



HIND LEYS COLLEGE

Theatre User Group Meeting

Monday 9th September, 2008

Present: Peter Fines; Steve Dootson; Linda Howe; Paul Boneham; Doreen Fearn; Gordon Kilpin; Adrian Dobson; Pat Clark; Tim Wood; Louise Hunt; Christine Hunt

1) Apologies: Simon Birchall, Iain Hunt

2) Minutes of last meeting

All agreed that the minutes were a true and accurate record.

3) Matters arising

All included as agenda items

4) Theatre website/email/minutes and agenda

SD wanted to make sure that everybody was receiving information via email. Some people are having a problem with email attachments. CH could not receive information regarding the technical sound courses as they were attachments to the email, but resolved the problem by downloading the documents from the theatre web site. This is an alternative which other user group representatives may wish to consider if attachments don't work. SD will add all circulated documents to the web site so that this option is always available.

SD suggested a web log via the website which could also be used for sharing props and costume information amongst the user groups. The booking form also needs updating. SD will amend the technical form, and LHU will amend the booking form. When the new booking documents are available SD will add them to the website which will enable theatre users to download the most up to date updated documents directly.

AD mentioned some shows were still on the website from last year as forthcoming SD admitted this was an oversight and will put this right as soon as possible. SD also requested a quick email from the web site if user's spotted such errors in the future!

5) Handover/hand back forms

The dance company who have just used the theatre have yet to do their hand back. Their representative will be contacted by LHU as soon as possible as they still have the theatre users manual and also still need to pay the college technicians they employed. We felt this was a huge frustration as the company had approached us at short notice to see if we could help them out as their intended location had cancelled their booking. We did a lot of work to accommodate them in the theatre, only to have to chase them after the event. This made us all feel that we should maybe concentrate on our current user groups and not seek to accommodate one off booking such as this one

LHu did the hand back from Grace Dieu, the only query it was how the stage door into the corridor became detached from its hinges. The premises officers have repaired this door over the summer and it is now working fine.

Act One reported problems with the fire alarm during their performance. This matter was discussed at length and it was decided to try and improve communication within the college during the booking period.

PB suggested heat detectors might help to avoid nuisance alarms. PF suggested making the item bigger on the booking form and perhaps getting the form signed by the Premises officer. It was also suggested that all special requests were given to the present premises officers. LH suggested that all the information was added to the premises officers' weekly sheet.

6) Technicians report / Five Year Plan

SD is in the process of updating the five-year plan. He reported to the meeting of his surprise when looking back, at the number of issues which have actually been addressed in the last two years. In fact since the five-year plan was developed we are pretty much on track with our first projection. Our focuses over the last two years have been the lighting and sound systems. As far as the sound is concerned we now have new amplifiers, new speakers, a 32 Channel mixing desk, a Graphic equalizer, and several new radio microphones all of which are available for theatre users to hire. These will be added to the new booking form. On at the lighting side work has been in progress to install DMX wiring from the control box to downstage right termination boxes. We have also recently acquired four Selecon zoom profile sports. This purchase was agreed at the last meeting. Two of the lamps have been bought from the theatre users account, and Shephed Youth Dance have purchased the other two. All four of these lamps are available for theatre user groups to use and they are fitted with gobo holders. Once SD has updated the five-year plan it will be added to the theatre website.

SD thought the addition of extra staging might be useful to the theatre five-year plan. PF mentioned the video link being installed in the foyer. Once the plasma screens have been installed SD will be adding a video link from the theatre. This video link will extend to the changing rooms along with an audio link.

7) Sound and lighting courses

SD reported the first lighting course has taken place last Wednesday. PF reported good feedback from college students who had attended the course. SD proposed a vote of thanks to Paul for agreeing to put the lighting course on for us. There was also a vote thanks for Simon in his absence. SD also thanked the theatre user group representatives who had supported the courses. He also reported that the courses were so popular it is highly likely that there will be a second round of courses in the New Year. CH expressed a vote of thanks to Steve for organising the courses and PF expressed a wish for accreditation to the Arts Awards. SD thought it would now be likely that he would have too many stage crew for We Will Rock You rather than not enough. PF suggested that more theatre user groups may be interested in using college stage crew. Please contact PF, LH or SD if so desired.

8) Control box redesign

SD reported that the control box redesign project was still alive. There are problems above the current control box with air conditioning vents and the mechanism of the clock. It is possible that the air conditioning vents can be avoided and the mechanism be removed. Both items will have to be looked at carefully. Finance for the project will always be an issue. PF suggested that county may have to come in it could take six months before it could be done.

It was suggested that the external platforms for the follow spots could be built separately before any work on the control box itself. PF suggested refurbishment of the whole back area of the theatre. He also suggested the East Midlands airport may be able to give a grant towards the scheme. Application forms for all these grants are available on the East Midlands website. SD said he would download an application form and will look at making the application. It was emphasised that these grants are not just available for the college but also any other local organisations. All agreed at the meeting that this was a good idea.

9) 2008/2009 theatre bookings

All companies who have previously put in provisional bookings have got quotes. AD was concerned about bookings and continuity of rehearsals and performances. This concern was raised as a result of an internal college letter detailing the closure of the college on Monday evenings. It was decided with consultation to the letter that the decision to open on Monday evenings during theatre occupations was to be taken by PF or LH.

S D produced a calendar for 2009/2010. Although this seems a long way away, this allowed the user groups present at the meeting to discuss their bookings between themselves. These provisional bookings will be honoured amongst the theatre groups, **but it must be stressed that as far as the college is concerned, they may be subject to change, especially due to exams.** LH said it was impossible to predict just when the exams would be taking place as the college was to change the exam board they were using for Performing Arts.

10) Any other business

Changing rooms were discussed as there is an element of rebuilding work taking place in the college. It appears that the creche area will still be available for changing, as will the music room. SD said that these two areas will be prioritised for the new changing room monitoring system which will be installed at the same time as the monitoring system in the foyer.

Several user group representatives requested that areas which were not in use for changing were securely locked so that their students do not wander into the wrong areas. AD wondered if it would be possible to have mirrors in these rooms but PF said it would be a problem due to several different uses of the room.

Finally, the meeting thanked CH for a donation which Coalville Operatic had given to the theatre users account.

Date of the next meeting: 12th January 2009 at 7.00pm (**Subject to confirmation!**)