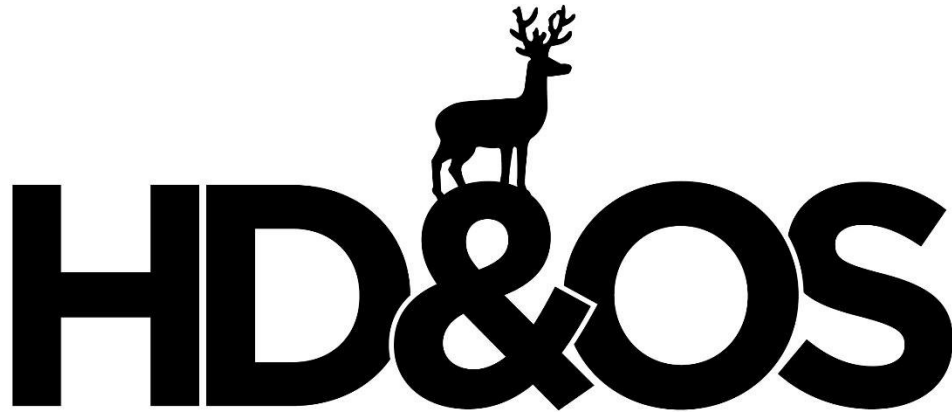




Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society

Trustees' Report for 2023/2024 and Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2023

Contents

- 2024 AGM Agenda
- Minutes of the 2023 AGM
- Reports by Trustees on Society Activities
- Financial accounts for year ending 31st July 2023

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Mrs P M Lay
Honorary Secretary

Mr C Bell
Chairman of Trustees

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

**THE 105TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HERTFORD DRAMATIC AND
OPERATIC SOCIETY WILL BE HELD AT BENTLEY HOUSE ON TUESDAY 25TH
JUNE 2024 at 8.00pm**

AGENDA

1. To confirm and sign the minutes of the 104th Annual General Meeting.
2. Matters Arising
3. To consider the report of the Trustees and sub-Committees
4. To consider the Treasurer's report.
5. To elect a President
6. To elect Vice-Presidents
7. To elect the following Officers:-
 - Hon. Secretary
 - Hon. Treasurer
 - Hon. Membership Secretary
 - Hon. Librarian and Recorder
 - Hon. Independent Examiners (2)
8. To elect:-
 - The Trustees
 - Electrical Manager
 - Properties Manager
 - Wardrobe Manager
 - Workshop Manager
9. To consider an amendment to Rules 12, 15, 18 and 19, with the purpose of bringing the rules into alignment with the requirements of the Charity Commission. The proposed changes are shown overleaf and concern the number, role and appointment of Independent Examiners.
10. Any other business

NOTE In accordance with Rule 20(c), candidates for election must be nominated by two members of the Society and nominations in writing must reach the Secretary, Pat Lay, 33 Hollybush Lane, Datchworth, Knebworth, Herts. SG3 6RE, by the 11th of June 2024. The consent of the candidate must be obtained before nomination and it is requested that such nominations should indicate the aspects of the Society in which the nominee is interested.

Proposed Change to Rules 12, 15, 18 and 19

Current wording of Rule	Proposed new wording of Rule
12 – The Society's financial year shall end on 31st July in every year. After that date the Honorary Treasurer shall forthwith prepare a proper set of annual accounts which should be audited by the two Honorary Independent Examiners and presented to the Society at the next Annual General Meeting.	12 – The Society's financial year shall end on 31st July in every year. After that date the Honorary Treasurer shall forthwith prepare a proper set of annual accounts which should be reviewed by the Honorary Independent Examiner and presented to the Society at the next Annual General Meeting.
15 – At the Annual General Meeting the Society shall elect their President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Wardrobe Manager, Properties Manager, Electrical Manager, Workshop Manager, Librarian and Recorder, two Honorary Independent Examiners and the Trustees. Voting will be confined to adult members of the Society who shall each be entitled to one vote.	15 – At the Annual General Meeting the Society shall elect their President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Wardrobe Manager, Properties Manager, Electrical Manager, Workshop Manager, Librarian and Recorder, an Honorary Independent Examiner and the Trustees. Voting will be confined to adult members of the Society who shall each be entitled to one vote.
Heading above Rule 18: HONORARY INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS 18 – Two Independent Examiners shall be appointed, one of whom shall not be a member of the Society. A Trustee cannot act as an Independent Examiner.	Heading above Rule 18: HONORARY INDEPENDENT EXAMINER 18 – An Independent Examiner shall be appointed who shall not be involved in the day-to-day administration of the charity. A Trustee or close relation of a Trustee cannot act as the Independent Examiner.
19 – The two Independent Examiners shall for the purpose of their audit have access to all books and documents of the Society and shall be entitled to call for any information with regard to the accounts of the Society which they may require.	19 – The Independent Examiner shall for the purpose of their review have access to all books and documents of the Society and shall be entitled to call for any information with regard to the accounts of the Society which they may require.

HERTFORD DRAMATIC AND OPERATIC SOCIETY

PRESIDENT Julie Markey

PAST PRESIDENTS

Mr. P. Longmore OBE	1919/40	Mrs. D. Clark	1973	Mr. J. Fennell	2000
Mr. L. Purkiss Ginn	1945/47	Mr. F. T. B. Wills DFM	1974	Mrs. P. Steadman	2001
Mrs. W. S. Hoare	1948	Mrs. P. Sledge	1975	Mr. J. Dore	2002
Mr. P.H. Ilott	1949	Mr. G. V. Hale	1976	Mrs. P. Coyston	2003
Mrs. D. Burgess	1950	Mrs. S. Tomlin	1977	Mr. J. W. Roberts	2004
Mr. W. S. Hoare	1951	Mr. P. N. K. Wells	1978	Mrs. J. A. Laidler	2005
Mrs. P. H. Ilott	1952	Mrs. B. P. Redwood	1979	Mr. K. Morbey	2006
Mr. T. Barber	1953	Mr. J. Goodland	1980	Mrs. J. Barton	2007
Mr. W.A. L. Jackson	1954	Mrs. A. Wells	1981	Mr. G. Crossley	2008
Mrs. J. G. L. Evans	1955	Mr. P. J. Keogh	1982	Ms. M. J. Tomlin	2009
Mr. H. Wallis-Nichols	1956	Mrs. D. Game	1983	Mr. J. Laidler	2010
Mrs. A. G. Blakes	1957	Mr. S. Onyon	1984	Ms. S. Hantke	2011
Mr. E. A. Williams	1958	Mrs. M. Archer	1985	Mr. M. Budd	2012
Mrs. E. Fullager	1959	Mr. R. G. Archer	1986	Mrs. C. Nicholson	2013
Mr. E. L. Porteus	1960	Mrs. M. Hale	1987	Mr. G. Lay	2014
Mrs. E. Purkiss-Ginn JP	1961	Mr. L. Sledge	1988	Miss K. Ayres	2015
Mr. E. E. Ashman	1962	Miss J. Jolly	1989	Mr. N. Mayes	2016
Mr. G. W. Brighten	1963	Mr. R. Dapp	1990	Mrs. L. Burnett	2017
Mrs. A. M. Tidd	1964	Mrs. D. Keogh	1991	Mr. C. Bell	2018
Mr. M. V. Puleston	1965	Mr. N. Parry	1992	Mrs. P. Lay	2019/ 2020
Mrs. H. V. Mellows	1966	Miss. D. Ison	1993	Mr. N. Mayes	2021
Mrs. B. Wingate	1967	Mr. A. Coyston	1994	Miss L. Warrilow	2022
Mr. P. G. Tomlin	1968	Ms. S. Newland	1995		
Mrs. G. Wills	1969	Mr. M. K. Grewcock	1996		
Mr. N. A. Parker	1970	Mrs. J. Crossley	1997		
Mrs. Z. Driver MBE	1971	Mr. B. Bates	1998		
Mr. H. A. Westmore	1972	Mrs. S. Bennett	1999		

