

Leeds Organists' Association

Affiliated to the Incorporated Association of Organists
www.leedsorganists.org.uk

President: Dr. Philip Wilby

President Elect: Dr. Simon Lindley

Secretary: Charles Brown (info@leedsorganists.org.uk)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday February 18th 2021 at 7.30

This AGM was held online via Zoom.

1. Obituaries
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the 2020 AGM (attached)
4. Matters Arising
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Secretary's Report
7. Outgoing Presidential Remarks
8. Election of Officers
9. Election of new President
10. Plans for 2021
11. Any other business

The Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditor stand for one year.

Minutes AGM 2021
Leeds Organists' Association AGM via Zoom
Thursday 18th February 2021 at 7.30 pm

Present

Philip Wilby (President and Chair of meeting), Simon Lindley (President-elect), Charlie Brown (Secretary), Nick Seddon (Website), Tim Gray, Catherine Harris, Andrew Kingscote, Tony Poles, Paul Tidd

Graham Barber, Tom Coxhead, Roland Dee, Gill Hart, John Riley, Giles Taylor, Nelson Walmsley, Wendy Wilby, David Wilks, Margaret Wilks

Minutes

1. **Obituaries** - none.
2. **Apologies** - received from Ian Lawrie, David Pipe.
3. **Minutes of the 2020 AGM** had been circulated in advance to all.

One change was made:

9. ELECTION of OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

Treasurer and Membership - Tim Gray was corrected to Ian Lawrie

4. **Matters Arising** - none.
5. **Treasurer's Report.** The audited accounts had been circulated in advance. Subscriptions for 2020 have been waived, but donations made are gratefully received. It was unanimously agreed to suspend payment of subscriptions for 2021 for the time being. Ian Lawrie was absent, but Giles Taylor noted that although it has been a quieter year for the accounts, a surplus of £278.60 was recorded.
The Treasurer's report is given in full on the next page.

Membership and Finances – February 2021

Membership of the Association currently stands at 53, including 4 Honorary Life Members.

Accounts for 2020-21 have been circulated, showing that our total assets stood at £3,339.13 on 22 January 2021, a net increase of £278.60 over the corresponding figure of £3,060.53 at the same time last year.

In July, the Committee agreed to my proposal that, in view of the Covid-19 situation, subscriptions for 2020 should in effect be waived. More specifically

- no reminders would be issued in respect of unpaid subscriptions, and the rule that membership lapses when a subscription remains unpaid for 9 months would be suspended for 2020;
- subscriptions that had been received would not be refunded;
- subscriptions would fall due as usual on the date of the 2021 AGM, but members who had paid in 2020 could, if they wished, request that their payments count as subscriptions for 2021.

Several subscriptions do remain unpaid, so our income is noticeably smaller than usual, but since expenses have been very modest, we have still recorded a surplus for the year.

It is still uncertain when we shall be in a position to resume regular meetings. My suggestion is that we suspend payment of subscriptions until further notice. The IAO has reduced its capitation fee by 50% for this year. I have not yet worked out our exact payment, but it should be below £100, and our reserves should be ample to cover any likely expenses in the next few months. For information, our current subscription rates are

- Full membership £25
- Concessionary £20
- Student £10

If, for example, we are able to resume something like normal activities from July, we might then ask members to pay 50% of these rates to continue their membership for 2021. However, I do not think we are yet in a position to know what will prove to be equitable, and for the time being I believe it would be wrong to ask members for money of which we have no immediate need.

Ian Lawrie
Honorary Treasurer and Membership Secretary

6. **Secretary's Report.**

Secretary's report for AGM Feb 18th 2021

That was a hell of a year.

When I took on the role of secretary, my life was settled and in a routine as was probably everyone else's.

We had a great year of events programmed by Phil and then Bang!

Covid-19 struck.

In a few short weeks our world had been turned upside down and my business had been decimated.

I was very thankful for my part time post at Ripon Cathedral, but had no idea how that post would develop into its present form, with myself leading the online worship and associated technology.

