

Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company Annual General Meeting – 29 September 2013

Minutes

Apologies

Apologies received from Arlene Joyce, Julie Loudon and Emma Watkins

Minutes of the AGM held on Sunday 30th September 2012

Proposed by Fiona Young Seconded by Kathryn Higgins

Welcome from the Chair Grant Alexander to the 6th Annual General Meeting of the Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company

Grant welcomed everyone to the 6th Annual General Meeting of the Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company and introduced current Office Bearers and committee members:

Chairperson - Grant Alexander

Vice - Chairs - Iain Gillies and Colin Wishart

Treasurer – Karen Wallace

Secretary – Agnes Law

Management Committee Members: Shirley Blackwood, Linda Fraser, Vivien Gillies, Graeme Hamilton, Susan Johnstone, Tracey Kildare, Lynn McConachie, Kathryn McGowan, Hilary Wallace, Fiona Young

I would like to formally thank the committee both past and present for their support and all the hard work they have done during the year. Their dedication to Big Bad Wolf is commendable. I would like to record my thanks to Graeme Hamilton who has intimated that he wishes to stand down from the Committee due to work commitments.

I am pleased to report that a number of people who have served on committee in the past, continue to be involved behind the scenes – in stage management, wardrobe, workshop or in a front of house capacity.

Report from the Chair

I will now give my report for the last year. There will be an opportunity to ask questions as we go or they can be taken during Agenda Item 10.

The year 2012 – 2013 was another big year for Big Bad Wolf. Following the successes of previous productions, BBW's reputation has continued to grow on account of the level of quality in entertainment we provide - an amateur company with professional production values.

In addition to the main production of Annie in February, the company undertook a number of smaller but very worthwhile performances throughout the year.

The company had again been invited to perform at the switching on ceremonies for the Christmas lights across the district towards the end of November – no fewer than 5 different venues. The biggest of these was at Falkirk where it was reported that the crowd numbered over 1000.

As 2012 drew to a close, the company were asked to make a number of appearances at a number of local care homes. These were said to be very enjoyable events. Performing in these smaller settings, our children received a very warm welcome and audience participation

was to the fore. This was further reflected in generous cash donations to the company as well as generating some ticket sales for our main production.

2013 started where 2012 finished off with the company busily preparing for their 6th Annual production – Annie. During the run up to the show, we returned to regular rehearsals on both Friday evenings and Sundays. All the offstage preparations in support of the production were also well underway with lots of endeavour in the workshop and in the costume making departments. As always the Production Team and the committee make plans for show week with the aim of having proceedings go as smoothly as possible.

The complex nature of productions means that unforeseen challenges sometimes can and invariably do crop up but I'm glad to report that those that did were quickly dealt with.

After the success of Dracula in 2012, the bar of excellence remained high. The choice of Annie as our show proved very popular and this was reflected in higher advance ticket sales than in previous years. Group bookings in particular were greatly up on the previous year. During show week, and after the opening performance, the few remaining tickets were quickly snapped up leading to a run of sell out shows. Music to the ears of our Treasurer and a true testament to the work that the performers, and everyone else, put in.

Thanks to the sponsorship of Larbert Rotary Club, we were again able to offer a signed performance of the show on the Thursday evening. Importantly, this opened up access to the theatre to a group of people who may otherwise have been excluded. It has been said by those who saw them that the energy and the animation put over by the signers from Deaf Connections in Glasgow added to the overall entertainment experience on the evening.

I'd like to thank all who helped in any small part to put on these shows, be it front of house, backstage or set building. These shows can not be put on without you.

From Spring, in to Summer and once again, we ran a series of themed workshops. Over 6 weeks, members were encouraged and supported to devise and develop their own material and to learn some new skills and for this to be showcased at the end of the programme. Once again, this evidenced the array of talent that we have available to us within our company.

Then in June this year, the company provided the entertainment at Soroptomists International Charter Dinner in the Park Hotel. A very successful event, the staging of these cabaret type spots is something we are keen to develop further in future.

Production Team

Before talking about the wider Production Team proper – there were two sad events this year of which I would like to make special mention.

