



Amateur Festivals Everywhere

The British and International Federation of Festivals
for Music, Dance and Speech



Newsletter Issue 19

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Word from Steven Roberts

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Chairman's Review of the Year 94th Annual General Meeting – Friday 16th October 2015

After welcoming everyone to the 94th Annual General Meeting of the Federation the Chair, Steven Roberts, gave his Review of the Year. The main messages are summarised below.

“It has been our aim to bang the drum and to proactively spread the word about our movement and to bring the name of the Federation to a wider audience; although it is a slow process we have nevertheless made progress. We welcome the support of new Vice Presidents Brenda Last for dance, Fiona Shaw for speech and Cecilia McDowell for music and look forward to working with them in the near future.

I am also pleased that we now have an Accompanist Representative, Tim Kennedy, on the Adjudicators Council and I would encourage all our Festivals to actively promote membership of the Federation, after all we are very aware of the benefits to our performers of a ‘good’ accompanist.

We have achieved a number of positive outcomes this last year which have helped to move us forward. We have continued to rigorously monitor our finances and after considerable work by our Treasurer, John Logan, and more recently new Trustee, Clara Lane, we are in the process of moving our investments to a company with significant experience of working with charitable organisations. We hope that this move will see an improvement in our financial return.

This year also saw our first corporate member, Elena Cobb, and some of our Festivals have already taken advantage of the new Elena Cobb Star Prize piano classes. We hope to attract more corporate members in the future, which will not only raise our profile, bring in extra income, but will hopefully provide more opportunities for our members.

Following consultation with staff and Councils about Festivals House we have committed funds to improve the working environment at our Head Office and for those who visit regularly you will soon notice the difference; significant changes will be to replace all the windows with double glazing and to improve the heating system on both floors. In an attempt to spread the net of the Federation even further we may also explore holding regional selection days for potential new adjudicator assessment.

We now have two regional championships, both of which ran very successfully last month with 59 performers from 37 Festivals participating. We are hopeful that other regional championships will be launching in other areas soon. I would like to put on record my thanks to the Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Region and the North West Region for providing a showcase for our regional winners.

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Foreword from Steven Roberts

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The Championships have been one way of bringing together our Festivals and we will continue to look at ways of better engaging with our regions in 2016.

We have submitted an initial assessment, completed a development plan and received feedback on our proposal to become accredited for the Investing in Volunteers quality standard which again will set us apart from other organisations. We have already begun work on a Volunteer Policy and a paper outlining the Role of a Federation Volunteer; In the longer term the Federation would hope to support individual Festivals who may wish to attain the same standard.

Our Adjudicators Council has been working hard planning and preparing the standardisation session for Adjudicators which will be presented on Sunday and I know we are all looking forward to it. We are keen to establish a methodology of standardisation and moderation which not only supports our existing Adjudicators, but provides guidance for our newer colleagues. Thank you in advance to all of those who are leading sessions for us.

We have also produced an information sheet to help those Adjudicators working overseas and we thank our International Festivals for their support in this activity. This will be published with the Year Book in January.

We are actively contacting Festivals to ask for information about anniversaries and special events and we would also like to hear from you about celebrity alumni or about those who owe some of their professional success to confidence building opportunities provided by our Festivals. This information would help to shape the picture of our influence across a wide spectrum of disciplines and careers and would be useful for our centenary marketing.

Looking ahead to 2016 we shall return to exhibit at the Music Education Exposition and Musical Theatre and Drama Education Show, where we have created the opportunity for one of our Music Adjudicators, Fiona Mclean-Buechel, to present a seminar on 'Mindfulness for Performers and Educators.' We shall also have a stand at the MOVEIT exhibition in March where our new Trustee, Deborah Norris, and our CEO, Terry Luddington will deliver a seminar on 'Safeguarding in the Competitive Dance world.'

We hope to play an active part in The Patron's Lunch in the Mall on June 12th, which will be the finale to a weekend long celebration on the occasion of the Queen's 90th birthday. Representatives from all of the Queen's 600 organisations and charities will have the opportunity to apply for a ticket allocation for the event with all extra monies raised through ticket sales going to The Patron's Fund. We should know more about how tickets will be allocated for purchase in the coming weeks.

Only recently the Federation have been delighted to announce that we have been accepted by the BBC as one of their BBC Ten Pieces Champions, which means that during 2015/2016 we will be able to find out which Primary and Secondary Schools are taking part in BBC Ten Pieces and encourage them to use our Festivals to perform their work. Already we have received 18 expressions of interest from Festivals hoping to capitalize on this initiative.

I would also like to ask members to consider becoming part of a new sub-committee to help plan and prepare for our centenary celebrations in 2021, although it seems like a long way ahead, it will soon be upon us and I would like to hear from those who would be interested in working with us to make our centenary a very special occasion.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone for their support in this my first year as Chairman and truly believe we have a team that shares a positive vision for our Federation. Thank you."

