

MINUTES

The Berlioz Society ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Berlioz Society,
held on Thursday 12th October 2017
at 7pm at FRANCIS TAYLOR BUILDING,
INNER TEMPLE, LONDON EC4Y 7BY

Present:

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| Alastair Aberdare (Chairman) | Adrian Brown | Linda Edmondson |
| William Edmondson | Christopher Follett | Avril Godfrey |
| Brian Godfrey | Jim Hart | Charles Harvey |
| Jeremy Hayes | Terry Heard | Richard Hubbard |
| Natividad Jimenez | Simon Jones (notes) | Robert Keen |
| Peter Payne | Helen Petchey | Martin Price |

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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| David Cairns | Gareth Jones | Mike Drake |
| Mark Noble | Shelagh Marston | Jim Page |
| Charles Shaw | John Sims | |

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM, HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2016

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

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Adam Ridley noted that, following the Society's £1,000 contribution to the Oxford Liederfest in late 2015, the organisers had expressed their gratitude for the Society's support, both financial and more general.

4 SECRETARY'S REPORT

- 4.1 Bruno Messina, director of the Festival Berlioz in La Côte Saint-André and his assistant, Delphine Sabouraud, visited London in November 2016 and met with David Cairns, Alastair Aberdare, Adam Ridley, Christopher Follett and Martin Price for advice on the coming Festival, "So British! Berlioz in London, in the era of Universal Exhibitions".
- 4.2 The Berlioz Society were given a full-two page advertisement - free of charge - in the Festival Programme - securing also mention of our activities in the local press. Chris Follett provided assistance with concert tickets and hotel accommodation to members interested in attending this summer's festival – ten Berlioz Society representatives attended.

- 4.3 During the 2017 Festival, Alastair Aberdare and David Cairns both gave talks at the Berlioz Museum, and at a ceremony at the Town Hall in La Côte Saint-André, they both received medals of honour from the Mayor in appreciation of the Berlioz Society's efforts to promote Berlioz (and by extension the town itself) to a wide international public.
- 4.4 The Society's 2016 Weekend looked at Berlioz and the Bards – specifically the writers in English – Byron, Scott, Moore, Fenimore Cooper etc. and their influence on him. Dr Peter Raby spoke on the English Theatre in Paris 1822-1845 and the Irish poet, Thomas Moore; David Cairns looked at Berlioz as reader of Scott, Cooper, Shakespeare, Moore and Byron; Olivier Feignier explored Byron's influence on music in France during Berlioz's lifetime; Stuart Kelly asked how famous was Sir Walter Scott; Diana Bickley spoke about the overtures; and Professor Peter Bloom considered Berlioz and the translators. Alastair Aberdare interviewed Sir John Eliot Gardiner, and we were entertained at the dinner by Michael Berkeley, composer and presenter of “Private Passions”.
- 4.5 Back in London, Ridley Sunday in June focussed on the Cambridge University Press's new Berlioz Encyclopedia, published in November 2017. Editor Julian Rushton described his role in the project and four contributors gave presentations of their work for the Encyclopedia.
- 4.6 In late September the Society staffed a promotional table in the lower stalls foyer of the Barbican for two evenings in connection with festivities to mark Simon Rattle's inauguration as music director of the LSO notably with two performances of "Damnation of Faust".
- 4.7 Publicity activities for the next Society Study weekend in early December - entitled "Berlioz & Italy" - are due to get under way shortly.

5 TREASURER'S REPORT

- 5.1 Copies of the 2016 accounts were distributed.
- 5.2 Income from subscriptions and donations had risen from £4,302 in 2015 to £4,419 in 2016. Subscription income received in 2017 is not likely to be as high, some subscriptions received in recent years contained payments overdue from previous years.
- 5.2 The amount of Gift Aid received in 2016 increased to £572 from £481 in 2015. This represented money reclaimed from 2015 subscription income which was higher than that for 2014.
- 5.3 The “Ridley Day” generated a small surplus of £54.
- 5.4 The 2016 Members' Weekend generated a surplus of £157, lower than the £745 in 2015, reflecting an increase in costs.
- 5.5 Costs for production and distribution of the Bulletin fell slightly in 2016 in comparison to 2015; however postal charges rose a little and this trend is expected to continue.
- 5.6 The Society has been hosting the financial assets of the new Berlioz Sesquicentenary Committee. In 2016 the Society received £9,000 in donations on behalf of that Committee and the Society donated £500, of which £327 had been spent by the end of 2016. The assets held for the Committee, £9,173, are shown in the accounts, with that figure needing to be deducted from the end-year bank balance of £23,836 to give Free Funds of £14,663 at year-end, a rise of £362 over the year.

- 5.7 This is a satisfactory financial result and no increase in subscriptions is recommended for 2018. However expenses are forecast to increase in the future and an increase in subscriptions is likely in the following year.

6 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- 6.1 Although subscriptions could remain unchanged for this year, an ebbing surplus and probable future increases in costs mean this could change.
- 6.2 The AGM is held late in the financial year and near the Members' Weekend. It would be more convenient to hold it in Spring. The Meeting agreed. The next AGM will be held in Spring 2018.
- 6.3 Any ideas for themes for future Weekends or Ridley Days would be welcomed, as well as suggestions for speakers.
- 6.4 Plans for the Sesquicentennial (B2019) include stimulating and promoting a great deal of activity around the year. There are two flagship projects:
1. A web-based digital platform targeted at two main audiences: schoolchildren and people interested in Berlioz and the anniversary programme;
 2. A choral initiative for 10,000 children, probably at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff.
- 6.5 The project is now a registered charity, the Berlioz Sesquicentenary Committee (Berlioz 2019).
- 6.6 The Chairman extended his thanks to the Committee, especially David Cairns, for another year of hard work.

7 ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

- 7.1 The existing Committee were willing to serve for the next year. Simon Jones may stand down as Secretary after this year, pending other commitments.
- 7.2 William Edmondson moved that the Committee be re-elected. This was seconded by Richard Hubbard and Jim Hart, and passed unanimously by the meeting.
- 7.3 The Committee was re-elected, as follows.

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| • President (and editor of the Bulletin) | David Cairns |
| • Chairman | Alastair Aberdare |
| • Vice Chairman | Adam Ridley |
| • Treasurer | Martin Price |
| • Secretary (and Website Manager) | Simon Jones |
| • Membership Secretary | Peter Payne |
| • Media Manager | Christopher Follett |
| • Weekend Coordinator | Helen Petchey |
| • Summer Event Coordinator | Shelagh Marston |
| • Archivist | Brian Godfrey |
| • Member (temporarily without portfolio) | Linda Edmondson |

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 Terry Heard asked how many members the Society had, in the UK and overseas. Peter Payne's records show 205 members, 35 of whom were based abroad, mainly in North America or Europe.
- 8.2 Richard Hubbard remembered a performance of the Funeral and Triumphal Symphony about twenty years ago by unison wind players, and suggested approaching musicians to perform it again.
- 8.3 Adrian Brown suggested writing to orchestras, especially the National Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Wind Orchestra, as orchestras are overpopulated with wind players. Making Music could also be encouraged to perform this piece.
- 8.4 Alastair Aberdare has compiled a list of little-performed music by Berlioz to promote as part of the 2019 commemoration.

The evening concluded with a viewing of a DVD showing Sir Roger Norrington rehearsing and then performing "Le Corsaire" with the SWR Symphonieorchester Stuttgart.