

Plainsong and Medieval Music Society

Report for the period 1 November 2005 to 31 October 2006

Conference

A second successful day conference was held in the Faculty of Music at Oxford at the end of April. The theme of Music in late medieval English Cathedrals attracted a good attendance of about 35 members and guests, and the day was very well received. Speakers included Roger Bowers, Tim Tatton-Brown, Anna Burson, John Harper, Sally Harper, David Lepine and Magnus Williamson.

Website

The Plainsong and Medieval Music Society website was launched in Autumn 2005: plainsong.org.uk. Though a simple site at present, it provides a ready means of communicating through the internet, including the posting of news and papers for members.

Publications

Plainsong and Medieval Music is circulated to all subscribing members of the Society, and is the principal benefit of membership. Although published by Cambridge University Press, the Society remains closely involved. Members of the Council are part of the Editorial Committee, and all three editors have been members of Council. Circulation figures for the journal have remained buoyant, and on-line consultation and downloading of articles have increased greatly. Our thanks are due to the editors, Joseph Dyer and Elizabeth Eva Leach, who lavish many hours on the journal, and to Nicolas Bell who has become reviews editor. Helen Deeming will succeed Dr Leach as joint editor.

The long-term major project, the publication of Drew Hartzell's *Catalogue of manuscripts written or owned in England up to 1200 containing music*, reached its final stages. It is published by Boydell and Brewer in association with the Society which has agreed to provide a subvention towards production costs.

The new edition of *Compline*, numerically the Society's best-selling publication, was published by the RSCM for the Society. Copies were sent to members of the Society.

The RSCM publications department has continued to act as distributor for the Society.

Membership

The membership has remained stable, and at the end of the period there were 112 members (including 3 honorary members and 6 life members). Members pay different levels of subscription (individual, joint, retired, student, and PMM editorial board). There is still scope for recruitment of new members, although the availability of the journal on-line through

subscribing institutions affects the attraction of the current membership scheme. Council will be revisiting this matter.

The society notes with sadness the death of Dom Jean Claire OSB (vice-president) and Professor David Chadd (member) during the past year.

Council

The following have served as members of Council and trustees of the Society:
Nicolas Bell, Margaret Bent, John Caldwell, Lisa Colton, Helen Deeming, Jane Flynn, John Harper, Elizabeth Eva Leach, David Mateer, Mary O'Neill, Susan Rankin, Owen Rees.

Officers: John Harper (chairman), John Caldwell (vice-chairman).

Council has met once in person, and there has been regular contact by other means. A group of members of Council and of ordinary members also met early in the year to plan for the future.

No member of the Council received payment during the period. Gratitude should be expressed to the Council, whose officers and members have often met their own expenses, and who have also borne other costs personally or made available their time to undertake routine administrative tasks.

The administration of the Society

Anna Burson has acted as administrator, and received an honorarium for this work. The RSCM has continued to deal with electronic transactions and to act as a clearing house for correspondence.

Constitution and Customary

The new constitution was approved in May 2006, bringing the Society into line with the Charity Commission's recommended practices for small, unincorporated charities. Alongside this official document a customary was approved, to deal with the internal operation of the Society.

Finance

The overall financial position of the Society remains sound, with a healthy cash reserve some of which is committed to the subvention for the publication of K. D. Hartzell's catalogue and the printing of David Wulstan's edition of *The Play of Daniel*.

The Society's assets, which at the end of 2004-5 amounted to £14,885, stand at £13,747 at the end of the current period.

Income from subscriptions has met the costs of members' subscriptions to the journal (a matter of concern in 2004-5). Some discrepancies between the CUP and PMMS lists have been addressed, and the administrator continues to chase up a few members in arrears. There remains scope for recruitment of new members. Other income included a more substantial sum for interest from the deposit account, because of a change of account.

In addition to regular administrative costs, there has been significant expenditure on the conference (£337), on the establishment and maintenance of the website (£431), and on the typesetting of the edition of *Compline* (£350).

John Harper
Chairman
20 April 2007

Informal Update to May 2007

The new edition of *Compline* was published at the end of 2005, and each member of the Society received a complimentary copy. The first printing has sold out, and the publication has been reprinted. Significant royalties (in excess of £1,500) have now been received, though printing and reprinting costs will need to be met.

K. D. Hartzell's *Catalogue* appeared in January 2007. The high standard of the volume's production, modelled to an extent on the Society's early publications, owes much to the author's expectation and persistence. The contents represent the product of a lifetime's scholarship, and offer an important addition to knowledge.

Sally Dunkley and Alistair Warwick have been working on David Wulstan's classic edition of *The Play of Daniel* for the press, in the version performed by the Clerkes of Oxenford. This will also be published by the RSCM for the Society. Publication is expected in mid 2007.