Fellowship

At the 2015 Conference in Brighton **Norma Redfearn**, Speech and Drama Adjudicator, was awarded Fellowship of the Federation.

Marilynne Davies, Chairman of the Fellows, said "This relatively new award was the initiative of the then Chairman now President of the Federation - Margaret Venables. It was intended as recognition of the contribution by Adjudicators to the Federation and its Festivals.

Adjudicators nominated for the award should be people of standing within the organisation who have, in addition, to adjudicating undertaken exceptional work to support a Festival, a Region and/ or the Federation. The Fellowship is a separate entity from that of Adjudication and includes contributions made to the organisation that promotes and upholds the Federation and the Festival Movement.

At the Conference in Brighton we announced that Norma Redfearn -Speech and Drama Adjudicator - had been elected to join the Fellows of the Federation.

Norma is certainly a person of standing within the organisation for she promotes the work of the Federation in a variety of ways. She is a member of the Adjudicators Council, she has conducted sessions at Conference and she has been involved in the selection of new Adjudicators. She actively encourages non-Federation Festivals to become members and, when she had her own Speech and Drama school, she entered her pupils for Federation Festivals. She has seen and supported the work of the Federation from a variety of different perspectives.

Those who have worked closely with Norma have found her to be supportive, encouraging and principled. She is known to be very adaptable and a joy to work with. Festivals and the Festival movement have been a big part of Norma's career.

We welcome Norma to the Fellows secure in the knowledge that she will bring with her many valuable qualities, including her belief in The British and International Federation of Festivals and the Festival movement, her compassion and her integrity."



Steven Roberts and Marilynne Davies present
Norma Redfearn with the Fellowship

Norma, who did not know she was going to receive the Fellowship, was overwhelmed when presented with the award and later said "Life is full of surprises; some pleasant, some not so pleasant. However nothing could have prepared me for the feeling I experienced when I received the Federation Fellowship at conference this year in Brighton. The secret had been well kept. For me there was no anticipation, for I never considered that I would be worthy of such an honour.

As I sat and listened to Marilynne's generous citation, I thought what an amazing record this mystery person had, and as I prepared to applaud, I heard my name being announced. To say I went into shock is an understatement. I'll never know how I got up to the stage, my legs were like jelly.

To receive this award from my peers in, what I consider to be, the greatest secular movement in the world, is humbling. The Festival movement puts us in the privileged position of advising and encouraging the participants in their chosen discipline, some of whom would not be able to afford examination fees. With the right advice, given with kindness, some of them will become the performers or teachers of tomorrow, some will become the informed audiences and all will become confident adults able to take their place in society with confidence and knowledge. I was reminded recently of the advantage to teachers, when a teacher thanked me for advice given over the years, to her students, which she had learnt a great deal from.

I can think of no greater honour than the one I have been given, to join colleagues whom I respect and who, apparently, count me worthy. A heart felt thank you. I still have to keep pinching myself to make sure I'm not just dreaming."

Membership

New Festival Members



Dulwich Music Festival (Provisional Member)

Ms Lorraine Liyanage

www.dulwichmusicfestival.co.uk

Music

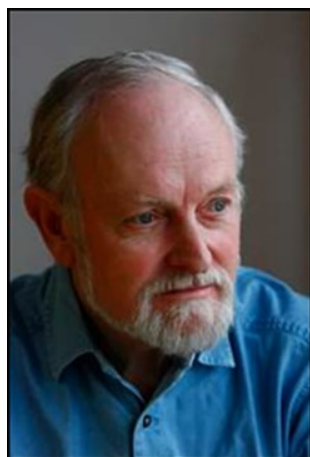
June annually

We are delighted to have welcomed so many new Festival members in 2015. Each new Festival member is assigned Provisional Member status. This means that the Festival has fulfilled the initial criteria for membership but will only gain Full Membership status once:

- insurance is in place,
- our new approach to safeguarding has been adopted,
- and Festivals Council have received a recommendation for Full Membership following the satisfactory completion of a live Festival visit.

We look forward to our Provisional Members moving to Full Membership over the coming months.

Honorary Friend



Sir Richard Stilgoe, OBE has accepted our invitation to become an Honorary Friend of The Federation.

For those of you who attended Conference and had the opportunity to listen to Richard whilst he performed and later when he introduced us to the wonderful work of the Orpheus Project you will understand how delighted we are to have his support.

Richard has spent fifty years as a performer and writer in all forms of the performing arts. On television he appeared on *Nationwide*, *That's Life* and several series of his own. On stage he toured for many years with his one-man show and subsequently his two-man show with Peter Skellern.