Our Musical Director Jonny Graham and his wife Kim tragically suffered a bereavement this year when their baby son Cameron died suddenly in June - every parents' worst nightmare. Jonny has understandably restricted his involvement with the company during the last few months but continues to work behind the scenes and took an active part in the recent auditions. Jonny knows that he enjoys the full support of everyone concerned with Big Bad Wolf and we hope to see him back amongst us in the near future.

The second sad event came in July with the passing of Mike Benzie our Design Consultant. Mike had not enjoyed the best of health for several years but in spite of this, had continued to offer up his expertise to Big Bad Wolf, putting in many hours at the workshop every week. Those of us who knew him, and I had known him for over 35 years will miss his dry wit but more importantly, his irreplaceable knowledge and expertise. A hard act to follow.

In terms of the Production Team going forward, it is for the key Production Team members to nominate their assistants. Our 2013/14 season sees Gavin Orr return as our Company Director. Gavin has brought back Lindsay Dowell and also has Diane Brisbane shadowing – Diane is helping out on a voluntary basis - as are a number of former members who Gavin will

involve as required to provide additional input at rehearsals. To choreography – we welcome the return of Sheila Mackie as our choreographer. Sheila has also brought back Romy Mackie as her assistant.

I am pleased to say that Jonny Graham once again returns as our Musical Director. For last years' production, Jonny had brought in Stephen Morton as his Associate. Unfortunately Stephen has recently had to relocate to Newcastle due to work commitments and has had to relinquish his position within the Production Team. It is hoped that Stephen can continue to be involved as part of our band during future productions and we thank him for his endeavours so far. On the back of Stephens' departure, I am delighted to confirm that Jonny nominated Sheena Graham as his Musical Associate. Sheena is known to many of us, having previously worked with the company on many occasions and we are fortunate in having her back as part of our Production Team for the coming season.

Once again, we continue to reinforce the notion of the Big Bad Wolf family – by families, for families. This remains one of our key aims.

In a desire to continually improve how the company operates the committee had once again been keen to canvass the thoughts and ideas of the members. Following on from last years' exercise, a set of survey questions was devised which were issued to members during the week of the Annie production – this sought to provide members with the opportunity to make suggestions. This was a really useful exercise and a number of the suggestions have already been taken on by committee. In terms of our own improvement and in the spirit of transparency, the committee intends to give the company some structured feedback in terms of the findings. As a committee we would intend to run a similar exercise again this year.

Headlines

I would now like to highlight in headline fashion some of the other developments to date this year – whilst I would not intend to go in to detail due to constraints on time, if there is anything in particular that someone wants to know more about, we are happy to take questions:

Workshop – In conjunction with the Falkirk District Arts and Civic council, we are now well established in our new workshop in the old Barrs Lemonade factory at Hopedale, Camelon. This is a shared facility with other theatre companies. During the year, we built a mezzanine which has doubled our storage and workshop capacity. It is worth noting that future developments of the canal bank may mean that we have to look at finding alternative workshop facilities within the next couple of years.

We continue to hold **regular meetings** between Committee and Production Team to assist with communication and decision making. This year, we decided to introduce a two year plan – not merely working towards the 2014 production but also our 2015 production. This was a first for the committee and was made possible due to the collaborative working with the Production Team. Consequently and as many of you may know, our 2014 production of Seussical will be followed in the Spring of 2015 by Peter Pan.

In April, and after having chosen Seussical as our next production, we organised a trip for members, parents and the Production Team to attend a production of the show staged by Forth Theatre in Edinburgh. This gave members their first introduction to Seussical.

Website – Our revamped website is now operational. We continue to explore how this can help us in our business and to this end, all members will shortly be issued with personal login details that will allow them to access a secure area of the site where information will regularly be posted.

We have continued to play an active part and have successfully become more **integrated with the broader amateur drama movement** at a local level

- we have strengthened our links with NODA and earlier this year we had our first presentation of NODA awards to our members by NODA Rep Mrs Elizabeth Donald
- we are represented on the Dobbie Hall Trust
- as well as Falkirk District Arts and Civic Council

- we have also seen a number of our members and parents supporting other societies – including Falkirk Opera, Alloa Opera and LAMP
- we have supported a number of local schools in their productions during the year through the loan of our sets, props and costumes.

