



MINUTES

GTG Annual General Meeting

Monday 4th September 2023

The Jack Phillips Godalming

1. Welcome: GTG Chair, Denise Hodgkiss welcomed those present thanking them for attending. Apologies were received from Erin Taylor

2.a) **Minutes of the last meeting on 6th September 2022** were approved and accepted . Proposed by Nikki Gooding and seconded by Carol Gallacher, they were unanimously accepted.

There were no matters arising.

3. Financial Report – Graham Seddon gave his treasurer’s report online and updated those present with the current situation. A full financial report is attached but briefly, over the current year, in which there had been three productions, income had been £71,000. With current reserves of £60,000 the policy is to continue having a good financial buffer so that GTG can put on good quality shows and be able to survive unexpected events like Covid. Year-round planning is much easier with the added benefit of the regular income from members and supporters and the plan for the 2023-24 season has the same aim of getting to a breakeven point. GTG continues to pay all our running costs, insurances and the rent on Marsh Farm.

David Dray proposed accepting the accounts and Peter Flew seconded. These were accepted unanimously.

4. Chair’s Report (full report attached)

Denise thanked everyone for coming to the AGM and for the invaluable support of group and audience members in the past year, of friends and patrons and of the organisations who regularly advertise in GTG programmes.

She mentioned the increasing difficulty of organising social events and thanked Jenny and Graham, Ben and Ellie for their very successful contributions. She added that if social events are wanted, members should let the committee know what they would like and then support the events and she urged anyone with an idea they wished to develop to come forward.

Denise also welcomed initiatives to promote GTG more widely and gave as an example the partnership of Steve Alais and Anne Turner who performed at Godalming Library. GTG also has an increasing presence in Godalming through town days, carnival, membership of

Godalming's Chamber of Commerce as well as our strong links with Charterhouse and Prior's Field.

She said how exciting it will be to bring our production of Joseph right into the middle of town in April.

A key focus for this season was to bring new people into the production side of GTG – she welcomed Matthew Lloyd Davies and Dan Bundy as new directors, Lizzie Hales and Emily Owen on the creative side and Aeden King and Graham Johnson on the technical team. She felt that this brought a real sense of energy and positivity to the shows.

It is committee policy to have new blood in all areas of GTG. Anyone with skills to offer should please fill in the online form on the GTG website.

Denise congratulated and thanked everyone involved in creating the hugely successful shows of the past year, calling it a 'fantastic season', with an intriguingly different Autumn play, a sellout pantomime and the musical **Kipps – The New Half a Sixpence**, *'a riot of colour, energy and strong performances'*

GTG looks forward to an equally exciting 2023-24, with the comedy **Ladies' Day** directed by Mary Logan in the Autumn, **Aladdin** the pantomime directed by Dan Bundy as the Christmas treat and the well-loved **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat** directed by Keith Thomas in April. Denise reminded everyone that the box office is already open for the play and the panto and that audition dates are coming up soon for **Joseph**.

Finally she thanked the committee for all their work behind the scenes and special thanks to Christina Bengston who has just stepped down from committee.

5. GYTG Report

Mad Gibb reported that the youth group continues to go from strength to strength. This year members performed in **Dick Whittington** and **Kipps**, and will also be appearing in **Ladies' Day**, **Aladdin** and **Joseph**. As one group of youngsters matures and heads off to further education, so the younger ones move up leaving room for new ones to join. GYTG limits number to 20 maximum ensuring they can really benefit from the activities on offer each week plus the special workshops organised for them. Mad asked that anyone who felt they could offer a special teaching session come and speak to her or David

6. Election of committee officers

All current committee members are willing to stand again. Chris East was proposed by Mad Gibb and seconded by Keith Thomas. Janet Goodwin volunteered to stand during the meeting. As there were two spaces available on the committee both were duly elected and no ballot was required.

Denise confirmed that she will be standing down as chair at the end of 2024. She said that Peter Flew would co-chair with her for the year with the aim of standing for election as chair at next year's AGM.

7. There was no AOB and the meeting ended at 9.30pm

Chair and committee's report – an opportunity to appreciate, celebrate and reflect on GTG's season 2022/3.

