

## Minutes of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting

Coward Room Hampton Hill Theatre Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 7.50pm

1. **Welcome:** Arts Richmond Chair, Hilary Dodman, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present.
2. **Apologies:** Hilary read out a list of Friends, Societies and Arts Richmond Executive who had sent in apologies which were as follows: Clive Bradley, Gillian Thorpe from the Executive. Luke Reader (Richmond Opera) Joseph Field (People Hive) Pat Harvey (Saturday Water Colours Workshops) Lottie Walker (Blue Fire) Roger McGough (Current President)
3. **New Presidents:** Hilary welcomes new presidents John Stapleton and Lynn Faulds wood
4. **Minutes from last AGM 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018.** No matters were arising. The minutes were approved and seconded.
5. **Annual Report:** Hilary Dodman presented the 2017/2018 annual report. It had been another successful year across the board for Arts Richmond and she thanked the relevant committees for work in hosting successful events such as the Swans, New Plays, The Visual Arts exhibition ,The New Poetry Hub and Showcoach. She praised Linda Whites continued and marvellous contribution as our Newsletter editor. Hilary mentioned the sad passing of Bernard Wigginton last year who helped Linda with the proof reading every month and thanked Gillian Thorpe for talking over this task, Special thanks were again extended to our team of stuffers for their continued hard work and commitment and Hilary made a special presentation of flowers to Jean Wit who tirelessly gives us her continued support in the office for all things financial and a great support to Simon Bartlett our treasurer, and a valuable help to Janet for all the Showcoach events throughout the year.
6. **Visual Arts (Acting Chair: Hilary Dodman)**  
Committee members: Linda White, Sue Ribbans, John Coombs, Heather Montford.

### a. Art Tent Richmond May Fair

Arts Richmond once again organised a very successful Affordable Art Tent at the Richmond May Fair on Richmond Green on Saturday 12 May 2018. 25 artists who were individual members or members of our affiliated societies took part, providing 76 paintings and many cards, of which 17 paintings were sold, as well as approximately 40% of the cards. It was also a good opportunity to publicise Arts Richmond and its many initiatives.

### b. Diana Armfield Drawing Competition

In March 2019, Diana Armfield RA NEAC, a distinguished artist, generously sponsored a Drawing Competition for local artists over the age of 16, in memory of her recently deceased husband Bernard Dunstan RA, who was also highly respected in the art world.

It was held from Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at the Landmark Arts Centre in Teddington and 112 excellent drawings were displayed. 51 local artists took part. Jonathan Barker won first prize with his drawing of "The River at Teddington"; Rachel Labovitch won second prize with her portrait "Steph" and many other artists were highly commended. Rachel Labovitch who was unable to attend the AGM send in

a few words about being awarded a prize... *"I was really happy about being awarded the second prize in the Diana Armfield Drawing Prize. It was a massive recognition for my work in observational drawing, something which I am passionate about but which seems to be dwindling in popularity. It was wonderful to meet Diana at the awards as well and hear about her and Bernard Dunstan's practice of making a drawing every morning. So I am really hugely grateful for that award, which has boosted my career and confidence. I have invested the (totally unexpected) prize money into developing a new website. Thank you to everyone involved for such a positive experience, I hope it runs for many future years."*

## **7. Literature (Acting Chair: Hilary Dodman)**

Committee members: Peter Cregeen, Heather Montford, Anne Warrington, Jean Wit, Clive Bradley

### **a. Young Writers Competition 2018/19**

We had another bumper year with over 400 entries from our borough schools covering years 1 through to 10. The presentation again took place at Twickenham's Exchange Theatre attended by all the finalists and their families. Keith Wait organised and directed a band of professional actors to present the final 16 highly commended pieces. These dramatized readings provided a most entertaining and thought provoking presentation which was enjoyed by all. We nominated laureates in the senior and junior age groups. Both of these laureates have gone on to review a number of Arts Richmond events and have been invited to one or two of our affiliated societies' productions. We hope this will continue in the coming years. We were fortunate that we had the pleasure of both Gemma Craig Sharples and Catherine James, Senior and Junior laureates for 2018 in attendance at the AGM. Catherine presented to the meeting and spoke for both of them what winning at the Young Writers meant for them.. Both ladies since winning have been able to attend a number of events of which they have been happy to review over the calendar year.