Participation in the Safe Drive Stay Alive campaign that saw a number of members and parents appear in a DVD that promotes safe driving amongst young people. The DVD is shown to senior high school pupils in Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannan.

We have also recently **reviewed all our policies and procedures** and the revised articles will shortly be posted on our website.

I would now like to talk briefly about two sets of recent auditions:

In May, the company held auditions for new members. As always, by way of natural progression, members leave and this creates opportunities for new members to come in. As always, there was no shortage of interest in auditioning. We were fortunate in having sufficient talent come forward to be able to create a waiting list. So over the Summer with older members taking decisions to head off to University and so on, we worked through the waiting list and to date, the number of new members who actually joined the company was 16. This takes our numbers to 80 – the maximum number we would take.

The second set of auditions was the casting of Seussical. Once again, I was fortunate to be able to sit in on these and was amazed at the array of talent we have available to us. What was both noticeable and pleasing was the number of youngsters who had previously been content to stay in the background who were putting themselves forward for parts – the quality was exceptional. Although a very difficult exercise, I am happy to report that the Production Team have assembled a very strong cast who have already started rehearsing for next years production.

As a self sustaining organisation, we are responsible for our own finances, hence fundraising forms a very important part of our business. I'd like to invite Fiona Young who on committee has specific responsibility for leading and co-ordinating our fundraising activities to report on events that have taken place during the past year and what is planned for the coming year

Fundraising

Fiona said that Peter Pan will cost even more than Beauty and the Beast to stage (£33k). We are looking to raise an additional £5000 through fundraising this year.

Christmas Hampers raise £800/£1000.

We will be holding a Stars in their Eyes event on 15 March. The Dobbie Hall and host have been booked. This will not be run by the Production Team but by the kids and any parents who wish to participate. It is an optional event and participants will be expected to create their own act and provide their own costume/props.

The bar at the September Show did not raise any funds for the company. Fiona is sitting her personal licence exam and will be able to run the bar for the company this time. The September Show last year did not raise any funds as the ticket income only covered the costs.

There will be no Phoenix catalogues at Christmas this year.

There will be a Rag Bag collection in November.

Fiona would welcome any fundraising ideas.

The Chairperson then continued:

Over the year there have been many different issues that have been handled by the committee. Thankfully, they are not common but when they do arise, the committee always look to deal with things in a way that they think is best for the company as a whole. Do we always get it right – no we don't - but we do the best we can. That is why if you have any concerns or even ideas to help improve things it is important that you raise them appropriately. Can I please encourage you to approach any member of the committee to discuss any concerns that you may have. You are also invited to attend a committee meeting to air those concerns should you wish to do so.

Treasurers Report

The financial details for the year ended 30th June 2013 are presented in the Receipts and Payments statement of which there are several copies available. A full set of accounts to be presented to OSCR are available should anyone wish to see them.

Total receipts for the year of £45,942 are £13k up on the previous year's receipts of £33k. Receipts are split into 3 categories covering, donations, Operating Activities and fund raising. Donations and similar receipts include membership subscriptions, Donations and hall fees. These are just over £1k up on last year.

Other operating activities to generate funds total £5,500 and are 5% above last year. Fundraising activities at just over £2k has increased by £500 but offset by reduced income from costume hire.

The main source of income is of course from ticket sales with the performances of Annie raising nearly £24k. This is £6500 up on Dracula being a combination of more seats sold plus changes to ticket pricing. Revenue generated from the talent show in September was just over £4k.

Expenditure incurred falls into 2 categories – cost of providing the shows and others. The cost of providing Annie was £27k compared to £24k in 2012 for Dracula. The September show cost £4k with the balance of £1000 relating to scripts. The key differences in the expenditure for the main productions relates to Royalty payments with £3,700 paid for Annie. This was offset by savings in costumes and scenery costs. Other increases that you will see in the accounts relate to the September show for example lighting costs in September was £3k and additional hall hire £600.

