

The Lute Society
Agenda of the Annual General Meeting
to be held by zoom conference at 5 pm, BST on 8th May 2021 at The Dutch Church, London

Url for Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83317678730?pwd=UmZUMlNnaDBYZ0dPRXN2Q0s5bmdBQT09>

Meeting ID: 833 1767 8730

Passcode: 368815

- 1. Minutes of the previous AGM**
- 2. Matters arising**
- 3. Accounts and Finances, to be presented by the Treasurer; receiving of the 2020 Trustees Report and Accounts: read online at <https://www.lutesociety.org/pages/accounts>**
- 4. Secretary's report**
- 5. Journal editor's report**
- 6. Publications editor's report**
- 7. Election of committee members, election of committee: Mike Ashley, Rick Jones, Myles Payne, Stephanie Feeney, retiring, Kevin Drake restanding; notified standing in advance of the meeting: Nancy Carlin, Sam Chapman, Sarah Shepley, Kevin Feeney
Election of president: restanding: David van Edwards**
- 8. Any other business**

The Minutes of the Lute Society AGM 2019
Held at the Dutch Church, Austin Friars 11th May 2019 at 11.00am

The meeting was opened by Nick Gravestock, Chair, who also took minutes.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the AGM 2018 had been distributed. It was proposed by Luke Emmett, seconded by Paul Overell that they be accepted, passed nem com.

2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3. The accounts

The accounts were presented by David Protheroe, treasurer. The Treasurer passed round the 2018 accounts. He reported that the society voted to change its structure last year from an unincorporated society to a **CIO**, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This meant creating a new legal entity for the CIO, also called "The Lute Society", and then transferring the assets from the old Lute Society to the new CIO on 31 December 2018. These accounts have been produced on a merger basis, as if the two entities were one and the same. So technically, the financial activities in 2018 were for the old society, while the closing balance sheet is for the CIO, but they are presented as if there had been no change. This is all explained in the notes to the accounts. The old society has been dissolved. The 2018 accounts for the old society were produced and independently examined, but I've not provided you copies today. They were virtually the same as these accounts, except that the closing balance sheet was nil.

The treasurer then presented the pages of the accounts and invited questions from the floor. [The accounts are a public document and can be found on the charity commission website, or supplied by email on request to the members].

Pages 1-3 are the Trustees' Report, giving details of our main activities: the magazine and journal, publications, lute hire, quarterly meetings, and finally educational and outreach activities, all of which the secretary will discuss in more detail. This year for the first time we raised an appeal, the **Student Bursary Fund**, to encourage greater uptake of the instrument among music students.

Page 4 is the SOFA, (Statement Of Financial Activities), setting out the annual income from each of our activities, and the corresponding expenditure. Net income was £18,291, but this includes £11,500 in donated lutes and £290 from the student bursary fund, which leaves £6,501 as net income in the general fund. The student bursary donations appear in a separate column, restricted funds, because the donations can only be used for student bursaries. Our other donations are not restricted – I was going to say they don't have strings attached, but that would be a misleading metaphor for lutes. The surplus for the year in the general fund, £6,501, is the highest ever. Our policy is to break even, and we set the membership fee accordingly, but this year we saw an unexpected resurgence in publications and lute hiring after some years of decline. Our initial idea is to use the surplus to help fund the imminent publication of the Herbert of Cherbury facsimile.

Page 5 is the balance sheet. We are accumulating cash, with a balance of over £50,000 at the year end, but the balance sheet shows that most of it is needed to cover significant liabilities in the form of about £18,000 for members' subscriptions received in advance, and a further £14,000 set aside to pay for journals produced in arrears, i.e. members are entitled to a journal for each year they belong, and we're behind in producing journals.

The balance on the general fund, £12,881, shows our true net position. This has been steadily rising since 2014 when it was negative.

Page 6 are accounting policies. These were revised in 2015 following big changes in the accounting world, and we now follow the Charities SORP (2014 version) and FRS 102.

Page 7 gives more detail of each of the activities. Note we make a surplus from publications and lute hire (notes 5 and 6) which provide a cross subsidy to our loss making activities such as the magazine and public meetings (note 7).

