



THE SOCIETY OF RECORDER PLAYERS

Registered Charity No. 282751/SCO38422

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Sunday 11th October 2015

Benslow Music Trust, Hitchin SG4 9RB

PRESENT:

Tessa Rolph	Chairman	Sarah Langdon	Competition Administrator
Mike Wilkinson	Secretary	Emily Bannister	Publicity Officer
Ulli Burchette	Treasurer	Rodney Callow	Festival 2016
David Rollason	Membership Secretary	Josée Beeson	Committee
Sandra Foxall	COS Secretary	Ciara Flanagan	Committee
Moira Usher	WBF Chairman	Pamela Flanagan	Committee
April Munday	Training Co-ordinator	Vic Morris	Committee
Anthony Hall	Web Editor	Evelyn Nallen	Committee
Alyson Lewin	Musical Adviser	Frances Tuffery	Committee

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Chairman opened proceedings at 10.30am by welcoming all present, especially Josée Beeson, who was attending her first Committee meeting, and Rodney Callow representing Lincoln Branch, hosts of the 2016 Festival. Apologies for absence were received from Madeline Seviour (News Editor), Eileen Silcocks and Ross Winters (Musical Advisers).

2. Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 19th April 2015

2.1 The minutes of the Committee meeting held in Wolverhampton on 19th April 2015 were approved.

3. Actions and matters arising from the previous meeting

3.1 NYRO (minute 3): NYRO had been sent a copy of the minutes of the meeting on 19th April 2015 so that they would be aware of the reasons leading to the Committee's decision to award them a grant of £4,000, rather than the £6,600 requested, for 2015/16.

3.2 Honorary Life Membership (minute 4.2): The Chairman reported that she had received a charming letter from Layton Ring thanking the Society for awarding him Honorary Membership and recalling that he had started playing the recorder in 1947.

3.3 Concerto Fund (minute 4.3): Evelyn Nallen reported that donations to the Fund for commissioning a concerto for recorder and orchestra, including the Society's donation of £3,000, had already been sufficient to enable payment of the required deposit to the composer, Graham Fitkin. The next payment was due in February 2016. It was agreed that the Secretary should remind Branches and affiliated Orchestras about the Fund and of the ways in which donations to it could be made. Although the possibility of accepting donations via the SRP website had been suggested, on reflection it was thought that the complexities of this could outweigh any benefit. Instead, potential donors should be encouraged to make their contributions directly to the Fund or to the Society, at any time or when paying their subscriptions for 2015/16 and 2016/17. The Secretary would check whether the Society could enhance the value of donations by claiming Gift Aid on them when it was acting merely as intermediary between the donor and the Fund.

Action: SECRETARY

3.4 Adopt a Composer (minute 4.4): Alyson Lewin reported that the piece written under this scheme for the Arden Recorder Orchestra by Kirsty Deveney, [*as if on a pivot*], had been recorded by the BBC, though it was not yet known when it would be broadcast. The Orchestra, conducted by Caroline Jones, would be including the piece in the concert they were giving at 12 noon on Saturday 14th November during the Early Music Festival in Greenwich. The opportunity to present such a concert was an adjunct to the Society's booking of a stand at the Festival.

4. Officers' Reports: record of issues discussed and action arising

The reports themselves are available on the SRP website at www.srp.org.uk/committee-meetings.

4.1 Chairman: The Chairman reported that Madeline Seviour was thinking of stepping down after about 20 years as SRP News Editor, though she was willing to continue if necessary. It was agreed that the Secretary would canvass Branches for possible volunteers for the post. Sandra Foxall reported that Madeline would be writing a review of the *Recorderfest* held at Benslow, with SRP support, on 25th - 28th September. In response to a suggestion that the Society might sponsor a concert at future *Recorderfests*, it was agreed that Sandra should seek the views of participants at the 2016 event.

Action: SECRETARY, SANDRA FOXALL

4.2 The Chairman said that she was unlikely to have time to make Gift Aid returns to HMRC until 2016. The claim for 2012/13 had been done, but claims for 2013/14 and 2014/15 were outstanding. No entitlement to Gift Aid would be lost since claimants had 4 years from the end of the tax year in which donations were made to submit claims. Anthony Hall noted that the computerised membership system recorded information from Branches about members' Gift Aid declarations and could be used to generate claims.

4.3 The Chairman referred to the invitation issued by *Making Music*, in conjunction with Classic FM, for music groups to submit recordings of Christmas carols, from which five were to be selected for broadcast. This was a good opportunity to try to promote the recorder. The deadline was 16 November. The Secretary had already forwarded details to Branches, and he was asked also to do so for the affiliated orchestras.

