

Draft Minutes of the Twenty-Second Annual General Meeting of the British Clavichord Society

***Held at the Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT
on Saturday, 17th June 2017, 2.15pm***

Members present: Derek Adlam (president), Peter Bavington, Alex Bell, Garry Broughton (chairman), David Derrick, Christopher Gold, Christopher Griffiths, Ulla Kite, Martha Leigh, Adrian Lenthall, Matthew Meadows, Richard Miller, Ian Mortimer, Nigel Reed, Karin Richter (secretary), Oliver Sandig, Huw Saunders, Peter Stephens, Judith Wardman (treasurer), Paula Woods.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from:

Carey Beebe; Brian Blandford; David Butcher; Sally Fortino; David Gerrard; Suzanna Grant; David Hitchin; Douglas Hollick; Richard Ireland; John Lester; Brian and Audrey Mattinson; David Millard; Charles Mould; Patricia Murdoch; Simon Neal; Janet Noakes; Duncan Preston; Claire Randall; Geoffrey Allan Taylor; Elizabeth Wells; Richard Whitehouse; Brian Wishart; Beverly Woodward; Howard Woollin.

2. Minutes of the 21st AGM, held 9th July 2016. Chris Griffiths proposed and Derek Adlam seconded that these minutes represented a true record of that meeting; the minutes were agreed unanimously and signed by the chairman.

3. Chairman's Report

“Not a vintage year, but a good one nonetheless, which began with Terence Charlston's fascinating recital after the AGM in July. BCS members Julian Perkins, Carole Cerasi, Francis Knights, and Dan Tidhar played in Ryedale, Dartington, and Cambridge respectively. Francis' and Dan's Froberger Festival at Fitzwilliam College Cambridge anticipated the BCS's major event last year: a Froberger Celebration involving lute, clavichord, harpsichord, and organ here at the Art Workers Guild in November. I think Froberger was very successfully celebrated by the playing of Benjamin Narvey, Adrian Lenthall (on Peter Bavington's Mersenne reconstruction) and Tom Foster. Our president, Derek Adlam, has said that such an event justifies the existence of the BCS: increasing knowledge and awareness of a key figure in Western musical art, and the instruments essential to that repertoire.

Julian Perkins deserves an especial commendation in this report; not only has he been giving clavichord recitals all over England, but he has also been busy in the recording studio with the French Suites of J.S.Bach and, due for release soon we hope, Herbert Howells's two books of clavichord music – Lambert's Clavichord and Goff's Clavichord – two pieces of which will be played on the Goff 1952 formerly belonging to the late Christopher Hogwood.

Francis Knights has also been busy with clavichord recitals in Cambridge and Oxford, including duets with Dan Tidhar. The two of them will be joined by BCS Newsletter Reviews Editor Adrian Lenthall in a Telemann 250th anniversary celebration at Sidney Sussex College Cambridge on June 25th. The indefatigable duo will also celebrate the 125th anniversary of

Herbert Howells playing his complete clavichord music on 11th November at St John's College, Cambridge.

2017 began most enjoyably for those lucky enough to get to the Handel House (now named Handel and Hendrix) on 10th January for the 7th joint recital of the BCS and the BHS. The talented performer doubling up on clavichord and harpsichord was Marie van Rhijn. Of particular interest was her performance of Suites by the late Stephen Dodgson on both instruments (the Peter Bavington J.H.Silbermann inspired clavichord, and the Kirckman 1754 harpsichord).

Also in January, the BCS made a contribution (increased by a generous donation from BCS members Paul and Kati Willis) to the Royal Academy of Music's clavichord day, involving about thirty students, when the brilliant teacher and recitalist was Steven Devine. We are hoping to work with the Royal Academy again as part of our commitment to education and sponsorship, and we are also negotiating with the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff to promote a similar event, combining teaching and listening. This would be a repeat of our visit in 2001 when one of our teachers and recitalists was Virginia Pleasants of fond memory. We have been looking carefully at our sponsorship budget and are still prepared to support young people with tuition, technician training, loan of clavichord, etc.

In March, Paul Simmonds, a former editor of our Newsletter who now lives in distant continental Europe, made a very welcome return to the Workshop in Lewes where he has given many memorable recitals over the past 25 years. He played music by Wolf, Müthel, Kirnberger, and Georg Simon Löhlein, probably the only composer in history to be wounded and left for dead on a battlefield (in 1757).

The BCS's next big event will be a celebrity recital by Carole Cerasi in Oxford on the 18th November; details will be in our June Newsletter. Looking ahead to 2018 we are in talks with David Hackett who runs 'Friends of the Square Piano' with a view to a joint meeting in April; and then the 2018 AGM and recital will take place on 30th June at the Art Workers Guild in London. It is at that meeting that the membership will be asked to decide how and in what form the Society is to continue.

As you have heard or read in my annual Chairman's Reports of the last several years, the BCS has encountered increasing problems with regard to 1) the escalating costs of promoting concerts and other activities and 2) the lack of volunteers willing not just to help out on an occasional basis, but to fill posts of responsibility for running the Society and its Newsletter. The officers and committee are fully committed to carrying on all the usual activities of the Society until the end of 2018 or early 2019. The hope is that by then either increased human resources to run the Society in its present form will have materialised in the shape of volunteers eager to show how much they value the BCS, or a more sustainable format for the continuation of the Society's aims will have been agreed.

