



Forthcoming read-throughs, auditions & other production stuff

- 'God of Carnage' auditions: Sunday 22 August, 4.00pm in the auditorium

Remember: a read-through is not an audition!

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT ISSUE:

Whenever the Muse strikes!

Other diary dates (more info on the website)

Coffee 'n' Chat Every Saturday, 10.00-12.00

apollo

The in-house magazine of the Apollo Theatre Players, Newport, Isle of Wight

Issue no. 285

July 2021

The Apollo comes back to life with 'A LONDON AFFAIR'!



Well, what a joy - 'A London Affair' opens the Apollo's return to life! Here are some words from the directors of each of the three plays which constituted the production.

'Lunch Hour' by John Mortimer' ... those five words have become very familiar over the last few months. As a first-time director it was all a bit of a challenge, to say the least. But a welcome and rewarding challenge. There was lots to learn and I have learnt a lot. The right cast helped, of course: three seasoned hands who know all the ropes made such a difference. An enormous heartfelt 'Thank you' goes out to Cheryl May, Carole Simpson and David Stradling. We had our moments (a bit of an understatement that!), with re-



Susan Simpson and David Stradling in 'Lunch Hour'

hearsals in the garden, children demanding a mother's attention, a 'gas fire' that wouldn't work quite as we ex-

pected it to ... all part of the fun and hurdles heroically jumped. The key thing remains, however: we did it!

David Ballard

This production, 'Marble Arch', has been quite different from the norm, with rehearsals on Zoom and trying to be as safe as we can, but everyone has been brilliant. I was very lucky to have four strong performers, so in terms of directing, I just left them to it. I'd like to thank all members involved in mak-



Kathryn Ward, Gary Smith and Ian Moth in 'Marble Arch'

ing the set, props, trolley, smoke and many more jobs to turn our 30 minutes into a real show.

Susan Simpson

Directing a play is a bit like painting a picture. First and foremost the inspiration: well, with Mortimer's 'Knightsbridge' that was easy. Then the composition: unlike a painting the composition moves but must still have a balance. The actors provide the vital tone bringing degrees of energy to their roles. And as with a painting one has to know when to stop fiddling and hand the play over to the actors to make it their own—and the cast of 'Knightsbridge' certainly did that with great aplomb!

There have been frustrations: auditions via Zoom, rehearsing outdoors while dodging showers, uncertainty about performing with restrictions and the postponement of pro-



Holly Quires, Martin Ward and Ginnie Orrey in 'Knightsbridge'

duction dates, but they are all forgotten in the glow of satisfaction of having created, with not only a wonderful cast but with all the hard-working backstage crews, a piece of art to be well and truly proud of.

Carole Crow



Ladies in Lavender.

Friday 17th—Saturday 25th September

The first play in our 2021-22 season is a moving piece taken from the film starring Judi Dench and Maggie Smith.

When two sisters find a young man washed up on a Cornish beach near their cottage, they take him in and nurse him back to health. They discover his talent as a violinist, and it is this talent that inevitably takes him away from them, leaving them bereft, particularly Ursula who has formed a close attachment to him. This tale of unfulfilled dreams will delight and stir.

Cast:

Ursula	Glenys Lloyd Williams
Janet	Carole Crow
Dr Mead	Paul Stevens
Andrea	Alex Howe
Dorcas	Cheryl May
Olga	Abbi Leverton

The production dates for 'Ladies in Lavender' will be Friday 17 September - Saturday 25 September. Steve Reading will be needing volunteers for the rotas, so please support him!

Editorial: the view from the Editor's chair

News from the Apollo Theatre Trust



... and a few re- minders

I got home the other night after the show, and as I sat enjoying the archetypal actor's supper of scotch eggs and beer I thought, what a joy—life is returning to something like normal, or at least to something we recognise as normal. O long may it continue! Everyone at the theatre that night—the first night of 'A London Affair'—was obviously feeling the same: the wonderful props crew, lined up to welcome the actors back on stage; the stage manager, saying 'O it's been such a long time since I did this'; fel-

low actors, standing in the wings discussing when the last time was that they did this; and that unique sound from the wings, of the audience settling down, chatting, then falling silent as the house lights went down and the 'go tabs' signal was given ... O how we've missed it!

And that's not to mention the return of the after-show party—another indicator of normality. Great fun—presents for the directors, kind words from everyone for everyone else, much beer consumed, but most of all

appreciation by all of us of the fact that audiences are braving the new post-Covid world to come back to live theatre.