### **b. November Literature Festival 2018**

We held four events at this year's Literature Festival three of which were held at Duke Street Church and presented renowned authors: Kamal Ahmed (*The Life and Times of a Very British Man*) Tim Marshall (*Prisoners of Geography*) and Alan Robert Clarke (*The Prince of Mirrors*), the last in conversation with actor John Sessions.

All three Duke Street events were well attended and received.

We were also able to commemorate Armistice Day with a Centenary Event of Poems and Song held at the Coach House Orleans Gallery.

### **c. The Poetry Hub 2018-2019**

We have held four poetry events this year: The Poetry Café; A WW1 Centenary Walk with Readings; The Armistice Day Commemoration Event and The Robert Gillespie evening.

**d. Poetry Café**

This poetry event on 15<sup>th</sup> June was planned to capture the atmosphere of a friendly café or pub. We were pleased by the very good response it received. Every seat in the Noel Coward studio at HHT was taken and the audience was entertained by a varied and versatile group of poets and musicians, many of whom perform regularly at the Adelaide.

**e. 1914-1918 Centenary Walk**

This walk, on Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup> 2018 was led by Dr. Helen Baker, a local historian, and Carol Wain. The Walk was based on the Warren Gardens (former Richmond Ice Rink and Pelabon factory), combined with the Richmond War Memorial. During the walk a number of poets presented poems on the theme of WW1 and the Armistice.

**f. Armistice Centenary Event, Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

A commemoration of the armistice through poetry and music inspired by WW1 including well known poems by Rupert Brooke and Wilfred Owen was presented in the Coach House at Orleans Gallery.. Poems were read by members of our drama and poetry communities.

**g. 'Are you going to take that little jump?'**

Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Robert Gillespie talked about his work as an actor, director and writer in the Noel Coward room, Hampton Hill Theatre. Two actors from TTC, Josh Clark and Michael Bishop contributed to the programme.

**8. Drama** (Chair: Gillian Thorpe, Committee Members: Sue Bell, Laurie Coombs, Benedict Dias and Anne Warrington)

This has been another busy year for the drama committee.

- a. **The Annual Swan Awards Gala** took place in September at The Landmark Arts Centre, where we were delighted to welcome Lynn Faulds Wood and John Stapleton as our celebrity guest presenters together with The Mayor of Richmond Upon Thames, Cllr Ben Khosa.

The evening itself was a sold out event. As ever the judges had a difficult job attending 41 productions during the course of the acting year (Sept 17-July 18). 35% of these were musicals and almost half involved children or young people – a very encouraging sign for the longevity of local theatre.

The 2018 accolade award was presented to Pam Frazer, who stood down from the organising committee at the event. Pam has been a driving force in so many areas of the arts in Richmond – she was a judge for many years and she will be much missed on the committee (although we are hoping to lean on her for advice and support in the coming months). She continues to organise the Richmond upon Thames Performing Arts Festival (RUTPAF) which does so much good work in recognising young talent.

The Swan Awards are a very integral part of Arts Richmond's year and they would not be possible without the hard work of the judges: Elaine Barton, Sue Bell, Keith Wait, Stephen Leslie and Pip Egan. Sadly Helen had to withdraw during the year due to ill-health. We are very fortunate to have such dedicated and hardworking people on our team.

- b. **SWAP, the 'mentoring' scheme for new judges** continues to flourish under the expert guidance of Anne Warrington. Two of the 'mentees' John Bellamy and Warren Walters joined the judging panel for 2018/19 taking the places of Elaine and Helen. The scheme is continuing for 2019/20. Joe Stockwell and Benedict Dias will be ready to step in for the new season as new SWAN judges. We continue to be grateful to all the societies for providing complimentary tickets to the participants.

We couldn't do such a great job without the financial support of Kay Williams; she is a great friend to the Swan Awards and we are grateful. We would also like to thank Sara Burn Edwards and Colin Squire (Squires Garden Centre).

- c. **Directors Forum:** This event was held on Saturday 2nd February, principally as part of SWAP's mentoring scheme. It was very popular. The event was held at Hampton Hill Theatre and led by Wes Henderson Roe with a panel of 5 practitioners. There were 33 in attendance with a good spread across the societies both in attendees and panel. There was good feedback, all suggesting we do more of these forums going forward.

d. **Future plans**

The Drama Committee goes into 2019 with different challenges – as reported elsewhere Pam Frazer has retired from the committee and our Chair, Laurie Coombs, has also resigned from the committee. However she has agreed to stay on as a co-opted member to help with the 2019 Swan Awards event.

