

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WAGNER SOCIETY

WEDNESDAY 21 February 2018 18.30 – 21:00

15 Gibson Square, London N1 0RD

ATTENDEES: **Richard Miles (Chair) (“RM”)**
 Cormac Cawley (Secretary) (“CTC”)
 Neil King (Treasurer) (“NGK”)
 Ray Godson (“RG”)
 Geoffrey Griffiths (“GG”)
 Meli Hatzihrysidis (“MH”)
 Henry Kennedy (“HK”).
 Nick Kohn (“NNK”)

APOLOGIES **Alan Ridgewell (“AR”)**

IN ATTENDANCE

The meeting opened at 18:30 and was declared quorate, there being present at least one officer and other committee members constituting at least one third of the total committee membership.

Item 1: Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from AR.

Item 2: Approval of minutes of meeting on 18 January 2018

The minutes of the meeting on 18.01.2018 were approved with some brief suggestions and clarifications, which had been sent to CTC by NGK by e-mail beforehand.

Item 3: Chairman’s Report & Item 4: Singing Competition 2018

RM reported that he, NGK & HK had had dinner with DAE to discuss the Singing Competition, the cultivation of a closer working relationship with Mastersingers and other general matters. DAE is willing to head the judges for the Singing Competition.

On the recommendation of RM, it was agreed that we should continue to work towards a closer relationship with Mastersingers but that it was very important that we were clear about any financial commitments that were made. This would involve us requiring invoices for any sums paid and confirmation of how any sums donated by us had been disbursed.

On this basis it was agreed that RM would go back to DAE to take these matters further.

Item 5 - Treasurers Report, Budget & Annual Accounts

NGK reported that the annual accounts had been agreed by the auditors. He suggested that we put a note in Wagner News saying that they were coming out by e-mail but that members could have them by paper if they paid for the postage.

The Budget has now been agreed.

He has circulated the January results, but no one has come back to him with any queries on them. There is a large loss on everything because of items paid for in 2017 coming up in January but this was nothing to worry about.

Finally, NGK recommended that when the committee takes anybody to dinner after an event that the Society pays for this and that committee members make a donation to the Society for their share of the bill. This was agreed by the meeting.

Item 6: Wagner News including cost of advertising

AR was not in attendance, but he had told NGK that he feels we should reduce the cost of advertising to encourage more copy. The cost of Wagner News this time was over £4,000 so some advertising would be a good source of funds. NGK reported that Baden-Baden had taken an advert before and it was agreed that AR & MH should approach them about this.

Item 7 – Bayreuth Ballot for 2018

CTC reported that we were waiting to receive the invoice/confirmation from the Kartenburo, of the 62 tickets which Jacques Bouffier and President Eggers had told us we had been allocated.

Item 8 - Membership Report

NGK reported that there was not much movement. 63 people are currently overdue on their subscriptions. Overdue membership is normally higher around this time. We need a Mailchimp to encourage members to pay up.

Item 9 - Events Officer's Report

HK reported as follows.

The Negus event - this event is all set up with Simon Thorpe who is singing the Dutchman at Longborough. The Bayreuth Bursary Awards will be presented at the start and the committee will take Anthony and the Award Winners to dinner afterwards.

NGK confirmed that the following were the details of the sponsorship for the dinner. RM would sponsor the after-dinner entertainment, NGK provide the wine and corkage, Jan Leigh was sponsoring the Goodall Prize. We just now need someone to sponsor the flowers.

It was agreed that a Mailchimp would be sent out about the Negus event and the Goodall Dinner.

The Balsadonna event will take place on 04.04.2018 at the Swedenborg Hall.

The talk with DAE and David Nice will take place on 10.05.2018 at the Swedenborg.

The Swedenborg would also be used for the AGM on 16.05.2018.

HK reported that he had agreed a date in May with Klaus Florian Vogt ("KFV") to come and speak to members but that he would not sing.

There would be a lecture on Lohengrin on 06.06.2018 to be given by a friend of HK who had worked with Barenboim at Bayreuth.

