

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT SHAKESPEARE AT THE GEORGE 2022

Although it all rather seems a lifetime ago now, it is correct and fitting that I begin this report, on behalf of everyone associated with Shakespeare at The George, whether Trustee, actor, front or back of stage or, of course, audience, in expressing our great sadness for the loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Most especially, for a Company that specialises in the works of William Shakespeare we welcome King Charles III and thank him for quoting from the Bard in his first address to us all. Please keep it coming.

And so to business. And I am glad to say, yes, exactly that – we are back in business! Shakespeare at The George has presented one production this year, back to our old familiar standards of stage and audience, and what a fine return it has been in the shape of Steph Hamer's production of Romeo and Juliet. We have done our bit, put it up there in lights and I am delighted and immensely grateful to say that our audience has done their bit as well, allowing us to play to largely sold-out audiences. Hip Hip Hoorah!

And did we go lightly into the Post-Covid relaunch? We certainly did not. I have nothing but admiration for a director who has a clear vision with which they are able to inspire not only their cast but the whole audience as well. This rock and roll Romeo and Juliet may have given a nod towards West Side Story, but was very much a vision in its own right, allowing us to see the world in which the play existed with very different eyes and allowing us to mould the two star-crossed lovers in a very different way. To begin a new season on a bit of a risk shows that our Company is not short of boldness and self-confidence. It paid off magnificently and may I wish Steph Hamer as Director and Reuben Milne as her Assistant, full congratulations. I would also like to mention that with this production we welcomed a number of new actors, including of course our Juliet. This is everything that we are about, especially as, to a septuagenarian, they all seem so young! Thank goodness we also welcomed one new member who is even older than I am. It gives me hope. I would normally not steal our Treasurer's thunder by commenting on the financial side of the production but as he is not able to be with us tonight, I must celebrate the fact that a profit of over £13,000 for this production is a measure of its worth and has now restored our finances with a necessary cushion against a rainy day. Smiles all round!

Whilst acknowledging the artistic success of Romeo & Juliet I would also like to take a moment to acknowledge the hard work elsewhere connected to this production. May I begin with the creation of our stage and theatre in The George Courtyard. This is the first time we have managed the full staging since the days when Kevin Connor would manage this for us with all of his experience and sacrifice of time. Last year the staging had been minimalistic so could only be considered a trial run. This year required a complete rethink plus a lot of extra help. The result was that all was there in perfect order and in perfect time. This was very much a team effort and I would like to thank all involved but in particular of course Ian Favell and Perry Incledon-Weber and not forgetting additional help from Ron Meadows.

Also this year we needed to have a bit of a rethink about our Front-of-House, an essential operation for the smooth running of each performance and the image we present to our public. The wonderful Karen James has retired from her management of Front-of-House, which has now been placed under the running of the Trustees, with James Barwise taking this as his area of authority. Once again I am happy to report that we have transitioned from the previous method of doing things to a new model with seamless efficiency. My thanks goes to James for supervising this and to all Front-of-House volunteers, which in this case happens to include me! Well done, Richard! That's very kind of you Richard, but please just get on with the report. Sorry...

Elsewhere, before his retirement, Ian Favell continued hugely valuable work in managing and improving Hathaway House, our headquarters. This, sadly was not without incident, as we were unfortunately broken into, with doors smashed but fortunately nothing stolen. This was a real headache for Ian and all involved, and I am so sorry for this extra work, but we are kind of back to normal now and hopefully there will be no repeat of this mindless vandalism.

Moving on, we must acknowledge with huge gratitude our very friendly and co-operative relationship with the Huntingdon Town Council and in particular the extremely generous support given by the garden department in mounting another wonderful display to advertise Romeo & Juliet at the Sevastopol cannon site. Further thank-yous are due to Rob Barton for not only his magnificent programme work, but also for turning up at the last minute to create a beautiful backdrop for Romeo & Juliet. Thanks are also due to Margaret Leverett and Louise West for photography, to Max Richardson and to Martin Avery for lighting and sound, to Julie Petrucci who we are delighted to say is now our NODA representative and of course produces that ever essential monthly journal of all theatrical activity in the County, Combinations.

