**Minutes of the Easingwold Players Annual General Meeting held at the Galtres Centre on Wednesday 19th February 2020**

D Goodwin opened the meeting by welcoming all present.

Present

D Goodwin (Chairman), A Deery (Treasurer), L Smith (Secretary), S Stephens, B Jennison, J Roberts, S Rinaldi-Butcher, W Rinaldi-Butcher, D Thompson, N Gray, J Gray, P Broadbent, B Topping, D Grey, M Grey, G Buckley, P Parry, I Hall, J Lister.

1. Apologies

D Madgwick, J Hawker, K Webster, C Smith, R Wood, R Walton, W Skinner, L Hill, M Hill, M Spink, O Willis, J Arnold, J Brook, J Lewis, F Padmore.

2. Minutes of AGM held on 20th February 2019

Agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising

None

4. Chairman’s report

I’d like to begin my report by thanking those people who have given so generously of their time and guidance over the last twelve months; in particular your committee, who have been a constant source of humour, guidance, generosity of spirit and good sense.

The last twelve months have been ultimately very successful for the Easingwold Players. Cassandra Bullock took to the director’s chair for Neil Simon’s “The Odd Couple” last Spring, and turned in a very successful production. Very good houses supported the show and it also proved there is a real need in the town to stage plays which are known (preferably comedy) or at least have known playwright’s name attached to it.

In May of last year, the Galtres Centre played host to the first Community Day. The event was deemed a great success with the Players gaining at least two new members from the event. For anyone involved in the event it was extraordinary to watch it unfold. Who knew there were so many community groups using The Galtres! Sports and theatre sitting alongside play groups and knitting!

In the summer Kieran Hardy again took control of The Galtres for a week to stage Willy Russell’s coarse and funny “Stags and Hens”. The play was a bold move for the young people as it is the first time they have staged something so adult themed. A combined audience of around 120 braved the swear words and adult themes and enjoyed it – indeed not one word of complaint for the language! Which was a relief!

The Autumn show and our 30th anniversary production was John Godber’s comedy, “Happy Families”. A play which proved difficult to cast initially, but again was extremely successful. Good houses enjoyed the show with a number of comments such as: “That was fun” and “What a laugh but what a tough play!” It indeed was a tough play; any piece which is mostly tight ensemble is going to be tough. We did however welcome two new members within the cast, Tasha Van Zilj and June Robinson and it was good to have Dan Grey in the tech box with John Roberts.

The highlight of last year was undoubtedly the 30th Anniversary dinner, 45 people came along and enjoyed good food, good company, and great fun was had by all. Huge thanks to the committee for undertaking such an event and it is surely an evening that will be remembered for a long time to come. It was really lovely to have some of the original and early members celebrate with us, Barbara Topping, John Roberts, Ian Hall, Olive Willis, Joan Arnold and Frances Padmore particularly.

Overall 2019 was quite a year!

Now onto the difficult bit!

Unfortunately, because of personal circumstances I am standing down as chairman, and this seems to combine with a general feeling of struggle within the society and the company is going through a bit of a tough period. Directors appear rarer than hen’s teeth. People to grab hold of a play, block it, sort the tech side with the crew and get it on the stage are just not available. I don’t think we are the only society struggling and it maybe that in this day and age there are too many calls on one’s time, the general **company view of old** just doesn’t translate in the 21st century.

Due to this, I offered the committee the small scale show (*A Night At The Panto* - which I am doing for The Swallow Theatre in Scotland) for the Players Spring slot. So like all EP shows, the company would fund it and take the box office. This will also give the Players time to regroup and work out what is to be done for the future.

It is also for this reason that we are having an open evening on 4 March, here at The Galtres to hopefully garner some new interest in The Players. Leaflets and posters are all over the town, and adverts are going into the Advertiser. The evening will include a tour of the theatre, a play reading and a short workshop, plus an opportunity to check out the lighting and sound side too, the bar will be open too.

Currently the Same people have been doing the same jobs for too long, and to grow and continue, we need new blood. I urge you all to come along to the open evening, if you are free and lets make it a party night, so when people leave the Galtres they want to come back, they want to be involved.

In so saying Kieran Hardy is once more proposing a youth show for the summer, “The Same Deep Water As Me by Nick Payne, a shrewd and witty play looking at the world of dodgy insurance claims, which played The Donmar in London in 2013. For the adults, plays and directors are already in the running for 2021, including the possibility of the comedy “Ladies Day” the popular comedy drama by Amanda Whittington and “Gaslight”, the Victorian classic by Patrick Hamilton.

But gaining new blood is a must!

To close, in my relatively short 12 months as chairman you, the company have been a great support, so thank you. Particular thanks to your hard working committee, without whom I would have really struggled!

