



Chairman's Report Leicester Music Society AGM 77th Season, 10th June 2025

Fellow members of LMS: those of you at the AGM last year may remember that we nearly didn't make it to the 76th season because of our fluctuating membership and finances in Season 75. That said we did press on and Season 76 marked a welcome return to some of the success we'd had in previous seasons. This season, with your support and that of our many guests, the average numbers for each meeting have been just as good or better despite, crucially, needing to raise the annual membership and the fee paid for each meeting by guests. Our Hon. Treasurer will explain this in his report. With the continued benefit of our comfortable room (which most members tell us they enjoy except for the extraneous and occasionally intrusive amplified sounds of speech and music from a neighbouring room) we eagerly look forward to Season 78. The noise issue, also mentioned last year, has partly been addressed but now, with the interval refreshments being in the central atrium, it is even more imperative that any hirers of the wonderful facilities, including us, do not interfere with any of the other events going on at the same time.

As I've mentioned many times before, I cannot over-emphasise the importance of our staunch and knowledgeable committee: David S, Ron, Neil C, Mary, Alan and Pauline. We always listen carefully to ideas given to us, ensure the smooth-running of our society and, with probity, certify that our records are impeccably kept. Our carefully curated, exciting and varied season has matched the best of some previous seasons. Next season, happily, we build on this positivity. Not only will we welcome back some of our popular speakers we have new ones too. More of that during the AGM...

Variety in our monthly presentations has been a prime reason in our choice of speakers and their topics. This was evident in our current season with speakers who have enthused us with a wide variety of topics. Our speakers continue to entertain and educate us with their deep understanding of their topics whilst enhancing our appreciation of new areas as well as familiar ones with remarkable recordings and videos and, with Chris Ouvry-Johns on the organ in January and all the performers and readers at the retitled "The Joy of Christmas" in December, our live music has flourished too. Almost all of our wonderful speakers this season have been welcomed back from previous seasons and it was especially pleasant to have John Florance end our season in May looking so well and presenting significant recordings in his inimitable style. Once again, I am particularly grateful to members of the committee for their stimulating introductions to our guests and their generous votes of thanks too. Don't forget that every vote of thanks is substantially expanded when placed on the society's website so please look them up afterwards. Each entry on the website also includes a track list so, rather than taking notes in the meetings, you can follow up the pieces and each of the performers for yourselves. Everything that we do is promoted, disseminated and archived on the LMS website which is exceptionally well-designed and maintained by Ron Mitchell. His commitment to LMS and the national FRMS continue to do him and us great credit. We remain grateful for the fiscal genius of David Saunders who will explain with simplicity and clarity how we are managing financially. David's accurately kept and properly audited accounts mean we can keep our speakers and their expenses within budget. I must also mention and thank Alan loaning us a most useful projector from the Houghton on the Hill meetings cycle and for his expertise in setting it up – notably for Mick Lessiter this year.

LMS continues to be appreciative of Mary Whittaker's personal connection with Christchurch and also with Jean Baxtor in welcoming us warmly every time and ensuring that we are open in good time. This gives me, David S and every speaker ample time to settle into the venue. Sadly, after this season, both Mary and Pauline are stepping down from the committee so please feel free to offer your services if you feel able. The commitment is fairly light but do check with Ron to find out more details. As always, our eloquent and expert President whose scholarship and zeal has kept the society going for longer than any other member, continues to support our ventures in so many ways. We are also grateful for considerable financial funding from some loyal members over and above the membership subscription. Remember that it is only with your support and regular attendance that we can continue. If we all take responsibility for that, and promote our meetings as much as we can, our continuance will be assured. Just bringing one or two guests to one of the meetings each season will certainly help too.

Every one of us is essential in helping LMS survive and I am grateful to each and every one of you for that. Thank you all.

David Fisher