Free time is precious, so I'm proud that our full and temporary membership and those following on our mailing lists choose to be a part of the GTG community. A special thank you to the full members, Friends and patrons whose regular financial contributions give us the security and confidence to keep going with ever imaginative and creative productions in a climate of ever increasing costs.

We're a sociable lot, but planning social events is an uphill battle – even though it's always enjoyable when they happen! Thanks go to Ben and Ellie Cahill-Nicholls who hosted GTG's Piano Bar social event in October. This was a lovely evening enjoyed by all who attended - despite lower numbers than the previous year.

The Beer, BBQ and Bowls evening was also great fun. Thank you Jenny and Graham Seddon for organising and Holloway Bowls club for their training and making us feel so welcome. From this event we were able to donate a sum of money to one of our past members Nell Rayner to help with producing her own play at a professional venue. I am proud to say it received ***** reviews. Nell has just graduated from Central and we wish her luck with all her new endeavours.

The town events such as the carnival and Christmas lights switch on can also be seen as a chance to get together, but not always supported in great numbers.

Is there anyone, or a group, of you socialites out there who might like to step up and take on the challenge of promoting this side of GTG life away from the stage! Social Sec anyone?

As a spin off from this, there can be opportunities for people to think outside the box , away from the three major shows, and at the same time promote, and be supported by GTG. One such example is the partnership of Steve Alais and Anne Turner. As a quid pro quo with Godalming Library we have been able to secure a spot to advertise our shows in the library and Steve and Ann made an entertaining and highly informative presentation to one of their poetry meetings with the title 'Are song lyrics poetry?' They are open to bookings but have already been approached to do more and present something at the Godalming museum! Thanks so much!

So, if anyone else feels they have an idea they wish to develop – please let us know!

Members/Friends/Patrons: – Joy Barnham

We currently have 54 members and 42 friends/patrons.

Sadly, we had to say goodbye to Anne-Marie Greenway who many of us knew from her directing days before she emigrated to Australia. She always kept in close contact and remained a Friend right to the end. We also lost one of our patrons in March, Margery (Peggy) Darnton – for many years the proprietor of Margery’s Hair Salon in Church St. She was a loyal supporter of the group and the family kindly asked for any donations from her funeral to be made to GTG. We are extremely grateful and will certainly put the money to good use in her memory.

The generosity of these people is a reflection of just how highly they regard GTG and appreciate the contribution it makes to the community. They often bring many guests along and help circulate information about our productions.

I would also like to thank the companies/organisations who regularly advertise in our programmes. This keeps them affordable with no compromise on quality.

A focus for this season was to try to bring new people into the production side of GTG. How wonderful then that we welcomed Matthew Lloyd-Davies as director for The Real Inspector Hound and Dan Bundy who will direct this year’s pantomime with Lizzie Hales as MD and Emily Owen as choreographer. Aeden King, Eddie and Polly’s daughter took on the lighting board, Graham Johnson worked on sound, Jan Duckett assisted with costumes and Tim Henneker-Parker compiled and created our programmes. Tim was rewarded for his labours as NODA’s winner of the SE Region for the Dick Whittington programme. Congratulations. Thank you everyone. Your presence has injected into GTG a real sense of energy and positivity – good to have you all on board.

This was as a result of our call out and although we couldn’t use everyone this season, we will do our best to offer opportunities in future projects. If you didn’t respond first time around but are tempted – do let us know.

What is so exciting is that all of the names mentioned above are people who are not committee members. You don’t have to be to get involved! Joy Barnham, Carol Gallacher, Eddie King, Paul Furlong, Sue Sillett are just a few who do so much for the group and our thanks go to them for their continuing contribution. So, if you think you have skills to add to this list be it admin, marketing, web design, art, sewing..... please let us know – no matter how small eg could you be in charge of putting up and taking down of banners in the town. You see – small but important!

I think this season was my 5th as Chair and throughout this time it’s not always been a smooth ride - a bloomin’ pandemic and another panto in town spring to mind! But the challenges generated by the bumps in the road have only served to make GTG more imaginative in its thinking and creative in its actions. We don’t always get it right but blimey we try hard!

