

**THE TAUNTON THESPIANS**

Registered Charity No. 1189940

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**1st SEPTEMBER 2022 to 31st AUGUST 2023**

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## THE TAUNTON THESPIANS

### Chairman's Report to the AGM of Taunton Thespians 9/10/2023

When we sat here 12 months ago we elected a full 11-person committee for the first time in a while. I think that, in my report for that AGM, I commented about how committees can be quite fluid in nature, and so it was – to a degree – this year. Ray Court took on Productions last year, but stepped back from it in February. I've been managing the role since that point. I'd like to thank Ray and the other nine committee members for all of the considerable amount of work they've done over the last year. Now I think that it's my turn to step down and make way for someone else. When times like this come about there are, inevitably, gaps that open up. Thankfully, we are in a position of having nominees for all roles except publicity, but publicity is obviously a very important function and so I'm mentioning it now in the hope that people here can consider whether it is something they feel that they can contribute and put themselves forward for when it comes to the election of the committee.

One of the first things I'd like to talk about is something about which I'm sure some of you have some questions. We were very fortunate to receive a generous bequest from our late President, John Meikle. After a consultation period a recommendation report was submitted by a group headed by VP Ron Roberts, which proposed using the bequest to make significant improvements to the Green Room. The committee agreed with the suggestions, but wanted to go further in remodelling the whole west side of the building, something we realised would require very substantial *additional funding* but which we felt was a worthwhile ambition, given that it would compliment the Green Room modifications. To further these aims we identified that work would have to be carried out in a particular sequence so that earlier work was not damaged by, or caused hinderance to, later work. One of the immediate requirements involved the movement of some of the internal walls. Nothing affecting the structural integrity of the building, but an it of the show, and I was very proud of what director Rachel Buttell was able to mould that into at the Brewhouse last November. ly sensible, both in terms of price and, especially, timescale. It was not for the want of trying but was, frequently, for the want of builders who would actually show up at an agreed time. After a sustained period of this kind of experience we have now decided to modify our ambitions and work on each of the areas involved: Green Room, toilets and kitchen, separately. I'm sorry that we haven't been able to deliver what we had originally hoped, but that is not to say that our revised plans will give you anything less than substantial improvements over the existing arrangements. Tackling each area separately means that one is no longer dependent upon the other and so we have now been able to actually progress some of the individual elements, starting with the suspended ceiling in the Green Room which, I'm told, is scheduled for later this year. I'll be watching to see how this plays out.

I do, however, feel very lucky to be able to say, in my final report, that ALL of our productions over the last year have made it into the black, have made a surplus, even if, in one case, it is by the narrowest of margins. Well in advance of every production we set out a genre pattern to cover the period ahead. This is to ensure that we never become trapped in a position whereby we offer the same type of fare to our audiences over and over again and that we keep flexing our dramatic muscles. The genre for last autumn was set as 'drama'. Now drama is never an easy sell, nor is it easy to find the right play. We have to find something worthy, not only that the director actually wants to direct, but also that suits our audience and our abilities. We read quite a few dramas in the lead up to that one, but *none quite fitted the bill until we read Pride and Prejudice, and then our way forward was clear.* The launch event for that play had a very pleasing response in terms of new, young actors who wanted to be a part of the show, and I was very proud of what director Rachel Buttell was able to mould that into at the Brewhouse last November.

Comedy, on the other hand, is not only a Thespian strength, it is also a particular forte for Ray Court, so that, when we decided upon comedy for our spring show at the Tacchi Morris, Ray was an obvious choice for director. Ray's preference for the Derek Benfield script *Flying Feathers* is perhaps not so surprising when one realises how many times he's put it forward for the summer play readings. Play readings ahead of play selection is a very useful tool, especially for comedy, where readers live reactions to scripts whilst reading them is an excellent indicator, and the feedback for *Flying Feathers* confirmed it for our choice. The further confirmation of the audience reactions during the run both validated the method of choice and filled Ray's wish of just wanting to make people laugh.

When Bob Corwin told me that he wanted to produce a play about the gay scene in 1950s New Orleans I wasn't quite sure what to make of it. Bob, however, was quite sure, and certain that this was what he wanted to take to the County Drama Festival in 2023. As producer, I watched as this one-act play took shape under his direction, until I too was convinced that this was a powerful piece of drama. I still think that we produced something worthy of the County Shield that evening, and so I suppose that I will just have to agree to disagree with that particular adjudicator.