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Mr R G Archer	Mrs P Coyston	Ms S Hantke	Mr S Onyon
Miss K Ayres	Mr G Crossley	Mrs D Keogh	Mr J W Roberts
Mrs J Barton	Mrs J Crossley	Mrs J Laidler	Mrs P Steadman
Mr C Bell	Mr J Dore	Mr G Lay	Ms M J Tomlin
Mrs S Bennett	Mr J Fennell	Mrs P Lay	Mrs S Tomlin
Mr M Budd	Mrs S Fennell	Mr N Mayes	Miss L Warrilow
Mrs L Burnett	Mrs D Game	Mr K Morbey	Mrs A Wells
Mr A Coyston		Mrs C Nicholson	

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr J W Roberts	Mrs S Tomlin	Mr A Coyston	Mr S Onyon
Mr R G Archer	Mrs A Wells	Mrs P Coyston	Mr R Charvill
Mrs D Game	Mrs P Steadman	Mrs J Laidler	Mrs J. Hopkins

MINUTES OF THE 104TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF HERTFORD DRAMATIC AND OPERATIC SOCIETY HELD ON TUESDAY 20TH JUNE 2023 AT BENTLEY HOUSE

Attendees were:

Katerina Ayres Julia Barton Clive Barton Clive Bell Sophie Bennett Sue Bennett Robert Charville	Andrew Coyston Penny Coyston Gordon Crossley Joan Crossley Richard Edgar Sally Fennell Annie Gaudencio Anne Godwin	Sue Hantke Alan Hobbs Brenda Hobbs Louise Kirtley Graham Lay Pat Lay Jim Markey Julie Markey	Steve Onyon Anna Palmer Pat Steadman Mary-Jane Tomlin Lynne Warrilow
---	---	---	--

Apologies were received from:

Ken Allford Malcolm Budd Linda Budd Liane Burnett Carol Charville Jerry Fennell	Joan Laidler Nik Mayes Elaine Miller Jackie Noble	Jenny Reynolds David Ronco Sally Tomlin	
--	--	---	--

The meeting was opened by the President, Lynne Warrilow, who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Minutes of 103rd AGM

There were no amendments to the Minutes. Acceptance of the Minutes was proposed by Julia Barton, seconded by Mary-Jane Tomlin. The motion to adopt the minutes of the 103rd AGM was carried.

2. Matters Arising

Graham Lay (Treasurer) referenced a point under Item 3 'Report of the Trustees' and wished to update the meeting on the situation regarding HD&OS having been nominated as one of the chosen charities of the Mayor of Hertford, Sue Barber. We had received a cheque which had unfortunately been filled in incorrectly so had had to be returned to the financial sector of the Town Council. Graham was in communication with the financial people who were intending to send the money by bank transfer. The final figure was expected to be around £9000.

3. Report of the Trustees

The activities of the Society were summarized in the reports from the Chairman of Trustees and the sub-committees which had been circulated to members with the Agenda.

Lynne Warrilow reported on her year as President. She had had a very busy but enjoyable year and, as she had said at the beginning of her year, she was honoured to have been chosen to fulfil this role. She wished to thank all members of Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society, the trustees and everybody who had helped in any way during the year.

As a society, we are fortunate to have such a wonderful venue and Lynne had been lucky enough during the year to see it used in a variety of ways and to have witnessed new people using it either on- or off-stage.

We had had a full programme of events including plays and play readings, a musical, a concert and a variety of social evenings, many of which she had either been part of or had attended.

In addition to the programme at Bentley House, she had been privileged to attend events organised by the Mayor, Sue Barber, especially as we had been one of her chosen charities for the year.

Lynne's year had begun with an invitation to Ware Operatic's summer concert, closely followed by the chance to see one of the final rehearsals of Hertfordshire Players' production of *The Tempest* before it had gone to Cornwall. Both these events had proved a lovely start to her year.

A more sombre event had happened in September with the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Lynne had represented the Society at a service of remembrance the day before the Queen's funeral.

Life goes on and the first play of our season, *Entertaining Angels*, had been performed in Bentley House shortly after. It had been lovely to see some new members as well as some who had returned after an absence. The play had been well received by the audiences and some of the people involved had returned to work with us again.

Dangerous Daughters had followed next. This was a relatively unknown show, but we had sold out each performance and Lynne felt sure we could have sold even more, had we had the capacity. The musical had a large cast and had been very complicated both for the actors and technically. It had been nominated for two NoDA awards – Best Musical and Best Technical. Lynne felt that we should have won both, but it was the technical award which had come home in the end. This was another show which had seen the return of previous members and, again, they had stayed to do other things.

November had been a bit of a low point for her as she had put her back out. This had meant that she had missed the backstage darts match and the Remembrance Day service. However, she was pleased to say that she had recovered sufficiently to attend the Christmas concert. This had replaced the pantomime which we had unfortunately been unable to cast. It had been a lovely evening's entertainment with a relaxed feel and good company. It had showed how talented people with a desire to entertain could put together a show in a relatively short time and had been perfectly suited to Bentley House.

Lynne had also been very pleased to join some of those talented people the next day as they had entertained people in three care homes and performed at the opening of a community play space with Christmas songs and carols. This had been arranged by the Mayor and Lynne hoped that we would be able to repeat it in the future.

This had been followed by a very enjoyable couple of hours attending the Mayor's Carol singing event at the Castle with mince pies and mulled wine afterwards. Well, it had been a very cold evening!

Her first event of 2023 had been the Mayor's quiz night, which had been a very enjoyable evening, even though our team had not won. Better luck next year perhaps!

Bentley House had once more been the venue to be in when the Open Mic night had put in its second appearance and a different set of people had entertained us. Many of the performers were members but others were not, and it was lovely that this event had again introduced some new people to the studio.

Our next offering had also introduced more people to Bentley House in a different way. We had been very pleased to host a play called *Red Handed* by John Finnemore. It was a one-act play with two actors and there had been an opportunity for the audience to ask questions of them and the director afterwards. Although the actors and director had seen the space before, they had not seen it set up as a theatre and were very impressed with what we had provided for them. So impressed that they were hoping to come back again! On that occasion, not only had most of the production been new to us, but so too had the audiences who came to see it. Loyal followers of John Finnemore, they had seen the marketing and had bought a ticket.

The same could also be said of our next production. *Wyrđ Sisters* had a lot of new people both in the cast and in the audience due in part to the Discworld fans who had come to see it. Another play with a large cast, it had gone down well in Bentley House and again in Hertford Theatre week.

That year's Hertford Theatre Week had been very special. Once again, we were at Haileybury and it was our Diamond Jubilee. Special already, but Lynne had also got to see nearly all the plays which was one of the perks of the job. She had also been privileged to give Steve Onyon a special award for his work on Hertford Theatre Week throughout the years and that had been very special indeed.

Talking of awards, Lynne, together with Mary-Jane Tomlin, had attended the NoDA East awards in Stevenage and had been delighted to come away with the NoDA award for Best technical in region 9. It had been amazing to see so many different productions nominated and to know that amateur theatre was very much alive in our part of the country.

As Sue Barber's mayoral term had drawn to an end, Lynne had gone to the castle with other members of HD&OS to receive a very generous cheque for over £7000. Lynne wished to thank Sue for her generosity, both in terms of her time – she had attended all our events – and also for her wonderful donation.

