

# Minutes of 49<sup>th</sup> South London Theatre Centre Members' Club AGM - Sunday 11th June 2023

## Committee Members Present:

Adam Crook (Chair)  
Guy Jones  
Brian Fretwell  
Matthew Lyne  
Lisa Thomas  
Caroline Doyle  
Andrew Chadney  
Steve Pleasants

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the 49th AGM, mentioning that we'll have to have a big party next year.

He thanked members for staying on after the Theatre AGM; the meeting was quorate.

The **minutes of the 48th AGM** were produced and offered as a fair record by Adam Crook and seconded by Fiona Daffern. Carried unanimously.

There followed a **review of last year's aspirations**.

1. Open the bar more weekdays and Sundays – achieved, with the bar returning to opening on Tuesday-Friday evenings, plus Sunday afternoons and evenings.
2. Increase total volunteer numbers - partially achieved, increasing to 59 active volunteers (up from 46). It was noted that we have more volunteers on our books but 59 are actively volunteering. Having said this, it's still a massive achievement.
3. Increase number of people routinely volunteering – not achieved. While a slightly larger number of people carried out at least five shifts, a few volunteers are doing a very large number and many are doing very few. This is a concern.
4. Replace the Rusty Beam - achieved. The beam has been replaced and many thanks were given to all who put up with the disruption.
5. Finish Club Room refurbishment - partial achievement. While some of the soundproofing has been improved, plans were significantly disrupted by the removal and replacement of the rusty beam as well as the flooding. Many thanks to Bex and BPT for locating the source of the flooding and trying to address it.
6. Deliver a varied programme of social events – achieved. Particular thanks to Daniel and Katrina for the open mic nights; to Guy for the quizzes and to Bex for the Good Ship Comedy programming.

Adam noted that we are doing pretty well in difficult circumstances, and that many pubs are going out of business. Thanks to all those who have made this possible.

There were no **resolutions** presented to the meeting (prompting cheering).

## Election of General Committee

It was explained that, although it's often referred to as Bar Committee, its official title is the General Committee of the Members' Club.

Adam noted thanks to all those who have served on the committee for the past year, including a large number of members who had stepped down during the year or at this

meeting. Adam highlighted that Dave Hollander is stepping down after very long and valued service, and expressed thanks for all he has contributed.

There were no contested positions, so the new Committee was:

						
Adam Crook	Guy Jones	Kay George	Andrew Chadney	Brian Fretwell	Steve Pleasants	
Chair	Deputy Chair	Secretary	Treasurer	Bar Manager	Volunteering & Training Manager	Social Secretary

Other Committee Members	Barry Heselden	Caroline Doyle	Graham Clements	Lisa Thomas	Matthew Lyne
	Caroline Beckett	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant

Adam welcomed Steve Pleasants as the new Volunteering and Training Manager, and Kay George as the new Club Secretary.

## Club Financial Report

Andrew Chadney set out the Club's financial report, noting:

- The Club's financial year runs from 1 February to 31 January. The Club's unaudited accounts for the year ending 31 January 2023 had been prepared by Begbies chartered accountants.
- Bar sales (turnover) were significantly higher in 2023 than 2022, largely due to the reduced impact from the pandemic.
- Gross profit was around £29,000, with a gross profit margin of 57% (compared to 49% in 2022).
- Costs were significantly higher in 2023, leading to a small operating loss in the year, particularly caused by contributing £10,000 towards replacing the rusty beam and much higher energy bills.
- Even with this operating loss, the Club remains in a strong financial position due to its strong reserves, with around £29,000 in the bank.
- The committee is keeping a close eye on bar prices and margins, and will make changes when needed.

Key points made in the following discussion included:

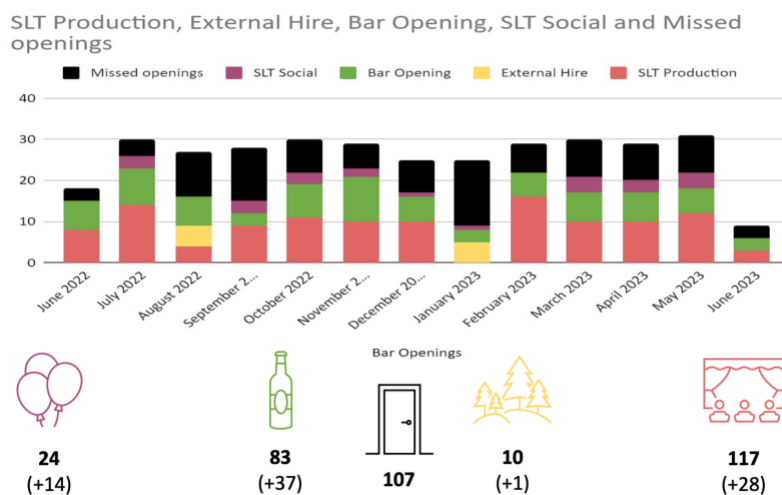
- Payment for all the Rusty Beam work has been included in the accounts.
- The main source of income is from sales on show nights.
- It is important to keep encouraging people to go to the bar after the show, noting that some visitors may not realise that it is still open given some West End and other non-professional theatres close their bars after the interval. The Front of House team is informing audience members, and references will be included in pre-show announcements. The committee will consider ideas generated by members, such as discounting post-show drinks, enabling them to be ordered in the interval, and improving signage.

