

MINUTES

The Berlioz Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Berlioz Society,
held on Thursday 24 October 2013, at 7:00pm in the Art Workers Guild,
6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AT

Present:

Alastair Aberdare	Richard Alston	David Cairns (Chair)
Rosemary Cairns	Linda Edmondson	William Edmondson
Christopher Follett	Harry Fox Davies (guest)	Avril Godfrey
Brian Godfrey	Richard Hubbard	Simon Jones (notes)
Shelagh Marston	Chris Moore	Peter Payne
Helen Petchey	Martin Price	Adam Ridley
Malcolm Sinclair	Monique Roseberg	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Michael Copeland	Michael Drake	Terry Heard
Dave May	Dorothy May	Hugh Macdonald
Tim Moorey	Jim Page	Sylvia Saunders
David Winter	Susi Woodhouse	Rosie Yacobi

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM, HELD ON 2 OCTOBER 2012

2.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the previous AGM.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Jim Hart had raised the possibility of starting the Weekend events later in the morning, to allow for travelling time on the first day. The Committee had looked into this and concluded it was not feasible if the number of talks and events was to be maintained.

4 TREASURER'S REPORT

- 4.1 The final accounts for 2012 showed the Society's subscription and donation income had increased by almost £500.
- 4.2 The main item of expense, at £2,824 over the year, had been the printing and posting of two editions of the Bulletin. The costs in the previous year had been £2,500 for three editions: the net rise per Bulletin was mostly due to the significant rise in postal costs, and this was likely to be a recurring problem.
- 4.3 The 2012 Weekend showed a record surplus of £1,388.

- 4.4 The expenditure column includes £1,834 for ten Society medals. One had been awarded to David Cairns and another to Sir Colin Davis (the latter sadly not in person).
- 4.5 Overall, the year showed a deficit of £5.38, due mainly to an invoice held over from 2011.
- 4.6 The outlook for 2013 was positive, with income from subscriptions and donations already £1,000 up on the previous year. Although printing costs will be higher (as three Bulletins will go out by the end of the year), the Society should have a three figure, or possibly a four-figure, surplus (assuming the Weekend breaks even)
- 4.7 William Edmondson asked whether members could be offered a reduced rate of membership if they opted to receive the Bulletin in electronic format. The Bulletin's designer is sending these publications in electronic form, and once these are received we can look into converting them to readable files such as pdfs. Economically, the Society would save little by offering this option: it would be cost-neutral apart from saving on postage. It was felt that most members would probably prefer to receive a hard copy.
- 4.8 The accounts for 2012 were formally adopted by the meeting. This was moved by Adam Ridley and seconded by Shelagh Marston.
- 4.9 The meeting thanked Alastair Aberdare for his work as Treasurer.

5 SECRETARY'S REPORT

- 5.1 The Society's last Weekend in November 2011 considered the impact of the French Revolution and subsequent upheavals on Berlioz's life, opinions and works, and explored his place within the wider Romantic movement. It was again very successful. The speaker at the dinner was actor and Berliozian Malcolm Sinclair, who spoke enthusiastically of his love for Berlioz – and joined the Society.
- 5.2 Publicity has focused mainly on the upcoming LSO/Gergiev season at the Barbican, involving close cooperation with the Barbican management and the LSO marketing department in marketing the event. They have been very generous and helpful, offering a 10% discount on tickets and a free ¼ page advertisement in the each of the concert programmes, and agreeing to the Society setting up and running a table for all eight evenings of the season.
- 5.3 A poster publicising the forthcoming Weekend has been distributed round libraries, music and university colleges in London, accompanied by a press release to media contacts.
- 5.4 It remains difficult to arrange tours. A "Berlioz in Nice" trip had to be cancelled last autumn and a similar visit to the Festival Berlioz in August drew only

minimal support. Assistance and information will still be offered to members interested in attending next year's Festival.

- 5.5 Chris Follett has arranged a possible 4 day tour for 29 March to 1 April 2014, to see Berlioz's "Les Troyens", conducted by Paul Daniel, with Enée:Roberto Alagna, Cassandre: Ildiko Komlosi, Didon: Béatrice Uria-Monzon. At Deutsche Oper, Berlin. Details have been sent to members.
- 5.6 The meeting thanked Chris Follett for his work in publicising the Society and organising all these events and offers.
- 5.7 In June Sir Adam and Lady Ridley hosted a summer meeting at their home in West London, and this time Diana Bickley talked about Berlioz's concert overtures and the art of arranging works for four hands on the piano. She later illustrated her points with live performances accompanied by her piano partner Jens Rosteck, and it was another great success.
- 5.8 In January the Liszt Society hosted an evening with the Wagner, Berlioz and Alkan Societies at the Forge in Camden. There were no Berlioz pieces on the programme this time, but there were truly astounding performances by young pianist Mark Viner of works by Liszt, Alkan and Thalberg, and a performance of Elsa's Dream and the Liebestod by Cara Mchendry (soprano) accompanied by Ben Woodward.
- 5.9 The Wagner Society will be holding the next evening, again in January and at the same venue. The programme will include two Berlioz songs, and arrangements of two other works by Liszt and Thalberg.
- 5.10 Membership currently stands at 226, a net drop of 6 since the last AGM. 6 new members had joined but 12 had resigned or died. Of these 226, 17 are organisations such as universities, libraries and so forth. Most members are UK residents, but there are 30 members in the United States, 18 in Europe and 7 elsewhere. Of the 170 individual UK-based members (as opposed to organisations), 77 are based in London.
- 5.11 The meeting thanked Simon Jones for his work as Secretary.

6 ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

- 6.1 The existing Committee were willing to serve for the next year. In addition, Linda Edmondson had been co-opted onto the Committee since the last AGM. She was willing to take on the duties of Membership Secretary. Shelagh Marston was willing to be the co-ordinator for the meetings at Sir Adam and Lady Ridley's home.
- 6.2 No other nominations being received, the Committee was elected, as follows.
- Chair (and editor of the Bulletin) David Cairns
 - Treasurer Alastair Aberdare
 - Secretary Simon Jones
 - Media Manager Christopher Follett

- Website Manager Dave May
- Society Weekend Co-ordinator Martin Price
- Committee Member Brian Godfrey
- Co-ordinator, meeting at the Riddleys' home Shelagh Marston
- Membership Secretary Linda Edmondson
- Committee Member Helen Petchey
- Committee Member Sir Adam Ridley

6.3 Rosemary Cairns moved that the Committee be re-elected. This was seconded by Avril Godfrey and passed unanimously by the meeting.

7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 7.1 Alastair Aberdare had attended the funeral of Celia Clarke, a long-standing member of the Society. As part of the service her nephew, Matthew Hunt, had played the Andromache pantomime from "The Trojans", on clarinet.
- 7.2 Alastair Aberdare had approached Dame Janet Baker to accept the position of President, but as she is withdrawing from all such positions she gracefully declined.
- 7.3 Shelagh Marston informed the meeting that the next Weekend, on 1 and 2 November 2014, would be on Berlioz and the orchestra.

The evening concluded with a viewing of John Bridcut's interview with Sir Colin Davis, shown on television shortly after Sir Colin's death.