

## **Boston Playgoers Society AGM Minutes Wednesday 28 June 2017**

**Present:** Peter Kay, Carl Reece, John Lingard, David Grant, Marilyn Cobb, June Owen, Stuart Bull, Kei Bailey, Abby Johnson, Lucy Taylor, Rachel Rowett, Melissa Poulson, Matt Barnes, Sheila Millington

### **1) Nominations for Officers and Committee**

None. All Officers to continue in their posts. Committee happy to continue, but Lucy asked if anyone knew of any Treasurers who might be interested to let the committee know so she didn't have to continue covering two roles.

### **2) Apologies**

Dan Poulson, Glyn Ruskin, Barbara Chambers, Sue Watsham, Paul Gibson, Julian Warrick, Liz Worsley

### **3) Minutes of the last AGM**

Distributed. Everyone happy. No matters arising.

### **4) Matters Arising**

None.

### **5) Chairman/Committee Report**

Read by Lucy. (Appendix 1)

### **6) Treasurer's Report**

Read by Lucy. (Appendix 2) Carl said that he was a member of another society where the accountant had suggested maybe signing off another society's accounts in return for ours doing theirs.

We are in a fairly good financial position and £200 up from last year. Didn't have to pay for room hire for 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary; although Blackfriars did offer to pay all costs for the event Playgoers decided to pay for the licence and scripts etc in order to give the event some support. Membership up by one. It has been a positive year financially.

Melissa read out a letter from Jacob thanking the society for their support this year.

Lucy isn't sure whether we need to register some of our stage items (eg. costumes, flats, struts) as stock for insurance purposes. We don't have insurance for storage facilities such as Paul's outbuildings. Jo pointed out that we'd need to do a stock take in order to do it. We will need to move everything out of Paul's storage at some point, so need to take advantage of anything that comes up. Stuart suggested that Playgoers might consider a joint storage facility with BOS as this might mean we could afford something better if we approached it jointly, and asked if we might consider it as a committee. **Committee** \* to discuss this.

### **7) Appointment of Tellers**

None needed.

### **8) Election of Officers**

None needed.

### **9) Election of Committee**

Sheila Millington and Matt Barnes were proposed as new committee members by Rachel Rowett, seconded by everyone, and elected onto the committee.

## **10) New Season's Programme**

### Habeas Corpus October 2017

Jo Warrick is directing. Has already been auditioned and cast, rehearsals start soon.

### Our Man in Havana February 2018

Paul will direct this.

### 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary October 2018

Looking at doing a play from our first ten years but a lot of them aren't suitable – the most famous one which is still performed today is Pygmalion. This may cause issues though as BOS have My Fair Lady in reserve if they can't get the licence for The Sound of Music in Autumn 2018, so both of them couldn't be performed within weeks of each other. Pete suggested we look back on all of the plays we've done and look at the top three we've ever done, look at what other societies are doing and see if there are any trends there, and also look at the most financially/attended shows. Carl suggested the Art of Coarse Acting show. Sheila mentioned the GCSE this year is Jekyll and Hyde. Kei suggested Roald Dahl or The Wind in the Willows. **Committee** \* to keep thinking!

Kei asked why we had gone to two plays a year; this is mainly because we don't have many directors, and it's been tricky to cast three plays a year, but we will change this in the future if the situation improves.

## **11) The Mr Wonderful Award for Being Marvellous**

The new trophy/award is the Boston Playgoers' Society Award "The Mr Wonderful Award for Being Marvellous" in memory of Alma Watts. Normally the committee will ask for nominations to draw up a shortlist each year which will then go to a final vote, but as this was the first year we decided it needed to go to someone who was very close to Alma and who, we feel, she would have wanted it to go to – Paul Gibson. (Paul was then rung in Portugal to be told the news as he'd given his apologies for the AGM!)

Pete then said the following: We believe that Paul joined Boston Playgoers in the early 1990s and so that means that he has been a key and pivotal member of BPS for nearly 30 years now. Paul got straight into the directing chair and we believe that the first play he directed was Alan Bennett's Habeas Corpus, which is the play Jo Warrick is directing this autumn for our society. Of course Paul is known not just for his directing but also for his varied technical knowhow in set design, set build, sound effects, lighting and many other areas. Paul has always got massively involved in this side of the society even when also directing at the same time. A huge commitment of time and effort.

Gathering props has also been something that Paul has got involved with and indeed there have been some cameo roles or walk on parts too in Fawlty Towers amongst other productions and we believe that even though acting was not the side Paul said he gravitated towards, he did enjoy these brief forays onto the stage during shows. Paul became Chairman in around 2005 and remained there for 9 years until Lucy took over in 2014. Let us not forget also that for the last two years of his chairmanship Paul was fighting a potentially very serious condition.

Alma was very fond of Paul indeed. They had a special bond and friendship and when Paul was diagnosed and needed looking after, Alma stepped up to the brink and took him under her wing. The nurse in her wasn't just during working hours - she nursed those she was fond of in her private life too. We feel sure that Alma would have more than approved of the choice of Paul Gibson as first recipient of this award.

Finally, the big question yet to be resolved (\*and I forgot to say this on the night!\*-Pete) is "where has that bloody grey mouse gone"? A private joke between Paul and Danny Chester-Bush but which was shared by those around them!

Pete then read out a poem he had written to mark the occasion (Appendix 3).

