

Big Bad Wolf
Children's Theatre Company
Annual General Meeting – 26 October 2014

Minutes

Apologies

Apologies received from Laura Dawson, Emma Watkins, Tracey Kildare, Evonne Johnstone, Kathryn McGowan, Lynn Findlay.

Election of Committee Members

Due to there being more nominees than places on the committee it is necessary to ask all present to take part in a vote. Therefore the Election of New Committee Members will become Agenda Item 5 instead of 7 to allow for the voting papers to be take away and counted.

Minutes of AGM 29 September 2013

Nominator – Fiona Young Seconder – Linda Fraser

Welcome from Chairperson Grant Alexander to the 7th Annual General Meeting of the Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company

On behalf of the committee, Grant welcomed everyone to the 7th Annual General Meeting of the Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company and introduced current Office Bearers and Committee Members

Chairperson - Grant Alexander

Vice - Chair - Iain Gillies

Treasurer – Steven McMullan

Secretary – Agnes Law

Management Committee Members: Shirley Blackwood, Linda Fraser, Vivien Gillies, Tracey Kildare, Lynn McConnachie, Kathryn McGowan, Hilary Wallace, Emma Watkins, Fiona Young

At last years AGM, we welcomed a number of new members on to the committee. As some members stood down, others put themselves forward to serve. Grant thanked 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. In particular Grant thanked our Secretary, Agnes Law who keeps the whole thing ticking over. He also thanked those who are standing or have already stood down – Colin Wishart, Karen Wallace and Susan Johnstone who all stood down during the year and to Kathryn McGowan and Vivien Gillies who have served their term but are not standing for re-election. Thanks go to all.

A number of people who have served on committee in the past, continue to support the company by being involved behind the scenes – in stage management, wardrobe, workshop or in a front of house capacity.

Report from the Chair

Grant gave his report for the last year.

The year 2013 – 2014 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 Seussical 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 – at no fewer than 5 different venues. The biggest of these was at Falkirk where once again, a sizeable crowd enjoyed the children's performance

As 2013 drew to a close, the company were also invited to make a number of appearances at a few of the 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.

2014 started where 2013 finished off with the company busily preparing for their 7th Annual production – Seussical. 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 huge success of Annie in 2013, the bar of excellence remained high. The choice of Seussical as our show was seen by some as very ambitious given that as a show, it was relatively unknown – that was until Big Bad Wolf took to the stage. Building on the reputation gained from the successes of our previous productions, early ticket sales were very encouraging. Once again, Group bookings in particular were 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.

Grant thanked 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 couple of themed workshops that supported the children to develop their gymnastic skills that will be put to good use in this

seasons main production. Once again, this evidenced the array of talent that we have available to us within our company. There will be further sessions incorporated in to the rehearsal schedule within the next few weeks that will see the children being tutored in the art of stage fighting – again this will help with the staging of Peter Pan.

Production Team

As always the success of our Productions is largely down to the endeavours of our Production Team. In going forward each year, it is for the key Production Team members to nominate their assistants. Our 2014/15 season sees Gavin Orr return as our Company Director. Gavin has brought back Lindsay Dowell as his assistant and this year has also enlisted the help of Iona Turnbull, one of our former members. Iona 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 and during show week. To choreography – we welcome the return of Sheila Mackie as our choreographer. Sheila has also brought back Romy Mackie as her assistant. We are pleased to say that Jonny Graham once again returns as our Musical Director and we are delighted to confirm that Jonny nominated his maw Sheena Graham as his Musical Associate. Sheena has worked with the company on many occasions and we are fortunate in having her back along with the other members of the 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 the success of last years exercise, a set of survey questions were once again issued to members after the main production. Thankfully, as a company we seem to be doing quite a lot right. However, there is no room for complacency and there are always things that can be done better. A number of helpful suggestions were made in relation to rehearsal times and specifically the use made of time at rehearsals. These were taken on by the committee and Production Team and this year's rehearsal schedule reflects this feedback. As a committee we are here to serve the members and are always keen to listen to feedback on how we can improve our performance and ultimately, our organisation. To this end, as a committee, we would intend to run a similar exercise again this year. However, if there is any constructive feedback you want to provide ahead of this, please speak to any of the committee members.

