

**AGM MINUTES Tuesday 25 October 2022**

Zoom at 7.00pm

**In the meeting:** Linda Terry (Chair), Phil Turner (Treasurer), Simon Tompsett, Maurice Crichton (Minutes), Anna Briggs, David Denbigh (Zoom Master), Chris Jackson, Martin and Elizabeth Denbigh, Ruth Cozens, Angela Wheatcroft, Stewart Hildred (in Milton Keynes), Mary Callan, Noel Stabler, Wilma Edwards, Steve Barker\* (in Turkey), Nick Jones, Ged Murray, Leslie Senden (in Minnesota), Chris Cullwick, Julie Speedie\*, Ximena Varela (in Washington DC), Zoe Enstone, Margaret Scott. (22 members, quorum is 10 members).

\* non-members

1. Welcome. Linda Terry gave us all a warm welcome.
2. Apologies for absence. These were noted from: Christina Skaife, Diana Wyatt, Maryanne Dearlove, Marie Tate, Janet Sharpe, John and Susan Saunders, Jenna Drury, Nick Ansell, Bernard Lyne, Gary Bateson, Terry Ram, Sue Harris via various media.
3. Details of Proxy Voting. No-one has appointed a proxy to vote for them.
4. Approval of Minutes. **The minutes of the AGM on 23 February 2022 were approved.**
5. Chair's report from Linda Terry

The Trustees' Annual Report for the year to 5 April 2022 was circulated ahead of the meeting. Linda highlighted some points.

Our objectives remain the same. We are committed to improving access to the Mystery Plays both in terms of those taking part and audience. For that reason, our membership fee is still just £10 to keep membership affordable to as many as possible. We are grateful to those who have sent additional donations. We want to increase involvement and diversity and to attract more members. Thoughts welcome as to how to expand membership.

We'd like to extend a huge thank you to members and supporters for sticking with us, especially during the pandemic. Particular thanks to our St Crux supporters and FOH volunteers, you always make a brilliant team. Linda introduced Stewart Hildred (joining us from Milton Keynes) at this point. He

does great work on newsletters, press and publicity for which our grateful thanks. Linda also thanked James Eaglesfield who looks after our website and all who took part in our productions, directors, cast, crew, photographers, FOH teams. Linda thanked her fellow Trustees for their considerable work and support to the Trust.

*Achievements: A Resurrection for York* was a big achievement, live theatre during the pandemic. The 3 way partnership - YMPST with York Minster and York Festival Trust - broke new ground. Many Mystery Play organisations were not communicating with each other before we brought them together at the annual stakeholder meeting. The Omicron variant defeated our Nativity in 2021 but we hope for better luck this year. Outside the period of the report, we staged an excellent production of *The Flood* in June as part of the Wagon Play pageant. There were two more highly successful days at St Crux. During the period of the report, there were some changes of Trustees: sincere thanks to Ged Murray and Colin Lea who resigned during this period for their contributions to YMPST. Janice Barnes-Newton has since come on board and is proving a very valuable contributor.

What about the future?

The immediate thing is *A Nativity for York* at the Spurriergate Centre this Christmas, 8-11 December. Alan Heaven is directing (and talked about his plans later in the meeting). Linda hopes to see everyone there. If you want to help with costumes, publicity, Front of House, speak up: email Linda at [linda.terry@ympst.co.uk](mailto:linda.terry@ympst.co.uk) if you would like to get involved.

Two dates for St Crux have been booked for next year (see below).

Early in the new year we plan to do a survey of members. What do you want from the Trust? Are we doing the right things? A trip to Chester Mysteries in 2023? Some Mystery Plays talks? We hope all of you will respond to the on-line survey we will send out.

Also to be addressed is the issue of succession planning. Some have been on the Committee a while! Last term of office for Linda and Gary.

We also plan to carry out a feasibility study for the next big staged production with colleagues from the city. The last one in the Minster was in 2016. What could happen? Is there an appetite for a big production in the city? What grants could be applied for? It's time we grappled with this elephant in the room.

We are working with two other small groups who have some ideas towards Mystery Play productions. More on these if/when they are further advanced.

YMPST is now 10 years old. We want to host a party in the New Year. Somewhere warm! Look out for the invitation and join in the celebration.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report from Phil Turner

The YMPST accounts for the year to 5 April 2022 were circulated to the membership ahead of the meeting. Phil highlighted a few points.

We started the year in question with around £11,000. We approach funding our activities by ensuring we have funding in place before the activity happens so we can't get into debt.