The Taunton Thespian summer tour has become a firm staple of our programme with twenty tours completed prior to this season. *Much Ado About Nothing* became our 21st tour, our 10th Shakespeare tour and Michael Gilbert's 5th stint at tour direction. It is a substantial undertaking. Everything about it is substantial, from the set – which has to survive being unloaded, assembled, disassembled and reloaded at least 10 times – to the dizzying number and complexity of the costumes and the sheer mileage covered by all concerned. The weather, as we found a couple of times this year, can also have its say. In the event we were forced inside only twice, although there were other close candidates for moving indoors. In the end well over 700 people saw a superb display of acting at its finest.

It is very easy for me to stand here and say that everything we've done this year has been great, but I do genuinely mean everything that I've said. What adds to those words are the multiple awards nominations we've had for each of our main productions – every single one. A total of 16 nominations for the Phoebe Rees awards and four nominations for the Rose Bowl awards tells me that we are producing quality theatre and presenting not only outstanding actors but top drawer backstage contributions across a range of roles and functions. For any awards that we win, well, that's icing on the cake. The fact that good performances or contributions have been acknowledged by nomination should alone tell us we are making good choices. The very best of luck to all those concerned.

But I've always seen this society as far more than a 'machine' for churning out productions. It doesn't seem to matter whether we're doing something social, but practical, like a play reading, or something just for fun, like the treasure hunt and barbecue but people turn up, in numbers, for the events we put on, and there has been no shortage of those in the last year. Since the last AGM we have held 16 play readings, the Christmas Ding Dong, a 'lyrical slam' (and I do hope that there will be another), Fab Feb Frolics, an Royal Shakespeare Company (no less) acting workshop, a skittle evening, a treasure hunt and barbecue, a directing workshop and an in-house performance. We've also taken part in the Taunton Carnival and the 10 Parishes Festival. I love also that visitors, many of whom subsequently decide to join us, consistently talk about how friendly and welcoming the society is.

To all of you I say – please keep this up. I'm extremely proud of everything we've done this year.

Thank you

**THE TAUNTON THESPIANS**  
**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**  
**TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE TAUNTON THESPIANS**

I report on the Financial Statements of the charity The Taunton Thespians (Charity No. 800217) for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023, which are set out on pages 5 to 8.

**Respective Responsibilities of General Committee and Examiner**

The charity's committee are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's committee consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act"), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- ♦ examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- ♦ to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- ♦ to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of Independent Examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as members of the General Committee concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:-

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
  - ♦ to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - ♦ to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date: 2nd October 2023

Edward Coton LTCL AFA/MIPA  
TaxAssist Accountants  
24 Bridge Street  
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TA1 1UB

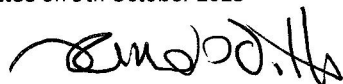
**THE TAUNTON THESPIANS**  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2023</u> 12 Months £                  £	<u>2022</u> 12 Months £                  £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>2</b>	218,441	86,308
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash at Bank - Treasurers Current Account		10,422	5,433
- Business Bank Interest Account		19,719	29,618
- John Meikle Legacy Account		10,050	0
- PayPal Wallet		48	410
- Redwood Account		27,993	27,231
Petty Cash held		106	105
Bar stocks at cost		67	179
<b>Prepayments</b>			
Future Shows		3,967	2,459
<b>Accrued Income</b>			
Prepaid Subscriptions		-408	-462
Prepaid donations		-49	-53
Future Shows		0	-36
		<u>71,916</u>	<u>64,883</u>
<b>Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year</b>			
Fyne Court 1001 Venue		-410	-300
Independent Examiner		-263	-250
<b>Debtors</b>			
NT MAAN Fyne Court Ticket Sales		<u>450</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		71,694	64,333
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u>290,135</u>	<u>150,641</u>
<b>Funds (all unrestricted)</b>	<b>3</b>		
General Reserve		71,694	64,333
Capital Reserve		218,441	86,308
Development Fund		0	0
		<u>290,135</u>	<u>150,641</u>

Approved by the General Committee on 9th October 2023

and signed on their behalf by:-

Sue Meredith - Secretary



Robert Smith - Treasurer



The notes on pages 7 and 8 form part of these Accounts.

