

Branch Secretary's Report for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 Seasons

Having met by Zoom since March 2020 due to the Covid pandemic, the branch resumed in-person meetings in the Life Church, West Richmond Street on the 27 September 2021 with regular conductors Anne Martin, Peter Wraith and Margaret McLay. All guidelines on social-distancing and ventilation were observed as far as possible and masks were worn at all times except when actually playing. We also hosted two Zoom workshops, Julie Dean on the History of the Round and Catch on 25 October 2021 and Caroline Jones on Technical Tips on 24 January 2022. Michael Graham visited the branch on 8th and 15th November 2021 to conduct his composition The Forth Suite, commissioned from him by the Edinburgh Branch.

Our Virtual Christmas Evening Concert was by Zoom on 13 December 2021 and included a mixture of pieces digitally assembled by Alan Martin and Tom Pitcairn from parts recorded by members in their own homes and recordings of live performances.

On 17 January 2022 we moved from our temporary venue, the Life Church, back to the newly refurbished Binks Hall (formerly the Kirk o' Field Hall). We are grateful to Eileen Holttum for looking after the branch's library of music in her home while the refurbishment was going on. The library has now been returned to the Binks Hall and is kept in a filing cabinet in the locked storage space at the back of the hall.

The National SRP Festival took place in Ipswich on the 23rd and 24th of April 2022 with the SRP Conference on Friday the 22nd of April when the Edinburgh Branch delegate was Anne Martin. The minutes of the Conference can be found at <https://www.srp.org.uk/annual-conference/>

Our Summer Evening Concert took place on 13 June 2022, our first live concert since the 2019 Christmas Concert. The conductors from the branch were Anne Martin, Peter Wraith and Margaret McLay.

The first meeting of the 2022-23 season took place on 26 September 2022 in the Binks Hall. The Branch currently has 34 members, up three up from the previous season.

On the 10 October 2022, the annual EGM was held to approve the branch accounts and elect a new branch treasurer. Alan Martin, who had been acting treasurer, since Hilary Campbell stood down at the end of the 2021-22 season, was elected as the new branch treasurer. Due to the increase in hall hire it had been necessary to reduce the number of meetings per season from 35 to 28 and the length of hall hire from 2.5 hours to 2 hours. Members voted for meetings to be from 7.30 to 9.15 with access to the hall from 7.15.

We were saddened to hear of the deaths of former members Viva Good, Helen Steuart and John Wexler. Viva Good died on 11 August 2022. She was a member of the Edinburgh Branch from the early 1960s until she retired from playing in 2012. She continued to attend our concerts for several years after that until she moved to a nursing home in Peebles where she died at the age of 95. John Wexler died in September 2022 and was a member of the Edinburgh Branch from 1984 to 1998. Also a keen singer, he sang in the Edinburgh-based choir Rudsambee. Helen Steuart died on 19 October 2022. She was a member of the Edinburgh Branch from 2007 to 2017 and also played in the Scottish Recorder Orchestra.

The branch's annual playing day took place on Saturday 5 November 2022 at St Columba's by the Castle, Johnston Terrace when guest conductor was Musical Director of the Cleveland Branch, Sandra Foxall. Twenty-six players took part and we welcomed visitors from other SRP branches, the Scottish Recorder Orchestra, and the Edinburgh Adult Education Evening Class.

Our Christmas Evening Concert was on Monday 5 December 2022, when we played to an audience of family and friends. The conductors from the Branch were Anne Martin, Peter Wraith and Margaret McLay, and we were joined by members of the Edinburgh Adult

Education Evening Class conducted by Marg Hall. The collection was divided equally between Doctors Without Borders and the Trussell Trust.

We look forward to hosting the 2023 National SRP Festival in George Watson's College on 1st and 2nd April, with the SRP Conference on 31st March. With bookings currently standing at 150 we are assured of a busy and enjoyable weekend. We are grateful to the Festival Committee and in particular Festival Organiser, Anne Martin, Festival Secretary, Eileen Holttum and Festival Treasurer, Alan Martin for all their hard work in organising the Festival. The full programme is now on the SRP website at

<https://www.srp.org.uk/national-festival-2023/>

Thanks are due to all our conductors for their commitment, patience and good humour throughout the season and especially for keeping us involved and enthused during the pandemic.

Eileen Finlayson
February 2023