

The Friends of St Cecilia's Hall and Museum

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 21st November 2015 in the Centre for Research Collections, University of Edinburgh.

Present: Pam Jackson (Chair), Dianne Fraser (Hon. Treasurer), Paula Allison (Minutes) and the following members: Veronica Bailey, Judith Brierley, Rosemary Carter, Gill French, Roger French, David Gerrard, Martin Hillman, David Jenkins, John Kitchen, Isobel Lodge, Jacky MacBeath, Darryl Martin, Arnold Myers, Jenny Nex, Claudine Tate, Jim Tate, Bryan Wade, Lance Whitehead, Vivien Wilson, Paula Woods.

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Centre for Research Collections and gave a special welcome to new members including Judith Brierley, Jean Starr and Peter Howarth.

Apologies for absence were received from: Joe Anderson, Lord and Lady Balfour of Burleigh, Sheila Barnes, Malcolm Bateson, Paul Baxter, Toni Bunch, Coila Clyne, Pat Cox, Gordon Frier, David Griffel, Pam Harper, Janet Jones, Chris Judson, David Kimbell, Dorothy Leeming, John Lester, Lady Lucinda Mackay, John Marston, Peter Mole, Charles Mould, Dawn and Simon Muirhead, Julian Newman, Peter Onslow, Esther Reid, Elly Smith, Ian Stirling, Anne Stirling-Whyte, Heather Stubbs, Flora Wallace, Mary Wetherick.

The Chairman noted that many of those sending apologies had sent warm approval of progress in the Redevelopment and Restoration Project, and of Friends' activities over the year.

The **deaths** were recorded of Lucy Carolan, Martin Goetze, Lynne Mirrey, Kathleen Newis, Ruth Thomson, John Fifer and Mairi Rankin. Condolences to their families and friends were expressed.

2. The Minutes of the 2014 Annual General Meeting were approved.

(proposer: M. Hillman; seconder: J. Kitchen)

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

a. The Redevelopment Project: Jacky MacBeath, Head of the Project, gave a detailed report of progress to date. She informed the meeting that

- the project was on schedule, and it was hoped the Hall might re-open on St Cecilia's Day, 2016;
- Jonathan Santa Maria Bouquet, Darryl Martin, Jenny Nex and Sarah Deters were working hard to ensure that new labelling and educational notes for the 800 instruments in the collection would be ready for the re-opening;
- Sarah Deters, Learning and Engagement Curator, had enlisted students from The Edinburgh College to create video and audio materials, for the use of visitors to the Hall, by recording Scottish Chamber Orchestra musicians playing instruments from the University's historic instrument collections;
- a new Edinburgh by-law would shortly be passed, obliging all businesses in the heritage area around St Cecilia's Hall to keep rubbish bins inside their premises, thus enhancing the environs;
- lighting would be mounted on the Hall's exterior to attract the public and to deter vandals;
- a special "hard hat" tour would be arranged for Friends' representatives in March or April.

J.McB ended her report by thanking members of the Friends' Committee for all the support, moral and financial, they had given to the redevelopment project.

b. Festival Concerts . The Chairman reported that:

- audience figures for the two 2015 Fringe concerts at St Andrew's and St George's West church on George Street had been good;
- dates for concerts in 2016 had been established as follows:
 - 21st August (Sunday), Gordon Ferries and Stephen Morrison on historic guitars.
 - 24th August (Wednesday), John Kitchen - solo harpsichord recital;
- negotiations were in process with the Keyboard Charitable Trust who might sponsor a young French harpsichordist (Jean Rondeau) to appear in an additional Fringe concert. This would enhance the Friends' profile during the closure of St Cecilia's Hall.

c. Delphian Records The Chairman noted that Paul Baxter had reiterated his desire to continue the collaboration between Delphian records and the Friends of St Cecilia's.

d. Organ Fund. P.J. announced that the Friends' enjoyable summer social events had successfully raised money for the Concert Hall Organ Fund. The organ's restoration was nearing completion. P.J. thanked most sincerely John Kitchen and Drs Joy and George Syper for their generous hospitality in opening their homes for Friends' concerts.

e. Retirements. P.J. reminded the meeting of the Treasurer's intention to retire at the 2016 AGM and of the need to replace her. Also, the Publications Officer had indicated his wish to retire in 2017. David Jenkins had kindly volunteered to undertake part of the latter role.

4. Chairman's Report.

Presenting her previously circulated report, Pam Jackson noted that the past year had been dominated by the inconvenience of being out of the Hall, but also by growing fascination with evidence of the ongoing building work. At first, the committee had been allocated office and storage space in the Reid Hall, but after that building also closed temporarily for refurbishment, meetings had been held in the Centre for Research Collections in the University Library.

