

North East Early Music Forum (Registered Charity No. 326282)

Annual General Meeting 11:30am on Saturday 29th September 2007 held at The School of Music, The University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT

1. Apologies

Richander Birkinshaw (who we thank for leaving her lemon cream pie, though she could not stay because of a bad cold!), Graham Coatman, Tim and Alison Down, Flora Pitt, Pam and Alan Radford, Jeffrey and Anne Singleton.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were generally approved as correct, and signed by Jillian Johnson.

3. Matters arising

The camping weekend is still under consideration.

4. Officers' Reports

Chairman:

Jillian Johnson confirmed that she would be retiring as Chair at the end of this meeting. She thanked the committee for working so hard on behalf of NEEMF. She'd had fun in the post, but had many other musical commitments. She was happy to leave a strong committee with a new Chair. She had written an article about NEEMF which had been printed in the NEMA magazine. She confirmed that she would remain as NEEMF Librarian – a committee-appointed but non-committee post. She hoped also to organise workshops in future. The Library is being used, though not all the newer stock is yet catalogued – but work is proceeding. Announcements of new materials will be made quarterly. The Library has even had borrowing requests from abroad, but the stock is not insured for foreign loans.

Secretary:

John Murdie thanked Jillian on behalf of the Committee and the membership for the years that she had spent as NEEMF Chair. While she always protested her lack of professional credentials to head the Forum, her strong leadership and great knowledge of the field of Early Music and its performers who would make suitable workshop directors had been a great asset, and had provided a sure foundation on which to build our success. He presented Jillian with a gardening voucher – a private present from the committee, since the Constitution does not permit NEEMF funds to be spent on gifts. He had little to report other than saying that the Secretary received various items of publicity which he forwarded to the NEEMF electronic mail list. He put printed items in the public racks at Banks Music Shop, York.

Treasurer:

Bill Hunt reported that NEEMF had made an overall surplus this year. Eight of the year's workshops had made a surplus – large at the Swaledale and Dore workshops – but the Oswaldkirk workshop and the Residential Weekend had made losses. Peter Gallant, ex-Treasurer, commented from the floor that he wished to congratulate Bill for the way he keeps NEEMF's finances in order. John Bryan, ex-Chairman, asked from the floor whether the Committee had any idea why some workshops were successful and others were not. John Murdie said that Elisabeth Hedges, our Arts Council Liaison Officer, was handing out questionnaires at each workshop for attendees' feedback. Jillian Johnson suggested that we send out questionnaires to all members asking why they did not attend (some) workshops. The Committee thought that an excellent suggestion, and said that it would be implemented. Someone asked if the membership fee should be increased this year. There was general agreement that it should remain the same.

Membership Secretary:

Marion Bolton said that the maximum membership ever had been 207, but that we had 193 members now.

Arts Council Liaison:

Elisabeth Hedges said that NEEMF was now about to start the third and last definite year of Arts Council support. All nine student bursaries have been awarded, and reports have been received from

the recipients and published. Of the nine extra workshops, five have been held with another four planned for next year. So far we have been given £6500 of the grant. The remaining £725 will be given after the last year's Activity Report. The following sums have been allocated: £1200 for the Library Catalogue; £2200 for the nine bursaries; and £2125 for six workshops, leaving £1700 for the four workshops to be held next financial year. Anna Shuttleworth asked from the floor whether we could apply to the Arts Council for continuing funding. Gill Humphrys answered her from the floor saying (as a NORVIS committee member) that NORVIS had not been successful in an attempt to get follow-on Arts Council funding, and that she thought that this was generally unlikely. Jillian Johnson said that NEEMF had been very lucky to have the time and expertise of Richard Lee, Elisabeth's predecessor, to make the application to the Arts Council for this funding. There was general discussion about the lack of young people as members of NEEMF despite the enthusiastic feedback of students who had attended our workshops.

Events Coordinator:

Thomas Green apologised for the date clash between the Swaledale and (cancelled) Beverley workshops. He is keeping an eye on the needs of special interest groups among our members – lutes, viols, recorders, medieval, baroque etc. A complaint came from the floor that there were not now any workshops East of York. Thomas said that ideas needed champions, and that the Committee would gladly accept volunteers to organise workshops. Someone said that the Southern Early Music Forum had a public festival day each year – might NEEMF do the same to spread the word?

