

**Minutes of the
Second Annual General Meeting of Surrey Brass**
held at Reed's School, Cobham, Surrey on
Wednesday 15th of January 2003 at 7:30 PM.

Attendance

- Will Spencer
- Michael Chapple
- John Goodwin
- Richard Knights
- Huw Evans
- Tim Costen
- Diane Prince
- Jonathan Bird
- Evatt Gibson
- Richard Stubbings

Item 1. Apologies

Steve Dawes sent his apologies – was on a business trip to Italy.

Item 2. Minutes of First Annual General Meeting

These were accepted without changes.

Item 3. Chairman's Report

Will Spencer presented his report to the meeting as follows:

**SURREY BRASS CHAIRMAN'S
REPORT FOR 2002**

Our first engagement was a charity event at Newland House School where we played an assortment of standard repertoire pieces to an enthusiastic audience and helped to raise £1,400 for Barnardo's. Later on in the year we took part in a fundraising event for Reed's school.

The first major concert of our own was held in Holy Trinity Church, Claygate and featured a selection of fanfares, which were judged by a panel of professional musicians, the winning composers received cash prizes. Hugh Davies performed two solo items, which added to a warmly received concert.

Our next outing was a trio of events to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The first was poorly attended partly due to the rain. The second was poorly attended because it was in Woking and the third was well attended because the rain had stopped and hundreds of people gathered to see the fireworks & beacon lighting in Reigate. It was a long day but was good PR for the group as well as being fun in a kind of masochistic way. John Goodwin had a particularly long day as he was being broadcast on the radio before the events took place. This started a relationship with the BBC who recommended the group to play at two events

at the Royal Horticultural Society gardens at Wisley . These were also enjoyable and good publicity for the group. We were then booked for a wedding in Ham House where the events co-ordinator was very impressed and wanted to take our details for future engagements.

The latter half of the year kept us busy with an exciting Russian concert, a Venetian concert (both featuring the sonorous tones of Robin Smith) and two Christmas concerts. The first two stretched the performers to their limits and in the case of the Venetian evening the performance was far from polished. There was much to learn from both events especially the importance of regular *full* rehearsals. We have suffered over the year with a lack of regular trombonists and it has been difficult to arrange enough full rehearsals well before a concert date. Consequently, we end up rehearsing too long on the day and are too exhausted to pull off a first rate performance in the evening. It was decided that in 2003 we would only have two major concerts. The first concert is to be of English Music, and the other based on theme of "Star Crossed Lovers". We have also decided to make a promotional CD. Although this seems like a much easier program for the year it is important that we use the extra rehearsal time to improve the standard of our performances, and that we try to make each one count.

On a brighter note, the two Christmas events were successful in almost every way, with items from Reed's Chapel Choir, The Ripieno Choir, children from St Anne's school in Chertsey, as well as distinguished reader, all adding to well rounded concerts, which left us with a feeling that Surrey Brass really was on the map.

WS

15/01/03

Item 4. Secretary's Report

The Secretary presented a brief verbal report to the meeting. Key points included;

- Surrey Brass has had a good first full year of operation.
- Prospects for the next year also look bright, with several interesting events in the pipeline following the recent Planning Meeting.
- The Secretary's role has proved to be more demanding than first envisaged. This is partly due to the fact that 12 concerts were put on this year, quite apart from other activities.
- In particular, the effort required to promote concerts had proved to be a particular challenge. This role is essential for audience development, and in addition healthy ticket sales are crucial to our financial viability.
- The website has proven to be our most useful promotional asset, and the recent experiment to sell tickets and CD's has worked well.
- Advertisements for volunteer helpers in the marketing role have been placed in the Guildford of Volunteer Bureau and the Richmond

Volunteer Bureau. We await a response, and until one is forthcoming, it would be good to co-opt a member of Surrey Brass to assist with concert promotion.

Item 5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer apologised that there were no accounts prepared in time for this meeting, and thus it was not possible to review the financial status of Surrey Brass at the meeting. Since accounts were not available yet, they could not be audited.

However, he would endeavour to supply accounts as soon as possible. He provided a verbal report. In summary, Surrey Brass is cash rich at present, however has a number of outstanding debts. On the basis of 2002, it will be essential to obtain funding to continue our activities in 2003. Sadly, the economic outlook is poor. The stock market is extremely depressed. Our application to the National Lottery last year revealed less than encouraging signs for the future here. We may need to go back to more traditional funding sources.

Item 6. Election of Officers

the members voted to elect the following people to the posts

- Chairman-Will Spencer
- Secretary-John Goodwin
- Treasurer-Hugh Evans
- Programme coordinator-Richard Knights
- Marketing-Diane Prince
- Librarian-Robin Smith
- Trumpet section manager-Will Spencer
- Horn section manager-Tim Costen
- Trombone section manager-Richard Stubbings
- Tuber section manager-Robin Smith
- Percussion section manager-Michael Creech
- Musical Director-Robin Smith

Item 7. Election of Auditors

Members discussed whether it was better to appoint an auditor from within the player membership, from outside the group. It was concluded that an external auditor would carry more credibility with funding organisations. Richard Stubbings volunteered to ask his wife Jan whether she would be willing to audit the Surrey Brass accounts. In the event that this was not possible, other members offered alternative auditors.

Whilst no Auditor was elected at the meeting, this appointment will be noted at the next meeting.

