

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24th November 2012.

Present: Pam Jackson (Chair), Dianne Fraser (Hon. Treasurer), Asma Khan (Hon. Secretary) and the following members:

Arnold Myers; John Kitchen; Derek Grainge; Richard de Soldenhoff; Charles Coventry;

Ian Stirling; Martin Hillman; Ann Bond; Malcolm Bateson; Peng Lee Yap; Anne Leaver;

Isobel Lodge; Lucy Carolan; Eleanor Smith; Darryl Martin; Antonia Bunch; Sheila Barnes

Veronica Bailey; Rosemary Carter; Lilian Cameron.

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to St Cecilia's Hall.

Apologies for absence were received from:

John Raymond; Paula Allison; Malcolm and Nicola MacRae; Christopher Hogwood;

Willie Hendry; Lynne Mirrey; David Kimbell; Joseph Anderson; Peter Freshwater;

John Scally; Colin Tilney; Chris Judson; Peter Mole; Charles Mould; Irene Eprile;

Andrew and Mary Watson; Pat Cox; Brian Wishart; Gordon Frier; Anne Stirling-Whyte.

The **deaths** were announced of two long-standing supporters: Miss Mary Mackenzie

and Lt. Col. Stroube Richardson.

2. The Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting were approved.

(proposer: Martin Hillman, seconder: Willie Hendry)

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

There were no matters arising

4. Chairman's Report

Presenting her previously circulated report, Pam Jackson promised to write in greater detail about the year's events in the forthcoming Friends' newsletter, *Soundboard*.

She reported on continuing progress towards the redevelopment of St Cecilia's Hall, noting that University representatives had been conscientious in informing the committee about each stage of planning and phase of fund-raising. These efforts to involve The Friends throughout the process were much appreciated. Bids for major funding from Creative Scotland and the Heritage Lottery Fund were deemed crucial to the project. Because of the current enormously high demands on Creative Scotland's resources, the University had been asked to revise their initial application for consideration in the next round, in six months' time. In particular, greater emphasis should be placed on community engagement. The bid presented to the Scottish Heritage Lottery Fund was for a much more substantial amount, and the University had recently received indication that approval was likely in the near future. Nevertheless, the delay in achieving funding from Creative Scotland would probably push back the date at which redevelopment work could commence. The University required a specified proportion of total funding to be secured in advance, therefore additional funding from a variety of other sources, including major individual donors, was still being sought. Redevelopment costs had been calculated to take account of the need for an additional staff post to help promote the museum's activities.

During the past twelve months Friends had volunteered a multitude of services in support of a wide range of events such as Edinburgh Doors Open Day, the Sypert concert series, a visit by the Friends of the National Galleries of Scotland, and the Friends' own Festival Fringe season. Planning for next year's Fringe concerts was well under way – dates would be publicised shortly in *Soundboard* and on the website.

Closure of St Cecilia's Hall for a year or more for building alterations would displace the annual concert series promoted by The Friends during the Festival. Alternative venues might be investigated, but could prove costly. Use of St. Cecilia's Hall is provided free to The Friends, and closure would restrict availability of instruments, most of which would be removed to secure, temperature- and humidity- controlled storage. Moreover, the terms of bequest and donation for several instruments stipulated that they could only be played in St

Cecilia's Hall itself. This matter prompted lively response from the floor of the meeting. Malcolm Bateson raised concern that the Friends might lose momentum over the summer concerts if they have to be suspended, but Martin Hillman argued that the series had been highly successful recently and it was unlikely the Friends would lose their audience. Isobel Lodge suggested that at the next Fringe a notification should be placed in the printed programmes, warning that the concerts would be suspended for a year. Dianne Fraser suggested a press advertisement could be placed during the period of suspension to remind audiences of the return of the concerts for the following year.

The chairman gave notice of future events which would involve the Friends as volunteers and/or financial supporters, in particular the International Conference on Historic Keyboard Music to be held in July 2013. The central focus would be the 400th anniversary of the publication of *Parthenia*, or the Maydenhead of the first *Musick* ever to be printed for the Virginalls. A School's Day would be held in January 2013, to be organised by Willie Hendry. Refreshments would again be provided for the Syptert concerts in May, June and July.

Further points were raised from the floor. It was noted that the banner outside the Hall should be double sided as the lettering is not currently visible from South Bridge.

Rosemary Carter raised the problem of walking up Niddry Street after concerts, noting that some members no longer attend evening concerts as they felt the environment was unsafe, especially in winter. Alternative routes via Robertson's Close and Infirmary Street were discussed. The need for major improvement in street lighting was emphasised.

The Chairman's report was **approved** by the meeting. (proposer: John Kitchen, seconder: Isobel Lodge)

5. Treasurer's Report

Presenting the year's statement, Dianne Fraser noted that there were currently 175 members: 14 Honorary; 98 Life; 61 Ordinary; and 2 Student members. She paid tribute to Lt. Col. Stroube Richardson who was the first member to request an electronic version of *Soundboard*, thereby saving the Friends considerable overseas postage costs.

