

**Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting of The Teddington Theatre Club Limited held on Monday 25th November
2019**

Apologies: Lucy Allen, Anton Ageyev, Simon Bartlett, Roberta Cole, Liz Eliot, Jean Goodwin, Kim Jackson, Simon Lane, Bridget Norman, Michael Norman, Mike O'Docherty, Jenny Osorio, Eleanor Pearson, Diane Salkilld, Steve Taylor

Present Clare Henderson Roe (Chair) and 51 full members

Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2018 were approved and signed.

Proposed Cath Messum Seconded Berni Messenger

The Chair presented her report for the year

Good evening and welcome to the 2019 AGM. I am going to speak for a few minutes reflecting on the last year at TTC and HHT, and then Lottie will speak about all things Artistic. Joe will thereafter present the financial report and we shall follow the agenda for the formal part of tonight's meeting. After the main meeting and a short break there will be some presentations and the opportunity for discussion of TTC matters.

TTC has done a wide mix of productions in the last year and we continue to produce great shows and are not afraid of rising to a challenge. Modern, Classical, Shakespeare, Comedy, Drama – we've covered them all and should be proud of the excellence we have produced.

YAT also continues to produce quality shows and with Firth & Madness, Austen and Shakespeare making up their list this year, they too cover many different genres. Jenna/Lizzie will be providing an update about YAT in the second part of this evening.

We also had two social events in the year, the Carol Concert and the New Year's Eve party, both of which were successful. My thanks to those who ran these events. Whilst it would be nice to do more social events, it is imperative that we have the people to run them and that we put on things that our members would like to attend, so please let us know what kind of events would interest you (and if you would like to volunteer to organise and run one).

We learned of the passing of five TTC members this year. Ivor Davies, who had been an active member during our Hampton Court House days, Maggie Greenhalgh, a member of several local societies and one of our Audience Mailing Stuffing Team. Joann Fuller, a long-time member who did a huge amount for TTC, including props mistress extraordinaire, one time Chairman and latterly a Vice President. Katie Eliot who along with her parents attended many productions and events and supported TTC. And Enid Segall, who was a regular Duty Manager and our Press Officer. They are much missed and I cherish my memories of them. On a happier note, many congratulations to Linda and Clive Hansell who got married in March, to Sophie and Dane Hardie on the birth of their daughter, Skylar Belle, in August. To Jenny and John Winterburn on the birth of their son, Micah David, in September and to Emma and David Knight on the birth of their daughter, Cleo, also in September.

Outside Hires are vital to the survival of our theatre and have remained strong this year. We have several theatre companies and dance and drama schools who hire our premises for workshops and productions.

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We also have daytime hires by a variety of organisations which include training sessions, bridge classes, business meetings and private events such as funeral receptions and birthday parties. My sincere thanks to John Gilbert and Wes HR for their hard work on securing and managing outside hires. Wes will be speaking more on this in the second part of this evening.

At last year's AGM I announced that, after twenty years in this building, and with the changing times that people have to commit to volunteering, the Board had agreed to conduct a strategic review of TTC and HHT. Michael Norman, a successful management consultant, TTC member for over 40 years and the person who wrote the Business Plan which contributed to securing the Lottery grant for the fitting out of the building, carried out this review and we have reported back on the findings and the recommendations that the Board are working on to progress. The Powerpoint presentation and notes from the Open Meeting held on 22 September are available on our website. It is imperative that we have more people come forward to progress some of the recommendations, specifically in the areas of Fund Raising, attracting more young members, Outreach and further raising of our profile in the local area. Recommendations are great, but this is what they will remain without people coming forward. I am very grateful to the few people who have thus far volunteered.

We are so very lucky to have Board Members who volunteer so much of their time. The amount of work each person does for and on behalf of our club is tremendous. Diane Salkilld stood down as Finance Director at the last AGM and we were very fortunate that Joe Stockwell came forward to fill this role, supported by Jane Smith, who is also taking over as Company Secretary. My sincere thanks to Diane for maintaining the books and for providing a comprehensive handover to Joe and Jane, who are now both up and running and managing our finances with quiet efficiency. Joe is also working with Mike Elgey and John Gilbert on implementing the 10 year Business and Finance plan, an essential part of the strategic review outcome that will ensure we robustly maintain our premises and equipment.

