

THE SOCIETY OF RECORDER PLAYERS

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

SUNDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2008

Held at Benslow Music Trust, Hitchin, Hertfordshire

PRESENT:

Dick Pyper	Chairman	Jim Rowley	Country/Overseas Sec
Bob Whitmarsh	Secretary	Sandra Foxall	Committee
Ulli Burchette	Treasurer	Caroline Jones	Committee
Moira Usher	Training Co-ordinator	Jane Sellek	Committee
Andrew Short	Chairman, NYRO	Pam Smith	Committee
Alyson Lewin	Musical Adviser	Mary Steele	Committee
Evelyn Nallen	Musical Adviser	Helen Shabetai	Guest

1 Apologies for absence and welcome: Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Collis, Madeline Seviour, Margaret Shearing and Eileen Silcocks. The Chairman welcomed new Committee member Pam Smith and guest visitor, Helen Shabetai (morning only), Editor of The Recorder Magazine.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on 20 April 2008 were AGREED without correction and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters arising

(3) Andrew Short regretted that he had yet to take advice on electronic banking from the Society's bank, National Westminster Bank.

(5.4) Andrew Short regretted that he had yet to ask whether the Charity Commission rules allowed the Society to raise funds for other charities. It appeared that the situation needed to be clarified because the Society may have raised funds for other charities in the past.

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 noted that the Competition Account had now been received. There had been some complications with handling a separate account and she recommended that in future the Competition funds should be merged with the Arthur Ingram Fund. £38 more interest had been credited to the account. In reply to the Secretary, the Treasurer said she was unaware whether funds in the Society's accounts would be guaranteed by the government if the bank collapsed. It was AGREED that this should be investigated further [**Action Treasurer**]. The Treasurer suggested that, as in previous years, the Festival surplus be split three ways between the Walter Bergmann Fund, the Arthur Ingram Fund and central funds. It was proposed that:

The surplus from the Tonbridge Festival 2008 should be split equally between the Walter Bergmann Fund, the Arthur Ingram Fund and central funds. The surplus from the Scottish Recorder Festival 2008, which was too small to be divided three ways, should be treated as a single sum in the accounts.

Proposed: Andrew Short

Seconded: Mary Steele

Carried *nem. con.*

4.2 *Membership Secretary*: The Membership Secretary had requested that the Committee discuss how donations made by members when renewing their membership should be handled. The situation arose because the new Membership Renewal Form contained boxes for donations to the Walter Bergmann Fund, NYRO and other donations as well as for the annual subscription.

After some discussion it was proposed that;

Annually, each Branch should send a single cheque to the Membership Secretary to cover all the Branch's subscriptions and donations with an itemised list setting out the subscriptions and donations included.

Proposed: Moira Usher Seconded: Caroline Jones Carried (1 abstention, Pam Smith)

4.3 *Moeck Competition Administrator*: It was noted that Andrew Collis was seeking a volunteer to review the concert by Chris Orton at the Early Music Festival in November.

4.4 *Training Co-ordinator*: Moira Usher said that no courses had taken place since the last meeting although she said she had had some enquiries. She was concerned that, because the courses were underwritten by the Society, advertising courses more widely might lead to a situation where more non-members than members attended a course. The Committee was unconcerned because running courses was regarded as part of the Society's charitable activities. The Training Co-ordinator acceded to a request from Helen Shabetai, Editor of The Recorder Magazine, to write an article for the magazine on the courses available.

4.5 *NYRO Sub-Committee*: Jane Sellek enquired how the photos taken by the professional photographer were to be used. Andrew Short replied that they were for the web site and for future publicity. Helen Shabetai requested that they be made available to The Recorder Magazine too.

After a discussion about the sale of NYRO's CDs Andrew Short agreed to report at the next meeting (February 2009) on the formal arrangement that had been made over these sales [Action Andrew Short]. He noted that CDs could be sold more widely in future at venues such as the Bishop Burton Summer School, the annual Festival, the Early Music Exhibition etc

5. Trustees' Annual Report

A number of changes to the draft report were suggested.