Lynne had also been pleased to attend the mayor-making ceremony at the council chambers where the new Mayor was announced, and then later in the same week she had gone to the civic service.

Our final offering for the year had been *The Memory of Water*, which had just finished its run. This had been yet another production which involved people new to the Society and which had been well received by all who had come to see it, including our new Mayor.

Lynne admitted to being biased, but she felt that Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society put on performances of a very high standard both on- and off-stage. We offer something for everyone and it had been lovely to welcome so many new people to our space. With Hertford Theatre being closed, we had used our studio theatre more often and had tried things we may not have done otherwise and she hoped that this would continue into the future.

One of our newer members had remarked on how well HD&OS worked together as a community and hopefully that was how we would continue as we looked forward to our next season.

That concluded her remarks on the events of the year.

In advance of the meeting, the Secretary had not received any comments on the reports. She wished to draw the attention of the meeting to the section in the Chairman of Trustees report recording the death during the year of Neville Parry, a long-term member and past President of the Society who, in recent years, had no longer been able to take an active role, but had continued to take an interest in the Society and had been able to attend the Centenary Dinner at Ware Priory.

The adoption of the Trustees' report was proposed by Andrew Coyston, seconded by Sue Hantke. The motion to adopt the Trustees' report was carried.

The President's Award

As her final act as President, Lynne was very pleased to be able to present the Zillah Driver President's award to a person or group of her choosing. Lynne said that the award was to acknowledge an outstanding contribution by an individual or a team during the course of the past year. It had been difficult to choose as there had been many great performances and a lot of hard work put in to all the extra shows. She was presenting the award to a group of people who were always present at events, always busy and always with a smile and she was delighted to award it to Sally Fennell and all the bar staff. At every event, they always went out of their way to make sure the bar was fully stocked, even going out during performances sometimes to restock. Sally received the award on behalf of all the bar staff.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Secretary had not received any comments or questions on the accounts and Treasurer's report in advance of the meeting. Graham Lay made a few comments on his report. He emphasised that the accounts presented were for the year 01/08/2021 to 31/07/2022 which is the period during which things were first starting to return to pre-Covid levels of permitted activity. For this reason, the year started with a certain amount of trepidation as to whether people would wish to return to involvement in shows and whether audiences would come back to see them. The reality was that audience numbers overall were reasonable, though Hertford Theatre Week tickets did not sell as well as hoped and some of the panto performances had had to be cancelled due to Covid among the cast. For these reasons, the outturn for the year was a little lower than we would have hoped. There was an overall operating loss of around £2500, which, given all the difficulties of orchestrating a return after Covid, was not too worrying.

Graham thanked everyone for submitting correctly filled-out expense forms, together with receipts, with all claims. He also thanked Beverley and Bill Tapper who have been our Independent Examiners for the past few years. They have decided to step down this year and Graham thanked them for all their hard work.

Regarding the balance sheet, Graham pointed out the drop in the bank account total from £48k on the previous accounts to £27k shown in these accounts. This was due to the decision taken by Trustees to transfer £20k into the investment fund where it will generate investment income. All the investment funds have continued to provide a steady income, which provides over half of the funds we need to keep the Society going. However, recent turmoil in the markets has meant that the capital value has gone down by a substantial amount (an 18k depletion in the value of the assets), but, in practice, this does not matter greatly, provided that the funds continue to generate income. He will keep a close eye on that situation, but it is not critical at the moment so does not require further action at present.

Graham has continued to operate on a paperless basis, with all transactions done electronically and stored on a memory chip.

Last year, Graham had reported that we would be hit by increases in utility costs. This does not show up in the current accounts due to the fact that, although costs were escalating, usage over the summer (during the period of increased tariff) had been very low. During the coming year, he estimated that the impact would be noticeable and utility costs would double.

Andrew Coyston thanked Graham for his hard work and stressed how much work had gone into the keeping and presentation of the accounts.

Adoption of the report and accounts was proposed by Steve Onyon; seconded by Annie Godwin. The motion to adopt the accounts for the year ending 31st July 2022 was carried.

5. Election of President

At this point of the meeting, it was time for Lynne to propose the next President. The person nominated as President for this year had joined HD&OS at the end of 1988 and had appeared in her first production the following Spring. That was *Oh What A Lovely War!* and it was the first of over 50 productions for the Society, across the whole range of plays, musicals and pantos. Appearances include: a hotbox dancer in *Guys and Dolls*, a cow, a tap-dancing traffic warden, Cinderella, and various fairies (good and evil) in pantos; Lady Jacqueline in *Me and My Girl* whilst pregnant with her daughter; Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*; sporting a tartan punk outfit in *Godspell*; two different roles across an in-house production and a Hertford Theatre Week revival of *Bad Girls*; Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*; and most recently the monstrous Lady Felmet in *Wyrd Sisters*. A particular high point had been receiving an award from Cyril Heath in 1992 for Best Supporting Actress for playing Lois in *Kiss Me Kate*. An accomplished dancer, she had also done choreography for *The Sound of Music*, *Bugsy Malone* and *The Mikado Goes West*. In 2021, as lockdown restrictions were being relaxed and allowing for limited face-to-face meetings, she had directed *Deckchairs*, with five two-handers, rehearsed in small groups, often outdoors, which had allowed us to put on one of the first productions of live theatre after lockdown. Always proactive in promoting the Society and working to ensure its success, she had served on several committees

at various times, including two periods as Trustee, she had recruited many new members for *Anything Goes* in 2009 in order to make the show happen, she had worked to promote shows in and around Hertford, and during the Covid lockdown had initiated on-line play readings and quizzes to keep the membership connected. She had continued to organise monthly play readings at Bentley House after Covid restrictions were relaxed and these were still continuing. She had been proactive in monitoring the plans and progress of the Hertford Theatre redevelopment and would be working hard to ensure the best possible outcome for the Society upon its reopening. In addition to all of that, she could always be relied upon to lend a hand with Front of House, bar duties, general setting-up and clearing away, sociable clean-ups and many of the other unseen jobs which are so vital to the running of the Society.

Lynne was pleased to propose Julie Markey as President for the coming year, seconded by Katerina Ayres. The motion to elect Julie Markey as President for the coming year was carried.

Julie began by saying that she was delighted to accept the post of President and that it would be both an honour and a pleasure. An honour as HD&OS was such a highly regarded Society at the heart of its community, and with a wealth of talented people amongst its members. When she joined, Len Sledge had been President. She remembered that he had made her feel welcome as did many of the other talented people who had followed him as President, several of whom were present in the room at the meeting. Julie said that she would make sure that as President she too would welcome new members and would do her best to represent the Society well at any functions that she attended "wearing the gong". And she knew that it would be a pleasure for her, as HD&OS had been at the heart of her personal life for almost 35 years.

She had moved to Hoddesdon to work at Merck Sharp & Dohme in the summer of 1988. Looking to build a social life in her new home, she had found that most of her colleagues lived some miles away and were older than her, so whisked off to their families at the end of the working day. The block of flats she had moved into seemed to be mainly populated with pensioners who had looked out for her but had not been looking to go out on the town after work! So off she had trekked to the library to look for local Performing Arts activities to join. She had been disappointed to find that there were no adult dance classes advertised and the choirs had all seemed to have a strong classical bent but there had seemed to be a thriving Amateur Dramatics scene with several societies listed, so she had bought a few tickets during the Autumn season in order to see what they were like.

Venturing as far as Cheshunt and Hertford, it must have been *The Music Man* that she had seen at Castle Hall for her HD&OS research. She honestly did not remember the show, but she did recall being impressed by the venue and, more importantly, the standard of the performance both on stage and technically. The list of previous shows had also been encouraging as it had appealed to her eclectic performing tastes, though she had been disappointed to have just missed *West Side Story*. She had subsequently got in touch with a couple of the groups which she had visited, but once she had seen the HD&OS HQ and had found out that, as well as producing shows, there was also an adult dance class, she knew this was the Society for her. And, as they say, the rest was history.