We had money in hand for The Resurrection and enough to do another Nativity. The Resurrection was a bit of gamble. Would we be able to stage it at all? So we set a limited budget of £1500 which we were prepared to lose if the show didn't go ahead. In fact, we got considerable financial support – £2,000 from the Passion Trust, £1,000 from the Lord Mayor's Fund, £1,000 from the Bramall Foundation – and all shows sold out. We made a profit of £500 and relieved a Treasurer. We had two successful St Crux days (£1700). Many members gave a donation as well as their subscription. Thanks to everyone for their generosity. It all adds up and helps us move forward. A generous donation from Ernst and Young Foundation of £500 was paid twice (but the extra was eventually reclaimed). We were asked to put on a workshop for visiting US students which led to a donation of £500. Our planned Nativity didn't happen but we got £550 from Common Good Trust and £500 from City of York Council towards it. We have ridden the costs of last year's cancelled production and can still stage a Nativity this year using the ring-fenced ticket income from 2019.

We finished the year to 5 April 2022 with £13,000 of which £4,000 was earmarked for our wagon play and £6,000 for this year's Nativity.

Phil thanked Bernard Lyne for acting once again as Independent Examiner of our accounts. Bernard is willing to do one last year. He has a significant birthday coming up. This time next year we will need a new Independent Examiner. Our accounts are simple (receipts and payments system). The Charity Commission just require our Examiner to have 'financial awareness and numeracy skills.' If anyone is interested in taking over from Bernard, please come forward or let us know of anyone you know who might be interested.

**Bernard Lyne unanimously appointed as independent examiner of our accounts for 2022-23.**

**The accounts for 2021-22 were unanimously adopted.**

## 6. Committee elections.

David Harrison was co-opted last year but has recently left the city so is no longer standing for election.

Three of the charity's trustees retire by rotation in accordance with Clause 13 of our Constitution. Linda Terry, Gary Bateson (both last re-elected at our AGM in February 2020) and Simon Tompsett (last re-elected at our AGM in March 2021). All three have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election. They have the full support of the Committee. **Linda, Gary and Simon unanimously re-elected.**

The full committee of 8 is now therefore: Linda Terry (Chair, in her third term), Phil Turner (Treasurer, Term 2), Simon Tompsett (Term 3), Gary Bateson (Term 3), Maurice Crichton (Secretary, Term 2), Anna Briggs (Term 2), David Denbigh (Term 1), Janice Barnes-Newton (Term 1).

That concluded the formal business of the meeting.

We would welcome your feedback on this meeting, please contact: [membership@ympst.co.uk](mailto:membership@ympst.co.uk)

**Alan Heaven who is directing our production of A Nativity for York joined the meeting at this point and spoke about his vision for the show.**

Coming to this as a movement person which is Alan's background: he wants the cast to constantly move and create shapes on the stage. Alan is focusing on 'Three Es.' 1. Energy. He needs people who will put everything into it. 2. Engagement. He wants an engagement with the audience, the text and with the entire team. 3. Equality. Everybody working together. It's to be a positive and community minded experience. Wants people to develop their own journeys. At the end of this production: Wow, how did I do that?

Text will be fairly familiar. Editing not so familiar. For example, Alan has edited Kings and Shepherds together. This is a real story about real people undergoing appalling experiences. Harold Mozley sent him TS Eliot, 'this Birth was / Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our Death.' (*Journey of the Magi*) Alan is interested in the contrasts that happen: joy and celebration, yes, but also horror and grief. Birth/death. Power/powerlessness. Doubt/certainty. Youth/age. The text will be underpinned by music and movement: visual theatre. There will be 12 scenes plus opening and ending and every scene has

an image and emotional core at its heart. Christmas carols not guaranteed! Alan feels Honoured and flattered to have this opportunity. Wants actors and crew and audience close to tears, overwhelmed by the sense of recovery and hope that the little baby symbolises. Set to be 'end on' to the south wall of Spurriergate. Alan has laughed through last couple of rehearsals. Very few people have one thing to do, most have multi-roles. The larger the cast the better some of the scenes are. Tomorrow a Kings rehearsal, currently one king still needed.

In response to a question from Ged, Alan talked about suitability of the play for younger age groups. This is a difficult area. It's targeted at over 11s, it's an adult play. But Alan isn't planning to say it is unsuitable for any particular age.

Wilma (a performer) thinks it is suitable for any age.

**Dates for your 2022-23 diary**

A Nativity for York 2022: 8-11 December

St Crux: Friday 31 March 2023, Saturday 16 September 2023