A case in point is bringing GTG right into the middle of Godalming with its production of Joseph in April. What an opportunity this is for us to showcase what we do capitalizing further on our increasing presence through town days, carnival, membership of Godalming’s Chamber of Commerce as well as our strong links with Charterhouse and

Prior's Field schools. And exciting news is that GTG Panto Aladdin have been asked to switch on the Christmas lights this year. Thank you, Town Council – another recognition of our place in the life of the local community.

Publicity/social media – Mad Gibb

Publicity is key: if we don't continue to maintain and grow audience numbers we cannot finance shows and who wants to rehearse for months and play to an empty house?

GTG continues to cover all avenues to reach members and audiences, engaging with the local public at live events in the town and ensuring we reach out through social media to all age groups. We have a key core of members and audience who share our messages on social media and an even smaller number who offer to assist at town events. It would be great to see more support in all these areas. We are always looking for outgoing personalities to help promote the group in all areas of marketing.

Do come forward if you can help.

GYTG – Mad Gibb

Our youth group continues to go from strength to strength.

This year we have seen GYTG-ers in Dick Whittington and Kipps, and we'll see them in Ladies' Day, Aladdin and Joseph. As one batch of youngsters matures and heads off to further education, so the younger ones move up leaving room for new ones to join.

Website – Peter Flew

A great number of programmes from past-shows have been uploaded. If you have a programme which isn't there, please let us know and we will photograph and upload it.

And if you have any snippets of info/ news regarding shows, past members, current members etc – do let us know – we love to hear from you.

Season 2022/2023

What a fantastic season we have enjoyed. The Autumn play, The Real Inspector Hound, directed by Matthew Lloyd-Davies was an intriguing piece of theatre, handled so expertly and executed brilliantly.

Dick Whittington, the Christmas pantomime, expertly written by our very own Jenny Seddon and directed by Ellie Cahill-Nicholls was another sell-out show and quite rightly so. Top quality entertainment for all the family – a triumph.

This was followed by Kipps, The Half a Sixpence Musical directed by David Dray. Again a riot of colour, energy and strong performances.

Congratulations to all – what a season!

We continue to go from strength to strength thanks to the people already mentioned and many more - including our wonderful audiences: there would be no point in doing any of this without your support.

Season 2023/2024

And so to next year:

The first production is the very British comedy, Ladies Day, directed by Mary Logan @ Prior's Field School. I'm in this one so I can vouch for what is going to be a highly entertaining evening. Four girls from a Hull fish factory going to Royal Ascot for the day – of course it will be mayhem! Mary is known for her 'thinking outside of the box' approach to comedy and is full of original ideas which she can't wait to get onto the stage. Sometimes our Autumn box office sales can struggle for all sorts of reasons (damn that strictly Saturday night show!) and we/I would be absolutely thrilled if we could sell it out!!!!!! So, **PLEASE book tickets**, I can promise, you won't be disappointed – come and 'ave a 'reet good laff'

Aladdin, directed by Dan Bundy is to be our Christmas treat @ The Ben Travers Theatre, Charterhouse. It's wonderful that for many of you, coming to our panto has become one of your Christmas traditions – without breaking the bank! Community panto is immediate, familiar, in close proximity with the audience – the children even get to meet with their favourites for a photo op at the end! And because of the success we had with it last year, we are once again putting on a toddler friendly, semi-relaxed performance. It worked so well – we could see that parents were relaxed, never mind the children! My 4 grandchildren loved it.

Do take note, the panto sells out quickly, especially matinees – so to avoid disappointment – buy those tickets early.

And our final production is to be that well-known, well-loved musical, Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat, directed by Keith Thomas to be performed at the Godalming Baptist Church, Queen St. It has been a long time since we performed a production in the town and we're grabbing this opportunity to widen our GTG community even further. A brand new setting means a brand new approach to direction, set, lighting, live band and a whole new experience for both actors and audiences. I know the creative team is excited about this adventure and can't wait to get going. Again, this should prove to be very popular.

The box office is already open for the play and the panto. And audition dates coming up soon for Joseph. So keep an eye out on the website www.gtguk.com and social media not to miss out on this bumper year.

I must say thank you on your behalf to the committee for all the work they do literally behind the scenes! And a special thank you to Christina Bengston who has stepped down now but who was a real asset: bringing new perspectives to the table.

Thank you one and all – and as you can see - it's clear 'We can do this together!'

Denise Hodgkiss chair