**THE WAGNER SOCIETY**

**MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 6:30PM ON 20TH NOVEMBER**

**2019 AT 15 GIBSON SQUARE LONDON N1 0RD**

**Present: Alan Ridgewell, Chairman (“AR”)**

**Neil King, Treasurer (“NGK”)**

**Meli Hatzhrysidis (“MH”)**

**Henry Kennedy (“HK”)**

**Izzy Pitman (“IP”)**

# 1. Quorum

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6:30pm noting that a quorum (at least one-third of the committee membership and at least one officer) was present.

In the absence of the Secretary, NGK agreed to take the minutes.

# 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from:

Tom Brown (“TB”)

Richard Miles, Secretary (“RM”)

# 3. Approval of the minutes of the last meeting

The minutes had been circulated in advance and were approved subject to a number of matters arising and a small number of clarifications and amendments.

# 4. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

All matters arising were discussed in the relevant sections below.

# 5. Chairman’s Report

New committee members

AR intends to send out a chimp/advertise on Facebook asking for members to express an interest in joining the committee in various capacities; AR indicated that Helen Beardsley – a former committee member – might also wish to re-join and also that Harley Mitford had expressed an interest. AR to take these and other suggested names forwards.

It was also noted that the current committee membership is at its minimum as permitted under the constitution.

Update on Bayreuth Ballot and new ticket arrangements

There were indications that the “new” ticket arrangements at Bayreuth might now be abandoned and that they might revert to the previous scheme possibly with the help of the GdF; AR will know more (possibly) after the Kongress at the end of the month.

RWVI Kongress, Venice

AR outlined various scenarios for voting at the Kongress for the new RWVI board and also the choices for our own representation with RWVI in future. His preferred choice was agreed.

**6. Secretary’s report**

No report had been received from the Secretary.

# 7. Treasurer’s report

2020 Budget

Further changes were suggested for incorporation into the budget: additional costs of the Bayreuth Bursaries and also additional donations to be made. NGK stated that after these changes the budget should be considered as final and will be uploaded into our accounts package. The final budget will be circulated to committee members in January.

Management accounts

No comments were made on the management accounts for September and October

Online payments

These were all approved by AR without query.

PayPal

NGK has given access to various committee members who wished to use PayPal for settling trivial online payments and also for expenses; not all members had yet logged in and completed the security section.

Debit cards, bank mandate changes and new investment fund.

Formal resolutions for these items had not yet been extracted and no progress had been made on these topics.

# 8. Events report (HK)

Current and future events

Furtwangler event was enjoyable and reasonably well attended; Roger Allen waived his fee requesting it went to help fund bursaries. Planning for the Young Speakers event is urgently needed and time is pressing.

Ticket sales and event results (NGK)

NGK summarised the position to date, which was favourable overall.

Sales of CDs and books at event

Sales of CDs will continue to be a feature of 2020 events. There is a substantial amount of money tied up in this stock.

Advertising events

See items 13

# 9. Joint Music Societies’ Recital Dinner (IP)

IP summarised the currently planning for an event to which she had come late and without proper handover from the previous organiser. Also members of other societies were proving difficult to work with. That said, the menu had been agreed, all performers booked and ticket sales were progressing. A basic budget had been circulated.

There was a subsequent discussion on whether we wished to continue being part of this event. It was generally felt that the event was not in keeping with the ambitions that we have for the society events in future nor was it of the quality of, say, our Singing Competition. The format was felt to be moribund and the desire to keep the price down has had a deleterious effect on the standards of food and wine.

It was **AGREED** that the Wagner Society would no longer take part in this event from 2021 onwards and that AR would communicate this fact to all other societies once the 2020 event had taken place.

# 10. Annual dinner and Goodall Award

Annual dinner budget

Tickets are on sale at £120 and this will present some difficulties in selling the necessary number and all marketing methods are to be tried. RM and NGK will continue make donations in cash or in kind as in prior years and Ray Godson has agreed a £1000 as well as taking a table. At least 70 tickets need to be sold to breakeven but the costs of NB travel and accommodation will not be taken as an Annual Dinner cost.

No solution to the issue pf paying for invited guests’ tickets was suggested and this could cause the event to move substantially into the red.

Format

A decision has not been taken on the format of the after dinner entertainment with either a series of short speeches from guests or an short interview with NB being possibilities.

