

**Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra**  
Minutes of the AGM held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at Holmewood House School

**In the chair: Giles Clarke**

**Apologies for absence** were received from: Andrew Muir, Yvonne Smith, Rosemary Collins, Maggie Fraser, Jane Taunton, Roger Harvey, Pippa Kings.

With regret, Giles informed those present of the recent deaths of Robert Ford, Nigel Shipway and Oliver Springett, all long-term supporters of the RTWSO.

**Minutes of last year's AGM held on Friday 9th June 2017**

- These minutes, which have been available on the Orchestra's website, were considered and approved at the meeting of the Orchestra Committee held on the 14th September 2017.
- There were no questions arising.
- The meeting gave approval to sign them as a correct record.

**Orchestral Manager's report - Anne Parker**

- It has been, yet again, a very successful season with the orchestra moving from strength to strength spurred on by Rod Dunk's enthusiasm and very challenging music programming.
- The increase of members in the last couple of seasons has resulted in a very healthy turnout on Friday nights. Players are really responding to the demands of the challenging programmes with their regular commitment to rehearsals and practice.
- The additional recruitment of Friday night members means that we have to use fewer pros for Sunday concerts.
- The season's concerts have been very well received and the soloists Sarah Connolly, Steven Isserlis, Alexandra Wood, Stephen Hough, Martin James Bartlett and Laura van der Heijden gave exceptional, memorable performances.
- The November concert audience was augmented by an additional 63 young people and parents as a result of our Education Outreach Programme directed by Yvonne Smith. Several Friday night members have been into a number of local primary schools and worked with the children. There has been some very positive feedback.
- The March concert went ahead after only 3 Friday rehearsals due to the bad weather and in spite of 2 injured violinists.
- The final concert included the magnificent Ein Heldenleben with an impressive violin solo from Julian Leaper. It was quite difficult to accommodate 97 players on stage including 9 horns, 2 tubas and a very large string orchestra but we did it.
- We are very grateful to Nichola Napleton and John, the caretaker, at Holmewood House for their continued help and support.
- Thanks to Giles, the committee and the orchestra and also the people who work behind the scenes: Libby and Tony Summers (librarians); Andrew (stage management); Miriam (front of house); Helen Clarke and Glynis who organise rehearsal teas.
- Thanks were given to Anne Parker for all her work.

**Ticket Manager's report – Gale Smith**

**2017-2018 Season:**

- The season started with 479 season ticket holders as against 429 in 2016-2017.
- This number increased to 491 after the first 2 concerts and possibly accounted for the drop in the sale of half-season and discounted tickets as the season progressed.
- Tickets to our sponsors were approximately the same (30 for each of the 2 concerts).
- The number of tickets sold as a result of the Education Outreach programme is very encouraging (62).
- The increase in the number of tickets sold by the Assembly Hall Theatre is pleasing (258 more).
- The percentage of all ticket sales was 80% which was much improved on the previous year's 67%

**2018-2019 Season to date:**

- Applications received to date: 228
- Actual tickets sold: 386
  
- We need to sell another 100 season tickets to reach last year's total.
- Giles thanked Gale for her work.

**Treasurer's Report – Jerry Matthews**

- 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:



- 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:

- Music Director                                    Rod Dunk
- Marketing Manager                              Barrie Crowhurst
- Education Officer                                Yvonne Smith

### **Education Outreach – Yvonne Smith**

Yvonne, who was unable to be present, submitted a report on the 2017/18 season.

- Approximately 1400 children in Tunbridge Wells have seen our Workshops and 180 seats have been sold since the programme began in 2015
- The concert chosen for the focus next season is Dvořák's New World Symphony on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 and there is a waiting list of primary schools wanting to be involved.
- Yvonne has had meetings with other local organisations including the Assembly Hall Community Engagement Officer and the Chair of Maidstone Wind Symphony Orchestra to see what other organisations are doing and how we can learn from them.
- The BBC has produced brilliant resources that enable us to introduce young children to classical music in our workshops. Our thanks to them.
- We owe a huge thank you to all the players who volunteer to support our programme.
- Yvonne and Helen Pye are seeking financial support for this work.

### **Chairman's Remarks**

- Giles started by thanking Maureen Greenhouse for providing the refreshments for the evening and Graham, Philip and Helen for providing the entertainment.
- Rod Dunk and the orchestra deserve our thanks for producing wonderful concerts this season.
- Thanks also to our Patrons and Friends for their generous support. We cannot continue without them.
- Yvonne Smith was thanked for her work. It is a very important initiative for the Orchestra which has had considerable success with young people.
- The new theatre has been given planning permission. The Council leadership is determined that it will go ahead despite local opposition.
- We have been promised a continued venue for our concerts at the Assembly Hall Theatre until the new theatre opens.
- The new theatre should provide improved facilities for both public and performers.
- We are still concerned about the planned acoustic design for the theatre which has been designed for amplified music and will be very dry for live orchestral music. We have made determined efforts to resolve this problem, but the theatre staff and responsible Councillors are resistant to our arguments.
- We hope that the innovations in the 2018/19 season will appeal to new and different audiences as well as regular subscribers. The WW1 Commemorative concert in November will include songs and poetry as well as music of that time while the April concert will feature music for the cinema.
- The March concert will include a piece written by Frederick Viner, a resident of Tunbridge Wells.

- The Quiz evening was very successful, both socially and financially, and will be repeated next year.

#### **AOB**

- Peter Mansfield introduced a new government scheme that involves the setting up of a limited company 'RTWSO Productions Ltd.' The Company has been established with Companies House and a bank account has been opened. Giles, Jerry and Peter will be directors. All orchestra expenses that relate to preparation and rehearsal of concerts will go through the company and are eligible for tax relief. This could amount to £10,000 p.a.
- Giles thanked Peter for his work.
- The programme sellers we given a round of applause for their work on concert days.
- Ralph Hebditch thanked the committee for all their work during the course of the year.

Giles Clarke, Chairman

Gale Smith, General Secretary