



NEWS



The Executive Committee met virtually using Zoom on 17th October 2020 and 6th March 2021.

2020 AGM (Rochester)

The AGM, that was to be held at Rochester on 9th May 2020, was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and took place on-line, using Zoom, on Saturday 12th September 2020. 17 delegates attended. Full details can be found on the FCOCA website under <Latest News>. The AGM resulted in changes on the Executive Committee: Nick Hodges was elected Chairman, Arnold Wills became Vice Chairman and Alastair Pollard was appointed Honorary Secretary. Subsequent to the meeting, Oliver Hamilton-Box was co-opted to help with the Development role.

2020 FESTIVAL (Chester)

The Festival due to be held at Chester on 11th – 13th September 2020 was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Executive Committee would like to take the opportunity to thank the Chester former choristers for their efforts to host the Festival and hope that we may come to Chester in the not too distant future.

2021 FESTIVAL & AGM (Ely)

The 2021 Festival is due to be held in Ely on 15th – 17th October 2021. This is under review as Covid-19 restrictions may still be in place and some people may be reluctant to travel. We will confirm as soon as possible whether the Festival will go ahead or whether it is postponed to 2022. If it does go ahead, the 2021 AGM will take place during the Festival and, if not, it will be held on-line via Zoom.

The 2023 Festival is planned to be held in Warwick and will form part of St Mary's and the choir's 900th anniversary.

WHAT DO MEMBERS WANT FROM THE FEDERATION?

Nick Hodges, our new Chairman, committed at the AGM to speak to all current (about 50) member associations, to gain an understanding of the challenges facing our members and to discuss what the Federation could be doing to help. He has had several very positive meetings, often with multiple members of association committees. By the end of March he will have met (virtually) with 12 member associations with more planned in the coming months. Feedback so far raised issues such as encouraging others to get involved, getting younger members and girls involved (who often don't like formality and like things to be more family orientated), and share information at nation level and cross organisation.

Feedback from these discussions will assist us to produce new and updated documents and update our website and social media presence as well as inform us on how we should project ourselves to the outside world.

DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Nick and Arnold met with the recently appointed Development Director of the Cathedral Music Trust (previously Friends of Cathedral Music) and two of their Trustees, to discuss how they and the Federation could work together in the future. It was agreed that there was great synergy between our organisations and that working together would be mutually beneficial. Through their connections, we are hopeful of engaging with former choristers who are now in the public eye to help promote the celebration of choristership.

ONCE A CHORISTER MAGAZINE

The 2020 edition of Once a Chorister magazine was published to our website in November last year. If you have not already done so, please do go to the website where you will find the link on the Home page. We know that some people prefer to read from a physical copy and Richard Belton (Leicester) has a few spare printed copies available at £2.50 incl. postage. Please contact Richard directly by email (richard.t.belton@btinternet.com), or email Secretary@FCOCA.org.uk

Alastair Pollard hopes to publish the 2021 edition of Once a Chorister magazine on our website in November 2021 and is inviting interesting information and articles to be emailed to him by the end of October 2021. (Secretary@fcoca.org.uk)

Please send your own Association Newsletters to Alastair (Secretary@FCOCA.org.uk) so that they can be published on the Federation website.

REGALIA INSURANCE

At the March Executive Committee meeting it was agreed that The Federation will cease to offer insurance for association regalia to its members and ask Associations to make their own arrangements for insuring their regalia (if they have any) from June 2022. The Executive Committee is undertaking a review of its insurance arrangements, which it intends to complete before the next committee meeting in July, when a final decision will be taken. We believe this should provide sufficient time for members to make alternative arrangements, and we suggest that this may be an appropriate time to obtain an up-to-date valuation of your regalia! The Executive Committee would welcome your comments on this decision.