5. Treasurer’s report

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Financial overview** |  |
| It was a quieter year in terms of production costs and income, however, the company put on three strong productions, including a summer production by its youth members.  There was no bank interest after the account was closed. | |
| **Fixed assets** |  |
| During the year the club purchased a laptop computer for £475 and in line with the clubs |  |
| policy this has been expensed in the year. |  |
| **Company is non-profit making** |  |
| In line with its status as a members' company, the company aims only to recover costs and not to make a profit. | |
| So long as the company's surplus remains below £500, it does not need to pay corporation tax or file a |  |
| corporation tax return. In order to keep the surplus below £500, the company made donations to other good causes. |  |
| **Subscriptions rate** |  |
| The subscription rate remained at £10 for an adult and £5 for a child. |  |
| **Fee payable to Galtres Centre (GEC)** |  |
| The company pays the Galtres Centre for use of rehearsal rooms at the usual rate of £18.00 per hour |  |
| and £36 for the lounge. It has free use of storage in the rehearsal room and for the technical equipment. |  |
| GEC charges for use of the stage for productions at a rate of £350 per production. |  |
|  |  |
| **Theatre trips** |  |
| Ian Hall continued to organise theatre trips by coach to several productions out of town during the year. |  |
| The company makes a small profit from group booking discounts and from small surplus recoveries of |  |
| coach costs which aim to break even. |  |
|  |  |
| Profit on theatre tickets | 561 |
| Profit on Theatre Coach | 564 |
| **TOTAL Profits** | **1,125** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Profit / (loss) on productions** |  |
| The profit/(loss) on productions during the year was as follows: | £'s |
| Odd Couple | 978 |
| Stags & Hens | (243) |
| Happy Families | 1,076 |
|  |  |
|  | **1,812** |
|  |  |
| **Technical Fund** |  |
| During the year the Committee made a policy decision to establish a technical fund to help replace capital items. We agreed to allocate approximately 10% of the surplus from each production into the Fund and at the November committee meeting a further decision was taken to place a further £1,000 into the Fund following a stocktake of items requiring replacement. The items have not yet been purchased but it is expected that this will happen in 2020. |  |
|  |  |
| Breakdown of technical fund: |  |
| Allocation from Odd Couple | 117 |
| Allocation from Happy Families | 108 |
| Allocation from Main Account | 1,000 |

The Treasurer then invited questions from the members present.

6. Re-election of the Hon. Treasurer

The Treasurer was invited to continue in his post and accepted.

7. Election of new Chairman and new members for the committee

Acceptance of S Stephens as the new Chairman was proposed by D Goodwin and seconded by S Rinaldi-Butcher.

Acceptance of K Webster as a committee member was proposed by C Bullock and seconded by L Smith.

Acceptance of G Buckley as a committee member was proposed by J Hawker and seconded by B Jennison.

8. Annual subscription

It was agreed that the annual subscription remain unchanged at £10 for adults and £5 for students.

9. Election of Independent Examiner

Acceptance of J Brook as Independent Examiner was proposed by A Deery and seconded by D Goodwin.

**Coffee Break**

**Open discussion**

The new Chairman, S Stephens, began by thanking D Goodwin for his hard work and great input during his year in the Chair and added that he will be greatly missed.

S Stephens reminded the meeting about the forthcoming Open Evening on 4th March 2020 at the Galtres Centre, when Easingwold Players are hoping to attract new members. D Goodwin informed us about three new people who would be attending the event. I Hall suggested that a contact name with email address be given to any new attendees at the open evening. G Buckley requested an A3 (event) poster so that he might display it in his locality. I Hall suggested that A4 flyers for the event could be distributed in Easingwold Advertiser copies. He is to enquire about the charge made for the service and also offered to supply a contact name for The Evening Press to S Stephens.

D Goodwin raised the matter of how EPs might organise themselves in order to keep the membership engaged, maybe with regular play readings? These could be publicised via Facebook and Stage Whispers. It was agreed that Stage Whispers is an essential way to inform members not directly involved in productions and I Hall thought that it could be sent out to a wider group. D Grey mentioned Twitter and Instagram as other ways to publicise events etc. J Lister asked if it might be worth approaching the university?

S Stephens wondered if social evenings, maybe in a local pub, might also be a way of keeping members involved? During the discussion the need for a marketing role to be created was highlighted.

The lack of directors was discussed and I Hall wondered if EPs might be able to pay a director or collaborate with another group on a production? M Gray wondered if we could “borrow” a director from another group? Both J Lister and D Goodwin added that they know of other collaborative successes. R Readman was mentioned as a possible contact.

The question of casting arose and D Goodwin commented that the choice of play is always director led. G Buckley asked if you should base your play choice on available membership or look further afield in order to cast it? D Goodwin replied that the director should always have a fall-back position. J Lister pointed out that casting male roles can sometimes be troublesome. B Topping added that she felt that plays should be well known to attract the local audience.

M Grey asked if details regarding the forthcoming summer youth production could be included in Stage Whispers?

J Lister then addressed the meeting and gave a short summary of “Scary Bikers” which he will be performing in the lounge at the Galtres Centre on 4th April 2020. He thanked Easingwold Players for their cooperation.

The meeting closed with the Chairman thanking attending members for their contribution to the discussion.