Other expenses at £12.3k are £5k above last year reflecting the increase in rental costs for rehearsal rooms and workshop repairs and reorganisation costing £2200. The miscellaneous figure of £3400 is £1500 above last year and includes £500 for Dracula DVD, 700 for Web design and Domain name and £500 for the bus to see Seussical in Edinburgh.

As a result of the above a gain of £1723 is reported compared with a gain of £1893 in 2012. Bank balance at the end of June is increased by this amount to £23k.

Blair Dewar questioned why there was no Gift Aid payment. Karen informed him our claim had been turned down last year as we charge a fee so not strictly a donation from parents. Karen has submitted a claim for this year and is waiting on a decision.

Secretary's Report

I would like to start by promising you no tears this year but unfortunately that is an almighty promise that I probably won't be able to keep. I make no apology for again wishing I that I was not sitting here today as I'm sure you'll understand, however Mary's thoughts would probably be along the lines of 'I don't know how you've done it but you've got through your first year, mostly on a wing and a prayer sometimes but you've got there, now get on with it and do a better job next year' and she would be completely 100% correct, I have absolutely no idea whatsoever how I have managed to get through this year, but I do know that I would never have made it without the support and backing of a very hardworking, supportive committee who I'm honoured to say have become great friends, my family, including my own personal mini guru's Emma and Heather, the production team and last but not least members and parents.

Our family were proud to donate the Mary Watkins Memorial Trophy for Commitment to Big Bad Wolf last year which was won by Hayden Stewart, with points awarded for all things important to Mary including:

Attendance at main rehearsal,

Timekeeping,

Praise

Helping to clear up after rehearsals

Being helpful to new members

Taking part in light switch on/care homes

However points can also be lost for poor conduct at rehearsals!

I apologise if you feel I send out too many texts or emails or make amendments at short notice, I try to keep it to a minimum by sending out as much information as possible as soon as I can but there can be a number of reasons for delays/amendments.

I'd like to move on to mention a few important points where we would appreciate your support:

It is vitally important that every member reports to register on arrival at rehearsals, we are required by law to keep a register of every child in our care.

Similarly if members are unable to attend rehearsals please let me know as soon as possible and the reason why, if I do not have a reason for non-attendance this will be marked as an unauthorised absence, it is understandable that members will have party invites etc. which clash with rehearsals but hopefully this will not be a regular occurrence, I would just ask that you please be as honest as possible with me, it does not go down well when I'm telling the production team members are absent because I have been advised they are sick or I have not been given a reason for an absence for the production team to then discover they are at a party. Please also ensure that you do not contact the production team direct.

Please also ensure that you have completed the additional activities/absence form if appropriate.

While I'm on a role I'd also ask that you please, please put any monies in a sealed envelope with the members name, amount of money enclosed and the reason on the front of the envelope, this is especially important as registration can become a bit hectic.

The t-shirt and hoody order forms have been issued however they will be updated to include our new items and will be re-issued, please make sure all orders are paid at the time of ordering (money in an envelope of course) we would like every member to have a t-shirt for publicity/programme photos, light switch ons etc. The first year's membership fee now includes a t-shirt therefore any new member who has not ordered a t-shirt please see me today. We also hope to have t-shirts for all front of house volunteers this year, they will be issued then collected and washed after each performance ready for the next performance.

Just a small point on the tuck shop, we have been asked by members if they can have something from the tuck shop and we can ask their parents for the money at the end of rehearsals, unfortunately this is not something we will do, the most obvious reason being that you may not want them to buy from the tuck shop.

If you do not put your name down to help out during show week you can expect a text, my aim is not to hassle anyone, but I'm conscious of the fact some members don't want parents to come in to the hall to pick them up, so you may not get a chance to see the sheets which will be on the wall outside the main hall.

Members are issued with either a script if they have a part or song words on a weekly basis at the moment, it is increasingly frustrating to find song words left in the hall or indeed the bin after rehearsal, members are expected to be learning words and practising between rehearsals which is impossible if they do not take the words home with them, there is also a cost involved printing song sheets which increases if we have to reprint as members have lost/forgotten their song sheets, can you please emphasise to members that they should take care of and remember their song sheets.

