

Minutes of Cowton Arts & Theatre Society Meeting held in the Beeswing at 7:30pm on Sunday 26th May 2024.

Committee Members Present: Nick Smith (Chairman), John Shields (Secretary), Susan Shields (Treasurer), Elaine Simpson, Pat Watson, Geoff Green, Jane Green, Margaret Walton, Cristina Peacock

Apologies: None

Agenda Items:

1. 2024 Production of Snow White. The issue of the ladies toilets in the village hall not working properly was highlighted by several members of the audience on both nights of the production. CATS concern is that if this matter is not addressed, it could put people off attending future productions. This has since been discussed with the village hall committee and the matter is being taken forward by them.

Aside from this issue, it was agreed that the event be signed off as a success following feedback from those who attended. Nick formally thanked all those who took part, who helped both on and off stage and who attended both nights.

2. Confirmation of income and expenditure for Snow White 2024:

Income: £1368.50
Expenditure: £1115.79
Profit: £252.71

3. CATS Committee Vacancy. JS informed the committee that Tim and Bridget Stewart had now left the village and Bridget had (verbally) indicated her wish to step down from the committee. It was agreed that the issue of committee numbers be addressed at the AGM (as required by the constitution) and a maximum number be set at 12. At that time participants of the meeting would be invited to put their names forward to join the committee. **ACTION:** To be raised at the AGM.

4. Future Events. Following a discussion regarding the excellent feedback from this event in 2023, JG and GG stated they were content to write another Dickensian Christmas event. This would be broadly the same format as last years but would seek to involve more children, many of whom had stated they would be interested in taking part. GG also stated he would look at the music content to try and bring in updated relevant music. It was agreed that if there was sufficient demand, the event would run over two nights. A provisional date of Friday/Saturday 29th/30th November was agreed. **ACTION: GG/JG** to draft a script including looking at suit content. **JS** to book provisional dates with the village hall committee. Offer to take part to be raised at the AGM.

NS stated that he had found several scripts suited for adapting for the next CATS production. These were Ali Baba, Treasure Island, Dick Wittington and The Pied Piper. NS said that the Ali Baba and Treasure Island scripts were particularly funny and looked very promising. After discussion it was agreed that NS would draft a brief

outline of each of these and then check at the AGM which might be the most popular and who would be interested in taking part. Provisional dates of Friday/Saturday 21st/22nd March 2025 were agreed with rehearsals beginning on Sunday 12th January 2025 (and each subsequent Sunday following this). Additional days would be considered once rehearsals were underway. **ACTION: NS** to draw up a brief description of each of the potential scripts and present them at the AGM. **JS** to book the provisional dates with the village hall committee.

NS also mentioned the potential for another Cowton Has Talent show as there were more people becoming involved in CATS events. It was agreed that this might be put on in September/October if enough volunteers came forward. NS stated he would canvass individuals to see if there was enough interest to proceed to planning. **ACTION: NS** to seek volunteers for acts and report progress at next meeting.

JS suggested the committee consider putting on a Murder Mystery event. This would be in the loose form of a play where the audience would be invited to question cast members (during an interval) and submit (by table/team) a suggested solution. At the end of the play the winning team(s) would be awarded a small prize. JG stated she had a boxed murder mystery set which she would get out to see if that could be used as a template. It was agreed that this be reviewed at a later meeting to consider when/if it may be put on, possibly sometime in August. **ACTION: JG** to look at her boxed set to see if it can be adapted. Matter to be on the agenda at a future meeting.

5. Village Hall Lighting. JS explained that the Village Hall Committee had been contacted by email to confirm the system was now complete and formally handed over to them. JS also stated that Paul Bramley, who had operated the lighting system at several CATS events, had requested that consideration be given to the purchase of another (small) DMX light controller to solely operate the new spotlight. Paul had informed JS that in some scenes in recent CATS events, he had found it difficult to reset the stage lighting after the spotlight had been required by itself because all the stage lights were operated by a single controller. JS informed the committee that this would cost iro. £100 including cables. SS stated that money remained in the account (£378.06) from the grant for sound and lighting which could only be used for this purpose. After discussion it was agreed that once the remaining action on the sound system had been complete, remaining funds could be used to purchase a new controller. **ACTION: JS** to proceed with the purchase of the new controller once the sound system installation is finished

6. Village Hall Sound System. JS explained that the speakers and associated wiring are now installed (with grateful thanks to Geoff Simpson and John Yorke) in the position agreed and signed off by the village hall committee - to ensure the installation met their H&S/insurance requirements. JS confirmed that the only work remaining was to complete the installation of the ducting to hide the wiring. **ACTION: JS** – to speak to Geoff Simpson/John Yorke regarding completing the sound system work.

7. Hearing Loop. JS stated that the new hearing loop system, purchased for use in the VH, had been installed and only required the purchase of a microphone as the sound source and the completion of the antenna wire. NS enquired whether more than one microphone might be necessary given the size of the space. JS informed

the committee that the system would have to be checked to see whether it could take two separate sound sources. **ACTION: JS** to check with Phase One to see what kind of microphone(s) would be best suited to the system and purchase accordingly.

8. Projector. Recent problems getting the backdrop projector working were highlighted by JS. JS also stated that as we now use the projector for backdrops rather than painting these, serious consideration be given to contingency in case this should fail. The costs of a new bulb for the type of projector CATS use was in the region of £300+ and due to the type and age had a limited shelf-life making the purchase and holding of a spare uneconomic. JS explained that modern projectors now use LED light sources which were highly unlikely to fail. It was agreed that the costs of a new projector, and also the possibility of a grant to purchase one, be investigated. JG asked if this piece of equipment should remain as a CATS asset. This was agreed. **ACTION: JS/SS** – to check prices and report back at the next meeting.

6. AGM/Video of Snow White for cast. It was agreed that the AGM be held on Saturday 13th July beginning at 7:00pm followed by a video show of the 2024 production for cast and crew about 7:30pm. Following discussion it was agreed to try and book the church annexe as this was more convenient in terms of accessing a projector etc. GG agreed to book this and confirm as soon as possible. **ACTION: GG** to book the annexe and confirm soonest. **JS** to publish AGM details and email cast and crew to alert them to the video showing.

7. AOB – JS informed the committee that the (borrowed) camcorder to film the production was successful. The model used could be purchased for approximately £200-£300 and might be an option if the owner was unable to lend their camcorder in the future.

GG asked how the returns from the 2024 production compared to previous years. SS stated she would draw up the necessary information but confirmed that CATS had agreed to keep prices low in order to get the community back into attending shows and also because of the current economic situation resulting in lower returns.

Profit/loss for CATS events

	Income	Expenditure	Profit/loss
2016 Sleeping Beauty	1000.00	436.95	563.05
2017 Wizard of Ozmotherley	1642.25	982.38	659.87
2019 Cowton's Got Talent	737.05	467.51	269.54
2019 Aladdin	1450.00	821.51	628.49
2019 Pie and Pea Cabaret	637.50	382.93	254.57
2019 Wind in the Willows *	0.00	207.33	-207.33
2023 Dickensian Evening	173.00	71.25	101.75
2023 Wind in the Willows	828.10	841.69	-13.59
2024 Snow White	1368.50	1115.79	252.71

* Event cancelled due to Covid – expenditure incurred hall/annexe hire & costumes

8. Next Meeting – The next will be agreed at a later date.

9. No other business was raised and the meeting closed at 9:00pm.