Laurie Coombs, our Operations Director, oversees the business and administration side of HHT which is so vital and is also involved with the implementation of the 10 year plan and the bar services review project.

Our Artistic Director Lottie Walker has overseen our great programme of productions and is frequently to be found at the theatre, supporting cast and creatives and dealing with the plethora of areas that come under her remit.

Gerry McCarthy does an incredible amount of work as our Sales and Marketing Director to ensure all our events are well publicised and co-editing Theatre Magazine each month, plus ensuring TTC has a presence at local events including the Hampton Hill Christmas Market.

Ken Mason has completed his first year back on the Board as Premises and Equipment Director and keeps track of the backstage and technical side of things along with Harry Jacobs and our Backstage and Technical team.

Berni Messenger continues to ensure our tills and the EPOS contactless payment system for the bar is kept in good working order and is on hand to answer any queries. Berni is also on the Bar Committee and part of the bar services review project.

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Harry Jacobs has headed up various projects this year including the installation of the new telephone system and also the new lift, the final phase of which has started today! Harry and Berni have been wonderful 'Non-Executive' Directors and have taken on and seen through to their conclusion a wide variety of projects in their time on the Board.

Sue Bell has been our Company Secretary for several years and has done a great job. She is also involved in Membership and has taken over as production accountant. Berni, Harry and Sue are all standing down this year and on behalf of the membership my heartfelt thanks to each of them for everything they have done for TTC and HHT in their time on the Board.

Barry Hill is our Minutes Secretary, magazine co-editor and Little Theatre Guild Rep, and continues to do a great job in all these areas. Everyone on the Board has worked incredibly hard and I could not have wished for a more supportive, positive and 'can do' attitude group of people to have served alongside.

I would like to thank all those who volunteer their time in so many areas, without whom we would not be able to function. Actors, Directors, Technicians, Stage Management and Crew, Props, Front of House, Bar, Box Office, Gardening, Wardrobe, Production Managers, Play Selection, Membership, Open Mornings, Social Media – we need our teams of volunteers in every department in order to thrive as a club and to keep our wonderful building alive.

We have had a few changes in team leaders this year. Lizzie Williams stood down as box office manager in March after two years and my thanks to Lizzie and her fellow volunteers for their work and dedication to keep the box office running smoothly and efficiently. This gave us the opportunity to review the box office set up and we have a team of volunteers, each with their role to fulfil. Kim Jackson heads up the team, putting the shows onto Positickets and having an overview of all things box office. Laurie Gibson continues to manage the telephone bookings. Gerry McCarthy deals with Swan judges and reviewers. Kim, Cath Messum, Paul Revis, Steve Wayman and myself staff the box office on show nights. Thus far the system is working well and this makes the job less onerous on any one individual.

Alison Barker stood down as head of wardrobe after many dedicated years and we were lucky to have Mags Wrightson and Lesley Alexander who have taken over in this department and who, with their wonderful wardrobe team, have already put in a huge amount of work to review and sort the Wardrobe Department.

After the very sad passing of Enid Segall, Christine Wayman came forward to take on the role of Press Officer, which she has embraced wholeheartedly to publicise our shows and is increasing our social media presence.

After 16 years as the club's production accountant, Ann Beauchamp stood down this year. This role included payment of production expenses, producing production accounts and paying our bar suppliers. Ann has been a member since the 1960s and was made a Life Member some years ago for the huge amount of work she has put into TTC in a wide variety of departments. The board would like to thank Ann for her contribution over a long period of time. Happily Ann remains an active member of TTC, volunteering for the bar and meeting and greeting at our Saturday Open Mornings. I would like to present Ann with a token of our gratitude.

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I am pleased to announce that the Board has appointed a new Vice President, Ken Mason. Ken joined TTC in 1976 and in his time has undertaken just about all roles on and backstage – actor, director, writer, lighting, sound and stage manager. In addition to this Ken is a regular Bar Senior, FOH Manager, and Steward and attends the Saturday Open Mornings to show people around our wonderful theatre. Ken also volunteers in the office each week to help ensure things are kept tidy and sorted. For eleven years Ken was responsible for the weekly stock ordering for our bar. In his time Ken has served on the Artistic Committee (now the PSC) twice and was our Chairman during the transition from Hampton Court House to HHT. Ken is one of those ‘go-to’ people for whom nothing is too much trouble and who can find a solution to almost any query or problem, a great example of someone who is positive about all things TTC and HHT and who has given a huge amount to the Club. I hope he doesn’t mind me describing him as one of our ‘Elder Statesmen’ who is proud to be a member of TTC and who has served the Club for many years and is most deserving of this appointment.