Newsletter Editor:

Alison Down, not present, had sent a written report. She thanked Lian French, the committee-appointed NEEMF Post-Mistress, for having efficiently despatched the NEEMF mailings this year. She also thanks Jillian Johnson for doing the printing (which she will continue to do after her resignation as Chair), and Marion Bolton for printing and providing the mailing labels. Alison reminded all present that items for the newsletter – workshop reviews, articles, letters, items for the event diary etc. would all be gratefully received, as would non-copyright illustrations.

Web-master:

Thomas Green said that the web site is being well used, as is the discussion group. The committee now has a Private web area for stationery etc. He invites the submission of workshop etc. photos.

5. Gift Aid and Membership

Jillian Johnson introduced this item, asking whether the membership wished the Forum to continue to apply for Gift Aid, and thus not be allowed to give more than 25% of the membership fee as direct benefit to members – this in practice excludes differential fees for workshops. Last year's AGM had heard an objection that there was now no incentive to be a member. Jillian said that this matter would be put to a vote after a discussion in this meeting: votes i) to reinstate differential workshop fees and to lose Gift Aid; and ii) to retain Gift Aid. Bill Hunt said that Gift Aid had gathered £??? income this year. William Marshall asked how many non-members attended workshops. Elisabeth said that unfortunately this was not a question on her questionnaire, but that some work would find the answer. Marion Bolton said that she thought perhaps ten or so non-members attended workshops. Gill Knowles asked how much the membership fee was – perhaps make it free or nominal. John Murdie said that it was £12 and that it had not been necessary to increase it in years, so it was essentially nominal. Peter Gallant said that the differential costs we used to apply to the workshop fees were too small to make a difference, and that the Forum should continue to take Gift Aid. Someone said that NWEMF had set up a Bursary Fund on which Gift Aid is claimed but had kept differential workshop fees – the Bursary Fund is used to aid young musicians. David Bolton said that the membership fees really are token. John Bryan said why not give a literal £3 token (25% of the membership fee) to people as an extra encouragement to become a member. Jo Green suggested greatly increasing the membership fee and greatly decreasing the workshop fees for members. Thomas Green said that we now had three possibilities: i) keep the status quo; ii) abandon Gift Aid; iii) use Gift Aid differently, as in NWEMF's use. Peter Gallant suggested instead a formal proposition: that NEEMF stay with Gift Aid, and adopt John Bryan's

suggestion of a £3 voucher given out on membership. This proposition was seconded by ?, and put to the vote. The motion was almost unanimously carried.

6. Election of Officers

Jillian Johnson is resigning as Chair. Anne Christys has tendered her resignation because she feels she is not now able to find the time to be Committee Member Without Portfolio, so that post is also now available. Graham Coatman had put himself forward for nomination as Chair. Jillian Johnson proposed him, and Alison Down seconded him. The Secretary counted 27 votes in Graham's favour, none against, and two abstentions. Gervais Frykman, not present, had put his name forward for nomination as ordinary committee member. John Dickinson nominated him, and Marion Bolton seconded him. He was elected unopposed. Jillian Johnson proposed that the rest of the committee be re-elected en bloc. The meeting unanimously agreed to this motion.

7. Past and Future Events

As the meeting was running late, Jillian Johnson asked the members to approach the Events Coordinator, Thomas Green, with any concerns or suggestions. Thomas asked members to consider organising an event and reminded everyone that Jillian's article explaining how to do this was on the web-site.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Jillian said that this would be left in abeyance. It should be placed outside the dates of the Hexham Festival to allow Graham, our new Chairman, who is Director of the Festival, to chair the next AGM.

9. Any Other Business

Thomas Green asked about the future of the Residential Weekend. Jillian Johnson said that the last few Residential Weekends had had diminishing attendances – just 21 participants this last time – and that it had lost £500 again this year, though NEEMF could afford that. In any case she did not wish to continue to organise it, having managed it for many years. Rodney Hughes asked whether a different time of year might improve applications. Jillian said that the availability of affordable academic premises and accommodation decided the time at the end of the conference season. Jo Green said that the Lute Society weekend at Scargill House in the Dales had been successful. Bill Hunt asked how many had attended. Jo said there had been sixty people, but not just lutenists; there had been other musicians there also. Peter Gallant said that it was disappointing that the Residential Weekend should come to an end. Jillian said that it was partly because musical opportunities elsewhere had increased.

The meeting closed at 12:55.

Signed as an accurate record of the meeting:

Jillian Johnson, Chair