

**Wells Operatic Society Limited**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**9 January 2012**

**COMMITTEE**

Richard Wright, Gerald Eyers, Mark Wall, Pauline Perrin, Alan Hooley, Sharon Edmonds, Ken Edmonds, Doreen Grant, Lisa Cope (Co-opted Patrons Secretary), Graham Brown, Norman Cowell and The Mayor of Wells

**1. Apologies** Alan Hooley

**2. Minutes of the last meeting** agreed

**3. Matters Arising**

- **Improving pit and orchestra area** - **AH** On going. AH hopes to have something to report by the Feb/Mar meeting. He is concentrating on improving the size of the pit and the ability to get cabling to and from it. AH is not looking at improving the distribution of sound throughout the theatre. That needs to be a separate study based on the experience of the musicians in the new, enlarged, pit, the audience experience throughout the auditorium and the 'on stage' experience of members.
- **The alternative heating/air conditioning system** -**RW** an estimate has been received from Wheelers (£6,700) together with comments and building costs (£1400-£1800) by Croscombe Roofing. This system would provide under-floor air conditioning primarily at the rear of the auditorium. The flow of this cold air should move towards the front but it may be necessary to add fan(s) at a later date. The system could also be used to supply heat, although this is again a future development. There are concerns over the power supply; MW to contact Bishop's to check our capacity. RW will investigate a grant application from MDC when final figures are known. The committee were keen to minute that there would still be a need to provide better heating and cooling in the dressing rooms. Agreed to go ahead.
- **Outside bar door repairs** - **MW** ongoing
- **Box Office** - There are some ongoing issues about refunds and exchanges - **CS** attended the meeting to clarify procedures. It was agreed to use a credit system, to allow refunds and the potential resale of tickets.
- Online booking will be advertised to be open from 8am on the first day of the public box office opening. Thanks to Chris for his work on this.
- **Billboards** supplied for Panto were the size too small (3'x4'). GE to arrange posters (4'x5') for the one act plays and **MW** to make the boards.
- **Purchase of new rehearsal piano** - **GE & Sheila Ross** ongoing
- **Lighting desk and window** replacement - **MW & GB** ongoing
- **Photographs** for shows - **GE** review of Panto photographs taken by Lisa Willets - this was difficult for her because she was in the production. It would be good to look for another person to cover when Lisa cannot be available. GE will produce the wall displays and add pictures to the foyer screen.
- **Emergency Lighting** in Bar and Emergency Exit in auditorium by wheelchair exit - **MW done**
- **Youth Theatre** - RW has received confirmation from Sarah Neale that the Youth Theatre will be going ahead with monthly meetings. The waiting list gets ever longer - **RW GE to ask for dates.**
- **The safe** in the bar needs replacing- **MW** ongoing
- **Car Park stickers** - **GE** has produced these at a cost of £1 to Ordinary Members. He will issue them.

#### 4. Correspondence

- Anne Beechey has emailed proposing another singing workshop - it was agreed to go ahead after the Sound of Music. Tickets at £10, **Anne** to organise.
- **RW** has written a letter to Thales thanking them for their assistance throughout 2011
- Various correspondences received regarding auditions for Sound of Music; there were concerns over the restrictions (Youth Theatre only) on the children who wanted to audition. It was agreed in the future to continue the Society's policy of open auditions for all shows - plays, musicals and pantomime.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report - PP

- **Robin Hood** - took approx £14,000 with costs at £3700, 100% seats sold.
- **Sale of shares** with Barclays Bank - ongoing
- **Credit card** - policy to complete and sign **Chris Spray** and **PP** to check

