

## **CHESTER MUSIC SOCIETY**

### **Celebrity Concerts AGM 23rd September 2020**

We again promoted six concerts last season in St Mary's Centre.

Membership was 94 (98 last year). We as usual lost a few for a variety of reasons, programming, ill health. Friends were 41, down from 45 last season.

We had a very good year for attendance. Our average attendances declined from 149 to 146. Total seats sold for the season were 746 against 891 the previous season.

It is worth noting that we had sell outs the previous season and this year we feel we lost audience numbers at the latter part of the season due to the emerging Covid Virus. We very fortunate that our last concert of the series, Ben Goldscheider on French Horn went ahead just few days before the lockdown.

Attendance at individual concerts was as follows.

	<b>Artist</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
October19	Piers Lane	134
Nov 19	Jennifer Pike	142
Dec 19	Pentagon Brass	122
Jan 20	Elizabeth Karani	102
Feb 20	Jubilee String Quartet	141
Mar 20	Ben Goldscheider	115
TOTAL	Average 126 (149 last season)	746 Cf 891

We continue to use Ticketsource for all on line sales as well as our telephone booking service. It is highly efficient with prompt payment to us. We continue to use the VIC for a small number of face to face sales.

We are very grateful for numerous additional donations and the support of friends of Celebrity Concerts In particular our anonymous benefactor again made a big difference to the money available for artists last season.

This enables us to secure performers whom we could not afford without raising our seat prices considerably.

We had another splendid buffet at the December concert, and again it was kindly co-ordinated by Margaret Walmsley, with help from Lorna Wishlade, Penny Clarke and Jenny Waker.

The Society funded one schools' workshop this year, managed by our section. This was Chris Barratt, Tuba Player from Pentagon Brass. Chris ran a master class at Abbeygate College for 8 Students. He was quite inspirational, he talked to them about the realities of life as a professional musician and some really interesting approaches to practice and rehearsal. He also worked with q3 brass players individually on specific pieces. I was pleased to attend the workshop and could see the improvement in the players in such a short space of time. We were due to hold another workshop in a School at Easter but this was cancelled, again to the Covid virus. However, we will press on and look to do to next season

There are a large number of people who have made these concerts possible and our thanks are due to them Berkeley Ranby our secretary, Mick Clarke who books our artists, Colin Waker who produces our posters and programmes and manages our social media, Thanks to John Penn and Penny Clarke for cashing up and Cd sales as well as

numerous other jobs. Elizabeth and Hamp Oates looked after the box office on concert nights and Lila Hallett, Claire Hallett-Rorke, Mary Ranby and Tom Miller worked on the sales tables with Sandy Boyne and Brian Walmsley on welcoming. We thank John Ierston for his management of the finances, Chris Williams for looking after the interval wine (supported by John Williams, Alan and Vera Jackson). Yvonne Coleby-Davies has fed and looked after our artists on arrival and at the interval. Phillipa and Richard Allis for serving the tea and coffee in the interval. We are very grateful to the Wigleys, Elizabeth Morgan and Chris Williams for providing accommodation for artists. Mention must also be made of additional help from Vera Jackson and John Williams on First Aid. Off-committee support is always welcome and again thanks to our resident cake-maker Yvonne Coleby-Davies, resident vintner Sandy Young and the many contributors to raffle prizes.

We took a decision in March, just after Lockdown to postpone the entire 20/21 season. We did not think the situation would improve very quickly and we believe our judgment was right. We would have had significant contractual obligations to meet had we left it any later to postpone the season. We are please to confirm that the 21/22 season will run exactly as it would have run in 2021/22. All our booked artistes agreed to a postponement. We are running a series of virtual concerts alongside the Showcase section of CMS.

Details found at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF9-LQLYUIaL\\_A6OExRbPeg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF9-LQLYUIaL_A6OExRbPeg)

Thanks, due to you all.

David Woods