



**Faringdon Dramatic Society  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022  
7.30pm Barber Rooms Faringdon

**Present:** Helen Thrower(Chair), Helen Tate (Treasurer), Gary Field, Shela Field, Richard Lock, Debbie Lock, Carolyn Taylor, Alan Taylor, Ian Lee, Joan Lee, Jo Webster, Peter Webster, Mike Fraser, Jacob Bayliss, Lucy Waywell, Steve Greening, Carole Tappenden, Lynda Bates, Gary Bates, Jan Crowdson, Kath Torbet and Sarah Couzens.

**Apologies:** Sarah Varnom, Alan Merrick, Debra Warner, Derek Crowdson, Jeni Summerfield, Duncan Sinclair and Martin Waymark,

**Minutes of the last AGM** were approved and will be signed as a correct record by Chair Helen Thrower.

**Matters Arising:** None.

**Chair's Report**

Welcome to our AGM Meeting. How lovely it is that we can meet again since October without Government restrictions.

Apologies: Sarah Varnom, Debra Warner, Martin Waymark, Jeni Summerfield

Minutes From AGM 21/09/2021 and any matters arising.

Chairman's Report

Welcome one and all and here is my Chairman's Report from September 2021 to May 2022. Since taking over as Chairman in September, I'm sure you can agree it has been a bit of a roller coaster not only for FDS but all the theatre and entertainment world. We were very fortunate to have been able to put on our successful production in November 'Ladies Day', expertly directed by Sarah V. From personal reflection it was so wonderful to be back in the saddle. I'm sure you will all agree that our 'long awaited' production was such 'joy' not only for all those involved but for our audience who relished the opportunity to go to the theatre - something that had been taken for granted in the past. It is wonderful to read the various reviews on the FDS website- which sums up how much it was this production was valued and loved. Which leads me on to recognition for excellence for a Noda Award – It is with great delight that Sarah Couzens has been nominated as the 'District 12' winner of April 2021 - March 2022 for the Sybil Conway award for Best Female in a play for her performance as Pearl in 'Ladies' Day'. I am sure that you will all join me in

congratulating Sarah for being recognised as the brilliant actress that she is, and I know from first-hand experience how Sarah's calm and skilled acting abilities emulate to other cast members when working together on a production. I sure you will join me in wishing her all the best for the Regional Awards in June.

It was during this production that we went 'digital' by purchasing a card reader for the bar and purchasing of tickets on the night. It was also during this time the committee made the decision to allow our audiences to solely purchase tickets on-line with the view that we could sell on the door if there were still tickets available as our past ticket sellers are now unavailable. – Our latest show proved very successful and was a sell-out. As a committee we have started to look at updating our current policies by looking at examples of what policies are required in today's climate and have been looking at Noda policies for guidance – we still need to continue this process into the next year so that we can update our website.

Jan production – I would like to personally thank all those who tried their best to put on a production for January. It was a great shame that the dreaded 'covid' once again interfered and cut short plans.

Roddy Benson – February 2022 – It was great sadness that we lost a great 'panto cast member' and as a society we donated money to one of his chosen charities. We also plan to dedicate a performance in memory of Roddy during our next pantomime.

Production – 'Confusions' again expertly directed by Carolyn and Debbie Wow – we don't have it easy!! But that did not stop FDS putting on an amazing show after having to accommodate a full electricity blackout and transferring the stage out into a beautiful setting, and looking at the reviews, you can tell that the audience were not disappointed in any way shape or form. The following two performances were also a great hit and have received excellent reviews from our audience as well an amazing report from NODA. Putting on a production of that size is never easy, but Carolyn and Debbie rose to the challenge and directed an excellent cast of whom should be very proud of themselves. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their contributions for putting on what was once again an outstanding production and a credit the FDS. Looking forward it is great news to hear that we will be performing one of the plays at the Folly Fest in July.

Having only been in the chair of the FDS Committee since last September, it feels that a lot has happened in such a short space of time. I am very much looking forward to what the next year brings for us as a society and would like to encourage anyone who would like to direct any future productions to feel confident that they will have the support of an amazing and very talented society. If re-elected, I would be very proud to continue as Chairman over the next year. Which brings me on the next item on our agenda -proposals for the next production.

**Proposal regarding the next production:**

Helen Thrower (HTh) proposed that we skip doing a November production this year and that our next production should be the pantomime, *Sleeping Beauty*, which she will direct starting in October. This will be our first pantomime after a long break and we will need the extra time.

Debbie Lock agreed this would be a good idea, but for this year only, as we should do a November production next year. Various members agreed with this.

Lucy Waywell raised the issue of the now somewhat controversial ending of *Sleeping Beauty* with issues around consent, which we should endeavour to handle carefully.

The proposal was put to the vote by a show of hands and carried by a large number.

**Long Service Awards**

HTh had a 25 year award badge for Adrian Wells, who was not present. Sarah Couzens agreed to give it to him. HTh then handed 10 year awards to Shela Field and herself.

