**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY**

**13th NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7:45pm**

**THE CLAREMONT, TUNBRIDGE WELLS**

Present: Chris Howland (CH), David Smith (DS), Helen Thorpe (HT), Michael Sutherland (MS), Phil Hardy-Bishop (PHS), Paul Donlon (PD), Peter Emanuel (PE), Brian Bissell (BB), Adrienne Fitzwilliam (AF), Fiona Young (FY), Kim Joyce (KJ), Chris Moreton (CM), Nicky Moreton (NM), Nimueh Ferdinando (NF), Louise Knapp (LK), Kate Marshall (KM), Yoshi (the dog).

Apologies: Nick Smith, Carol Smith, Kay Sandford, Jean Erxceleben, Rebecca Justins, Paul Rowlandson, Christina Blaney

1. **Minutes of 2023 Annual General Meeting**

Nothing to report. ***Phil proposer, Nikki second***

1. **Matters arising**

Nothing to report.

1. **Presentation and adoption of Treasurer’s report – Chris Moreton**

First of all, the numbers are wrong, HT submitted an expense claim for Macbeth’s expenses after the report was completed, this will be accounted for in the next year.

Audience numbers totalled 4,280 for the year over our 3 shows (an average of 1,427 per show), as against 3,756 for 2023 (an average of 1,252 per show), and 4,294 for 2019, our last pre-Covid year, with 4 shows (an average of 1,073 per show). The attached show accounts give a detailed breakdown of the revenues and costs for each show, with comparison numbers for each of the previous 5 years. Our net profit for the year on productions @ £17,165 (2023: £13,827), reflected both the increased audience numbers, and our increased ticket prices (now averaging £16/head as against £14.25/head for 2023), offset by increased costs of production (£47,344 for 2024 as against £40,127 for 2023).

Other Income comprises net member subscription income of £1,488 (2023: £1,098) representing a net increase of 16 members; and TTC Appeal and donations income of £4,125 (2023: £3,637), largely from show bucket collections. Of this, we donated £1,200 to Hospice in the Weald in memory of Kris Robinson, and, given our now much-recovered cash position, we took the opportunity of refunding £3,000 to Helen Thorpe from the £6,100 she previously invested in the Club in previous years, to help keep it afloat.

Net income before overheads was £18,827 (2023: £17,961).

Overheads, at £9,460, showed a £1,395 reduction over 2023’s £10,855 largely as a result of steps taken by the Committee to reduce set, costume, and props storage costs by moving out of Storage Mart in November 2023, allowing us to incur lower storage costs from December onwards. Further reductions are anticipated for the current financial year, when we will benefit from a full year’sworth of savings.

Total surplus for the year was £9,367 (2023: £7,106).

This surplus is reflected on the Balance Sheet, where we are showing an increase of £9,366 in net assets to £26,604 (2023: £17,238), comprising cash of £25,307 (2023: £12,415) and advance expenditure of £3,044 on future shows, offset by £1,746 expenses owed for A Murder Is Announced (now paid).

Detailed Income & Expenditure, Balance Sheet, and Show Accounts are attached. Our accounts haven’t as yet been given an independent check by anyone in place Mike Stubbs, who stepped down from this role after the 2022 accounts, and for whom we still need to find a replacement.

 **Notes on this:**

* HT asks about ticket loss due to the loss of the front row (AA). CH reports in the last 18 months, there was a debate over whether moving it was worth the 12 seats – the last year with the higher ticket sales; if we were a month before a show and it started to sell out, we could add the row AA’s – down in ticket sales
* CM reports ticket prices have also gone up to an average of £16, but as have the prices of Trinity rent and charging for credit card payments – 3%.
* Saving on set design costs due to not using Andy, material prices are on the high side, perhaps due to the choice of plays. Props, costume and lighting prices were up against last year.
* Technical help from Trinity also cost more. CH reports that they used to charge £12per/hour, and are now charging £22 per/hour, and the club are now monitoring the hours spent on this.
* Marketing costs in line with previous years.
* Subscriptions are up.
* Bucket donations did well - £4125, which paid back HT’s claims, and donated for Kris to Hospice in the Weald
* **Cash in the bank at £24.5K**

***Proposer Peter, second Phil***

1. **Chairmans Annual Report – Chris Howland**

We started the year with Macbeth directed by Helen Thorpe. Our first full Shakespeare since 2016 and Measure for Measure. We welcomed new members Kim Joyce, Michael Sutherland, Stella Crawford and Ben Dangerfield to the stage as well as 2 children – again the first time in a while – The Crucible. This was a very successful production both critically and financially, congratulations to all involved, especially Helen.

Shortly after Macbeth we welcomed Kim, Michael and David Smith to the committee, swelling our numbers to the relative normal amount. 9

In the New Year we had a small New Year Social at St John’s Yard. This well attended and is something that we will try and keep doing going forward. It certainly seemed easier to arrange and attend than the lead up to Christmas.

At the end of February, we completed Helen’s trilogy/triptych with A Murder Is Announced. Once again Tunbridge Wellians proved they love a good murder, and we were sold out the week before we opened! Something I’ve not seen before! We welcomed newcomers to the stage: - Jack Stevens, Hettie Rockall, Charlotte Butterworh and Joanne Dixon. Another critical and financial success for Helen and the club. Well done everyone.

In June we had One Man Two Guvnors directed by yours truly. A comedy! Not my normal forte! We welcomed new member Nimueh Ferdinando and returning actor to our shores - Louise Knapp. This production did pretty well financially but the ticket sales were affected in the performance week by it being the only week in June that had decent weather! And as it turned out - the rest of the miserable summer!

You will see that we welcomed a lot of new people to the stage, but we are, however, in need of some key people backstage. We have 2 key people, who due to age and health, have all but stopped helping. We need to look at a finding at least half a dozen people, who are interested in at least assisting props and wardrobe, and being in the production teams. We have welcomed Jenni to props, but as fast as Jenni joined Claire moved back to Wales!

All in all we had a very successful year critically and financially, this is no small feat and has been achieved by the incredibly hard work of the committee. My thanks to Helen, Fiona, Christina, Rebecca, Kate, Kim, David and Michael for their hard work. As always special thanks to those involved in marketing and our production teams, if we can’t sell it and get it in and on, we would be in a lot of trouble!

As always none of this would be possible without the support of Team Moreton and their diligence and advice both personally and financial.

And finally, I have decided that it is time for a bit of a rest! I am tendering a years notice that I will be stepping down as chair and off of the committee. I will still be very actively involved directing, acting and in the production teams – if you’ll have me! I just won’t be sitting here where the buck always seems to stop!

1. **Election of Officers & Committee members**

All the committee members will be staying on.

***Proposer Bryan, Second Paul***

1. **Consideration of any motions of which due notice has been given**

Nothing to report

1. **Other Business**

Nothing to report.

***Meeting finished: 20:30.***