So here we go again—back to the routine of rehearsals and planning, and isn't it wonderful? The only difference is that we can't yet confirm a whole season at a time—we're working one or perhaps two plays ahead and hoping for the best. It may not be the beginning of the end, but it certainly feels like the end of the beginning!

Over the past year or two many of you will have noticed regular updates from the Chair of the Apollo Theatre Trust about the forthcoming proposed merger between the Trust and the Players, to create one entity, called a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, or CIO. Your Committee has been working closely with the Trust to sort out the way forward, but soon

it will be for you, the members, to vote on the proposals at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). The Committee wants to make sure all members are aware of what's going on, so this issue contains a substantial article on pp 6-8 first of all setting out the legal issues relating to the merger, and then summarising the proposals for a changed management

structure to run the new organisation.

This has all involved a lot of work by the Trust Chair and the Committee, but we think the end is in sight. Do please take the time to read the article, and if you have any questions or would like to raise any issues relating to the changes, do please get in touch.

On volunteering ...

If we want the theatre we love to still be operating this time next year we really do need people to be involved in every area: backstage, on stage and front of house. During the run of 'A London Affair' we had a visiting group paying to use our theatre followed immediate-

ly by our own production, and at one point we didn't have enough volunteers front of house to open every night. Luckily, enough people came forward to open the box office, without which we couldn't have sold tickets on the door. Please everyone, just look again

and see if you can give us your time. Training is there for anyone who wants it. Steve Reading will be forever in your debt, as will the theatre. It's our theatre, let's make sure it's still going to be there for the future!

Kathryn Ward

On borrowing props ...

The production of 'Ladies in Lavender' will be going up in just over a month, and Gwen Stevens is finding herself short of some essential props. Could everyone please have a rummage in sheds and attics and see if

you can help? Specifically, Gwen needs the following:

- a single eiderdown (preferably pastel shade);
- a wooden wheelbarrow;
- an old-fashioned garden bench with a back;

- an old violin in an old case;
- a small fold-up stool, an old-fashioned camping version.

If you can loan any of these, please call Gwen on 525655.

News from your Committee

Notes from the Committee meeting on 19 July 2021

BUSINESS

As you can imagine, the Players have been sailing pretty close to the wind as the lockdown continued and our income disappeared. The Trust kindly vired a sum of money a few months ago to keep our heads above water; they have done so again, so we are once again OK. Our sincerest thanks to them and to the productions pre-lockdown which enabled the Players to transfer a substantial amount to them in the first place. See Martin Ward's helpful article about our funding on page 5.

It was agreed that Martin, who is currently Treasurer to the Trust, should be co-opted to the Players to oversee the financial issues around the move to the CIO. Martin is financially qualified and has the experience and expertise to support us during the process.

The waste collection contract that the theatre has had with Biffa for some considerable time has been unsuitable for our situation. I am pleased to report that I have been able to negotiate a new one which suits us better in a number of ways, as well as saving us money.

MEMBERSHIP

The Saturday morning 'Coffee on the Forecourt' gatherings went well, with 15-20 members showing up each week, and it has brought in two new members, one of whom is already turning up at worknights. A recent one

also saw the Levertons popping in with young Josiah, who we are happy to say is thriving! My plea for help in all areas has resulted in a few people offering assistance in Props and Front of House.

HOUSE

The bar was cleaned in time for the return of coffee mornings, and the foyer was made tidy and safe and cleaned and sparkled in the week prior to the opening of 'A London Affair'. Our cleaners will be invited in to give the auditorium a good deep clean. I have also revised the cleaning specification which can be used for future tenders. We have a new seating plan to include the replaced seats in the auditorium, and Ticketsource went live on 15th June following the Government's announcement. I asked members for rota help as usual a fortnight before LA went up but we had more difficulty than usual filling all the slots so I hope that as things settle down my lovely volunteers will feel able to return.

There has been discussion in the past about the House Manager's role, which is quite onerous, being split into 3 roles which are clearly definable. I will not be looking to stand for HM at the AGM in November, so I believe it's important that we find some way forward on this. If any members would like more information or a discussion with me about what the various roles en-

tail, do please get in touch with me.