Action: SECRETARY

4.4 Secretary: It was suggested that those conductors who did not already do so should be encouraged to indicate the types of music they preferred when revising their entries in the List of Visiting Conductors, a new edition of which had recently been issued. One way of getting conductors who rarely received invitations better known was to invite them to conduct at Festivals. One purpose of requiring Branches to get approval in advance from the Secretary for conductors' visits was to guard against Branches regularly inviting conductors who had to travel long distances, though in practice this had not been an issue. Alyson Lewin said that both she and Helen Hooker would be happy to endorse the appointment to the List of one of the conductors they had observed at the 2014 Festival in Truro. The Secretary was asked to find out if the person concerned remained interested and, if so, to process their appointment.

Action: SECRETARY

4.5 The impending closure of Hullavington as a Branch of the Society, though not as a playing group, was noted with regret. While the Branch accepted that its substantial stock of music belonged to the Society and, under the Rules, should be passed on for the benefit of groups that were part of the Society or to help launch a new Branch, there was some concern that such action could foster negative feelings towards the Society and prompt other Branches to ask if the benefits of being a Branch outweighed the costs of, currently, £23.50 per person. In the light of this concern, the Committee agreed to donate back to the Hullavington members 50% of the music they held. The Secretary was asked to discuss this with the former Branch Secretary.

Action: SECRETARY

4.6 This prompted a wider discussion on the benefits available to SRP Branches. In particular, the Committee was reminded of a decision it took some years ago, but which appeared to have been overlooked since 2010, that Branches and affiliated Orchestras should receive a score and SIX sets of parts of the pieces commissioned for Festivals, paid for from central funds. The aim had been to ensure that even the largest

groups had properly printed music ready for playing without the need for photocopying. The Committee agreed that this decision should apply retrospectively to *Wolf Suite*, written by Sasha Manning Johnson for the 2015 Festival in Wolverhampton and of which only a score and ONE set of parts had been issued, and to all future pieces, including the official piece for the 2016 Festival in Lincoln and to the arrangement that Mirjam Morat was finalising of Sir Peter Maxwell Davies' *Farewell to Stromness*. Alyson Lewin agreed to prepare an estimate of the costs for printing further sets of parts for *Wolf Suite* and a score and six sets of parts for the other two items discussed. If convenient, these could all be issued to Branches and any Orchestras represented at the 2016 Festival.

Action: ALYSON LEWIN

4.7 In further discussion it was agreed that at its next meeting, on 24th January 2016, the Committee should discuss further the benefits offered by the Society to its members, Branches and affiliated Orchestras and could usefully do so by revisiting the conclusions of the 2020 Report, issued in April 2012, on the future development of the Society. That Report, of which Appendix C summarises its recommendations, is available at www.srp.org.uk/srp-future, but the Secretary was asked to circulate it again for ease of reference.

Action: SECRETARY

4.8 In discussion of Branch numbers, Sandra Foxall reported that she had spoken to people who some time ago had been considering setting up an Orkney Branch. They were pleased that the Society had recently amended its Rules to allow all Branches an annual subsidised visit from a member of the Panel of Conductors. The Secretary was therefore asked to contact them again and also to contact the person who several months ago had enquired about setting up a Branch in south east Essex.

Action: SECRETARY

4.9 Treasurer: The Committee agreed that the £1,705 surplus on the 2015 Festival should be distributed as usual, with one third each to the host Branch (South Staffordshire), the Walter Bergmann Fund and the Society's General Fund. The Treasurer noted that new Charity Commission rules required charities' Committee expenses to be separately identified, so the accounts for 2015/16 would look slightly different from those for previous years. This also meant that the Conference expenses of Committee members and Branch delegates had to be separated from their Festival expenses.

4.10 Moeck/SRP Competition Administrator: The Competition Administrator reported that the new system for electronic submission of entries had worked well, with $\frac{3}{4}$ of entrants choosing this method for the 2015 Competition. The adjudicators had chosen 4 finalists, which was something that had happened on previous occasions, though not in recent years. Each finalist would have 40 minutes for their performance, leaving 45 minutes for the adjudicators to reach their decisions. The Committee therefore considered a proposal for a 4th prize, and agreed a sum of £200 from the Arthur Ingram Fund. The Administrator would inform Moeck so that they could produce certificates for all the finalists. She was also continuing to work with Andrew Wooderson to meet the differing requirements of the finalists over the tuning of harpsichords, though she proposed that in future years the Competition guidelines should state what would be provided and require entrants to tailor their programmes accordingly. It was noted that, although all the finalists came from overseas, their prizes would be paid in sterling as advertised.

