

Big Bad Wolf
Children's Theatre Company
Annual General Meeting – 6 November 2016

Minutes

Apologies

Apologies received from Emma Watkins, Tracey Kildare, Audrey Kelly, Mandy Kennedy, Susan Johnstone, Susan Black, Amanda Thom, Tracey Alston, Claire Hamilton. Steven McMullen

Minutes of AGM for 2015

Last years' AGM was held on Sunday 25th October 2015. Grant asked for confirmation that the Minutes published and available on the website were a true and accurate reflection of this meeting.

Nominator – Jacqui Pearson

Secunder – Michelle Campbell

Welcome from Grant Alexander to the 9th Annual General Meeting of the Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company

On behalf of the committee, Grant welcomed everyone to the 9th Annual General Meeting of the Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company

He introduced himself as current Chairperson for Big Bad Wolf. and also introduced other current Office Bearers and committee members

Vice - Chair – Gordon Gallacher

Treasurer – Steven McMullan

Secretary – Agnes Law

Management Committee Members: Shirley Blackwood, Michelle Campbell, Laura Dawson, Gemma Devlin, Louise Harland, Karen Houston, Evonne Johnston, Tracey Kildare, Claire Stirton, Emma Watkins, Stuart Williamson, 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 formally and personally 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. Grant particularly extended his thanks to our Secretary, Agnes Law who keeps the whole thing ticking over. Grant also extended his personal thanks to Treasurer Steven McMullen, who served his term and is not standing for re-election today. Grant was pleased to report that many ex committee members continue their

involvement with the company in different capacities in areas such as set design and construction, web development and costume and thanked them all.

Report from the Chair

Grant gave his report for the last year and offered the opportunity to ask questions as he went or for them to be put forward during Agenda Item 10.

The year 2015 – 2016 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 All Shook Up 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 4 different venues. The biggest of these was at Falkirk where once again, a sizeable crowd enjoyed the children's performance

As 2015 drew to a close, the company were also invited to make a number of appearances at a few of the local supermarkets and shopping malls. These were said to be very enjoyable events. Performing in these smaller settings, our children received a very warm welcome and given the time of year, 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.

2016 started where 2015 finished off with the company busily preparing for their 9th Annual production – All Shook Up. 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 Peter Pan in 2015, the excellence bar remained high. The choice of All Shook Up as our show once again saw the company take on a challenging large scale production. Building on the reputation gained from the successes of our previous productions, early ticket sales were very encouraging 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 cannot be put on without you.

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 2016/17 season brings with it a number of changes to our Production Team. After our previous Company Director Gavin Orr intimated that he would not be returning this year, the committee moved very quickly to put in place his replacement. We did not have to look too far. Lindsay Dowell who had served as Gavin's assistant for a number of years intimated her interest in stepping up and despite a high level of interest, the committee were unanimous in their choice of appointing Lindsay. As well as bringing a wealth of experience to the role, Lindsay's appointment also secures continuity - with most of the members knowing Lindsay as well as Lindsay knowing the members. At this point Grant thanked to Gavin. Gavin served this company well. Having been the Company Director from the outset Gavin skilfully steered the company through 9 full scale productions. However, with the birth of his daughter Amelie and his return to studying for a Masters Degree something had to give so after much soul searching, Gavin decided the time was right to hand over the baton to someone else. Grant formally thanked Gavin for his endeavours in helping to build the reputation of the company that it enjoys today. So with the appointment of Lindsay, Lindsay decided to bring in Emma Wilson as her assistant. Grant was pleased to say that Jonny Graham once again returns as our Musical Director and was delighted to confirm that Jonny nominated his maw Sheena Graham as his Musical Associate. To choreography – and once again we have some new faces here. After 4 years as our choreographer, Sheila Mackie and her daughter Romy decided to concentrate their energies on running Sheila's successful NRG Dance School. Suffice to say that our last few productions were all the better for Sheila's choreography and for this we extend our thanks. Our choreography team this year is headed up by Nadine McKenzie Judge from the McKechnie School of Dance. As a really busy person, the company were fortunate to secure Nadine's services. As her assistant, Nadine has brought in one of our own former members Emma Watkins. Emma has been involved with the company since the outset so we look forward to her working with the company in her new role. We are fortunate in having available to us such a strong and talented team working with us during 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.

Grant emphasised that 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, if there is any constructive feedback you want to provide, please speak to any of the committee members.

