Minutes of the Easingwold Players Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 15th May 2024

Present

K Webster (Chair), L Smith (Secretary), J Roberts, P Broadbent, D Grey, S Stephens, H Quayle, A Bussey, S Rinaldi-Butcher, W Rinaldi-Butcher, C Smith, J Gray, J Shipley, V Abbiss, E Bell, P Parry, J Field, J Hawker, B Prihar, C Seymour, I Hall, A Moore

1. Apologies

A Deery (Treasurer), A Huby, O Willis, D Madgwick, M Hill, L Hill

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 15th February 2023

Agreed and signed by K Webster.

3. Matters arising

D Grey reported that there had been some interest since holding the “Tech” day. E Bell, who was in attendance at this meeting, is very interested in acquiring the skills to assist as necessary.

4. Chair’s report

Good evening and welcome everyone. This is, what I class as the worse part of the Chairperson’s role so please bear with me.

Since our last meeting, we have sadly lost a number of members, Barbara Topping, our founder member, Maggie Spink, Joan Arnold and Paul Elm who were mainstays of our company for many years and will be sadly missed.

In the last fifteen months, we have staged three very successful productions and are very pleased to say that we have attracted new members to our family of Easingwold Players.

Our production last Spring, I’m sure that you will remember, was Calendar Girls directed by John Roberts. Thank you John, we will never forget the fun we had in that one, nor the buns which I have kept as a memento. We also raised a wonderful £1,200.00 for Cancer Research and this was thanks to the generosity of our audience, our sponsors, Hannah and Richard Tym who donated the sunflowers and Easingwold Players.

The pantomime in November was something new for Easingwold Players and I was surprised just how popular it was. It was a challenging time to start with but everyone pulled together to make it fun and a great success so we will be staging another one this November.

On the Saturday evening after the pantomime, we attended a Christmas meal at the George Hotel which rounded off the week in a very special way and we must thank The George for bringing their Christmas Dinner menu forward into November for us. A very enjoyable evening was had by all.

Our Spring production of Four Plays was again, very well received and we welcomed two new directors in Huan Quayle who directed Alternative Accommodation and John Hawker who directed Murder in the Market Place. Congratulations to both. And, we must not forget the one man that we can’t keep down and we wouldn’t want to, our very own mainstay, Mr John Roberts who directed Funeral Tea and Last Tango at the Galtres. Many thanks to all our directors on a successful production.

It has certainly shown that our audience enjoys a good laugh so we need to look at future productions that will keep attracting numbers and send them home with a smile on their face.

This society could not function without the support of a lot of members. The full extent of the work of these members is often not seen nor recognised so, I would like to give a special thanks to our committee and to everyone who helps to put these productions together.

We have a wonderful family of cast and crew members who all work hard to ensure that everything runs smoothly so a huge thank you to everyone who has been involved. I did start trying to mention everyone by name but, after being sure that I would manage to forget someone, I gave up on that idea so, you know who you are and how important you are so, thank you for all your contributions to a successful society.

It will not be long before we start rehearsing for this year’s panto which, hopefully, will be Oh No Aladdin. This is not the story of Aladdin but will feature him with a lot of favourite pantomime characters on his journey into Story Land so I hope that you will join us on that journey.

As well as attracting new members on stage, we still need members to come forward in support roles. Susan does a marvellous job front of house but, we need more volunteers to add to the list of front of house helpers. This is also true of our technical support roles so, if you know of anyone that can help or would be interested in joining us in that capacity, please ask them to get in contact with us.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in these last three productions and let’s hope that we can keep attracting new members both on and off stage to keep our Easingwold Players family growing and moving forward.

5. Treasurer’s report

As the Treasurer was unable to attend the meeting his report was not available. It will, therefore, be ratified at the next Committee meeting, assuming that the Treasurer can attend. The Secretary is to forward the report to the membership as and when it becomes available.

6. Re-election of the Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary

The Secretary was invited to stay in post and accepted. Proposed by P Broadbent and seconded by J Roberts.

On the subject of re-election of the Hon. Treasurer, K Webster invited those present to come forward if they might be in a position to support A Deery in this role? The Committee is to confirm the re-election of the Hon. Treasurer at the next Committee meeting.

7. Voting for nominations

Acceptance of B Prihar as a Committee member was proposed by K Webster and seconded by P Broadbent.

8. Annual subscription

Annual subscriptions remain unchanged at £10 for adults and £5 for students In the absence of the Treasurer, the Secretary received payments.

9. Election of Independent Examiner

This item is to be dealt with at the next Committee meeting. In any case, whatever the terms, acceptance was proposed by J Roberts and seconded by C Smith.

Open discussion

K Webster opened the discussion by asking if anyone present would be interested in getting together to try on some recently acquired pantomime costumes? Several were interested in ding so and most would prefer a Monday or Wednesday evening at 7pm. The Secretary is to check dates with the Galtres Centre.

K Webster then went on to inform the meeting that a pantomime is planned for November. She is in the process of writing “Oh No Aladdin!” which features the characters Aurora, Widow Twankey, Hemlock, Coppit, Rapunzel, Hysteria and Listeria amongst others.

She then thanked I Hall for promoting the spring production, 4Plays, and also M Parry, for his super piece in the Easingwold Advertiser. P Parry will pass on our thanks to him. I Hall added that he thought that the plays were excellent and very well attended, considering that many touring companies are struggling for larger audiences at present.

J Roberts advised us that he has agreed to tech for the Blue Light Theatre Company, who are bringing their production “Murder in Reptilian Park” to the Galtres in June. Since this group give all their profits to the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) all present agreed that we support them by allowing use of our laptop and by paying the £26 for the necessary show cue system.

D Grey wondered if the earlier start time of 7pm for our last two productions was to be adopted going forward? S Rinaldi-Butcher added that several audience members had arrived late for 4Plays, as they had expected curtain up at the usual start time of 7.30pm. After discussion, the meeting agreed that we should commence shows at 7.30pm, with the exception of pantomimes, which will start at 7pm. On the subject of the forthcoming pantomime, it may be that we put two shows on for the Saturday? There were mixed opinions here and the Committee is to discuss this further.

The Chair addressed the meeting to ask for thoughts on future productions? Amongst suggestions were: The new script (?) for ‘Allo ‘Allo, Hi-de-Hi!, Ladies Day (small cast, D Grey suggested could be suitable as a Lounge production?), Going Green by David Tristram (3M 3F), The Secondary Cause of Death by Peter Gordon (3M 6F), 39 Steps (the spoof), Brief Encounter (the spoof).

P Broadbent went on to ask I Hall how his organised theatre trips were going? He replied by informing us that there are two trips coming up: My Fair Lady and Brassed Off. He was pleased to say that the uptake is very good. Some attending the meeting are not receiving his emails regarding the trips but this can be easily remedied. I Hall then entertained us by passing round a photographic memory of himself and J Roberts performing in Kiss Me Kate.

K Webster reiterated the need for new volunteers for Front of House (FOH) duties and tech. S Rinaldi-Butcher added that, although she thinks that all’s well with FOH at present, there is a need for someone to begin to learn the ropes. This led to a discussion regarding the need for an up-to-date list of members for FOH etc. It was questioned as to whether our GDPR is appropriately applied regarding members and friends contact details. H Quayle kindly offered to look into this matter, and it will be discussed at the next committee meeting.

K Webster closed the meeting by thanking everyone for coming.