Action: COMPETITION ADMINISTRATOR, TREASURER

4.11 Web Editor: The Web Editor suggested that, given the increasing importance of the website and associated Facebook page in the operation of the Society, it would be advisable for him to have a deputy who understood the workings of the system, especially the customised and therefore particularly vulnerable membership system, either ready to take over if he was unavailable or to share in running the system. While he had written guidance, and included some of it on the website itself, some direct experience was desirable. The Committee endorsed this proposal and invited the Web Editor to draft a job description as the basis for canvassing Branches, colleagues and others for a volunteer for this post. Meanwhile, the Web Editor would ensure that backup copies of the passwords etc needed to operate the website were securely deposited with the Secretary.

Action: WEB EDITOR

4.12 It was noted that some questions about the Performers page of the website remained to be resolved. The Web Editor agreed to resend the relevant e-mails since the Publicity Officer may not have received them. He also reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 22nd February 2015 (minute 4.4), Musical Advisers and others had been invited to submit some sample questions (and answers) about teaching and learning the recorder with which to start a FAQ section of the website. The Secretary was asked to remind Musical Advisers of this invitation.

Action: WEB EDITOR, PUBLICITY OFFICER, SECRETARY, MUSICAL ADVISERS

4.13 Membership Secretary: The Membership Secretary had found that distribution of the 2015 Membership List at the Festival in Wolverhampton had involved more significant and repeated shifting of heavy boxes and parcels than expected, and concern from a few Branch delegates about carrying such parcels by public transport. He had therefore been exploring other options for the next List, which was not due until 2017. Recorder MusicMail had said they would be happy to print the List and either bring bundles for Branches to the 2017 Festival or post copies individually with the *Recorder Magazine*, as they had done in the past for COS members. At current costs, the extra postage would be 58p per copy, but this might in part be offset by lower printing costs. The Committee invited the Membership Secretary to obtain a more detailed estimate, for printing and posting, for discussion at a future meeting.

Action: MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

5. **Greenwich Early Music Festival, 12th – 14th November 2015**

5.1 The Chairman reported that the Society had again been allocated a stand in the Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College. She suggested that some of the publicity material used in previous years might benefit from a revamp, and the Publicity Officer agreed to consider this further. Suggestions included having a laptop or electronic picture frame displaying a slide show of recorder-based images, and a competition for which, subject to Data Protection rules, entrants might be asked to give their contact details. See also minute 3.4 about the Arden Recorder Orchestra concert.

Action: CHAIRMAN, PUBLICITY OFFICER

5.2 The Chairman said she intended to attend the Festival on all 3 days and would help to run the SRP stand when not required for other events such as the Moeck/SRP Competition. The following also volunteered to help on the days shown:

Thursday 12th November: Vic Morris

Friday 13th November: Vic Morris, Mike Wilkinson (am), Moira Usher (pm)

Saturday 14th November: Mike Wilkinson, Moira Usher (am), Sandra Foxall (12-2), Emily Bannister (pm)

5.3 It was noted that the dates for the Early Music Festival in 2016 were 10th – 12th November.

6. **Preparation for the 2016 Festival, Lincoln, 2nd – 3rd April**

6.1 The paper presented by Rod Callow, Secretary of Lincoln Branch, summarised the very positive steps already taken to prepare for the 2016 Festival. Relations with staff at the venue, Christ's Hospital School, had been excellent, and their Lettings Manager would be on hand throughout the Festival weekend. Conductors and some shops had been booked, and B&B accommodation for conductors and some Committee members had been reserved at nearby Longdales House. Rod would be contacting Committee member about their accommodation needs in due course. It was proving difficult to open a Festival bank account with the Branch's bank, so they might try a different one. Rod was particularly delighted that the Branch had secured the services of Piers Adams (recorders) and David Wright (harpsichord), members of *Red Priest*, who would be giving a concert on the Saturday evening. There would be two commissioned works – an "official" one in 9 parts by Nick Wynne, Chairman of Nottingham Branch, to be issued to Branches and affiliated Orchestras (see also minute 4.6), and a bonus piece by Paul Richards. One issue to be decided was what concessions to offer those who volunteered to help over the weekend. The Chairman said she had included a trailer for the Festival in her piece of the Winter issue of the *Recorder Magazine*.

6.2 Rod also outlined the budget for the Festival, though inevitably this was at an early stage and required further detail and refinement before it would be ready to submit for approval by the SRP Treasurer. She advised that, on past experience, it might be prudent to plan on an attendance of between 120 and 140 but also to test the sensitivity of the budget (and the facilities and the programme) to smaller and higher numbers. She also agreed to discuss with Rod the details of the Festival application form to ensure that it was clear for applicants and provided the information needed by the Society and the Branch for their respective accounts.
Action: TREASURER, ROD CALLOW and team

6.3 In the light of this and earlier discussion (see minute 4.9) it was suggested that the Society's Festival Guidelines, available at www.srp.org.uk/festival/festivalguidelines.pdf, which had expanded over the years as new material was added, might benefit from some updating, with key requirements presented as bullet points. Moira Usher offered to undertake this exercise in conjunction with Frances Tuffery (2013 Festival, Dublin), Alyson Lewin (2015 Festival, Wolverhampton) and the Treasurer.
Action: MOIRA USHER, FRANCES TUFFERY, ALYSON LEWIN, TREASURER

