

**Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Annual General Meeting
of the British Clavichord Society**
*Held at Oxford Quaker Meeting House
on Saturday, 22nd June 2019, 2.15pm*

Members present: Derek Adlam (president), Peter Bavington, Alex Bell, Garry Broughton (chairman), Terence Charlston, David Derrick, David Griffel, Christopher Griffiths, David Helliwell, Keith Howard, Richard Ireland, Adrian Lenthall, Allan Leroy, Richard Miller, Jillian Mitchell, Ian Mortimer, Roger Murray, Sarah Noble, Anthony Noble, Jacky Peacock, Oliver Phillips, Nigel Reed, Karin Richter (secretary), Colin Roberts, Chris Sansum, Geoffrey Allan Taylor, Mimi Waitzman, Janet and Philip Wardle, Judith Wardman (treasurer), Elizabeth Wells, David Wilson, Paula Woods.

1. Apologies for absence had been received from:

Carey Beebe, Brian Blandford, John Collins, Sally Fortino, David Gerrard, Claire Habbershaw, John Henry, David Hitchin, Alexander Horsburgh, Brian and Audrey Mattinson, Patricia Murdoch, Duncan Preston, Paul Simmonds, Richard Whitehouse, Katie and Paul Willis, Beverly Woodward.

2. Minutes of the 23rd AGM, held 30th June 2018. It was proposed by Richard Ireland and seconded by Roger Murray that these minutes represented a true record of that meeting; the minutes were agreed unanimously and signed by the chairman.

3. Chairman's Report

"Welcome to the 24th and last AGM of the BCS. Here is my 15th and last chairman's report. 25 Years ago almost to the day 60 clavichord enthusiasts gathered at the Bate Collection here in Oxford and decided to form a society. By the time of the first AGM in March 1996 there were about 140 members, five events had been organized, and the Society had a surplus of £1040.

When I made my first chairman's report in April 2002 I was able to report the Society's healthy financial position with membership heading for a record figure of over 200. Many of those members were looking forward to the 4th (and last) Edinburgh Clavichord Weekend organized by Sheila Barnes and Darryl Martin: just reading a list of the participants who enthralled us with talks, demonstrations and recitals is enough to remind us of what we can no longer provide. Steve Barrell, Art Tatum, Grant O'Brien, Joel Speerstra, Karin Richter, Virginia Pleasants, Koen Vermeij, Derek Adlam, Paul Simmonds, Peter Bavington, Menno van Delft and Siebe Henstra ('Der Prallende Doppelschlag'), Lance Whitehead, Jenny Nex, Maria Boxall, John Kitchen, John Raymond... plus Haggis and Cranachan, and waistcoats designed by Johann Hass.

Coming back to the present, my report of the Society's last year is going to seem somewhat meagre by comparison. Painful discussions and planning for our demise were alleviated by some superb music making: Adrian Lenthall gave two memorable recitals, the first after the 2018 AGM, and then a December recital with a highly original choice of programme. In November last we invited Pierre Goy, "a master of the clavichord", as Paula Woods said in

her review, to play for us in Oxford – he included some marvellous Müthel (this reminded me that the BCS was responsible for introducing Müthel to this country when we invited Menno van Delft to give a Müthel lecture recital exactly 22 years previously in November 1996, where 50 members paid £5 to hear him). BCS members who gave recitals not directly sponsored by the Society included Julian Perkins in Petworth, Francis Knights in Cambridge, Neil Coleman in Edinburgh, and Terence Charlston, who gave his illustrated inaugural lecture as Professor of Historical Keyboard Instruments at the Royal College of Music, London. In May, David Griffel, a former officer of this society, gave a lecture recital as part of the new Bristol Early Music Festival. Several BCS members are also ‘Friends of Square Pianos’, and attended their annual meeting at Chelveston.

At this point, I usually mention forthcoming attractions but of course there will be no further BCS events – our ‘clavexit’ will definitely happen at midnight on the 31st July. However, individual former members will continue the work initiated by the Society: Terence Charlston in Harpenden and Sudbury, and Francis Knights in Cambridge (the Goldberg Variations on clavichord!) Also, in September the German Clavichord Society holds its 45th Clavichordtage (probably the last European event Britons will be able to attend before Britain weighs anchor and sails west across the Atlantic to join the dazzling American scene, or is that just a case of Trump l’oeil?) Prime minister Edward Heath alleviated the tensions surrounding the vote to enter Europe in 1971 by playing his Goff clavichord, but will our new prime minister relieve tension over Brexit with a clavichord?

