

Minutes of Cowton Arts & Theatre Society Meeting held in the Beeswing at 7:30pm on Wednesday 30th August 2023.

Committee Members Present: Nick Smith (Chairman), John Shields (Secretary), Susan Shields (Treasurer), Elaine Simpson, Pat Watson, Bridget Stewart.

Apologies: Jane Green, Geoff Green, Margaret Walton, Cristina Peacock

Agenda Items:

1. Dickensian Christmas Event – JS explained that the agreed date (25th November) had been pencilled in by the VH committee. It was also confirmed that this would not clash with any other planned events in the village. As GG was on holiday, no update on progress could be given but would be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

2. 2024 Performance – The proposed script of Snow White, which had been sent out to all committee members prior to the meeting, was formally accepted by those present. It was agreed that JS would hold the 'master' script to prevent duplicates circulating. JS stated that the script was not complete and asked committee members to give consideration to providing additions/amendments. JS also stated that at least one scene (introduction of the dwarfs – possibly a 'slapstick' scene) needed writing. NS stated he had an idea for this and would look into it. Also, some of the smaller parts may require further dialogue adding. NS suggested those with ideas for additions/amendments make notes of these and then get together as a group to agree a final working script (date to be set at next CATS meeting).

JS confirmed that the provisional dates of the performance (22nd/23rd March 2024) had been pencilled in by the VH committee. Once the minutes of the current CATS meeting have been agreed, JS would send out a general email to the CATS mailing list announcing the proposed performance and the provisional dates. This would also explain that a production meeting would be held towards the end of the year in the VH to begin identifying characters and outlining the program of rehearsals.

The roles of Director and Stage Manager were discussed and NS informed the meeting that Fiona Yorke had offered to direct the production with assistance from NS (and Amanda). This was warmly welcomed by those present. It was agreed that the next priority is to identify a Stage Manager. ES also asked that consideration be given to a method of communication between front and back of house to make scene changes etc. easier. JS stated that he had a full set of radios that could be used and he would look to identify microphone headsets to add to these. Consideration would also be given to 'streaming' the production to the back room.

3. VH Stage Curtains - NS asked what progress had been made regarding the stage curtains. ES informed the meeting that she had a recent discussion with a member of the Village Hall Committee and that CATS may have to clarify what a grant (if successful) would cover, i.e. stage curtains/tracking for the hall etc. The current position is that CATS are waiting for details of an estimate from the VHC.

4. Positioning Speakers - PW asked when the speakers might be put in place. JS explained that the people who were going to help had been (and still were) away on holiday. He also informed the committee that, until the situation regarding the VH windows and curtains had been progressed, there was no immediate urgency.

5. New Members – JS informed the meeting that some new residents had expressed an interest in getting involved with CATS productions both on and off stage. They have been contact (by email) and their names have been placed on the CATS mailing list so that they are kept informed of upcoming events/meetings/etc.

6. Next Meeting – The next meeting would take place at 7:30 on Wednesday 27th September in the Beeswing.

7. No other business was raised and the meeting closed at 8.20pm.