

THE WOODHOUSE PLAYERS

At a meeting of the **WOODHOUSE PLAYERS COMMITTEE** held on **TUESDAY 24th AUGUST 2004** at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Steve Balchin
Liz Braithwaite
Khadija Cheetham-Slade
Carla MacLean
Thos Ribbits
Tim Seward (Chair)

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Phil Braithwaite
Pete Raggett

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from James Goodman.

2. MINUTES

Committee Minutes: 1st July 2004: APPROVED
Woodhouse Players Blog Posts to 23rd July 2004: NOTED AND RATIFIED.

Matters Arising:

Website Development: Pete Raggett advised that he owned a copy of the Dream Weaver Website Builder and volunteered to assist Tim with website development.	TIM SAWARD TO NOTE
Steve and Khadija volunteered to be taught HTML by Tim in order to assist in website updates	TIM SAWARD TO DO
Website: Tim to investigate electronic booking form process	TIM TO DO
Wyrd Sisters: Carla and Sacha to consider budget and contact James	CARLA AND SACHA TO DO
Wyrd Sisters: Noted 20 Terry Pratchett books donated to the Group by a friend of Thos to be used for raffle prizes.	CARLA AND SACHA TO NOTE
Jack and the Beanstalk: Usage of the Welsh Church Hall on 6 th January 2005 by Jennifer Haley School of Dance to be confirmed	LIZ TO DO

Jack and the Beanstalk: Performance dates agreed as: Thursday 30 th , Friday 31 st December 2004, Saturday 1 st January 2005 (matinee only), Thursday 6 th (to be cancelled if the Hall is unavailable), Friday 7 th , Saturday 8 th January (matinee and evening performances).	ALL TO NOTE/ LIZ TO BOOK
Noted need to ensure that liaison with Church Representatives needs to be explicit about room requirements and times.	LIZ TO DO
Once tidying by Woodhouse Players has taken place, Tim to contact Playgroup to discuss the issue of storage of all Welsh Church Hall users belongings and resolve a way of operating satisfactory to both parties.	TIM TO DO
First aid kit to be purchased at £45 for kit suitable for 20 people, and to be labelled as belonging to the Woodhouse Players.	CARLA TO DO
Steve to email all Woodhouse Players to see if anyone is qualified in first aid.	STEVE TO DO
Thos to investigate any corporate responsibility by Woodhouse Players if they hurt someone in the course of providing first aid.	THOS TO DO
Steve to look in insurance documents on this matter	STEVE TO DO
Tim to investigate any guidance in the theatre handbook	TIM TO DO

3. TECHNICAL REVIEW AND ELECTRICAL EVALUATION OF WELSH CHURCH HALL

Following concerns about the electrical equipment in the Welsh Church Hall after problems during Macbeth, agreed that a review needed to be undertaken involving an inventory of the Woodhouse electrical equipment and testing and maintenance as required. Noted that Rob Bettelheim was the owner of this project now and would be liaising with someone who could undertake a proper check.	ROB BETTELHEIM TO DO
Pete undertook to ask him for details of his proposals and Tim agreed to follow this up by email on behalf of the Committee.	PETE RAGGETT AND TIM SAWARD TO DO
Noted that other technical team members might wish to have input into the project and they should therefore liaise with Rob to ensure that their concerns were all accounted for.	PETE RAGGETT AND INTERESTED PARTIES TO DO

Noted that it was proposed that the gallery by the stage be used exclusively to store electrical equipment	AGREED
Some members expressed concerns about the safety aspects of Rob's proposal also to build permanent access to the loft from the Gallery. Rob had offered to provide further information on his proposals and so it was agreed that he be asked to do so to the Committee.	TIM SAWARD TO DO

4. INCREASED RUNS OF PERFORMANCES

Members expressed a wish to put on more performances of productions, and expressed view that Macbeth could have run for two weeks instead of just four performances. Noted Wyrd Sisters and Jack the Beanstalk would be having more performances (six and seven respectively).

It was agreed that if the producer/directors of shows thought there was scope to have lengthier runs and that these could be organised around other users of the Welsh Church Hall, then this should be considered. It was noted that close and early liaison with other hall users would be necessary and that it was essential to keep on good terms with our partners.	ALL TO NOTE
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5. CREDIT CARD TICKET SALES

Tim explained how he had investigated operating a credit card ticket buying system. The proposal would cost £5 a month and there would be a need for synchronisation of bookings between the credit card process and the more traditional telephone booking process to avoid double booking.

