

Wells Operatic Society Limited
Minutes of the AGM and Members Social Evening
Friday 22nd March 2024

7:30pm

Reception and drinks in the theatre bar

8:00pm

AGM held in the theatre auditorium. 28 full members attended and President of the society, Cllr Tanys Pullen Mayor of Wells.

Chairman, Ken Edmonds, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1) Apologies for Absence

Sarah Briton, Ollie Tatar, Glynn Webster, Elisha Webster, Lisa Cope

2) Minutes of the 2023 AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 31st March 2023 have been shared with all society members and have been available on the theatre website for the past 11 months.

3) Matters Arising

None. The minutes from the 2023 AGM are agreed as a true record.

Proposer: Sandra Marshall

Secunder: Mike Scammell

KE will sign the minute book in due course.

4) Chairman's Report: Ken Edmonds

This is the 122nd year of Wells Operatic Society Limited's existence. The society is registered at Companies House (registered number 1377655) and is also a registered charity (number 276308).

This last year has been busy with shows with Avenue Q in May, The Tempest in September, Puss In Boots, in December and The Glass Menagerie earlier this month, all of which Tom will report on later.

Besides the shows the committee has had plenty of other business to be going on with. During this year we have had gates installed at the Chamberlain Street entrance, the ladies front of house toilets have been refurbished, insulation has been installed over the workshop so set builders won't require Arctic gear anymore, hopefully.

We have purchased a new projector and Mac for running sound, the tree of doom has had a severe haircut, we have revamped the onstage working lights and there is

now a switch near the props area so you no longer have to fumble your way up the stage left wing to get any lights on stage.

We ran a summer social at Henton Village Hall, and in me, we now have a new licensee.

Last month we ran a clear up day which saw us get rid of a lot of rubbish from areas such as the kitchen area in the rehearsal room, the stock room in the bar, the room behind the lighting box where we found arcane electronic items from a very definitely bygone age and in the area over boiler room we found parts from old seats which were the ones we had before the ones before the ones you are sitting in. Two lots of seats ago.

Thank you to everyone who came along and helped and please keep your eyes peeled as there is still more to do and many hands make light work.

We hosted Wells Comedy Festival again and Chorus of Disapproval choir for a successful concert.

Once again this year, we invited people to put forward shows they would like to direct and again we had plenty of suggestions with almost all our slots being filled for the next two years.

It is fantastic that we have so many people wanting to put shows on here.

So as you can see there is a lot that your committee does for the society beyond putting on shows and in the coming year we will have plenty to keep us occupied too I am sure.

In the past year, two members of the committee have stepped down and I would like to thank Glynn and Adam for everything they have done during their time on the committee.

At this AGM, a further three members of the committee are stepping down, in Graham, Liz and Dave, and I would like to thank them for everything they have brought to the committee in the past year.

I also need to thank everyone who is remaining on the committee this year—Pauline, Mike, Jo, Tom, Bobby, Natalie and Caroline— because without them the theatre could not continue to run. Thank you.

As you will see later, we have some fantastic new volunteers hopefully joining the committee this year, I can say definitely until after the official election, but I would like to thank them in advance.

I would like to thank Alisa and Julie for taking on the role of safeguarding lead and deputy for the theatre because without them we would not be able to have any

under-18s involved in any aspect of theatre life and I would like to thank Adam and Lucy for putting us firmly on the right path with regard to safeguarding.

As always, we need more volunteers for the bar, bar supervisors and front of house, particularly for big shows such as pantomime and musicals when a lot of the usual volunteers are on stage. Please remember that the Society cannot function without people volunteering to take on some extra duties whatever they may be, and it can't just be left to a few people to do everything. If anyone would like to get more involved with any aspect of the theatre, please see a member of the committee who will be delighted to help.

We have a wonderful theatre here which offers friendship and laughter, among like-minded people, a community of all ages and ability, passionate about drama and all sharing a love of theatre.

5) Treasurer's Report for 2022 calendar year and Appointment of Accountants:

Pauline Perrin

It is recommended that [Webb & Co] remain as our accountants and business advisers

Proposer: Pauline Perrin

Secunder: Nick Barlow

Full details of the accounts are on the Home Page of the website and members are encouraged to read them.

I commend the accounts to the meeting and propose that they be adopted

Proposer: Vicky Orman

Secunder: Sharon Edmonds

6) Members' Reports

Shows report: Tom Creswick

I have the fun task of talking about the past and future shows! I want to start by talking quickly about publicity at the theatre. It's been a year of growth and development surrounding the publicity at the theatre. I'll keep this quick but want to mention a couple of the changes I've made throughout the year.