The **2015 Friends' Fringe Concerts** had been well attended and were much appreciated. The Friends were greatly indebted to Willie Hendry who had generously provided his beautiful French double-manual harpsichord free of charge for John Kitchen's recital. P.J. also recorded the success of an October concert organised and sponsored by Ian McFarlane on behalf of Edinburgh University to raise awareness of the St Cecilia's Redevelopment Project. James Laing, counter-tenor, had stepped in at short notice for the indisposed Andrew Kennedy. This delightful concert in Greyfriars' Kirk had been very well received.

Concerning **Student Bursaries**, P.J. reported that, after slow response from Edinburgh University music students, the bursaries had been publicised in other Scottish higher education institutions, in accordance with the bursary scheme's regulations,. As a result, three splendid individual research projects had been funded, while a further bursary had been awarded to the director of the Kellie Consort, Scotland's first pre-professional baroque group of singers and instrumentalists. P.J. suggested that this last bursary might be regarded as standing in place of the Fenton House Chamber Ensemble prize which the Friends used to award.

P.J. gave heartfelt thanks to Roger French for all his hard work in creating an up-to-date, colourful and engaging Friends' **web-site**.

Looking to the future, P. J. advised the meeting that:

- the Syperpts had offered to host another fund-raising summer concert at Ballencrieff for the Friends and their guests;
- two or possibly three Friends' Fringe concerts would be presented in 2016;
- a memorial concert would be held to celebrate the life and achievements of the harpsichordist, Lucy Carolan;
- 2016 had been designated by the University as the Big Leap Year for Giving. This should encourage Friends to make an extra effort on behalf of the Redevelopment project.

In her closing remarks, the Chairman congratulated Ellie Smith on her recent appointment as post-doctoral Research Fellow at the prestigious Orpheus Institute in Ghent, Belgium. P.J. wished to record her great satisfaction in the continuing good relations between the Friends and both the Keyboard Charitable Trust and Delphian Records. She ended by thanking the committee, curators and conservator for all their hard work through the year.

The Chairman's report was **approved** by the meeting (prop: M. Hillman, sec: I. Lodge). The Treasurer thanked the Chairman for the huge amount of work she had undertaken on behalf of the Friends.

5. Treasurer's Report.

Presenting the year's financial statement, Dianne Fraser noted that current membership numbers totalled 181 (12 Honorary members, 104 Life ms, 64 Ordinary ms, and 1 Student). Closure of the Hall throughout the year had made recruitment of new members difficult.

The treasurer was pleased to confirm the award of four Bursaries, to: Elizabeth Ford, Tom Wilkinson of The Kellie Consort, Eric Thomson, and Belinda Robertson-Kirkland.

D.F. noted that the two concerts in aid of the Organ Restoration Fund had proved fruitful. By the end of the financial year the fund stood at £7670 to which gift aid would be applied where possible. Since the end of the financial year further donations had been received. The fund remained open.

D.F. reported that, despite good attendances, the 2015 Fringe concerts had not broken even but had run at a minimal loss because of the costs of hiring St Andrew's and St George's West Church as venue. She thanked J.K. for his generosity in donating his concert receipts to the organ fund. D.F. also thanked Willie Hendry, not only for the loan of his harpsichord but for his time given in full preparation and tuning of the instrument free of charge.

The treasurer's annual accounts had been **examined** by Malcolm MacRae and **approved** by the members of the Committee acting as Trustees, in accordance with current OSCAR regulations.

M.H. thanked D.F. for all her hard work throughout the year.

6. Confirmation of Examiner of Accounts for 2015-16.

Malcolm MacRae had indicated his willingness to continue for another year in this role. This was welcomed by the meeting, and MM was duly appointed as Examiner.

7. Curators' Report.

Presenting the annual report (previously circulated), Darryl Martin underlined that the Redevelopment and Restoration Project, which had, naturally, been his priority all year, was not yet fully funded and that a further phase of active fundraising would be launched in 2016.

D.M. assured the meeting that, despite the near comprehensiveness of the University Collections and constraints on future display space, St Cecilia's curators remained constantly on the look-out for any historic instrument which might be appropriate to fill rare gaps. The forthcoming auction of Finchcock's instruments was unlikely to offer anything that would be essential for St Cecilia's, which was fortuitous given the difficulties of storing instruments during closure. D.M. added that any offer of a donated instrument was carefully scrutinised as to its suitability to fit the Collections.