Last year we had to seriously reduce our charity activity. I am delighted to say that funds are sufficiently back on course for us to continue this year with our outreach. We have been delighted to be able to work with Samantha Arnold in recent years, creating a filmed record of our production. We have been able to offer her another bursary this year and wish her the very happiest time at University. Coupled with this, we are also now able to announce a return of the Mo Pearce Bursary, which this year is awarded to Hinchingsbrook School, to help with their camera equipment and also establishing a good and I hope fruitful contact for even more co-operation.

I now enter the final straight. Before any further thank-yous, may I say how much we are all looking forward to next year's production of Much Ado About Nothing, set in the high Renaissance by its director, Paula Incedon-Webber, more about that anon. And so, may I thank as ever, our hard working Trustees and of course the unceasing support of our Patron Dame Norma Major and the joyous friendship we have with Leon and all his staff at The George itself.

One of the most remarkable and sustaining things about theatre is its ability to change and develop. At its best it reflects the times we live in and the people who surround us. To keep moving forwards is essential. Nothing should hold this up and for that reason I have now decided that it is time for me to break my staff and drown my book. I am retiring from the Trustees of Shakespeare at The George knowing full well how much I will regret my decision but that it is the right thing to do. I cannot over emphasise how proud I am of the present contingent of Trustees and it is right that I now hand over the reins. You will shortly – I hope! – approve the nominations for the Trustees for next year. I have seen over the past year how eager and able they are and the extent to which they are brimming with new ideas. We always need new ideas. When I joined the Trustees, the main topic of conversation was the colour of the three-fold leaflet and requesting the director to theme the menu served by The George. Now our communication is almost entirely done by social media and very effectively too. Our reputation stretches way beyond Huntingdon, even beyond the shores of this country. In the battle between amateur and professional theatre we stand somewhere quixotically suspended in mid-air between the two: our cast and crew may be all amateur (with of course some professionally trained) but our audience regard as a professional company and take a high standard for granted. This requires clearer energy and brighter minds than mine now and I can assure you that that is what you will get. Simon, who will replace me, in particular, has driven the Company into the 21st Century in a tireless and positive way and I look forward to seeing what will happen under his direction. But no man is an island, and this is not just about me. I would also like to particularly thank and commend for all their work and spirit Steph who retires as Secretary, Heather who retired earlier this year as Trustee for front-of-house and Ian who has just retired as our technical expert.

And there I am done, but I have not entirely run out of puff so I look forward to plaguing future directors to find a place for an over-acting oldie. Over and out.

Richard Brown
Chairman of the Shakespeare at The George Trust

October 2022



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
Shakespeare at the George Trust

**On accounts for the year
ended**

30 September 2022

**Charity no
(if any)**

270546

Set out on pages

5-6

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **30 September 2022**.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

29 June 2023

Name:

Christopher Dougherty

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Address:

Lakin Rose Limited

Pioneer House, Vision Park, Histon

Cambridge CB24 9NL



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Shakespeare at the George Trust

270546

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01 October 2021

To

30 September 2022

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Box office and programmes	29,970	-	-	29,970	10,594
Advertising and sponsorship	2,250	-	-	2,250	-
Sales	417	-	-	417	668
Book sales	27	-	-	27	163
Interest received	3	-	-	3	2
Sundry income	490	-	-	490	8
Donations	200	-	-	200	224
Insurance settlement	1,931	-	-	1,931	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	35,288	-	-	35,288	11,659
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	35,288	-	-	35,288	11,659
A3 Payments					
Production costs	16,663	-	-	16,663	1,997
Publicity	718	-	-	718	110
Programmes	563	-	-	563	114
Production insurance	3,406	-	-	3,406	3,169
Premises costs	5,046	-	-	5,046	4,039
General admin / other	252	-	-	252	95
Bursaries	250	-	-	250	250
Merchandise	431	-	-	431	379
Travel	-	-	-	-	-
Independent examination	600	-	-	600	600
Donations	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	27,929	-	-	27,929	10,753
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	27,929	-	-	27,929	10,753
Net of receipts/(payments)	7,359	-	-	7,359	906
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	23,138	-	-	23,138	22,232
Cash funds this year end	30,497	-	-	30,497	23,138

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Current account	4,889	-	-
	Building fund account	25,608	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	30,497	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			


	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Sound equipment	Unrestricted	10,932	-
	Lighting equipment	Unrestricted	11,699	-
	Other equipment	Unrestricted	9,409	-
	Sound & lighting equipment	Restricted	15,000	-
	Staging	Unrestricted	35,546	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Creditors	Unrestricted	1,060	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	P E LEVERETT	29/06/23