The Committee was divided on the benefits of a credit card system. The points raised were:

- Credit card booking assured income which the current system did not.
- Synchronisation between the two systems would be difficult to achieve and would need one person to keep track of bookings, and batch orders for processing by the credit card booking company.
- It was necessary to continue having a cash only system even if credit card booking was introduced so as not to exclude people who had no credit cards (eg young people).
- Security of credit card details could not be assured
- Current arrangements meant that the accuracy of credit card details could not be assured in all cases.
- It reduced the time for taking bookings prior to performances.

<p>The Committee agreed that the idea should be investigated further to see if solutions could be found to the problems identified and if a single person would be found to take on the role of keeping track of bookings.</p>	<p>TIM TO DO</p>
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6. WORKSHOP ARRANGEMENTS

Thos expressed his concerns that the workshops arranged so far had been specifically for casts of productions then current. He requested that future workshops, whilst continuing to be “show specific”, be opened to the wider membership of the Woodhouse Players.

The Committee noted that the arrangements for the past workshops had been organised with short notice which worked against wider involvement but hoped to ensure that future ones were open to all, as was the case with the forthcoming Writers’ Workshop.

7. OUTSIDE EDGE: OUTSIDE PRODUCTIONS

The Committee discussed the proposal from Ita Hill to produce Outside Edge at an open air. Concerns were expressed at the price of hiring such a venue and the chance of the performances being rained off which would result in a financial loss. The Committee however did not however rule out the idea of open air productions as long as overheads were not great and the budgeting for such productions considered the implications of cancelled performances.

<p>It was agreed that Tim should advise Ita that the agreed process for adopting productions be followed in this case and that it was for her to advocate the production, build up support and a team and to “sell” the idea to the group.</p>	<p>TIM TO DO</p>
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8. UPDATE ON FORTHCOMING PRODUCTIONS

- **Wyrd Sisters by Terry Pratchett and Stephen Briggs (27th - 30th October 2004 in the Welsh Church Hall) (Producers/Directors: Sacha Walker and Carla Maclean)**

Noted that there had been some problems with cast members dropping out but there was currently a full complement with three new people who had found the group via the new website included in the cast.

The budget is currently approximately £500 but Carla and Sacha to discuss with James Goodman the possibility of an increase to help cover the costume requirements of a large cast, and in view of the likely higher takings as a result of the larger number of performances.	CARLA AND SACHA TO DO
Steve to send out an email asking for assistance on costume and props	STEVE TO DO
Carla and Sacha to ensure strong publicity and to liaise with Khadija on this matter in an attempt to ensure full houses and high revenue.	CARLA AND SACHA TO DO
Noted electronic poster would be required within two-three weeks for effective publicity.	CARLA AND SACHA TO DO
Rehearsal schedule to be provided to Liz to allow her to book the Welsh Church Hall	CARLA AND SACHA TO DO
Noted that there was a clash of hall usage over one weekend for rehearsals of Wyrd Sisters and the team working on the 24 Hour Film Challenge. It was agreed that the Wyrd Sisters rehearsal would vacate the main hall by 2.00 pm to allow the Film Challenge team to use it from then. Tim to advise all affected parties.	TIM TO DO
There would be no rehearsal on 8 th October to allow for the play read through evening.	CARLA AND SACHA TO NOTE

- **Rehearsed Reading: (November 2004) (Producer/Director: Ita Hill)**

Noted that there were no proposals yet from Ita as to what this play might be. However, the concept of a second rehearsed reading was supported in principle.

Noted general rules for rehearsed readings:

- Should not overshadow main productions
 - In cases of emergency, the rehearsed reading would be expected to “sink or swim” on its own and it would unreasonable to expect resources to be relocated from main productions to it.
 - The production for readings should be minimal rather than ambitious.
 - Public expectations should be managed
 - Advertising should be clear what rehearsed readings involve.
- **Jack and the Beanstalk: A pantomime by Nick Pickles (Thursday 30th, Friday 31st December 2004, Saturday 1st January 2005 (matinee), Thursday 6th (to be confirmed), Friday 7th, Saturday 8th January 2005 (matinee and evening) in the Welsh Church Hall) (Producers/Directors: Steve Balchin. Pete Raggett, Tim Seward and Thos Ribbits)**