MARKETING

Publicity for 'A London Affair' was placed with the Isle of Wight Observer, the Island Echo and the County Press (who sent reporters to the first night). Flyers were handed out to audiences for 'After All These Years'. Posters appeared around the Island and the show was promoted on social media. The 'London Affair' programme had a corporate Apollo template and format, with an emphasis that they are three separate plays.

A MESSAGE FROM WARDROBE

Just a note to thank everyone who has donated costume pieces to Wardrobe over recent months. The costume team is now back in the Theatre on Tuesday evenings and we are overwhelmed by all your bags, suitcases and boxes of clothes; so much so, that until we sort, catalogue and find hanging space for all of it we are unable to accept any more donations for a while.

Thank you for your support.

Peggy Harcourt
Wardrobe Manager

YOUR COMMITTEE

Theatre Director & Chair of management committee (elected 3-yearly): **Amy Burns** (2019-22) amy@masexodus.co.uk

Arts Manager (elected annually in Nov for season beginning following Sept)	Evelyn Hicks (2020-22) nevelyn.hicks@gmail.com	2 Members' Representatives (elected annually)	Kate Fysh (2019-20) katefysh@gmail.com
Business Manager (elected biannually)	Ginnie Orrey (2020-22) gginnie@googlemail.com or info@apollo-theatre.org.uk	House Manager (elected biannually)	Steve Reading (2019-21) steverreading104@btinternet.com
Marketing Manager (elected biannually)	Maureen Sullivan (2020-22) msullivan58@me.com	Technical Manager (elected biannually)	Dan Burns (2019-21) dan@masexodus.co.uk
Players' Secretary (elected biannually)	Mike Whitehead (2020-22) michaelwhitehead@yahoo.com	Financial adviser (co-opted)	Martin Ward martinward700@yahoo.co.uk
Membership Secretary (elected biannually)	Carole Crow (2019-21) carolecrow9@gmail.com	LTG rep	Cynara Crump cynaracrump@gmail.com
		Apollo Trust Buildings Manager (co-opted)	Roger Simpson roger.dodger45@yahoo.co.uk

**CASTING
CALL:
'God of
Carnage',
by Yasmina
Reza**

**'Gender-
neutral'
casting—and
related
musings
by
Ian Moth**

Regular readers may remember that occasionally I share with you a list of novels set in the theatre. This piece is from 'The Daughter of Time', by Josephine Tey. It's very dated, written in the 1930s, and isn't set in or about the theatre at all; however, one of the characters is an 'actress' who now and then pops up to distract the protagonist with some theatrical nonsense. This passage tickled me so much that I felt I had to share it with you. The speaker is visiting her friend in hospital and starts telling a story ...

'God of Carnage' is an interesting four-hander (2F & 2M) translated by Christopher Hampton from the original French script by Yasmina Reza (author of 'Art').

Two married couples each have an 11-year old son (which gives some hint as to the ages of the cast). The synopsis is quite simple: what happens when two

sets of parents meet up to deal with the unruly behaviour of their respective offspring. A calm and rational debate about how to bring up your kids, or a hysterical night of name-calling, tantrums and tears. An award-winning black comedy. Directed by Steve Reading, the play will run from 5-13 November.

This pesky virus has thrown

out all our planning, so read-throughs and auditions coincide with the holiday season; however, Steve can confirm that auditions will be held on **Sunday 22 August at 4.00pm**. Audition pieces will be available in the next few days when he returns from the mainland.

Any questions: Steve is on steverereading104@btinternet.com

I read in my newspaper that several of the biggest theatres in Britain have signed the pledge. Apparently only trans, non-binary or gender non-conforming actors will henceforth be cast in roles for characters with those identities. The Royal Court, Oxford Playhouse, Contact Theatre and the Royal Exchange in Manchester are named.

The Donmar Warehouse and Birmingham Rep lit the fuse for all this by rashly casting a cisgendered actor (ie ordinary, I think) to play a certain role in a play called 'Breakfast on Pluto'. It struck me immediately how far behind the professionals we are in our little backwater. Take an obvious example from Shakespeare. Theatregoers will go to see 'Macbeth' resigned to the disappointing fact that the three witches aren't witches at all, they have no magical

supernatural powers that I can see, and if that wasn't bad enough the guy playing Macbeth often isn't even Scottish.

In the case of 'A London Affair' it would have taken a brave director to enquire into the sexual mores of applicants for some of the characters involved. By the time this Apollonius is published theatregoers will be aware that some of the characters were hardly paragons of moral rectitude. Having played a necrophiliac serial murderer myself in the past I can understand that it is easier to get someone to pretend, than to go out and find the real thing. I expect that here on the Island we could probably find any number of ideal candidates for that sort of thing but I expect there's some stuffy regulation that would prevent them from being released.