On the subject of exit I must mention the death of Wolfgang Zuckermann in October last year at the age of 96. In our current Newsletter Peter Bavington writes about Wally’s importance in the development of harpsichord and clavichord making over the last half century. I met Wally at the first Early Music Exhibition in London in 1973 – I had just finished making an Italian style harpsichord from one of his kits – and he took me round the exhibition giving a running commentary on the good, average, and bad instruments on display (many of the makers had read his book and were understandably anxious).

I also have to report the death of founder member John Weston who wrote on many fascinating subjects for our newsletter, including a three-part article on ‘George Bernard Shaw and the clavichord’ (newsletters 17, 18, 19). This reminds me to pay tribute to those making the newsletter such a respected part of the clavichord scene, especially Paul Simmonds, Peter Bavington, Adrian Lenthall, and Judith Wardman. There will be one final newsletter, no. 74, in its present format, although we are hoping that clavichord information will continue to be provided in some way.

BCS sponsorship money contributing to a recording of 20th and 21st century British music for clavichord duo will be used to commission a piece for two clavichords from composer Iain Farrington, that as Terence Charlston says “will hopefully have a life of its own beyond the CD, with other players and audiences.”

On behalf of the membership, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those who have been involved in the Society’s activities over the last quarter-century – I cannot name them all, but those currently involved are Karin Richter, our secretary, Paula Woods, membership secretary, David Hitchin, webmaster, Huw Saunders, bookshop, Adrian Lenthall, reviews editor, and the committee, Christopher Gold, Ulla Kite, Jillian Mitchell, Roger Murray, Anthony Noble. And of course Judith Wardman, who continues in 4 roles – treasurer, events organizer, newsletter editor (with Peter Bavington doing layout and

typesetting), archivist – and our president, Derek Adlam. Together we have spent many hours discussing how to dissolve gracefully and yet to survive in some form. When Peter Bavington was evaluating the achievements of our first 15 years (in an article he wrote for Clavichord International, November 2009) he concluded that whereas we had largely succeeded in our aims to entertain and to inform, we had not achieved as much as we would have wanted in promoting increased awareness of the clavichord in schools and colleges or in the broadcast media. Ten years further on from Peter’s report you don’t need me to tell you that due to the disastrous education policies of successive governments music education in the state sector continues to deteriorate. As a very small society we never had the resources to compensate for government underfunding, but our efforts in other areas have been more successful – I think the BCS can claim part of the credit for the clavichord exerting a much greater influence on the performance of keyboard music from the 16th to the 21st centuries through our recitals, talks, study days, research and publications. The BCS newsletters give a complete record not only of the society, but also of all the developments in the clavichord world since 1994.

A motto that Violet Gordon Woodhouse wanted inscribed on one of her Goff clavichords was a quotation by John Milton: “Time will run back and fetch the age of gold”. Our age of gold is fast receding, but, to quote a more recent poet, “in departing we leave behind us footprints in the sand of time”.

The chairman then congratulated our long-standing member Elizabeth Wells on being awarded the 2019 Curt Sachs Award by AMIS (the American Musical Instrument Society), in recognition of her years of work at the Royal College of Music’s instrument collection. The room responded with an appreciative round of applause.

The Nederlands Clavichord Genootschap had sent a message to the BCS, which Garry Broughton read out:

“Dear Board and Members of the British Clavichord Society,

On this special Saturday, 22 June 2019, I would like to address some words to you with feelings of admiration and sympathy.

In the first place and with the greatest pleasure, I wish to congratulate you with the 25th anniversary of your illustrious Society! Twenty five years of important and inspiring contributions to the clavichord world, with activities of national and international impact. Your BCS Newsletter has published original articles besides knowledgeable reviews of concerts, CDs, sheet-music editions and literature. Your BCS members have delivered important and leading contributions to the international meetings in Magnano and elsewhere. For short: the BCS has always been an eminent and very pleasurable company. But then, sadly, this Saturday also is the date of the tragic dissolution of your Society. All explanations cannot prevent that it is still difficult for us to accept the unavoidable decision. We do hope that the close relationships of British clavichord experts and lovers with like-minded *Kenner und Liebhaber* all over the world will anyhow continue in the next future, with a hopefully stimulating role for ‘Clavichord International’ (please remain or do become subscribers...).

On behalf of the Board and Members of the Dutch Clavichord Society,

Cordially yours,

Tom Brockmeier, secretary”

Karin Richter added informal greetings to the meeting from Paul Simmonds (Swiss Clavichord Society) and Lothar Bemann (German Clavichord Society), with whom she had been in touch recently.

4. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report

Judith Wardman presented the annual Accounts; there were no questions, and Garry Broughton expressed thanks on behalf of the Society for her tireless work as Treasurer, as well as her other functions in the BCS.

It was then proposed by Karin Richter and seconded by Derek Adlam to accept the accounts. Carried unanimously.

5. Update on the dissolution of the BCS

The secretary gave an update on the following points:

a) Database and Mail Chimp List: final communications with members.

