



Principal: Yvonne Lee
Vice Principal: Adrian Stevenson,

THEATRE USER'S GROUP MEETING MINUTES:- Monday 19th May 2008 7.00pm

PRESENT

Linda Howe, Doreen Fearn, Tim Wood, Christine Hunt, Steve Dootson, Pete Fines, Paul Boneham, Adrian Dobson, Diane King, Louise Hunt, Len Dobson.

Prior to the meeting, PF explained there had been changes in the management structure at the College, particularly with respect to Community which is disappearing as an entity. PF also introduced Louise Hunt who will be taking over much of the administration of the Theatre. All present made self introductions.

1. Apologies:-

Iain Hunt, Gordon Kilpin, Kevin Clark

2. Minutes of last meeting.

All agreed – a true and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising.

All matters arising had been included as Agenda items for later in the meeting.

4. Theatre web site / email address / minutes and agenda.

SD presented the Hind Leys Theatre web site www.hindleystheatre.net and requested ideas for development of the site. Sponsored links and a forum were suggested which SD will look in to. It was also suggested that User Groups compiled a list of equipment they own which they are prepared to hire out to other User Groups. This idea was extended to items of set or even props which theatre groups own. Any User group who wishes to add such information to the web site can do so by emailing it to mail@hindleystheatre.net or, do it the old way and leave a list at reception f.a.o. LHowe / SD. SD will also add the facility to download a booking form from the web site, also a link to contact Louise by email. PF offered a vote of thanks to SD for the work on the web site. PB suggested the facility for students to download rehearsal scripts, for example, which should be password protected due to copyright. A further suggestion was made, later on in the meeting, for an "items wanted" page, eg. for props.

5. Handover / Hand back Forms:- Feedback from recent Theatre bookings.

Two problems were identified since the last meeting, one was the main tabs had been isolated, and the second was that the perimeter curtains had been cable tied together and not released again afterwards which made it very difficult to get many dancers on and off stage. Whilst everybody appreciates the stress of the get-out, could we take extra pains to leave the Theatre as we find it to try and reduce the impact on following user Groups?

Ironically, at the last meeting, the tabs featured, this time because they had *not* been isolated! SD said it was important to learn from these occurrences, and as such would add a line to the handover / hand back form simply to check the status of the tabs prior to and after the occupation.

On the subject of curtain tracks, the position of the front gauze track was discussed. SD said that although the tracks were considered as fixtures, he appreciated the need to move them every now and again. If a User Group wishes to move tracks, please let SD know in good time, and where possible, he will move the track for you, or at least help you

to move it. Please remember that since Coalville Amateur Operatic Society donated a number of curtain bobbins, the "old" tracks are now useable again!)

PF also had a problem with an isolator switch which controlled the sockets in the DSR corner of the stage which had been switched off. For the record, this isolator is in the electrical bank in the S/R wings.

TW mentioned a problem with the length of hired gauzes. SD mentioned that SYD had bought made to length gauzes from Custom Group Ltd (link on web site!) which, from memory were just over £200.00

6. Technician's report / Theatre 5-Year Development Plan –

SD reported that the lockable cupboard fitted to the control box over 5 years ago has now been removed, and replaced with a mobile sound rack. This is because we have much better control of the Theatre space, and the rack, being mobile, allows simple set up for groups setting up their sound outside the box.

SD reiterated that the money spent on hiring sound equipment goes directly back in to the Theatre for the benefit of all User Groups. He went on to say that as we had procured a good quantity of sound equipment, in line with the 5-year plan, we are in a position to increase the level of equipment offered with the "basic package". It was proposed (and seconded by PF) that the basic package will now be upgraded to the stereo amp, PA speakers, small mixing desk and multi core. SD will amend the booking form to account for this. Bookings already made will automatically benefit from this improvement. Additional equipment, such as radio mikes, will still be available on a hire basis.

SD will update the 5-year plan, and add a copy to the "technical" part of the web site. We are almost on target, having acquired the sound equipment mentioned above. SD, turning our attention to the lighting, suggested some profile zoom spots be purchased from the Theatre Users' budget. PB explained the function of profile spots, and all agreed they would be a useful addition. LH said that SYD were prepared to match this purchase by buying two more profile spots.

Now that DMX cabling has been installed from the control box to the DSR wing, upgrading the lighting desk was discussed. PB explained that moving lights can typically take 28 channels to control, in other words, our existing Sirius 48 channel desk would control 2 lights! Computerised desks were discussed and PB will make some recommendations and find out some prices. Selling the Sirius desk was discussed, but SD suggested that some groups would prefer to use the more standard lighting desk as an option.

7. Sound and Lighting Course Update.

The sound and lighting courses have continued to gather pace with both Simon and Paul producing very interesting schemes of work. All the information is available on the web site. It was suggested an application form was also added to the web site which SD will attend to.

It was discovered that the College governors are wishing to close the college on a Monday evening which conflicts with the arrangements for the course. Paul said he could do Wednesday evenings, but SD needs to contact Simon to discuss this further. Please keep an eye on the web site for further information.

There is a lot of interest in the courses, but as yet nobody has applied, maybe due to the uncertainty about which evening it will be held on. Interest has been shown by SD, TW, DK, (present) and Joe Newcombe, John King (not present) amongst others. Commitments will be required by August.

SD reminded people that there will be a modest charge for the courses, around £4 per evening for adults and £2 per evening for students.

PF has already advertised the sound course amongst the music group, and both PF and LH will advertise the lighting course within the College.

8. Control Box Redesign

It seems clear that any changes to the lighting box will be slow to take place due to time and cost, but we are all agreed as to the direction, namely a raised control desk, with high level follow spot platforms either side. In the first instance SD suggested removing the pane of glass from the front of the box so the sound crew could actually hear the sound properly from inside the box. The glass will be cut in two vertically, and made to slide open or closed.

PB mentioned the fire risk assessment with respect to the dimmer pack. SD will check with the premises officers to make sure we will not contravene a previous assessment.

Also suggested for the interim was a second door providing a complete walk through during performances. SD will look at this further when the glass has been done.

9. Theatre Lettings: Rates & Availability for 2008 / 2009

Louise Hunt introduced some changes to Theatre lettings beginning September 2008. There are no hidden charges, and from September onwards, a quote will always be available should a User group request one. If a group books more than 8 days a year they will qualify for a 25% discount, and if they are an Arts Partner, the rate is 30% discount, this rate is due to be put through to the governors. TW expressed concern over the amount of rooms that the Spring Festival and Sharon Wood School of Dance occupied. Louise said she thought there would be room for a fair price. AD requested specific rooms on the booking form that could be used for changing rooms. SD said this would make changing room monitoring easier as we would know which rooms to set up.

PF explained that the old nursery will still be used as a changing room, but the family room would not be available as specialist equipment will be stored in there. PF also reminded groups that these prices would be guaranteed for six months only, beyond which there could be added interest.

SD agreed that a copy of the availability of bookings form would be sent to Louise, and reminded everybody else that the availability can be checked on the web site.

The group thanked Louise for her work prior to the meeting, and her email address is louisehunt@hind-leys.leics.sch.uk

10. AOB

SD has altered the seating plan to allow for a centre walkway between the non-fixed chairs. The floor has been marked accordingly. SD will also add the new seating plan to the web site for groups to download.

11. Date of next meeting:-

8th September 2008 at 7.00pm (Place to be advised as the college may be closed on Mondays by then!)