Item 8. Any other Business

The following items were raised:

Trombone section. Evatt Gibson reminded the members that he would be leaving soon due to his work commitments. This places additional pressure upon trombone section recruitment, which has proved continuously difficult during 2002. A number of approaches were

discussed by the membership. John Goodwin was asked to contact our deputy musical director, to establish whether he would be willing to play trombone for one or more seasons this year. Robin Smith was asked to speak to Eric Crees, Roger Argente, Les Lake, to establish whether they were able to recommend any players. John Goodwin was asked to speak to Sebastian Forbes to determine whether any suitable players were available at Surrey University.

Brass workshop. The possibility of running a workshop was discussed. It was concluded that it would be worthwhile to run workshops at universities and similar higher education establishments, but not compete with other organisations who are already providing a similar service to state schools come. However, there may be an opportunity to run workshops for independent schools and for adult education organisations. In addition, the Secretary reminded the members that the Surrey Brass President, Roger Argente, had made inquiries about Surrey Brass joining forces with the Trinity College of music to undertake workshops on difficult complex works that were really played. Robin Smith was asked to speak to Roger Argente to follow this up.

Subscriptions. The Secretary reminded members of previous informal discussions regarding the need for a subscription to cover weekly rehearsal costs. The current system of collecting cash at each rehearsal was not working well, and therefore a direct debit was considered to be preferable. The members voted to accept paying subscriptions by direct debit. It was not possible to determine the level of subscription at the meeting. The treasurer agreed to calculate the level of subscription required, and to circulate appropriate paperwork to all members in order to set up direct debits.

Front of House helpers. Members recorded their thanks to everyone who helped Surrey Brass over the course of the last year in many roles at the concerts, and hoped that they would continue their excellent support this year.

Stands. A number of comments had been received about the poor visual appearance of the ensemble at concerts, and that this detracted from the performance. Robin Smith suggested that the Surrey Brass and purchases 15 black stands using trade or educational discounts and that individual members by one stand. This would be refunded upon the player leaving the ensemble. The membership agreed that this principle. A new action was agreed to investigate costs of purchase, by Will, Tim and Diane. It was agreed to vote later on the purchase, once cost information was available.

Publicity photos. More photography was required in order to update the brochure and provide other promotional material. Photographs had not been received from the Golden Jubilee concert. John Goodwin was asked to follow up the delivery the Photo CD from the photographer. Robin Smith volunteered to the services of his mother, who is an excellent photographer. In addition, Robin Smith suggested that the

under an easel is purchased to provide the noticeboard during rehearsals, and a dual role as the display board at concerts. It was agreed that this was a good idea, and John Goodwin was asked to investigate costs. The large A-board which Paul Farr had made appeared to be very effective at gaining publicity prior to concerts, and that a better one was required. The members agreed, and asked John Goodwin to investigate further.

Arrangers. John Goodwin commented on the warm reception that John Hughes's arrangements had obtained at concerts. It is clear that if we wished to continue to play an original innovative, and entertaining music, that more people willing to make arrangements for Surrey Brass were needed. After discussion, it was agreed to approach all composers who contributed to the fanfare contest, and also for John Goodwin to investigate composition students at local universities. Robin Smith comments that we had been sent original compositions by several composers and had yet to play them.

Planning meeting. The members thanked Robin Smith for organising the planning meeting, and in particular, for an excellent lunch. The planning meeting had been an entirely successful enabling a programme for the whole year to be assembled very efficiently. This saved numerous e-mails, phone calls, and other conversations. It was suggested to hold another planning meeting mid-year, and this was agreed by the members. Robin Smith mentioned that the music which had been selected for one of the concerts cost £85, however, since it had not yet been published, he was attempting to obtain a discount for first performance, for proofreading services!

Deputy musical director. Robin Smith informed the membership that he was unable to take certain rehearsals. He has been investigating alternative conductors to deputise for him, and a number of people have expressed interest. Paul Archibald is keen to take one rehearsal. Eric Crees is keen to rehearse West side story. Robin agreed to investigate booking these people for appropriate dates. (post meeting note – Robin to discuss funding with Treasurer.)

Storage at Reeds School. Robin Smith agreed to investigate the possibility of a small amount of secure storage space at Reeds School, to accommodate the heavy music box, and also stands and other materials owned by Surrey Brass.

Librarian. Robin Smith requested that all players put their pads in order at the end of concerts. This would save several hours organising music.

Concert Commitments. Robin Smith informed members that in addition to the results of the Planning Meeting, Reeds School has approached Surrey Brass to Rutter's Gloria on the 11th May 2003, and was asked to confirm that this concept would go ahead. John Goodwin agreed to include this in the musical programme on the web site.

Rehearsal organisation. Robin Smith agreed to publish a programme for rehearsals, including named players required to attend. The members agreed that commitment to all rehearsals for a particular concert was required, and that in the event of non-attendance, it was the responsibility of the player concerned to inform the section manager, and to identify the appropriate deputy.

Player Membership: John Goodwin reported that since the departure of Paul Farr, a number of inquiries had been received to the advertisement on web site regarding the tuba vacancy. Robin Smith commented that it was necessary to have a regular player at least on the seasonal basis, so that the ensemble could work with a regular player, with the longer term aim of trying out all candidates, and appointing a permanent player together with a number of deputies. Robin Smith agreed to fix the tuba player for the next season. John Goodwin agreed to pass details of all candidates to Robin Smith.

The meeting closed at 8:35 PM.