Headlines

Grant highlighted, 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 – After months of uncertainty surrounding our workshop premises in Camelon, and in order to regain some stability with regards to our set building function, the committee took the decision earlier this year to relocate our workshop facility to Smith Street in Bainsford. There were a number of factors that informed this decision: there were the emerging British Waterways plans to further develop the area along the canal bank in Camelon and the associated redevelopment of the workshop site: there were a number of health and safety

concerns and there was the likely increase in rental costs for the premises. All in all, in light of these factors, the decision to relocate was one that had to be made. So, having done so in September, the workshop team are now hard at work pulling the set together for Pinocchio.

Production Team: We continue to hold regular meetings with members of the Production Team to assist with communication and decision making. This year, as well as moving forward with our production of Pinocchio, we are already looking ahead to our next production. This two year planning cycle is now well established within the company and is the result of good collaborative working with the Production Team. The committee expects to be in a position to announce our 2018 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 the option of on line purchasing for our tickets as well as the use of social media as an enhancement to 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 All Shook Up, 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, former 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, former 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.

Auditions

Grant then spoke briefly about two sets of recent auditions:

In August, 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 23. This keeps our numbers below 80 – the maximum number we would take.

The second set of auditions was the casting of Pinocchio. 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 now confident enough to put 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 are already well into rehearsals for next year's 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

There have been several fundraising activities over the year including the members singing in the Howgate, Tesco Redding, Glebe Street and The Claremont. They will not perform in Glebe Street for Scarlet Ribbons this year as it was felt this would not be of benefit to the company. There will be performances in Tesco Redding, Howgate and The Falkirk Wheel. Fiona will put up lists so members can sign up to take part but they do not need to attend every extra performance. Fiona will email out the lists when they are almost full so the parents will know what their kids have signed up for. Margaret has arranged a Race Night for 3 December and tickets will be £4 per adult and £2 per child. This is a family event.

Grant then said that 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. He asked if any parent has any concerns or even ideas to help improve things it is important that they raise them appropriately. He encouraged parents to approach any member of the committee to discuss any concerns that they may have and also invited them to attend a committee meeting to air those concerns should they wish to do so.

Agenda Item 5 – Treasurer's Report

Attached Separately

Agenda Item 6 – Secretary's Report

Agnes started by thanking everyone for the privilege of again allowing her to hold the post of Secretary of Big Bad Wolf Children's Theatre Company. She said it really is an honour to be associated with such a fabulous company. She thanked Grant for always being there and also the committee for all their hard work and support.

Agnes said that our production of All Shook Up totally blew her away this year - an amazing production with so much talent, both on and off the stage, who pulled this whole show together. She thanked everyone who helped in any way to get the show on the road. Agnes's family were delighted to again present the Mary Watkins Memorial trophy to the member gaining the most points in all things important to Mary including attendance at rehearsals and events. This year's worthy winner was Lisa Keeley.

Agnes was also delighted to be invited to the Royal Garden Party in July this year through Big Bad Wolf, even though there were a couple of hiccups along the way including her name being spelt incorrectly on the invitation which required it to be sent back to Buckingham Palace for a quick replacement, and her outfit only arriving at 6pm the night before the event. She said it was such a fabulous, memorable day and thanked everyone so much for the opportunity.

Agnes emphasised that we require a minimum amount of supervision at rehearsals so parent rota is an absolute must and stated the parents continued support is very much appreciated. The duties include registration at the start of rehearsal as well as setting up and selling the tuck shop among other things but most important is making sure members keep as quiet as possible during rehearsals and that they do not leave anything behind at the end, especially their words. Agnes prints enough words for everyone plus a few extra but when they're gone, they're gone. Members should take a folder to put their words in and learn them for the following rehearsals. She asked the parents to please make sure they have all the words they need and they bring them each week. Christmas words should be put in a separate folder and wrapped in Christmas paper to look like a Carol singing book for light switch on's etc. but nothing too ornate please. Agnes asked that parents please remember not to drop members off any earlier than 10 minutes before start time of rehearsal as there is no supervision available for them.

She said our fabulous Costume Team have been working hard to pull together information for costumes and asked that if you have not spoken with them please see them today - they will be in the foyer from 4pm. Lynn is not available next week so please try to catch up with her today.

Agnes apologised for sounding like a broken record again by asking if all money can be put in envelopes when you hand it in but it makes life so much easier as she doesn't bring a supply of envelopes with her so please make sure you have one or we can't accept your money.

She then touched on show week and asked parents to please, please put your name down to help saying it is a fantastic experience and we can't run the show without you. She also asked that parents make sure all their family and friends know that they are not, under any circumstances allowed to take any photos or videos whatsoever during rehearsals or any of the shows. There are very strict rules relating to child protection and taking photos/videos of children without permission as it is a criminal offence. She was extremely disappointed to see unofficial photos taken during All Shook Up appear on Facebook. We as a Company have written permission from all our members' parents/guardians to take and use photos for Big Bad Wolf but they must be officially on behalf of Big Bad Wolf.

