

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23rd November 2013.

Present: Pam Jackson (Chair), Dianne Fraser (Hon. Treasurer), Paula Wilson (Minutes) and the following members:

Darryl Martin, Arnold Myers; Charles Coventry; J.I.Anderson; Dorothy Wright; Jean Archibald; John Kitchen; Rosemary Carter; Ethel Houston; Isobel Lodge; Anne Leaver; Peng Lee Yap; Julian Newman; Ian Stirling; Bryan Wade; Anne Stirling-Whyte; Eleanor Smith; Martin Hillman.

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

Apologies for absence were received from:

Asma Khan; Lucinda Mackay; Rob van Haarlem; Chris Judson; Kathleen Newis; Sheila Barnes; Pat Cox; Malcolm Bateson; Andrew and Mary Watson; Peter Burman; Peter Williams; Maggie Dawson; Peter Mole; Peter Freshwater; John Lester; David Kimbell; Antonia Bunch; Gordon Frier; Simon and Dawn Muirhead; Lillian Cameron.

The **deaths** were announced of Martin Russell of Dorset, Roy Gregory of Humberside, and Anne Cairns of Fife. Condolences to their families and friends were expressed.

2. The Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting were approved.

(proposer: Dianne Fraser, seconder: Isobel Lodge)

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes:

The Chairman conveyed the substance of a verbal report from Jacky MacBeath concerning progress in the Redevelopment Project, to the effect that:

- over 50% of required funding had so far been achieved;
- the result of the university's major application for Heritage Lottery Funding was imminently expected;

- the project was entering RIBA stage E, with detailed considerations about the building and its fittings;
- the University would hold further meetings with regular user groups to discuss internal features and facilities;
- an application for Planning Permission had been recently submitted to Edinburgh City Council;
- approaches for funding from further trusts, foundations and individual donors were in preparation; and
- for successful bidding it was crucial to demonstrate outreach towards new audiences, educational provision and engagement with the local community.

4. Chairman's Report

Presenting her previously circulated report, Pam Jackson undertook to write in greater detail about noteworthy occurrences for the forthcoming issue of the Friends' newsletter, *Soundboard*.

She drew attention to highlights of an extremely busy year, in which a series of events marked the 250th anniversary of the opening of St Cecilia's Hall for public concerts. The culminating concert and reception would be held in early December. She was delighted to report that the attractive programming and high performance standards of The Friends' Edinburgh Festival Fringe series had drawn much appreciation, and she looked forward to an exciting summer season in 2014, and to collaboration for the first time with the Keyboard Charitable Trust in order to bring a young Russian artist to St Cecilia's. Planning towards the period of Closure, PJ informed the AGM that she had begun searching for a suitable alternative venue in which to hold Fringe concerts in 2015. She was exploring possibilities in the Moray House buildings on the Royal Mile, parts of which were being developed by the university as Festival performance spaces e.g. in Paterson's Land and Thomson's Land. She had spoken with Peter Nelson, Head of Music at Edinburgh University, and would liaise with him further.

A source of great delight had been the opportunity to award Friends' Student Bursaries to six very worthy candidates. Accounts of completion of their projects would be published in *Soundboard* in due course. Donations for the Bursary Fund were always welcomed.

Friends had volunteered for various events throughout the year in generous spirit, for example, acting as hosts for visitors to St Cecilia's on Edinburgh Doors Open Day. It was particularly pleasing to welcome back Annemarie Klein, a former bursary holder, as performing artist on that day. The Friends had also volunteered assistance for public sessions of the International Conference on Historical Keyboard Music.

The chairman explained the basis of the committee's carefully considered decision to award Friends' funding towards the acquisition of a set of pastoral pipes for inclusion in Edinburgh University's collection of historic British bagpipes, on display at St Cecilia's Hall for several months. This attractive exhibition had brought in significant numbers of new visitors and had raised awareness of the building's central activities and treasures.

She reported that The Friends had been well represented over the year at a range of meetings designed to discuss progress towards St Cecilia's redevelopment. PJ wished to record thanks in particular to Jacky MacBeath and her team for regular updating information.

Responses from the floor of the meeting reinforced the importance of maintaining contact and raising the Friends' profile throughout the closure period by continuing to publish newsletters, organising a programme of members' activities and joint events with other societies, and especially by presenting at least some public concerts during the Fringe. This gained general agreement. Peng Lee Yap proposed that Friends' funding might be directed to restoration of a particular harpsichord or the organ in the Concert Hall, as an appropriate contribution to the redevelopment project. This gift could be prominently associated with the Friends' name. John Kitchen welcomed the idea, emphasising the appropriateness of restoring the Concert Hall organ since it was a handsome visual focus but had been disappointingly unusable for many years. Further discussion raised the possibility of establishing a dedicated Organ Restoration Fund and inviting contributions. There was enthusiasm from those members present, and the chairman undertook to follow up these suggestions with the full committee and curators.