6. Membership Secretary

The Chairman reported that Margaret Shearing, the current Membership Secretary, wished to stand down at Conference 2009. A replacement was still being sought and he urged Committee members to come up with suggestions. After discussion it was decided that the best approach would be to ask Margaret Shearing to write a job description and for this to be used to find a volunteer by advertising in the next issue of The Recorder Magazine [Action Chairman]. The views were also expressed that personal contact was more likely to turn up a suitable candidate and that any previous candidates for the post might also be asked.

7. Annabel Knight's article in The Recorder Magazine

The Chairman gave some background to the article 'Thoughts on being a recorder player' which had appeared in the Autumn issue of the Recorder Magazine. Following an exchange of emails between members of the European Recorder Teachers' Association (ERTA), and lunch with the Chairman in February, Annabel Knight had written an article that proposed the creation of a single body to represent all UK recorder players.

The ensuing discussion raised a wide range of opinions and ideas, not all relevant to the article, which are summarised below.

A) *What sort of umbrella organisation could be created?*

- The Recorder Magazine offers a sort of ‘umbrella’ in that it caters for many different sorts of recorder player but it is not part of the Society (some people would like to see a different magazine format with more pictures and colour)
- A web site might be the ‘umbrella’ that would attract professionals, teachers, instrument makers and amateurs

B) *How can the Society link up with ERTA? Why are they separate?*

- ERTA membership appears to be declining
- Linking up with ERTA could be a means of reaching out to professionals, students and teachers at all levels
- Run the SRP Festival and ERTA Conference in parallel at the same venue
- Offer joint SRP/ERTA membership at a reduced subscription
- Concern that closer links with ERTA will change the Society

C) *How to cater for professionals?*

- Successful professionals need to present themselves as offering a unique brand of music; joining the Society doesn’t help them do this
- Offer free membership for first year
- Offer specialist events and information e.g. talks on new music, instruments, specialist sessions
- Set up a (virtual?) Branch for professionals

D) *The views of Branches*

- At least some Branches would prefer to keep the *status quo* even if the Society attracts a new sort of membership
- Branches attract a lot of older (retired) people who get a lot of pleasure from playing music
- As other options for leisure activities increase so commitment to Branches declines

E) *Branches could offer new approaches*

- Offer free membership to students
- Get higher education teachers/lecturers to encourage students to join their local Branch
- Offer long weekends with a broad range of activities cf. Australian model
- Provide one-to-a-part (consort) playing in venues with access to a music library
- Meet more often
- Put on Easy Recorder Orchestra days which may attract new members

F) *The image of the Society and the recorder*

- The Society should move away from being solely amateur
- Local educational authorities regard the recorder as only a beginners’ instrument; this attitude needs to change
- Change the Society’s name to suggest that it does more than have Branches meeting once a month for members of a certain age
- Recorder orchestras boost the recorder’s image

The Chairman summarised the discussion and asked the Committee, and others, to write articles for The Recorder Magazine that illustrated how Branches operate in a variety of ways to meet the needs

of their members. He said that he would draft a response to Annabel Knight, for publication in The Recorder Magazine, and circulate it in the next few weeks [Action Chairman].

The idea of a new overarching web site, which would link into the existing Society web site, met with general approval. It was recognised that it might have to be run by a professional webmaster.

8. The appointment of Visiting Conductors

The Secretary began by reporting an email which had been circulated earlier in the summer by Eileen Silcocks in which she had raised two questions 1) are we aiming for a level of professionalism among Visiting Conductors or a sort of free-for-all? and 2) what qualifications should we expect conductors to have? It was pointed out that a conductor visiting an SRP Branch needed to have many skills that included not only conducting but also people skills, and which did not necessarily include paper qualifications. Branches varied considerably in standard but in all cases members wanted to leave their playing session having had an enjoyable time. A great difference in approach was required by a conductor conducting professionals and amateurs. It was AGREED that the Committee should be strongly influenced by advice from all the Musical Advisors when considering a new appointment to the List of Visiting Conductors.

Further, it was suggested that any candidate wishing to become a Visiting Conductor should first be assessed by one of the Musical Advisors. It was proposed that;

One or more Musical Advisors should observe and report on each candidate Visiting Conductor, while the candidate is conducting a Branch other than their own or on some other similar occasion, before the Committee considers the candidate's application.