## **12) Any Other Business**

When it was the Open Day, we said that everyone who attended and signed up to our mailing list would be put in a prize draw for two free tickets for our next production. Melissa put all of the names into bits of paper and Matt randomly pulled out Ellie Poole as the winner. **Melissa** \* to contact.

A gentleman called Ben Peel attended our Open Day, wanted to organise regular play reading evenings where people get together and pay £5 to read plays and critique them; he was a member of a play writers' group in Norfolk who did this. June knows of this as well and will look into this a bit further. There was a discussion about whether this would work for us – Blackfriars got the enquiry initially but fielded it to Playgoers as being interested in plays. Stuart said the committee would support it if at all possible.

June asked if there was a playwriting competition in Lincolnshire. General interest in this as an idea, and that maybe we could sponsor some sort of event. **Committee** \* to discuss.

Jo says Nathan is interested in doing another play reading for us as he's written a play. Perhaps could be done as a rehearsed play reading in the revue bar. **Jo** \* will keep committee informed.

Lucy suggested that we need to support Blackfriars by becoming members if at all possible. Their AGM is Wednesday 20 September.

Pete reminded all committee members to stay behind afterwards to set committee meeting dates.

Lucy thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9pm.

## **Appendix 1 – Chairman’s Report**

Welcome to you all. It’s lovely to see you all here.

I cannot believe that I became acting chair at the beginning of 2014 and then officially chair at the AGM that year. I should be getting better at these reports, but it’s always a struggle to sit down and make a start until I begin to think what we have done as a Society over the past year. We have a really strong committee helping Playgoers to progress in a time when groups seemed to be finding it particularly hard to get continued support.

I want to say a huge thank you for what they have done and the support they have given me over the past year especially since being on Blackfriars Board of Directors.

We were involved in Blackfriars 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Night performing Last Tango in Slippery Gown. The bear and TARDIS made an appearance on stage again and it went down very well with the audience. People helping backstage were in hysterics. I especially remember Rob Barclay couldn’t stop laughing when Sheila was singing in the tin bath, legs akimbo, and I needed to shield his eyes... We are taking part in the One Act Drama Festival at Hunstanton to perform it once again.

Our production of Blood Brothers was amazing and very successful in bringing different people to the group, and a wider audience with schools taking an interest. In total we had over 600 people come to see it.

There was so many good things to remember about Blood Brothers - from the first time Sue got everyone speaking like 8 year olds to the polished performance on stage. I was always at the side of stage where Matt and Megan flew on at speed to run around the set and then fall to the floor. The energy they had was astounding. It was truly worthy of a NODA nomination. Thank you Sue and Marilyn for all your hard work as directors.

In November we had a social evening in tribute to Victoria Wood. These evenings, whether in tribute to someone we’ve lost or not are great fun. Reading different sketches in a very non serious, light hearted way. It would be good to see a few more members coming to them and having a good laugh.

It was unfortunate that we felt the need to cancel Our Man in Havana earlier this year, but these things happen from time to time. It gave us the chance to take stock and think what we, as a society, need to do to keep the momentum going. The idea of an open day was a great success and we had some good, positive feedback from the day.

We now have our next production – Habeas Corpus. With auditions already taken place, a strong cast found and Jo as Director we have a lot to look forward to going into our 90<sup>th</sup> year as a Society.

Finally I want to say thank you to all our members for your continued support – thank you.

## **Appendix 2 – Treasurer’s Report**

Business Saver Account, interest £1.41                      Balance £3771.73

Community Account    Balance as statement £7870.34

Cheques paid that are for year 2017/18 amount to £700.46 so actual balance is £7169.88

Debtors - Items paid for which fall into 2017/18

Prepayments are annual payments divided into the relevant years’ accounts.

Creditors/Accruals – People we owe money to which are Blackfriars for the meetings held from January to the end of May estimated at £52.50

And Tailored Accountancy for checking over the accounts making sure they are an accurate record.

**Blood Brothers** - Outstanding success ending with a surplus of £3137.08

### **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Although Blackfriars were happy to meet any costs, the committee decided that we could support the event by paying for our licence and scripts.

Membership up slightly

Donation towards Jacob's studies at RADA

Trophy costs but covers the next 10 years to our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

T – Shirts available at £15 each

All in all quite a positive year financially.

We have never put a value on our stock or insured them - is this something we need to do?

Over the past few years I have also been mindful of the storage facility we have at Paul's and if there are any alternatives possible.

### **Appendix 3 – Paul's Poem (by Peter Kay)**

Not extrovert or pushy

Nor his responsibilities vaguely cushy

Full of talents galore

All things technical with him, create a rapport.

From fresh new member through to director in a blink,

Another 13 years later and to us from the Chairman's chair does he wink.

A gentleman and a gentle man, in his fab res in Kirton

Storing oodles of set and props in house and garden

Of whom do we speak?

The Portugal freak?

Of BBC professionalism does he reek!

Yes, we are here to thank Mr Paul Gibson

A Doll's House? Maybe not, but to US as good as Henrik Ibsen.

Paul, we thank you for all you have done for us

Over the last thirty years

It is true that there has been much blood, sweat and tears,

But on ONE thing we all unite,

As director for thirty, and chairman for ten years, you did delight,  
So come on quickly and without further ado, please accept this trophy from us  
One thing we ALL know for sure is you hate load of fuss!