But sometimes even the real thing can be disappointing. Many years ago in America Charlie Chaplin was so popular that there were 'Charlie Chaplin lookalike' competitions that drew huge crowds. It is said that Chaplin himself, incognito, entered one of them. He came second.

[Ian has, as always, put his finger on one of the existential issues for actors. Readers of the Guardian may have seen a piece by Dev Patel in which he says, 'Where am I allowed to exist? How specific are we going to get with this? What does it mean to be an actor – to just be yourself? Am I only allowed to play a guy who's 31 years old? Are you going to check my blood type? The very essence of acting, it asks you to perform, transform, change—that's the allure of the job.' Ed.]

'We've all got to the stage where the lines have ceased to have any meaning at all for us. One's mind just won't stay on the thing. Geoffrey dried in the middle of the second act last night. His eyes nearly popped out of his head. I thought for a moment he was having a stroke. He said afterwards that he had no recollection of anything that happened between his entrance and the point where he came to and found himself half-way through the act.'

'A blackout, you mean?'

'O no. Just being an automaton, saying the lines and doing the business and thinking of something else

all the time. Geoffrey had turned his son out of the house, quarrelled with his mistress and accused his wife of having an affair with his best friend, all without being aware of it.'

'What was he aware of?'

'He says he had decided to lease his flat to Dolly Dacre and buy that house at Richmond that the Latimers are giving up; he had thought about the lack of bathrooms and decided that the little upstairs room with the Chinese wallpaper would make a very good one. They could remove the beautiful paper and use it to decorate that dull little room downstairs at the back which is

full of Victorian panelling. He had also reviewed the drainage, wondered if he had enough money to take the old tiling off and replace it, and speculated as to what kind of cooking range they had in the kitchen. He had just decided to remove the shrubbery at the gate when he found himself face to face with me, on stage, in the presence of 987 people, in the middle of a speech. Do you wonder that his eyes popped?'

I'm sure most of us have experienced something similar!

Ginnie Orrey

It's so good to be back in the theatre enjoying all things thespian. Apollo life isn't quite the same, with screens at the Box Office, table service in the Bar and sanitizing routines after every performance, but our sincerest thanks to all those who have come forward and are making it happen. A further Box Office training session is to be arranged and I urge anyone keen to help to attend.

Preparations for the next production 'Ladies In Lavender' are well under way. If you can lend a hand with the set building and paint-

ing, please come along to work nights at 7pm on Mondays and Tuesdays. Peggy and the Wardrobe team meet on a Tuesday, so please let me know if you'd like to get involved with costume making. Props is an interesting department to be part of—I'm happy to pass your name to Teresa and David if you'd like to join them.

We are now able to use the Bar for Saturday morning 'Coffee 'n Chat'; it's proving a very good meeting point for us all as well as attracting new members. Do pop in if you can; you'll find me there between

10.00-12.00.

We have two new members, Robert Abbott and Alex Howe, who are already actively involved with Apollo life.

See you around the Theatre!

Carole Crow

Membership Secretary
carolecrow9@gmail.com

A marvellous piece of news has come to us. You will all remember our beloved Di Evans, who so sadly left us a few months ago after many years of devoted activity at the Apollo. We have now received news from her daughter that Di remembered the Apollo in her will. This is what her daughter, Sue, said:

'As you know Mum passed away in April but before she died she made several re-

quests; though not officially in her will we want to make sure these are honoured after the will has gone through probate.

One of her requests is that a sum of money is given to the Apollo to finish the organisation of the props that she was working on. Any money left over is to be used towards the theatre being able to convert to a traverse stage.

I also spoke to Amy about organising a memorial afternoon/evening at the Apollo towards the end of the year. She has let me know some dates when the theatre will not be available and we are going to have a family chat and see if we can find a mutually agreeable date to hold it.

The Apollo was such a big part of Mum's life it feels right that we should celebrate it there.'

On 23 March 2020, Boris Johnson announced the first nationwide lockdown, saying that people should stay at home.