The Board has received a nomination for Life Membership and has unanimously agreed this. This award exists to recognise the valuable contribution to the past, current and future existence of the Club. In considering the award of Life Membership, an individual should have demonstrated significant, sustained and high quality service enhancing the reputation and future of the Club, and this person fulfils this admirably. This person continually suggests new ideas to improve the way the Club works. He researches them, manages the installation and provides on-going support of these projects. These projects have included: The introduction and ongoing support of the Virtual Documents library. Wirelessly extending the technical communication system between the front of house manager and the backstage and technical team. The provision of standalone equipment to allow hirers to easily operate sound themselves. Building and maintaining the sound effects library. Involvement in the Foyer ceiling replacement, including installing new automatic LED lighting and additional speakers. Researching, recommending and overseeing the re-covering of the auditorium seating in phases, between shows. Leading the improvements to our broadband and WiFi services to cope with the increasing demands. A complete upgrade of the sound facilities in the auditorium, including a huge amount of work beforehand and several weeks in the theatre. Following that, an upgrade of the sound facilities in the Coward room and improvements to the facilities in the Yardley room including: a stage relay to the SM and cast; a cueing facility; SM communication to the cast; and a camera relay to the SM. He researched, recommended and oversaw the installation of both the new telephone system and is also doing so for the lift. He maintains contact with TTC and our Hires technical people and provides assistance and on-going support to them. He has been on the Board of Directors for six years and has been a very valued member of the team. Everything this person does affect the way the theatre operates, makes our lives easier and we are more professional as a result. This person (who was the one Board member not involved with the decision!) is Harry Jacobs.

Very recently the Board has also approached a potential new Patron and I am pleased to announce that Rula Lenska has accepted. Rula has supported several productions and also did her fascinating one woman show here in the studio earlier this year. We are very proud to have her as a Patron.

And so I come to the end of my time on the Board. I have been reflecting on my time thus far at TTC. I joined around 2002 ostensibly as an actor/singer. However, in 17 years I have been in two studio productions and co-directed one show. I quite quickly got involved with the bar and still thoroughly enjoy my shifts and meeting people. I have been involved with the management of TTC/HHT since November

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2007 when I became Co-Chair of the Management Committee. In April 2009 the single Board was formed and I became a Non-Executive Director with responsibility for volunteers. I stood for and was elected Chairman in November 2011. In the main I have enjoyed my experiences and have learned a lot from my fellow committee and board members. I have strived to improve communication and to make us all feel an important part of the TTC family. I have seen a lot of changes in my time, the passing of many dear TTC members and also the joy of welcoming new members brimming with enthusiasm and talent. I am passionate about all things TTC and YAT and I hope I have helped to develop the bond between the two groups well. I am looking forward to maintaining my involvement with the bar, box office, volunteer liaison and FOH and who knows, I might even get a moment to be involved with a production again! I wish Cath all the success in taking over this diverse role and I am sure the Membership will support her in her efforts, as they have done for me over the years. Thank you for listening and I shall now hand over to Lottie.

To receive and adopt the Chair's Report
Proposed Barry Hill Seconded Ann Beauchamp

President Roger Smith then proposed a vote of thanks to all those standing down from the Board.

Presentations were made to Harry Jacobs, Sue Bell, Clare Henderson Roe, Berni Messenger and Ann Beauchamp.

Life Memberships were given to Clare Henderson Roe and Harry Jacobs.

The Artistic Director presented her report for the year.

I'm now at the end of my third year in this job. It should have become easier but in truth this year has been the toughest yet. Mostly in a good way. TTC is a victim of its own success; our track record in delivering consistently high production values and producing an ambitious programme is excellent. And there is a certain amount of pressure in keeping these standards up. What is equally difficult is living up to our reputation whilst also remaining inclusive and maintaining our "club" atmosphere. Under Clare's leadership inclusivity has been a top priority and I've never been allowed to forget that we are here for fun. Sometimes the "best" actors don't audition for things and sometimes we have to work with a new and inexperienced technical person. And so what? The most important thing is getting the show on and giving everyone an opportunity to try their hand at whatever it is they want to do.