Oh What a Lovely War had been her first show and she had quickly started to make friends. The Tomlin family in particular had made her feel at home – quite literally - as they had invited her to Sunday lunch and to sunbathe in their garden any time! She would always be grateful to them as she had actually been quite lonely living in Hoddesdon. She had soon moved to Hertford in order to make it easier to get to rehearsals and to socialise with those new fellow performers. She had eventually made a multitude of friends in Hertford and they had had a huge impact on her life away from the Society too – one had opened doors for her at Tesco and she had got a new job there, She had also been a bridesmaid and had acquired two goddaughters directly through friends made at HD&OS. And, of course, she had met the man who would eventually become her husband in that very room in which they were all sitting – Rehearsal Room 1.

While rehearsing to play opposite each other in *Me and My Girl*, they had had the best surprise ever when they found out that she was pregnant and later they had their wedding reception in that very room. Subsequently, her stepson James had appeared in a show with them, having been encouraged to do so by Malcolm Hollow.

She never did get to do *West Side Story*, but she had had the pleasure of seeing their daughter Fiona play Maria in the wonderful most recent Young Idea production at what was by then the renamed Hertford Theatre.

That brought her back to what would inevitably be part of the focus for her Presidential Year – getting back into Hertford Theatre as it reopened. Indeed, she and Clive Bell would be there on the Friday after the AGM for a behind-the-scenes tour, asking lots of questions on the Society's behalf.

She would also like to ensure that the Society was planning its programme well ahead through the recently-started Production Committee, which the meeting had already heard about during the evening. Hopefully, that would mean that we would have plenty to offer those who enquired about membership just as there had been when she enquired 35 years ago.

6. Election of Vice Presidents

The election of the Vice Presidents as listed in the Report with the addition of Lynne Warrilow, was proposed by Graham Lay, seconded by Clive Bell. The motion to elect the Vice Presidents was carried.

7. Election of Officers

The following officers were willing to stand for re-election.

Hon. Secretary	Pat Lay. Proposed by Steve Onyon, seconded by Liane Burnett. Duly elected.
Hon. Treasurer	Graham Lay. Proposed by Mary-Jane Tomlin, seconded by Clive Bell. Duly elected.
Hon. Membership Secretary	Clive Barton. Proposed by Pat Lay, seconded by Anne Godwin. Duly elected.
Hon. Librarian & Recorder	Penny Coyston. Proposed by Louise Kirtley, seconded by Nik Mayes. Duly elected.
Hon. Independent Examiners	David and Carly Cousins. Proposed by Graham Lay, seconded by Lynne Warrilow. Duly elected.

Lynne proposed a vote of thanks to Beverley and Bill Tapper for all their hard work.

8. Elections

8.1. Trustees

Clive Bell, Anne Godwin, Nik Mayes and Louise Kirtley had been elected for 2 years in 2022 and were prepared to continue as Trustees.

A minimum of 2 and a maximum of 7 more Trustees were needed to complete the committee. The following members were standing for re-election: Mary-Jane Tomlin and Steve Onyon. Proposed by Liane Burnett, seconded by Julie Markey. Three further members were standing for election: Lynne Warrilow proposed by Clive Barton, seconded by Sue Hantke; Penny Coyston, proposed by Pat Lay, seconded by Graham Lay; Sue Barber, proposed by Lynne Warrilow, seconded by Mary-Jane Tomlin. All elected unanimously.

A vote needed to be taken as four of these 5 nominees were to be elected for 2 years. The following four people were elected to serve for 2 years: Steve Onyon, Mary-Jane Tomlin, Sue Barber and Penny Coyston. Lynne Warrilow was elected to serve for one year.

Pat Lay welcomed them onto the committee.

Liane Burnett was retiring from the Trustees after many years serving on the committee. Lynne thanked Liane for all her hard work and many years of service.

8.2. Election of Hon Managers

The following people were willing to stand for re-election:

Hon. Electrical Manager	Nik Mayes. Proposed by Steve Onyon, seconded by Julie Markey. Duly elected.
Hon. Properties Manager	Lynne Warrilow. Proposed by Anne Godwin, seconded by Clive Barton. Duly elected.
Hon. Wardrobe Manager	Penny Coyston. Proposed by Nik Mayes, seconded by Louise Kirtley. Duly elected.
Hon. Workshop Manager	Steve Onyon. Proposed by Julie Markey, seconded by Graham Lay. Duly elected.

9. Any other business

The following items were raised:

9.1. To introduce a scheme to allow members to access reduced ticket prices:

Lynne Warrilow explained that Trustees had been discussing schemes to encourage membership and it was felt that some incentive should be offered in the form of a reduction in ticket prices for membership. Other local societies already employed such schemes. On behalf of the Trustees, Lynne proposed that the meeting authorized the Trustees to introduce a trial over the coming year of reduced ticket prices for members, with specific schemes being agreed on a show-by-show basis and approved by Trustees. Katerina Ayres asked when it was envisaged that such a scheme would be implemented and Lynne stated that it would apply to the Autumn musical. The motion was seconded by Penny Coyston, agreed unanimously.

9.2. Donation from Sue Barber, previous year's Mayor of Hertford:

Lynne Warrilow reiterated our gratitude to Sue Barber for nominating us as one of her chosen charities during her previous year in office as Mayor of Hertford. Trustees had had some preliminary discussion as to what the money should be spent on and felt that it should go towards a specific project, with suggestions so far being: to use it to fund workshops for young people and possible for adults; to buy new free-standing mirrors for Rehearsal Room 1 which can be moved around more easily; or to invest in projects aimed at increasing membership, such as the scheme initiated by Bob Thomson. Lynne stated that Trustees would welcome suggestions from the membership for any other suitable projects and asked people to forward their suggestions to any of the Trustees over the coming few months.

9.3.

Penny Coyston thanked Lynne for all her work during what had been a busy and amazing year with so much going on.

9.4. Proposal of Jessie Hopkins as Life Member:

Clive Barton addressed the meeting with a proposal that Jessie Hopkins be elected a Life Member. Jessie had been instrumental in setting up the Young Idea section and had appeared in many of our productions over the years. Latterly, she had continued to support the Society up until the Covid pandemic by helping on Front of House, as well as continuing to support Young Idea, especially with the presentation of the Jessie Hopkins award. The motion was seconded by Sally Fennell and carried unanimously.

9.5. Defibrillator:

Louise Kirtley thanked the Trustees for agreeing during the past year to the purchase and subsequent installation of a defibrillator. She felt very strongly that this was an essential item with the increased use of the building for shows.

9.6. Panto:

Sue Bennett asked whether there were plans to stage a panto this coming year as she knew of several people who had expressed disappointment that we had not been able to put one on last year. Lynne Warrilow explained that plans were in place to put on a production of *Peter Pan* with a Director already appointed. Lynne urged the membership to support the production by attending get-togethers and auditions.

9.7. Upcoming events:

Lynne reminded people of the following upcoming events and dates for the diary:

One-day First-Aid course to be held on Saturday 8th July. As we have a duty to provide first-aid cover at events, the course would be funded for anyone willing to commit to providing first-aid cover occasionally at shows and events. Otherwise, people could fund the course themselves if they wished. Anyone interested should contact Anne Godwin as soon as possible.

The next monthly play-reading would be on Monday 10th July at 10.00am in Pat Steadman's garden (weather permitting). Anyone interested should contact Julie Markey for details, or all information was in the July edition of the newsletter.