'The Thrill of Love', a drama about the circumstances surrounding the murder of David Blakely by his lover Ruth Ellis, had ended its run at the Apollo on 22 February. Rehearsals for 'When We Are Married', the next show in the season, were in full swing in preparation for its run which was scheduled to begin on 3 April. However, less than two weeks before opening night the plug was pulled as a result of the encroaching virus that we now recognise as a pandemic. The theatre was dark.

This presented several problems, but one that was immediate and long-reaching. How was the theatre going to find the money to meet its statutory obligations?

Gas, electricity, water, insurance and costs relating to the security and upkeep of the building still needed to be met, without the income provided by our paying audiences. Despite a shortened season, the income for the last year that the Apollo were able to perform showed that our audiences funded us to the tune of almost £22,000.

The Apollo, like a large number of establishments, were not going to be able to survive without some form of funding. The answer came in the form of Government aid. Funds were made available for councils to administer to local businesses and organisations who found that their income had been taken away as a result of lockdown. The first grant was applied for in April 2020 and the sum of £10,000 was received. Since then, a

number of schemes have been launched to enable organisations to take advantage of funding administered by the Isle of Wight Council. The latest one has enabled the Apollo to benefit to the tune of £8,000, bringing the total amount received to just over £27,000 since April 2020.

This has effectively replaced the income that we would have received had we been able to continue our normal function, and has enabled the Apollo to continue to pay for utilities and other costs that it has been obliged to meet. Let us hope that we never again experience a time when we are not able to welcome audiences to the Apollo. However, our gratitude must go to the government and to the council for helping us to keep our heads above water.

Martin Ward

June 2021

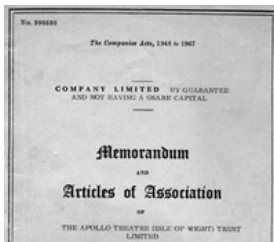
Access details to the members' area of the theatre website

- Go on to the website and hover over 'membership' and the 'members' area' tab should drop down;
- click on that and you'll get the message 'We're sorry, the content you are trying to reach is restricted to members only';
- click on 'member login' and a drop-down box will appear containing the two areas 'username' and 'password';
- In the top area enter your 'username', which is first-name.secondname' (remember the dot between the words), and in the bottom box enter your password, which is your membership number.

Once you've done this you should get straight into the members' area. If not, there's a problem and you need to let Ginie Orrey (webmistress) know, but try these steps first.

The Merger of Trust and Players into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

A summary by Paul Jennings



Incorporated the 1st Day of January 1971

The Apollo was originally set up as three organisations:

The Players - Responsible for staging the productions

The Trust - Responsible for ensuring the charitable objectives were met and governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association (the Articles). Registered with the Charity Commissioners and Companies House

The limited company - Capable of issuing shares which enabled the original purchase - subsequently dissolved after all shares bought back or donated.

There has been a feeling among some members that the relationship between the Players and the Trust isn't working well. Referring back to the Articles, the charitable objectives were stated as:

'The objects for which the Trust is established are the promotion and encouragement in the arts among the public.'

Over the last ten or so years the Trust has largely involved itself with maintaining and developing the various buildings including the two listed buildings in Pyle Street and approving capital expenditure for technical equipment. The individuals making up the trust originally were a mixture of active and less active, more independent people but over the years the Trust has become dominated by active members of the players. There has been little or no oversight of the stated charitable objectives.

A number of members suggested that the Trust and Players could merge and provide more effective management of the theatre's operations. It was agreed that a working party (Paul Jennings, Amy Burns, Ginnie

Orrey, Martin Ward, Cynara Crump and Steve Reading) would be formed to look into the possibilities. Realising that the merger would involve re-drafting the Articles, we contacted Paul Wheeler (solicitor and friend of the theatre) who advised that the Charity Commission had created a new form of charitable organisation which seemed to provide a good fit for our proposed merger, namely a **'Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with voting members other than its charity trustees'**.

A CIO if approved remains a registered charity and is still accountable to the Charity Commission, but, significantly, not to Companies House. This slightly reduces the requirement for annual accounts to be audited. A comprehensive template is provided by the Commission for a constitution to be tailored to meet the needs of the organisation.

The template still requires trustees to have oversight of the organisation's activities with stated charitable objectives, but also allows the integration of the active members with rights to vote. The template is very detailed and includes guidance notes specifying what provisions **MUST** be included and which **MAY** be included. It requires details to be specified of how Trust meetings should be conducted including setting numbers of trustees and what constitutes a quorum. Use of modern communication methods is also allowed for, including use of email and electronic voting although these are not mandated and precise details have to be agreed for each organisation. It hasn't caught up with Zoom yet!