Noted that as Nick Pickles had been unable to complete the script, this was being done by Thos Ribbits and the completed draft would be circulated at the end of August. This would then need editing.	THOS TO DO
Tim had been creating a song plot for the production in liaison with Thos and he undertook to liaise with Rosina Pulley over this.	TIM TO DO
Noted that the production would commence before the ending of Wyrd Sisters	ALL TO NOTE

- **24 Hour Film Making Project (4/5th September for rehearsal, 18/19 September for film making proper in the Welsh Church Hall) (Producer/Director: Matt Mitchell)**

Tim to ensure that the production team involved in the film making process realise need not to upset the Elders of the Welsh Church Hall due to its overnight nature	TIM TO DO
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- **Woodhouse Cabaret (February 2005) (Producer/Director: Chris Pethers)**

Noted that there would be a workshop on cabaret performance. It was agreed that the venue was likely to be a room over a pub and that performers be asked to pay a small fee to help cover the cost. Noted also that due to the modular basis of cabaret, rehearsals would be done by the performer(s) in their own time and homes.

- **Triple Bill (March/April)**

Steve to check if the Waltham Forest Festival had been rescheduled for the Easter holidays in April 2005 and the timings of other festivals	STEVE TO DO
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9. IMPORTANT DATES

Writers Workshop: To be rearranged from 17 th September 2004	STEVE TO DO
Next Committee Meeting: 5 th October 2004 at a venue yet to be confirmed	THOS TO DO
Social Event: November	KHADIJA AND JAMES TO DO
Large Play Reading Session to aid programming of forthcoming year (according to model calendar)	TIM TO DO

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm

Thos Ribbits
Secretary
Woodhouse Players

APPENDIX ONE

TASK	PROGRESS	OWNER
PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATION		
Creation of "Countdown to Show" guidelines to be arranged and placed on website and kept in hardcopy.	Liz has provided a first draft and has taken on board the Committee's initial comments. This will be then updated and recirculated by email for further comments	LIZ
There should be a read through of plays to select the production for Summer 2005 on 14 th January 2005. Liz to book Welsh Church Hall.	Not yet done	LIZ
Triple Bill possibly to include work of local writers, possibly by competition. Liaison with local creative writing groups to be investigated	Steve has emailed all members but is yet to approach local groups. Agreed the following dates: September 2004: Friendly read through of new one act plays for developmental purposes. Original date of 17 th September to be reorganised. 8 th October 2004: read through of plays to determine which to produce. Agreed that there should be no overarching theme in plays (unless one presents itself after choice has been made) Steve to contact local groups with details and circulate dates to Woodhouse Membership.	STEVE
Triple Bill to be better paced by having shorter play in the middle.	ALL TO NOTE	
Workshops to be tied in with schedule for major productions eg singing workshops before pantomimes	Verse-speaking workshop done. Stage-fighting workshop done. Basics of Acting Workshop: Saturday 11 th September 2004 in the afternoon in the Welsh Church Hall for 25-30 people:	CARLA AND TIM

	Singing workshop: 10 th November 2004, led by Chris Pethers (the cast of the pantomime to be encouraged to attend this) More to come	
Fundamentals of Acting Workshop Trainer's details to be passed to Steve	New Task	CARLA
PUBLICITY		
Branding work with Nicola Holland.	Logo: done Other branding: Tim to contact Nicola about possibility of producing teeshirts for those who want them, whilst agreeing that wearing them should not be compulsory for events (eg working on front of house)	TIM
Production of merchandise	Tim to investigate ways of producing mugs for sale at productions.	TIM
Production of letter headed paper	Tim to produce a small amount of letter headed paper for Committee Members who wish to use it	TIM
Casts to help with publicity for shows (placing posters in libraries, etc.)	ALL TO NOTE	
Publicity to some shows to be partially focussed eg scout groups for pantomime.	Phil to write to the Scouts central office to investigate the best way of contacting local groups.	PHIL
Develop a working party to develop a new website	DONE	
Rationalisation programme on how publicity is currently handled to be developed for Committee to agree	Not yet done	KHADIJA AND THOS
RECRUITMENT		
Specific publicity to be organised for actors, technical people, musical people, etc. to include websites (eg B3TA), performing arts colleges, outreach through one off events (eg rehearsed readings). Sarah Webber to assist.	Not yet done.	TIM AND SARAH WEBBER

