

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WAGNER SOCIETY

Thursday 19 January 2017 18:30

15 Gibson Square, N1 0RD

ATTENDEES: Richard Miles (Chair)
Cormac Cawley (Secretary)
Neil King (Treasurer)
Jan Leigh
Geoffrey Griffiths
Ray Godson

GUESTS Helen Beardsley
Harry Clarke

APOLOGIES Jan Rynkiewicz

The meeting opened at 18:30 and was declared quorate, there being over one-third of the total committee membership present.

Item 1: Apologies for absence

As indicated above.

Item 2: Co-option of Helen Beardsley, Katie Clay and Harry Clarke as Committee Members

Helen Beardsley ("HB") was proposed by CTC and seconded by NK, Katie Clay ("KC") was proposed by RG, seconded by RM and Harry Clarke ("HC") proposed by GG, seconded by RM and all were elected by unanimous vote and welcomed onto the Committee by the meeting.

HB agreed to act as Events Manager in place of JL who was planning to resign as Events Manager so that HB would take over and manage all events from the President's Masterclass in June 2017 around the time of the AGM. JL would be meeting with HB to arrange handover in the coming weeks, with emphasis on the Masterclass and the 2017 Singing Competition.

KC will take over from RG as Editor of Wagner News after the edition in April 2017.

HC agreed to take over the role of Webmaster from Cormac Cawley and would report to the meeting later on about his initial ideas around the website.

Item 3: Minutes of Meeting on 22.11.2016.

The draft minutes of the meeting on 22.11.2016 (prepared by NK) were proposed and agreed.

Item 4: Chairman's Report

The Chairman had nothing in particular to report.

Item 5: Treasurer's Report

NK reported. He will be producing the December accounts for upload to the website.

He is preparing the 2016 Accounts/Report for Members, Wagner News and the Charities Commission. He is going to be away on holiday in February so he asked everyone to send in any remaining claims as soon as possible.

JL will do a review of the year's events for inclusion in the annual report.

CTC will send year end numbers to be sent off to Herr Cisek at the RWVI.

A summarised version of the report will be produced for submission to the RWVI.

Item 6: Events

The meeting noted its particular thanks to JL for taking over the Singing Competition ("SC") at short notice and in challenging circumstances. The meeting agreed that the SC was a triumph in the end. RM reported that there were many compliments about the event from the Judges and special guests, who included Professor Märtson and Eva Wagner.

JL explained that she will prepare a list for HB of what is required to be done as part of her planned hand-over of the SC to Helen.

JL reported that she had positive feedback from Catherine about the Music Societies' Combined Dinner on 18.01.2017. Next year's dinner had already been booked for 18.1.18 and they are looking at putting an organising team with representatives from each of the societies, Alkan, Mahler, Liszt and WS.

JL and HB agreed to run events in tandem up to May by way of handover, with JL leading on the events which she already has in hand, and HB leading on the DGJ Masterclass and the SC.

It was also agreed to keep the SC on the agenda for committee meetings permanently. RG raised the issue of where the SC might take place if ROSL was not available or affordable due to their recent changes in pricing. The Royal College/Kings Place was mentioned. The venue would need to hold an audience of up to 100. Other options were the Ballroom at RAF Club, which GG could get for free.

JL reported that Tom Empson has advised that he does not want to be involved in the SC this year due to pressures of work. JL agreed to ask him again in the hope he would change

his mind but it seemed unlikely. The committee members expressed their thanks to Tom for his hard work and commitment which contributed to the success of the event last year.

JL reported the Gary Kahn has managed to get is the German Historical Institute (“GHI”) Building in Bloomsbury Square for free for the event on 09.02.2017. Catherine is going to be there to do the refreshments.

JL reported that Catherine would not be able to do the PDB Study Day lunch on 18.02.2017. Caterers will provide lunch on this occasion.

CTC will send a Mailchimp to members about all upcoming events.

NK agreed to ask DGJ if she will come to the Meistersinger Dinner. RM will ask Anne Evans and her husband.

The Dinner Committee was NK, CTC and JL.

JL reported that Dr Patrick Carnegy had agreed to do a talk in March/April (no definite date yet) at the GHI. Gary Kahn has agreed to talk to GHI about this. Another option might be the Army and Navy Club. It will be a talk about Wagner and the Third Reich.

JL was also planning an event with Antony Negus and Carmen Jakobi about Tristan for 4.5.17 6.30 for 7 – 9 pm with light refreshments (which Catherine kindly agreed to do). Tickets will be £15.

