

Friends of the Theatre Royal

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 3 August 2024

Attendance

36 as per the Register.

In attendance: Marianne Locatori, Kelly Smith and Ginny Atthey

1. Apologies for Absence

Karin Dyke, Sam Dyke and Sue Jenkins

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 5 August 2023

Acceptance of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting was proposed by Carol Ainslie and seconded by Ken Turley

3. Chair's Report

Mark Sugden reported that he would be reviewing the year from April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

He was pleased to report that there had been a full year of Friends' Events which appeared to go down well with members.

There were nine Inside Views/Coffee mornings in the 12 months to 31st March 2024 (one less than last year, due to the cancellation of the one that fell on the King's Coronation day). These were:

- Titanic in April 23 when we were joined by Valda Aviks. There should have been more guests but the Company Manager gave them the wrong start time, however Valda was a brilliant guest on her own.
- Greatest Days in June 23, we had mother and daughter cast members Kym Marsh and Emilie Cunliffe who were very friendly and fun guests.
- SIX! in July 23 we were fortunate to have 6 queens as guests, there may have been one or two others amongst the Friends as well! It was a fabulous morning.
- Noises Off in September 23 when Matthew Kelly, Liza Goddard and Simon Shepherd attended. They were really entertaining guests and went down well with the Friends.
- 42nd Street in October 23, the Company were unable to provide any guests but Pam stepped in and regaled the Friends with some funny stories, and Ginny provided a quiz which kept everyone entertained.
- Opera North in November 23, we had six very good guests from various sections of the Company who gave a fascinating insight into what goes on in the background.
- Pinocchio in January 24 when we were delighted to have six lovely guests from the panto cast - Danny Adams, Joe McElderry, Wayne Smith, Kylie Ann Ford, Christina Dawson & Amelia Walker. Carol did a great job keeping them all under control (especially Danny).
- Blood Brothers in February 24 we had 3 lovely guests, 2 from the cast Sean Jones who played Mickey and Tim Churchill, also Mark the Company Manager. The guests were great as was the audience.
- Full Monty in March 24, the guests were Bill Ward, Neil Hurst, Jake Quickenden, Danny Hatchard, Alice Schofield and Suzanne Proctor. They were lovely and chatty and everyone had a great time. And yes, they did leave their hats on!
- Prior to the Full Monty Guests we had Christina Dawson and Janet Plater do a short talk about Limelight which was to be performed in the Studio. They spoke very well and a few Friends booked for the show after hearing them talk about the show.

Our other events during the year were:

- In April 23 we held a celebration of Shakespeare's birthday with Jill Halfpenny as our special guest. She was lovely and we had some excellent readings including David Faulkner who dressed for the part and his reading went down a storm.

- In August 23 we held Doreen's Do at Café 16, St Nicholas Cathedral, this was a fitting event to remember our friend Doreen Marshall who died in December 2022. She loved her afternoon teas, probably as much as attending the theatre and the Friends events.
- In September 23 the Scarborough trip took place. 39 members boarded the coach and we managed to return 39 home again. Mixed reviews of the play and as the numbers had dropped we have decided to rest the trip in 2024.
- In October 23 12 Friends and a number of committee members attended the Walking Tour of Newcastle. Tony did a good tour and it was a nice walk, but the weather kept the numbers down.
- In December 23 we held our Annual Christmas Lunch at Northern Counties Club. It was once again a sell out, the meal and entertainment were great and the raffle raised an amazing £136 due to the wonderful prizes kindly donated by the Friends (especially Paddington, made again by Carol). Thanks to Pam for organising the event and Ruth for compiling the challenging quiz.
- In February 24 a Tea Time talk was held at Northern Counties with Ross Proudfoot as our guest. He spoke very well and showed some video clips of his work.

We have continued to welcome visiting companies with a basket of fruit on behalf of the Friends. There is a card that accompanies the fruit with a QR code that links to a welcome message from me on the Friends behalf. The fruit baskets are really appreciated, and we receive regular thank-you's from the recipients. Thanks to the Door Staff for putting out the fruit each time it is delivered.

