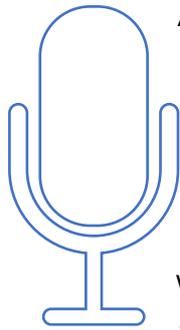


ORIGINS OF THE AM CHORUS



As the AM Chorus is starting afresh, it may be worth reminding ourselves how it began.

In a discussion I had with Avril McCusker in the Spring of 2016 she said that she liked to have a project running alongside her work as a music teacher and thought there might be interest in a community choir.

We agreed that Avril would provide the musical input while I did the administrative work. I approached the church to ask if we could make use of the small hall for a non-denominational community choir.

After informing the Minister, Tom Pollok, of our plans he very helpfully suggested that this would fit with the objectives of Sherbrooke Initiative and this has proved invaluable from the start.

After some publicity the first gathering took place on 7th September 2016 with a dozen or so members.

Avril and I agreed to commit ourselves to the end of the year and, provisionally, to the end of March 2017. Our numbers slowly increased.

Over the following summer Avril felt, for personal reasons, that she could not continue. Claire Bauld took over the musical elements and as 2017/2018 progressed our numbers rose slowly and with an expanding repertoire, the administration also grew. Brian Lockhart joined me in meeting this challenge through to the end of that period.

As my eyesight deteriorated, I could no longer read musical scores and Brian kindly agreed to take over all of the administration. From Autumn 2018 Brian's enthusiasm for the project saw the numbers continue to increase and by the time the Coronavirus arrived the number of those attending was consistently around 40 or more.

THE NAME

Avril thought that, since choirs generally meet in the evening, there might be an opportunity to attract members who would prefer morning meetings. After several exchanges of ideas, we wanted to follow on from 'The Dawn Chorus'. We felt 'The Morning Chorus' seemed a little bland so we opted for 'The a.m. Chorus'. When Avril gave this information to her son, Aiden, he immediately pointed out that these were Avril's initials. This was complete serendipity on our part!

Alan R Irons