DGJ Masterclass – HB is dealing with this in liaison with DGJ and the singers, Samantha Crawford and Mari Wyn Williams.

A suggestion had been made the we might have a short recital at the AGM on 21.06.2017 but the meeting voted against this.

JL reported that she had asked Sir John Tomlinson for some dates for a possible talk and she would pass them on to HB when she heard back from SJT.

JL and RG had agreed the wording the Advert for the Meistersinger Dinner in WN.

RG mentioned the possibility of an event with Gwyn Howell (whom RG knew) and would contact. HB would also take this idea up.

Item 7: Treasurer’s Proposal about award of Bayreuth Bursary to Runner-up in SC

The meeting agreed to the Treasurer’s proposal that the runner up in the SC would also be given the opportunity of a Bayreuth Bursary if the Judges felt that was appropriate and that there their (judges) decision would be final.

Item 8: Membership Report

Membership Report & Proposal that Lapsed members are mail shot with the next Wagner News as an enticement to re-join and also offer them a free year's membership. Some might just take it, some will say no, and others might be

permanent new members. It was agreed to offer such former members three months' free membership if they re-joined.

Item 9: Website Report

HC reported that he had some ideas about a Design overhaul to change the appearance of the website, to make it a more clean design compared to that produced by Simon. He produced some images and said that he would have more ideas for the next meeting.

He suggested we place an emphasis on selling Events.

There was also some discussion about reducing the amount of material which was only available by logging in as some members found it difficult to remember passwords and were less inclined to avail of the material in the Members' Area as a result. HC would also look at whether we really needed a Members' Area at all.

Item 10: Advertising of other societies' events

The meeting agreed to advertise events of other "not for profit" organisations and bodies with similar objectives to ours.

Item 11: Bayreuth Ballot

RG and CTC agreed to review the draft Bayreuth Ballot Byelaws and to report back to the next meeting.

It was also agreed that only one joint member (but not a second) could partake in the ballot and would be able to apply for two tickets.

In addition, the Ring Cycle would be offered as a single ticket as that is how Bayreuth sends it to us.

Item 12: Wagner Journal Co-operation

NK is liaising with Barry Millington about giving them support. They are not a charity but a private company. NK reported that we needed to be clear on their financial status before making any commitment.

The meeting discussed and felt that it might approve payment of quarterly amounts over 3 years at a rate of £2,000 p.a. if NK's queries about financial status were addressed.

Item 13: Wagner News

RG reported that the 2nd proof of the next edition was back and had be finalised by 20.01.2017.

He said that there was a lot more correspondence in this edition. There was also a report by Barney Schwarz about the Melbourne Ring.

RG will do the April edition and KC will have her first edition ready for July.

RG mentioned that a letter had been received from DGJ indicating that Roger Lee would be interested in resuming editorship of WN. However, events had been overtaken by the addition of KC to the Committee on the basis that she would edit WN.

Item 14: Return of Society's Records by former officers

RM reported that Andrea Buchanan still held some of the Society's records and that he would be liaising with her about collecting them from her.

Item 15: Archive

GG reported that he had received some new items among which were:

1. A 1948 letter from the German officer in charge of Bayreuth.
2. 4 large boxes from Stewart Spencer containing hundreds of letters. He was known as the Hermit of Hampstead.
3. There was also an old Bayreuth Bursary file.
4. 40 piano scores of Wagner operas. GG has retained 10 to be used as prizes in the SC.
5. A huge amount of material from Granville Pyne, a former secretary of the Society in the 1950s. These contained 3 volumes of Wagner Opera scores, Wagner news, and a large plastic bag of meetings and secretaries report.

RM agreed that he would write to the Librarian in Hull. RG offered to go up and visit him and make a recommendation as to what to do with the library. GG mentioned that the library was listed on the old website, but this had not come through on the new one. We would need to chase this up with Simon Empson or Kit Kitoda.

Item 16: AOB

1. NK asked for final Invoices for the SC and for the DGJ Humphrey Burton event.
2. There was discussion about booking for the Budapest Congress. The closing date was 29.11.2016 for bookings but no one had yet had any confirmation. Details would be passed to HB and HC.
3. It was agreed to move the March Committee meeting to 22nd as most committee members wished to attend the performance of La Voix Humaine on 21st March at the Royal Albert Hall.

The meeting ended at 21:43

The next meeting would be held on 22 February at 15 Gibson Square