Firstly, the theatre now has its own merchandise. So far this is in the form of a black or white hoodie, tshirt, zoodie and sweatshirt, but more colours can be added if the demand is there. To purchase one of these, please head to a website

called concept wear, then click on shop and scroll down to find our logo. This is permanently on their website now, so feel free to buy whatever you want. This is going to be a big help for future productions too, as directors or producers of shows just need to send me the logo for their production, which I will get as part of the new publicity process anyway, and then I sent this to the company who will get show specific merch listed as soon as possible, for cast to order to their own address whenever they please.

Secondly, I have now created a publicity guide for all directors and producers to have when they start their show. I'll arrange a meeting before things get going to discuss the finer points, so there's clarity on who is creating the material, and the general direction the directors see the show going.

Finally, I've been using Facebook and looking at the data our posts generate to alter when things are posted, when they're likely to be interacted with, and what sort of posts get the most traction. Thank you to everyone that shares these posts, they really do go a long way in helping to sell tickets. At this stage I want to say a massive thank you to Elisha, who is the creative force behind the graphics you see on social media. I give her the content, she makes it look good for me to post, so I certainly can't take credit for how good these look.

So, looking onto next year! We currently have Sister Act going well, which I'm pleased to say is now completely sold out, and our next play is Agatha Christies Witness for the Prosecution, directed by Adam. We then have the fabulous Nativity the Musical, which is being directed by Sharon, before Jackie Watts takes the baton again with another Ronald Hawood Play, equally divided. Our Spring musical for next year is currently in discussion and we should have some news on that in the next month or so. I'm excited to announce that we're feeling prepared this year, and have already booked our next couple of productions after this. Bobby will be directing Little Women in September, and Vicky is penning another pantomime for us next Christmas.

I will end my little section in traditional wells fashion, with a little poem I've created about the past years productions.

Following last years AGM, we began our theatre calendar with Avenue Q, the show the committee did dread. I can see absolutely no reason why though, it was only me and Alissa having puppet sex in bed?

The audiences loved it, though some members did scorn. It wasn't that bad, it was just Glynn as Trekkie monster singing songs about porn.

The show was a hit, so a big well done the team, lead by Nick. Although, did anyone else spot Lucy The slut trying to have a go on his...

Then came the tempest, oh no, Shakespeare, what a drag. Fear not, with Jonathon at the helm, he had plenty to brag!

The show had it all, fine actors, a boat. It's even been nominated for a NODA award, which is certainly something to gloat.

The question people ask is will Shakespeare's plays survive? Well, when Wells put a show on, we've proven his work will still thrive!

2023 ended with Puss in Boots, penned by the fabulous Vicky. Glynn and the team did very well, as managing 500 people on our stage did prove rather tricky!

The panto was a hit, with fun and laughs galore. They even cheered when our skyscraper dragon didn't fit through the door.

The cast loved doing it, the audience too. Especially the random man who walked onto the stage, needing the loo.

Our most recent production was The Glass Menagerie, a classic American play. How on earth did they learn all those words, there was a lot of them to say. Kevin did a great job, it was funny and it was sad. Ken was clever with his character, as he left the audience wondering, was he good or was he bad?

Thank you for listening to me today, I'm sure you don't want to hear my voice anymore. All that's left to say is here's to a successful 2024!

Social Report: Caroline Hoare

We ran a number of social events during the year including going as a group to a number of awards ceremonies run by various groups including the Somerset Fellowship of Drama.

We had a get together in May on Eurovision night in the bar at the theatre.

We had the usual gathering for carnival which was well supported and after panto we had time for a carols evening just before Christmas.

If anyone has ideas for social events in the next year or if there is anything people would like to see please contact Caroline.

7) President's Address

The Mayor Wells, councillor Tanys Pullen, gave a short address talking about how long she has been in Wells and how vibrant the local community is.

She spoke about the importance of places like the Little Theatre in their contribution to the social fabric of Wells and in helping to create the diverse and dynamic cultural life of the city.

8) Election of officers and Committee

There has been one nomination for each of the following posts on the committee:
[ADAPT AS NEEDED]

POST	NOMINATION
Chair	Ken Edmonds
Vice-chair	Tom Creswick
Treasurer	Pauline Perrin
Secretary	Vicky Orman

Publicity Officer	Tom Creswick
Stage Representative	Mike Scammell
Committee members	

There have been 9 nominations for the positions of Committee members:
Jo Hartley-Scammell, Bobby Bass, Emma Hardy, Caroline Hoare, Natalie Hope,
Janice Holwill, Sandra Marshall, Charlotte Munckton, Alan Watts

It is proposed that all committee member nominations are agreed
Proposer: Nick Barlow
Secunder: Sharon Edmonds

[All were elected unanimously]

9) Any Other Business

There have been no other issues raised in writing to the secretary before the meeting
and no additional questions.

OR

[Kate Lynch noted that we had no representation at the community day held in the
cathedral every two years]

Meeting closed at 8.30pm