**THE TAUNTON THESPIANS**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

	2023 12 Months	2022 12 Months
	£	£
<b>Incoming Resources</b>		
Income from stage productions	30,331	25,121
Subscriptions	951	882
Interest received	914	234
Club activities	1,014	719
Wardrobe & Equipment Hire	430	183
Donations	109	74
Letting Income	5,993	5,705
Gift Aid Received	129	120
Government Covid grants		2,667
Theatre Tax Relief	2,722	
Other (John Meikle bequest)		10,000
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>42,592</b>	<b>45,704</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>		
Expenditure on stage productions	25,732	28,210
Club activities	1,148	704
Cost of premises	463	659
- Rates and water		
- Repairs and improvements	2,355	2,130
- Safety and security	1,055	260
- Heat and light	1,051	742
- Insurance	1,111	1,005
Warden's Honorarium	300	300
Postage, stationery, advertising and telephone	-4	5
Subscriptions and donations	843	517
Sundry expenses	410	515
Marketing	74	239
Clothing sales	-43	-3
Independent Examiners Fee	263	250
Other Professional Fees (re Theatre Tax Relief)	408	0
Depreciation	383	3,339
PayPal Charges	46	31
Sumup Charges	20	25
Write-offs	0	0
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>35,614</b>	<b>38,929</b>
<b>Net Ingoing/(Outgoing) Resources</b>	<b>6,978</b>	<b>6,775</b>
Accumulated Funds Brought Forward	150,641	143,866
Revaluation of Freehold Land & Buildings	132,516	0
<b>Accumulated Funds Carried Forward</b>	<b>290,135</b>	<b>150,641</b>

**THE TAUNTON THESPIANS**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**General**

These Accounts have been prepared under the historic cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of investments, and in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Charities Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities".

**Fixed Assets**

Individual fixed assets costing £80 or more are capitalised at cost.

Depreciation is provided at the following rates, based on the estimated useful life of the fixed assets and their anticipated residual value:-

Freehold land and buildings	2% straight line to 31/08/22
<b>From 2022-23 financial year changed to revaluation on recommendation of independent examiner.</b>	
Technical equipment	10% reducing balance
Office equipment	10% reducing balance

**2. Fixed Assets**

	<b><u>Freehold</u></b>			
	<b><u>Land &amp;</u></b>	<b><u>Technical</u></b>	<b><u>Office</u></b>	
	<b><u>Buildings</u></b>	<b><u>Equipment</u></b>	<b><u>Equipment</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b><u>Cost</u></b>				
At 31 August 2022	145,716	9,483	59	155,258
Additions	0	0	0	0
Revaluation	69,284	0	0	69,284
Write-offs	0	0	0	0
At 31 August 2022	<u>215,000</u>	<u>9,483</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>224,542</u>
<b><u>Depreciation</u></b>				
At 31 August 2022	63,231	5,659	59	68,949
Charge for the year	-63,231	383	0	-62,848
At 31 August 2023	<u>0</u>	<u>6,042</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>6,101</u>
<b><u>Net Book Value</u></b>				
At 31 August 2023 *	<u>215,000</u>	<u>3,441</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>218,441</u>
At 31 August 2022	<u>82,484</u>	<u>3,824</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>86,309</u>

\* Initial cost minus total depreciation shows rounding error of £1



**THE TAUNTON THESPIANS**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

**3. Funds (all unrestricted)**

	<b><u>General</u></b>	<b><u>Capital</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
	<b><u>Reserve</u></b>	<b><u>Reserve</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>
	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>	<b><u>£</u></b>
At 1 September 2022	64,333	86,308	150,641
Transfers	0	0	0
Net ingoing/(outgoings) for the year	6,978	0	6,978
Adjustments - Depreciation	383	-383	0
Adjustments - Revaluation	0	132,516	132,516
At 31 August 2023	71,694	218,441	290,135

The Capital Reserve represents profits which have accrued to the charity from the past sales of freehold land and buildings of £116,943 and from a bequest from a former member of £2,000. This was reduced by £19,174 in 2013 and was subsequently reduced each year to reflect the amount of tangible fixed assets after depreciaton.

**From the 2022-23 financial year, the land and buildings have been valued on a revaluation basis.**

The General Reserve now shows, fairly, the true amount of Current Assets, including the John Meikle bequest of £10,000.