It is also planned to have a New Plays Festival in spring 2020. The venue will once again be the Orange Tree Theatre, subject to availability. Invitations have gone out to the Arts Richmond drama group members. Expressions of interest have been requested by end of June 2019.

9. **Showcoach** (Chair: Janet Langhorne Committee Members: Jean Wit, Linda White, Heather Morgan, Hilary Dodman)

**April 19 - 22<sup>nd</sup>** Our 3 day residential trip to the *Great Houses of Derbyshire* was very popular with all 26 participants

**June 8<sup>th</sup>** A day trip to *Charleston* and Lewes. All 40 members enjoyed this trip

**July 11<sup>th</sup>**. A small group of 10 had a guided tour of the *Guildhall Museum* followed by lunch and then a free flow visit to the *Bank of England*.

**August 8<sup>th</sup>** our popular annual visit to the *Chichester Festival Theatre* attracted 45 members. This year's performance was "*Me and My Girl*"

**September 4<sup>th</sup>**. Showcoach visit to *The Proms!* This proved a very popular choice with 20 members booking to hear the *Tango Prom*

**October 12-14<sup>th</sup>**. Another success for Showcoach was when 21 members visited *Glyndebourne* to see a performance of Massenet's "*Cendrillon*".

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>** Here we had a walking tour of *Bloomsbury* with a Blue Badge Guide all 20 members

**December 13<sup>th</sup>** A very popular visit to the *Royal Festival Hall* to hear the Philharmonia Orchestra All 30 members had a great evening

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>** A small group of 10 visited the *Rambert School* in Isleworth. Here we learnt about the history of the school and watched a variety of dancers performing. We all enjoyed the day and were encouraged to join in the workshop!

**February 20<sup>th</sup>** This month 20 members attended a brilliant exhibition at *Tate Britain of Edward Burne-Jones*..

**March 21<sup>st</sup>** *Witness for the Prosecution* was well attended by 15 members. *The old County Hall* was an excellent setting for this play and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it.

This is a brief summary of the visits undertaken for Showcoach during the year 2018 – 2019 They illustrate the wide variety of places and events members greatly enjoyed through the year

Betty Miller, a member of Arts Richmond and regular Showcoach attendee, spoke to the AGM saying 'I have had a great time going on Showcoach trips giving me a lot of variety and interest as well as companionship'

#### **10. Annual Accounts: Provided by Simon Bartlett and presented by Jean Wit**

This has been a successful year for Arts Richmond seeing an increase in our reserves of £834 to £18,738. The increase in reserves of almost £4,000 in the 2017-18 year was always going to be a one off mainly due to the interregnum in the administrator role before Linda joined us.

Reserves are slightly shy of one year's operational expenditure of just over £20,000. An admirable situation if at the upper end of what most funders would consider reasonable for a charity such as this. However with increased costs ahead relating to rental of office space at ETNA and the costs of the administrator, we are likely to dip into these reserves in the coming year.

With the ongoing support of Arts Richmond, our other sponsors and our members, to whom we are very grateful, income, remained broadly static in the year. However the greater hours of the administrator in the year, coupled with ongoing increases in print and website costs mean that expenditure increased in the year – very much as anticipated.

The reserves are held in predominantly cash, reflecting the need for immediate access to support the fluctuating cash flow of the organisation across the organisation around our events, with the remainder held in a Charibond investment earning a greater return on these funds.

We continue to strive to mitigate costs where-ever possible – and are very grateful to, in particular, all those who put in so many hours voluntarily to support Arts Richmond and its work. This list is of course headed by our Chair, Hilary. But I must also thank in particular Jean Wit, the assistant Treasurer who does so much hard work behind the scenes, making my role so very straightforward.

If you have any questions I will attempt to answer them now, or do please feel free to contact me through the office.

Proposer and seconder of Adrian Mumford independent examiner

Proposer: Gillian Thorpe

Secunder: Linda White

#### **11. Re-election of four members:**

Hilary thanked all the holding trustees for the year and thanks all those who were staying on in the new capacity.

- a. For re-election Hilary proposed the following members

Simon Bartlett (2<sup>nd</sup> Linda White)

Gillian Thorpe (2<sup>nd</sup> Geoff Acton)

Anne Warrington (2<sup>nd</sup> Benedict Dias)

Jean Wit (2<sup>nd</sup> Sue Bell)

The meeting voted in all four of these re-elected members

The meeting ended with a presentation from YAT (Youth Action theatre) of an extract from Sense and Sensibility a production they would be taking up to Edinburgh in August.

The meeting closed at approx. 9pm