#### 6. Membership

- **Members renewal** of subs online seems to be going really well
- **New member** - Gill Gough Stone - ordinary, passed
- **Patrons** - Because of heavy personal commitments which were not anticipated, Elly Miln has had to step down as Patrons Secretary and we are really very grateful to Lisa Cope for stepping in to hold the fort and see us through the arrangements for the Spring Show. She suggested that it would be ideal to appoint a team rather than one person as Patrons Secretary and we are therefore looking for two or three keen volunteers who would like to organise this side of things. Although it means keeping communication with the Patrons generally during the year, most of the work takes place between November and April, as the run up to the Spring Show. No previous experience is required, and Lisa is willing to head the team to begin with in order to set it all up and get the administration running smoothly. The committee are looking into Corporate sponsorship with possible arrangements with John Lover; President of Wells Rotary.
- **Dinner Dance** - **AH** had a meeting with The Swan team just before Xmas and agreed the following:  
**Fri 25th May 12 - 7 for 7:30pm start.** The Swan bar will be open for our use only. The bar and music will run to 11:30pm.  
Dining: The aim is to serve the starter direct to table. The 'major domo' (Mark) will then invite tables to the buffet to select the main course. We will arrange the Chairman's table to go early so that he is ready to start speeches as soon as the last table is served pudding. The major domo will ensure that tables move to/from the buffet smoothly, keeping queues as low as possible and will ensure that the buffet is replenished throughout the process so that the last to the selection will be offered the same choice as those that went first. The tables will be cleared by Swan staff and once clear the pudding will be served direct to table. Swan staff will serve coffee direct to the table.  
He is still negotiating the food that will be offered but you can expect it to be of the standard and type that they offer for weddings as this is what they have based their costs on.
- **AGM** Friday 11 May 2012
- **Carnival Curry -AH** - again a great success; however with the increase in numbers we need a little more control. It was agreed that - bar staff need to be allocated for the evening; ticketing would help with the control of numbers and costs; other 'staff' for the evening should be found to ease the pressure on Alan and Irene (several of the committee were happy to volunteer). Further arrangements are to be finalised closer to the event next year.

- **Show Launch & Mulled Wine Evening** - Wednesday 21 December, again very good, thank you to Alan and Irene.

## 7. Publicity

- Banner - possible sponsorship by HW Signs - **KE ongoing**
- Programme advertising - arrangements and invoicing - **KE ongoing**
- Fosse & Mendip News is starting up this month and may be a source of future publicity -**KE** to look into costs for the One Act Play
- **Wires** down the high street are booked for the banner.
- GE reminded the committee that this year it is the Society's **110<sup>th</sup> Birthday!** The committee discussed various 'celebrations'. It was agreed that **KE** would put together an article for the Journal and the National NODA magazine (and others?), this could include a brief history and lots of photos! We will also organise the 'Big Snap' - a huge Society Photograph to celebrate the event and provide a really interesting memento. Everyone is welcome to get in the snap - from life members to youth Theatre, backstage to FoH staff - the whole Society! Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May, at 3.00pm for the main event, although the bar will be open from 2.00pm, to help us get in the mood! Further details to follow. i.e. what to wear!

## 8. Theatre Renovations

- **Downpipe** - **MW** ongoing
- **Lights in workshop** - **GB** agreed to spend £200 for 4 strip lights, **GB** to install as a 'plug in system'.
- **Code lock** on front door and remove crash bar - **MW** ongoing
- **Light bulbs** - several notes in the Hotbox, **GE** to talk to Angelo

