

BAMPTON PLAYERS AGM 2024

8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 20th March 2024

Riverside Hall, Bampton.

There were 24 attendees (all members) and we received 2 apologies ahead of the meeting

1. Notes of 2023 AGM

Roger Erskine -Hill formally opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, then discussed the notes of the 2023 AGM. These had been circulated two weeks prior to the meeting and were unanimously agreed to be a true and accurate record.

2. Chairman s Report

Roger Erskine-Hill delivered his last Chair s report (see Appendix for this in full). Roger shared the productions, social events, and other activities from the last twelve months, in particular highlighting and thanking efforts for the creation and delivery of the outdoor production last summer, and the relocation of the props and costume store. Roger also gave thanks to members who have given so much time and dedication this year.

3. Treasurer s Report

Xanda Vass presented the end of year accounts for the year (see Appendix for this in full) and highlighted that the loss of £87 is of no concern as this was mostly caused by the relocation of props alongside creation of the outdoor stage. Xanda also discussed how she has completed the changes for the organisation to become a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation), as agreed at the last AGM. This has led to a change in Bank accounts. Xanda also explained that we have purchased a sum-up machine which would enable members to take payments by card for tickets and at future events.

4. Election of officers and committee

Members stepping down:

Roger Erskine-Hill (Chair)

Anne Hilton

Officers elected:

Sue Shaw - Chair

(proposed by Avril Saxby and seconded by Roger Erskine-Hill)

Louise Melmoth – Secretary

Sylvia Wakeham – Membership Secretary

(proposed by Sue Shaw and seconded by Wendy Boothroyd)

Committee members elected:

Judith Kelland

(proposed by Avril Saxby and seconded by Wendy Boothroyd)

The committee for 2024-25:-

Chair – Sue Shaw

Secretary – Louise Melmoth

Treasurer – Xanda Vass

Directors – Avril Saxby, Wendy Boothroyd

Garry Girling – Technical Lead

Sylvia Wakeham - Membership Secretary

Judith Kelland

On taking her new role as Chair, Sue began the role by thanking Roger and Anne for their efforts and contributions to the committee.

5. Membership Renewal –

Sylvia Wakeham shared that we currently stand with approximately 60 members, of which 45 have already paid. Continuing forward, we are not charging membership fees to children (under 16), of which we currently have 6 as members.

6. Plans going forward for 2024-25

- Play Reading “Pressure” - An enhanced read-through about how meteorology impacted the planning for D-Day - 1st June 2024 at Riverside Hall

- Shakespeare 2024 Production “Twelfth Night” - Performances on 11th, 12th, and 13th July 2024 at our outside venue – Sherwood
- Summer 2024 lunchtime BBQ - Saturday 27th July, midday at Sherwood
- Autumn 2024 Quiz night - Saturday 12th October 2024 at Riverside Hall
- Mummings at the Bampton Charter Fair 2024 - Thursday 31st October - further details will be released in April/May
- Christmas Social Event 2024 – TBA
- Panto 2025 “Alice in Wonderland” - Performances on 20th, 21st and 22nd February 2025 plus a matinee on 22nd, all at Riverside Hall

7. Matters arising from members.

- It was discussed that it would be good to put on social events to encourage new people to become involved with the players. A suggestion was that a ‘safari supper’ had worked well in the past. This will be discussed at the next committee meeting.
- Wendy shared further details for the production of ‘Pressure’ stating that as the cast is mostly men, females may be asked to read male characters. It would help the production if actors were able to use accents (In this case American, Yorkshire and Scottish). Judy has kindly taken on the role of ‘dialect coach’ for this if anyone would like additional support.
- A discussion was had regarding how enjoyable reading with a script had been during Farewell to Olympus and how beneficial this was for people who struggle with memory but enjoy acting. A suggestion was proposed for script reading socials to be an idea going forward.

Again, this will be discussed in more depth at the next committee meeting.

- At this stage we have still not had anyone state that they would like to direct this year's Mummings play. Judy would be happy to support any budding new directors who would like to try their hand at directing!

8. AOB

The meeting formally closed at 9.00pm

Appendices.

Chairman's Report 2024- Roger Erskine-Hall

This has been a busy year for the Players, although not entirely for the reasons we would prefer to be busy – i.e. putting on regular productions. More of that in a moment.