D.M. paid tribute to Lynne Mirrey and Lucy Carolan who had been wonderful friends of St Cecilia's and generous donors to the Collection.

Although the past year had been frustrating because of being out of the Hall and Museum, D.M. was able to report that it had also been an exciting time, with 17 students, the biggest number ever, on the History of Instruments programme, while 3 PHD students had completed their theses. There were high numbers of enquirers' visits to the Centre for Research Collections, where the curators were temporarily housed, and to the Gyle storage and conservation annexe, for the study of instruments. The curators looked forward to a busy year of labelling, placing of instruments and designing display contexts in readiness for the re-opening of the museum.

The Curators' report was appreciatively received.

8. Publications Report.

Presenting his previously circulated report, Martin Hillman expressed pleasure in introducing David Jenkins who had indicated willingness to assist him with Friends' publications. He would be trained to deal with stock-taking, sales of CDs, and the reproduction, distribution and mailing of instrument drawings and editions of the Friends' newsletter, "Soundboard".

In reply to questions MH disclosed that almost all publications, apart from instrument drawings, could be delivered electronically. Editions of "Soundboard" were currently sent electronically to most overseas Friends. P.J. undertook to present the U.K. readership in the next edition with a further opportunity to ask to receive the newsletter electronically.

P.J. thanked M.H. for all the work he had done with publishing "Soundboard", and appealed for someone to help with its future practical production.

M.H. then distributed a paper, outlining the current situation regarding technical instrument drawings and data sheets. He acknowledged a large debt of gratitude to Arnold Myers who donated fees from the sale of drawings of woodwind and brass instruments to the Friends. This provided a steady income stream. However, as yet no drawings existed either of bowed string instruments or of any instruments in the Mirrey collection. In the belief that it would be useful to extend and update the available range, M.H. suggested that the Friends might wish to employ someone to execute further drawings. Support of the academic staff would be needed in finding suitable candidates and checking their work on completion, but MH invited the meeting to instruct the committee to look further into this idea.

In response, D.M. stated that it would be difficult to commit to such an undertaking until he and his team were reinstated in St Cecilia's. A.M. reminded the meeting that each drawing would require hours of work and would therefore be extremely expensive. Occasionally drawings were done by well-wishers or instrument-makers.

Regarding descriptive data sheets for instruments in the Collections, M.H. intimated that he would like to increase their availability. He emphasised their usefulness, being both cheap and quick to produce, and suggested that it might be a good idea to supply all data sheets as free to download, along with a request for a donation.

Lively debate ensued, including consideration of alternative means of providing instrument plans:

- CT scanner – Jim Tate pointed out that a CT scanner could be used on any instrument, and would reveal internal as well as external information;
- Pantography – pantography of all keyboard instruments in the collection had been undertaken previously by Elly Smith, and could perhaps be used to cover more instruments;
- Digital drawings – David Gerrard enquired about the economics of digitising the technical drawings. It was pointed out that although this was possible, it would leave St Cecilia's with no control over reprints and further re-distribution, and would therefore cut off a valuable income stream for the Museum.

Paula Woods suggested that a sub-committee be formed to review past modes and possible future strategies for dissemination of technical information. Plans for a new catalogue might profitably be another part of the sub-committee's remit.

D.M. confirmed that a new catalogue would be prepared for the re-opened St Cecilia's, since the instruments would be on display in different or newly configured spaces.

Election of office bearers and committee members.

- The Chairman intimated that Elly Smith had resigned from the committee, due to work commitments abroad.
- Brian Wade proposed the re-election of current office-bearers. John Kitchen seconded the proposal, which was endorsed unanimously.
- John Kitchen and Gill French, currently co-opted, were unanimously elected as full committee members. (Proposed by Veronica Bailey; seconded by Arnold Myers)
- Dianne Fraser proposed the re-election of the remainder of the serving full committee members. Pam Jackson seconded the proposal, which was endorsed unanimously.
- Roger French and David Jenkins were unanimously elected as new members of the committee. (Proposed by Isobel Lodge ; seconded by Martin Hillman).

A vote of thanks to the committee for the previous year's hard work was proposed by Darryl Martin and seconded by Jenny Nex.

Date of next Annual General Meeting: M.H. proposed that the exact date of the next AGM should not be determined until firm information about the re-opening date of St Cecilia's Hall and Museum had been obtained. (Seconded by Paula Allison). The proposal was unanimously approved.

A.O.B: No other business was raised. The meeting closed at 4.10pm, and was followed by an impressive recital of ancient and modern recorder music given by Annemarie Klein, a former Friends' bursary holder, who recently completed advanced postgraduate performance studies at the University of Leuven (Louvain).

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