- The Members' Club generates a higher gross profit than the Questors Theatre; however, this was not considered a reasonable comparison due to the different scale of activity.
- The blackboard wall will be used for bar-related information only, and will set out new lines and important messages to visitors (e.g. that all involved are volunteers, and that only card payments are taken).
- Local breweries could be approached for sponsorship or promotions, though sponsorship is challenging given our relatively low sales volumes. The committee has been building links with other local producers, though there are some technical challenges that make it difficult to chop and change.

Andrew recommended the accounts for approval. Jeanette Hoile proposed them, and Kay George seconded. These were carried unanimously (with one abstention from Matt Davies because he'd never abstained before and he's moving away from the area and won't have another chance).

## Volunteering update

Adam Crook noted the bar was open much more than the year before, with thanks to all of those who had volunteered during the year:



We were successful in encouraging more people to volunteer than before, but that we were still too reliant on a small number of regular volunteers which is unsustainable in the long term:

**59** Active Volunteers (+12)

**19** New Volunteers

**6** Returning Volunteers

**18** Inactive Volunteers

**6** Average # shifts per active volunteer (+1)

**18** Volunteers performed 5+ shifts (+4)

**9** Volunteers performed 10+ shifts (+2)

**48.5%** Shifts performed by BarCom (-5%)

**21%** Shifts performed by new volunteers

**63%** Shifts performed by 10 most regular volunteers

Steve is now in charge of bar volunteering and training and will need all our help to get the numbers up. There are many great reasons to volunteer, not least that it's an easy way to meet new people while doing something relatively simple that helps the theatre immensely.

Adam announced the results of the Lyne League, the informal bar volunteering championship named for Matthew Lyne who ran the volunteers for 15 years. Volunteers get a point for every shift that they do and half points for training people or opening the bar briefly around other activities.

Adam noted thanks to all those who had volunteered in the past year, and noted that the top ten points scorers were as follows:

1. Adam Crook (53.5) – duly crowned as the league champion with great embarrassment
2. Lisa Thomas (50.5)
3. Barry Heselden (27)
4. Angus Hepburn (26.5)
5. Fiona Daffern (25.5)
6. Caroline Beckett (21)
7. Caroline Doyle (19)
8. Rob Wallis (17)
9. Matthew Davies (11)
10. Kay George (10)

### The Drinkies

Adam announced the results of the 'Drinkies', a playful set of informal awards drawn from the bar's sales data over the last year:

- **Show securing highest bar takings in the year:** Thumbelina (honourable mention: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland)
- **Show securing highest bar takings in a single week:** Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (honourable mention: Vampir, Spider, The Elephant Man)
- **Highest single shownight bar takings:** Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

- **Highest post-show party takings:** Vampir
- **Cast performing most bar volunteering shifts:** SLT Shorts
- **Favourite Beer or Cider:** Frontier lager
- **Favourite Wine:** Malbec
- **Most popular spirit:** Casper the friendly ghost (followed by gin)
- **Favourite soft drink:** Diet Coke
- **Favourite confectionery:** Cadbury's Wispa

### **Aspirations for 2023/2024**

Adam noted his key aspirations for the year ahead for the Members' Club:

1. Survival - we need people to keep supporting the bar and to fill the remaining vacancies on the committee.
2. Boost volunteering - more regular volunteers and earlier commitment, as getting people to book in their shifts well in advance enables better planning and less effort filling gaps.
3. Refurbishment - continue to improve the clubroom, and finish the cellar refurbishment.
4. Increased social activities for our community.

### **AOB**

- **Kim Goldsmith:** What does "member without a portfolio" mean and what are their responsibilities? This refers to committee members without a named role, who pick up on various projects according to skills and availability (e.g. refurbishment activity, ordering stock) and contribute to group decision-making.
- **Tom Mathias:** Are the show posters still going on the ceiling? This will still happen, and Tom agreed to help Matthew Lyne to make it happen.
- **Cal Beckett:** It's great that when the theatre is dark we have events like "Old Gits" on. If you know about any one-nighters that might like to hire the theatre, or other volunteers activity nights on dark Saturdays that could help and introduce new people to the space.
  - **Adam Crook:** we still need a social secretary - we have a board in the bar for calendar and notices but need a coordinating and innovatory force
  - **Cal Beckett:** Tom could put on another improv event? We could also have more leaving parties and birthday parties for members.
- **Malcolm:** Congratulations to Fergus for being the first canine to sit through 2 AGMs.
- **David:** Is the bar still open? - it will be shortly.

Meeting adjourned at 20:45