

THE SOCIETY OF RECORDER PLAYERS

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

SUNDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2009

Held at Benslow Music Trust, Hitchin, Hertfordshire

PRESENT:

Dick Pyper	Chairman	Andrew Collis	WBF Chair/Moeck
Bob Whitmarsh	Secretary		Comp Admin
Ulli Burchette	Treasurer	Jim Rowley	Country/Overseas Sec
Moira Usher	Training Co-ordinator	Sandra Foxall	Committee
Evelyn Nallen	Musical Adviser	Caroline Jones	Committee
Eileen Silcocks	Musical Adviser	Jane Sellek	Committee
		Mary Steele	Committee

1 Apologies for absence and welcome: Apologies for absence were received from Alyson Lewin, Petrina Lodge, Madeline Seviour, Margaret Shearing, Pam Smith and Andrew Short. The Chairman noted that Andrew Short was recovering from an operation and on behalf of the Committee wished him a speedy recovery.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 19 October 2008 were AGREED without correction and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising not otherwise covered by the Agenda. The Chairman thanked Evelyn Nallen for her efforts in bringing the Gavin Bryers commission to fruition and for arranging its first performance.

4. Officers' Reports

See attached documentation. Unless the officer had anything to add to his/her written report, details are not repeated below.

4.1 Treasurer. The Treasurer provided an update to her report dated 13th February in so far as she had revised the forecast figures in the Table. Moira Usher asked for an explanation of the advantages of subscribing to Making Music which cost £400 a year. The Chairman pointed out that the Society-wide Public Liability insurance from Making Music was slightly cheaper than if each Branch arranged its own policy. It also covers orchestras. Similarly the Employer's Liability insurance covered the NYRO Administrator and conductors. The Secretary, who held the password to obtain access to the Making Music web site, offered to find out what other benefits accrued and how the Society could make greater use of its membership [**Action Secretary**]. Jane Sellek enquired why the costs of an Internet presence and Employer's Liability insurance had risen sharply since the previous year. The Treasurer replied that the first figure was a standard forecast, in most years the cost was less, and that the insurance premium paid by the Society would be half the stated figure because it was shared equally with NYRO.

The Chairman noted that the values of instruments owned by the Society and NYRO appeared to be absent from the full accounts. The Treasurer explained that the auditor had suggested that in future, rather than progressively writing off instruments, an inventory should be kept which could also include other instruments owned by the Walter Bergmann Fund, Branches and orchestras but not by individuals. [**Action WBF Chairman, Branch Secretaries, orchestras**].

The accounts were accepted by the Committee as a true and accurate record of the Society's income and expenditure in 2007-08. The Trustees APPROVED the Charity Accounts for 2007-08. The Committee thanked the Treasurer and Auditor for their time spent on the accounts.

4.2 *Membership Secretary*: The Membership Secretary suggested in her report that a database of all members be held by the Society which could be accessed and updated, on a limited password-protected basis, by Branches. The Secretary suggested that it would be better to wait until her successor was in post and had become familiar with current procedures. The Chairman suggested that any such database could be part of software designed to handle the Society's accounts as well. The Treasurer noted that the Membership Secretary was preparing the 2009 Membership List. It was agreed that she should be asked to add the names of the President and Vice-Presidents to the page that listed the names of the Committee.

4.3 *Moeck Competition Administrator*: Andrew Collis said that the reception held after the Moeck winner's concert had been well attended and he planned to repeat the event after future such concerts. Currently he was waiting to receive entries for the 2009 competition.

4.4 *Training Co-ordinator*: Moira Usher regretted that she had nothing to report on training. She hoped that the Secretary would continue to mention the availability of training courses in his occasional letters to Branches [Action Secretary]. She was concerned that members were increasingly questioning the benefits of Society membership since in some Branches members were now expected to pay for the services of Musical Directors and conductors. There needed to be a review of benefits. One benefit for Branches was clearly the benefit of the Society's Public Liability Insurance.

4.5 *NYRO Sub-Committee*: The Committee were concerned at some of the suggestions to raise funds for NYRO. The Chairman agreed to write to Andrew Short, Chairman of the Sub-Committee, to pass on these views [Action Chairman]. The views were also expressed that some players were being lost because they could not afford the boarding fees (yet would be happy to join in on a daily basis), that some experienced NYRO players were moving away to play other orchestral instruments and that, notwithstanding the excellence of the present conductor, it would be healthy to rotate the conductor from time to time to expose players to a range of conducting styles.

5. Trustees' Annual Report

The report was accepted by the Committee and signed off by the Chairman and Secretary. The Treasurer noted that Trustees' Liability was set at £250k; the Chairman offered to obtain a quote for £500k [Action Chairman].

6. Draft revised rules

The proposed revisions were accepted except for the following alterations,

Rule 3.11. The rights and privileges of Corporate members would be extracted from previous Committee Minutes but without making them explicit in the Rule.

Section 4. A Rule would be added to say explicitly who are the Trustees of the Society.

Rule 4.6. Text referring to affiliated groups modified.

Rule 4.15. Reference to accommodation expenses added.

Rule 5.2. The role of the President was discussed briefly and it was agreed to re-visit the subject on another occasion.