Thank you all for your continued support of our events. In particular, I would like to give a special thanks to those Friends who joined us in person at the events we have arranged throughout the year and to those who have regularly donated various items for our raffles, and, of course, all of the Friends who buy raffle tickets on a regular basis.

The Friends events do not just happen and I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members for all they do to make them happen. So thanks to Pam, June, Clive, Yvonne, Carol, Sue, Karin, Gillian, Melanie, Ruth, Eve and Christine for all their hard work.

Gillian also looks after Matcham's Numbers, our monthly fundraising raffle which has a £100 prize each month. Each number costs only £12 per year and there are some numbers available so please see Gillian if you would like to join. Ask any Committee members for details as there continue to have been a few winners over the last year who are Committee members.

We are working on plans on how to spend some of the Friends funds that have been raised, on areas such as accessibility, inclusivity and widening participation, when a decision has been made on what we are going to contribute towards this will be communicated via the Friends newsletter

A huge thank you to Ginny for being our Friends' Liaison. She does everything with such enthusiasm and has made the Committee's life easier with all her help and assistance.

On behalf of the Friends and the Committee I would like to present Ginny with a small gift as a mark of our appreciation for all that she does.

Last, but by no means least, thanks also go to the Theatre Management for their invaluable support. Marianne, who is with us today and will be hosting the Friends' Forum at the close of this meeting, and also Jo Kirby and Kelly Smith who join us at some of our committee meetings.

4. Treasurer's Report, presentation and adoption of Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2024

Pam Clarke went through the Income and Expenditure report and the Balance Sheet. She explained how items were calculated:-

Income:

Inside View is the ticket money less the cost of staff and refreshments.

Raffles - all the money raised goes to the Friends Funds thanks to the kind donation of prizes.

Other Raffles – this was for the raffles held at Doreen's Do and the Christmas Lunch

Lunches, Teas etc. – shows the profit after all costs.

Matchams' Numbers – the amount Friends receive after the prizes for the year are paid out.

Expenses:

Gifts – were for Ginny Atthey and Retiring Chairman at the AGM, our Patron, Jill Halfpenny, who joined us at Shakespeare's Birthday and the wine given to our Inside View guests.

Fruit Baskets – our main expense and increased due to the fruit costing more, and the fact we had some large visiting companies. The fruit is always appreciated by the recipients.

This left a profit for the year of £113.

Balance Sheet

Debtors – money owing to us.

Matchams	494.00
Re events	136.00
Due from Theatre	2033.38
Total	2663.38

Cash at Bank – what is held in our Current and Deposit Accounts,

Accruals and Deferred Liabilities – money owed by us, or receipts for events happening after 31 March 2024.

Donations from Doreen Marshall on hand	462.10
Cheque to Theatre Royal (to replace one lost)	1500.00
Total	1962.10

Accumulated Fund – Total Friends Funds at 31 March 2024

Pam asked if there were any questions and as there weren't any she asked for a proposer to accept the accounts. Ken Turley proposed and Carol Ainslie seconded the proposal.

5. Election of examiner

Keith Proudfoot, our Independent Examiner, has expressed a willingness to continue in the role for 2025. This was proposed by Alfie Mordue and seconded by Melanie Howie

6. Election of Officers and Committee Members

There are six Officer posts up for election:

Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary.

There being only one nomination for Chairman, Mark Sugden was duly elected.

There being only one nomination for Vice Chairman, Clive Fremantle was duly elected.

There being only one nomination for Treasurer, Pam Clarke was duly elected.

There being only one nomination for Assistant Treasurer, Yvonne Richardson was duly elected.

There being only one nomination for Secretary, June Svenson was duly elected.

There being only one nomination for Assistant Secretary, Sue Jenkins was duly elected.

There being two nominations for committee posts the following were duly re-elected and elected respectively: Karin Dyke and Alfie Mordue

The formal meeting then closed, and Marianne Locatori reported on the theatre's finances and future programme. She thanked the committee and Friends for their fundraising.