

SHOTTS ST. PATRICK'S AMATEUR OPERA GROUP

CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

The Group will be called "SHOTTS ST. PATRICK'S AMATEUR OPERA GROUP" hereafter referred to as "THE GROUP".

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Group will be to entertain the public by the performance of dramatic and operatic works and to provide a social interest for the benefit of our members. To this end, the Committee will have the following powers:

- a) To promote operas, operettas, plays, drama comedies and other dramatic and operatic works;
- b) To acquire any copyrights or performing rights, musical scores or libretto necessary for any show to be performed by the Group;
- c) To purchase or hire plant, machinery, furniture, fittings, scenery and all other necessary effects;
- d) To hire the services of any person or persons deemed necessary, or to subsequently dispense with the services of the said person or persons. To this end, any person or persons hired by the Committee will be supplied with written terms of employment clearly stating:
 - (i) The nature and period during which the duties to be undertaken by the said person or persons;
 - (ii) The payment they will receive for carrying out these duties;
 - (iii) In the event of premature resignation or dismissal, the financial settlement, if any to be paid.
- e) To raise funds, invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, sponsorship, donation and otherwise, provided that the Group will not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds.
- f) To promote the concept of equal opportunities and inclusion and discourage discrimination on account of religion, race, disability, gender and age (subject to the provisions of paragraph 4 regarding the minimum age membership requirement) in granting membership and the performance of works.
- g) To protect the welfare of all members (aged 18 years and under) and children invited to participate in any works performed by the Group in accordance with the requirements of the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 and through the introduction and maintenance of a Child Protection Policy and associated procedures.
- h) To do all such other things as shall further the objects of the Group.

3. CONSTITUTION

The Group will consist of cast and non-cast members. An accurate and up-to-date register of members will be maintained by the Secretary.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Eligibility for membership (irrespective of religion, colour and race) will be open to those aged 15 years and over at the commencement of rehearsals who agree with the aims of the Group and desire actively to further them. All cast and non-cast members will require to pay an annual subscription. Membership fees for cast and non-cast members will be proposed annually by the Committee for consideration at the AGM (see para 24 (d)).

5. APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Application for membership will be by request to the Secretary. Applicants may be required to satisfy the Musical Director as to their singing/musical ability.

6. EXPULSION OF MEMBERS

The Committee may by a 2/3 majority, vote to expel or suspend any member who has persistently neglected the work undertaken by the Group or whose conduct they consider likely to endanger the welfare of the Group. No decision on such a matter may be taken unless all Committee members have been given prior notice that such a decision is to be taken at a Committee meeting. A quorum for such a meeting will be 8.

7. MANAGEMENT

The Group will be managed by a Committee consisting of the following officials: President; Vice President; Secretary; Treasurer; Minute Secretary; a minimum of eight and a maximum of fourteen Committee Members.

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. of the Group will be held no later than 2 months after the final performance of the show produced each year. The report of the Committee and the Accounts, duly audited, will be presented. Officials, where applicable, Committee members and 2 Auditors for the ensuing year will be elected and all general business transacted.

9. NOTIFICATION OF A.G.M.

Written confirmation of the date, time and place of the A.G.M. will be sent to each member, no later than 14 days before the A.G.M.

10. GENERAL AND EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

A General Meeting of the Group may be called at any time at the discretion of the Committee (but see para 27). An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called within 21 days after receipt by the Secretary of a dated requisition in writing to that effect, signed by at least one third of the current membership. Every such requisition will specify the business for which the meeting is to be convened and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting. A quorum for any General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting will consist of not less than one third of the total membership of the Group. To this end, the Secretary will ensure a proper quorum has been achieved by reference to the register of members (see para 3).

11. RESOLUTIONS AT A.G.M., GENERAL MEETINGS, EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Unless otherwise provided by these rules, all resolutions brought forward at the above meetings will be decided by a bare majority of the votes properly recorded at such meetings and in the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman will be the second or casting vote (see paras 6, 26 and 27 for exceptions to this rule).

12. NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION

Nomination of candidates for Official, Committee and Auditors vacancies to be filled at the A.G.M., will be by nomination slips submitted to the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the A.G.M. (nomination slips will be enclosed with the written notification of the A.G.M. – see para 9). If more names are proposed than the number required to fill the vacancies and sufficient names are not withdrawn at or before the A.G.M., the election will be by ballot at the A.G.M. If insufficient nominations are received to fill the vacancies in question, verbal nominations will be accepted at the A.G.M. In the event of insufficient verbal nominations being received at the A.G.M., the Committee may ask for and accept volunteers present at the A.G.M. If vacancies still remain outstanding at or after the A.G.M., the Committee reserve the right to co-opt anyone they consider suitable.

13. RETIREMENT OF OFFICIALS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All officials will be elected for a period of 2 years but shall be eligible for re-election. For the 1982 AGM only, the Vice President and Secretary will be elected for a one year period. In 1982, the Vice President and Secretary will retire. In 1983 the President, Treasurer and Minute Secretary will retire. Thereafter, the sequence will continue by bi-annual election. The Committee and 2 Auditors will be elected annually and will also be eligible for re-election. In the event of the premature retirement of any Official, the vacancy will be filled by an elected member of the existing Committee. In the event

of the premature retirement of any Committee member, the vacancy will fall to be filled by the candidate who polled the most votes at the A.G.M., but failed to be elected. Should there be no such candidates, the Committee may co-opt anyone they consider suitable. A similar procedure will apply when an Auditor prematurely retires.