A *Matilda*-themed summer school for young people aged 8-15 would be run from Monday 7th to Friday 11th August at Bentley House. Sessions would run from 10.00am -2.00pm and the cost for the week would be £100. This would be open to members and non-members.

Our Autumn musical would be *Stepping Out* and would run from Tuesday 17th – Saturday 21st October. Tickets were on sale via Ticketsource.

The November Drama production was originally planned to be *Natural Causes* by Eric Chappell but it had been decided that this was not the right time to do this play so it was likely that we would be doing *The Laramie Project* instead. This would be confirmed after the next meeting of the Production committee. Lynne asked everyone to note that the information in the June newsletter was therefore out-of-date, and asked people to look out for further updates in future communications.

Lynne confirmed that the panto would be *Peter Pan*, directed by Darren Jones. Full details of cast and characters were included in the June newsletter and could also be found on the website. Get-togethers would be held on 14th and 21st September with auditions the following Sunday (24th) from 6.00pm onwards. The production dates would be in early January and would be confirmed once the production had been cast.

Lynne encouraged everyone to support all these events in whatever capacity possible.

Lynne thanked everyone for their support and attendance and declared the meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

The next meeting of the Trustees would be held on Tuesday 12th July.

REPORTS FOR 2023-2024

Report from the Trustees for 2023-2024

Over the past twelve months HD&OS continued to perform shows at The Studio Theatre in Bentley House which have provided excellent entertainment for all of our audiences.

The main duties of the Trustees are:

- Ensuring that HD&OS is managed appropriately and solvent. The Trustees continue to minimise expenditure where possible, yet remain consistent with the Society objectives for the quality of our shows.
- Ensuring that the charity complies with its own rules. There have been no issues for the Trustees to deal with.
- This year we had the pleasure of producing *Memory of Water* in June 2023, *Stepping Out* in October 2023, *The Laramie Project* in November 2023, *Puss in Boots* in January 2024, *Double Acts* in February 2024, and *Six – Teen version*, all of which were performed at The Studio Theatre, Bentley House.

The Trustees have also addressed some specific areas of concern for the benefit of the society:

- HD&OS have maintained regular contact with the Hertford Theatre Development Team over the past year who have stated that they are keen to support HD&OS and as a result HD&OS were invited to a guided tour of the Theatre in June 2023. The Hertford Theatre Development Team have informed HD&OS that the refurbished Hertford Theatre, known as BEAM, will have a soft opening in August 2024 and HD&OS will perform their “comeback” production of *Shrek – The Musical* in October 2024.
- Communication between HD&OS and the Signature management team has been ongoing on a regular basis over the past twelve months.

On a more sombre note, it is my sad duty to report the death of Dorothy Keogh in November 2023, one of our long-standing members who had been an active member of the Society from 1969 until the 1990's and was President of the Society in 1991. Apart from performing Dorothy was also Wardrobe Manager for several years. Our condolences are extended to her family.

I would like to thank all the Trustees for their support and contribution during the year in fulfilling this essential role to maintain the Society's smooth operation.

Clive Bell
Chairman of Trustees

Membership report for 2023-24

Following the previous year of transition from the paper-based membership system, the 2023-24 year has used a self-written computer database to help manage membership management and newsletter distribution.

This has proved useful but still involves a lot of time clarifying and transcribing information into the database from membership forms, financial reports, etc.

In April the card machine was successfully used for membership payments of the *Shrek* cast but has raised new time-consuming challenges identifying who payments are for.

This has shown the need for a specifically designed online membership system. At the time of writing we are starting to look at what other groups use and what is available, while defining our requirements

As of 1st May 2024, HD&OS has 157 members (33 Friends, 19 Juniors, 70 Members, 32 Seniors, 3 Members in Full-time Education).

This compares to the 108 Members in May 2023 when numbers had declined due to Covid and the aftermath. The rise in numbers is due to the increase of activities including the production of SIX Teen version for the Juniors and Shrek scheduled for October in the newly re-opened Hertford Theatre. For *Shrek*, there were over 100 enquiries for auditioning.

The numbers above exclude the 12 Life Members and the President who do not pay.

Clive Barton

HD&OS Membership Secretary 5th May 2024

Report from Hertford Theatre Week Committee

At the time of writing this, Hertford Theatre Week 2024 is yet to happen, and HTW 2023, due to its' earlier date, was included in the reports for the previous AGM – so not a lot to say this year.

What I can say is we are beavering away to make the 2024 festival a success. Again, we have a varied programme of plays from our six competing teams, and we welcome back our adjudicator Walker Ewart OBE ADA. Walker was very popular with our audiences on his previous visit.

The full programme details are on our website and, depending on when you read this, I hope you will be, or have been, able to see some or all of this year's competition.

Steve Onyon

Chairman – Hertford Theatre Week committee

Report from Production Committee

The second year of this Committee has seen it achieve its aim of creating a schedule of performances and events on a rolling two-year basis which will appeal to our members and attract new ones. This includes pulling together the creative and backstage teams. All plans are discussed with and approved by the Trustees.

This year saw the introduction of a Directors' evening to share the plans for the year ahead with the membership at a social evening and we intend to hold a similar event this year.

Another purpose of this Committee is to provide support to the Production team for each show by sharing knowledge and expertise. To assist with this Pat and Graham Lay have put together a comprehensive Production Guide which we continue to review and add to. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all the work they put into this very useful document.

The membership of this Committee has changed during the year and I thank those who have served on it. We would currently welcome a couple of new members. Please do let me know if you are interested in joining this important team who shape our activities.

Reports from the various sections are provided below.

Julie Markey

Drama

At the time of the last AGM, we had just put on *The Memory of Water* by Shelagh Stevenson, directed by Nick Vause. However, the Annual Report had to be completed before the production was performed, so to complete the picture, it was a very successful run with very good audience feedback. Nick thoroughly enjoyed directing for us and has expressed his willingness to be invited back. He was particularly impressed with the level of backstage support which he received for what was quite a challenging play in many ways.

Our Autumn play for 2023 was planned to be *Natural Causes* by Eric Chappell. However, it was decided that, with an October musical and a January panto, it would be stretching our set-building team too far to do a play which required a full living-room set, complete with French doors and garden beyond. It was decided instead to do *The Laramie Project*, which had a variable cast and a minimal staging requirement. This was duly cast with 14 people playing more than 60 roles between them. This moving and poignant play, based on the true story of the brutal murder of gay University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, was as emotionally challenging to perform as it was to watch, and audience reaction was overwhelmingly positive. Congratulations to co-directors Gina Rogers and Anna Palmer whose vision produced such a wonderful production, which went on to win Best Play at the NODA regional awards in April 2024. This was a lovely surprise, especially as, for a variety of reasons, we did not get the whole cast together until opening night! We decided, as soon as the November run was finished, that we would like to enter it into the Hertford Theatre Week, where it will be performed again on Wednesday 29th May at the Ayckbourn Theatre, Haileybury College. Unfortunately, one of the original cast (Freddie Taylor) will be in the throes of A-levels at that time and has had to withdraw, but we are delighted to welcome Adam Watt to the cast in his place. Getting the play up and running again for Theatre Week has been dogged with similar problems to the original run – personal problems, difficulty fitting in rehearsals with so many shows going on at Bentley House, and with people having taken on roles in other shows in the interim, it has proved almost impossible, yet again, to get everyone together at the same time. We are, nevertheless, hoping for a successful last outing at Theatre Week.