The present officers and committee have given a lot of time and thought to the possibilities: a purely online existence with a website as a multi-purpose base for news and activities, including an electronic Newsletter, although all that would still need volunteers; reduce events to one flagship meeting per year or an annual celebrity recital; stop trying to support education and sponsorship, given our dwindling resources. I hope our members will continue to send in their comments and suggestions: as Derek Adlam has pointed out, it is certainly not the case that the promotion of knowledge and appreciation of the clavichord is so effective and widespread that a specialist society devoted to it is now redundant.

In the short term the officers and the committee would like to propose some small changes to the Society's constitution to make the day to day administration better able to function with decreasing human resources. The changes to be voted on have been set out in the Notice of AGM, and also in the Agenda.

At this point I must thank those who have given of their time and energy over the past year to keep the Society going: they are Karin Richter, our secretary; Judith Wardman, treasurer, events organizer, acting newsletter editor, and archivist (the fact that she has to wear four hats simultaneously epitomises our problem); Adrian Lenthall, reviews editor; Paula Woods, membership secretary; Huw Saunders, who runs the Newsletter and Clavichord International distribution and the BCS shop (which is now closed); David Hitchin, webmaster; and committee members Christopher Gold, Ulla Kite, Jillian Mitchell, and Roger Murray; and of course our president Derek Adlam.”

At this point, Karin Richter added warm thanks to our chairman to this list.

4. Treasurer’s Report. The independently examined accounts for the year 2016 were circulated along with a written report from the Treasurer, Judith Wardman, and introduced by her. There was a question from the floor why the cost of producing and dispatching the Newsletter was considerably higher in 2016 than in 2015. Judith Wardman explained that this is partly due to the different size of Newsletters, leading to a difference in printing and other costs.

Peter Bavington pointed out that in the balance sheet the figures for ‘Cash in Barclays’ and ‘Total Fund’ should be identical with the figure for ‘Fund to 31/12/2016’. Judith Wardman agreed to correct this error and have the accounts re-examined by Brian Blandford.

Huw Saunders proposed and Peter Stephens seconded that the meeting should accept the Treasurer’s report, subject to correction and re-examination. Carried unanimously.

5. Changes to the constitution

The following changes to the Constitution were recommended by the committee and were proposed by Garry Broughton and seconded by Judith Wardman (proposed changes in bold):

-15. The Committee shall meet at convenient intervals for the transaction of business, but in any case not less than three times in any one year. **CHANGE TO: ... not less than twice in any one year**

-16.a) At meetings of the Committee:

i) the Chairman of the Society, or in his/her absence a deputy elected for the occasion, shall preside;

*ii) no business shall be transacted unless a **quorum** of Committee members is present, a quorum for all purposes being five members personally present; **CHANGE TO: ...a quorum for all purposes being four members personally present, at least one of whom should be an Officer of the Society***

iii) all proposals put to the Committee shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and voting, the Chairman having an additional casting vote in the case of an equality of votes. **DELETE: put to the Committee**

NEW CLAUSE TO BE ADDED:

-16.b) Between meetings of the committee, any two Officers acting jointly and in agreement with each other may decide to put matters requiring decision to an email vote. In this case all committee members must be notified and given a reasonable period of

time to respond, and the proposal shall be decided by a simple majority of those who respond within the given time, the Chairman having an additional casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

This motion was carried nem con.

6. Election of Treasurer.

The treasurer had come to the end of her term of office, and had agreed to stand for re-election. **Judith Wardman** was proposed by Adrian Lenthall and seconded by Karin Richter, and was re-elected unanimously.

7. Election of Committee member.

Huw Saunders and Adrian Lenthall had come to the end of their term of office; **Huw Saunders** had decided not to stand for re-election, and we thanked him warmly for all his work over many years.

Adrian Lenthall had agreed to stand for re-election and was proposed by Karin Richter and seconded by Christopher Gold, and re-elected unanimously.

8. Election of Examiner of the Accounts. **Brian Blandford** had been proposed by Karin Richter and seconded by Garry Broughton, and was elected unanimously.

9. AOB. Derek Adlam wondered whether we could be more active in the propagation of knowledge of the clavichord. The clavichord is a useful tool in the training of modern pianists, quite apart from being a great instrument in its own right. The clavichord is not being promoted enough; in particular, had the committee undertaken a survey of the principal music schools and colleges?

Garry Broughton responded that the Trinity Laban Conservatoire and the Royal Academy of Music were the only institutions which had been responsive to educational initiatives. He agreed that the educational value of the clavichord was not recognized enough. He added that very few organists own a clavichord. Derek Adlam said that in the past the link between the clavichord and the organ was such that a Silbermann organ would have been delivered with one of their clavichords.

Judith Wardman stated that very few institutions have a good, well maintained clavichord, which is a prerequisite for take up. Derek Adlam commented that in his student days there were not even Early Music departments; he himself used to tune harpsichords for staff who were giving lectures on early keyboard playing to the piano students.

Peter Bavington thought that good clavichords were essential for promoting the instrument; he wondered whether contacts with the heads of keyboard instruments in the institutions would not be more effective and productive than a survey.

There was general agreement that it was important to energize the tutors and staff to encourage educating future clavichordists.

There was also a general consensus that the BCS Newsletter was indispensable.

The meeting closed at 3.05pm; remaining stock of the BCS Shop was for sale afterwards. This was followed by a recital by **Marcia Hadjimarkos** at 4pm.