But what of the LOA? Zoom is great for meetings such as this and a social catch up, but the experience of visiting organs is not the same in the virtual world and there is nothing to beat a face to face chat over a coffee or beer.

So, as a result of all that I have very little to report.

Partly due to Covid and partly due to changes in personal circumstances, I can't continue to be the secretary, and I really feel that the role needs somebody with the time to give it the attention it deserves.

Thank you all for your support and tolerance during this difficult year and I wish my successor all the best.

Charlie Brown

7. President's Report.

AGM Remarks 2021:

from the Outgoing President Philip Wilby.

I choose to begin these remarks by a heartfelt vote of thanks to those officers and committee members of the Association who showed such energy and flexibility during the current pandemic. That we have managed to keep active at all is entirely due to their efforts, and we are all in their debt.

As is well known, this AGM will be my last as President, and you will forgive me if I start these comments with a brief moment of reminiscence.

Thinking back over recent years in the life and times of the LOA, I remember the occasion when Gordon Appleton invited me to rejoin the LOA. Equally well, I remember when he invited me to stand as his President Elect. I can remember the moment when I last saw him as he came back from hospital, and the news that he had died in action at the organ on Easter Day 2017. I can also remember taking over his programme with the help of David Wilks and Roland Dee and how hard we all worked to deliver Gordon's last year's timetable in a way that did justice to his memory. I can remember how much I enjoyed last year's outings, the splendid Movie night with Darius, Charlie Chaplin and free ice-creams. I can remember David Pipe's masterly performance of La Nativite at St Anne's or the multi-player performance of Clavierbung 3 which preceded it. Most tellingly of all, I remember the teaching sessions that enlivened us all, with Graham Barber, Margaret Phillips, and David Pipe. I remember the outstanding organ festivals, in Ripon in Leeds, at the Town Hall recital where we were allowed an open console session after it. So many happy memories, enlivened with guest speakers, Paul Hale, Philip Moore, and Matthew Owens.

Who then could have foreseen how things would have turned out 12 months ago. We enjoyed a fine meal, Matthew Owens flew in from Belfast to talk about kindness, and we said our thanks and farewells to David and Nelson after their long service on our committee. By happy and providential coincidence, last year's AGM also saw the election of new members to the committee. Catherine Harris joined us, and she lowers the average age by a healthy margin. Andrew Kingscote, with his medical background joined two technologists. Charlie and Nic Seddon to complete the 2020 committee. What a Godsend they have all been. Within weeks, all church playing ceased, Easter was silent, organs mouldered, and we faced a novel situation where our fellowship only existed online.

However, cometh the hour cometh the man and the woman, and I must congratulate our new members for their inventive and energetic embrace of new situations..... This year has been a sequence of new situations which no-one could have imagined last February.

We have been invited to add music videos to our website. Graham Barber clearly gets the Presidential medal on this count for his many fascinating and varied 'Organcasts', and many

other members took the opportunity to contribute to a growing and expanding website, expertly managed by Nick Seddon and Charlie Brown. We have held our committee meetings via ZOOM, and all enjoyed a couple of memorable sessions in the autumn, sharing some teaching with David Pipe on hymns, voluntaries, and chorale preludes, and enjoying a socially distanced Christmas recital with our fellow travellers. This even climaxed with a newly composed Christmas duet played jointly by Philip Meaden in Filey and myself in my Garden shed in Ripon. It was simply a case of 'keep calm and carry on' and we have all enjoyed the fun.

Such then have been my recent years as your President. No-one could have written it down in advance, and the most inventive creator of Science Fiction could never hope to publish a script so far-fetched.... And yet..... such has been our shared experience.

It has been my pleasure to serve you all, and I look forward to the next chapter with equal anticipation. No-one can say that the local Organists' Association is dull... as Donald Trump famously said on another occasion..... It was WILD!

At this meeting we say our thanks and farewells to three of our number whose efforts have contributed hugely to the recent success of LOA, and whose energy has kept the Association afloat and positive over the last year.

Tim Gray, who has served as Treasurer and co-author of the constitution, stands down this year. We have asked him to stay on, but he prefers to hand the reins to younger hands, play his Hauptwerk organ, and enjoy his status as the Associations' most recent life-member.