As in previous years I don't intend to dwell on every single production – if you saw them, you'll know about them. If you did not see them you won't be interested. However, I feel quite strongly that it needs to be said – and understood – what the impact in whether our members support our productions has on TTC as a whole.

People far better qualified than I will speak to you this evening about our finances. From my perspective the most important thing is that, despite continued and ever more innovative efforts from our marketing teams, revenue from ticket sales has declined for the second year running. Ticket sales are a large percentage of TTC's overall income stream and it is really worrying that although artistically we are doing well and pushing boundaries we are not necessarily reaping the financial rewards.

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Our directors and production managers are all incredibly good at working within their budgets and the ability to make something from nothing at TTC is a thing of wonder, but controlling costs is one thing. Increasing revenue is another.

This year we have produced some really excellent work that has just not sold as well as we'd have liked. The issue the PSC and I have is that we need to attract audiences whilst also producing a programme that will excite our members. There is no point in trying to produce things that no one wants to be in or work on just because they are guaranteed box office. I am sure everyone is glazing over now, so here are a couple of illustrations of what has been said by some of our members about some of our shows this year.

"well that won't be any good – it's far too ambitious"

"not my cup of tea"

"no one will go to see that"

"I'll go because I'm expected to but I won't like it "

"don't know those actors so I won't go"

"no need to book for that one – it won't sell out"

This is, I'm sure the tip of the iceberg. I'm equally sure that none of it is meant maliciously, but it is self-fulfilling. The more people heard to say this stuff, the fewer people will be tempted to book for something they are unsure of. And the impact on the morale of a show's team and box office revenue cannot be underestimated.

As I say all the time to the point of boring myself – Theatre is subjective. Not everyone will like everything and our programming is designed to ensure that there is something for everyone at least once in each season. The PSC also try to make the programme as accessible as possible so that our audiences can feel comfortable when stepping outside their comfort zone. So my plea to you all this year is please continue to be supportive of club – and be seen to be supportive. You can make a real difference. Yes, Wolf Hall and Pornography have brought in a totally new audience who we hope to see again, but the idea is that these new people come along together with not instead of our regular audience!

So this year's appeal is – if you are in or otherwise involved in a play please try to get your friends and family to book early - nothing sells tickets more than sold tickets! And if you are not directly involved in something please try to at least limit any negative thoughts and opinions to within your own four walls at home. The nature of non-professional theatre is that standards vary. Please be aware of this and supportive of your fellow club members. And remember the old customer service saying "if you give good service your customer will tell one person. If you give bad service they will tell 10".

The PSC is changing a little going forward. We have been thwarted all year by issues around acquiring performing rights for plays and have gone back to the drawing board on slots more times than I care to mention. In order to streamline things next year we will be smaller. I've had a fabulous response to my call to action for a new PSC member when some of our current team stand down and Danny and I are meeting with everyone who has expressed an interest to ensure that they know fully what is involved and that we can make an informed choice to identify the right person to complement the existing team.

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On that note I'd like to formally thank this year's PSC who have been innovative, flexible and above all patient with the frustrations we have faced. They are: Danny Wain, Jeremy Gill, Andy Smith, Heather Mathew, Trine Taraldsvik, Charlie Golding and Rebecca Tarry.

They have, without exception, been a great support, keeping me in line when I've wanted to go off piste and I couldn't have managed without them.

This last year I have been delighted to see so many new members become actively involved in our productions. And to see more familiar faces taking on new roles and responsibilities. Our panto sees Technical Hero Patrick Troughton tread the boards and several of our acting members have been dipping their toes into different administrative and technical areas. Most of all it has been wonderful to see several ex-YAT members (and a few current ones) become actively involved in TTC productions, more, I believe, than ever before. We have several "young person" roles on the horizon over the next few months and already have some YAT and ex-YAT people in the mix on Stage Management and technical teams for the next season. So many opportunities for YAT and TTC to strengthen their ties further. I'm especially keen that once YAT members hit the magic age of 26 we don't lose them from the building forever.