After the success of our visiting production of *Red-Handed* last year, it was decided to invite Harry Harding to come back in February with all three of the one-act plays that make up the *Double Acts* trilogy: *WYSINNWYG*, *Red-Handed* and *Hot Desk*. Two of the plays had the original cast from Harry's previous production, but *WYSINNWYG* was cast from HD&OS members. Once again, the wonderful writing of John Finnemore drew the audiences in and provided us with a very successful production. Two of the plays, *WYSINNWYG* and *Hot Desk* are going forward into the Welwyn Drama Festival in May 2024.

There was a plan to put on a musical in the March slot, which unfortunately had to be cancelled (more under the Operatic report), and as it was too late to get another drama production organised to replace it, the next play in this season will be *The Children* by Lucy Kirkwood, directed for us by Mel Powell, with performances from 19th -22nd June. This story of three old friends coming to terms with the aftermath of a nuclear incident for which they feel partly responsible deals with serious issues as well as themes of friendship, responsibility, duty and love, with the horror of their situation intermingled with moments of great humour.

There will not be a play in November, due to the overwhelming effort being put into our return to the refurbished Hertford Theatre, now BEAM, with our lavish production of *Shrek The Musical*, followed by our panto in January. It is intended to try putting on some low-key rehearsed readings, so keep an eye on the newsletter and the website.

Monthly play readings, usually held on a Monday morning, have continued to prove popular and Julie Markey has found a wide range of interesting and unusual plays for us to read, some more unusual than others! *Serious Money* by Caryl Churchill contained much ripe language and Stock-Exchange jargon, *Party Piece* by Richard Harris was a very funny and sharp comedy, *The Moderate Soprano* taught us much about the development of Glyndebourne and in December *The Santa Panto* had us choking with laughter over our Christmas nibbles at Julie and Jim's house. We have had modern plays and Chekhov's *The Seagull*, as well as a lovely morning in Pat Steadman's garden, reading *The Darling Buds of May*, so really something for everyone. All are welcome at these play-readings – they are very informal and relaxed. Contact Julie if you are interested, even if you only want to listen.

We are delighted that this year we have had several new people joining our backstage and tech teams. We always need more help, so please, if you or anyone you know is interested in becoming involved, please talk to one of the Trustees or Managers. Thank you for your support for our productions during the past year and please carry on buying those tickets!

Pat Lay

Operatic

Our October 2023 studio production of *Stepping Out - The Musical* proved to be a popular choice with our audiences and was a huge success, performing to sell-out houses every night. We were nominated for Best Musical of 2023 by NODA.

Our March 2024 Musical, *Topsy-Turvy*, an original piece based on the music of Sir Arthur Sullivan, unfortunately had to be withdrawn. Despite the female roles being cast successfully, there was insufficient general interest amongst the membership in a G & S based production and we were unable to cast the male lead or the ensemble. Disappointing for those we had cast, but unavoidable in the circumstances.

By contrast, our choice of musical for October 2024, *Shrek - The Musical* – the launch show back in the former Hertford Theatre, rebranded as BEAM Hertford – proved to be a popular choice. Of the 66 people who auditioned, 36 people have been cast. Audition standards across the board were exceptional and we have assembled a really strong cast. Rehearsals are well under way. We are looking forward to the challenge of returning once again to a larger stage in the venue that we have used as our main performance space for many years.

Mary-Jane Tomlin

Children and Young People

As reported last year Sunday morning Young Idea workshops ceased due to difficulties finding people to run the sessions and a drop in the number of attendees post Covid. However, we have now introduced Children's workshops during school holidays. The first was *Matilda*-themed and was held in August 2023. There have subsequently been workshops based on *Frozen* and *Bugsy Malone*. The number attending is increasing and we intend to continue these workshops.

There is a lot of administration involved with these workshops and we have to ensure that they follow all safeguarding regulations. This also applies to the inclusion of children in our shows. The Trustees therefore decided to appoint Annie Gaudencio as our Young Person's Administrator and Designated Safeguarding Lead. She brings a wealth of relevant experience and knowledge to this role and is

ensuring that we keep children and young people safe while enjoying the pleasure of being involved in our shows.

Our 2024 youth show *Six:Teen* was both popular and successful with incredibly positive reviews. It attracted several new members and was totally sold out several weeks before the run. Penny Coyston excelled once again with amazing costumes and all the backstage functions were delivered to a very high standard. Congratulations to everyone involved, particularly the fabulous creative team of Sarah Comerford, Niki Wolstenholme and Lizzie Droy and to Lorraine Bottomley for her vision and drive to produce this show.

We are delighted that we have been able to include some children and young people in the cast of *Shrek The Musical* and we will be looking for young Chorus members in our upcoming Pantomime. A youth show is being planned for our Studio Theatre in Spring 2025 and Scott Welch has again agreed to direct this for us.

Julie Markey

Panto

2024 saw the return of Pantomime to our Studio Theatre with our production of *Puss in Boots* ably directed by Darren Jones. Our MD was once again Keith Willis who also provided some wonderful musical arrangements. We welcomed a new Choreographer, Kris Vivash, and she added much to both the production and the great team atmosphere we had with this show.

The cast included a number of new members as well as familiar faces. The backstage team ensured we presented a colourful and entertaining Panto to large audiences which included a considerable number of small children. The end of show photo shoot proved very popular as costumes and make up were admired and audience members got to talk to their favourite characters.

For a second year several of the cast were joined by other Society members to visit various Care Homes in Hertford in December to dispense some Christmas songs and cheer. We also used this as an opportunity to advertise the Pantomime.

Next year's Pantomime will be *Dick Wittington* and will be back in our town centre Theatre now known as BEAM.

Julie Markey

Social Events and Social Media

Social Events

Our first event after last year's AGM was a new venture for us – a Directors' Open evening and summer social on Thursday 27th July, at which all the directors for planned shows were invited to give a short presentation. Some shows were already cast and/or in rehearsal, so for these it was a chance to advertise them and encourage people to buy tickets, whilst for other shows still at the planning stage it was a chance to generate interest and explain the director's vision for the show. With the bar open, and the chance for social chat afterwards, it was a very useful and convivial evening, and we intend to hold another this summer, the likely date being 6th July, when Pimms will be served.

Saturday 23rd of September saw another Open Mic evening held in the Studio Theatre. An experiment at advertising this more widely around the town generated a couple of acts which were not particularly appropriate for our audience which contained younger people. A lesson learnt! Subsequent events were restricted to Newsletter articles and word of mouth promotion. Otherwise, this was another successful evening with some real talent displayed.

25th November was our annual Backstage Darts Match, which proved yet again to be a thoroughly jolly and relaxed evening. After a supper of pasta Bolognese, followed by fruit crumble and cream, the tense final was won by new member Tony Barber.

The Christmas event on 15th December took the form of a review of the year's activities and was open to members and Friends of the society only. Julie Markey, President, went through all the events of the year and reminded those present of the upcoming opportunities for involvement in the coming year. The evening was rounded off with a largely Christmas-themed Open Mic event, compered for us by John Hebden, and refreshments of nibbles, mince pies and mulled wine, supplemented with the bar being open too. A thoroughly enjoyable way to get us all into the Christmas spirit!

We have also tried some general social evenings throughout the year, when the bar has been open for people to drop in and chat to friends. The first one coincided with a rehearsal, and was particularly well attended, though all have been popular and feedback from those attending has been positive. Do keep an eye on the newsletter and social media for details of these 'Open bar' evenings and come along to support them – it is always good to have a relaxed chat and a catch-up with friends and there is often little opportunity during the hectic schedule of doing shows.

It remains only for me to thank everyone who has supported the Society at our various functions throughout the year, whether by attending and buying a ticket, or by helping with all the jobs essential to putting on events of all kinds. Social events make a useful contribution to Society finances, which is of increasing importance in these times of rising energy costs and cost-of-living increases. In addition, and of equal importance, the social events are vital for promoting links and fellowship within the Society. The events are always enjoyed by those who attend so please take the time to come along and support us during the coming year.