Headlines

Grant highlighted some of the other developments to date this year:

Workshop – In conjunction with the Falkirk District Arts and Civic Council, we are now well established in our workshop in the old Barrs Lemonade factory at Hopedale, Camelon. This is a shared facility with other theatre companies. It was reported last year that we had built a mezzanine – this has now doubled our storage and workshop capacity. However we are also aware of the emerging plans to further develop the area along the canal bank in Camelon and it is likely that we will have to find alternative workshop facilities within the next couple of years. Our workshop manager, Blair Dewar is already on the case. If you do know of anywhere that you think would be suitable, please contact Blair.

We continue to hold regular meetings between Committee and Production Team to assist with communication and decision making. This year, we are looking at another two year plan – not merely working towards the 2016 production but also our 2017 production and beyond. We first introduced the notion of a two year planning cycle in 2013 and as a result of good collaborative working with the Production Team, our project management approach has proved very successful. And as a teaser, the committee expects to be in a position to announce our 2016 production within the next couple of months.

Website - Our **revamped website** is now fully operational. We continue to explore how this can help us in our business and to this end all members now have their own personal login allowing them access to a secure area of the site where information is regularly posted. This facility came in to its own during the recent auditions where audition pieces were made available for download. We continue to explore how social media can enhance our business.

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 during Seussical, we again had our presentation of NODA awards to our members by NODA Rep Mrs Elizabeth Donald
- we work collaboratively with the Dobbie Hall Trust
- we are represented on the Falkirk District Arts and Civic Council
- we have also seen a number of our members and parents supporting other societies – including Falkirk Opera, the Bohemians 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.

A number of our members and parents again participated in the Safe Drive Stay Alive campaign in January. They appeared in a DVD shown for a week at the Macrobert Centre in Stirling to promote safe driving amongst young people. The DVD is shown to senior high school pupils from Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannan.

All our updated **policies and procedures** have been posted and are now available to view on the website.

Auditions

In March, 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. Once again, there was no shortage of interest in auditioning – testimony to the company's reputation. So, over the Summer with older members taking decisions to head off to University and so on, we allocated places to the successful applicants and to date, the number of new members who actually joined the company was 24. This keeps our numbers just below 80 – the maximum number we would take.

The second set of auditions was the casting of Peter Pan. Grant was able to sit in on these and was amazed at the array of talent we have available to us. He said what was both noticeable and pleasing was the number of youngsters who had previously been content to stay in the background who were now confident enough to put themselves forward for parts – the quality was exceptional. Although a very difficult exercise, Grant is happy to report that the Production Team have assembled a very strong cast who are already well into rehearsals 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. Grant invited 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 it will cost around £34,000 to put on Peter Pan. She is keen that it is not always parents who are putting their hands in their pockets to raise funds. We have two bag packs this year in Tesco and Asda. We also had a Quiz Night and have a Fashion Show in Matalan on 2 November. We are having a Braw Draw this year for some higher value items which have been donated, including a Hummingbird Voucher and Afternoon Tea, and each family will be given £5 of tickets to sell. There will also be a £5 per entry draw for a Hudl. We will be having our usual Christmas Hamper draws in December and each family will be issued with £10 worth of tickets to sell. There will be a list put up for donations for the Christmas Hampers. We have Carol Singing slots in Asda Stenhousemuir on 11 and 16 December and Tesco Redding on 18 and 22 December. We ask that each member takes part in one of the Carol Singing slots but it is not necessary to attend all of them. Asda Stenhousemuir Bag Pack is 27 December. Fiona asked that parents contact her if they have any other ideas.

Grant 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.

Election of New Management Committee Members

All Management committee members (including Office Bearers) serve for a period of 2 years. The maximum number of Committee members is 15. At the moment we have 13 members - 6 of whom have reached the end of their two year term. This leaves 7 sitting members. One of those 7, our Treasurer Steven McMullan, was co-opted during the year and requires to be formally voted on to the committee at today's AGM. All of this means that there are up to 8 places to be filled to return the complement to the maximum of 15. Of the 6 members who have reached the end of their term, 4 have intimated their intention to stand for re-election. In addition, following the call for nominees, a further five have put themselves forward for election. As we have 9 nominees and 8 places, then effectively we will be required to carry out a vote.

So in terms of the committee for 2014/2015:

The 6 existing Members who have 1 year remaining on their term of service are:

Grant Alexander

Shirley Blackwood

Linda Fraser

Iain Gillies

Emma Watkins

Fiona Young

Two existing Members are standing down

Vivien Gillies and Kathryn McGowan - our thanks go out to both Vivien and Kathryn for their input during the last year. We would also like to thank ex committee members, Susan Johnstone, Karen Wallace and Colin Wishart, all of whom stood down during the year.

