

Cambridge Philharmonic Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 7.30 on **Tuesday 25th September 2007** in the Farnsworth Hall, Chesterton Community College, Gilbert road, Cambridge

1. Election of Chairman of the AGM

As Sir David Willcocks was absent from the meeting and the position of Chairman has yet to be filled, it was agreed to ask Mr David White to chair the meeting.

David White welcomed our Honorary Patron, the Right Worshipful the Mayor of the City of Cambridge, Councillor Jenny Bailey.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Sir David Willcocks, Tim Brown, Graeme Jenkins, Raymond Leppard, Hugh Macdonald, Russell Keable, Matthew Rowe and 10 members of the Society.

3. Minutes of the 2006 AGM

These were adopted.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Secretary's Report

On behalf of the Society Jan thanked the Committee for their hard work.

She particularly mentioned Chris Strachan, the chorus librarian, and Alison Vinnicombe and Steve Clarke who took over the management of the season's programmes. Jan gave a special thanks to all of those who have stewarded, put out chairs and rostra, written programme notes and provided refreshments at rehearsals.

Jan informed the members about others who had contributed to the work of the Society - Tom Curran rigged and ran lights/sound for us during the year, John Williams, our designer and Richard Birkett who looks after the website and keeps us up to date – often at very short notice.

Jan thanked the professionals – Chris Whitton (Chorus Master) and Steve Bingham (Leader), who give much more than their paid time and expertise. In particular she mentioned Tim Redmond, as this was officially his first season, as he has inspired and extended us.

There were goodbyes to:

Chairman Lindy Beveridge who deserved a huge thanks to her for support, guidance, range of experience and good sense. She leaves us to live in France.

Claire Lucas – who has kept our finances in the black – no one can know or appreciate how much work is involved in this post – it is relentless and this has not been an easy season with the complications of Prague and the festival

Angela Bennett guided the Society to a new, slick look for paperwork, posters and website. A thanks to her,

Accompanists – Max Pappenheim who took over from Oliver Brett and soon to be replaced by James Sherlock.

There were sad goodbyes to Sir Robin Orr, Denis Fielder and Marion Holliman who died during the year.

The Secretary gave a report on the year. There were the three *Henry Vth's*, Cambridge, Prague and for the Mayor in the Guildhall in May. We nearly had the wonderful David Timson permanently on contract.

The visit to Prague was an amazing experience for us all performing in the Rudolfinum. Without David White, Claire and Emma it would not all have come together. It was not without its headaches but was truly memorable from the reception and concert by Prime Brass to the fantastic concert in the evening introduced in Czech by Tim. The Prague University staff made us truly welcome and the Rudolfinum technical crew communicated in a mix of languages - mostly universal techie.

There were Cambridge Festival concerts with projected planets, young composers, last minute words and uncertain ladies in the Corn Exchange and a missing conductor for jazz in Ely. Howard Blake and Bernard Cribbens arrived for a Mari Gomori *Snowman* in January. Tom Curran cued Bernard Cribbens, who could not read music, and was all over the score. Tickets sold faster than could be got off the computer for *Little Red Riding Hood* with David Timson. in February and our first experience of PAYPAL. Cordelia Williams, playing *Rachmaninov* in May, brought all of her friends and *Gerontius*, in a very full Ely Cathedral, with Roger Bond and a team of young singers to rounded it all off. Through it all Paul Patterson, as composer in focus, was the most regular member of the audience.

Jan explained that the Society is the sum of its members and asked people not to be shy in coming forward to help – particularly in concert management, setting up, stewarding and front of house management. She said that the Society looks forward to a great season ahead with Tim Redmond.

6. Conductor's Report

Tim Redmond addressed the meeting and highlighted some of the key parts of the 2006-7 season.

He gave his thanks to all who had made the Prague visit a success and reminded the Society how complicated the organisation had been. He mentioned the possibility of performing in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam in 2010 with the Amersfort choir.