Two main types of trustee are recommended:

Charitable Trustees - it is proposed that wherever

possible these are independent people responsible for oversight and governance.

Ex-officio Trustees - it is proposed that these are members of the operational management team with specific responsibilities especially those related to the charitable objectives. They would hold a place at Trust meetings by virtue of their elected position and only while they hold that position.

Trust meetings would then focus on assessing compliance with the charitable objectives.

The transition of the Trust to a CIO means that those members currently part of the Players' structure will, subject to the scrutiny of the Trustees, have full responsibility for the operation of the theatre, including capital spend and development of the buildings. They would also be responsible for taking a strategic view of the artistic direction of the Apollo. To address these challenges it was thought necessary to review the current Players structure, which has led to the proposal of an [Operational Management Team](#) (see following article).

The constitution, including proposals on the numbers of trustees and the charitable objectives, has been drafted and agreed by the Players committee and the Trust.

The constitution, the transition to a CIO and the formation of the Operational Management Team will be presented to the membership for approval at a meeting in the near future.

The objects of the CIO are now stated as:

'To inform, educate and entertain the public in matters connected with the arts, and in particular the performing arts, by any appropriate means including the provision

and maintenance of facilities for educational and charitable purposes; the primary means being the staging of a regular season of dramatic productions.

The facilities include but are not restricted to the Grade II* listed building known as the Apollo Theatre in Pyle Street, Newport, Isle of Wight, and other properties; and the CIO recognises and accepts its responsibility to maintain and develop the buildings so far as is reasonably practicable.'

The proposed number of trustees is currently four charitable trustees plus four ex-officio trustees appointed to carry out the governance role, meeting infrequently (say twice a year) specifically to review the CIO's performance against its aims.

The ex-officio trustees will be four members elected to four roles in the new struc-

ture:

the Theatre Director;
the Arts Manager;
the Business Manager;
the Operations Manager.

The Theatre must then appoint the Charitable Trustees. Initially these will include any members of the current council of management who are willing and eligible to serve, plus sufficient new independent trustees to bring the total to the required number. The chair is to be elected from these, with secretarial duties to be carried by the elected secretary. There is currently no specified process for selecting the Charitable Trustees. A number of people have been suggested as potential trustees and the working party will have to devise a selection process.

The final stage in the implantation of the CIO is to submit the constitution, including the names of the Charitable Trustees and

copies of the accounts, to the Charity Commission, who may well respond with comments and objections which we will have to address before we hopefully get their go-ahead. The Charity Commission are currently quoting a 45 day turn-round to review new applications so there may be some time to wait before we make the transition, depending on the number of iterations of our proposal. However, this does not prevent the Players implementing the Operational Management Team.

Once we have Charity Commission approval we can dissolve the current Trust and transfer all assets to the CIO.

**Paul Jennings, Chair,
Apollo Theatre Trust**

August 2021

The Merger of Trust and Players into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (contd.)

What you've read so far is the strategic side of the merger of the Trust and the Players. However, what most members see on a day-to-day basis is the operational side of things, and that, as you can imagine, has given your Committee much food for thought. However, we've now come up with a document which we think covers most of the issues facing us in the new world, and we're including it here so that you, the membership, can give it some thought and make any suggestions you think might be helpful.

With the proposed changes to the Trust, a single organisation will be responsible for the two main areas covered between the present organisations, namely:

- the operation of the theatre itself, with the oper-

ational requirements of maintaining the building, utilities and infrastructure; and

- the artistic endeavours of mounting and supporting productions and other arts in line with the Trust's current and future aims.

The committee structure should reflect this breakdown – we need to ensure that both artistic and operational requirements are met – and experience shows us that there are members who are better at the operational side (the 'nuts and bolts'), and members who are better at the artistic side. It is important that the two strands support and complement each other.

We must also bear in mind that many committee posts have 'accumulated' additional responsibilities along the way as a result of individuals' particular strengths and weaknesses – responsibilities which may not be part of the specific job going forward.

In relation to terms of office, the current problems which have been almost universally identified are the recruitment of new committee members, and the length of terms in important posts such as the Artistic Manager.

The 4 posts shaded in green on the chart overleaf are the ex-officio posts, with the 4-year terms offset so that one post changes each year. This gradual replacement allows for continuity, but an unbroken 4-year term allows for some strategic planning and time to implement it.