Our first production of the year was *Wind in the Willows* back in July last year, directed by Avril. This was a triumph for several reasons. For a start, this was the first time we had put on a play in our new outdoor venue at Sherwood. A huge amount of work had gone on beforehand by Hugh, Gary Hilton, Garry Girling and others to refurbish our stage blocks and to install all the cabling and lighting, followed by the superb design and build of the scenery.

Despite the rain on the last day, when the show went on regardless, the play was such a success that The Bampton Players have since been awarded the prestigious Noda South West Achievement Award specifically for this production.

Although we may soon decide to sell the current outdoor stage blocks - as they are almost too heavy to manoeuvre – and use the proceeds to buy lighter ones, our outdoor venue at Sherwood is now ready for future productions, the next being *Twelfth Night* this coming July. During the year, we also undertook a review of accessibility issues to the outdoor stage for those with limited mobility, and several recommendations from that review will now be implemented for future performances.

At the beginning of September Hugh and Avril kindly hosted the Players' annual BBQ, which as always was very well attended and a great success. While in mid September, we set up a free video showing of *Wind in the Willows* here in the Riverside for anyone who missed it in the summer.

Then at the end of September, Hugh and Avril kindly prepared and hosted the Players' annual quiz night, which raised £260 and was won, yet again, by Judi and her team. One day Judi....

Meanwhile, back in August, Spar approached us and demanded that we remove all our props and costumes from their upstairs rooms on the basis that they apparently constituted a fire risk. This precipitated a frenzy of activity to find a new location and then to orchestrate the move itself. Many people were involved firstly in successfully finding our new home in the rooms above us here at the Riverside, secondly in sorting and greatly reducing our stock of props and costumes, and finally in physically moving them across to here. The whole operation took up to 3 months and huge thanks are due to everyone involved, particularly Xanda, Sue, Anne, Ali Diamond, Alison Brooker, Wendy and Hugh.

As a result, we now have a well organised stock of both props and costumes, but at the cost, because of the disruption, of not being able to put on an autumn play as we would otherwise have hoped. We were going to stage *Dangerous Corner* by J.B.Priestley, but this production has been postponed indefinitely.

In the process of sorting out what had accumulated at Spar over the years, we also found old archive material which is now being catalogued and stored by the Heritage Centre.

On 26 th October, the Players once again performed a Mummers play at Bampton Fair, and huge thanks are due to both Judi and Liz for selecting, organising and directing it.

On 9 th December we held our Christmas dinner at the Toucan, which was well attended and once more Bruce and Claire kindly organised games to entertain everyone.

Then just 2 weeks ago, we put on a play reading in the Community Hall of *Farewell to Olympus* – Denise's sequel to *Trouble on Olympus*.

On other matters, we have finally, thanks particularly to Xanda's dogged determination, converted the Bampton Players into a CIO (a Charitable Incorporated Organisation) which limits the liability of individual committee members, a change which we formally agreed to pursue at last year's AGM.

Thanks are also due to Humph, as always, for all his work throughout the year organizing our sound systems, creating videos of each production, for these display boards you can see here this evening, and for updating our presence on the Bampton website.

Finally, as I am about to retire from the committee any minute now, I would like to applaud my fellow committee members, who have been so dedicated and worked so hard over this last year on the Player's behalf. I cannot imagine a more efficient, dedicated and hugely enjoyable team of people to have worked with, and I thank each and every one of them enormously for their hard work and great support over what has been a challenging year.

Treasurers Report 2024 – Xanda Vass

The accounts have been audited by Harry Lees who has now unfortunately moved away from Bampton. However, the new owner of their house used to be an accountant in Taunton so I'm hoping to rope him into service! Although our wonderful productions made profits, we made a small overall loss of £87 for the year. This was because of the planned construction of the outdoor stage at Sherwood and the unforeseen need to relocate all our costumes and props from the two floors above Spar into a much smaller space at the Riverside Hall.

Nevertheless, we still had a very healthy £9,511.20 in our accounts at the start of 2024. To take advantage of the increase in interest rates we have opened a 95 day notice account alongside the deposit account and have put £6,000 in there. If anyone would like a copy of the accounts I have some here.

With a view to selling tickets in the not-too-distant future we have recently purchased a Sum up machine to enable us to accept credit and debit card and electronic payments (google pay and the like). We would also expect to use it for bar and ice cream sales at productions. The software can be downloaded onto mobile phones so they can also be used which gives us lots of flexibility.