Theatrically in 2019 we have covered politics, history, family relationships, terrorism and fantasy. We have travelled to New York, the Tudor Court of the 16th century, the English Countryside of the 1940's, Disneyland and Cold War Moscow. We have cheered on our handsome hero in Dick Whittington and our plucky heroine in Daisy Pulls it Off. We have looked in detail at a relationship in the 2 hander that was Frankie and Johnny and achieved what so many thought was impossible (and may I remind you what no-one else in the world bar the RSC has) in staging the epic Wolf Hall and Bring Up the Bodies. Our calendar year started with The Winter's Tale, our journey to oblivion that was Pornography. These plays when looked at together probably demonstrate better than anything else the full depth, breadth and diversity of TTC's programme and talent pool. We are fortunate indeed to have the people we do to be able to make theatre happen to such a high standard.

Next year's programme is every bit as diverse, with established, new and returning directors taking on comedy, costume drama, modern drama and - in response to the requests from many of you in our recent survey - two full blown musicals. But first - it's panto season (oh yes it is!). This year's panto may be set in outer space but it has everything you'd expect from pantoland- a dame, a villain, a hero, a heroine, goodies, baddies, several princesses and a robot!

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to make 2019 a success.

To receive and adopt the Artistic Chair's report
Proposed Charles Halford Seconded Michelle Mackrell

The Finance Director presented the Auditor's report and audited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2018.

For those who do not know me, I am Joe Stockwell the finance director. I am a chartered accountant working as a Senior Finance Business Partner in local government.

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I would like to start by saying thank you to Diane for her handover and continued support during my first few months and Jane for taking on the payments, banking and other tasks on top of becoming company secretary.

Thank you to Sandra for the box office reconciliations, Ann for her work as production accountant, which Sue has recently taken on.

Thank you to Eddie, Charles and Laurie for bar banking and reconciliations.

Thank you Kim, Clare and Laurie for making the transition to the virtual terminal seamless and for running the box office.

Thanks again to Sue for the Membership accounts, Robin for maintaining the membership database and also John and Wes for managing all of the outside hires.

Now onto the accounts for 2018/19. I'll give a brief overview, but the full accounts and Trustee report are available on our website.

The headline is that we made a loss in the year of £8,650 compared to a profit last year of £3,243, a reduction of £11,893. This was our first loss since 2014/15.

While this is clearly not ideal, the day to day operations of the club remained profitable. The profit and loss account includes depreciation, which is an accounting adjustment and not an actual cash cost that the club has to pay. Therefore if we exclude depreciation then we made a profit of £19,504, compared to a profit of £31,103 last year.

Looking at the income, outside hires remain our largest single source of income and accounted for 2% more of the total income than last year.

Box office income was £6,271 down from the previous year.

Bar income increased by £3,557 from last year, which is the largest increase for a number of years. This is most likely due to the introduction of the card machines. The percentage of card transactions is steadily increasing, and has been as high as 54% for a recent show. The costs associated with the card machines were £2,184 for the year. Making the net increase £1,372 from 2017/18.

This next slide shows the income over the past ten years, with the same groupings. The red line is the total expenditure excluding depreciation.

As you can see, our total income is down for the second year in succession and our profit margin is down for the third year in a row.

While this is not an immediate concern as we are still making an operating profit, it will become an issue if it continues to decrease and will limit our ability to support the proposed rolling capital programme.

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If we move onto the running costs. The running costs account for 47% of the total expenditure, and equates to £325 per day. This is an £11 per day decrease from last year. This is due to a reduction in cleaning and maintenance costs and utilities.

The cost of activities at £130,391 increased by £15,625 from last year.

The largest increase was in production costs which increased by £8,823 from last year, but was still within budget.

Bank and other financial charges increased by £3,113, with most of this increase due to the introduction of the bar card machines.

The Club continues to maintain high cash balances and a high level of reserves.

The Board has set a reserve policy of £210k. Which is broadly equivalent to one year's revenue expenditure. This would be sufficient to keep the Club solvent were it to face a significant decrease in income or significant unexpected expenditure.

Our reserves are currently greater than this at £432,058 as at 31 March 2019, but with the recent significant cost of the lift, the telephones and other projects this will reduce in the next few years. The level of reserves will be reviewed at regular intervals by the board.

One recommendation of our recent strategic review was to implement a ten year business plan.

