

**Wells Operatic Society Ltd. AGM and Members Social Evening  
Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013 Minutes**

**A reception** of wine and nibbles in the bar was followed by the formal AGM in the auditorium,

**8.15 AGM** - in the theatre auditorium

Full members attending 47 others 14 = 61 total

The Chairman welcomed our President, the Mayor of Wells Cllr Theo Butt-Phillip.

1. **Apologies** for Absence.- Gaye Volk, Frank Edgeller, Judi Neale, Tony & Kate Hathway, Lyn Prior, Pip & Margaret Rice, Frank & Penny Bonetti, Jeanne Clogg, Emma James, Freda Brown, Carol Phillimore, Lesley & Terry Ricketts, Sylvia Guy
2. **Minutes of the 2012 A.G.M.** held on the 11<sup>th</sup> May have been available on the notice board in the bar.
3. **Matters Arising** - none  
It was unanimously agreed by all that they are a true record of the meeting. Chairman signed the minute book

**4. Chairman's report**

The 111<sup>th</sup> year of Wells Operatic Society Limited, The Society is registered at Companies House (registered number 1377655) and is also a registered charity (number 276308). The Chairman reminded the meeting that this is his last report. He said again that it was important for the society to have fresh ideas and a new impetus. He expressed thanks to all the outgoing committee for all their hard work during the last year; specifically Alan Holey who was not seeking re-election, Sarah Neale for her work with the youth Theatre, Vicky Orman, Katie Biggs and Mark O'Callaghan for providing us with a Newsletter, Angelo Gianetti for looking after the daily maintenance of our building and Sharon Upham for organising the Roy Bevan Award (awarded to Sarah Briton at the Dinner Dance). He also thanked Chris Spray for his work on the on-line booking system and organising the Bar rota, and Gill and Darren Kerton for the day to day running of the bar.

He then presented five NODA Awards for long service

1. Sharon Upham for 20 years' service
2. Sharon Edmonds – 10 years
3. Mark Hutchinson – 10 years
4. Helen Makin – 15 years
5. Gill Kerton – 15 years

The Chairman then outlined the Orchestra Pit and Stage Improvements project – and proposed that a sub-committee is established to look at the best way to proceed. He proposed the motion "The Society should proceed with all necessary work to accomplish the expansion of the orchestra pit, the provision of a stage trap door and (if possible) a passageway from orchestra pit to rear of stage, and a levelling of the stage itself; and to proceed with an Arts Council application and such other fund raising activities as are necessary to reach this target". Some discussion took place (further detailed minutes are available from the secretary), which mostly centred on financial concerns. The proposal was agreed by majority.

Chairman asked for volunteers to form a sub-committee to look at the project:-

Gina Cleverly, Nick Furze, Maria Olteanu-Furze, Nick Barlow, Tina Evers, Sharon Upham, Jenny Hailes, Sandra Marshall, Gill Kerton, Vicky Orman, Louise Baker, Jon Sansam, Norman Cowell, Darren Kerton, Dave Collyer, Alan Hooley

He also spoke of the theatre's Membership - we have a healthy number able to take on four or five major productions a year. We have some very skilled backstage people and a lot of talent that manifests itself on stage. We continue to be extremely successful, both in terms of nominations and winners, in each of the three County competitions (Phoebe Rees, David Beach and Cinderella). The standard of our productions is generally acknowledged to be improving all of the time and long may this continue. The number of patrons of the Society is, as a general trend, declining very slightly and he would envisage that over the next few years the new Committee will have to consider the status of patrons and the way this is dealt with within the Society and whether it is sensible to continue with that system or whether there is some alternative. We have developed the possibility of outsiders sponsoring shows and this idea is in its infancy but has been used successfully for example in the Beauty and the Beast production and may be something that we will need to look to expand in the future.

**5. Members' Reports**

1. Theatre improvements – Gerald Evers

Before the report Gerald took time to thank the Chairman for all his work over the last 4 years.

In addition to the stage and pit project (discussed earlier) we have redecorated the bar – thanks to Sharon Edmonds and team.

Refurbished the lighting box thanks to – Rob, Graham and team and installed a top quality sound system. We have also purchased new programmable bar tills.

2. Past and forthcoming productions – Sharon Edmonds. 'Leading on from last year's Sound of Music we changed pace with the brilliant and challenging Animal Farm... Lois's inspired interpretation of the script ... the set, another of Catherine's amazing creations; then A Little Night Music... a humorous script, great characters and the music of Sondheim. Pantomime [Rumplestiltskin] came in with a bang once again thanks to another great script from the amazing Vicky and co. To round up the year came Anything Goes. What an amazing show! The year is definitely one to be proud of!

