

Whetstone Drama Group – AGM Jan 23rd 2020

Present

Carl Smith- Chairman, Jon Sutcliffe- Secretary and Steve Cutler- Treasurer.

Mel Wale, Sandra Sutcliffe, Jean Warner, Bernard Warner, Peter Tovey, Linda Tovey, Hazel Sharp, Amy Davies, Ben Morley, Heather Stokes, Paul Hurford, Carrie Peters, Ben Thomas, John Freer, Penny Freer, Martin Peters, Sue Wale, Kate Holyland Graham Ward, Graham Muddimer, Nicola Voyle, Kaila Handley, Alan Wilson, Spencer Greasley, Val Morgan, Patricia Kenyon, Ruth and Jack Wright and Ben Love.

Also in attendance Karen Bevan from the Central England Co-op.

Apologies

Bob Christer, Amy Christer, Richard Sutcliffe, Louisa Cohen, Charlotte Stokes, Norma Lawrence, Paul Lawrence, Michelle Frost, James Bennett and Dianne Todd.

Minutes of last meeting

Jon Sutcliffe read out the minutes of the last meeting held on 21/05/19. All agreed these as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising from the minutes

John Freer asked if the Church/drama committee had been set up. The sub-committee was set up last autumn and has had one meeting so far. Members – Carl, Jon and Sandra and from the Church Jean and David and Janet Statham.

Jean and Bernard Warner have received presentation gifts for their long services to the group. Bernard spoke warmly of the great memories and friendships they have treasured over the years. Unfortunately Norma was unable to attend the meeting so her presentation will be arranged as soon as possible.

Chairman's Report

As Chair, Carl welcomed all to the meeting. It has been an excellent year for the group in all aspects. We continue to be in a healthy position financially with good reserves. Carl gave a detailed presentation of the updated Business Plan. The BP was sent out to members prior to the meeting with further copies available on the night. Included with the presentation was the proposed partnership with the Central England Co-operative Society. Details of this partnership are outlined below in Karen Bevan's presentation.

Successful productions in 2019 were directed by Sandra and Norma with three one act plays in January and by Sandra again in May with "Appointment with Death." Later in the year Carrie Peters directed the "Blitz Club." This play was a joint youth-adult production. Music and the script were written by Derek Stone and a member of

the group Mel Wale. In December Carl directed our bi annual Christmas Show. Our superb marketing, led by Ben Thomas continues to go from strength to strength as does our ability to attract new funding to improve infrastructure. Grateful thanks also go to our set team led by Graham and Graham to the front of house team led by Jean and for costume support from Nicky. This year our continuing aim remains to adopt a more business-like approach to ensure that we continue to thrive and prosper and to fully embrace our new association with the Central England Co-operative.

Presentation from Karen Bevan our CE Co-operative representative.

Karen explained the Co-op's grant system that supports communities. Within our region other groups receive support grants. These include Sequence Dancing, The Wine Circle, Women's Groups, Holiday Parks, Ratae Drama Group Leicester and Intergenerational work. We receive a generous annual grant. All it costs us is a £1 a year donation from every member of our group. We will also agree to support the 7 principles of the Co-operative Society (these are detailed in our Business Plan). Our name as such will not change except for an addition to include our support to the Central England Co-op. We will also include this addition on our written correspondence. There are no time limits or restrictions on this association. Karen suggested our sale of tickets for plays could be boosted with the help of the Co-op food store on Dog and Gun Lane.

We all agreed to this generous and supportive venture and Karen was warmly thanked for her presentation.

Finance

- Steve Cutler provided a detailed update to the group on the current financial position as at 31/12/19.
- At the end of the year we held an available cash balance of £7,217.
- Steve's presentation included detail breakdowns of play costs/profits for last year as well as grants and purchases.
- We agreed to hold a reserve of £3000.

Election of committee members

Full committee members are currently in post for another year. Carl, Jon and Steve are happy to continue as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

Planned productions

- 2020 – "Come on Jeeves" produced by Spencer April 30-May 2. Kate Holyland offered to prompt.
- "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" (Youth) produced by Sandra Sept 17-19.
- "Lady in the Van" produced by Ben Nov 25-28.

- Sandra raised the importance of trying to involve new members as much as we can.

Murder Mystery programme (Sandra)

- Our murder Mystery Group has been kept very busy over the last year and a large number of charities covered. Murder in Motown was our play for the 2018-19 season. We are currently performing Hi De Hi De Help!! We have raised money for: The Wildlife Hospital, Loros, Alzhiemers Society, Leicester Voluntary Carers, MIND, Countesthorpe Bowls Club, Cosby Cricket Club, Cosby Community Library, Glen Hills Community Café and Library, Desford Church, Cosby Church, St Teresa's Church Birstall and Narborough WI. We have performed to approximately 800 people raising several hundreds of pounds. During the summer we are undertaking an exciting venture when we are performing a new MM as part of the events to enhance the Thomas Cook Exhibition. This is at the New Walk museum and we will perform in the Art Gallery. Our play is "A Twist for Oliver" is set in Victorian times with a sub plot centred around the construction of the railways. This will be our next MM for the next 12 months.

Any Other Business

- Youth group members now to pay £5 annual membership.
- Spencer suggested a welcome pack for new comers. This will be discussed at committee level.
- As agreed at the 2018 AGM cast members to pay for their play books.
- Stage monitoring system. This would be very useful for musicals. Steve suggests we look at this at committee level.
- Ben Love will email Carl re the idea of a form of a Christmas Show for the years in between the usual planned show.

Minutes agreed
Carl Smith – Chair

Date