Noted that some old Woodhouse recruitment posters in libraries were out of date.	New up-to-date poster to be developed and circulated to libraries to replace old ones	TIM AND KHADIJA
Directors must be prepared to use new people.	ALL TO NOTE	
The Group was pleased with its continued working arrangement with the Rosina Pulley School of Dance but noted that if she decided to retire from productions, there would be a need to find other partners. Agreed that as contingency plan, there be a feasibility study on what musical and dancing school support there is in locality.	Not yet done	TIM
Group to capitalise on its friendly nature by having social events which could also be used for recruitment/retention. Picnic, parties and quiz evenings to be organised as future events.	Picnic organised by Khadija: held successfully. Khadija and James to consider other events, with one possibly being held in November.	JAMES AND KHADIJA
INFRASTRUCTURE		
Infrastructural team to be developed to include Sarah Webber and taking advice from Rob Bettelheim, Clive Goodwin and John Bradley: Group to produce wish list of purchases as part of a long term infrastructural renewal programme to allow for capital grant applications.	Phase Two to include consideration of improving sound issues in the Welsh Church Hall, with costings to be placed on Blog. Phase Three to consider lighting matters including profile (spot) lights.	JAMES
Khadija to ask Rob Bettelheim to organise easy hanging of blacks.	Rob investigating different methods for this	KHADIJA/ ROB
Agreed purchase of sewing machine.	Not done	JAMES
Agreed purchase of forty more cushions, all uncovered.	To be done once Carla has produced covers for existing cushions	STEVE
Creation of suitable cushion covers	Carla to do after Wyrd Sisters with aim of completing this by the pantomime	CARLA
Plan for managing the Welsh Church Hall space to be organised to include long term safeguarded storage	Carla has partially tidied the side chapel, and Thos has tidied the filing cabinet, making an inventory of its	THOS, CARLA, JAMES AND

arrangements to be developed (eg shelves, wardrobes, chests, etc.) also Creation of inventory (to be visual and updatable) and rationalisation programme of assets to be developed by working group to include Vicky Harris and other interested parties	contents. Noted due to production demands, it was proving difficult even to get two people together to begin this work. Agreed that a plan was needed to allow a bigger team to be created and work according to it. Thos to make one more attempt to find a date for the group to meet if not Thos and Steve to meet to develop a plan.	STEVE
Disposal of materials to be offered to interested parties (eg Leytonstone Reading Group, recycling, etc)	Not yet done	THOS, CARLA, JAMES AND STEVE
FINANCIAL		
Approach to Bob Grey of Waltham Forest Arts Council after Committee agrees what needs financial support should be for.	Not yet done – Tim to meet with Chris Pethers first	TIM AND CHRIS
Fundraising strategy to be developed in conjunction with Chris Pethers	To be done in light of Phase Two of infrastructure plan, following costings being placed on blog.	TIM AND CHRIS
COMMUNICATIONS		
Member details to be collated in one place	Thos has collated lists held by James and Steve. Awaiting any updates.	THOS, STEVE AND JAMES
Mailing List Database to be created	Phil and Steve both hold email addresses. Tim to help convert these to a more versatile storage system. Steve to create final single version	TIM, PHIL AND STEVE TO DO
AGM minutes to be circulated to all members.	DONE	
Email communications to Members to come from one person (agreed that this be Steve Balchin) and consideration to be given on how to avoid email overload for members	ONGOING	

ADMINISTRATIVE		
Waltham Forest Arts Council Membership Form to be passed to James Goodman	DONE	
List of external venues to be created	Some preparatory work done on a directory of venues.	THOS AND TIM
A copy of the key to the Paladin Bin to be asked for from Wayne, the Hall Caretaker.	Not yet done	CARLA
Recycling box to be acquired from Council	Ordered but not yet delivered	CARLA AND KHADIJA

MODEL PROGRAMME FOR THE YEAR

JANUARY	Pantomime Read through to select summer play Social event for whole group
FEBRUARY	Experimental/one off slot
MARCH	Performances at festivals
APRIL	Triple Bill
MAY	Annual General Meeting
JUNE	Experimental/one off slot (eg Rehearsed Reading)
JULY	Summer production
AUGUST	Social event for whole group
SEPTEMBER	Experimental/one off slot
OCTOBER	Autumn Production
NOVEMBER	Social event for whole group Large playreading session to aid programming of forthcoming year
DECEMBER	