



Principal: Yvonne Lee
Vice Principal: Adrian Stevenson
Assistant Principals: Julie-Ann Biddles, Peter Fines, Helen Mallin

THEATRE USER'S GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held at the Theatre on 15th January 2007, 7.00pm

PRESENT

Linda Howe, Steve Dootson, Diane King, Pat Clark, Tim Dickens, Doreen Fearn, Gladys Watret, Adrian Dobson

1. APOLOGIES

Yvonne Lee, Kevin Clarke, Julie-Ann Biddles

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes were circulated with the agenda for this meeting. All agreed the minutes are a true and accurate record of the last meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING

- i) Seat Identification: SD has now finished the seat identification on the fixed seating, with assistance from Sarah Harrison and Gordon Kilpin. This still leaves the free standing seats to do, which will be addressed as soon as possible.

- ii) Baby Grand Piano: As could be seen by all at the meeting, the baby grand piano has arrived at the Theatre. Thanks go to all concerned. It was made clear at the meeting that the piano cannot be removed from the Theatre auditorium, and that User groups not wishing to use it would have to work round it. This has caused a little difficulty for groups who had made their plans prior to the piano's arrival, but hopefully now all will accept it as a permanent fixture. It is likely that a charge will be levied for groups wishing to use the piano for performances. This would be used towards the cost of tuning on a regular basis.

4. HANDOVER / HANDBACK FORMS

Personal handovers continue to take place wherever possible. This has led to fewer problems being experienced by User Groups as many issues are discussed during the handover. Comments are also invited on the hand back forms whenever appropriate.

Sharon Wood's School of Dance and Loughborough Flower Lovers have used the Theatre since the last meeting. The former group was one of the groups who experienced problems with the arrival of the piano, but they managed to work around it. Thanks go to them for their co-operation in this matter.

5. TECHNICIAN'S REPORT / THEATRE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SD reported on the work done, or in progress, since the last meeting:-

i) The overhead projector has been wired for use with lap tops or DVD players. The termination plugs, (in the down stage right corner, behind the proscenium arch) are SCART or phono/jack. The audio link uses the multicore to the sound box on channels A and B, terminating in 6mm Jack plugs which can be linked to two channels on the amplifier in the usual way. Clearly the sound level will need to be set before use. SD suggested when using lap tops to set the lap top volume control to about 50% whilst setting the level in the box. This would allow limited volume control from the lap top. TD expressed some concern about the audio/visual synchronization as the signal routes were different. The link has been used with both lap tops and a DVD player since the installation, both without any synch. problems.

ii) The top 1m of the cyclorama has been painted black following a suggestion from a User Group. This was a simple but very effective way to improve the appearance of the cyc.

iii) The installation of the wooden cable trays (as discussed at the last meeting) is in progress, starting with the right hand side of the auditorium. Progress came to an abrupt halt however due to SD being involved in the College production of The Hired Man. Work on the trays can now resume.

iv) Due to the Theatre being successful in a bid to share the annual charity donation from the Thomas Harley foundation to the College, we have been able to replace the old blue Furse fresnels discussed at the last meeting. The lantern stock has been added to with 6 x PAR64 lanterns, and 6 x 500W Selecon mini fresnels. All lantern stock is available to User Groups, although careful handling of all the stock is not an unreasonable request.

v) Following the installation of the new stereo amplifier the auditorium speakers have been rewired. The above stage monitor / foldback speakers have also been rewired, but independently to the auditorium speakers. The monitor speakers have a dedicated amplifier in the sound box, with the anticipated input being taken from the Aux send outputs on the sound desk, which will give the sound technicians choices as to which channels to fold back. Each circuit has dedicated 6mm jack sockets, one bank in the sound box, and one bank outside. ***Please note, if the stereo amp is used, the speaker tails in the back of the existing mono amp should be removed.***

vi) The receivers for the 5 radio microphones have been permanently installed backstage, in the down stage right corner, behind the proscenium arch. The location has been tested, and found to be successful. The receivers even pick up the radio microphones from the foyer and beyond.

vii) Many User Groups have started to use 3 suspended microphones above the front of the stage. Audio leads for these microphones have been permanently installed from the rigging to the multi-core termination box. The leads are cable tied in the rigging, so simply need dropping down before use. This will normally be done by SD before User Groups get-in, based on their requirements indicated on the booking form.

viii) The handrails requested some time ago now have now been installed down both sides of the auditorium.

6. THEATRE USER'S ACCOUNT

Opening balance:- £365.10

Income received from sound equipment hire, a donation from Loughborough Flower Lovers, and the charity donation mentioned earlier.

Expenditure includes audio connections, leads and other miscellaneous sound equipment, and the new lighting detailed above.

Closing balance £455.42

A long discussion then took place during which TD expressed possible outcomes for the theatre finances. Although too long a discussion to minute accurately, one potential outcome is for the Theatre to be treated as it's own cost centre, going away from the community association. TD also stressed that whatever the financial arrangements in the future, College activities could not subsidise user groups, and vice versa. There are many implications to the way forward, one of which, TD added, was that College projects could be charged for use of the Theatre. TD stated that the College has a responsibility to pay for the use of the Theatre. All of the implications have to be considered carefully before a decision is taken by the management.

TD said that "affiliation" to the Theatre was no longer necessary or even desirable, and as such would be discontinued.. Both would have to contribute on a fair and even basis. It was also emphasized that the Theatre is a curriculum space and as such would need to have priority over outside User groups, however, careful use of the booking system should avoid conflicts. The charges for the Theatre are also due for a review, partially based on the new facilities available to User groups. (Piano, stereo amp etc).

7. A.O.B

TD reported that the foyer lift for disabled people is now fully operational. Where possible, User groups are asked to indicate on their booking forms if they *know* of any people attending their productions would require the lift. For the meantime, the premises officers will hold the key to the lift, and therefore would need to be made aware if it's use is required on performance evenings.

SD pointed out that the Theatre booking form needs revising. Amongst other things, the current form states we have no College technicians, which is not the case at the moment. User groups requiring the assistance of College technicians are asked to let SD or LH know a reasonable time before their event. User groups are also reminded that College technicians will need to be paid!!

LH asked who was responsible for taking bookings for the Theatre. TD advised that Diane was soon to leave the College, and the management had yet to decide the way forward.

SD passed on a suggestion that the Theatre minutes and agenda could be sent out by email to those who preferred this mode of communication. Many agreed this would reduce paperwork, and TD suggested setting up a Theatre email address. TD will talk to SD about this possibility.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:- Monday 14th May at 7.00 Hind Leys College Theatre

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Theatre User Group Communication

Dear Theatre User,

Further to the last meeting, Tim Dickens has been able to establish an email address for the Theatre, which of course is available to all Theatre User Groups for use. As the address was established so quickly, it seemed inappropriate to wait for the next meeting to advise of its existence, hence this communication.

The email address is:- theatre@hind-leys.leics.sch.uk

The email account will be monitored by:-

Tim Dickens
Linda Howe
Steve Dootson
Deborah Cornes
Reception

It may be helpful when using the email address, if, in the email subject box, an indication of the intended recipient, or the nature of the email could be included.

As a follow up to the minutes of the last meeting, could we ask all Theatre User Group representatives ***who would like to receive their future agenda and minutes by email*** to indicate their preference by email to the above address? There is no reason of course why several representatives from a single group shouldn't receive email communications.

The Theatre Management Team