## 9. Production/Trifold/Hire

- **The Last Bread Pudding & Last Tango in Little Grimley Feb 23-25 2012** - **MW & DG** directing, Budget tba Rehearsal Schedule done, Producer **DG & MW**, SM **Bob Collins**, Sound & Lights **GB**, Ticket price £6
- **The Sound of Music 16-21 April 2012** Director - **Gill Kerton**, MD - **Darren Kerton** - Choreographer - **Kim Fisher**, Producer - **Vicky Orman**, SM - **Chris Spray**, Set design/ASM - **Catherine Tucker**, Programme and Publicity - **Katy Biggs and Mark O'Callaghan**, Costumes - **Kate Hathway, Leslie Roach & Sophie Kerton**, Lighting - **Adam Killey and Rob Rogers**, Props - **?**, Prompt - **Sue Kerton**, Rehearsal schedule **done**, Budget **done**, Ticket price £12 and £9, no concessions Friday and Saturday. The full cast to be auditioned
- **Bristol Old Vic - Cold Comfort Farm - 30 May 2012** confirmed - **RW, GE** FoH, **NC** to organise Box Office
- **Animal Farm, July 4-7 2012** Director - **Lois Harbinson**, Producer - **RW**, SM and set design - **Catherine Tucker**, Programme - **Sarah Kendall**, publicity - **KE & Sarah Kendall**, Costumes - **Louise Baker**, Lighting - **Pete Ross**, Props - **Charlie & Pat Watkins**, Prompt - **Joanna Hartley**, Rehearsal schedule **TBA**, Budget **TBA**, Ticket price **TBA**
- **A Little Night Music Sept 5-8 2012** - Director **Lois Harbinson**, MD - **Sheila Ross**, Producer - **?**, Programme and publicity - **?**, Costumes - **?**, Lighting - **?**, Props - **?**, Prompt - **?**, Rehearsal schedule **TBA**, Budget **TBA**, Ticket price **TBA**
- **Panto - December 15-22 2012** Title to be announced but probably Rumpelstiltskin (or Rumpel) written by **Vicky Orman**, **RW** Directing, **Vicky Orman** Producing, **Nick Barlow** MD
- **Spring 2013** - Anyone interested? Any ideas? General discussion, but the idea was to move forward and look at something different, a smaller show - move away from the standard type of well-established musical that has been the tradition in the past, and try something new even if this meant that the cast numbers were restricted.

- We are considering organising our own internal '**one act play/sketch festival**' to take place in October 2012. Anyone interested could put together their own team (cast and crew) and present a short sketch or one act play. The idea would be that we did not get heavily bogged down in the technical side, keeping everything as simple as possible. Productions would be between 10 minutes and 30 minutes long and could be a one man show or involve a number of people. It would clearly be helpful if we had a number of 'teams' entering the festival so that we had perhaps between 1 and 2 hours worth of productions to present. The probability would be that it would be admission free, take place on one night only and give people an opportunity to do theatrical tasks that they might not otherwise undertake. We could have an adjudicator or a judges' panel to give feedback and (if we are feeling competitive) to make awards. The initial thinking is that there might be a workshop in May to explain guidelines and give some hints about approaching the technical side and to explain what support might be available.
- **Spring 2016** - Ken Edmonds has suggested that we consider 'Kiss Me Kate' as this is the 400<sup>th</sup> year after Shakespeare's death. Other Shakespeare productions might also be considered for this year. **Ongoing.**

## 10. Training

- **Singing workshop** - Anne Beechey to arrange
- **Lighting training** - GB to look into options

## 11. Show Reviews

- **Let's Misbehave** - an evening of Cole Porter music and commentary, Salisbury Studio, excellent GE
- **Snow White** by John Morley, Moorlight Theatre Company, quite long but still good stuff
- Strode's Panto **Sleeping Beauty** was good although it felt more like a series of songs and sketches rather than a coherent show. Good individual work with some weak links between parts. They did the show well but the script let them down. MW, KE

## 12. Any Other Business

- Sheila Ross has communicated with the committee that she is very unhappy with the inability to balance orchestra and stage sound. RW to find out more and bring to discuss at the next meeting.
- Costumes - Sarah Briton has written to the committee with suggestions for organisation and maintenance improvements to the costume and properties store. The committee all agreed to support her suggestions and offer her a £100 budget to start the process. More information to follow at the next meeting.
- Bar Till **PP** and **GE** have discussed the purchase of a new bar till - to be discussed at the next meeting.
- DVD recording GB has a contact that would produce a DVD recording of a production if we wished.

13. **Date of next meeting - 6<sup>th</sup> February**

**Thank you for attending. The meeting finished at 10.30pm**