Tim talked about linking theatre with concert programming and making them intriguing and challenging. The audiences grew as the season progressed. The children's concert was particularly exciting. Tim explained that he is aiming to link soloists with celebrity e.g. EMI recording soloists.

He thanked the society for fabulous performances last season and reaching 'beyond our own' audiences.

He talked about the link with Paul Patterson as ‘composer in focus’ and aimed to have the same involvement with Jonathan Dove. Currently Tim is talking to publishers about the idea of commissioning a work with another group or society. He also mentioned the possibility of performing for the Roald Dahl Foundation in 2008-9 season. Tim told the Society about Disney releasing music for a children’s concert and felt that this would be prestigious for CPS to be the first to perform this in the UK.

Tim is keen to have young singers working with us and is looking for opportunities for this to happen. He finished by saying how good it is to play to good, full houses, ‘a joy every time.’

7. Treasurer’s Report

The Treasurer reported that the Society had made a surplus of just over £2,100, an excellent result considering the expenses of the Prague trip. Audiences improved over the season; the autumn term was a difficult one with the programme being based around the requirements of the Cambridge Festival concert and the Prague trip. The children’s concerts were very successful; both performances were sold out. In the summer term the West Road concert was almost sold out, and the final concert in Ely Cathedral saw ticket sales £2500 over budget. Together, the non-contract concerts saw a loss of just over £3000, compared with a budgeted loss of £5600. The two contract concerts gave a net surplus of just over £2900. The Treasurer thanked the orchestra members who were able to make these a success through their hard work.

Concert costs were £4000 above budget. The soloists’ budget was exceeded by £1000, largely due to having to find late replacements when soloists dropped out. Orchestral music hire and publicity costs also contributed to the overspend, as well as the hire of audiovisual equipment for the Planets concert..

The extra concert costs were partly offset by a £900 surplus in subscriptions, largely due to new members joining both the chorus and the orchestra during the season. In addition, rehearsal and admin costs were kept down.

The trip to Prague resulted in a loss of £3791, almost entirely represented by the cost of professional instrument transport, but it was felt that was a very worthwhile investment, and the trip had been a great success for the Society.

The introduction of Paypal for online ticket sales for selected concerts had been successful, and will continue in 2007-8. However, it will not be introduced for subscription sales as the Paypal transaction charges would reduce subscription revenues significantly.

The Society’s reserve now stood at £47,025, compared with a planned expenditure of around £64,400 in the coming season.

This ended the formal report. Questions on BACS payments for subscriptions, and the statutory requirement for reserves, were taken from the floor.

The Treasurer thanked the orchestral members for additional revenue raised from contract concerts.

8. Appointment of Chairman of the Society and Officers and Election of Committee

The Secretary proposed that Paul Patterson should be offered the opportunity to be a Vice President of the Society as he had contributed so much during the season. This was seconded by Mary Bedford and agreed unanimously.

Bruce Tate proposed Claire Lucas as Publicity Officer, Seconded by Alison Vinnicombe. This was agreed unanimously.

Patrick Hall proposed Neil Caplan as Treasurer, Seconded by Richard Monk. This was agreed unanimously.

The remaining members of the committee were re-elected unopposed.

9. Member's Annual Subscription 2007-8 and election of auditors.

The Treasurer proposed that there should be a change in subscriptions. Until now all members of the Society have paid the same subscription but in addition chorus members have had to pay for the hire of their music. This was an increasing cost and was felt by many to be unfair.

The Treasurer proposed that the subscription should be raised to £100 and that the Society should fund the hire of all music. This was seconded by Julia Napier and agreed unanimously.

The Treasurer proposed that Whitmarsh Sterland should be the auditors and this was seconded by Anne Read and agreed by the meeting.

The Treasurer told the meeting that Gift –Aid was £3,700 last season.

AOB

David White thanked the committee and the professional musicians.

The meeting finished with wine and nibbles.