7. Commissioned Music

7.1 Evelyn Nallen noted that the piece commissioned from Bob Chilcot for 2017 would be the last covered by the budget allocated some years ago for music commissioned by the Society (rather than that commissioned for Festivals). She invited the Committee's views on commissions and a budget for the next few years. While it was not possible to be sure how often or widely previous commissions were played, since figures for sales and PRS fees were no doubt confidential, there was anecdotal evidence that some were played regularly by more accomplished Branches and Orchestras. The basic specification for a commissioned piece, which it was not proposed to change, was that it should have 3 to 8 parts and last for between 5 and 10 minutes. Within that specification, Evelyn was keen that the Society should draw on the reputation of established composers to enhance the repertoire available for the recorder.

7.2 After further discussion the Committee agreed to allocate a budget for commissioned works of £2,000 per year for six years starting in 2017/18. As before, it was not expected that this would be committed or spent evenly each year but that the timing of more and less expensive commissions would be matched to the budget over the six years. It was noted that, when composers already had agreements with music publishers, the Society would most probably have to accept the terms of those agreements but in other cases it was free to negotiate other terms as appropriate. The Secretary was asked to review the terms used in previous years with a view to having standard terms available for future use. The Committee looked forward to being consulted by Evelyn about proposed commissions and, while recognising the practicalities over rehearsals etc, asked her to consider whether groups other than her own might sometimes be awarded a first performance.
Action: EVELYN NALLEN, SECRETARY

8. Visiting Conductors

8.1 Pamela Flanagan tabled a paper with some proposals for encouraging and supporting people interested in learning or developing conducting skills both at Branch level and as potential or actual members of the Society's Panel of Visiting Conductors. The existing workshop on conducting was offered at beginner and intermediate level, with the former suitable for absolute beginners. The website set out the capabilities expected of applicants. The limit of 12 participants for the intermediate course was to ensure sufficient time for all students to conduct groups of their fellow workshop members. A suggestion for an advanced course had not yet been taken forward. David Rollason recalled that the 2020 Report had noted that some Branches were very dependent on their Musical Directors as conductors, so steps to encourage new conductors at Branch level could be welcome. It was important to remember that workshops were open to all, not just SRP members, and so could perhaps be publicised more widely, for example to U3A groups and through *Making Music*.

8.2 At present the initiative in organising a conducting or other workshop was usually taken by a Branch, though other groups could also do so. It was suggested that some Branches might be reluctant to arrange a workshop for which there might be only limited interest amongst Branch members; they would have to rely on participants from neighbouring Branches to make a workshop worthwhile. It was therefore proposed that the Society should from time to time take the initiative in promoting workshops, perhaps on a regional or north/south basis, to which all Branches and any other relevant groups in the area might be invited to send participants. There would be a number of practicalities to be considered when taking this proposal forward, but the Committee welcomed the idea and agreed to discuss this and other issues raised in Pamela's paper further at its next meeting. Meanwhile, the Secretary was asked to circulate an electronic copy of Pamela's paper.

Action: SECRETARY

9. Workshop fees

9.1 The Training Co-ordinator noted that 3-4 years ago the fee for workshop leaders had been increased from £150 to £200. She now proposed that it should be increased to £260. The number of workshops held per year was unlikely to increase much beyond the current 6 or so, so the additional cost would be modest. Figures appended to the Treasurer's report showed that the net cost to Society funds of six recent workshops varied between £5 and £286, with an average of £145. The Committee also noted that it would be invidious to offer different fees to different workshop leaders and that it was not practicable to take into account, when setting fees, the varying amounts of unremunerated time taken by leaders when travelling to and from workshops. If they considered that travelling time was disproportionate in any case, it was always open to them to decline that workshop.

9.2 In the light of the Committee's discussion, the Training Co-ordinator revised her proposal and moved that workshop fees be increased to £300. This was seconded by Alyson Lewin and agreed by the Committee. Moira Usher, who declared a conflict of interest as a workshop leader, properly abstained.

10. Any other business

10.1 It was suggested that the selling of merchandise such as badges, bags and mugs bearing the Society's logo to promote the Society and raise funds might be revived. There was no great enthusiasm for this, which might in any case risk breaking the rules about trading activities by charities. It was agreed that no action should be taken on this suggestion, at least for the present.

The next Committee meetings will be on:

* Sunday 24th January 2016, at Benslow Music Trust

* Sunday 3rd April 2016, at Christ's Hospital School, Lincoln LN2 4PN.

The meeting closed at 4pm.