Deposit

The full 50% non-refundable deposit of c£4,500 has now been paid.

# 11. Wagner News Report (AR)

AR suggested copy/publication dates for 2020 and agreed to circulate these once finalised. The proposal is for January (held over from previous December), April, July and October (Bayreuth number) with the possibility of a December/Christmas number. The budget would need to be again adjusted if five editions were planned but the meeting was supportive of this aim.

# 12. Membership report (NGK)

Current numbers

A report showing the number of members at the end of October was circulated and is attached to these minutes. A further gratifying increase has been recorded in advance of the planned membership drive.

Membership drive

The plans for this had been delayed due to the uncertainty over the Bayreuth ballot ticket allocation since this was a large feature of the campaign. It was agreed that MH should revise his campaign but that we should really not delay any longer if at all possible although news from Bayreuth might affect this.

GDPR campaign

The final numbers for this exercise are not yet final and will be presented to a future meeting.

# 13. Archive and library

Wagner News

An almost comlerte set of Wagner News, Wagner and previous publications is held with five editions missing. An appeal for these items will be made. However, a second set belonging to the society is not yet merged with these items sicne it remains with ray Godson and AR undertook to speak to him in this regard and recover these assets. Wahnfried are also missing some editions and efforts will be made to complete their set also.

In future it was agreed that two copies of each edition will be preserved in the archive.

Other archive material

This is now all held securely and centrally but cataloguing is dependent on committee time and also archiving expertise; we might look for an intern for this work.

Books

All items for Wahnfried and the London Library have now been dispatched. All other books have been disposed of except the larger sets, which cannot readily be taken ot meetings and will be advertised online and in Wagner News.

CDs

A large number of these remain and are shown in the balance sheet as assets for resale. It is hoped that the bulk of this will be sold at future meetings and by advertising in Wagner News.

# 14. Social media and marketing report

MH reported on this topic primarily covering the use of Facebook for marketing but also the need for coordination across all social media channels. Difficult to know if this work brings in additional members or more attendance at events but both these are growing and so social media is probably contributing particularly amongst younger people. NGK pointed out that FB campaigns are far from free and we should continue to be satisfied that this represents value for money. Generally, more analytics on these campaigns might be very useful.

# 15. Bayreuth issues

There was no further discussion, beyond what had already gone by, on this topic.

# 16. Bayreuth Bursary

IP is administering this work both for singers (who will be selected at the Singing Competition) and non-singers from whom applications are sought. Further updates are agreed once there is more to report.

# 17. Singing Competition

All was in hand for this event on Saturday with the final running order and arrangements for the day, lunches, flowers and so on already comeplted.

Following representations, RM and NGK have agreed increase their funding of the first and second prizes to £3,000 and £2,000 respectively. No further donors were found for the other prizes and the third prize had also been increased to £1,000.

# 18. Website development

No report was made beyond it already having been noted that it has been impossible to contact the person appointed to be doing this work recently.

# 16. Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

# 17. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be at 6:30pm at 15, Gibson Square, London N1 0RD on 15th January 2020.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:30pm.

**WAGNER SOCIETY - SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED MEETINGS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Current or Proposed date** | **Notes** |
|  |  |  |
| Singing Competition | 23rd November 2019 |  |
| Christmas Party | 12th December 2019 |  |
| Committee | 15th January 2020 |  |
| Young Lecturers’ Competition | 21st January 2020 |  |
| Joint Music Societies’ Dinner | 28th January 2020 |  |
| Kupfer Ring | 25th February 2020 |  |
| Committee | 26th February 2020 |  |
| Goodall Film | 10th March 2020 |  |
| *Committee* | *17th March 2020* | *Provisional* |
| *Annual Dinner* | *18th March 2020 (TBC)* | *Provisional* |
| Negus Walkure | 21st April 2020 |  |
| Committee | 22nd April 2020 |  |
| Kennaway - Tristan | 28th April 2020 |  |
| Bruckner and Wagner | 12th May 2020 |  |
| Committee | 13th May 2020 |  |
| **Annual General Meeting** | **20th May 2020** |  |
| Holden – Ring recordings | 16th June 2020 |  |
| Committee | 17th June 2020 |  |
| Committee | 8th July 2020 |  |
| Summer Party | TBC July 2020 |  |