We would also ask anyone collecting members from rehearsals to remain in the foyer until rehearsals have ended.

If you have any concerns or need any information on anything Big Bad Wolf related please do not hesitate to contact me, I don't promise to know the answer but I will do my utmost to find out for you as soon as I possibly can. As you know, everyone is a volunteer, I work full time and should not have access to my mobile during working hours, however I can often open your text or email but it's not easy trying to hide and work a mobile phone under a desk so I don't always have the chance to answer until lunch time or until I'm home from work but I will get back to you as soon as I can.

You'll be glad to hear that concludes my report, I'd just like to close by Thanking everyone again for bearing with me and for all your kindness, help and support. Thank you.

Constitution Changes

Iain Gillies ran through the proposed changes to the Constitution:

Section 2 – Wording will change from seed to seek. All present in favour of change.

Section 9 – Failure to adhere to Code of Conduct. All present in favour of change.

Section 44 – Amended to include that communication may also be made by email and/or text. All present in favour of change.

Plans for 2013/14

This brings me to the coming year for BBW and we have another busy and exciting year ahead.

Similar to last year we intend to perform at some of the care homes in the area. Exact dates are still to be worked out but as we have a busy rehearsal schedule we are restricting this to just a few performances during November and December. This allows us to give something back to the community and the people who support us, as well as drumming up further support for future productions. Rehearsals for the care homes will be kept to the end of the Sunday rehearsals. We have also been asked back to perform again at the Christmas Lights switch-ons at the middle of November.

Our main production, Seussical will run for six performances from to 4 February to 8 February 2014 in Falkirk Town Hall. We will stage a matinee on Saturday 8th.

Rehearsals for the show will be on Sundays with Fridays being used to work with the Principals, although as we get closer to the show these will become full company rehearsals.

In terms of pricing, with the exception of Group Discounts, we have taken the decision to freeze our ticket prices this year. Tickets will continue to be priced at £9 with concessions being offered at £8. In comparison with local companies, our pricing structure remains very competitive with most of the other amateur productions staged locally.

Tickets will go on sale later in October with priority booking for the company as usual.

However putting on a show is not just about having artistes on the stage but also ensuring that all the support roles front of house, back stage costumes, make up, hair, lights, action, sound are all covered. So if everyone does something then it lightens the load for everyone. With almost 25% of the company comprising new members then this represents a sizeable pool of new talent both on and off the stage. Everyone has a gift – don't be surprised if over the next few weeks you are approached by Shirley or by Fiona or by Blair inviting you to use yours.

As stated earlier, we are in the unique position of being able to work to a two year plan. This means that whilst our focus at the moment is rightly on Seussical, both committee and the production Team have already started some preliminary work on Peter Pan. Exciting Times.

So after the first six years comes the next two years. An annual turnaround in members of 20 – 25% ensures that the company remains healthy and vibrant but to capture this dividend we must both embrace the new members but also encourage their parents to become involved – BBW family.

The scope for parental involvement is unlimited. Become involved – encourage others to become involved.

I'd like to extend a challenge to you all – to adhere to the theme for the year – that of the Big Bad Wolf Family - to turn the notion of the BBW family into a reality

Election of New Management Committee Members

All Management committee members (including Office Bearers) serve for a period of 2 years. The maximum Management Committee members are 15. At the moment we have 15 members - 7 of whom have reached the end of their two year term. In addition, a further member has intimated his intention to stand down due to work commitments. With 8 standing down, this leaves 7 sitting members. This means that there are 8 places to be filled to return the complement to 15. All 7 members who have reached the end of their term have intimated their intention to stand for re-election. In addition, there has been one person who has put themselves forward as a nominee for election. As we have 8 nominees, then effectively they can all be automatically elected and re-elected. However, to keep things right I'd like to ask for a Nominator and a Secunder for them.