Agnes finished by thanking everyone for all their patience and support. She can only send out the rehearsal call when she receives it from the Production Team. She doesn't decide the call, they do. Agnes will always try to respond to texts or emails as soon as she possibly can but, as you are aware, we are all volunteers. She also has a full time job and this is not it so she asked parents to please bear with her.

Agenda Item 7 - Constitution Changes

Any proposed changes to the constitution are required to be raised to the committee and considered and voted on at a general meeting. Grant reported that there were no changes proposed this year.

Agenda Item 8 - Plans for 2016/17

This brought Grant to the coming year for BBW. We have another busy and exciting year ahead!

As already reported, last Christmas we undertook carol singing in a number of local supermarkets. In light of the success, this Christmas, we want to repeat the number of such performances in supermarkets throughout the area, continuing to widen 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. 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 Pinocchio, we can hopefully realise a dividend of some additional ticket sales. Grant was also pleased to report that we have again been invited to perform at the Christmas Light switch on events throughout the district beginning in November. The dates for these events have already been issued. Rehearsals for these spots will be kept to the end of Sunday rehearsals.

Our main production, Pinocchio will run for six performances from 31 January to 4 February in Falkirk Town Hall. We will stage a matinee on Saturday 4th.

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, we have taken the decision to increase our ticket prices this year – the first rise in three years. Tickets will be priced at £12 each with concessions being offered at £10. There is also an Early Bird offer of £10 per ticket for Tuesday and Wednesday evening performances until the end of November.

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. Sheets are posted at rehearsals where family members can sign up for involvement during show week. Please believe me when I say that it really is enjoyable.

This is your company so we need you to be involved. Everyone has a gift – don't be surprised if over the next few weeks you are approached by Shirley, Emma, Laura or Hilary 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 Pinocchio, both committee and the Production Team are already looking ahead to the next production.

As we move in to our second decade as a company, these are exciting times. 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. Grant challenged all parents to become involved – encourage others to become involved.

Agenda Item 9 - Election of New Management Committee Members

Pass to Gordon Gallacher to take us through the election of new members

All Management committee members (including Office Bearers) serve for a period of 2 years. Our constitution states:

"The maximum number of members of the management committee shall be 15 with a variance of 2 at the discretion of the management committee."

At the moment we have 16 members - 7 of whom have reached the end of their two year term. This leaves 9 sitting members. This means that there are up to a maximum of 6 places to be filled to return the complement to the maximum of 15. Of the 7 members who have reached the end of their term, 6 have intimated their intention to stand for re-election. In addition, following the call for nominees, a further 2 have put themselves forward for election.

So in terms of the committee for 2016/2017:

The 9 existing Members who have 1 year remaining on their term of service are:

Grant Alexander

Shirley Blackwood

Michelle Campbell

Gordon Gallacher

Louise Harland

Karen Houston

Evonne Johnston

Emma Watkins

Fiona Young

As previously intimated, one existing Member has served their term of office and is not seeking re-election. Steven McMullan.

Our 6 nominees to be re-elected/standing for re-election are:

Laura Dawson

Gemma Devlin

Tracey Kildare

Agnes Law

Claire Stirton

Stuart Williamson

Our 2 New Nominations to Committee are

Susan Johnstone

Mandy Kennedy

So these are the 8 nominees to be considered for the 6 places.

If I can remind you that the constitution states:

"The maximum number of members of the management committee shall be 15 with a variance of 2 at the discretion of the management committee."

As was said earlier on, where people have put themselves forward to make a contribution, they should be actively welcomed and supported to do so. With this in mind - as we have 8 nominees and 6 places, then the existing committee has the discretion to approve the election of all 8 nominees without the need for a vote. Grant proposed that this discretion is applied and that all 8 nominees are considered for election.

However we still need to formally elect these nominees on to committee

Nominator : Evonne Johnston

Secunder: Michelle Campbell

Grant thanked everyone and stated that we now have a committee comprised of 17 members. This concludes the election of the new committee.

Agenda Item 10 – Any Other Business

Allison Bell asked if tickets could be sold at event BBW attends. Agnes said we are looking into this and they may possibly be on sale when we attend The Wheel. Grant said this may depend on the logistics and that we are possibly looking at taking on responsibility of selling all the tickets ourselves next year.

Grant, again, thanked everyone very much for attending and said minutes for the AGM will be made available on the website shortly.

He then declared the meeting closed.