Page 8 gives more detail of balance sheet items. Tangible fixed assets (note 8) are the lute hire fleet, (currently 96 lutes!) plus office equipment such as a photocopier and a computer. Stock (note 9) are pre-printed editions – there were two reprints of popular student editions during the year – but most of our publications are printed to order and don't appear as stock. Consumables are stamps: the December Lute News didn't go out until early January, but we bought stamps in December in readiness. (The same happened in 2017). By the way, we've considered getting a franking machine instead of using stamps, but we don't have the volume for it to be cost effective.

Page 9 gives more detail of liabilities, plus note 15 related party transactions where we disclose all transactions with trustees and other related parties.

Page 10 is the independent examination with a clean report. Under charity commission rules, the accounts have to be independently examined, not necessarily by a qualified accountant, but someone with sufficient financial skills to follow accrual accounting. (I am grateful this year to Julia Paget Brown, who though practising as a solicitor, originally qualified as an accountant). Unfortunately she's not going to be available next year, so we're looking for a suitable replacement next February. The treasurer asked the floor to let him know if they knew of anyone who might volunteer. They can be a member of the society, but should be independent of the trustees.

Question A question was raised from the floor about any expenses incurred in transferring to CIO Status. The treasurer reassured the questioner there were none as all the work had been done by John Reeves and himself. A vote of thanks to the treasurer was proposed by the Chair, proposed formally by Mike Lowe and seconded by Richard Corran, and passed nem com (with applause).

4. Secretary's report

As always the Secretary's speech consisted mainly of thanks.

For the third year running the membership stands more or less unchanged and indeed remarkably consistent: 1086 in 2016, 1088 in 2017, and 1087 in 2018. The number of new members has been on a gentle downward trend for some years, but evidently the members we have are becoming more loyal. Demand for hire lutes and revenue from them stood at an all-time high, and there remains unsatisfied demand for theorboes, and some of the other minority lutes.

We have had some memorable events this year, and would like to thank those who have made these possible, too numerous to list individually here. Meetings have included our ever-popular young artists sessions, notably a singer's masterclass led by Emma Kirkby as part of a joint day with the Viola da Gamba Society last September, and another this February, at which the standards attained by the young artists was reassuringly high. Other memorable sessions included a lecture on fingering by Nigel North, some superb Caccini singing, and Dowland's Lachrymae pavans, and papers on lute symbolism, and on the lute in Regency Bath, and a call to repentance in the matter of historically authentic archlutes and theorboes. Today we look forward to something rather different – a day themed around the lute in street and tavern. These meetings have spawned some really excellent papers for Lute News, which in addition has received other papers not given as lectures at meetings,

notably an excellent paper asking whether the lute every really died out at all. Meanwhile The Lutezine has presented papers on the colascione, loaded strings, and the Dance of Salome.

There was another very lively Benslow Lutefest, and once again a lute song midweek course there too, playing days in South Wales and in Farnham, another wonderful summer party, and not one but two concerts by the European Lute Orchestra, in Laval in France, and in Utrecht, in conjunction with the Utrecht Early Music Festival, and two church services with lutes and voices, one in Wiltshire in June 2018, and one in February 2019 in Salisbury.

In terms of outreach family difficulties prevented the Secretary from travelling much to other lute-playing nations' meetings but we had a stall at the Blackheath Early Music Exhibition, and of course our large presence in the European Lute Orchestra flies the flag for us. Several of our hire lutes are now played in the Low Countries, and we had a joint meeting with the Viola da Gamba Society. Stephanie Feeney continued her 'Flow my beers' early music nights in pubs, and her radio show, the big late lute breakfast, on Resonance FM.

We at last completed our members' survey and the results were published in The Lutezine. There seems to be a lot that we are doing roughly right; the strongest request seems to be for more meetings outside London, and accordingly there will be a joint meeting with NEEMF in Yorkshire in September and a joint meeting with the Viola da Gamba society in Oxford next April.

The move over to opting in rather than opting out of receiving emails and appearing on the website map is proceeding with no complaints, and a modest but bearable admin burden imposed by the new laws. Our data security is improved with much faster computer backups.

This year we wish a happy 70th birthday to Emma Kirkby and congratulate Franco Pavan on the discovery of the big new cache of lute manuscripts in Pesaro, and send our best wishes to the organisers of the first international conference on the study of the lute in higher education, and to the recently formed Austrian Lute Society, and re-formed Czech Lute Society. We note with joy that the London Weiss manuscript is now available online, that the long-lost portrait of Margaret Gainsborough with a lute has been found, and that there is now a 'lute hero' computer game.