Future productions include: Beauty and the Beast, then Mort from the ridiculously talented Ken Edmonds. Another play Endgame should be ready in July from newcomer Maria. September will see Alan bringing Pajama Game and then in October another play from Doreen - Rumours by Neil Simon. Pantomime this year will be Goldilocks and the three Bears directed by herself. Next year's spring show is...? Any volunteers?

A show is a bit like an iceberg it is only the tip – there is much more underneath, help where and when you can and she looked forward to bringing you a report of another fabulous year's worth of productions same time, same place next year!

3. Youth Theatre – Sarah Neale. Sarah gave an outline of the work of the Youth Theatre and asked for further support from the members. Everyone was reminded to buy tickets for Beauty and the Beast – performing next week.

4. Entertainment and Social Report – Alan Hooley. Alan reminded the members of the yearly events that are now well established in the Theatre calendar. He was happy to announce that Louise Baker will be taking over this organisation. He offered his continued support. Thanks to Alan

## 6. Treasurer's Report and Appointment of Accountants

Appointment of Accountants-

The Treasurer recommended that Webb and Company remain as our accountants and business advisers,

Proposer: Mark Hutchinson, Seconded: Norman Cowell

All accounts are in credit and the general financial situation is healthy although our overall reserves have gone down by about £11,000. This is mainly due to the outlay on the new Air Conditioning and Sound Systems for the auditorium.

Having gone up by 20% last year subscriptions this year went down by 20%. This is a great pity as subscriptions make a very valuable contribution towards the general running costs of the theatre.

There were 5 productions during the last year, 4 of our own plus the Young Vic's production of Cold Comfort Farm bringing in a net income of just over £10,000. Theatre hire brought in over £5000 which was an increase of £2000 on last year.

The bar made its usual valuable contribution to the funds with a gross profit of nearly £4000 and hopefully this will increase with the new pricing system for public nights.

However, setting aside the cost of the main theatre improvements (AC & Sound) all of this income together leaves us a shortfall of about £2000 on our general running costs. The committee will need to look at this.

Full details of the accounts are on the notice board in the bar and members are encouraged to read them. If some of the figures appear wildly different to last years it is because we have altered the way the general running costs are allocated.

Please note that to clarify our financial position re the discussion around the investment for the stage pit improvement our total assets are around £180,000 which includes £59,335 of available funds.

The Treasurer commended the accounts to the meeting and proposed that these be adopted.

Proposer: Marcel Wills, Seconded: Alan Hooley

All agreed

## 7. President's address

The Mayor spoke passionately about the place of the Theatre in the local community; he said it was a 'tremendous honour' to be our President for the year and looks forward to supporting us by attending our next productions.

## 8. Election of officers and Committee

The Secretary outlined the present situation regarding volunteers for the committee. He proposed that because we had two vacant 'named' positions, and seven volunteers to fill the four committee spaces, there should not be a vote, and so all volunteers could join the committee. This was agreed by all and the President read out the resulting committee:-

There have been no nominations for the post of -

**Chairman** – *left vacant*

**Theatre Administrator** – *left vacant*

There was one nomination for the post of -

**Vice-Chairman** – **Richard Wright** *who is duly elected*

**Treasurer** – **Pauline Perrin** *who is duly elected*

**Secretary** – **Gerald Evers** *who is duly elected*

**Patrons Secretary** – **Lyn Jones** *who is duly elected*

**Publicity Officer** – **Ken Edmonds** *who is duly elected*

**Stage Representative** – **Graham Brown** *who is duly elected*

And there have been seven nominations for the position of four committee members, with no vote

**Norman Cowell, Alisa Creaser, Sharon Edmonds, Doreen Grant, Kate Lynch, Sarah Neale and Mark Wall** *all are duly elected*

**Date of the next committee meeting - Monday June 24th 7.30pm in the Little Theatre Bar**

## 9. Any Other Business

- Thanks to Ken and Sharon for organising the food for tonight.
- Jess Briton spoke about the plans to hold a play writing event in Wells. Anyone who was interested should talk to him.
- Anne Beechey asked about starting a monthly 'Social Evening'. This was agreed and when the new 'bar organisers' were in place it would be something that could be arranged.
- The Chairman reminded members that Award winners should collect certificates after the meeting.

The meeting finished at 9.25pm

Many thanks to all who attended.