The Treasurer noted that £400 previously donated as sponsorship by the Polish consulate, which had appeared on last year's statement of accounts, had been used this summer for the promotion of a solo harpsichord recital by Pawel Siwczak.

Highlighting major items of expenditure, the treasurer drew attention to a substantial contribution towards funding the post of Audience Development Officer; also to the publication by The Friends of *The Temple of Harmony, a new architectural history of St Cecilia's Hall*; and the award of student bursaries to Rachael Durkin and Annemarie Klein. She explained that in the current economic climate no bank interest is being earned on the dedicated bursary fund, but it is regularly topped up by profits from informal catering.

In discussion following presentation of the Treasurer's report the authors of *The Temple of Harmony* were congratulated on its successful publication and were thanked for their hard work in its production.

Concern was expressed that applications for bursary funding had dwindled recently, although availability is well publicised. There was speculation that the current student generation was not greatly engaged by early music. It was noted that Fenton House had also experienced a decline in entries for its solo harpsichord competitions. Assurance was given that all applications for a Friends of St Cecilia's Hall Bursary were seriously and helpfully considered, and advice was offered to adjust the application where appropriate. No application had yet been rejected outright. Anne Leaver suggested that the bursary might be applied to interesting combinations of early music with other subjects such as drama. She referred to a previous proposal by Wayne Weaver. The Treasurer responded that Wayne had applied for a bursary but did not actually take the offer up. Darryl Martin indicated that in future he would positively encourage students to apply, rather than treating the fund conservatively. Martin Hillman replied that, although monies were currently limited, the fund should not be viewed by students as a last resort for financial support. Its donors intended students to benefit fully. If the fund became exhausted, a new appeal could be launched to build it up again. It was agreed to publicise the availability of bursaries vigorously for the next round.

The Treasurer's Report was **approved**. (proposer: Ian Stirling; seconder: Sheila Barnes) and DF was **thanked** for her detailed work .

6. Appointment of Examiner of Accounts.

The current examiner, **Mr Malcolm Macrae**, had indicated his willingness to continue in that capacity. His appointment for 2012-2013 was **approved**. (proposer: Willie Hendry; seconder: Sheila Barnes).

7. Report of the Curators.

Presenting the formal annual report (previously circulated), Darryl Martin indicated that over the past twelve months he had identified no instrument for purchase at auction which would significantly benefit the collection. Display space to accommodate instruments is limited.

He was delighted to report that the Hall would be the venue for harpsichord recitals by Christophe Rousset during the official Edinburgh International Festival. John Kitchen had been approached by EIF to present a talk and to prepare programme notes. JK would also be playing for the Friends' Fringe series..

Peng Lee commended the recent restoration work on the 1766 Shudi double manual harpsichord which had featured strikingly in Paweł Siwczał's Fringe concert.

The Curators' Report was **appreciatively received**.

8. Publications Report .

Martin Hillman reported that over £200 had been raised through his recent special sale of CDs. Circa one hundred copies of *The Temple of Harmony* have been sold since publication. Sheila Barnes had generously donated two keyboard instrument drawings. Ann Bond had promised copies of her book, *A Guide to The Harpsichord*, for The Friends to sell.

The Publications Report was **welcomed**, and **Martin Hillman was thanked** for all his efforts in promoting the Friends' merchandise.

9. Committee and staff changes.

It was announced that Elly Smith had indicated her decision to stand down from editing *Soundboard* in order to finish her thesis. A request for help with producing future editions would be circulated. Elly was warmly thanked for all her hard work.

Derek Grainge had volunteered assistance in re-designing the website. The committee looked forward to working with him.

Asma Khan wished to relinquish the position of secretary due to full-time work commitments. The post would now be reduced to minute taking for the three full committee meetings in the year (January, May and September) and for the AGM (November). No other secretarial administration would be involved. A request would be circulated shortly for a volunteer to undertake this task.

Cat Peck, former MSG intern at St Cecilia's Hall had taken up a curatorial appointment at Saltram House, a National Trust property in Devon. She would welcome any Friends who would like to visit the house.

Antonia Grant, former A.D.A., had taken up duties at the Handel House Museum and would also welcome any Friends visiting London. (Sarah Deters Richardson takes over her as A.D.A).

Ian Stirling wished to step down from the committee and was sincerely thanked for all his support.

10. Date of next Annual General Meeting

The next AGM of The Friends of St Cecilia's Hall would be held on **Saturday, 23rd November, 2013.**

11. Any Other Business

D.M reported that extra signage would shortly be placed outside St. Cecilia's Hall, and the alley leading from Cowgate to the main entrance would be re-named 'Dickson's Close'.

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The meeting ended at 4.15pm. It was preceded by an enjoyable social reception, and was followed by a much appreciated recital of music by Corelli and J S Bach, given by Annemarie Klein (recorder), accompanied by Eric Thomas (guitar).