Palmerston North Choral Society (Inc.)

Palmerston North New Zealand

2026 Annual Report



Jacob Ploeg

AGENDA 2026

Notice is hereby given of the 2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Palmerston North Choral Society to be held at St Peter's Church, Ruahine St, Palmerston North, 7:30 pm Monday 23rd February 2026. Copies of all documents are in the Annual Report emailed to choristers.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Confirm Minutes of 2025 Annual Meeting
3. Matters arising from Minutes:
4. Receive President's Annual Report
5. Receive Music Director's Annual Report
6. Receive Treasurer's Report and adopt the Financial Statements for year ended 31.12.2024
7. Election of Honorary Members (Patrons).

   Patron – Jenny Boyack

   Vice Patrons – Guy Donaldson, Graham Parsons and Roy Tankersley

8. Election of Management Committee – Current officers will retire but are eligible for re-election.

   Nominations will be accepted at the meeting.

   [*The new PNCS Constitution provides that the Management Committee shall have from 3 to 10 members, all of whom are "officers". These comprise the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to six additional members.*]

   Nominated Management Committee Officers:

   President: Sue Brown
   Vice President:
   Treasurer: Robert van Bentum
   Secretary: Ian Rowden is not seeking re-election

   Myra Smith
   John Chittenden

   Music Director: Alison Stewart, ex officio

   Honorary Accompanists; Myra Smith and Frances Siddle

9. Subscription 2026.

   Motion recommended by the Committee for adoption:

   That the subscription for 2026 be $160 reducible to $150 if paid early by the indicated date, or $60 per performance if not singing all year.

10. Appointment of Reviewer: Alan Martin [Retired Chartered Accountant]

11 General Business

12 Closure.

Palmerston North Choral Society (Inc.)

P O Box 1636 Palmerston North 4440 New Zealand

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting: Monday 3rd March 2025
Time: 7.30pm. St Peter's Church.

Present: Sue Brown (President) chaired the meeting; Alison Stewart (Music Director), Averil Nasario, Carrol Donoghue, Heather Wilson, Frances Siddle, Karen Hall, Tineke McLean, Sue Brown, Ingrid Vlieg, Graeme Siddle, John Drake, Wilma Glassey, Jo Lewis, Kevin Stafford, Robert van Bentum (Treasurer), Marian Dean, Ian Rowden (Secretary), Brian Colless, Sheila Jolley, Ken Jolley, Kathy Love, John Love, Shirley Deere, Stanley Barnes, Gina Fermor, Susan Larsen, Craig Barber, Catherine Whitby, Myra Smith, Emma Jolley, Anne Smith, Robyn Good, Mike Tuohy, Pauline Simonsen, Sushmita Aind, Fiona Crozier, Nancy Langlands, Nicola McCarthy, Naomi Clements-Roeper.

Apologies: John Chittenden, Bev Waugh, Ray Watchman, Miriam Peel, John Searle.

Minutes of the 2024 AGM
The Minutes of the 2024 AGM were circulated prior to the AGM and were taken as read.
Motion that the minutes are a true record of that meeting. Carried.

Matters Arising: Nil.

President's Report – 2024 – was circulated prior to the meeting so was taken as read.
Motion that the President's report be received; Sue Brown / Carried.

Music Director's Report – 2024.
The Music Director's report was circulated prior to the meeting so was taken as read.
Motion that the Music Director's report be received; Alison Stewart/ Robert van Bentum. Carried.

Presentation of the Audited Financial Statements for the year ending 31/12/2024

These were also circulated prior to the meeting so were taken as read. They contained one reference of 2023 which should be 2024.
The Treasurer summarised the year by commenting that 2023 had been a successful year with a small surplus as a result of performance proceeds exceeding expenses. However, the subscription revenue does not cover operating costs, due particularly to smaller membership.

Motion that the Financial Statements be received; Robert van Bentum/Ian Rowden. Carried.

Moved that Alan Martin be thanked and requested to continue as Honorary Reviewer of the statements. Robert van Bentum/Ian Rowden. Carried.

Election of Honorary Members (Patrons).

All have agreed to continue as our Patrons.
Motion that Jenny Boyack be elected as Patron, and that Guy Donaldson, Graham Parsons and Roy Tankersley be elected as Vice-Patrons.
Moved Sue Brown, seconded Ian Rowden. Carried.

Election of Management Committee

The following nominations had been circulated prior to the AGM and were elected unopposed:
President: Sue Brown
Secretary: Ian Rowden
Treasurer: Robert van Bentum
Myra Smith
John Chittenden
Alison Stewart (Music Director) ex officio

There were no nominations from the floor. The President advised that volunteers were needed to carry out small but essential roles.

Subscription 2026-27

The current subscription does not cover operating costs. Our subscription is significantly less than those of other choirs.

Motion: That the subscription for the next financial year be $160 reducible to $150 if paid early by the indicated date, or $60 per performance if not singing all year. Moved Robert van Bentum seconded Pauline Simonsen. Carried.