The Chairman's report was **approved** by the meeting. (proposer: Bryan Wade, seconder: Dorothy Wright)

5. Treasurer's Report

Presenting the year's statement, Dianne Fraser noted that there were currently 182 members: 14 Honorary; 101 Life; 65 Ordinary; and 2 Student members. Highlighting major items of expenditure, the treasurer drew attention to the commission and purchase of a high stand for the Keene virginals. This had been used in performance for the first time during the recent Conference on Historical

Keyboard Music. It was now in place in the museum galleries. Six awards had also been made this year from the Bursary Fund. She reminded the meeting that no bank interest was currently being earned on the dedicated fund, but that it was topped up from time to time by donations and by profits from serving refreshments at public concerts and other events. She particularly requested members who wished to make a donation to sign a Gift Aid declaration wherever possible. Referring to the idea of establishing an Organ Restoration Fund, the Treasurer reminded the meeting that, as an accredited charity, The Friends' organisation could be used as a channel for donations and awards of funding both for general purposes and for specific named projects associated with its aims.

. The Treasurer's Report was **approved**. (proposer: Arnold Myers; seconder: Isobel Lodge) and DF was **thanked** for her painstaking 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 2013-2014 was **approved**. (proposer: Martin Hillman; seconder: Jean Archibald).

7. Report of the Curators.

Presenting the formal annual report (previously circulated), Darryl Martin reported on staff changes and on the rebranding of the Collection as Musical Instrument Museums Edinburgh, (MIMEd). A full account of curating, teaching, research, conference and publishing activities was given, with an encouraging perspective on post-graduate student successes. Visitor numbers (both general public and specialist groups) were high. Instruments from the collection were used for new CD recordings by John Kitchen and Yoshiko Ieko.

The central focus of the year was the St Cecilia's Redevelopment Project which continued steadily through staged phases of fund-raising, architectural planning and museum display designing. DM intimated the intention to close the Hall in September 2014 for a period of eighteen months and assured the meeting that the instruments were to be stored in specially controlled conditions off-site, at the Library and Museums Annexe at the Gyle.

DM added an account of the excellent publicity surrounding concerts given by Christophe Rousset at St Cecilia's Hall and the Queen's Hall during August 2013 as part of the Edinburgh Festival. Several of the Collection instruments were featured, and the Goermans/Taskin harpsichord had the distinction of being awarded a "Herald Angel".

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

8. Publications Report .

Martin Hillman reported on a successful year for the publications department. In particular, John Kitchen's latest CD recording had proved very attractive, with a

pre-launch reception hosted by Delphian during the Festival which gave The Friends a good sales boost. MH thanked Professor Arnold Myers for generously transferring proceeds from the sale of catalogues at the bagpipe exhibition, *A Piper's Whim*, to The Friends' coffers. Technical drawings had benefitted from fresh scanning, and plans of plucked string instruments sold well. Circa £1000 per annum is raised from sale of publications.

After exhorting members to buy Friends' merchandise as Christmas presents, MH concluded with an appeal for a volunteer to join him in running the publications department.

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

9. Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members

Paula Allison and Veronica Bailey, currently co-opted, were unanimously elected as full committee members (PA: proposer Dianne Fraser, seconder Pam Jackson.

VB: proposer Martin Hillman, seconder Elly Smith).

PA was thanked for her offer to assume the role of Minutes Secretary.

Ann Stirling-Whyte proposed the re-election of current office-bearers. Peng Lee Yap seconded the proposal, which was endorsed unanimously.

Bryan Wade proposed the re-election of the remainder of the serving full committee members. Dorothy Wright seconded the proposal, which was endorsed unanimously.

10. Date of next Annual General Meeting

The next AGM of The Friends of St Cecilia's Hall would be held on **Saturday, 22nd November, 2014**.

11. Any Other Business.

The chairman reported Professor Peter Williams' concern following the recall to Apsley House of the Duke of Wellington's piano, which had been carefully tended at St Cecilia's Hall through years of long-term loan. Prof. Williams urged Friends who visit Apsley House to view the piano and to enquire specifically about its conservation welfare.

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The meeting ended at 4.15pm. It was preceded by an enjoyable social reception, and was followed by a highly attractive concert of 18th century songs on the theme of "Lasses and Lads", elegantly sung by soprano Jenny Nex accompanied by John Kitchen on the 1728 Hitchcock spinet.