Our 7 nominees to be re-elected are:

Grant Alexander
Iain Gillies
Karen Wallace
Fiona Young
Susan Johnstone
Shirley Blackwood
Linda Fraser

Nominator Agnes Law Seconder Blair Dewar

Remaining Members who have 1 year remaining on their term of service are:

Vivien Gillies
Tracey Kildare
Agnes Law
Lynn McConachie
Kathryn McGowan
Hilary Wallace
Colin Wishart

One Member is standing down

Graeme Hamilton - our thanks go out to Graeme for his input during the last year
New Nominee to Committee is
Emma Watkins

Nominator Linda Fraser Seconder Lynn McConachie

Any other business

Jackie Gallacher asked if it was normal to hold Committee Meeting during the rehearsals. The committee try to hold meetings during rehearsals and Hilary and other committee members have kindly hosted meetings during the break.

Beverley asked the cost of group tickets - £7.

Blair asked if the Committee Meetings could be advertised, perhaps by text.

Programme advertisers should contact Agnes initially.

Blair intimated that help was required for Stage Crew and at workshops.

Jackie Gallacher asked if BBW would be involved in the Charities Days in town. Karen Wallace will check if we can take a stall at CVS Charities Day on 26 October in St Modans Church.

Blair suggested trying to get a bag packing slot. Fiona replied that the last one had been mainly staffed by Committee due to the kids having too many other commitments at the time allocated by Tesco. Fiona has contacted Asda Stenhousemuir and we have a slot on 27 December.

Jackie Gallacher suggested holding a raffle with a £100 note as the prize.

Meeting closed 4.20pm

| Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|--------|---------------|------|--------|--------|
| Receipts and Payments Account | | | | | | | |
| For the Period Ended 30th June 2013 | | | | | | | |
| | | 2013 | | | 2012 | | |
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | | |
| Receipts | | | | | | | |
| <u>Donation, Legacies and other similar receipts</u> | | | | | | | |
| Membership Subscriptions | | 6,645 | | | | 6,190 | |
| Donation and contributions | | 897 | | | | 495 | |
| Hall Fees | | 1,520 | 9,062 | | | 1,295 | 7,980 |
| <u>Operating Activities to further organisation's objectives</u> | | | | | | | |
| Ticket Sales | February Production | 23,901 | | | | 17,303 | |
| | September Production | 4,207 | | | | 0 | |
| Programme sales and advertising | | 3,194 | 31,302 | | | 2,499 | 19,802 |
| <u>Operating Activities to generate funds</u> | | | | | | | |
| Fundraising activities | | 2,037 | | | | 1,597 | |
| Raffles etc | | 1,733 | | | | 1,706 | |
| Miscellaneous receipts | | 950 | | | | 554 | |
| Costume Hire | | 850 | | | | 1,430 | |
| Bank Interest | | 9 | 5,578 | | | 9 | 5,295 |
| Total Receipts | | 45,942 | | 33,077 | | | |
| Payments | | | | | | | |
| <u>Cost of Providing Shows</u> | | | | | | | |
| Scripts etc | | 1,000 | | | | 0 | |
| Posters, Advertising and sundry | | 1,038 | | | | 471 | |
| Programmes | | 680 | | | | 910 | |
| Scenery and Props | | 270 | | | | 890 | |
| Royalties | | 3,741 | | | | 0 | |
| Make up | | 80 | | | | 158 | |
| Sound and Lighting | | 8,515 | | | | 4,521 | |
| Hall hire | | 3,069 | | | | 2,441 | |
| Fees for production teams and band members | | 11,920 | | | | 11,860 | |
| Costumes | | 1,526 | | | | 2,509 | |
| | | | | 31,838 | | 23,760 | |
| <u>Other Expenses</u> | | | | | | | |
| Rent of rehearsal rooms | | 4,859 | | | | 3,933 | |
| Insurance | | 303 | | | | 303 | |
| Licences | | 45 | | | | 540 | |
| Postage and Stationery | | 584 | | | | 65 | |
| Outlays for fundraising | | 907 | | | | 606 | |
| Workshop repairs | | 2,240 | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous | | 3,443 | 12,381 | | | 1,977 | 7,425 |
| Total Payments | | 44,219 | | 31,184 | | | |
| Net Receipts | | 1,723 | | 1,893 | | | |