Rule 5.10. Several members thought that a 3-year rotation cycle for Committee members who do not hold a post was too short. It was agreed that such members could stand for a second 3-year term, immediately after their first term, before the one-year period of ineligibility would be applied.

Rule 7.2. Wording modified slightly.

Rule 7.3. 'and/or' replaced by 'and'.

Rule 7.9. The word 'Representative' was replaced by 'Delegate' (and elsewhere too). The Committee agreed that the rules regarding polling were too complicated, and in practice almost unworkable. It was decided to simplify the procedure with new text [Action Secretary/Chairman].

Rule 9.1.1. Added reference to overnight accommodation.

Rule 14.4. Deleted reference to expenses.

Rule 14.6. Added a new rule referring to Corporate bodies.

Appendix I. Amended to mention that all Branch financial accounts and cheques should include reference to the Society of Recorder Players (SRP) and include the words 'Registered Charity Nos. 282751, SC038422'.

7. ERTA and the Society of Recorder Players

The Chairman reported that he had met Peter Bowman, Acting Chairman of the European Recorder Teachers Association (ERTA), to discuss how the SRP and ERTA might combine their activities in some way. He said that for him there were two aspects that were non-negotiable 1) the SRP had to remain as an organisation that primarily brought adult players together to play the recorder and 2) the SRP had to keep its charitable status. ERTA had around 700 members in total of whom around 70 were based in the UK; one third of these 70 were estimated to be SRP members as well. Peter Bowman had suggested that the SRP change its name to indicate that it was a UK based organisation but this was not possible because it had a Branch in Dublin. Evelyn Nallen pointed out that there was a need to encourage recorder teachers. She continued that although ERTA had considerable 'clout' on the continent within UK it was much less active. The Chairman said that some SRP members might be interested in ERTA's activities such as teaching adults. The Treasurer suggested that ERTA members in UK could form a Branch of the SRP, as had been suggested by the ERTA Treasurer, and might even be offered a seat on the Committee (although it was pointed out that any member was free to stand for Committee). Finally the Chairman said that he would continue to meet Peter Bowman with a view to progressing the discussion; meanwhile he would welcome the views of the Committee and Branches on the subject [Action All].

8. Affiliated organisations

This subject was not discussed further since it had already been covered in Item 6 above.

9. Any other business

9.1 Electronic banking. The Committee discussed a paper that had been submitted by Andrew Short on behalf of the NYRO Sub-Committee that sought permission to introduce electronic banking for NYRO's transactions. The Treasurer said that in her view there would be advantages in the Society adopting electronic banking. It would be possible to conduct transactions even when banks were closed; a relatively small balance was kept in the Current Account so that the Society's principal capital could be protected. Moira Usher noted that, while agreeing that the use of cheques was in decline, the safeguards presented in the discussion paper were no better than those presented and rejected at Conference 2008. Jim Rowley concurred; he recalled that Tessa Rolph (Nottingham) had objected strongly to the lack of safeguards at Conference and wondered how her objections had been met. It was agreed that the Chairman/Secretary should seek the advice of Tessa Rolph; if her response was positive then the paper should be put to Conference and, if accepted, the Rules would have to be altered [Action Chairman/Secretary].

9.2 Membership Secretary. Margaret Shearing had indicated that she wished to step down at Conference 2009. Mary Steele said that she was prepared to be nominated as Membership Secretary and the Committee warmly welcomed her proposal.

9.3 Nominees for new Committee members. Two new Committee members were required to replace Mary Steele and Petrina Lodge who were due to rotate off the Committee at Conference 2009. The Committee composed a shortlist and requested the Chairman/Secretary to approach the named individuals [Action Chairman/Secretary].

9.4 Raising funds for charities. The Secretary reported that he had recently received an enquiry from a Branch asking whether their handling of funds collected for a charity was correct. The Secretary said he had sought advice from Andrew Short who had indicated that relevant advice was available on the Charity Commissioners web site (<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc20.asp>).

9.5 Dates of future Festivals. Moira Usher informed the Committee that a venue had been booked for Festival 2010 on 8-9 May 2010. She said that, to avoid possible confusion, she would not post these dates on the Society web site until after Conference 2009. The Secretary recalled that Somerset/Devon had offered at Conference 2008 to host Festival 2011. The Chairman stated that Guildford was willing to host Festival 2012 subject to finding a suitable venue.

9.6 New Branch. The Secretary said he was very happy to report that he had received a proposal to set up a new Branch based in Lechlade, roughly half-way between Oxford and Cheltenham. A small group already existed that met in members' homes and they had identified larger premises for monthly meetings. The Committee warmly welcomed this news and agreed that the proposal should be put to Conference 2009 for confirmation. The Secretary said he would pass on the good news to the Lechlade group [Action Secretary]. [Subsequently the name South Cotswold Branch (SCO) was adopted for this new Branch].

9.7 Several members requested that Branches be reminded of their minimum responsibilities when entertaining visiting conductors. The Secretary agreed to add a postscript to the standard Authorisation letter [Action Secretary].

10. Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the next two Committee meetings would take place 1) at Prior Pursglove College, Guisborough, immediately after Conference 2009, on 26th April 2009 and 2) at Benslow Hills Music Trust, Hitchin on 18th October 2009.

Attached:

Officers' Reports