



Chairman's Report Leicester Music Society AGM 11th June 2024

Fellow members of LMS – this report will be much as it has been in previous years – giving thanks to the LMS's hard-working committee with specific appreciation to certain members. However, this season has been different in that the Leicester Music Society was teetering on the edge of not happening into next season. Earlier in the season the committee met to consider the future programme and it was, after much deliberation, proposed that as numbers last season were not sustainable financially, despite generous donations, we'd have to close at the end of Season 76. Thanks goodness, then, that the numbers this season for each meeting have been better than expected and with the benefit of a less austere but just as comfortable room (which members tell us they enjoy) we look forward enthusiastically, if with a little trepidation, to Season 77. Actually had we finished this evening, we would have gone out on a high as the committee, David Saunders, Ron Mitchell, Neil Crutchley, Mary Whittaker, Alan Herringshaw and I curated an exciting and varied season to match some of our very best. As always, we do listen to members and have taken on board some of the members' suggestions. Next season, therefore, is just as positive with a welcome return of some of our popular speakers. More of that during the AGM...

That variety was evident throughout this current season with speakers who have educated, entertained, enthused and enlightened us with topics from opera, musical personalities – many geniuses in their fields, jazz, personal recollections and, of course, the Victorian Evening in partnership with the Leicester branch of the Victorian Society. Our speakers' deep and devoted knowledge of their topics enhanced our appreciation of new areas as well as familiar ones. I am especially grateful to members of the committee for their interesting introductions to our guests and their kind votes of thanks too. These votes of thanks are generously expanded when placed on the society's website so do check them afterwards. Each entry on the website includes a track list so, rather than taking notes in the meetings, you can follow up the pieces for yourselves. We actually had an extra meeting this year as Nigel Simeone was indisposed for his February meeting and I am indebted to David Saunders and Neil Crutchley for joining me in maintaining the original date with 35 minutes each of a variety of topics. There is a link to this on the website too. It was also notable that three of the speakers this year had books on offer (sometimes several) which were sold at considerable discount, keenly autographed and all eminently readable. All that we do is promoted and archived on the website which is designed and maintained, by Ron Mitchell. His commitment to LMS and the national FRMS do him and us great credit. Ron's secretarial nous is equalled by the fiscal wizardry of David Saunders who will explain with superb clarity how and why we are able to continue for another season. The LMS accounts, thanks to David, are always accurately kept and properly audited which means we can keep our speakers within budget.

LMS continues to be appreciative of Mary Whittaker's diligence (with Lawrence at times) in ensuring that we are open in good time which gives David, me and every speaker ample time to settle in. Our move to Christ Church this season has, with one dissention, been very successful in a smaller room which more suited in size and comfort to our current numbers. The only hiccough has been the music emanating from a neighbouring room which we are hoping to address. All the committee have worked very hard this season, as always, to ensure that matters run smoothly. Being a relative newbie to most of them, I am happy that their intimate knowledge of past seasons and willingly accept the advice given - notably from our esteemed President whose eloquence, erudition and enthusiasm has kept the society going for longer than many of us care to remember. As Neil has explained before, it is only with your support and regular attendance that we can we continue. We remain at a critical stage in our history and each and every one of us needs to take responsibility for our continuance. If we endeavour to bring just one or two guests during the season to a meeting, our future will be more positive. That said, I continue to be glad that I am Chairman of such a great team and society.

As I said last season, we have to preserve what we have and ensure that LMS doesn't hurtle to oblivion for the want of more members. Together we can continue but it really is up to every single one of us to make it work. Over to you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'David Fisher', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

David Fisher