The Theatre Director, Secretary, Operations Manager, Business Manager and Artistic Manager together form the Executive Committee. If an urgent decision needs to be made where it is **impossible** to wait for a properly constituted meeting, these 5 can make a decision providing that it is minuted at the next full meeting. This would apply to decisions that must be made immediately, such as

The operational side of things

urgent repairs or works as a result of weather damage, or something that directly affects the Theatre's ability to operate.

The Operations, Business and Artistic Managers will each chair their own respective sub-committees which should meet regularly; and the advantage of this is that the full committee do not have to have lengthy discussions regarding the minutiae of situations which are better discussed by a more focussed group. Requests for spending, problems and concerns will be taken by each chair to a meeting of the full committee where they can be discussed, and a decision taken.

It is up for discussion whether the posts in each

sub-committee are chosen by election or co-opted. One suggestion is to elect 3-4 members to each committee. The sub-committee then meet with the executive where it is decided which role each member will take. This would keep the advantage of clearly identified roles that would ensure they can be given to those with the appropriate skills.

Each subcommittee would be expected to appoint a deputy who would be the expected successor to the chair's post.

Obviously there are further 'layers' underneath those shown on the chart - the Production Manager for example would oversee the Wardrobe, Props, Set Build, Lighting, Sound and Set Paint departments - though these posts can be appointed as opposed to elected.

House Manager would be free (and perhaps expected) to appoint a box office manager.

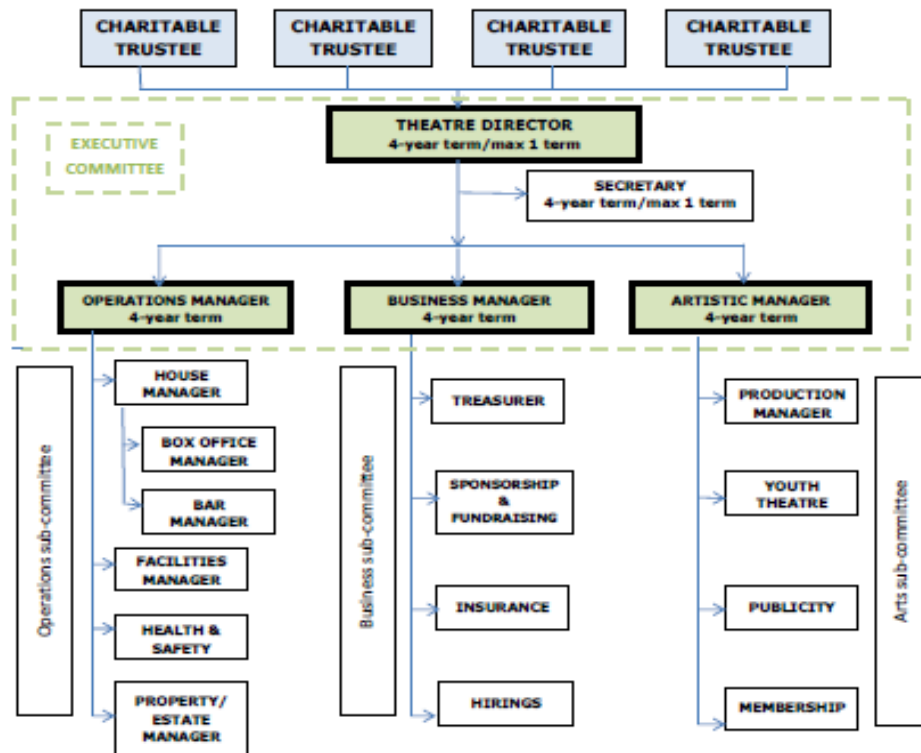
The Theatre Director should be expected to take on an area, but it may be desirable that the Director becomes the LTG Representative as a formal part of their job description.

Explicitly stating the 8 full committee members in the proposed constitution but not explicitly stating the makeup of the sub committees (beyond there being 2 elected members in each, one chair and one deputy) allows for some flexibility in terms of retaining knowledge at the sub-committee level, but ensuring an appropriate level of turnover at the elected level. It would ensure that all ex-officio members were changed every 4 years, al-

lowing for fresh blood and fresh eyes to come through the organisation; ensuring that we do not simply accept the status quo; and ensure that the Theatre remains a vibrant place that people want to become involved in.