We are required to formally elect Steven McMullan who was co-opted on to committee earlier this year

Nominator – Blair Dewar

Seconder – Linda Fraser

Our 4 nominees to be re-elected are:

Tracey Kildare

Agnes Law

Lynn McConnachie

Hillary Wallace

Our 5 New Nominations to Committee are

Laura Dawson

Gemma Devlin

Claire Stirton

Stuart Williamson

Elaine Milne

So these are the 9 nominees to be considered for the 8 places.

Iain Gillies instructed all present on voting procedure then Iain and Linda Fraser took all the Voting Papers to be counted.

There were 39 votes in total. Those elected were:

Agnes Law

Tracey Kildare

Lynn McConachie

Claire Stirton

Hilary Wallace

Gemma Devlin

Laura Dawson

Stuart Williamson

Grant welcomed all the new members to the Committee. He also emphasised that supporting roles are very important – Front of House, Backstage and Stage Crew during show week and those helping in the workshops during the year.

Treasurer's Report

Steven thanked all the Committee and also Kathryn Higgins for auditing the accounts. Blair Dewar asked if ticket sales were lower last year as there was less spent on advertising. Iain informed him that we had managed to cut our costs, not the advertising that we did.

Secretary's Report

Agnes said she is honoured to hold the role of secretary of Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company which, according to the fabulous Seussical review we received in the Falkirk Herald this year, 'are one of the most talented children's theatre company in the country' and if it's in the Falkirk Herald it must be true!

She could not, however, hold this role without the support of the members, parents, Production team and a dedicated, hard-working committee. She thanked everyone for their help and support and said she owed a special thanks to Grant for his support, the hugely talented Hilary Wallace who not only designs our amazing sets but willingly allows us to invade her home for committee meetings, Tracey Kildare (and her Mum Beth) for being there at every turn, setting up the hall and tuck shop at rehearsals until the Parents rota is in place, Shirley Blackwood whose willingness to help even at short notice is appreciated more than she will ever know and last but by no means least the person who in her eyes is **the** unsung hero of Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre is the ever patient Iain Gillies. Iain does so many things that just 'appear and happen' His knowledge of all things Big Bad Wolf is second to none, his IT expertise is a god send, he never fails to answer questions however silly they may be.

Agnes said she feels she should now be pulling a trophy out of her bag but unfortunately she doesn't have one! Moving on to trophies, her family are proud to see the Mary Watkins Memorial Trophy continue to be hotly contested, won this year by Jasmin Milne, points are awarded for all things which were important to Mary including attendance at rehearsal, helping to set up/clear up the hall, being helpful to new members, taking part in light switch on/fundraising events, however points can also be lost for poor conduct at rehearsals.

We understand that the children do get a bit restless when the production team are working on a scene which may not involve everyone but we lose so much time during rehearsals because the production team have to stop rehearsals to tell everyone to be quiet. We would appreciate your support if parents could re-iterate to members that there is a required standard of behaviour at rehearsals, also if they are on parent rota could they make sure members sit quietly. Please could parents remind members to register at the table as soon as they arrive at rehearsals, we are required to keep a register of every child in our care which we can't do if we don't know they are there. Similarly if members are unable to attend rehearsals or need to arrive late or leave early

please let Agnes know as soon as possible and the reason why they cannot attend. If she does not have a reason they will be marked as an unauthorised absence which can affect their membership. It is understandable that members have party invites, holidays and other activities but we would ask that you are honest with Agnes about the reason for absence because it does not go down well when we are told a member is sick or just unable to attend then we hear or see on Facebook they are at a party. Please also make sure you contact Agnes to let her know and do not contact the Production Team direct. Please also let Agnes know if there are any issues or concerns with members, if we don't know we can't help. Agnes apologised if you receive rehearsal text at short notice but she has just identified a problem with the texts. She likes to have the texts sent by a Wednesday and does not like to send texts after 10pm however she has noticed some texts are not sending until hours or days later or sometimes not at all. Hopefully it will be rectified this week but if parents have not received a rehearsal call by 10pm on a Thursday could you let Agnes know please. Sometimes she will send a text or an email and as soon as it's sent there is something else comes in which I need to send so she apologised for any text/email overload.

Another thing which helps greatly is if any money, orders etc. are put in an envelope with details written on the front before they are handed in. Hoody/t-shirt orders take approximately 2-3 weeks and must be paid at time of ordering, we like every member to have a BBW t-shirt for photos etc. If they do not have a BBW hoody for outside events could they please wear a plain red or black hoody or jacket.

