

MINUTES OF AGM via ZOOM, SATURDAY 26TH MARCH 2022

Present: Derik Palmer, Jan Brodie, Helen Slade, Doug Harbour, Neil Gillard, Diana Arseneau Powell, Jenny Beattie, Anita Cotterall, Marilyn Cowan, Sue Edwards, Janet Jenkins, Cary Karp, Ziggy Knopfler, Bob Lander, Patrick O'Sullivan, Guy Padfield, John Rawlinson, Margaret Rigby, Hilary Robinson.

Apologies: Anne Cole, Lyn Jones, Christophe Amineau, Tony Archibold, Emmelina Audigier-Prade, June Barke, Dick Bland, Pat Breen, Marcia Dungan, Ruth Dyke, Peter & Kathleen Everson, Heather Farrell-Roberts, Pat Gilbert, Anja Lyttle, Maggie MacBean, Felix Mauron, Kevan McCallum, Christina Murrie, Claudia Myatt, Barbara Parkinson, Anne Pyne, Chris Sills, Alison Smith, Judy Spindler, Nadine Stah White, Ian White.

Our President, Derik, opened the meeting and welcomed all present to our AGM.

The minutes of the 2021 AGM, which had been previously circulated, were taken as read, proposed as a true record by Helen Slade, seconded by Sue Edwards, and accepted by all present. There were no matters arising for discussion.

The President's Report, previously circulated and attached, was summarised. As well as good support for Zoom workshops, the first Zoom UKA Day in July attracted 55 members, while the free Day in November was also well-attended. The new website is progressing despite teething problems and should soon be available to all members. Sue Edwards suggested that as well as thanking the Committee, perhaps some mention should be made of the liaison with SFSS done by Heather Farrell-Roberts. Derik acknowledged this and expressed his gratitude.

Treasurer's Report: the accounts and report were previously circulated and are attached again. Derik reported that the UKA's financial situation remains sound, with the overall funds once again increasing during the year from the small profits accruing from the online workshops, even if only by £517. However, considerable sums from the trading surplus were expended on our first 'free' UKA Members Day via Zoom (£450), the Zoom subscription, and the subscriptions to Making Music for our new website. In addition we purchased 2 OS autoharps for potential resale (at cost) to new members seeking a first instrument of their own. There is no need at present to increase subscriptions, or fees for events.

Helen Slade proposed that the accounts be adopted, this was seconded by Sue Edwards and unanimously passed.

Membership Secretary's Report: (attached) was summarised. We currently have 138 members – the most at this stage for several years – including members in Austria, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA. Most members have embraced the MemberMojo renewal system which caters for payment via PayPal, BACs and cheque, and the Membership Secretary finds it easy to administer. The only problems arise through members making payments without going through MemberMojo, particularly if the payment is made as a donation. Sixty-six members bought Grand Draw tickets.

Officers and Committee Members: There were no new nominations for any of the posts, except for that of Vice President. Helen Slade (who will also retain responsibility for autoharp spare parts, etc), nominated by Derik Palmer and seconded by Sue Edwards, was elected unanimously. The following were confirmed in their roles: Derik - President, and (although preferring not to be dual-hatted) to continue as Treasurer for a further year), Neil - Secretary, Doug - Membership Secretary, Jan - Events Organiser and Editor of Autoharp Notes, Lyn - Loaner Coordinator, Anne - Website Co-ordinator, Alison Simmons – Committee Member. All proposed by Sue, seconded by Cary and accepted unanimously.

Anita proposed a formal vote of thanks to the Committee for their service and hard work – all agreed.

Future Events

We will be continuing with regular online events – workshops with Karen Mueller, the monthly Meet, Greet and Warble (both of which are well-supported), and workshops with other tutors including, possibly, Tom Schroeder, Cindy Harris, perhaps a concert from Neal & Coleen Waters and so on. A further ‘free’ UKA Day will be planned, possibly for Saturday 18th June (which is close to World Music Day on 21st June), with a further such event possible before the end of the year.

Those present were asked for their thoughts about live events. Obviously such events would not cater for our whole and very widespread membership, but there are those who find Zoom difficult, and most would welcome the chance to meet in person. It might be that smaller more local events would work – maybe 10 or so members getting together with one tutor in a location cheaper than a school? Marilyn and John expressed an interest in doing something in Devon (6 members there, but others from Dorset and the South West might be prepared to travel). Sue also expressed an interest in getting something together in the Gloucester area in the not too distant future. Other members might like to step-up to act as local hosts in other areas. Neil would be very happy to organise something in Dorset. The Committee will provide whatever help they can to get such events happening, and they would, of course be underwritten by UKA. Jan also mentioned that there will be a meeting of autoharpers in Moniaive this year – though on an informal village basis, rather than as a full UKA ScAW.

The question of geographical location of members was raised. It would be very useful if members knew where others (particularly those near them) were so that they might get together to play and so on. The members’ directory from Nonsuch was shown. Could UKA not do likewise? Obviously members would need to consent to be included in this. The AGM agreed to ask the Committee to investigate this further, and Helen, in her new role as VP, agreed to lead this.

Other Business

Sue asked to mention an initiative for Ukraine she is organising at SFSS Easter Week, a sale of surplus music items – tuners, picks, stands, etc with the proceeds to be donated to ‘School in a Bag’ for Ukraine, The Yeovil-based charity is connected to ‘Shelter Box’ and provides rucksacks filled with pencils, notebooks, maths equipment, a water bottle and a lunchbox, such that might be useful to asylum seekers and displaced children. Donations of £5 or £1 would be asked for items depending on potential value. Those attending Sore Fingers encouraged to take items to donate.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 4.04pm.

The Grand Draw then took place.

Grand Draw Results:

1st – Gig Bag – Claudia Myatt

2nd – Set of Strings – Irene Anderson

3rd – Cooperstand – Hilary Robinson

4th – Roll of Felt – Diana Arseneau-Powell

5th – Autoharp Cosy – Anne Pyne