

Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra
Minutes of the AGM held on Friday 17th June 2016 at Holmewood House School

Apologies for absence were received from: Rod Dunk; Jane Taunton; Vreni Gould; David Elliott; Ann McQuart; Rosemary Collins; Mr & Mrs Mariott; Mike Hart; Mr & Mrs McMillan; Mr & Mrs Richardson; Mr & Mrs Venables

Minutes of last year's AGM held on Friday 12th July 2015

- These minutes were considered and approved at the meeting of the Orchestra Committee held on the 17th September 2015.
- There were no questions arising.
- The meeting gave approval to sign them as a correct record.

Orchestral Manager's report

- Anne thought it had been a challenging, fun, successful and rewarding year.
- She appreciated all the support she had received from the committee, the orchestra and Rod.
- Thanks were given to Roger Harvey for his work during the last two years organising and booking soloists. Richard Watson is now taking on the role and has already started booking for the 2017/18 season.
- The outreach link with Langton Green School was very successful. Thanks were given to Yvonne Smith.
- There are plans to link with Speldhurst School next season.
- Anne is grateful to the staff, Mikey Powell and the technical staff at the Assembly Hall for their help in ensuring that the orchestra could be accommodated appropriately throughout the season.
- Thanks to our conductors Rod Dunk, George Vass, Mark Shanahan and rehearsal conductors Roger Harvey and Philip le Bas.
- The standard of orchestral playing continues to rise but we are in the process of a recruitment drive especially for upper strings.
- Christine Geer retired at the beginning of the season, Geri Holton is going to Australia for at least a year and Isabelle Ormsby is off to university. We look forward to welcoming prospective new players.
- We are grateful to John, the caretaker, Nichola Napleton and Holmewood House School for letting us use their facilities for rehearsals – and to Glynis Dickinson for organising tea and biscuits.
- Thanks must be given to all those who make concert days run smoothly especially Libby Summers, Andrew Muir and Miriam Kuikman, together with programme sellers, tea makers and others.
- Olive Isaac commented that that the school involvement was good to hear about.
- Giles thanked Annie for such a terrific amount of work

Ticket Manager's report

Gale Smith reported on 2015-2016 Season:

- Total sales 4435 giving overall percentage of 76 (the same as 2014-2015 season).
- Total number of season tickets sold 531 (579)
- Total number of ½ season tickets sold 17 (12)
- Total number of discounted tickets sold through RTWSO 156 (112)
- Total number of tickets bought by sponsors 76.
- Total number of tickets sold by Assembly Halls 879 (650)

Gale Smith reported on 2016-2017 Season to date:

- Applications received to date – 151
- Actual tickets sold: 250 . Friends and Patrons 36; existing subscribers 98; new subscribers 17 .
- Brochures were put on seats at the April concert, there was a mail shot in May and reminders will go out in the next week (approx. 170 of last year's subscribers have not yet applied.
- Giles thanked Gale for her work.

Treasurer's Report

- The accounts had been examined and signed off by Paul Garside of Messrs. Deeks Evans.
- Copies of the Income, Expenditure and Balance sheets were circulated to all members present.
- Jerry pointed out that copies of the complete report were available from him on request.

General points:

- This is the treasurer's 9th report and the reports are similar each year.
- During the past year donations have increased and we have received sponsorship from Westwell Wealth Management.
- We have not received any grants.
- We have requested and received a 'top up' of £37,500 from the Friends of RTWSO.
- We have recently received a personal donation of £10,000.
- A private donation of two tickets for Glyndebourne will be auctioned later in the evening.

Income and expenditure account

- Easy Fundraising (online buying) has raised £100.
- Season ticket sales were £64,000 altogether.
- Conductor's fees have not changed.
- Because of shortage of players we have had to buy in more professionals.
- There was a late presentation of the bill for rehearsal halls.
- The price of media advertising was money well spent.
- Last year we had a loss of £5163.76. This year's profit of £2173.16 is a reflection of additional support from the Friends of RTWSO.

Giles expressed thanks to Jerry for his work

Acceptance of the report was proposed by Helen Clarke , seconded by Ralph Hebditch and approved by the members present.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

- Jerry Matthews proposed the re-appointment of Paul Garside of Messrs. Deeks Evans. All agreed.