A key part of the ten year business plan is a rolling capital programme encompassing scheduled repairs and maintenance, as well as improvements and enhancements to the theatre spaces, front of house, bar and function rooms.

The first version of the plan was agreed at the last board meeting, with approval to proceed with the first round of projects. This will return to the board for review and approval each year, alongside the annual budget. The rest of the business plan will continue to be developed.

Thank you to all the BAT team for their input, but especially to Mike and John for pulling the plan together and keeping it up to date.

With this future expenditure plan and steadily increasing running and operating costs, we must increase our income to maintain our operating margin.

Fundraising could be a key source of additional income for the Club. There is currently a bar review underway and other projects identified which could be attractive fundraising possibilities.

Christine Wayman has already made a start in this area by setting us up on easyfundraising.

And I would like to organise a fundraising working group to work specifically on this. If anyone would like to help then please let me know.

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If we move onto the performance of the shows, you can see that the gross contribution from the shows to the running and maintenance of the theatre was over £55k.

However this figure does not include any of the other costs associated with the use of the building and the promotion of the show.

Last year Diane calculated a cost per show for these items and if we include this we see that the total net contribution is £10k lower than last year at £34,627.

Average ticket sales for auditorium shows reduced from 69% last year to 59% in 2018/19, with three of the six shows selling under 50% across their run, leading to box office income reducing by £6,271 from last year.

This concludes my report.

The slides from my report will also be available in the member's area of the website.

Finally, I would like to conclude my remarks by again saying thank you for all the help and support I have received since becoming Finance Director, and the continued help of everyone who plays a part in maintaining the finances of the Club. It is a huge team effort and one that goes largely unseen, but is crucial to maintaining the Club.

To receive and adopt the Finance Director's report
Proposed Berni Messenger Seconded Roger Smith

To receive the Auditor's report for the year ended 31st March 2019
Proposed Jeremy Gil Seconded Charles Halford

Appointment of auditors

To resolve that Taylorcocks of Farnham be continue as Auditors and Independent Examinors for the year ending 31st March 2020.

Proposed Barry Hill Seconded Mike Elgey

Remuneration of Auditors

It was resolved that "the Board of Directors fix the remuneration of the Auditors and Independent Examinors for the year ended 31st March 2019".

Proposed Berni Messenger Seconded John Gilbert

Re-election of Directors

Clare Henderson Roe, Harry Jacobs and Berni Messenger are standing down this year. Three nominations to replace them have been received from Cath Messum, Steve Wayman and Rebecca Dowbiggin.

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It was therefore resolved that the under listed be appointed as Directors of the Company to serve until the next annual general meeting or sooner as the members may decide:

Cath Messum as Chairman
Ken Mason as Premises & Equipment Director
Lottie Walker as Artistic Director
Laurie Coombs as Operations Director
Gerry McCarthy as Sales & Marketing Director
Stephen Wayman as Non-Executive Director
Rebecca Dowbiggin as Non-Executive Director

Proposed Mike Elgey Seconded Nick Eliot

Elected unanimously

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.45

Susan Bell
Company Secretary

25th December 2019

Notes on the Discussion Session after the AGM

1. Outside hires

Wes Henderson Roe outlined the policy followed for outside as follows:

Opening statement

The income from theatre hires forms an integral part of the funding of this building. Without it (or its equivalent) HHT and therefore TTC in its current guise would not exist.

2018 – 2019 Hiring year

The last financial year was, to all intents and purposes, a typical hiring year in which income was received from multiple sources some of whom hire our spaces on more than one occasion in the course of the year. In the following analysis I have NOT included regular day classes by children's theatre groups like SOS and OSN as these fall within John's remit as business or commercial hires.

Of the 40 theatre-based hires invoiced in the financial year only 4 were studio based, the remaining 36 were all here in the main house.

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Of these 36 main house hires 21 were full weeks, 6 were 2 to 5-day projects, and 9 were one day bookings.

Of the 21 full week hires 11 were youth, dance or children's productions, 6 were musicals or pantomimes, and 4 were plays.

All the 2 to 5 day projects were children based.

Of the 1-day bookings 4 were stand-up comedy, 2 were music hall, 1 dance, 1 music concert and 1 floral demonstration.