Social Media

Mary-Jane Tomlin has continued to post regularly throughout the year on Instagram and Facebook, with posts going up for auditions and get-togethers as well as a regular feed of posts in advance of shows. In the weeks running up to a show, cast photos are drip-fed on a weekly basis and cast are encouraged to share posts as widely as possible. Instagram interaction has been lower than hoped – we had 86 followers in November 2023 and this has now gone up to 211 as at May 2024, so moving in a positive direction.

The Laramie Project was, in some ways a harder push than shows like *Stepping Out – The Musical*, as there was very little in the way of eye-catching costumes or scenery to provide intriguing photo opportunities, though the moving story was the selling point here. *The Laramie Project* provided us with concrete proof of the usefulness of sharing cast head-shots – one cast member shared their cast photo page and immediately sold 20 tickets as a result.

For the panto, three of the principals did a photo-shoot in costume and this was shared to all the social media sites. These generated a great deal of interest. With several performances to sell, panto posts were put out regularly, and on a daily basis during the run. Posting reviews and comments by audience attending helps to sell tickets, so feedback is greatly encouraged!

Early in the year, posts were coming thick and fast for *Double Acts*, audition notices for *The Children* and advertisements for the *Bugsy Malone*-themed workshop in February. Many of the audience for *Double Acts* had not been to the Studio Theatre before, but John Finnemore generates a loyal fan following who had seen the social media posts.

Notices about auditions for *Six-Teen* generated a great deal of interest and the show was cast with some amazingly talented girls. The show practically sold itself, so it is difficult to gauge the effect social media had on this show. Many tickets were sold to cast members' families and friends, so it is likely that, of all our shows, this one required the least effort on social media sites.

On a similar note, posts announcing the get-togethers and auditions for *Shrek – The Musical* generated such a tidal wave of interest that a conscious decision was taken to cut back on the promotion. Gratifying as it was to have such a response, it was somewhat overwhelming. Hopefully, the interest

from the public will be equally enthusiastic once the tickets are on sale. This show requires a large creative team and posts were put out asking for anyone willing to get involved to contact the Production team and it seems that some support has been forthcoming from this.

The workshops for young people continue to attract a following and are advertised well in advance on all social media pages. Social functions are more of a problem, as we often want to restrict them to members only and this is proving difficult to achieve. We are trying to make sure that people receive some value from their membership and one way of doing this is to have events exclusively for members. Both the main Facebook page and the Members and Friends page have a lot of followers who are not paid-up members. The original intention was to restrict the Members and Friends page to fully paid-up members and those who have paid a reduced subscription to be a Friend of the Society, but the term 'Friends' has been loosely applied! It is impossible to prevent non-members joining, especially when they are invited to do so by other people already following.

Lorraine Bottomley has been working with Ben Williamson and Sarah Comerford on the promotion for *Six-Teen* and *Shrek*. On the back of this, the Instagram account has now been successfully linked to the Facebook account, so that all feeds to Instagram automatically go onto the Facebook page. The posts and reels which went out for *Six-Teen* were excellent, and although the show was sold out early on, the promotion has been excellent for the Society, especially when reviews and comments have been posted during the run. The team will continue to work hard on the publicity for *Shrek*, which should have a considerable impact on engagement with the social media sites. They are also going to do rehearsal shots and reels for *The Children*, which, with a cast of just three and a more serious storyline, will need a push to get ticket sales up.

Grateful thanks go to everyone who has worked on or helped with the social media promotion during the past year. Whilst many of our audience do not engage with social media sites and rely on more traditional methods of promotion, it is the main channel now for dissemination of information and is vital for promoting shows and encouraging ticket sales. If anyone has particular skills in the field of social media and would like to help in promoting the Society, we would be delighted to hear from you!

Pat Lay.

Bentley House Bar Report 2023-24

The bar has been open for in-house productions, social evenings, after show parties and when requested rehearsals. The bar continues to make a small but steady profit. Due to inflation we have had to implement a small price increase on certain items but the bar still offers very competitive prices.

Thank you to all the members and friends, who have helped behind the bar during the year, their help is much appreciated. If anyone is interested in helping on the bar for our forthcoming productions, please let me know.

Sally Fennell – Bar Manager

Treasurer's report – financial year 2022-2023

Our accounts for August 2022 to July 2023 (the financial year end) have been circulated to the membership for presentation at the AGM. The Society had an operating profit of £8.9k for the year (including investment income) but total funds reduced from £285.2k to £269.7k.

All expenditure was supported by an Expense form or similar documentation which the Society's members have completed to confirm that they are valid and to ensure expenses are allocated correctly. Thanks are due to David and Carly Cousins for reviewing the accounts and declaring them satisfactory.

We have been able to present a number of productions during the year and the accounts show outturn from the shows. Ticket sales were generally quite good and all except Dangerous Daughters showed a profit. Generally, plays are profitable, but it is difficult to cover the additional costs of musicals with the small total audience that is possible in the Studio Theatre.

The drop in the total value of the Society is driven almost entirely from fluctuations in the value of our investments, something that is outside our control and reflects higher interest rates and equity volatility. Most of the reduction is in the Society's holding in Blackrock's UK Charities Bond Fund and since the end of the accounting period this valuation has improved slightly. The investments do however continue to yield a regular income which amounted to £11.8k in the reporting period.

This year has seen the impact of the general increase in utility costs and our bill for gas and electricity has increased from £4k to £9.2k. The Society did a market comparison and changed gas and electricity supplier in May 2023 in order to benefit from lower off-peak electricity costs. The swap has not been smooth and the balance sheet contains an entry for an outstanding final bill.

There was no significant capital expenditure in the report period and nearly all of our assets are fully depreciated.

Graham Lay

Treasurer, HD&OS



Section A Statement of financial activities

Donations and Legacies	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Endowment funds £ F03	Total funds £ F04	Prior year funds £ F04	
Incoming Resources						
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	11,988	-	-	11,988	5,858	Donation from Hertford Mayor's charity fund and subs
Charitable activities	23,264	-	-	23,264	15,836	See Note 1, Show Accounts
Other trading activities	3,252	-	-	3,252	1,695	
Investment income	11,151	-	-	11,151	9,817	See Note 5, Investments
		-	-	-	-	
Other	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	49,654	-	-	49,654	33,205	
Resources expended (Note 3)						
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		-	-	-	-	
Charitable activities	16,246	-	-	16,246	13,615	See Note 1, Show Accounts
Separate material item of expense	15,996	-	-	15,996	10,724	Bentley House Costs
Other	8,558	-	-	8,558	11,378	
Total	40,800	-	-	40,800	35,717	
Net income/(expenditure) before investment	8,854	-	-	8,854	- 2,512	
Net gains/(losses) on investments	- 20,635	-	-	- 20,635	- 18,388	
Net income/(expenditure)	- 11,781	-	-	- 11,781	- 20,899	
Extraordinary items	-	-	-	-	-	
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	
Other recognised						
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use	- 3,717	-	-	- 3,717	- 3,824	See Note 4, Fixed Assets
Other gains/(losses)		-	-	-	1,049	
Net movement in funds	- 15,498	-	-	- 15,498	- 23,675	
Prior Year Adjustment						
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward	285,202	-	-	285,202	308,877	
Total funds carried forward	269,704	-	-	269,704	285,202	

