

Akkoortje 27

A look ahead – or perhaps not?

After a long break, Akkoortje 27 is back again this week. That means that, even taking into account a few extra weeks' holiday and a house move, we've been providing the choir with well-intentioned advice, reflections and constructive criticism for a good year and a half now.

In the first column after the summer holidays, one should really be looking ahead, but unfortunately, due to unfortunate circumstances (more on that later), we haven't started yet, so I'm going to take a moment to look back at the past year and a half.

The columns are intended as light-hearted entertainment, but they always have a slightly serious undertone. If they come across as too critical, readers should simply assume they were meant to be humorous. We don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. We'd be mad to do that – we want to keep the members we have.

One of the most recurring topics is, of course, the purpose of the choir. What does singing in a choir do for you? Why do choir members live to such a ripe old age? How does it affect your mood? How does it impact your social life? Why is a drink at De Baek not bad for a choir member's health, and so on and so forth.

Another aspect is, of course, the composition of the choir. Although we've already given plenty of tips on how to recruit new tenors, no one has yet managed to bring in a tenor. Yes, we did get to enjoy Jan Bemelman for a while, but he was soon struck down by a health problem. This was, of course, because he had sung with the Stadhuiskoor for far too short a time. In other areas, however, we have certainly managed to attract new members, to the extent that we even had to introduce a membership freeze for sopranos and altos. That has since been removed from the website for the time being, but we've already received the first new application, so it's quite possible that this freeze will be reinstated.

Another aspect is communication within the choir. In Akkoortje 7, we'd already asked everyone to switch to Signal so as not to make the world's multimillionaires any richer than they already are. Was our appeal successful? That varies by voice part.

Currently, 45 per cent of the sopranos are on Signal.

Among the altos, it's a bit complicated because Marleen often sings along with the tenor(s). Still, she's an alto, so if we count her as one, the altos score reasonably well at 70 per cent. If we don't count her amongst the altos, they score 77 per cent.

For the tenors, it makes no difference. They score 100 per cent in every possible scenario.

The basses are neck and neck with the altos, scoring 75 per cent. (Who is that one person????)

If everyone were to switch over, the hassle with the two WhatsApp groups could, of course, also be resolved. Signal would then become 'Stadhuiskoor Zakelijk' and the 'Lief and Leed' group would remain on WhatsApp. This does mean, however, that everyone would

also have to join the 'Lief en Leed' group. You can, in fact, switch off the notifications, in which case they won't bother you. Please note: in that case, do leave Signal's notifications switched on, as that's where we'll alert you if the River Maas bursts its banks.

As well as many other topics, the columns naturally often deal with the choice of repertoire. Although we don't want to be prescriptive at all (just offering well-meaning advice), we have nevertheless seen a number of recommendations come up. Sometimes not specified precisely in terms of titles, but certainly in terms of genre. For instance, songs often tied in with public holidays and/or the seasons; funny songs were introduced; even 'You'll Never Walk Alone' made an appearance, though I believe that was voted down by the Sparta supporters; and we even rehearsed a modern song by The Beatles, which I suspect is being sabotaged a bit by a few Stones fans (just kidding)

So now, at the start of the new year, we should really be starting work on the repertoire for the performance at the Kapelletje, were it not for the fact that Janneke was knocked off her bike. As soon as she's back on her feet, we should sing a bike-related song, but the problem is that most songs about cycling are really lovely, and Janneke's accident was definitely not a laughing matter. There's even a website featuring the very best songs about cycling. And which songs are on there?

Fiets – Herman van Veen

Jimmy (How Strong Is the Lonely Cyclist) – Boudewijn de Groot

Op fietse – Skik

Bagagedrager – Gers Pardoel, Sef

Bicycle Race – Queen

The Ride – Luka Bloom

Nooit naar nergens – Yevgueni

De bergkoning van Nederland – Bert Weyers

Bagagedrager – Spinvis

Broken Bicycles – Tom Waits

Ik ben een renner – Alex Roeka

Ploegsteert – Het Zesde Metaal

De dood of de gladiolen – Freek de Jonge

Jij en ik – Floor Minnaert, Dafne Holtland

Des équilibristes – Clio

A bicyclette – Bourvil

Les bicyclettes de Belsize – Engelbert Humperdinck

À bicyclette – Yves Montand

Spring maar achterop – Eddy Christiani

All available to listen to on Spotify. In terms of current events, it obviously doesn't sit well with the accident Janneke had. To find a song, alongside 'Broken bicycles', that says something negative about a bicycle, you really have to scour the internet.

One of the least serious mishaps on a bike is, of course, in the song "Snelle (formerly Zwarte) Piet ging uit fietsen, toen knapte zijn band".

Things only get truly disastrous in the song by the Flemish duo Taai taai: "Jo is van de fiets gevalle"

I wonder if we'll see this last song back in our repertoire.