Appointment of Reviewer
Robert van Bentum thanked the current Reviewer Alan Martin (retired chartered accountant) who was willing to be re-appointed.
Motion: that Mr Martin be reappointed: moved Robert van Bentum seconded Ian Rowden. Carried.

General Business:
Carrol Donoghue – An Appreciation
In light of Carrol's recent retirement from the PNCS Committee, President Sue Brown spoke as follows:
"Carrol Donoghue has made a contribution to our choir that has been notable for its longevity and quality. Carrol joined the choir in 1996 and for 25 of the following 28 years was a member of the Committee.
Over this period, Carrol carried out the roles of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Archivist /Historian. In 2005 Carrol was made a Life Member. Carrol now wishes to reduce her range of administrative tasks but will continue to be actively involved and provide her considerable experience and advice to the Committee. "
Sue then presented a gift to Carrol in appreciation of her stellar work ethic and unwavering loyalty.

The Meeting closed at 7.51pm.

S Brown
PRESIDENT

13 / MARCH 2025
DATE

Presidents' Report 2025

It is a privilege to be involved with a choir that works hard to ensure it delivers a quality performance. All of you do your best to make a positive contribution where and when you can. I am hopeful that the request for more committee members is received positively; a few more people would make the work much easier and more effective, I'm sure.

Our first concert *A Night at the Opera* brought effusive praise from the audience who were engaged by the spirit of the choir and the vibrant soloists. Alison's wisdom in juxtaposing pieces worked beautifully.

Our second concert *Vive la velorution* was back by popular acclaim. Audience comments on both the choir and jazz quintet were positive and included the words 'jaunty', lively' 'thought provoking' and 'engaging'. The choir all did their sartorial best to look like keen cyclists. There was evidence of many high Viz vests plus several altos in elegant Edwardian garb. Alison reflected the theme by wearing a yellow top inscribed 'leader.' Props included Robyn Goode's unicycle and Tineke's cargo bike festooned with flowers. In her presentation role Tineke gifted some of her artwork- framed drawings of kiwis (birds) on unicycles with additional quirky wording.

Our choir was bolstered by some additional choristers for *Highlights from the Messiah,* our third and final concert for the year. This concert was a credit to everyone. The choir and orchestra melded and complemented each other beautifully. Alison is commended for bringing out the best in us. Our large audience was extremely appreciative.

Special mention must be made of choir members who work behind the scenes to make all this possible: Karen and helpers who set up (and dismantle) staging, Anne, Heather, Shirley, Jo and co. who always make supper look enticing, Heather for distributing and managing the 'black folders', Tineke for using her creativity in providing gifts for the soloists, musical director and instrumentalists and John and Kathy Love for their immense contribution over the years designing posters and fliers.

A special presentation was made to Myra Smith and Frances Siddle for their highly professional accompanist expertise at our rehearsals.

Thanks are also extended to Graeme Siddle for organising a choir trip to a viewing of "The Choir' and to Robert van Bentum for organising a group to see ''Tina'', a NZ film on the impact of music on students' lives.

A sincere acknowledgement to our committee; Robert van Bentum (Treasurer), Ian Rowden (Secretary), John Chittenden, Alison Stewart and Myra Smith. Thank you for your collegiality and on-going determination to further the growth and success of the choir.
In 2026 we hope to bolster our choir with additional singers so that we can maintain and even surpass the quality of our concerts. Thanks to everyone for your continued commitment to the choir – long may it continue.



Sue Brown
President

Music Director's Report for 2025

It is my pleasure to present this report on another successful year of choral music-making in our region. In 2025, we successfully delivered three distinctive concerts, each offering our audiences a rich and varied musical experience.

Our year began with a celebration of the operatic repertoire, featuring beloved choruses and arias spanning three centuries. The programme opened with Mozart's enchanting *Magic Flute Overture* and traversed the romantic landscape of Verdi, Puccini, and Wagner before concluding with stirring selections from musical theatre. The choir's performance of iconic choruses, including Verdi's magnificent *Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves* and Puccini's ethereal *Humming Chorus* from *Madama Butterfly*, demonstrated both technical precision and emotional depth. These were complemented by exceptional solo contributions from Jennifer Little (soprano), Sinead Keane (mezzo-soprano), and Lindsay Yeo (baritone), whose artistry brought vivid characterisation to beloved arias such as Puccini's *O mio babbino caro* and Bizet's seductive *Habanera,* and *Toreador* song. Guy Donaldson's accomplished piano accompaniment was integral to the evening's success, with his solo performance of Verdi's Rigoletto Quartet being a particular highlight. Audience response was exceptionally warm, reflecting genuine appreciation for both the musical quality and the accessible programming.

Our second offering showcased Alexander L'Estrange's exuberant cycle *Vive la Velorution*, a work that combines jazz idioms with choral writing in a celebration of cycling culture. The choir embraced both the musical and theatrical dimensions of this piece with enthusiasm, with many members donning cycling attire that added visual flair to the performance.

