**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WAGNER SOCIETY**

**WEDNESDAY 17 July 2018 18.30 – 21:20**

15 Gibson Square, London N1 0RD

**ATTENDEES:**​

**Richard Miles (Chair) (“RM”), Neil King (Treasurer) (“NGK”)**​, **Isabella Pitman (“IP”)**

**Alan Ridgewell (“AR”) & Shirley Cully (“SC”)**

**APOLOGIES**​**:**

**Cormac Cawley (Secretary) (“CTC”), Geoffrey Griffiths (“GG”), Ray Godson (“RG”) Henry Kennedy (“HK”), Meli Hatzihrysidis (“MH”) & Nick Kohn (“NNK”)**

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 for absence were received from CTC, RG, GG, MH, HK, NNK [who gave notice on 15 July of his resignation from the Committee]

**Item 2. Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 20 June 2018**

Approved with item 17 to be reworded & circulated to the 8 attendees at the June meeting

**Item 3. Chairman’s Report**

The Chairman reported Michael de Navarro’s proposal to hold the President’s masterclass at the music room at his house in Broadway, subject to a £10ph catering cost and a £25 donation to the village hall for the use of their chairs, and the Committee to handle all ticketing and publicity arrangements.  This generous offer had already been unanimously approved by the Committee by email circulation.  Mr de Navarro was going to put this proposal to the President but at the time had not done so.  Timing would be subject to the President’s, Mr de Navarro’s and the prize winners’ availability.  Ticket prices, and transport (the possibility of the Committee booking a bus to transport members from London, should there be demand for it), and the question of a charitable donation, were all issues to be discussed further.

**Item 4. Treasurer’s Report**

NGK reported that the deficit for year is running at £5,500 -  £7,800 behind budget (which is to break even).  This month we had to pay RWVI invoice & WN costs of £6,000 (higher than usual because of extra copies + postage).   However uncollected Gift Aid amounts to c £16,000 (& we earn more interest from HMRC by delaying collecting it than we would from banking the money).  We have budgeted for Events to make 20%, but in fact they have just about broken even.  Not holding a Singing Competition this year would provide further upside.  Financial summary circulated.

**Item 5. Wagner News**

AR reported that the Deadline for the next edition would be 7 September.  Bayreuth mostly covered but not Dutchman or Lohengrin.  RM has asked a friend of his who is visiting Bayreuth for the first time to contribute a review of Lohengrin.

**Item 6. Events officers report**

HK reported the following schedule of forthcoming events:

* 3rd October - 7pm - Swedenborg Hall, Eva Turner Memorial Lecture with Professor John Deathridge. Suggested ticket price £10 each to ensure good turnout.
* 6th October - 3pm (with buffet) - Swedenborg Hall - In conversation with Stefan Vinke. He wants an interviewer.
* 25th October - 7pm - Music Room, Pushkin House, Bloomsbury Square- Bayreuth Bursary Award evening recital.  Julien and Michelle are singing with Mark accompanying. Talk on Bayreuth theatre direction, followed by general discussion about Bayreuth. Decent grand piano there and holds up to 65 people.
* 5th December - 7pm - Swedenborg Hall, "Great Wagner Conductors in Performance" with Professor Raymond Holden.
* 13th December- 15 Gibson Square - Christmas Party
* January (date/time tbc) - In conversation with Robert Lloyd.
* January (date/time tbc) - In conversation with John Lundgren
* 13th February - 7pm - Swedenborg Hall, Sir Roger Scruton talks about Parsifal.
* March (date/time tbc)- Goodall Award.
* End of March (date/time tbc) - In conversation with Dan Ettinger.
* 4th April - 7 pmn- Swedenborg Hall- In conversation with Brindley Sherratt, interviewed by George Hall.

**Item 7. Bayreuth Bursary**

The form has been completed - assuming no Singing Competition, we can put the deadline back to January/ February 2019.  As regards nominees, we would take advice from (e.g.) Mastersingers, Anthony Negus and others connected with LFO, who have just been through an exhaustive auditioning process for The Ring.  Non-singers (e.g. conductors) to be nominated by members of the Committee- e.g. Henry Kennedy, Izzie.  Good to have a range of candidates, e.g. directors.

**Item 8. Media, Advertising & Social Media**

Social Media Secretary role vacant. RM can do Twitter (subject to some instruction).  Separate social media meeting to be held.

**Item 9. Written Decision Byelaws Update**

Unanimous decision to accept M de Navarro’s offer had already been agreed by email circulation.

In future, we should consider taking external legal advice as appropriate, rather than putting the burden of providing legal advice on any Committee member who happens to be legally qualified. This could put the Committee member under unfair pressure and give rise to a potential conflict of interest.

**Item 10. Membership Report**

NGK reported that membership is continuing to grow, with 14 net new members in June, and 72 in the year to date (about half of which are students).  Publicity (e.g. recently in the Sunday telegraph) seems to boost membership.

We have c.1000 addresses on a list of past recent members & it was agreed to send each of these a letter + GDPR form + complimentary Wagner News in case some might wish to resume membership.

Neil explained that he chases expired members with a series of letters and usually gets a result - only 1 or 2 are written off per month.

Total membership at end-June is 1074.

**Item 11. GDPR**

All members on the website + paper records now being circulated

**Item 12. Society's Library of Recordings & Books**

Following the recent sad death of Andrew Medlicott, all his records have gone to Ray, so we now have a complete run of Wagner News which he is kindly scanning.

RG has also agreed to take on the archive. We have already decided we will only keep material directly relevant to the history of the Society: items of general Wagner interest will be offered to the Wahnfriedmuseum in Bayreuth, or sold.

It has also been agreed that in view of Andrew Burton’s intention to move house, we will sell the audio library, which will be advertised by email.

Mr Medlicott’s signed programmes could be auctioned by sealed bids, subject to minimum (IP’s father advised that the value would be in the region of £50 each). Mr Medlicott’s partner would like the proceeds to go towards bursaries.  NGK to progress this sale. As an alternative HK suggested that the Society should itself buy the programmes for future use as gifts (to speakers, etc..).

**Item 13. Website**

AR has investigated branding suggestions (cost to be supplied).

Some members find the site difficult to use, and AR proposes simplifying it, to focus on Wagner - the man & his operas - & functionality (ticket sales etc).  AR to report at next meeting.

**Item 14.  Archives**

No report

**Item 15. Goodall Award**

It was decided to make the award for 2019 winner to Martin & Lizzie Graham of Longborough Festival Opera. It was also discussed whether some kind of award should be given to Norman Bailey (now living in the USA & recently widowed – possibly as a combined award. It was agreed to make inquiries into Norman Bailey’s health & circumstances.

**Item 16. AOB**

NGK mentioned that Jacques Bouffier had informed us of the President's complaint to Horst Eggers about the masterclasses, and would appreciate being kept informed by the Committee.