14. APPOINTMENT OF SUB COMMITTEES

The Committee will have the power to appoint Sub-Committees and to delegate to such Sub-Committees all or any of its powers. These Sub-Committees will continue to hold office until the conclusion of the A.G.M. at which, if necessary, its successors will be elected.

15. SELECTION OF WORKS

The Committee will select the works to be produced by the Group. A Selection Sub-Committee will be appointed by the Committee to assist and advise the Committee on the choice of the annual production. Suggestions for the annual production will be accepted from members in writing. These suggestions, together with any nominations from the Committee, will be appraised by the Selection Sub-Committee. The final decision on the choice of the show for the annual production will rest with the full Committee.

16. SELECTION OF PRINCIPALS

The Principals for any production will be selected by a Casting Sub-Committee appointed by the Committee. This Sub-Committee will consist of no less than 5 and not more than 7 persons.

17. ALTERATION TO ORIGINAL CASTING

The Committee, after consultation with the Casting Sub-Committee, Musical Director(s) and the Producer(s), will have the power to replace any member to whom a principal part has been given, and who, in the opinion of the aforementioned, has proved unsuitable for the part.

18. OBLIGATIONS OF CAST MEMBERS

Cast members will, to the best of their ability, play the part assigned to them whether principal or chorus and obey the directions given at all rehearsals and performances.

19. CONTROL OF REHEARSALS

The Musical Director(s) will conduct and control all musical rehearsals and the Producer(s) will control all production rehearsals.

20. ATTENDANCE AT REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES

A record of cast members' attendance at rehearsals and performances will be maintained by the Secretary and the Committee will have the right to approach any cast member whose attendance at rehearsals has been irregular without just cause. If, after such an approach, there is no improvement in attendance and the Committee consider that such poor attendance be detrimental to the quality of the production, they will have the power to expel the offender from the production in question (see para 6).

21. MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

The first meeting of the Committee will be called by the Secretary and will be held within 21 days of the A.G.M. A minimum of 6 further meetings will be held throughout the year until the next A.G.M. and will be called by the Secretary on dates specified by the Committee but outwith the Group's rehearsal nights.

Minutes of all Committee meetings will be recorded by the Minute Secretary or in his/her absence, by another member of the Committee. These minutes will be proposed and seconded at subsequent meetings as a true reflection of the business enacted and will be available for scrutiny by any member of the Group at an A.G.M. or on request.

All decisions relating to the business of the Group will be taken by the Committee utilising a majority vote basis where necessary. The President will have a casting vote in the event of a tied vote.

Where a decision or decisions are required outwith the Committee meetings, Committee members should be contacted verbally by the Secretary and a decision or decisions reached. Five will constitute a quorum for such decisions.

22. COMMITTEE MEMBERS ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

The Minute Secretary will maintain a record of Committee members' attendance at meetings. Members absenting themselves, without just cause from 3 consecutive meetings, may be, at the discretion of the remainder of the Committee, be deemed to have resigned their position on the Committee.

23. COMMITTEE'S POWERS

The Committee will have the power to decide any questions arising out of this Constitution and all other matters connected with the Group (other than, and except those which can only be dealt with by the Group in a General Meeting (see paras 10, 26 and 27)).

24. The Committee will review annually its Child Protection Policy and associated procedures as a means of protecting all children (under the age of 18 years) who are either members or have been invited to participate in the Group's works from all forms of abuse, danger, exploitation and harm in accordance with the provisions of the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003.

25. FINANCE

- (a) The funds of the Group will be applied solely to the stated objects of the Group and causes considered worthy by the Committee;
- (b) No member of the Group will receive payment directly or indirectly for services to the Group other than legitimate expenses incurred in its work;
- (c) Any legitimate expenses must be claimed through the Secretary;
- (d) All cast membership fees, concession fees and non cast membership fees will require to be paid to the Treasurer by the 30th April of each year. Those cast members who have not paid the prescribed fee within this time limit will forfeit their cast membership by this default;
- (e) A time limit will be set by the Committee for the return of all money due from any function held on behalf of the Group throughout the year;
- (f) The Treasurer will be required to submit financial reports to the Committee at regular intervals throughout the year.

26. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members and non cast members will be afforded the opportunity to pay their membership fees and concession fees to the Treasurer fortnightly on nominated rehearsal nights prior to 30th April. The Committee will nominate the nights in question. Non cast members may also pay non-cast membership fees in this manner. The Committee reserves the right to alter annual fees. Any proposed alteration must be notified to members at a General Meeting (para 10) or at the A.G.M.

27. DISSOLUTION OF THE GROUP

The Group will only be dissolved by resolution passed by a majority of at least five sixths of the members present and voting at an Extraordinary General Meeting (E.G.M.) called for the purpose of considering such dissolution. In the event of dissolution, any balance of funds remaining in the accounts after the realisation of any assets and payment of any debts will not be distributed among the members but will either be held in trust by trustees appointed at the said E.G.M. or charitably donated to any individual(s), organisation(s) or other cause(s) deemed to be worthy by the members in attendance at the E.G.M. The preferred option to be decided on the basis of a simple majority.

28. ALTERATION TO CONSTITUTION

No alteration to this Constitution will be made except at an A.G.M. However, should the Committee consider that an alteration is urgently required, this can only be done by calling an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Group (see para 10). To this end, all members will receive written

notification of the proposed alteration to the Constitution, together with the time and place of the General Meeting at least 7 days before the said meeting. Any alteration will only be effected if there is a two thirds majority of members at the General Meeting in favour of the alteration. A quorum for such a General Meeting will be one third of the total membership (see para 10).

(Updated 15/01/2008 from proposed and accepted amendments of A.G.M. December 2007)

Paul Leonard
Secretary