

Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra
Minutes of the AGM held on Friday 9th June 2017 at Holmewood House School

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr & Mrs Richardson; Mr & Mrs Venables; Libby Summers; P LeBarr; R Harvey; C Eraut. Don Haley died recently, a small donation has been made in this memory.

Giles added another item (6) Education Outreach, Yvonne Smith.

Minutes of last year's AGM held on Friday 17th June 2016

- These minutes were considered and approved at the meeting of the Orchestra Committee held on the 19th September 2016.
- There were no questions arising.
- The meeting gave approval to sign them as a correct record.

Orchestral Manager's report

It has been a very successful season with more challenging and innovative programming made possible by the continued drive, wonderful direction and enthusiasm of Rod and the raised standards of the orchestra.

An increase in the number and standard of Friday nighters has led to reduced expenditure and given Friday night rehearsals a lift.

The rehearsals run from 7-10pm and include a sociable coffee break.

Thanks are given to Nicola Napleton and John at Holmewood House for their help.

Cellists Isabella, Olivia and Inga left at the end of last season but Clare Lees has joined us.

Violinists Clare Haythornwaite, Amanda Rupp, Hannah Charlesworth, Carolyn Cabrera and Andreas Rosenboom have joined us, together with two of Julia's pupils in second violin section, and viola player Frances Armstrong.

It is good to see Michael Sumpter return.

Alan Gout, principal trombonist for approximately 30 years has decided to retire. He has contributed a lot to the orchestra and will be missed.

We are still in need of Friday night bass players.

Ticket Manager's report

Gale Smith reported on 2016-2017 Season :

- Total sales 3792 giving overall percentage of 67% (76% previous season)
- Total number of season tickets sold 431 (531)
- Total number of ½ season tickets sold 13 (17)
- Total number of discounted tickets sold through RTWSO 208 (156)
- Total number of tickets bought by sponsors 71.
- Total number of tickets sold by Assembly Halls 781 (879)
- Total number of tickets sold through Education Outreach 70.

Gale Smith reported on 2017-2018 Season to date:

- Applications received to date : 163
- Actual tickets sold: 255
- Brochures were put on seats at the April concert, there was a mail shot in May and reminders will go out shortly.
- Giles thanked Gale for her work.

Treasurer's Report

- The accounts had been examined and signed off by Paul Garside of Messrs. Derek 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:

- The Treasurer gave an upbeat account of the Orchestra's financial position.
- Income in the 2016/17 Financial year exceeded expenditure by £3508, allowing us to carry forward £5,671 to the following year.
- Season ticket sales fell but total ticket sales were only £95 less than in the previous year, which was an insignificant loss given that total income exceeded £112,000.
- The Orchestra had to request a grant of £17,500 from Friends this year- approximately equal to the increase in Friend's assets in the same period-and £20,000 less than last year's grant.
- As long as the Orchestra's annual need from Friends is, on average, about the same as Friends' income, the long term financial future of the Orchestra is secure.

The Treasurer commented that he has done the job for ten years, and has found it very satisfying, but he may have to stand down before the AGM next year. He needs an 'understudy' (a lot of work and no perks!) and anyone interested should see him or Giles.

- Giles expressed thanks to Jerry for his work
- Acceptance of the report was proposed by Helen Clark, seconded by Tom MacGibbon and approved by the members present.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

- **Jerry Matthews** proposed the re-appointment of Paul Garside of Messrs. Derek Evans. Ralph Hebditch seconded. All agreed.

Marketing Report

Barrie Crowhurst presented his report and commented on the following aspects:

- Use of Social Media- Facebook, Twitter etc
- Direct Mail – by post and hand delivery (thanks to Sue Topping)

- Flyers and Posters;
- Advertising and Editorial – Assembly Hall, Courier, local free papers and magazines
- Programmes and Newsletters that now contain some advertising.
- Online – RTWSO website.
- Thanks to Dennis Clark for his excellent photography.
- Barrie said that it is very difficult to identify what is successful.
- In the 2017/18 season the focus will be on the press and editorials.
- There is a new marketing manager at the Assembly Hall and posters are already on display.
- Becky MacGibbon has been recruited to boost online activity.
- A new programme is to be produced with the aim of selling advertising to cover the cost of production.
- Giles thanked Barrie for his work.

Education Outreach

Yvonne Smith outlined the work that has taken place

- In 2015/16 a local school had decided to have a 'Music Week'.
- The BBC had chosen 10 orchestral pieces (including the Planet Suite) and had arranged them for three levels.
- RTWSO were to play the Planet Suite at the first concert of the season.
- Orchestra members went into the school to support the learning of composition based on the piece.
- Pupils and parents attended the concert.
- The programme was repeated this year with even more success and plans are already in place for next season.
- This work results in improved links with schools.
- With regard to GCSE exams there are timing issues. RTWSO programming committee has to work in advance of knowing what the set pieces are.

Rod recognises the importance of Yvonne's work.

Chairman's Remarks

- Giles started by thanking Maureen for providing the meal for after the meeting.
- He then thanked all the committee members for their work during the year.
- The standard of music has been amazing. Many thanks to all concerned.
- Giles asked for comments and suggestions for future programming.
- We have a great range of soloists for the next season.
- Concern was expressed as to the ageing audiences and, sadly, it is the same in other theatres, concert halls etc.
- We need people aged 50-60 to be our new audience.
- Lochlands Trust has sent a cheque for £5000 – totally unsolicited.
- Westwell Management have agreed to sponsor the Orchestra for the coming year and have paid for an advert.

New theatre:

- The space for the new building is small but it needs to pay its way and hold 1200. It will be a tall building with balconies.
- The architect is working on space for amplified music and the acoustics will not be as good for live performances
- We are pressing for an orchestral shell to be included in the plans in order to improve the acoustics.
- There is a meeting coming up.

Comment was made that there are no brass or wind soloists in the coming season. Violins, piano and cello are the favourite instruments.

Election of Officers and Committee

- There have been no nominations so Giles suggested that the committee be re-elected en bloc.
- This was proposed by Ralph Hebditch, seconded by Jane Taunton and approved by all present.

The committee for the next year is:

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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 |

The following are appointed by the committee:

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| • Music Director | Rod Dunk |
| • Marketing Manager | Barrie Crowhurst |

AOB

- We need more volunteers to help provide teas mid-rehearsals on Sunday mornings.
- Giles thanked everybody for attending and invited them to stay for the meal, auction and musical entertainment.

Meeting ended at 9.00pm