Marketing Report

Barrie Crowhurst presented his report.

- The year has been a learning experience and he has continued to build on the work done by Tim Rogers in the past.
- The target was to create greater awareness and to aim at a younger audience without alienating our existing followers.
- “You don’t need to go to London to hear great music”
- The task was to develop a consistent image through advertising and editorial coverage to include posters, website, Facebook, Twitter etc.
- There are plans for an email marketing campaign in the future.
- Barrie thanked Sue Topping for distributing 1000 brochures in Tunbridge Wells
- Giles has been appearing on Radio Kent
- Barrie sends copy to classic fm but it is difficult to judge whether it is used.
- Thanks to Tony Summers for his editorial work and Maureen Greenhouse for her proof reading.
- There are plans to develop The Score and possibly include adverts. Thanks to Vreni Gould for the excellent job she is doing.
- The new website will include a stop press page.
- Excellent photos were taken at the December concert and they will be used in brochures, posters etc.
- The issue of sponsorship needs focus and increased attention.

Giles thanked Barrie for all his work.

Chairman’s Remarks

- Giles started by saying how fortunate it is that there are so many people who put in such hard work.
- He thanked Roger Harvey for his excellent work; Derek Watmough for his talks; Tony Summers for his notes; Maureen Greenhouse for the food for the AGM.
- He congratulated the orchestra on a first rate season. The first concert, in particular, had been wonderful, if expensive.
- We rely on the Friends of the orchestra for their continuing financial support, but this year we have begun to eat into the capital and this must not continue.
- Giles has challenged the Orchestra Committee to recruit ten new players in order to save the cost of £100 per player per concert.
- The Programme Committee must be more aware of the costs for each concert. Relevant issues are copyright, scheduling pieces for very large orchestra, and the use of a piano which costs us £500 per concert to hire.
- Giles is reluctant to reduce the scope of the concerts, but ticket sales are dependent on the content.
- The issue of sponsorship is a major one. Westwell donate £1000 and buy tickets for which we are grateful, but we need more.
- We desperately need someone to take on the job of contacting companies for sponsorship.
- It is very encouraging when individuals contribute as Patrons but here again we always need more. Forms are available.

AOB

A New Theatre and Concert Hall for Tunbridge Wells

- The Borough Council are enthusiastic about building a 1200-seat replacement for the Assembly Hall, and the leader has ‘guaranteed’ that the new premises will be open for the panto in 2020 and then the Assembly Hall will be pulled down. The new building will be on the Great Hall car park site and will be funded initially by a government loan.
- A question was asked about possible increased costs for the new premises but these have not yet been revealed.

General comments

- Olive Isaac asked if Sainsburys have been approached for sponsorship. Ralph said they had given money in the past.
- Ralph Hebditch asked if a ‘paid fund raiser’ had been considered. Giles replied that professionals in this field want money up front, will do nothing of risk to them and are not prepared to work on commission.
- Olive Isaac wondered whether professionals could be taken on as section leaders. Ralph replied that our section leaders do an excellent job and should be maintained.
- Aline Davies commented that changes in the wind section in the past have seen improved standards. She asked whether trainee conductors could be used to reduce costs but maintain standards. Ralph said this had been done in the past but they frequently dropped out at the last minute.

Election of Officers and Committee

The following members offered themselves for re-election:

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| • Chairman | Giles Clarke |
| • Secretary | Gale Smith |
| • Treasurer | Jerry Matthews |
| • Ticket Manager | Gale Smith |
| • Librarian | Libby Summers |
| • Players Representative | Helen Pye |
| • Orchestral Manager | Anne Parker |

- Deputy Chairman Andrew Muir
- Editor of The Score Vreni Gould
- Concert Day Manager Miriam Kuikman
- Education Officer Yvonne Smith

The following are appointed by the committee:

- Music Director Rod Dunk
- Marketing Manager Barrie Crowhurst

An en-bloc vote was proposed by Ralph Hebditch, seconded by Lesley Orson and carried *nem.con*.

The meeting ended at 8.58pm