



THE SOCIETY OF RECORDER PLAYERS

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

17 APRIL 2011

Kings of Wessex School, Cheddar, Somerset BS27 3AQ

PRESENT:

Dick Pyper	Chairman	Evelyn Nallen	Musical Adviser
Bob Whitmarsh	Secretary	Alyson Lewin	Musical Adviser (by invitation)
Ulli Burchette	Treasurer	April Munday	Committee
Andrew Short	NYRO S/C Chairman	Tessa Rolph	Committee
Mike Wilkinson	Membership Secretary	Matthew Taylor	Committee
Sandra Foxall	Country/Overseas Sec	Anne Martin	Festival/Conference 2012
Andrew Collis	Musical Adviser		
Helen Hooker	Musical Adviser		

1. Apologies for absence

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10.50. Apologies for absence were received from Moira Usher, David Powell, Colin Touchin and Naomi Wellings.

2. Welcome of newly elected members

The Chairman welcomed newly re-elected Committee member, Tessa Rolph and newly elected Committee member, Naomi Wellings *in absentia*.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

After the Secretary explained that the reference to the Phoenix Orchestra in the third paragraph in the Membership Secretary's report had been modified, at the request of Steve Marshall, the Minutes of the last meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Actions and Matters arising not otherwise on the Agenda

4.1 The Chairman noted that all Branches had now been sent the revised explanatory Gift Aid letter.

4.2 Sandra Foxall noted that because NYRO members were not listed in the new 2011 Membership List she had taken no further action to pass on their names to Recorder Music Mail. Mike Wilkinson explained that the NYRO Administrator now sent him lists of students attending the Easter and Summer courses who then received the four following issues of The Recorder Magazine.

4.3 The Chairman asked whether any more information had been found about Sister Mary Austin, an Honorary Life Member, who had recently died. Sandra Foxall suggested that Sister Veronica Walker, a regular attendee at the Summer School, should be consulted because they had known each other well. In reply to the Chairman, the Secretary said that he would post any information about Sister Mary Austin on the Society's web site, just as had been done with the obituaries of Brian Bonsor [it was later discovered that this had been done already by the webmaster on 14 April].

4.4 The Treasurer regretted that she had not yet taken any action to find an account that bore a higher rate of interest than the Society's other accounts.

4.5 The Chairman reported that the Society's insurers, after some delay, had stated they were not concerned that non-recorder-playing activities, e.g. dancing, took place during some Training Workshops.

5. Draft NYRO Terms of Reference

5.1 An extensive discussion took place on NYRO matters in general.

Tessa Rolph said she would like to see a table of the numbers of students who had attended the Easter, Summer and day courses. She suspected that the day courses were losing money. Helen Hooker said that the day courses were a form of 'loss leader' and a good way of advertising and encouraging students to attend the longer courses.

Evelyn Nallen asked what was the worst case scenario for NYRO. She said that bounds need to be set either on the losses made or on the number of students attending courses. She continued that the Committee should not have to rely on music staff being willing to step down if numbers were insufficient in 2011 and urged the Committee to address the problem. She repeated that the Committee should set bounds and let the Sub-Committee manage the problem while recognising that NYRO was currently not breaking even and was being supported with the Society's funds.

Mike Wilkinson asked how recruitment to NYRO courses was being managed. He noted that, as far as he knew, no advertising leaflets had reached Branches or had been included in The Recorder Magazine. Andrew Short replied that Rheingold had tried to persuade NYRO to advertise with them but it was not cost effective. He continued that music teachers should be contacted. The Chairman interposed that ERTA currently has 60 members. Andrew Short concluded that he would find out how teachers learnt of NYRO by the time of the next meeting when he would also bring feedback forms completed by students and parents. [Action: Andrew Short to bring feedback forms and teacher information to next meeting]

Anne Martin declared that many young recorder players were torn between orchestral playing and recorders and usually the former won, partly for reasons to do with outside pressures, when a choice had to be made between courses. Helen Hooker concurred. Evelyn Nallen thought that this exemplified the problem of marketing and presenting NYRO.

Tessa Rolph suggested that youngsters would be more attracted by a YouTube page or a promotional video. Andrew Short replied that two years ago Birmingham Conservatoire had videoed a concert conducted by Colin Touchin; the sound was good but the picture was poor. He suggested that some of this video could be put up on YouTube as an experiment. Evelyn Nallen was not convinced. She thought that teenagers expected to view either high quality video or something very bizarre on YouTube. It might be difficult for a recorder orchestra to 'cut it' on either count! On the other hand, she continued, some YouTube quality is dire and such clips are often watched on mobile phones.

The Chairman opined that more resources could well be needed for the development side of NYRO. The Committee agreed that a new and different approach might well be needed.

Andrew Short said that so far there had been 27 applications for the 2011 Summer course which, although less than in April 2010, might well increase because the on-line payments system was working well. It was agreed that 27 was barely enough to run the course.

Finally, Tessa Rolph suggested that the profiles of some individual students should be posted on the NYRO web site to demonstrate how their careers had progressed post-NYRO. Andrew Short reported that Colin Touchin was planning a 10th Anniversary Reunion Concert for NYRO alumni in 2012 and that might be the time to address this idea.

