

Minutes of Cowton Arts & Theatre Society Meeting held in the Beeswing at 7:30pm on Wednesday 29th September 2023.

Committee Members Present: John Shields (Secretary), Susan Shields (Treasurer), Elaine Simpson, Pat Watson, Geoff Green, Cristina Peacock

Apologies: Jane Green, Nick Smith, Margaret Walton, Bridget Stewart

Agenda Items:

1. Dickensian Christmas Event – JS confirmed that the agreed date (25th November) has been booked with the VH committee. GG explained the format of the upcoming performance and stated there would be no requirement for other bookings for use of the VH as there would be no need for extensive rehearsals. GG also stated that he and JG would now begin approaching people regarding taking on various roles in the performance. It was agreed:

- GG would draw up an outline program/list of events of the performance along with any props/music required although these are expected to be minimal
- The expected duration of the performance would be approximately 2 hours with a short break
- Publicity would begin in early November including an article for the parish magazine (must be submitted by 15th October)
- Ticket prices would be £2.00 for adults and £1.00 for children (U16)
- Mince pies, tea, coffee and squash would be available
- ES would approach EC school to check whether the children wanted to be involved
- CATS would put up and remove the stage curtains (see item 3) for the performance

(Action: GG to produce program/list of acts etc. with props/music requirements if needed. GG/JG to begin approaching people ref. roles. ES to check with EC primary ref. children involvement. JS to draft item for parish magazine with assistance from GG)

2. 2024 Performance – JS confirmed that the provisional dates of the performance (22nd/23rd March 2024) had been booked with the VH committee. As NS was unavailable the item regarding the writing of scene 3 would be carried forward to the next CATS meeting. It was agreed that a date for the preliminary production meeting would be decided at the next CATS meeting but this was likely to be sometime in early December by which time the script would be ready to distribute.

3. VH Stage Curtains – JS stated that CATS involvement in a grant for new stage curtains was on hold as the village hall committee were considering applying for a new source of funding. JS also explained that CATS had provided an estimate of £750 for the supply and fit of a new heavy duty (manual) curtain tracking system for the stage. JS also explained that both an electric and mechanical (winding) system had been considered but would be too expensive as the size of the stage meant any replacement system would have to be 'made to measure'.

JS also stated that the village hall committee had no current plans to re-install the old curtains before the new ones had been purchased. This meant the old stage curtains, if required, would have to be put up and taken down by CATS for a performance.

4. Positioning Speakers - PW asked for an update on the placement of the sound system. JS explained that his brother, who was going to help, had recently been injured and was unlikely to be fit enough to help for some time. He also informed the committee that he had discussed the matter with Gavin Hall, following a suggestion by Tim Stewart. Gavin had agreed to make his indoor scaffolding available for a day in early November. This meant that if the brackets etc could be put in place before that, the speakers, which are the heaviest part of the installation, could be safely put in place. JS explained that all the brackets, plus safety cables, had already been made or purchased. JS explained he had discussed installing these items with Tim Stewart and would follow this up ASAP. GG also offered to assist in any way he could. **(Action: JS to discuss with Tim)**

5. Next Meeting – The next meeting will take place at 7:30 on Wednesday 25th October in the Beeswing.

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