The studio bookings were 2 full week plays, a two-night cabaret, and 1 comedy night.

Finances

Of the over £55K generated by these bookings net of VAT the one-week bookings bring us in on average between £2.5 & £3.5K before VAT with the dance schools topping the list as they often hire most or all of the additional rooms in the building.

The others bring in on a pro-rata basis with the short part-day bookings like the comedy nights being the least lucrative in terms of hire fee.

However, our financial analysis should not just look at the hire fee for use of the space when evaluating best use of the building, so for example with the high paying dance schools we may see part of our income from them offset by TTC paying for rehearsal space offsite. This is one reason why I try to keep dance school bookings to a maximum of three in any year. On the other hand, the comedy nights often generate high bar takings as do many of the musicals.

In the last financial year we only incurred one part bad debt, the attempted recovery of which is still ongoing.

Balance

Part of my role as administrator is to maintain balance. What do I mean by this?

1. Balance in the sense of not having too many dramas that compete directly with TTC in terms of content. I do this by limiting the number of hire weeks available for such productions, particularly in relation to their proximity to TTC productions, but also as many of our drama neighbours rely more and more on TTC actors and technicians to put on their chosen plays.

2. Balance in terms of trying to avoid clashes of choice of plays with the TTC programme. I do this by requesting in advance hirer choices wherever possible and advising hirers if a piece has been recently performed by another company here.

3. Balance in the sense of spreading musicals across the year whenever possible. When doing this I also take into account any TTC or YAT musicals programmed.

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4. Balance in terms of the numbers and production content of the children's and youth bookings. Many of these do not require our bar services, so again by trying to spread these across a year we give short respite gaps to our hard-working bar staff which they wouldn't get with back to back plays or musicals.

Conclusion

In conclusion I'd like to thank the board for their guidance in hiring decision making, but also their willingness to allow me to manage the hires in my own inimitable way on a day to day basis.

I'd also like to thank the duty managers and bar staff without whom none of these hires would take place.

Thought

And finally, I'd like to suggest that the Board consider how in future I or following administrators might improve on the quality of some of the productions put on by hirers here, as I am aware that many (if not most) of our audiences rarely distinguish between TTC and hirer shows, sometimes to the detriment of TTC as a club.

Wesley Henderson Roe
Theatre Hiring's Administrator

2. Youth Action Theatre

Jenna Powell gave a resume of the last year's activities as follows:

Another year has flown by and as always YAT has had an eventful and packed season at HHT. 2019 has seen the group perform here at HHT three times and included our regular progress north to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Our spring production was *Our House the Musical* which saw several new members join the group and provided an opportunity for many to get a crash course in the music of Madness! The reviewer described the cast as 'lively ...and engaging' and we were thrilled to receive a Swan nomination for best musical production and for best design element.

Next up for the group was an adaptation of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* which was performed in the Coward Studio and then presented for a week's run at the Edinburgh Fringe. We were blessed to have good weather and the group rose to the challenge of promoting the show on the Royal Mile with all the charisma and ingenuity we have come to expect from our members! Reviews called it a 'fresh take on an old classic' that maintained 'the charm of Austen's writing in a thoughtful, entertaining and enjoyable production' and that the cast came over as 'relaxed, enthusiastic, vigorous and totally absorbed in their characters'.

And our most recent production, *Romeo and Juliet*, closed only a couple of weeks ago and was directed by two YAT members, JoJo Leppink and Emily Moss. Our star-crossed YATters presented a modern take on this well-known Shakespeare, embracing the multiple talents our members have to offer and included inviting old YAT member Idy Wheatley back as fight choreographer. We had good audience attendance and

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the reviewer noted the casts 'entertaining and professional performances' in a 'contemporary setting [which] was brilliantly framed...with a highly creative and original stage design'.

YAT continues to rehearse at St. Peters and St. Paul's Church in Teddington where we have now been based for our rehearsals for several years and where we enjoy a friendly working relationship. As always, we remain grateful to HHT for their help and support when hiring of the theatre and to TTC members who often help us in so many different capacities. Thank you – your help is very much appreciated!

As a charity organisation we are always looking to other funding streams and are trying to cover as many of our running costs as possible within our production profits, whilst still making this wonderful group free to all who join. We were extremely lucky to have received monetary assistance from a couple of generous supporters and ex-members this year, for which we are very thankful.