5.2 NYRO's Draft Terms of Reference.

The Secretary said he would re-format the document by adding the SRP logo and charity commission numbers. [Action: Secretary] He also suggested that it should be made clearer who would appoint the music staff. Andrew Short also agree to update paragraph 6d) to say 'Prepares and submit such accounts, budgets and forecasts as the NYRO Sub-committee and SRP Committee may require.' The Chairman suggested that 7c) should become 7a) to give marketing and development more prominence. Tessa Rolph suggested that 7e) should also include background checks other than CRB. The Secretary noted that reference also needed to be made to the equivalent Scottish body called 'Disclosure Scotland'. [Action: Andrew Short to revise text in several places]

6. Honorary positions within the Society

Andrew Short began by referring to his experience of finding a replacement President after Michael Tippett died in 1998. He noted that, as far as he knew, previous Presidents had all died 'in post'. In 1998 the main criterion for a new President was simply someone who was widely known. Evelyn Nallen suggested that today the criterion of being 'widely known' really boiled down to a 'personality'. It was suggested that in future the Presidential term should run for no more than ten years. The discussion was inconclusive and the matter was deferred *sine die*.

7. To review progress with recorder web sites

Mat Taylor explained that he had talked to Ashley Allerton about future plans. Ashley likes the idea of a 'microsite' with links to many pages of the Society web site. Mat said he would also talk to John Murdie who is Acting Webmaster. [Action: Mat Taylor to consult with John Murdie about microsite]

Mat Taylor continued that it would cost around £30 per year to host a web site and that he could get quotes for a design of the site which Ashley had already sketched out. It was suggested that the design should be significantly different from the Society's web site. In reply to a question, Mat stated that Ashley already had access to some suitable URLs although Andrew Short counselled against using a URL with a .me suffix. He preferred to use a .uk site.

8. Set up and approve the terms of reference of an SRP 2020 Working Group

The Chairman introduced the item. He felt that there was a need to consider where the Society was heading in a rapidly changing world. He asked whether it was worth setting up a Working Group to study the question and, if so, who should be involved?

Evelyn Nallen thought that it was good that the Society continued almost without changing. The Chairman replied that change is all about us, for example, recorder orchestras are blossoming. Others pointed out that orchestras play a different repertoire and require a different form of playing.

In discussion, various members pointed out the potential advantages of remote playing (using Skype for example) particularly as fuel costs make travel more expensive, that people may have less time to play in future, there may be fewer advanced players (because of less recorder teaching in schools today), people may join Branches at a later age as they retire later, there are advantages to having adult beginner classes and it is essential to have a cohort of excellent teachers.

Finally, Tessa Rolph asked what is the Society for and how well are those aims being addressed today. It was agreed that the Committee should send Tessa their answers to the above questions. [Action: All send ideas to Tessa Rolph]

9. Nominations to the Panel of Visiting Conductors

9.1 First, the general point of how to assess candidate visiting conductors was re-addressed. It was explained that the current system involved finding a suitable date among three parties, the candidate, the MA assessor and the 'foreign' Branch. This is complicated and also potentially costly in travel

expenses. It was also pointed out that today candidates appear to nominate themselves whereas previously nominations came from Branches.

The Treasurer noted that Branches can, and do, provide feedback on visiting conductors, which is almost exclusively very positive, and on the overall quality of the conductor's visit. The idea of a probationary period was discussed but rejected because 'word of mouth' soon weeds out any unsatisfactory conductor.

Evelyn Nallen recited her experience of assessing musicians by video and commended the method. She suggested that a 20 minute video of a candidate conducting their own Branch accompanied by the programme of music for an actual two and a half hour conducting session would be sufficient to make a judgement. **Finally, no decision was made.**

9.2 Second, it was agreed that Richard Lindsay (Lincolnshire Branch) should be asked to conduct a 'foreign' Branch in the presence of a Musical Adviser, and submit a list of the music which he had conducted at Lincolnshire Branch meetings for the last 6 months. [Action: Secretary to inform Richard Lindsay]

10. Discuss support for affiliated orchestras

Item postponed until October 2011 meeting.

11. Any other business

11.1 Agree written financial procedures for future Festivals. Item postponed until October 2011 meeting.

11.2 75th Anniversary and Festival in 2012. Anne Martin asked whether any special events were planned for the 75th Anniversary of the Society in 2012 to which the 'great and the good' should be invited. She re-called that, for the 50th anniversary, she had organised an event at Goldsmith's College, London. Evelyn Nallen said she had held a reception at her house as well. Alyson Lewin recalled that special music had been commissioned for both the 50th and 60th anniversaries.

Evelyn Nallen remarked that Jonathan Dove was unlikely to finish his commission by Festival 2012 but that was not a problem provided the music was released sometime in 2012. The Secretary remarked that Steve Marshall had expressed an interest in writing a short history of the Society for the 75th anniversary year.

Anne Martin noted that if an event was planned to coincide with the Festival she would need to know soon. The Committee was asked to send the Secretary names of the 'great and the good' and the reason they should be invited. [Action: All send names to the Secretary]

Evelyn Nallen note that if any text about the 75th anniversary of the Society was to appear in The Recorder Magazine it would have to be submitted by the 1st March 2012 copy date.

11.3 It was noted that one Society member had expressed the view that all Honorary Life Members should be individually invited to Conference.

11.4 Sandra Foxall and Anne Martin both commented that it would be appropriate to commemorate Brian Bonsor in some way. Sandra Foxall said that she would like to see the Society set up some permanent feature in memory of Brian Bonsor. The Chairman replied he would talk to her about this at another time. [Action: Chairman talk to Sandra Foxall]

11.5 The Chairman noted the successful adoption of electronic banking with the CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) Bank for the Society's day to day business and anticipated that NYRO and even Branches might wish to follow suit. However he cautioned that although the Society's account had

been set up with just three signatories changes in the rules now required all trustees to provide personal information. He proposed to supply such information to CAF Bank unless any trustee objected. [Action: Trustees to inform Chairman if they object]

12. Dates of next meetings

The Secretary reminded the Committee that the next meeting would be on 16th October 2011 at Benslow Music Trust, Hitchin. The Secretary undertook to book the Hitchin venue for the February 2012 meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 12.45.

RBW/RP