



Charity No. 1124762

West Sussex Guitar Club AGM
Saturday 20th September 2014
at Regis School of Music at 8.25 pm

Committee Members present:

Sasha Levtoy (Chairman/Artistic Director) **SL**

Julie Insull (Librarian/Publicity Officer) **JI**

Baz Boxall (Charity Officer/Membership Secretary) **BB**

Debbie Burford (Secretary) **DB**

SL welcomed club members to the 21st AGM of the WSGC.

1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Mike McCurrach, Moyria Woodgate, John Mason, Jenny Burt, Peggy Carrott, Richard Prior, Patrick Butcher, Philip Malyon and Christine Daniel. Around 22 members (excluding committee) attended the meeting.

2) The Minutes of the last AGM

The minutes from the 21st September 2013 were approved by a unanimous show of hands.

3) Receive the Artistic Director's Report

Members had received by post the Artistic Director's detailed report of the club's 21st season. SL said it had been one of the most successful years and so eventful that he'd had to reduce the font-size to fit it all in! Artists from the six concerts were all very happy and keen to come back. The club remains one of the most active and successful guitar societies in this country and beyond, SL added. Membership is stable but finances are dwindling slowly which needs to be addressed. SL also wished to express his gratitude to the committee which helped organise all the events. The report was adopted as correct.

4) Adoption of the Club Accounts

In MM's absence, SL/BB presented his accounts from 1/8/2013 to 31/7/2014. In summary, the current bank balance is £7845 which is quite healthy considering club's turnover. However, this is £1000 less than at same time last year (though there is an outstanding gift aid sum to come of around £500). The main reason for this is the November Festival which costs £1000 every year to run. Over its fourteen year existence, only once has the festival received a grant of £3000. SL added that the club also subsidises every professional concert by around £150-£200. The club always pays musicians a reasonable rate and this is a noble thing to do as professionals need to be sustained and supported. SL pleaded with the membership therefore to "help us fill the hall" for every concert. There were no questions or comments from the floor. The statement of club accounts was approved by a unanimous show of hands.

5) Election of Club Officers

SL opened by stating it would be impossible to do anything without the committee. Everyone has an important role or two. MM was doing a wonderful job with the finances. BB combines membership and charity duties, both very responsible posts which he does brilliantly. JI co-ordinates events, runs the library and has been a very successful and effective publicity officer. DB writes splendid minutes which 'can be read and re-read like a novel.' (!) Non-committee posts are just as important, SL continued. Up-keep of archives, photography and newsletter-writing and editing are thanks to Terry and Moyria Woodgate. Library responsibilities are shared by Pam Fereday. Another important post could be webmaster as at present BB is combining this with his other duties. All of the committee are standing for re-election except for SL who was 'humbly standing down after one year.' One nomination had been received and he proposed Julian Bobak (JB) as the new chairman. Terry Woodgate (TW) seconded. SL introduced Julian as a progressing guitarist as well as a lawyer and chairman of the law society. There was a unanimous show of hands and JB said he was 'glad to relieve SL of some of his duties and looking forward to re-joining the senior orchestra.' DB thanked SL for being a wonderful chairman and thought he had served for more than a year (*in fact it was 3 years*). Other members of the committee had kindly agreed to carry on. The posts of Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Charity Officer, Publicity Officer and Librarian were proposed in turn by BB, Ian Burt, Linda Kelsall-Barnett, DB, SL, TW and JI and seconded by Sam Brown, Pam Fereday, Diana Green, Mike Lander and TW.

The new committee was voted in as follows:

Julian Bobak	Chairman	Debbie Burford	Secretary
Sasha Levtov	Artistic Director	Baz Boxall	Membership Secretary/Charity Officer
Mike McCurrach	Treasurer	Julie Insull	Librarian/Publicity Officer

For the non-committee posts MW would continue as Photographer/Archivist, TW as Newsletter Editor and Pam Fereday as second librarian.

Committee officers then presented their reports. BB reported that membership was fairly stable. Last year 8 people did not renew and sadly 3 members passed away but 10 new people joined the club. This gives a total of 104 memberships (of which 32 are family) and 9 honorary members, meaning around 150 people are involved in the club. Payment by standing order does reduce the workload and those who pay by other means tend to need a lot of chasing up, he added. BB urged members to pay promptly. SL thanked BB.

Jl, in her role as librarian, thanked all the members for supporting the raffles, enabling new items to be bought for the library. All recent items are listed in the latest newsletter and by the library door. As publicity officer, Jl is always looking for new places to publicise the club and would be grateful for suggestions. Jl has covered all papers/magazines in an area from Bognor to Pulborough and Arundel, as well as Guitar Magazine. SL thanked Jl.

SL then thanked TW for the wonderful job he does with the newsletters every year. 'You must have all read these from cover to cover, even if you put the AGM documents aside,' he added. It requires a great deal of work from TW to write all his reports and thanks also go to Moyria for all her photos. TW said that the newsletters are always sent to the artists and adjudicators and how much they appreciate them. It serves to spread the news of the club and is an extra thank you to the artist. BB also keeps the website updated with all the news. TW said it would be nice to get a few articles from members eg. reviews of concerts. Of course when he took the job on he was told it would be easy, just collate all the articles - but it seems that every review has "TW" after it! He reported that the committee profiles in the newsletter would be followed by other prominent members of the club.

SL also wished to thank Nina for her invaluable help behind the scenes.

6) Discussion of Club Affairs

SL then gave the audience a chance to express opinions on club affairs. New member Ken Baker thought 50 extra members would help and suggested letting the building to other musical groups to attract new members. SL confirmed that the building is already well used in this way through the Regis School of Music. Ian Burt suggested that as we had an ensemble evening this year, perhaps next year we should have one dedicated to duos. TW thought that "Meet the Composer" would make an interesting club evening with someone like Vincent Lindsey-Clark. Linda said she had spoken to Peter Nuttall at West Dean and he was very keen to come to the club now he has moved to Bournemouth. New member Robin Burgess and SL also thought this a good idea.

TW suggested that a book or board could be placed at the door for members to write on if they wish to play at a club evening and then SL could pick the order. SL thought this could work but often he makes a lot of phone calls persuading people to play. If it was a chalk board you could have "Tonight's special" was suggested.

SL asked members to continue helping to fill the hall at concerts which raises funds but also when you listen to music in a full hall, he said, you share the excitement and multiply the pleasure. This hall has lovely acoustics. An ovation is rare and not long enough and we all need to 'put shyness away and clap for longer.' He thought of recording the best applause and turning it up!

7) AOB

Linda raised the question of the club orchestra. SL said two conditions needed to be fulfilled (1) sight-reading and technical ability well above Grade 5 (2) excellent conductor in Linda. But it also needed sufficient players. There were already two ensembles and people were reluctant to commit. Steve Higgs would be leaving for Spain and others in Monday class could not spare the time. He asked if Linda had other dedicated people but she had left it to SL to find the participants. It was reluctantly decided that the club orchestra could not therefore proceed.

SL concluded the AGM by apologising for its length and thanking everyone for supporting the club and making it a very enjoyable society. 'We also have a generation (currently in bed) who are the future of the club,' he said. SL promised to 'grant everyone's special wishes in the coming year.' TW suggested a round of applause for the committee. The meeting closed at 9:30pm.