

MINUTES

The Berlioz Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Berlioz Society,
held on Tuesday 7 October 2014, at 7:00pm in the Art Workers Guild,
6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, London WC1N 3AT

Present:

Alastair Aberdare (Chair)	Linda Edmondson	William Edmondson
Christopher Follett	Avril Godfrey	Brian Godfrey
Jean Hayes	Harold Hughes	Simon Jones (notes)
Robert Keer	Shelagh Marston	Dave May
Dorothy May	Peter Payne	Helen Petchey
Martin Price	Monique Roseberg	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Diana Bickley	Adrian Brown	Jonathan Burton
David Cairns	Michael Copeland	Michael Drake
Terry Heard	Christopher Price	

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM, HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2013

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

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Following on from point 7.2, the Chairman was delighted to announce that although Dame Janet Baker had not felt able to accept the position of President of the Society, she has accepted the award of the Society's medal and will be attending the dinner during this year's Members' Weekend, where it will be presented to her.

4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

4.1 Alastair Aberdare paid tribute to the work done by the previous Chairman, David Cairns. David still continues to edit the Society Bulletin to an unfailingly excellent standard.

4.2 A vote of thanks to David was proposed by Shelagh Marston, seconded by Martin Price and carried unanimously, with acclamation.

5 TREASURER'S REPORT

5.1 The final accounts for 2013 show a very substantial increase in subscriptions and donations compared with 2012, and a small increase in Gift Aid reclaimed, reflecting the

increased subscriptions in the previous year. £467 of the subscriptions relate to the following year, 2014. So far this year, subscriptions, and particularly donations, are down, thus they will not provide such a significant contribution to the 2014 accounts.

5.2 A small surplus of £60 was made on the 2013 Ridley Day, with almost the same surplus for the 2014 Ridley Day.

5.3 For the major event of the year, the Weekend, there was a surplus of £1,581. However as most of the Weekend costs are fixed – the venue hire – we cannot count on this continuing. Falling donations may show some sign of belt-tightening.

5.4 The major expenditure of the Society is in producing and mailing the Bulletins. Costs of both of these increased in 2013, and have continued to rise in 2014.

5.5 In other costs, for 2012 the large sum represented the purchase of the 10 Society Medals, whilst in 2013 these costs were accounted for mainly by the purchase of about 400 additions copies of Bulletin 190, devoted to tributes to Sir Colin. These were sold partly by Margo Miller to Boston Symphony players and audience and similarly partly by Helen in the LSO/LSC community. Receipts for sales were partly in 2013 and partly in 2014.

5.6 The overall surplus for 2013 was £3782, which maintains our reserves at a satisfactory level (£12,664 at year end). However for 2014, with falling donations and increased Bulletin costs, and without taking into account any contribution of the forthcoming Weekend, a much more modest surplus is forecast. The committee will keep a close watch on the Society's finances and there is no proposal to increase subscriptions for next year.

5.7 The meeting thanked Martin for all his work as Treasurer.

6 SECRETARY'S REPORT

6.1 The last Member's Weekend in November 2013 focused on Berlioz's personal and artistic relationship with Germany. Topics included Goethe and French Romanticism and Berlioz's relationship with German composers. In addition, Alastair interviewed the famous bass Robert Lloyd and Dr Leslie Howard performed a brilliant selection of Liszt's Berlioz transcriptions.

6.2 The speaker at the evening meal was Kathryn McDowell, Managing Director of the LSO, who entertained us with tales including the waylaying of the instruments one evening in the Czech Republic, and the heroic response of the local population to make it good.

6.3 The Society had a manned table at all eight concerts in the two-week long LSO/Gergiev Berlioz Season at the Barbican in October and November, an operation in which virtually all Committee members participated with great success. This involved close cooperation with the Barbican management and the LSO Marketing Department, including the production of a special LSO flyer offering Berlioz Society members a 10 percent discount on tickets and the placing of a 1/4 page advertisement in the concert programmes (free of charge).

6.4 In late March the Society organised a tour to Berlin to attend a performance of The Trojans at the Deutsche Oper - seven members took part in the four-day tour, seven others made their own individual arrangements. A tour to Paris next February to attend a performance of Berlioz's Requiem in the new Philharmonie de Paris Concert Hall due to open at the new year had to be cancelled due to a total lack of interest on the behalf of members.

6.5 The Society does not intend to organise any more such arrangements for the time being as there is it seems minimal member interest in these tours, although we will still

offer to help members with information, hotel bookings, travel arrangements and concert tickets for the Festival Berlioz at La Côte Saint-André in the summer - this August nine Society members attended the Festival (for varying durations)!

6.6 In June at our “Ridley Day”, we took our cue from the then current ENO production of Benvenuto Cellini. David Cairns gave a brilliant talk about the opera and its many wonders, and in the afternoon we heard a selection of recordings.

6.7 In January the Liszt Society hosted an evening with the Wagner, Berlioz and Alkan Societies at the Forge in Camden. On 27 January next it is the Berlioz Society’s turn to host the event – we have Keri Gage as soloist and will be sending out details soon.

6.8 The meeting thanked Simon, and Linda Edmondson as Membership Secretary, for their work throughout the year.

7 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

7.1 No nominations having been received before the meeting, it was proposed by Harold Hughes, seconded by Robert Keer, that the serving Committee be re-elected *en bloc*. This was carried unanimously. Those elected are:

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| • Chairman | Alastair Aberdare |
| • Treasurer | Martin Price |
| • Secretary | Simon Jones |
| • Media Manager | Christopher Follett |
| • Website Manager | Dave May |
| • Membership Secretary | Linda Edmondson |
| • Society Weekend Co-ordinator | Helen Petchey |
| • Vice Chairman | Adam Ridley |
| • Archivist | Brian Godfrey |
| • Summer Event Co-ordinator | Shelagh Marston |
| • Membership Secretary | Linda Edmondson |

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 No notifications had been received in advance.

8.2 The Chairman announced there are plans to include a day featuring discussion and performance of Berlioz’s songs at the Oxford Lieder Festival in 2015. Adam Ridley is organising this. This year the Festival is intending to perform every one of Schubert’s 632 known songs.

The formal meeting closed.

Further items discussed:

- Shelagh Marston advised any members wanting to attend future Summer Events held at Sir Adam Ridley’s home to book within a week of receiving the notification, as it gets fully subscribed very quickly.
- Peter Payne asked why the Members’ Weekend had gravitated towards the end of November rather than the beginning. It was inconvenient as it clashed with other December events. Harold Hughes explained the first of these events was

timed to coincide with Berlioz's birthday, and Alastair Aberdare noted that since the Society started using the Art Workers Guild the dates have been dependent upon the availability of the Hall.

- Christopher Follett would welcome any ideas about generating interest in outings to concerts.
- The Committee is always keen to hear ideas for topics for future Members' Weekends, Summer Events and the entertainment for the AGM. Brian Godfrey proposed a viewing of an extended version of the John Bridcut interview with Sir Colin Davis.
- Harold Hughes suggested a memorial day to Sir Colin Davis, possibly as the Summer Event.

The evening concluded with a viewing of Episode Two of Simon Russell Beale's BBC series "Symphony", covering later Beethoven, Schubert, Berlioz and Liszt.