MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NORWICH PHIHARMONIC SOCIETY HELD AT THE ASSEMBLY HOUSE, NORWICH ON TUESDAY 20 JUNE 2017 AT 7.30PM

Colin Pordham, Vice President, took the chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said that the Society’s President, Antony Jarrold, gave his apologies as he was indisposed.

1. **Apologies:**

Apologies for absence were received from 22 members. 38 members were in attendance.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting:**

Colin suggested the Minutes be circulated in advance of the meeting next time. Members were asked if they would accept them as a record of the meeting and they were unanimously voted as a correct record.

1. **Chairman’s Report:**

Colin introduced the Chair’s report by saying that an Honorary Degree was to be conferred on Caroline Dixey (Chairman). He said her role as Chairman of the Society was mentioned in the Press release and thanked her for all that she did for the Society. Caroline then presented her report (see attached).

1. **Annual Accounts:**

Kate Anetts (Treasurer) presented her report (see attached).

Colin said that Kate did so well to get everything within the budgets and thanked her and Chris Jennings for their work. The Accounts were unanimously approved, proposed by Caroline Furniss and seconded by Sally West-Lindell.

1. **Election of Officers**

The Officers of the Committee were re-elected en bloc by a vote in favour proposed by Judy Tryggvason and seconded by Peter Phillips.

1. Election of Ordinary Members:

There was a vacancy for an Orchestral Representative and there being no other nominations Ron Jackson was re-elected proposed by Caroline Dixey and seconded by Mike Nutt. There was also a vacancy for a Choir Representative and Alex Atherton was elected proposed by Sally West-Lindell and seconded by Pat Stephenson. There were two vacancies for Public Representatives and Robin Wetherall was elected to fill one of these, proposed by Caroline Dixey and seconded by Sue Mitchell.

1. Appointment of an Independent Accounts Examiner:

Kate said that Chris Jennings had been persuaded to continue in this role for another season. He was elected by a vote in favour proposed by Colin Pordham and seconded by Peter Halls.

1. Presentation of Long Service Awards to Members

Colin said this was always a pleasurable exercise and he presented the awards to Mary Hall and Diana Gilder, each having been members of the choir for 26 years, and Paul Allen, a choir member for 25 years. Rachel Clayton, also a choir member for 25 years, did not attend the meeting.

1. Concert Programme for the next season 2017/18

Mike Nutt said there was a terrific programme in store with some rarely heard works as in the previous season. The opening piece, Sibelius’ Symphony No 1 was well known and influenced by Tchaikovsky, first being performed in the same year as ‘Finlandia’. The second half of the November concert he thought sounded like an app for an i-phone.

David took over to introduce ‘The Cloud Messenger’ composed in 1910-12 by Holst, based on Sanskrit poetry and experimental in style. He said Wagner and Rimsky Korsakov were influences, the first performance was a disaster, but Holst emerged from the gloom of this to compose ‘The Planets’. David said he and Vaughan Williams both liked the work which featured an organ climax in the middle. The piece was now in proper print so could be resurrected as a more popular work.

Mike pointed to some lovely images in the new season’s brochure with lots of clouds and what he felt was a transcendental theme. The Society having recently performed Mahler’s Symphonies nos 1,2,5 and 8, he said the theme would be continued in December with a performance of Mahler’s 9th Symphony ‘a vision of the hereafter’ composed not long before his death. He hoped it would play to a packed house as with previous Mahler performances.

David said the Christmas programme was taking shape. Cawston Brass Band would be playing under the baton of Lee Sharpe and he hoped they would combine in some numbers with the chorus.

Mike introduced the February concert saying the outstanding pianist Alexander Ullman would be playing Rachmaninov’s Piano Concerto No 3. The piece was most demanding and was featured in the film ‘The Shine’ starring Geoffrey Rush. Also in the concert was Martinu’s Symphony No 3 and it was a first time for this Czech composer. Martinu was composing the work in 1944 during the Second World War giving it a sombre aggressive tone. The meditative end section in E major reflected the Allied Invasion then taking place. The overture at the start of the concert by Kabalevsky was a bit of froth from a largely forgotten opera but was wonderful music.

David rounded off the season talking about the March choral concert which would include Brahms’ ‘Song of Destiny’, last done in 1992 and although a smaller work than his Requiem, still a masterly piece. The other major work would be Mendelssohn’s Symphony No 2 which was neither a pure symphony nor a purely vocal work, but a sort of cantata which celebrated the 400th anniversary of the invention of the printing press. It included the famous piece ‘I waited for the Lord’.

David added that he was pleased that the chorus had been invited to sing in a performance of Mahler’s 8th Symphony in Ely on July 7th 2018 and it would be great to do it again.

1. Any other business

Ivor Self said that over the past ten years, as an ex Health and Safety Executive Officer, he had been concerned about choir access in St. Andrew’s Hall. He felt an approach should be made to the Council regarding the need for hand rails or balustrades. Although he would be happy to approach the Council himself he felt this should be done en masse by the Society.

Caroline D replied that the Society had close liaison with The Halls and could ask them but it would not be easy. She suggested talking about it within the Committee and getting ideas from Ivor to pursue.

Sally West-Lindell then said she would like to thank three people especially for their hard work and presented orchids to Caroline, Kate and Sue.

Colin thanked everyone in closing the meeting. There followed a recital from the flute and clarinet choirs from the Norfolk Centre for Young Musicians, arranged by Juliet Rickard. The recital was very well received and Caroline thanked them very much.