Carole Tappenden suggested some new badges should be ordered for members who have done more than 35 years with the society. *Committee to action.*

**Membership:** subs of £20.00 per person are now due. HTh thanked webmaster Ian Lee for his management of the collection of these. There are still a few outstanding.

**Treasurer's Report:** Richard Lock gave this report as he had been treasurer for the majority of the period covered. He had previously circulated details of the accounts by email. *Copy available.* Helen Tate has now taken over, after a protracted delay by the bank in sorting out the change of signatories on the accounts. RL Stated we had made a loss of £3396.00 over the period of Covid lockdowns, because core costs such as insurance, rental of the Store and various licenses still had to be paid, whilst we had no income. Luckily our reserves were able to handle this. Our first production after this, *Ladies Day* in November 2021, made a profit of £85.00. There were additional expenses for this regarding licenses for the Canada Exchange, which never happened. GF mentioned that we have a credit for two licenses with Nick Hearn Books, who hold the rights, if anyone wants to direct one of their plays in future. RL then said that *Confusions*, which is outside this accounting period had at present made a profit of £810.00, although there may be a few more small expenses to come off this. We are grateful to Lord Faringdon for letting us use the Buscot Park Theatre for a very reasonable rate, which has helped with this.

RL mentioned the difficulty for the treasurer of providing cash floats, now that tickets are all sold on line.

Jo Webster asked about the relationship with the Junior School and RL reported that things were much the same so far as we know, but since we will not be doing a production there until the next pantomime, we shall see how this works out. Both the school and Stage Coach have used our lower staging over this past period, plus the white back cloth and the stage legs. A team will be going in on 27<sup>th</sup> May to arrange storage of these items and some of the props etc., at present under the stage in a more accessible cupboard in the hall.

Lynda Bates asked if any payment or donation had been given to Ian Chandler of IC Lighting who had given us a lot of equipment recently. RL said that so far there had not been any donation to Ian and proposed offering him £100.00.

Debbie Lock raised the issue of programmes, which we have sometimes given out free and at other times charged for. There were a large number left after Confusions, which seems a waste of paper, although the system of asking for donations for programmes had certainly covered their cost. There was some discussion about this and the consensus was that we needed to have more elaborate programmes for the pantomime. Larger programmes cost about £50 to produce smaller ones about £25.00. Lucy Waywell suggested that we ask people to include a programme in their purchase when they buy their tickets online. Then we would have a better idea how many to produce, whilst also having spares for cast and for sale on the door. The Committee will take this forward.

### **Election of officers:**

HTh thanked Martin Waymark for his work on the Committee. He is standing down for now but hopes to be back before too long. She herself is happy to continue as Chair and other current members are also happy to continue.

The election of officers was as follows:

Helen Thrower Chair, proposed by Gary Field, Seconded by Jayne Isham.  
Helen Tate Treasurer proposed by Jayne Isham seconded by Richard Lock.  
Gary Field proposed by Helen Thrower seconded by Carole Tappenden.  
Jan Crowdson proposed by Helen Thrower seconded by Jayne Isham.  
Carolyn Taylor (Minutes Secretary) proposed by Debbie Lock seconded by Jo Webster.

Debbie Lock as a new member, proposed by Carolyn Taylor seconded by Helen Thrower.

Peter Webster as a new member, proposed by Jo Webster Seconded by Carole Tappenden.

All these proposals were accepted by the meeting.

### **Any Other Business:**

- 1) Helen Thrower spoke about the Barbecue which we hope to hold in September. Gary and Shela Field and also Jo and Peter Webster volunteered to host.
- 2) Carole Tappenden asked about Insurance for members over 80, herself and several others coming up. They are at present not covered for

personal injury by the NODA Insurance policy. The Committee will look into this and see if anything can be done

- 3) Peter Webster raised the issue that there has been no power up at the store for some time. The owner, Andrew has been unwell and although PW has raised the issue it has not been resolved. It is just our unit that is cut off. The Committee will follow this up.
- 4) DL offered a vote of thanks to Shela Field and Alan Taylor for their work on the bar at all productions, which is always carried out with good humour and efficiency.
- 5) Sarah Couzens asked about the situation with regard to a future Canada exchange. At present Canada is behind the UK opening up after Covid, so nothing is planned for now.
- 6) Gary Field mentioned the NODA Awards Ceremony for which Sarah Couzens has a nomination for best actress as Pearl in 'Ladies Day'. It is held in Radlett near Watford and this year is starting at 9.30am. GF has mentioned to our NODA rep Andrew Walters how difficult it is for us to get there so early. Unfortunately we cannot attend this year.
- 7) Steve Greening asked if we could arrange for new FDS T-shirts to be available for members to purchase. Committee to action.

**Meeting closed** at 8.40pm and was followed by a social gathering.

**Signed .....**(Chair)

**Dated.....**