We do have a tuck shop at rehearsals and are occasionally asked by members if they can have something and pay next week or at the end of rehearsals. Unfortunately we can't agree to this as you may not want them to buy from the tuck shop. Everyone including the Production team and committee pay for anything they want from the tuck shop.

Agnes asked parents to put their name down to help out during show week. It's a fabulous opportunity to get to know everyone and the show cannot go on if we don't have enough volunteers. Anyone helping out front of house will be given a BBW t-shirt to wear on the night. Agnes asked if parents could please hand it back in before leaving that night. Lists will be displayed in the foyer from today, please make sure you add your name.

Members are issued with a script and/or song words at rehearsal, it is very frustrating to find these words lying in the hall or even in the bin after rehearsals, as this costs time and money to replace we have decided that members will only be given one copy of each set of words, if they lose them they will have to print them from the BBW website or arrange to copy a friend's. Lost property is another issue. Agnes will pick up anything she sees and bring it to rehearsal the following week but won't keep it any longer. It will be destination charity shop after that.

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

If you have any concerns or need any information please do not hesitate to contact Agnes. She will always try to get back to you as soon as possible. As you know we are all volunteers, Agnes works full time, so the mobile is either locked in a desk drawer or a locker during the day but she will reply as soon as she can.

Agnes closed by thanking everyone most sincerely for bearing with her and for all their kindness and support.

Constitution Changes

Any proposed changes to the constitution require to be raised to the committee and considered and voted on at a general meeting. There were no changes proposed this year.

Plans for 2014/15

This year, at Christmas time, we are reducing the number of performances at care homes to one. As already reported, last Christmas we piloted carol singing in a local supermarket. In light of the success, this Christmas, we want to extend the number of such performances to other supermarkets throughout the area, widening our audience base. Clearly, we are mindful of the time demands this can put on members and their families at what is already a busy time of year – hence the decision to reduce the number of care home concerts. The supermarket spots provide a real opportunity to reach into local communities and give something back to the communities that support us. Also, by including a couple of songs from Peter Pan, we can hopefully realise a dividend of some additional ticket sales. Whilst exact dates are still to be confirmed, rehearsals for these spots will be kept to the end of Sunday rehearsals. Grant is also pleased to report that we have again been invited to perform at the Christmas Light switch on events throughout the district beginning in the middle of November.

Our main production, Peter Pan will run for six performances from 3 February to 7 February 2015 in Falkirk Town Hall. We will stage a matinee on Saturday 7th.

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 increase our ticket prices this year – the first rise in a number of years. Tickets will be priced at £10 each – that's an increase of £1 from last year with concessions being offered at £8. Group Discounts at the rate of £7 per ticket will be available on group bookings made by recognised groups. Priority booking for members opened through the Steeple yesterday. The Steeple is not handling requests for Group Discounts. These will be made through the BBW mailbox and will be approved by committee.

In comparison with local companies, our pricing structure remains very competitive when compared with most of the other amateur productions staged locally.

Although tickets are now on sale, 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 30% 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 Pan, both committee and the Production Team are already looking ahead to the next production. Exciting Times.

So after the first eight years will come the next two years. An annual turnaround in members of 25 – 30% ensures that the company remains healthy and vibrant but to capture this dividend we must

both embrace the new members and also encourage their parents to become involved – It really is a BBW family.

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

Grant extended a challenge to all – to adhere to the theme for the year – to become part of the Big Bad Wolf Family - to turn the notion of the BBW family into a reality.

Any Other Business

As no other business was raised Grant thanked everyone for attending and intimated that minutes for the AGM will be issued or made available on the website shortly then declared the meeting closed.

Annual Financial Statements

For the Period ended 30 June 2014

I have reviewed the accounts of Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company for the period ended the 30th June 2014 as set out on pages 2 to 4.

The information for the accounts is based on data provided by the Big Bad Wolf Theatre Company. This data consisted of bank statements and invoice documentation.

In connection with the work prepared no matters have come to my attention which would give reasonable cause to believe that adequate accounting records have not been maintained.

The attached accounts provide a true and fair view of the receipts and payments for the period to 30th June 2014.

Kathryn Higgins ACCA
24th October 2014

Annual Financial Statements
For the Period ended 30 June 2014

Registered Charity Number SCO38677

See separate file with details of accounts