The lute revival has been going on for long enough for there to be some sad news every year: in the last 12 months we have said goodbye to Tessa Murray, who made a wonderful bequest of her lutes, Douglas Alton Smith, Robin Thodey, David Mayers, and Ephraim Segerman and from the wider early music world, Jeanne Dolmetsch, and Layton Ring.

Chris Goodwin went on to give thanks to Julia Paget Brown for acting as independent examiner of the accounts; to Luke Emmet, for his continuing tremendous work as webmaster, to John Robinson, Wilfred Foxe, and Martin Shepherd who had supplied regular music supplements for the magazine – John's extra contributions to the Lutezine continue to be stupendous and he seems to be working practically full-time for us now, on the Herbert of Cherbury facsimile, with further plans in the pipeline for editions of Bachelor, and eventually, drawing together existing projects, editions of 17th century masque music, Robert Johnson, and John Dowland in all known versions. Also he is working on Ian Harwood's posthumous study of the English consort.

And we have to pay particular thanks this year to Michael Heseltine, who has completed the gargantuan task of cataloguing all the music supplements we have ever published – a phenomenal undertaking. This has been posted to the website where it is easily searchable, enabling the music so painstakingly edited over the years to be easily found and enjoyed by newcomers: the Secretary is happy to supply individual pieces to members free of charge, and larger selection may always be purchased. Michael Heseltine has kindly offered to keep updating this list to incorporate future issues.

The Secretary paid thanks to Lynda Sayce for her quarterly beginners' lessons, and to Denys Stephens, for performing the role of General Editor of music publications; to David van Edwards for maintaining the online shop which is now central to our revenue, and for his ongoing work on the lute iconography website and his splendid series of cover picture stories in Lute News, and furthermore for initiating our new product line of Christmas cards.

He thanked John and Joyce Reeve, for organising and funding the summer party; the tutors at the Benslow Lutefest in March, (Gian Luca Lastraioli, Jacob Heringman, Roy Marks, Jeni Melia and Lynda Sayce) which is now an annual spring fixture (the date for the 2020 Lutefest has just been fixed as 5-8 March 2020 with headline tutors Nigel North and Michal Gondko).

Thanks were also paid to, Bridgewood and Neizert of Stoke Newington, and Monica Hall for acting as, respectively, lute hire administrators and repairmen, and CD reviews coordinator; to John Reeve, as custodian of the microfilm collection, to Bruce Brook for retailing plans, to Pam and Graham Hope and Joyce Reeve who have become our regular events photographers and to Djilda Segerman, the Donald Gill librarian.

He thanked David Protheroe and Charlotte Harford for hosting and Stewart McCoy for leading playing days, and Eric Franklin for his ongoing work on a 'buddying' scheme, outreach, and 'meeting and greeting' work. He also thanked those who have continued the high standard of catering – certainly now the highest at any international lute society's meetings - by bringing home-made cakes; Joyce Reeve, Rowena Sudbury, Pat Glynn, Mary Ensor, and Gordon Gregory.

He also thanked all those, too numerous to mention, who had contributed material for the Journal and Magazine, or playing editions, those who had performed mini-recitals, and speakers and players at meetings,

He thanked those who had made various donations to the archive, and also those who had donated either directly in money or in books to be sold for the benefit of the society. Magnificent donations to the hire fleet continue: the Tessa Murray bequest of two lutes, a vihuela and a baroque lute (instruments 92-95) is a wonderful addition and instruments went straight out to hire; the Alan Kay gave us a Luth Doree lute in pristine condition (lute no. 96) and an anonymous donor has given a folding theorbo (no. 97) awaiting only a new case (for its extended rather than collapsed state) to go out on hire too. A very big thank you to them all and to Luke Emmet, who continue to turn sow ears into silk purses, working wonders on some of the older or amateur-made lutes donated to the hire fleet, and of course Bridgewood and Neitzert have been busy fettling these behind the scenes to keep them all battle ready. Other donations have included books for our library, and of course funds; this year for the first time we have a dedicated student bursary fund, the first beneficiary being a student, Sara Salloum, who was given a free place at the Benslow Lutefest. There are surplus funds already, so the fund seems viable for the long term.