Members have given us permission to store and process their data according to their personal preferences. Some data (such as names and addresses) are in any case covered under the provision of 'legitimate interest' (meaning in plain English, without these basic data we could not run the Society at all). A number of our members have opted out of being contacted by email; a very small number have opted out altogether of the printed membership list, others have decided to have only part of their personal information published. Printed membership lists will of course remain in the possession of those members who received them at the time of publication, but no more copies will be sent out, and any surplus copies will be destroyed at the end of July.

The residual committee, after the formal dissolution, will carry out any work that is needed before things can be finally wound up. We assume that members would like to receive some final communications from us regarding any decisions not yet taken, such as who the recipients of any surplus funds are going to be, and what will happen to the Archive. This sort of communication is again covered under the 'legitimate interest' provision of GDPR rules. As soon as the residual committee is satisfied that there is no further need for communicating with the current membership, the database and the Mail Chimp email account will be closed down. However, we will send out an email or letter to all members about four weeks before dissolution, giving them the option to opt out of these communications, and having their data deleted by 31 July 2019.

b) Website; future and content

The committee has decided that the BCS website can continue until the end of 2019; this will keep a diary of events, as well as an archive of former events, articles, minutes of AGMs, etc. etc. accessible for the moment. Obviously some of the content will need to be modified (i.e. the invitation to apply for sponsorship, etc.); specific pages of the website are under discussion – (such as the Professional Register). Keeping the website for a few more months will also give us more time to decide whether any content could potentially be transferred to another website. At the moment there is no one willing or able to run a continuation website after the BCS website has been deleted; there had been ideas to attach a webpage to an existing website which is willing to host a clavichord page, such as the Friends of Square Pianos.

c) Archive: potential recipients.

Finding a recipient for the Archive in its entirety is not easy; many of the possible recipients have issues of space, or financial constraints. The committee may need to consider splitting up the archive. Some preliminary enquiries have been made, and further suggestions for recipients will be welcome; however, a decision needs to be made before too long.

d) New Email List.

No one has volunteered to run a new email list yet. The idea is that one could invite current members and non members to subscribe, creating a new database independent of the BCS. The onus would be on the subscribers to supply information on their events etc., which the 'owner' of the list should upload. There would be no direct contact amongst subscribers. Members would be informed should this come about within the period where we can still legitimately contact BCS members.

e) Yahoo clavichord group.

This is an internet forum of players, makers, and other clavichord aficionados; a link can be found on the BCS website under 'Links'.

f) Distribution of remaining funds.

After all liabilities of the BCS have been dealt with, remaining funds will be given to another organization or organizations in line with paragraph 23 of our constitution. So far, suggestions include Clavichord International, and the Finchcocks Charity for Musical Education, but others will be considered. The secretary took this opportunity to remind those present of the special offer CI has extended to BCS members for a 2019 subscription.

A question was raised whether a copy or copies of membership lists will remain in the Archive, and whether this would be legitimate under GDPR rules. This also prompts the question whether the archive remains accessible to the public, and where it will be kept – all of which is yet to be decided. The secretary responded that we will look into this, and if it is permissible, copies will be kept.

6. Election of Treasurer and Committee members.

As some business will have to be conducted beyond the date of the AGM and the date of the dissolution, it was necessary to hold these elections. The treasurer, Judith Wardman, and reviews editor and committee member Adrian Lenthall, had both come to the end of their term of office, and had agreed to stand for re-election. Sarah Noble had agreed to stand for election as a committee member.

Judith Wardman (treasurer) was proposed by Roger Murray and seconded by Christopher Gold.

Adrian Lenthall was proposed by Karin Richter and seconded by Judith Wardman.

Sarah Noble was proposed by Garry Broughton and seconded by Judith Wardman.

All three were elected unanimously, and Sarah Noble was welcomed to the committee.

7. Election of Examiner of the Accounts.

Brian Blandford had kindly agreed to examine the final accounts of the BCS; he had been proposed by Garry Broughton and seconded by Christopher Gold, and was elected unanimously.

8. Any other business.

- Mimi Waitzman suggested that should someone want to run a clavichord page, the Musical Instrument Resource Network website may be able to host.
- Derek Adlam pointed out that the copyright with articles in BCSN lies with the writers of these articles, and therefore their longevity may not be guaranteed. Copyright holders would need to be contacted before transferring any material to another website.
- Terence Charlston asked about the volume of the Archive, for future reference regarding potential recipients.
- Derek Adlam thanked all officers and committee members past and present for their hard work in running a successful society. Karin Richter added specific thanks to our current chairman, Garry Broughton.

The meeting closed at 3.15pm and was followed by a recital by **Julian Perkins** at 4pm.