



2016 AGM Minutes

Monday 25t July 2016
Door 84 Lowther Street York @ 7.30pm

Welcome to everyone from all members of the Committee

Apologies: Pam Davies and Lee Smith, Emma Bailey, Chris Bailey

Committee Member Attendees: - Alison Ashton, Paul Mantle, Leni Ella, Howard Ella, Marie – Louise Surgenor, Caroline Heppell, Tammy Banks, Daisy Ella, Helen Woodall,

Attendees: Sam Woodall, Carol and David Metcalf, Chris Higgins, Sian Davies, Gemma McDonald

A few housekeeping notes - If there were an emergency you can get out either by the way you came in or through the fire exit in the opposite corner.

Review of the 2015 AGM minutes

Howard led the meeting and talked us through last year's minutes. Everyone agreed that they were correct.

Summary of 2015/16 season

As in the last few years, we have worked together without a Chairman. We have continued with the reduction in yearly performances. This season we performed just one play and one pantomime.

The Panto - Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs Written and Directed by Howard Ella (5 - 12 December 2015) did really well with the best houses so far. It was a challenging production, which pushed the boundaries with a strong cast, wonderful music, fantastic sets and costumes. The profit we make from our yearly panto continues keep the society afloat throughout the year and because of this, the Committee feel that we should continue to invest in this production in terms of staging, costumes and effects. The cost of this production was very similar to last year and made an overall profit of £18,625.52.

Alice in Wonderland - Written by Lewis Carroll and Directed by Gemma McDonald (26 - 28 May 2016) was our first non panto production in five years that did not make a huge loss and was overall a great success. With a healthier bank balance following the success of panto we decided to spend more on this production than we have on other plays in recent years. The set for Alice was built with this year's panto in mind so that many of the parts can be reused. Show fees and audience numbers helped to balance the books for this show. Overall, the costs to date are £7,244.93 with a small number of payments still to be made, so we may have just broken even on this.

Marie talked us through the finances - we had a very good year with an overall profit of £7231.61. Ticket sales of £44,947.78 really helped to cover the costs. We have invested in the new website and set building tools. The rent for The Groves remains similar to last year, as does the rental of our workshop at Murton, which combines, to a total of £6,466.04. A full breakdown of the accounts was made available to us all.

Everyone was happy with the accounts, which were proposed by Helen Woodall, 2nd by Leni Ella and 3rd by Chris Higgins.

Advertising

We continue using the Local Link as our main source of advertising productions, we also use the York Evening Press and some on line sites that provide free advertising such as Minster FM, Events in York, Visit York, My Brit Event, York360, Gransnet and Mumsnet.

We will also continue using social media sites as a way of advertising our productions.

A major change for all users of Joseph Rowntree Theatre has been the opening of The Box Office, which will now manage sales and marketing for all shows there. They take 6% of sales and all users of the theatre must use the Box Office facility. Thanks to Helen for all her work over the year from David and Carol Metcalf. They agreed that the Box Office at the theatre was a good idea going forward.

We will keep our account with Ticket Source open because we may decide in the future to hold smaller productions at other venues, which would require us to manage our own ticket sales.

Panto charity collection Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs 2015

Our charity collection last year raised £1,187.24, which this year was donated to York Against Cancer.

2016/17 productions

Dec 16 – The Hunchback of Notre Dame written by Andy Welch and Howard Ella. Howard was going to take a year off this year and Andy was keen to do the Hunchback of Notre Dame. The committee were split on whether to do it or not, so Andy presented his ideas to the committee and we were happy to go with what he had in mind. Howard is now helping with the writing and it will be another big production. Auditions have already been held and this year we had the largest number of people turn up to audition for parts in this show, which is really good. Having chosen a not so popular panto this year we have already decided that we will be doing Aladdin in 2017 and this will be advertised at Christmas.

The question about having a live band was raised and Howard explained a bit of the history and reasoning (costs, reliability and the ability to have the music during rehearsals) behind our fairly recent decision to go for backing tracks. We had agreed that this year we would invest in a live band for panto but the MD has let us down and did not turn up for the auditions as promised. This leaves us wondering what will happen now and it is disappointing not to have a live band.

Committee resignations

Claire Horsley stepped down from the Committee just after Christmas. Today Caroline has decided to step down after 12 years with the Players. Massive thanks to Caroline for everything she has done and also a very big thank you to Claire. We wish them both well.

Committee elections

- Secretary – Alison Ashton was elected to the role
- Treasurer – Marie –Louise Surgenor remains in post
- Ticket sales Liaison – Helen Woodall

We have welcomed new members to the committee during the last year - Tammy Banks, Daisy Ella and Lee Smith have all joined us with their own individual unique skills. Graham Smith also wishes to join the committee.

Tammy will look after and update our safeguarding policies. Daisy is going to take on Marketing and Lee has been helping Paul with set building and props. Paul continues to be our Stage/Technical Manager.

William Wallace presentation and the Joan Sadler award

Caroline took charge of the elections for both of these awards.

The William Wallace award was presented to Daisy Blue Ella for her acting performances over the years but more recently in Snow White and Alice in Wonderland.

The Joan Sadler Award was presented to Sam Woodall for his continued help at the workshop and also back stage during shows.

Very Well done to both of you.

Thank you's

The Committee have worked very hard throughout the season and thanks must go to all involved.

Thanks go to non - committee members who have helped set build, paint, tidy up, sourced props and costumes and spent many many hours doing a variety of unseen tasks to make our productions such a success.

Thanks also to all those actors and actresses who have taken part in all our productions.

Thanks to the staff at Joseph Rowntree Theatre, all volunteers and back stage crews.

Thank you also to all those who have supported us throughout the season in any way and also to the audiences who have come to see our productions.

End of Formal Meeting

This saw the end of the formal part of the evening. There following an informal discussion about what to do next:-

Suggestions were made about putting on a smaller play in a smaller venue. Or should we stick with the bigger productions at Joseph Rowntree Theatre?

We were reminded about the history of Rowntree Players and that this is an acting society so suggest that we go back to doing two plays and the panto each year.

A question was raised about whether the All England Drama Festival still existed as Rowntree Players always took part in this.

Gemma told us that she had a small play almost ready to go called Constellations and suggested we put it on at Friargate Theatre.

Howard volunteered to do a spring play.

We talked about doing a £5 per ticket show so that it was completely accessible for all.

Suggestions were made about using the theatre spaces at York St John, The Manor School and Joseph Rowntree School.

At the end of the discussion, it was decided that next year we would follow panto up with Constellations at Friargate Theatre - dates to be decided. Howard would direct a play in March.

We need new Directors for a production in July - a play with children and adults.

Local Link advert - RP back to its roots - press release

Noises Off - Comedy with a cast of 10 and 1 set.

Suggest Sunday Matinee and then get out!

At the end of this meeting, everyone agreed that this had been very productive - Thank you everyone for your input.