He thanked our officers David van Edwards as President, Nick Gravestock as Chairman of the Society, David Protheroe as Treasurer and the members of the committee for their support throughout the year.

In the coming year we look forward to David Protheroe's playing day, on 22nd June, the summer party on 6th July, and meetings including talks on marine archaeology, and the lute and the oud, a meeting in Yorkshire, reviving our commitment to a meeting in the north every year, and an extra joint meeting in Oxford with the viola da gamba society, and of course recitals by leading players.. We greatly anticipate the publication of the long-awaited facsimile of the Herbert of Cherbury lute book. It is hoped that the next ELO concert will take place in Rome, and we are hoping for another joint meeting with the Dutch Lute Society, on the theme of music for the Pilgrim Fathers (or should that be 'parents'?)

A vote of thanks to the Secretary for his extensive work and report plus two following reports was proposed by Mike Lowe and seconded by Peter Lay, all agreed.

5. Journal editor's report

Regrettably, due to a range of adverse circumstances, no journal has appeared between the last AGM and this one. However, there is enough material in hand for at least two more issues, one of which may be a double issue., and a window of opportunity over the summer to typeset these, since the issue of Lute News dedicated to the Herbert of Cherbury lute book is already typeset. A forthcoming issue of Antonio Corona-Alcalde's book on the lute in Christian Spain will be one of the issues. The policy of sending PDFs of the current journal ex gratia to current members continues, and is likely to do so until we get a bit nearer to catching up. We would like to thank all those who have contributed articles to the journal.

The project of digitising back issues of the journals for sale as PDFs is now well advanced and should be complete in the summer.

6. Publications report

In the absence of General Editor of Publications, Denys Stephens, Chris Goodwin provided an ad hoc summary. Recent publications include 158 preludes and ricercars, two editions of religious works for voice and lute by Brian Wright, the introduction of Christmas cards for the lute society by David Van Edwards, and later this summer the long awaited facsimile of Herbert of Cherbury's lute book.

To the members' compositions pages have been added some settings of Spenser sonnets by David Protheroe.

Future plans include an edition of Bachelier, a collection of all the different versions of Dowland, to be published in a book with one selected version of each piece and an electronic version of all the rest - possibly on a memory stick in view of the file size. There are hopes of publishing a complete set of the Milano pieces serialised in the lute society magazine supplements in french tablature, when the final pieces have been done. Green Man editions will produce a set of music of songs by Cavendish for Benslow Lutefest 2020. In time for the proposed Oxford meeting next year on masque music, we hope John Robinson's edition of masque pieces previously published in Lute News will be ready.

A Question was raised on the digitisation of the playing supplements. Currently there are no plans, but the Secretary is happy to scan and send out pieces on request which happens about once a fortnight, so the demand is not huge. Lute News and its supplements are already available from issue 101 onwards. It was also noted that Michael Heseltine's index of contents of music supplements of previous issues of Lute News uses original spellings, which slightly complicates searches, though of course we are deeply grateful for this huge labour.

7. Election of committee members.

We had three members standing down having completed two full terms of 3 years (John Reeve and Pat Glynn) or because moving abroad (Ryaan Ahmed). For the first time in many years (ever?) we had more candidates than places: six people proposed for the three places, limited in number by the constitution. An election was duly held with an exceedingly tight result and only a vote or two in it in some cases. Richard Corran, Peter Jones, and Liz Pallett were duly elected. Kevin Feeney, Roy Marks, and Sarah Shepley were not elected but we hope might be encouraged to stand next year when others reach the end of their term. Many thanks for them all putting their names forward. The committee does have the power to co-opt extra members if required, and has ex officio non-voting members.

8. Any Other Business

Eric Franklin raised the fact that the lord 'buddying system' he used to run has largely been superseded by the Google map and the secretary easily being able to introduce geographically close lutenists, via postcode and county sorting of the membership database, if they wish to play duets etc. It was accepted that this scheme has reached its natural end, since no players have contacted him since he sent out a reminder email to all members as part of an earlier round robin email. We thank him for having operated this scheme for a number of years.

It was noted that the Early Music show on Radio 3 the next day, May 12th, was dedicated to Herbert of Cherbury. It will be listenable for at least a period on the BBC website.

The meeting closed at 11.45