We were fortunate to engage an outstanding jazz ensemble whose musicianship elevated the entire production. David Selfe on piano, Neville Lauridsen on bass, Yuri Park on violin, Max Haas de Silva on trumpet and flugelhorn, and Jacob Lauridsen on drums brought artistry to their roles. The synergy between choir and instrumentalists created an infectious energy that clearly resonated with our audience.

We concluded the year with our presentation of Highlights from Handel's *Messiah*, a work that continues to draw both performers and audiences with its enduring power. I am pleased to report that this December performance represented some of our finest work as an ensemble. The choir demonstrated remarkable musical maturity in their interpretation of Handel's score, while the orchestra provided sensitive and stylistic accompaniment.

Our soloists brought considerable artistry to their demanding roles: Jennifer Little as soprano, Sinead Keane as contralto, Nigel Tongs as tenor, and Lindsay Yeo as bass, with distinguished instrumental contributions from Roy Tankersley on harpsichord, Annie Hunt on cello, and Neville Lauridsen on trumpet.

Both choir attendance throughout the rehearsal period and audience numbers at the performances were highly encouraging, reflecting the Society's strong position within our community and the choir members' exemplary commitment during this traditionally busy season.

The success of this year's programme reflects the dedication of many individuals. I must begin by expressing my profound gratitude to Myra Smith, our rehearsal accompanist, who does an outstanding job week after week. Myra's musicianship, patience, and skill are the foundation upon which we build each concert, and her vocal coaching has been invaluable in developing individual voices and blend within the choir. Her time and commitment to the Society cannot be overstated. I also extend warm thanks to Frances Siddle, who steps in to accompany whenever Myra is unable to attend. Frances's willingness to support us and her pianistic ability ensure continuity in our rehearsal process, and we are most grateful for her time and dedication.

I am particularly grateful to Sue for her collegial support, insightful conversations, and collaborative approach to planning. The entire committee deserves recognition for their tireless work behind the scenes,

it is their efforts that enable everything we achieve musically. I encourage all members to express appreciation to committee members whenever you see them, and to seriously consider joining this vital group.

Anne Smith and her team have once again created memorable hospitality at our interval refreshments, with themed presentations for each concert that enhance the overall concert experience.

Our format of shorter, more varied concerts with focused rehearsal periods has proven successful, allowing us to present repertoire that might otherwise be beyond our reach while maintaining musical standards and member engagement. This approach serves both our artistic aspirations and our community's appetite for live choral music.

Thank you all for your commitment, musicianship, and collegiality. It remains a privilege to make music together and to share that gift with Manawatū audiences.



TREASURER'S REPORT TO PALMERSTON NORTH CHORAL SOCIETY (Incorporated)

2026 ANNUAL MEETING

I present this report to accompany the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2025. The Reviewer's report to members is set out on page 6 of the Financial Report.

Statement of Financial Performance

This statement lists all the income and expenditure items for the year together with comparison figures for 2024. The Choral Society ended the year with a deficit of $1600 compared to a small surplus of $504 in 2024. The increase in membership subscription fees to apply this year (as agreed at the 2024 AGM) will help to close the gap between expenses and income.

A quick overview of the outcome of three concerts presented by the Choral Society in 2025 is provided below:

- The **Opera Highlights** concert attracted an audience of over 140 with 132 tickets sold (88 choir and 44 door sales). A small surplus of $610 was achieved.
- For our second performance of **Viva La Velorution**, we had an audience of around 120 with 106 tickets sold (62 choir / 44 door sales). A small deficit was recorded of $831.
- The **Messiah** remains popular and was attended by over 220 with 213 tickets sold (choir 93 / door 120). While we had anticipated strong demand, we unfortunately ran out of programmes. Even with the significant investment in soloists and musicians we achieved a pleasing surplus of $1,393 for the concert.

Despite having a reserve, the Committee makes every attempt to ensure concerts at least break even and hopefully make a small surplus to cover some of the choir's annual operating costs. This is achieved by careful budgeting and control of operating costs.

We are grateful for the efforts of the choristers to promote the concerts this year despite the challenging financial position faced by many. We are also grateful to our volunteer door sales people – Murray and Esme who have done a fantastic job.

The Treasurer will bring options for simplifying ticket sales and reducing cash handling through use of a booking website and/or the provision of eftpos payment arrangements at the door to the committee for consideration.

Statement of Financial Position

The Society's Assets and Liabilities are set out in detail on page 3 of the financial statements. Total Members Funds at the end of 2024 was $22,509. The notes on pages 4 and 5 set out the accounting policies under which the report was prepared.

General

The Committee wish to express our gratitude to Choral Society members for their continued support including the prompt payment of subscriptions during 2025. Registered and financial members for 2025 totaled 49 including life members.

The report of our Honorary Reviewer, Mr. Alan Martin is on page 6. Mr. Martin's generosity in conducting the review on an honorary basis is warmly acknowledged. Alan has agreed to complete the review for 2026 but asked that a new person be identified for subsequent years.

I wish to acknowledge the support of the committee for managing financial matters during periods of leave and John Chittenden for assisting with contracts for musicians and soloists.

Robert van Bentum
Treasurer
Palmerston North Choral Society Incorporated