Clearly stating expectations in terms of succession plans will also allow people to consider applying for a post that fits within their speciality, but having worked through the sub-committee route ensure that they are confident by the time that they serve on full committee.

**THE APOLLO THEATRE CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION
DRAFT STRUCTURE**



I'm delighted once again to welcome our poet-in-residence, Steve Taverner, back to our pages with more of his wonderful verse. Fresh from the Ventnor Fringe, where he no doubt had them rolling in the aisles, Steve has offered us some more of his unique creations.

CLOUDS

When Carol went to Val d'Isere
She photographed what she saw there.
She saw so many wondrous sights
She used too many megabytes,
And so she found it very hard
To fit them on one memory card.
So to relieve the picture crowd
Geoff shoved the lot upon a cloud.

But then the sun shone warm and bright
And drove the cloud right out of sight.
Carol said, 'Oh bugger, how Can I look at my photos now?
The forecast says the clouds have passed

And these blue skies are set to last.'
'I know'' said Geoff, 'Let's go to Wales
We'll find clouds there, it never fails.'

And when they got there, what a sight!
The heavens opened up all right,
But not with rain or hail or snow,
Just photos fluttering down below.
As Carol watched the pictures fall,
She knew they were not lost at all.

She gathered up the ones she took
And stuck them in a picture book.

ONE'S ROUGH GUTS

This poem was inspired by the Queen's much publicized bout of gastro-enteritis, combined with one of the most controversial aspects of council cuts on the Isle of Wight.

It's sad to hear our queen is ill, we wish her all the best. I'm sure she'll soon get better with good medicine and rest,
But there's a silver lining to this cloud that hides the sun,

At least she wasn't in Ventnor when she felt the need to run.
For now that our conveniences have nearly all been shut,
She'd have a job to find a throne to park the royal butt!
She could go in a public house or café, so you'd think,
But she doesn't carry any cash to buy herself a drink.
So, like many older folk her majesty might fear
To visit us here on the Isle of Wight where loos are seldom near.

RECORDED MESSAGE

Thank you for calling us,
you will soon find
That answering phone calls can be such a bind,
We'll do all we can to make sure you give in,
And hang up the phone, 'cos you know you can't win.

We'll give you some choices of numbers to press,
Which lead to more numbers, increasing your stress,
We'll tell you how valued you are as you wait
For someone to answer, becoming irate.

The music we play will drive you round the bend,
Wondering when this frustration will end.
We know you'll give in if we wait long enough,
Sod customer service, just go and get stuffed!

POETRY
please!

I was delighted to see that Dave Talbot has published a fifth slim volume of his inimitable poetry, this time entitled 'Such is Life: A Chastening Thought'. Written during the pandemic, as always it consists of some of Dave's thoughts on life, the universe and everything, always with an entertaining twist, even in the shortest of his Great Thoughts (his poem on Pigeons reads, in full, 'The pigeon is the one bird I hate/ever

since Dad grew brassicas/ which the pesky creatures ate'. A sentiment with which I'm sure all veg growers will sympathise!).

Anyway, this volume contains a lovely (and very apposite) poem which I'm sure you'll enjoy.

Adult Life

Whether you're a woman, lady, man or bloke
There are often times when life seems anything but a joke
Some people are brought up to know
Which direction in life they would like to go
Although there are some who don't know, like me,
Just like a squirrel climbing a tree
Life is hard for an adult, which is true
But if we stop hunting, life can change in a way we don't expect it to.

**DAVE'S
POETRY
CORNER**



The Apollo Theatre Players
Apollo Theatre
Pyle Street
NEWPORT
Isle of Wight PO30 1JT

tel:
01983 527267

ticketline:
01983 210010

email:
info@apollo-theatre.org.uk

To book tickets or find
out more about our
productions, go to:

www.apollo-theatre.org.uk

**Any unsigned
copy in this publi-
cation is the work
of the Editor,
Ginnie Orrey, and
expresses her
opinions.
Contributed copy
must be signed.**

Bringing good theatre to the Isle of Wight for more than 40 years



The Apollo Players' next production



**17-25
September
2021**

A nostalgic story of unfulfilled dreams and unrequited love. Two ageing spinsters, Janet and Ursula, discover a young shipwrecked violinist washed up on a 1930's Cornwall beach. They nurse him back to health, forming a deep attachment which unleashes previously restrained emotions of love and rivalry. The relationship is described by Olga Danilov, his rescuer, as 'more their prisoner than their guest.'