



Charity No. 1124762

**West Sussex Guitar Club AGM**  
**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2013**  
**at Regis School of Music at 9.25 pm**

**Committee Members present:**

Sasha Levtov (Chairman/Artistic Director) **SL**

Mike McCurrach (Treasurer) **MM**

Baz Boxall (Charity Officer/Membership Secretary) **BB**

Julie Insull (Club Promotion Officer/Librarian) **JJ**

Robin Smith (Hospitality Officer) **RS**

Debbie Burford (Secretary) **DB**

SL welcomed club members to the 20<sup>th</sup> AGM of the WSGC.

**1) Apologies for Absence**

No apologies were received but only 20 members attended the meeting.

**2) The Minutes of the last AGM**

The minutes from the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2012 were approved by a unanimous show of hands.

**3) Receive the Artistic Director's Report**

Members had received by post the Artistic Director's detailed report of the club's 20<sup>th</sup> season. SL prepared a short screen presentation (concert posters accompanied by deafening applause) as a reminder of the aims of the club which are to share a love of music and classical guitar. He also saw the club as providing a calm environment in which to draw youngsters away from the "corrupting" electric instrument!

**4) Adoption of the Club Accounts**

MM presented the accounts from 1/8/2012 to 31/7/2013. MM broadly summarised by stating that the club started the year with £8000 and ended with £8500 which was very positive. He was excited by the year's concerts featuring performers of the highest calibre which were (on the whole) well attended. If the club could attract just 20 more people to each concert then the books would always balance. This year's concerts only balanced because of some exceptional events; Xufei Yang gave the club half her takings and the two Festival of Chichester concerts plus the hago concert raised substantial funds. St. John's concert was also exciting because many of the audience were new to the club and it is hoped to build on this. All the performers, including Amanda Cook, volunteered their services and performed so well.

The WSGC November Festival is an important "outreach" event, developing young guitarists. MM remembered his first festival; the hall jam-packed with youngsters, guitars, parents, grandparents and it was very exciting. The junior festival pays for itself whereas the senior day makes a loss, mainly because they don't bring their parents along! The shortfall on last year's festival (including the Vida concert which needed those 20 more people to attend) was £1000, so that is the challenge, and though the club is happy to support it we may need to seek sponsorship.

MM sees the club continuing to arrange high profile concerts, supporting club members (eg. bursaries) and also perhaps helping youngsters who have inadequate guitars. MM thinks the fees are right and that we should keep prices the same. He finished by appealing to the audience, "There are 20 of us here. Can we all persuade just one paying person to come?" There was applause and SL thanked MM.

The statement of club accounts was approved by a unanimous show of hands.

**5) Election of Club Officers**

SL listed the committee and non-committee posts and stated that all the committee were happy to continue. He then listed the two vacant posts, that of Fundraising Officer and Publicity Officer, duties which the committee currently shares. He stressed how important fundraising has been over the years and it is only in the last 5 years with trust funding that we haven't struggled to find sufficient funds to maintain the concerts and building. Regular funding has come from Bognor Town Council and the Marsh Christian Trust but this involves annually filling in forms. Patrick Butcher has been helping MM with this but SL did not want the burden to fall on MM as he already does enough. If someone came forward to help it would be very important.

The Publicity Officer (PO) post is also very important and our publicity is currently insufficient because we are not quite bringing in enough people to the club. It is not a complicated job, contacting newspapers and updating the website, but it has to be done in advance. It would not be a great deal of work but would be a great help to the club.

SL offered his sincere thanks to all the committee in turn. RS helps organize outside events and festivals. MM's computer has been steaming up lately with all the figures. DB is absolutely indispensable taking minutes with a sense of humour. BB looks after the membership, collects fees and standing orders, and communicates with the Charity Commission, recently working with them to correct an error in the figures. Thanks also to JI who looks after the club's image and also the wonderful display board here every week, full of information. When David and Alison Stonestreet stood down, JI took over looking after the whole library which has become more and more popular. Jez Rogers was also thanked for setting up and working on the website from his home in New Zealand. He is stepping back so it would help if the new PO was able to continue with the website, which is looked at by hundreds each week from all over the world.

Two other people were profoundly thanked. Moyria Woodgate (MW) keeps our archive of albums which are a wonderful depiction of the whole history of the club. Terry Woodgate (TW)'s newsletter is very important to all of us to recall events and also because it is given to all our artists and adjudicators.

The committee was voted in by a unanimous show of hands as follows:

|                |                                   |              |   |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Sasha Levtov   | <b>Chairman/Artistic Director</b> |              |   |
| Mike McCurrach | <b>Treasurer</b>                  | Julie Insull | <b>Club Promotion Officer/ Librarian</b>      |
| Debbie Burford | <b>Secretary</b>                  | Baz Boxall   | <b>Membership Secretary/Charity Officer</b>   |
| Robin Smith    | <b>Hospitality Officer</b>        | VACANT       | <b>Fundraising Officer/ Publicity Officer</b> |

For the non-committee posts MW would continue as Photographer/Archivist and TW as Newsletter Editor. There were no offers from the floor to take on the vacant posts.

## 6) Discussion of Club Affairs

SL then gave the audience a chance to express opinions on club affairs and BB's questionnaire was handed round. SL first asked Ian Burt, as a supporter from the very beginning of the club, if there was anything we could do better? Well-known for his strong opinions, there was a gasp as Ian replied, "I'm very happy". SL thanked Ian for designing the club's logo all those years ago. "Would you like to be Publicity Officer?" was then asked of each member of the audience in turn to which the reply was always, "No". Pam Fereday was last to decline the offer of PO but said she would be happy to help JI with the library. Linda Kelsall-Barnett thanked SL for the opportunity for the West Sussex Music Centre to come and play. She also thought the club is running successfully as it is (as did Kit, Joanna, Peggy, Daphne and David) but would like to see more attending club evenings. Sue Reeve thought the club was terrific and is going to try and bring a friend. TW would like to see more variety at club evenings and suggested Maurice Thomas' lute talk. MM said numbers had dropped recently and thinks we need to be more inventive. Linda said she was very happy to organise a club evening.

TW suggested we go one better than a recent event in Lyme Regis where 2000 guitarists played in unison on the beach and got into the Guinness Book of Records. It was suggested we could be naked or combine it with the Birdman event, jumping in with guitars (naked or otherwise). Linda said, "I'm not taking my guitar onto the beach!"

MM mentioned that this small seaside town had concerts of outstanding quality that you would normally only find in London and described the club as "Bognor's best kept secret". He suggested a concert in Arundel to put us more on the map. Linda expressed concern about acoustics but SL said the Barons Hall, Arundel and St Johns Chapel, Chichester were both very good for guitar. He plans to engage the Vida Quartet to play at St Johns next year and thinks they are "the best quartet in the world". TW agreed we need to build on the success of the Chichester concert.

Daphne Snocken had recently seen the Arctic Guitar Trio (Arne Brattland's group from Norway) and put in a request to SL to have them at the club.

SL mentioned that Sam Brown was studying in London with 16 other guitarists and would like to entice them here. Since the last train is 9.30pm he wondered if we could put them up. A sleepover in the hall was suggested.

"Why do we need a sponsor?" SL reiterated that every professional concert needed £200-500 support from club funds. The club also wished to continue supporting youngsters and this year's bursaries have helped George Robinson, India Falconer and Victor Smith. SL also thanked Pam Fereday for donating a guitar to the club.

## 7) AOB

None.

SL concluded the AGM by thanking everyone for supporting the club. The meeting closed at 10:40pm.