Section B Balance sheet

	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Endowment funds £ F03	Total this year £ F04	Total last year £ F05	Notes
Fixed assets						
Tangible assets	5,673	-	-	5,673	9,390	
Investments	223,780	-	-	223,780	244,415	
Total fixed assets	229,452	-	-	229,452	253,805	
Current assets						
Bar stock	722			722	701	
Presidents medals	420			420	472	
Prepayments	2,497	-	-	2,497	2,990	
Cash at bank and in hand	36,982	-	-	36,982	27,234	
Total current assets	40,621	-	-	40,621	31,397	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	370	-	-	370	-	Outstanding dispute over Gas bill
Net current assets/(liabilities)	40,252	-	-	40,252	31,397	
Total assets less current liabilities	269,704	-	-	269,704	285,202	
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year (Note 20)	-	-	-	-	-	
Provisions for liabilities		-	-	-	-	
Total net assets or liabilities	269,704	-	-	269,704	285,202	
Funds of the Charity						
Endowment funds (Note 27)	-			-	-	
Restricted income funds (Note 27)		-		-	-	
Unrestricted funds	269,704		-	269,704	285,202	
Revaluation reserve				-	-	
Total funds	269,704	-	-	269,704	285,202	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name				
		GRD Lay				

Section C Notes to the accounts

Note 1 Analysis of Shows

	Dangerous Daughters	Entertaining Angels	Hertford Theatre Week 2023	Memory of Water	Red Handed	Wyrđ Sisters	TOTAL
Income							
4160 - Other Income						250	250
4205 - Ticket Sales	5,991	1,894	6,011	2,393	684	3,622	20,596
4210 - Programme Sales		18	180			213	410
4230 - Entry Fees			25				25
4300 - Show Fees	680						680
5140 - Bar Income			1,303				1,303
Total Income	6,671	1,911	7,519	2,393	684	4,085	23,264
Cost of Sales							
6005 - Hire of Venue	285	50	1,700				2,035
6010 - Staging	247	69		219		24	559
6015 - Staging Transport						119	119
6020 - Lighting			60			224	284
6023 - Effects	1,333					331	1,664
6027 - Hire of Equipment			97				97
6030 - Properties				25			25
6035 - Wardrobe	696	53		223		100	1,072
6040 - Musical Director	1,500						1,500
6045 - Orchestra	360						360
6049 - Choreographer	500						500
6050 - Director						260	260
6055 - Royalties	756	331		414	240	530	2,271
6060 - Posters, Flyers; Printing		131	93	102		80	406
6063 - Programme Design & Print	90		148	35		54	327
6070 - Advertising			260				260
6080 - Scripts & Scores	872	93		9		84	1,058
6085 - Photographs	68	80		68		68	284
6095 - Sundry Show Expenses	78	9	498	13	25	5	628
6100 - Adjudicator			887				887
6125 - Team's Expenses			1,600				1,600
6130 - Awards			49				49
Total Cost of Sales	6,785	816	5,393	1,108	265	1,880	16,246
	-113	1,095	2,126	1,285	419	2,205	7,017

Note 2

Analysis of income

Analysis		Total funds £	Prior year £	
Donations and Legacies	Donations and gifts	8,508	105	Donation from Mayor's fund
	Gift Aid	-	-	
	Legacies	-	-	
	General grants provided by government/other charities	-	-	
	Membership subscriptions and sponsorships which are in substance donations	3,480	3,295	
	Donated goods, facilities and services	-	2,818	
	Other	-	361	
income		Total	11,988	5,858
Charitable activities:	Canteen	-	-	
	Entry Fees	25	20	
	Show Fees	680	-	
	Ticket sales	20,596	14,693	
	Programme Sales	410	296	
	Other	1,553	-	
	Total	23,264	15,836	
Other trading activities:		-	-	
	Asset Hire	220	30	
	Bar Income	1,898	1,665	
	Other	1,133	-	
	Total	3,252	1,695	
Income from investments:	Interest income	-	-	
	Dividend income	11,151	9,817	
	Rental and leasing income	-	-	
	Other	-	-	
	Total	11,151	11,213	
TOTAL INCOME		49,654	33,205	

Note 3 Analysis of expenditure

	Analysis	Total funds £	Prior year £
Bentley House	Building Repairs & Maintenance	3,751	3,447
	Cleaning and management	2,214	2,374
	Council Tax		-
	Electricity	2,763	1,116
	Gas	6,460	2,997
	Telephone	351	362
	Rates (Non - Domestic)	457	428
	Water		
	Total	15,996	10,724
Other			
	Archive Expenses	109	51
	B.H. Refreshments	58	20
	Donations	90	
	General Advertising	174	43
	Bar Expenses	185	490
	Insurances	2,302	2,403
	Make Up		40
	Miscellaneous Expenses	63	660
	Newsletter		-
	Postage	108	
	Stationery	13	-
	Printing	54	
	Total Newsletter	175	51
	Office/General Administrative Expenses		12
	PayPal	60	11
	Photocopying	2,061	1,944
	President's Expenses	238	100
	Social Events Expenses	548	134
	Software (QuickBooks)	475	446
	Sound/Lighting Repairs	251	2,236
	Stationery		-
	Subscriptions & Licences	511	383
	Trustee Expenses		-
	Training	576	1,223
	Uncategorised Expenditure		-
	Wardrobe Repairs	62	452
	Website	439	467
	Workshop Renewals		-
	Workshop Repairs	180	169
	Young Idea Payments		44
	Total	8,558	11,379

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 24,554 22,103

Note 4

Tangible fixed assets

Acquisition and Depreciation

	Bar Equipment	Bentley House Boiler	Computer Hardware & software	Foyer	Furniture & Fittings	Lighting Bridge	Lighting Equipment	Muslim Drapes	Properties & Wardrobe	Tools & Plant	Total
Donations and Legacies											
Original Cost	87	5,357	3,478	42,513	40,893	10,561	60,355	344	6,595	31,660	201,842
Investments											0
Additions							0				0
Cum. Dep. As @ 31/7/2022	87	5,357	3,478	36,514	40,893	8,036	59,489		6,681	31,660	192,194
Depreciation 2022/23	-	-	0	2,751	0	533	433		0	0	3,718
Cum. Dep. As @ 31/7/2023	87	5,357	3,478	39,265	40,893	8,569	59,922		6,681	31,660	195,911
Net Book value 31/7/22	-	0	0	5,999	0	2,525	866	0	0	0	6,639
Net Book value 31/7/23	-	-	-	3,248	-	1,992	433	-	-	-	5,673

Note 5	Investment assets
--------	-------------------

	Listed investments	
Carrying (fair) value at start of year	244,415	Note 1
Add: additions to investments during period*		
Less: disposals at carrying value	-	
Less: impairments	-	
Add: Reversal of impairments	-	
Investment income	-	
Gain/Loss on revaluation	- 20,635	
Carrying (fair) value at end of year	223,780	

Note 1:
Charifund: 7361 units.

Blackrock Charities UK Bond Fund (income) 62735 units.

Schroder Charity Responsible Multi-Asset Fund, 18218.26 units.

valuation (from FT)

	units	Price	Value
Charifund	7361	1438.77	105908
Blackrock	62735	1.40	87829
Schroder	55064	0.55	30043
Total			223780



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees	Charity Name Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society		
On accounts for the year ended	31 st July 2023	Charity no (if any)	271065
Set out on pages	1-7		
Responsibilities and basis of report	I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31st July 2023. As the charity's trustees, 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 all 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 (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect: • the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or • the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or • the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination. I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.		
Signed:		Date:	5.2.24 5.2.24
Name:	emchugh D Cousins CAREY MCHUGH DAVID COUSINS		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):			
Address:	27 MARTINS DRIVE 27 MARTINS DRIVE HERTFORD HERTFORD SG13 7TA SG13 7TA		