He wrote lyrics for *Cats*, *Starlight Express* and *The Phantom of the Opera* and music and lyrics for *Bodywork*, *Brilliant the Dinosaur*, *'Orpheus – the Mythical'* and *Road Rage*. His broadcasting work has earned him the New York Radio Festival Gold Award, three Monaco Festival Prizes and the Prix Italia. Richard sits on various boards involved in music education and is Chairman of Youth Music. In 1997 he founded the Orpheus Centre in Surrey, where young disabled people prepare for independent living through a series of performing arts courses.

He was High Sheriff of Surrey in 1998, during which he was awarded the OBE. He owns and drives a JCB digger, and has five children and eleven grandchildren, none of whom told him he was going to be the subject of *This is Your Life* in June 2001. In the Jubilee honours list of 2012 Richard was knighted for charitable service through the Alchemy Foundation.

Council Elections

We would like to congratulate the following members of the Federation who have recently been elected to the Adjudicators Council:

Speech and Drama Representative	Carol Schroder	Accompanist Representative	Tim Kennedy
Music Deputy	Julia Dewhurst	Dance Deputy	Nathan James

Flying the Safeguarding Flag

This month we are delighted to announce that the following Festivals have now completed their implementations of our new safeguarding approach and can fly the safeguarding flag:

Ballymena Festival - Music, Speech and Dance
 Banbridge Performing Arts Festival (Speech and Drama)
 Bangor Speech Festival
 Beckenham Festival
 Bristol Festival of Music, Speech and Drama
 Bromley (Kent) Festival of Music and Speech
 Camborne Music Festival
 Carlisle and District Music and Drama Festival
 Carrickfergus Music Festival
 Derby Arts Festival
 Devon Performing Arts Festival
 Dudley Festival of Music, Drama and Dance
 Dungannon Music and Drama Festival
 Ealing Festival of Music, Dance, Speech and Drama
 Highbridge Festival of the Arts
 Isle of Wight Music, Dance and Drama Festival
 Kingswood Eisteddfod
 Leith Hill Musical Festival
 Lincoln Music and Drama Festival



Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts for Dance,
 Music and Drama
 Minsterley and District Eisteddfod
 Newry Musical Feis
 Northfield Festival of Music and Speech
 Orpington Festival of Dance
 Portadown Festival
 Rochester and North Kent Music and
 Drama Festival
 Skipton Music Festival

Festival Volunteers

Several Festivals have queried the age at which young people can become a Festival Volunteer and, having discussed the matter with our Insurance Broker, we are able to offer the following advice:

There is no minimum statutory age or a lower minimum age policy for Employers Liability. Someone under the age of 16 is covered under the Employers Liability, whether they are gaining work experience or are a volunteer, as long as they do not carry out any manual work such as erecting or dismantling stages or lighting.

It would be appropriate to limit the duties of young Festival Volunteers to tasks such as stewarding, which may include showing people to their seats, walking younger groups of performers to and from the stage, taking messages between other Festival Volunteers and playing the CD to accompany performers as well as general light duties to assist with the running of the Festival.

We would ask Festivals to be mindful of the capabilities of all Festival Volunteers when allocating tasks and to take into consider the safety of the individual and those around them.

In Memory

The Cooperative Festival of Music and Speech Committee are sad to announce the sudden death of a valuable and popular volunteer, **Mrs. Marleen Joy Sheridan**. Marlene has worked for the Festival over a number of years, always greeting everyone with a cheery comment and a smile. She will be sadly missed.



Barbara Walker

The Manx Music Festival would like to pay tribute to **Mrs. Barbara Walker** who sadly passed away at the end of October.

Many of you from the 'Arts World' will fondly remember Barbara as she was an official accompanist for the Guild for around 20 years from 1981. She was the first Manx person to win the Open Pianoforte Solo at the Blackpool Music Festival in 1939, playing a piece Schumann's Carnival which took 30 minutes to complete. Her piano teacher was Miss Emily Christian.

Barbara, together with her husband Bert, formed choirs at all RAF stations that Bert was posted to, including the RAF Brize Norton Singers who appeared on Opportunity Knocks in 1969! The Brize Norton Singers are still in existence and still performing.

On the Isle of Man Barbara was a Founder Member of the Manx Operatic Society in 1949 becoming Joint President with Bert in the 1990s. She retired from that position in 2002. Barbara, again with her beloved Bert, started the Manx Operatic Glee Club, then were founding members of Musicale before forming Harmony. She continued with her music until into her late 80s. Additionally, she was also the Christine Wild Theatre School Musical Director for over 25 years and had also played for Dancing Schools at each RAF Stations the family lived at.

All at The Manx Music Festival would like to acknowledge this lady's huge contribution to the Isle of Man Community and pass on sincere condolences to her daughter Jane Quayle.

Performance 

The British and International **Federation of Festivals** for Music, Dance and Speech
Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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