Next year's season has just been announced and serves as prelude to our 50th anniversary celebrations which will begin in earnest in 2021, in line with YAT's first production in 1971. We will begin our 2020 season with Bill Compton directing *The Snow Queen* swiftly followed by a change of theme and tone as Tom Wright and first time director Joe Evan's present *Julius Caesar* and our finale autumn show will be comic musical *The Addams Family* directed by Marc Batten.

We look forward to working through these productions with the group and producing a result that will engage our audience and be a source of pride for our members. If you have any young family members, neighbours or friends you think would like to get involved please do send them down to our production information evenings. Full details of our 2020 season are now on the website - on our dedicated season page www.yat.org.uk/season – please do have a look!

As an affiliated group to TTC, it is hoped that YAT members will naturally progress to the club and we are pleased to see that this tradition continues to flourish both on stage and in technical and directorial roles. Josh Clarke's latest direction, *Pornography*, has just closed in the studio and included several YAT members performing and backstage, whilst *Daisy Pulls it Off* featured numerous YAT members (and two Trustee's!) as does this year's panto.

We always feel a great sense of warmth from the TTC membership; everyone is incredibly supportive of YAT and excited to hear our news and plans – however, we still desperately need your support as audience members. Thank you so much to all those who did come along to one of our shows this year, it makes more of an impact than you might realise. We try to pick a varied selection of shows to cater to both our members and our audience's tastes and we hope that looking ahead to next year you will see at least one production that tickles your fancy! Every show is different with YAT! Our reviewer for *Romeo and Juliet* said this of his experience: 'This was a truly ensemble piece which embodied the YAT spirit and drew on the talents of its member to create something truly great, including president Eileen Baker whose voice-over closed the play... The programme tells us that Youth Action Theatre is dedicated to inspiring young people. I can't claim to being young but I certainly left Hampton Hill Theatre feeling inspired, having been totally gripped by this outstanding production'. So, if you have never seen a YAT show, give it a go – you might be surprised!

Finally, on behalf of the YAT trustees (Sarah, Rick, Lizzie, Bill and myself) as well as our lady President Eileen we would like to wish you all an early happy Christmas and we look forward to all that 2020 might bring.

3. Social media

Rebecca Dowbiggin, who had asked to address the floor as a newly elected member of the Board, utilised two analogies that she hoped would effectively express her concerns regarding TTCs future; especially with regards to the recruitment and retention of young people and the Club's engagement with the wider community. She suggested a further review of the Club's approach to social media. Rebecca stated that were she to feel that her first three months on the Board resulted in limited positive change, she would feel it prudent to tender her resignation.

She was supported by Kelly-Marie Tuthill who said that TTC social media should include details of other local groups and of members' 'moonlighting' activities, maintaining that other drama groups were not competitors and supporting them will result in their support for us.

Lottie Walker, artistic director, explained that the Board had made a decision (included in the social media guidelines produced by Christine Wayman) that the three presences we have on Facebook should have different content as follows:

- 1 - The TTC page - the corporate presence purely for promoting TTC 's productions and TTC as a club.
- 2 - The HHT page - to promote the building and visiting companies. Outside hire shows fit into this page
- 3 - The TTC group page - is for TTC members and supporters to share information about whatever they wish. 'Moonlighting' fits into the group page.

Messages on the TTC page can be confused as we often have more than one show on sale or in production and some shows need more of a push for sales than others, so the order of precedence needs to be closely monitored. It will be far too confusing to complicate this any further by adding details of productions by other companies.

The group page needs to be utilised by more members and have more varied content. It is up to the people who use it to make it the forum it is supposed to be.

It was agreed that the new board would schedule a discussion of this topic at their first meeting in December.

4. Welcoming atmosphere

Jenny Hobson wished to place on record the welcome and friendship she had received on joining TTC and the opportunity of acting and directing she had been given.

5. Fundraising

Heather Morgan suggested collecting small change from members to help pay for the new lift installation. This could mount up to a considerable sum.

Sally Cadle asked how many members had signed up to the Easyfundraising website and was told that about nine members had done so. She emphasised that more members should be encouraged to join.

Joe Stockwell, TTC financial director, stated that he had already suggested the establishment of a fundraising committee and asked for volunteers.