Tim, on behalf of everyone here we thank you most warmly for your long service, and hope that we can all meet up soon.

Please accept this well-deserved round of Applause!

David Pipe has had a most surprising year when his teaching, examining, and performing, as Cathedral Organist at St Anne's, RCO examiner, and teacher of choice for a great cohort of young players in the Diocese of Leeds was all placed online. Understandably he feels that his time is very stretched and that this is his moment to step aside. For my part, David, you have always been a great support to me personally and very generous with your time. Your teaching sessions 'PlayBach' and 'Sweet Songs of Zion' have been inspirational to all who heard them, and we are all in your debt.

Here then, with our thanks, is a second well-deserved round of Applause!

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Last but not least, it comes as no surprise that I wish to single **Charlie Brown** out for a special vote of thanks. As head Verger at Ripon Cathedral, and as a professional IT specialist, Charlie has been at the heart of many of our successes, and has proved to be the perfect person to help the Association in the peculiar circumstances it has enjoyed over the last year. A professional of real distinction, Charlie also possesses the common touch which is so essential in a mixed group like ours where performers of international reputation rub shoulders with their amateur colleagues in a shared love of our favourite instrument.

Charlie has been our 'Man for all Seasons' and we are all truly sorry that events have conspired to compel you to stand down. However, rest assured that we are grateful for the huge amount that you have given to us over recent months. When many similar organisations have been obliged to go into mothballs, you have helped us to keep in touch, make music, and learn for one another.

Charlie, we thank you most warmly for freely sharing your many gifts and we hope to see you again as soon as is practical.

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Here is a third round of socially distanced applause!

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Finally, I would like to extend my own thanks to you all for the support that I have enjoyed as President. I have loved the variety of people, the variety of musical opportunities. Who could forget the trip to Manchester Cathedral when we had the building to ourselves on a Saturday evening, the chance to play the recently rebuilt organ in Selby Abbey, or the chance to hear about Karg-Elert's music for Harmonium in St Bart's with Graham Barber.

From my school days in Leeds, I was trained to be a professional musician, playing the violin and composing freely. However, the organ was always a guilty pleasure, which as a keen amateur I have enjoyed as an inextinguishable hobby.

Serving as your President has been a real privilege for which I thank you all.

PHILIP WILBY February 2021

Incoming President, Dr Simon Lindley, then addressed the meeting. The full text of his address is on the LOA Website - you can read it on the News page.

8. Election of Officers

Treasurer and Membership - Ian Lawrie re-elected

Secretary - Nick Seddon

Safeguarding Officer - Charlie Brown

All proposed by Roland Dee, seconded by Graham Barber

Committee Member(s) - Tom Coxhead, Roland Dee (re-elected), Gill Hart, Giles Taylor, Charlie Brown elected, *proposed by Simon Lindley, seconded by David Wilks*

Auditor - David Wilks elected, *proposed by Phil Wilby, seconded by Wendy Wilby*

9. Election of new President - Dr. Simon Lindley was unanimously elected.

10. Plans for 2021

- Committee to meet on the 8th March.
- Event with Robert Sharpe to speak about the work on York Minster organ to be rearranged (with other local Organ Associations).
- A questionnaire is to be sent out after the middle of April depending on restrictions.
- John Riley is happy to help with his online organ quiz.
- Most of last year's series can be re-used.
- Philip Wilby and Richard Cooper have offered to make an online presentation of their new score 'An English Passion'.
- Peter Wright is currently based at Ripon Cathedral and has offered to chat about his life and experiences.
- Catherine Harris has offered to host a meeting at St Anthony's, Beeston as they have recently acquired an 1893 Forster & Andrews organ. Gill Hart has also offered to host a visit to Hampsthwaite which has an organ by the same maker.

11. Any other business

Alana Brook just been awarded the Turpin/Durrant prize for success in the FRCO examination - Philip Wilby to write from the Association to congratulate her on this. Philip Wilby will also write to Andrew Bryden to record thanks from the Association following his recent departure from Ripon.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.