

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the West Wight Arts Association held at Freshwater Memorial Hall on May 27th 2017

Present: Judith Hunt, Keith Brettell, Jackie Warner, Liz Wason, Malcolm Tait, Harriet Gibbins, Dick Dawson, Sandy Toms, Toni Rogers, Claire Sharples, 55 members and guests.

Thomas Luke, piano and Thomas Nash, guitar, the two major award winners at our Bursary in March, opened the proceedings with a short recital.

Welcome by the President, Keith Brettell, who said what an honour it was to be asked to become President after the death of Joan Gregson in January. Joan's wise counsel would be sadly missed. Keith offered grateful thanks to the Chair for all her hard work in so many ways.

Apologies had been received from: Michael and Judith Jennings, Siobhan Cosgrove, Olga Budden, Helen Foster, Norman and Karen Cave, Chrissie Acland, Judy Cleeve, Angela Clarke, Doug Kelman, Doreen Dace and Nick Wilde and Jane Strange who had been married that day, congratulations.

Minutes of the previous AGM were adopted as correct, proposed by Carol Walker, seconded Brian Wilson.

Annual Report for 2016/17 was given by Judith Hunt. She said that the 70th season had been a momentous one, greatly overshadowed by the deaths of several key figures in the organisation and the retirement of others, but musically tremendous and celebratory of the 70th birthday nonetheless.

The President of the Association, Joan Gregson, died in January. She had been involved in WWAA first as a page turner and then as a member of the committee from 1996. She had been instrumental in the purchase of the piano at that time and had become Vice Chair when Ernest Glover died in 1998 and President when Arthur Starke died in 2000. She was a very hands on President, guarding the piano zealously, full of sane and knowledgeable advice, passionately interested in the music and devoted to the well being of the Association. We were indebted to her for her long and hardworking efforts on behalf of WWAA. Keith Brettell had stepped up to the position of President and Liz Wason to Vice President. Claire Sharples had taken over responsibility for the piano. Michael Wason, our official bouncer, had died in November. We missed his elegant dinner jacketed presence, clicking in the audience. A former trustee, Richard Seabroke, had also died that year. Thanks to him every tree in Newtown had been plastered with WWAA posters for many years.

Our Treasurer Jackie Warner had moved to Winchester two years before, and had nobly carried on doing her job by remote control and coming over to concerts, but had decided to retire after seven years of balancing the books. We would miss her greatly, her innovative ideas - the Bursary had been her inspiration- and her meticulous management of the finances. Our finances were from this moment on in the safe hands of Dick Dawson. Doreen Dace had been our publicity officer for the last nine years, taking charge of the distribution of posters with great efficiency. She was now stepping down. Christine Storey had agreed to become a Trustee and take on Doreen's role, her election would follow shortly.

The season had been very successful with a record number of season ticket holders and an average attendance of 175. The Bursary, organised by Claire Sharples, had been a great success with eight young Island musicians shortlisted. The standard was extremely high.

Judith then thanked all the many people who kept the Association running smoothly and successfully: the Memorial Hall team, ticket sellers, flower arrangers, piano tuner, Wightlink, YCAT, poster designer, the designer of other publicity materials, website manager and the Trustees for all their hard work. Lastly Judith thanked the audience, their appreciation and sponsorship without which we would not have been able to function as we did.

Financial Report was given by Jackie Warner who circulated the accounts, which had been independently audited. Jackie thanked everyone for their help especially the wonderful sponsorship and donations. There would be a small increase in season tickets and individual tickets. The accounts were adopted, proposed by Harald Schenk and seconded by Paul Mayer.

Re-election of Trustees. Harriet Gibbins and Malcolm Tait were re-elected to the committee and Chris Storey was elected as a new Trustee, proposed by Sir Guy Acland and seconded by Dick Dawson.

The meeting was followed by a wonderful piano recital by Hao Zi Yoh, and by wine and cheese.