

UK AUTOHARPS
PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2022

We have come through another year and survived! Better than this, we have advanced. We finished 2022 with almost 150 members and despite still being named UK Autoharps our membership is now very much international with members across Europe, several in the United States and even one in Australia. This growth in our geographic spread is a consequence of our much-expanded online presence on social media and the attraction of our online activities; clearly, we're doing something right! I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all those of you who have joined us in 2022 wherever you are, and whatever your mother tongue; music is the universal language, good for both heart and soul that brings all nations together, and long may it remain so.

During the course of the year we have learned in monthly workshops with Karen Mueller which have rightly proved very popular; we have enjoyed monthly 'Warbles' run by Jan Brodie and other workshops provided on an ad-hoc basis by Ivan Stiles and Helen Slade. And of course we have had two excellent UKA Days at no cost to members but with paid contributions from Mike Fenton, Karen Torell Hoffman, Neal and Colleen Walters, Jo-Ann Smith and Tom Schroeder. I should note here that Tom declined to accept payment for his contribution and asked that we donate it to BeeKind, a UK charity that seeks to protect our world's declining population of honeybees. "They need it more than I do" he said. Thank you Tom for that very generous gesture.

Despite increased membership we have finished the year with fewer funds than we started. The main reason is made clear in the expenditure statement and the Treasurer's Report; we have spent a considerable amount on establishing a new website. Our old one was falling to bits, built with now outdated software that was hard to maintain and frequently incompatible with newer features we wanted to incorporate. Following advice in 2001 we signed up to Making Music, a charity dedicated to supporting live music groups which would provide us with a website at what seemed an advantageous cost. In the event, this proved to be a mis-step; the website was slow to arrive and in some respects didn't meet the specification outlined by the UKA Committee. So alongside this we commissioned a website designer to create one that would meet the specification and would be easily maintained. I would like to thank Anne Cole, our Webmaster, for all the work she has put in and continues to do to make this new website both highly functional and attractive. It will be a great resource for our members and a superb showcase for UKA.

UKA does not run itself. The fact that it continues to function at all is due to the enthusiasm and continual work of a small band of members known collectively as The Committee. Despite having families, social lives and in some cases working lives too, each of them gives freely of their time, energy and expertise to maintain what we have already achieved and seek ways to improve it. Being President and therefore de-facto Chairman of this group is an awesome privilege and I'm grateful to each and every one of them for their contributions. I hope you all will share my sentiments. And on behalf of the committee I'd like to thank all of you for your support throughout what are still very difficult times.

We shall continue to work to see UKA grow in the coming year and beyond, in members, resources and activities. Suggestions are always welcome so if you feel there is something new we could be doing, or something we already do that could be done better, please let us know. UKA is your association, after all.

Derik Palmer
President.