

NONSUCH DUCIMER CLUB
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 19TH 2024
at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire

Minutes of the Meeting

Sally Whytehead welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Attendance There were 7 attendees On Zoom and 37 present in the room, Total 44.
There were no apologies for absence.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 14th October 2023 were published in the newsletter. Their acceptance was proposed by Jane Scott, seconded by Peter Collinson and agreed by the meeting.

3. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.

4. Voting - Results of Postal and Online Voting were announced as follows.

Election of Trustees:

Chris Fitt	For 53	Against 0	Abstain 0	Duly elected to serve.
William Duddy	For 43	Against 4	Abstain 6	Elected to serve in continuance after serving 4 years.

Acceptance of the Trustees' Annual Report, Accounts and Independent Examiner's Report to the Charities Commission for the period 01/04/2023 to 31/3/2024

For 51 Against 1 Abstain 1

These were accepted and will be submitted to the Charity Commission.

5. Discussion about future activities

- A. Spring Fling 2025 is in the final throes of planning along the same lines as previous years.
- B. Annual Weekend 2025 is planned for Malvern St James School in Malvern.
The numbers are down a little this weekend so we may well run at a loss of perhaps £800.
This is a good reason for our return to Malvern.
- C. The Dulcimer Week at Halsway in May 2025 is already fully subscribed
- D. Discussion from the floor – several topics were brought up:-
 - a) Steven Eulberg provided some online teaching sessions for the club entitled 'Pass the Music On' aimed at helping members with introducing the instrument to new players. Ruth Wilson asked whether these are available on-line. They can be accessed through the members' area of the website.
 - b) William Duddy said that there are on-going items from previous meetings, which the committee is still actively considering and working on.
 - c) We are aware that we need to promote and increase membership among younger people. Gianna Williams ran a school's event during the festival which she ran in Italy and wondered whether we could do the same. Jane Foggini recently taught workshops within her local community to adults. Whilst it is good to interest young children, Lisa Warburton wondered whether we really should be attracting older students e.g. university. There is also a need to target Music teachers.

- d) Alice Sprinkle mentioned that in America there are sometimes repositories of instruments for students to use. Alice had been to a US Festival which has seen attendance move from mainly older people, to predominantly younger through the provision of scholarships.
- e) Gianna Williams suggested staging public concerts at festivals but Chris Fitt said this may not be possible depending on the host venue. This could well be different at Malvern next year.
- f) Ruth Wilson raised the possibility of cardboard mountain dulcimer kits e.g. on licence to be produced in the UK. Gianna Williams mentioned cheaper possibilities of Romanian MDs. There does need to be a way of providing cheaper instruments.
- g) Frans Morre told us that at the Gooik Festival in Belgium, workshops where participants can make instruments including HD occur about 5 yearly to a design by Roger Frood and costing around £200. This could be another way in.
- h) Heather Whittle wondered whether it's worth targeting some young people through faith groups who may well have some funding.
- i) Ruth Wilson said that the DofE scheme now has a music aspect and Bob Fitt said that music is a part of youth movements e.g. Scouting, but finance is a major issue.
- j) William Duddy reported that our Spring Fling event is run back to back with the Northumbrian Gathering in Morpeth, to which we have links through the efforts of Sandie and Ken Hudson. The Folk Club in Newcastle which is visited by Spring Fling participants sometimes focuses on Music students.
- k) Chris Fitt mentioned the fact that Nonsuch does not have a base and wondered whether there are people who would lead. We need to find possibilities alongside people who would lead and, while we do not want to be negative, it is not necessarily easy to find such leaders.
- l) New attendee, Lyra Lewis Flanagan, and her teacher had not known of the existence of the Nonsuch Dulcimer Club. Lyra suggested a greater on-line presence e.g. short videos with links to the club.
- m) Peter Bromwich attended the Chippenham Festival at the beginning of June where those who showed an initial interest did not go further. At the Sidmouth Festival, interest in dulcimers came from people over 50! Peter wondered whether there are other members of the club who could act as mentors, not necessarily with a teaching role.
- n) Sally Whytehead hosts several club loan HDs and said that between six and eight HDs are out on loan at any one time. Hilary Davies and others do informal mentoring when loans are made. We do put people in touch with other players whenever we can.
- o) Chris Fitt said that as The Members' Directory does not always give addresses it can be difficult to liaise. But both Sally Whytehead and Jan Cormie are happy to put people in touch with member's agreement and Heather Whittle said that just the first two letters and number of a post code would help.
- p) Re young people, at folk festivals we are preaching to the converted. Maybe at a Pop Festival, modern songs played on dulcimers might attract them. There was some discussion about Glastonbury. Geoff Reeve Black's MD workshops at Shrewsbury are always very popular.
- q) Lisa Warburton - suggested having a pilot scheme on 'How to attract Youth'.

- r) Jan Cormie always points new members to the new directory but it is surprising how few people look at our website. She also provides information for new members.
- s) Peter Collinson suggested adding a QR code to direct people to information.

6. Chair's comments.

Sally Whytehead thanked all the committee for their contributions with a big thank you to Shirley Warbrick for her sterling work as event organiser of this weekend. Shirley has stepped down from the committee and her role as event organiser. This role is to be split up in the future so we are looking for people to help with the 2025 event, especially the tutors side.

The post of treasurer has been vacant for some time, although Steve Herron Thompson continues to provide book-keeping support.

All the ideas for out-reach need people to put them into effect.

Sally also thanked all those who have been working hard for the club.

7. Any Other Business.

Jon Warbrick apologised to on-liners for the sound issues.

William Duddy thanked Sally Whytehead for all the work she does for the Nonsuch Dulcimer Club and Sally thanked attendees for their presence and their contributions.