipe brow. Nothing, compared to the 20-year song compilation that Past President Barb completed!

The files are physically housed in the home of the Archivist. The files are in order. The current archivist Jo Saunders has completed three years in this exalted position and is willing to continue for the following choir year.

Jo Saunders

BV Archivist

h. Executive Positions for 2019-2020

President Waddington announced that all but two of the executive have agreed to stay on for one more year. Valerie Bryce has agreed to take on the Marketing and Publicity post. Thus, the one vacant position is for **Secretary**. He urged any member interested in this position to contact him directly at johnwadd@magma.ca

The executive team for the coming year will be:

President	<i>John Waddington</i>
Vice-President	<i>Faye Grinberg Rice</i>
Secretary	VACANT
Treasurer	<i>Jon Jones</i>
Concert Coordinator	<i>Doina Popescu</i>
Marketing and Publicity	<i>Valerie Bryce</i>
Music Librarian	<i>Irene Bakker</i>
Membership	<i>Charles Pryce</i>
Outreach Events	<i>Kathy Massoud</i>
Past President	<i>Barb Clubb</i>
Director of Music	<i>Joan Fearnley (non-voting)</i>

Non-executive member volunteers

Section leads	<i>Altos: Lyndsay Gowing (Rehearsal lead) and Pam Spurway</i> <i>Soprano: Faye Grinberg Rice, Rehearsal and Section lead</i> <i>Men: Barry Craven, Section lead;</i> <i>Faye Grinberg Rice (Rehearsal lead)</i> <i>John Waddington, Charles Pryce, Barb Clubb</i> <i>Paul Taylor</i> <i>Lyndsay Gowing, Doina Popescu, Iona Quinn, ..</i> <i>Kathy White</i> <i>Iona Quinn</i> <i>Barry Craven</i> <i>Valerie Bryce and Chris Thurgur</i> VACANT
Gmail, Google Account, E-corporate memory	
Midi Files	
Library Assistants	
Finance Assistant	
Membership Assistant	
Marketing and Promotion Assistants	
Social media assistant for marketing	
Website	
Archives	
Facebook page	
Facebook assistant	

8. Plans for 20th Anniversary Celebratory Concerts

The BV executive has approved special budget of \$5,000 for the Spring anniversary concert. See

item #5 Report of the Director of Music for details as they are known at this time.

9. Other business:

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Submitted by

Barb Clubb

A/Secretary

Reviewed and approved by President John Waddington

Attachment: 2018-19 Financial Statement, Fina

BYTOWN VOICES FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2018-2019

June 05, 2018 - June 04, 2019

OPENING BALANCE at June 05, 2018

\$11,981

FALL SPRING

INCOME

Registrations	\$5,910	\$5,795
Ticket Sales	\$4,261	\$3,480
Friends	\$170	\$0
Concert CD Sales	\$285	\$235
Sponsorships	\$150	\$175
Donations	\$490	\$135
Performance Fees	\$0	\$125
Miscellaneous	\$25	\$160

**TOTAL
INCOME**

\$11,291 \$10,105

EXPENSES

Director fees	\$3,185	\$3,580
Accompanist fees	\$1,739	\$1,948
Soloist/instrumentalist fees	\$300	\$350
Section leader fees	\$0	\$0
Space rental	\$850	\$950
Liability Insurance	\$351	\$167
SOCAN Fees	\$144	\$61
Purchase of Music	\$1,040	\$1,318
Concert expenses	\$366	\$448
Vocal Workshop	\$0	\$0
Website/domain	\$0	\$0
Gifts for director/accomp	\$152	\$208
Honoraria	\$0	\$0
Piano tuning	\$249	\$124
Bank fees	\$0	\$0
Concert CD expenses	\$63	\$133
Refreshments	\$0	\$0
Donations	\$0	\$0
Audio system	\$134	\$0
Advertising	\$0	\$0
Stationery, mailing costs	\$11	\$161
Misc (purchase and repair of filing cabinets, etc.)		\$675

**TOTAL
EXPENSES**

\$8,586 \$10,123

EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENSES

\$2,705 -\$18

CLOSING BALANCE at June 04, 2019

\$14,668