



Charity No. 1124762

West Sussex Guitar Club AGM
Saturday 8th September 2012
at Regis School of Music at 9.30 pm

Committee Members present:

Sasha Levtov (Chairman/Artistic Director) **SL**
Patrick Butcher (Treasurer/Fundraising Officer) **PB**
Baz Boxall (Charity Officer/Membership Secretary) **BB**
Julie Insull (Club Promotion Officer/Librarian) **JJ**
Robin Smith (Hospitality Officer) **RS**
Debbie Burford (Secretary) **DB**
Terry Woodgate (Newsletter Editor) **TW**

SL welcomed club members to the 19th AGM of the WSGC and introduced the committee.

1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mike and Sarah McCurrach, Peggy Carrott and Angela MacTavish.

2) The Minutes of the last AGM

The minutes from the 10th September 2011 were approved by a unanimous show of hands.

3) Receive the Artistic Director's Report

Members had received by post the Artistic Director's two page written report of the club's 19th season. SL summarised it as a very full and enjoyable season. A unanimous show of hands accepted this very accurate report of the club's activities.

4) Adoption of the Club Accounts

PB presented the accounts from 1/8/2011 to 31/7/2012. PB summarised by stating that the main sources of income were membership fees and gift aid. Funds were in a good state though had decreased slightly this year. There was a need to find new sources of income and sponsorship because WSCC and Arun DC had stopped giving grants. Only the Town Council had donated £200. PB is in process of approaching other sources. Other income came from Marsh Christian Trust, £200 every other year. Concert funding was a constant headache, audiences being ephemeral, and roughly £1000 per year was lost on concerts. Selsey Festival and Chichester concerts only raised small amounts for the club. The West Dene Trust grant of £3000 was a one-off. Basically the club was solvent and in a good position but did subsidise each concert by about £200. There was roughly £8000 in the bank which would see the club through a few bad years or even the biblical "seven lean years." Member Tony Poulett asked if the funds had increased over the past 5-6 years. PB said they had increased every year until this year.

The statement of club accounts was approved by a unanimous show of hands. SL said the club was extremely grateful to PB and thanked him for his work as Treasurer over the last three years.

5) Election of Club Officers

SL listed the committee and non-committee posts. SL stated his desire to stay as Chairman and Artistic Director. SL announced that regretfully PB was standing down as Treasurer, for family reasons. SL declared PB had done a wonderful job to keep the club going. No nominations had been received over the summer but then a few days before the AGM, new member Mike McCurrach (guitarist and recently retired music teacher) had fortunately come forward to offer his services as Treasurer. Mike was prepared to do the job for at least one year and his wife Sarah (an accountant) was prepared to help him if necessary. SL was understandably jubilant at this offer of help, as was PB!

SL stated that DB had kindly agreed to stay on as Secretary. The post of Fundraising Officer was currently vacant – silence reigned in the hall as no offers came forward to fill the post. SL said it was a collective responsibility and up to all members to look out for businesses or other potential sponsors who may help. SL asked member Diana Green if Marks and Spencer would help. She responded that at a local level each store had only £300-£400 per year to give to good causes but that she would approach Head Office. BB kindly offered to continue as Charity Officer.

Although there was a lot of paperwork involved, it did mean that 25% of donations were refunded by the taxman amounting to £687 for the club last year. BB was also happy to stay on as Membership Secretary. SL thanked RS for his help in organising events and greeting new members. RS was happy to stay on as Hospitality Officer. SL thanked JI and was very grateful for all her work in her important post as Club Promotion Officer, which involved advertising concerts, selling tickets and organising the display board. The new committee was voted in by a unanimous show of hands. In summary, the new committee posts are now:

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|----------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Sasha Levtov | Chairman and Artistic Director |
| Mike McCurrach | Treasurer |
| Debbie Burford | Secretary |
| Baz Boxall | Membership Secretary and Charity Officer |
| Robin Smith | Hospitality Officer |
| Julie Insull | Club Promotion Officer. |
| VACANT | Fundraising Officer |

For the non-committee posts, JI would continue as Librarian (following the resignation during the year of David and Alison Stonestreet due to ill-health), MW as Photographer/Archivist and TW as Newsletter Editor. SL thanked TW for doing a wonderful job with the newsletter which is distributed to all members and also artists that perform at the club. TW reflected that the club had a very interesting archive as it started its twentieth year. The post of Press Officer was currently vacant, following the resignation of Angela MacTavish due to ill-health. TW/MW/SL and JI were covering this post but it was not consistent. There were no offers from the floor to take on the post of Press Officer which remains vacant.

6) Discussion of Club Affairs

Member Mike Lawn asked how youngsters were funded to attend West Dean and how it would be possible to fund more places. PB stated that an annual West Dean competition (within the WSGC Festival) gave a first prize to attend the course, and the club supported a runner up of £200 (towards the £550 fee). This year due to a special grant from West Dene the club was able to support four runners-up at £150 each. SL stated that in future if the club wanted to support more juniors in this way then the club would need to raise funds. There was some support from the floor for this. Member Bernard Robinson suggested that funds could be raised by the juniors themselves by holding a junior concert. SL thought this a good idea.

Long-standing member Ian Burt suggested the shortfall on the concerts could be covered by charging children half-price (rather than the current under-18s free policy) which may also make them value the concerts more. SL replied that he wanted to make it easy for families to bring their children and that at concerts there was generally a maximum of 10 children (more usually 3 or 4) so would not bring in much extra funds. In addition it was very important for children to hear live music. TW felt that it would be contrary to the charitable status of the club which is to promote education and we could risk losing this status. Teenage member George Robinson suggested charging 13 to 18 year olds half-price but retain under-12s as free. George would willingly busk to pay for a concert ticket! Guitar teacher member Chris Sweatman said that a lot of parents come to concerts *because* their children come in free and it is a great selling-point for the club. Guitar teacher member Linda Kelsall-Barnett supported the idea of charging a small amount for children and did not think this would deter families. SL thanked Ian for his question and suggested that the committee should discuss it further. Ian Burt raised another point that he felt too many adults were also coming free to concerts but SL felt it was important to invite guests as they often ended up joining the club. Member Ian Moorey suggested issuing just one complimentary ticket to members rather than two or making the number of complimentary tickets dependant on the number of concerts attended. Young member Louis Jenkin (aged 11) suggested the club could produce a season ticket to attend all the concerts. RS suggested there should be a junior representative on the committee! RS also suggested a donation box for the club.

TW wished to record thanks to Alison and David Stonestreet for their work on the Library. They had done a wonderful job putting all the items on the computer so that members could browse the library from home. TW also wanted to thank the committee for all the work they had done.

7) AOB

TW suggested reinstating the series of interesting talks or young professionals to bring variety to club evenings. DB suggested that the raffle prize at concerts should be a CD of the artist, or a bottle of wine, rather than guitar strings.

SL concluded the AGM by thanking everyone for coming. The meeting closed at 10:45pm.

Debbie Burford 16th September 2012