

The Society of Recorder Players : Guildford Branch

President: Jonathan Dove

Registered Charity No 282751/SCO38422



Annual Report. September 2019

Our 45th anniversary year has been a momentous one for Guildford SRP. We have moved venue, set up a new website, invited a number of guest conductors to join us throughout the year and celebrated our birthday with a fantastic cake in the shape of a Paetzold recorder!

At last year's AGM, we said thank you to Dick Pyper, our longstanding Chairman who was stepping down after 22 years, on the Committee. Dick was initially Librarian and then became Chairman from 2006 to 2018, a real testament to his loyalty and support for the Branch. In addition, Dick was Chair of the National SRP from 2007 to 2012 and we celebrated that achievement by holding the SRP Festival here in Surrey in 2012.

We gave Dick a great send off with a card, gifts and a magnificent cake baked by Maria Lemonidou, one of our Committee members, and followed this with a spirited afternoon of playing, with our guest conductor Kati Boosey.

During 2018 Maria had organised a questionnaire of our members looking for views on the branch and inviting suggestions for increasing our membership. The Committee used the results of this questionnaire to focus on three aspects: venue, website and meetings, as a steer for our actions this year.



In October we moved from the Guide Hut in Nightingale Road, Guildford to our new venue at East Horsley Village Hall. We owe our Committee Member, Penny Clarke, many thanks for her quest for new premises, visiting fourteen local halls to assess their suitability for our playing sessions. Initially we held meetings in the Millennium Room but we quickly outgrew that space and in May we moved to the large hall for our meetings. Our membership now stands at 32 which makes us one of the larger branches again. We celebrated our move with a Pastoral Visit from Helen Hooker who brought a variety of music from Renaissance to Modern for us to play.

The website had been hosted by Surrey Community for many years and we must thank Sue Pluthero for her dedication to updating it on a regular basis. However, technology and web design has changed over the years and as a result, members felt that we needed to advertise our presence to a wider audience. We have since heard that the Surrey Community offering is closing, reinforcing our decision to update our site.



We moved our website to sit under the main SRP website, giving us the advantages of coordinating with other branches and enabling our events to be circulated to other branches. We also advertise our meetings on Facebook.

As Anne Martin, our Musical Director, had moved away, we were without a regular conductor. The questionnaire had indicated that most members enjoyed a combination of regular and guest conductors and so we planned the year's meetings with visits from Jackey Birch, Andrew Challinger, Andrew Duncan, David Burgess, Emma Murphy for our May Playing Day, Kati Boosey and Julie Dean. Anne Martin came back to conduct our November Playing Day. A big thank you to all of those for their expertise, time and patience! We marked our 45th birthday at our June meeting with Julie Dean.



We enjoyed the variety that this mix of conductors brought to our meetings and I believe this approach has accounted for the increased number of visitors who join us at our sessions. We are continuing to invite guest conductors in the coming year but have invited Kati Boosey and Harriet Oliver to provide stability by conducting a number of sessions. Subsequently Kati has decided to move back to Finland and we will have an opportunity to say goodbye to her in October.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee: Peter Anning, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary; Ann James, our Secretary who organises the programme including the arrangements for guest conductors; Penny Clarke and Maria Lemonidou who provide the tea and cakes every month; Sue Pluthero who manages Playing Days; and Andrew Duncan who looks after visitors and helps with the organisation of the meetings. Thanks too to Trudi Pulsford for looking after the Branch library of music.

We are running another questionnaire this autumn to gather your views on our progress to date and the direction for our future and this will help to guide the committee actions in the coming year. We are also clarifying the information you have given us about sharing your data and images via a Privacy Consent Form.

We are looking forward to an exciting next season with a mix of conductors, some new to us and some we know well. One development is to encourage members to consider conducting and so we are inviting offers to join Andrew Duncan in April in "Over to You!" In addition, we have invited Ian Wilson of the Flautadors, and Head of Woodwind at Eton to make a return visit to conduct our playing day in May.

It is amazing to think that Guildford Branch has been running since 1974, and we do have members with us who were there in the early days. We have had 45 years of enjoyment as a group and I am sure that we have another 45 years to come!

Jill Day
Chairman

September 2019.