Proposed: Jane Sellek

Seconded: Mary Steele

Carried: *nem. con.*

The Chairman observed that this was a change in operational procedure, to be noted in the Foreword of the next List of Visiting Conductors [Action Secretary], and would not require a change to the Society's Rules. It implied the need for a well balanced geographical distribution of Musical Advisors.

When it was noted that in fact there was no feedback from so-called 'pastoral' (implying 'of or pertaining to a teacher's responsibility for giving moral care or guidance') conductors about the status of Branches it was suggested that Branches might instead wish to comment on the visiting conductor! It was AGREED that the Expenses Claim Form should be modified to allow space for feedback to the Society on visiting conductors [Action Secretary].

9. Applications to join the List of Visiting Conductors

9.1 Marion Doherty Hayden. The application from Dr Hayden was AGREED *nem. con.* It was noted that Dr Hayden was based in Dublin and therefore any visit she made to the UK mainland might incur unusually high travel costs. It was AGREED that any reasonable costs should be born by the Society.

9.2 Alan Perkins. The Committee decided not to accept this application.

10. Adding the List of Visiting Conductors to the web site

The Secretary said he had received a suggestion from a Society member that the List of Visiting Conductors be posted on the Society's web site. After discussion it was decided not to proceed with the suggestion. It was accepted that some conductors might well object to their personal details appearing on the internet and that anyway all Branch Secretaries had a paper copy of the List and were sent annual updates.

Mary Steele suggested that reference should be made to the List somewhere on the web site and to the fact that a copy was held by each Branch Secretary [Action Secretary].

11. Revised Rules of the Society

A first draft of a set of revised Rules had been circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting but in view of the time that would be required to discuss them in detail the Chairman asked members to send comments to the Secretary by 15th December which would allow time for a further iteration and for final consideration at the February 2009 meeting [Action All]. It was planned to submit the revised Rules to Conference 2009 before getting them approved, possibly by default if no objection was received within 3 weeks, by the Charity Commissioners.

12. Gift Aid

The Chairman noted that Gift Aid returns were still required from some Branches. For 2006-2007 he estimated that the Society would gain around £3700, part of which would be given to NYRO and the Walter Bergmann Fund. For 2007-2008 he expected the income to be around £4150. He noted that in future Gift Aid would be calculated on the basis of the Society's accounting year (September-August) and not on the UK tax year (April-March).

The Chairman suggested, and the Treasurer concurred, that, whilst Branch Subscriptions and Donations could be the subject of Gift Aid Claims, the claims should not be made centrally. The Chairman thought that it would be comparatively simple for the Branches to use the same Forms which he used for these claims.

The Chairman understood that HM Revenue and Customs would require notification of those authorised to make claims on behalf of Branches.

It was proposed that;

Each Branch should claim, from the Revenue and Customs, the Gift Aid due to them.

Proposed: Caroline Jones Seconded: Jim Rowley Carried: *nem. con.*

Instructions to Branches on how to make a claim needed to be drawn up [Action Chairman].

13. Any other business

13.1 The Country & Overseas Secretary reported that he had received an application from Forsyth Publications to become a Corporate Member. It was confirmed that if Forsyth Publications joined the Society they would not be able to use the Membership List for any commercial purpose (Rules, Appendix 2, Data Protection Action 1998).

13.2 Festival 2009. Sandra Foxall reported that plans for the 2009 Festival were well advanced with conductors, venue and accommodation arranged. An Application Form would be circulated in January 2009. Donations of £1000 had been secured. She noted that the venue was located 11 miles from the nearest suitable accommodation and so transport by coach would be laid on.

13.3 Early Music for Youth. Early Music for Youth had requested £150 to help with publicity for their 2009 Summer School. It was AGREED that this application should be remitted to the Walter Bergmann Fund Sub-Committee [Action Secretary, Chair WBF].

14. Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the next two meetings would take place 1) at Benslow Hills Music Trust, Hitchin on 15th February 2009 and 2) at Prior Pursglove College, Guisborough, immediately after Conference 2009, on 26th April 2009.

Attached:

Officers' Reports

Trustees' Annual Report 2006-07 (draft)

RBW/RP

Minutes FINAL

24/11/2008