



DORSET THEATRE-GOERS' CLUB

NEWSLETTER – SPECIAL EDITION – JANUARY 2017

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Those of you who attended our AGM last May will have heard me express my concern about falling membership numbers – 337 at the last count, down from a high of 500 in March 2012. As I said then, and repeated in the June and July editions of our Newsletter, I felt that we could not continue to sustain falling numbers of this magnitude, since it would in time inevitably undermine the ability of the Club to offer a quality service at a reasonable price, and eventually adversely affect our financial viability. Our clear, number one priority was (and still is) to ensure the continued existence of the Dorset Theatre-Goers' Club.

As a result, your committee began a process of reviewing our current operation, incorporating among other things: costs and revenues; officers and their responsibilities; journeys, venues and pick-ups; and promotion of the Club. The recent mini-survey of members' preferences, and decisions such as cutting out longer journeys and the dropping of the additional charge for guests, were all part of this process. The review is ongoing.

One large item of fixed expenditure (ie. not related to travel and theatre charges) is the fee paid to Katy Murrell, our Bookings Secretary. The original intention when her predecessor was appointed was that administrative costs (including the Bookings Secretary's fee) should be met from subscription income but, over the years, despite occasional increases in the subscription rates, the two have become significantly out of step, so much so that subscription income now covers only about 65 per cent of admin costs. The balance has to be met from trip income.

With reducing membership numbers (and therefore subscription income) and the need to keep the prices of trips at reasonable levels, our unfortunate but inevitable course of action was to terminate Katy's engagement and to revert to a totally voluntary arrangement (which ran successfully until ten years ago). This means that, from now on, all the Club's officers will be volunteers and none will be paid.

Fortunately, Lynda Maidment, currently our Membership Secretary, has kindly volunteered to act as Bookings Secretary – her contact details are set out overleaf.

I am sure you will agree that Katy has done sterling work for the Club over the past nine years. On behalf of all members, past and present, I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank Katy publicly and to wish her well for the future.

Finally, may I express the hope that you all have a healthy, prosperous and happy theatre-going New Year.

CLIVE WILLETTS

CHAIRMAN

NEW BOOKINGS SECRETARY - Lynda Maidment
I can be contacted on 01305 269892 e-mail Lynda.dtgc@outlook.com
or by post at 26 Hawthorn Close, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 2PQ

At this time I would just like to say, please be patient with me for the next few months as I learn on the job how it all comes together. I will be trying my hardest to make the trips run smoothly and hopefully we will all enjoy ourselves.

Lynda

PS A DAIRY NOTE

Saturday 1 April 2017 Guildford to see Nell Gwynn

Saturday 20 May 2017 Richmond to see Footloose

Saturday 3 June 2017 The AGM will be held in Exeter at The Phoenix Arts Centre which is in the centre of Exeter after lunch/shopping time we will then go on by coach to The Northcott Theatre to see The Death of a Salesman starring Tim Piggott-Smith.

Saturday 15 July 2017 The Mill at Sonning to have lunch and then see Spiders Web which is a thriller.

Full details of the above will come out shortly on the booking forms.

The responses from the round-robin e-mail on going to Plymouth were quite positive and I will endeavour to see if there is an excellent show in the autumn that we can book which hopefully everyone will want to go and see.