HK reported a provisional date of 20.06.2018 had been set for Christina Opolais and Andris Nelsons to come and speak to members.

There would be an event in July with Peter Conrad about his book on Verdi and Wagner.

In September we shall have the Bayreuth Bursary Award event.

The 2018 Singing Competition Final will take place on 25.11.2018.

There would be an event on 05.12.2018 about "Wagner and Conducting".

The Christmas Party would take place on 13.12.2018.

HK was also exploring the possibility of an event about Parsifal and Buddhism.

He was still not able to report any final arrangements with John Mastrogiovanni for his talk.

Item 10 – Society's Libraries of Recordings and Books and donations to same

CTC reported that Andrew Burton had written again concerning his plans to move to a new house which would mean that a new home had to be found for the Audio and DVD libraries. The meeting confirmed that when Andrew was ready to remove we would dispose of the library held by him.

Item 11 – "Wagner 1900" Conference.

NGK reported that he would be finalising the advert for Opera magazine by the day following this meeting and that he would adapt this for inclusion in any of the "Wagner 1900" conference materials.

Item 12 - Written Decisions Byelaws

CTC reported that no written decisions had been made since the last meeting.

Item 13 - Byelaws for members items on the agenda of AGM

CTC reported that no changes had been made to the byelaws in this regard but that this was something which he and NGK would look into and report back.

Item 14 - Strategy Meeting

It was agreed that the strategy meeting would take place on Saturday 08.09.2018 at the home of RG in Herefordshire. The meeting expressed its thanks to RG for agreeing to make his home available to us for this meeting.

Item 15 – Grant Scheme

HK reported that this was all in hand and that he would report back at a later date.

Item 16: Bayreuth Bursary Awards ("BBAs")

HK confirmed that the award winners were being taken to dinner after the Negus event and also that there would be an event in October when the winners reported back to members on their experiences.

The meeting noted that DAE did not think that singers got very much from the award.

It was agreed that the committee would review the UK residency requirements for applicants in future years.

Item 17: Mailchimps and member communications

MH explained to the meeting that he felt we needed greater control over how we sent information out to members (particularly by Mailchimp) and it was agreed that in aid of this a bimonthly or monthly newsletter would be produced for circulation to members.

Item 18: Media, Advertising, Twitter & Facebook

NNK reported that we needed a socialmedia@wagnersociety.org address and CTC agreed to create this. NNK reported that Isabella Pitman was helping him in relation to social media.

The Facebook and Twitter pages were up and running but we needed more photographs of events to post.

Item 19: Website Report

In the absence of a Webmaster there was no report on this item.

MH reported that he and AR were meeting with the person who was going to do some work for us around the website and they would report back on that to a subsequent meeting.

MH felt that we could use the website to create posters for events using more images.

At this point CTC raised the question of the GDPR and his concerns about whether we were complying with the "12 Steps" of the ICO to ensure that we were compliant. RM thinks that we should ignore it. CTC disagreed. The mood of the meeting was to not be concerned about this as we were a small charity.

Item 20: Wagnerstimmen Competition

It was agreed that we would sponsor Syzmon Wach's application.

Item 21: Change of date of March meeting

It was agreed to move the date of the March meeting to 20 March as it was clashing with the Goodall Dinner. It was also agreed to move the April meeting to the 17th.

Item 22 & 23: Honorary Memberships & Alumni

It was agreed that we needed an updated list of the Goodall winners. We also need to include the judges from last year Singing Competition as Honorary Members.

Item 24: Constitutional Sub-committee

It was agreed to leave any consideration of amending the Constitution until after the AGM in May.

Item 25: Catering Committee

CTC reported that there had not been very much response from members to the request for assistance with catering. Catherine Dixon is not going to be able to continue for much longer and we do need to speak to her about her intentions.

Item 26: Archive Catalogue from GG

GG agreed to report back to the next meeting with a note about the archive.

Item 27: AOB

Nothing was raised under this item.

THE MEETING ENDED AT 21:02

NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday 20 March

Tuesday 17 April

Monday 14 May

AGM 16 May 2018 (HK, NGK, CTC, AR & RG available so far)