



**The International Theatre Studio
The President's Report to the AGM on 30th March 2017
Mrs Diana King**

From 2016, our 41st year on the coast, and into 2017

Moving from Vice President of The International Theatre Studio to take up the role of President in March last year was both an honour and a privilege. It has been an interesting, enjoyable and productive year. Thank you to all our members, friends and supporters for making it so.

The Spring Production 2016

We kicked off with the spring production "Ghost Writer" by David Tristram, which I directed, with Sandra Sprawson as producer. The audiences enjoyed this comedy immensely and the feedback was very good. As Jamie Stonehewer took the leading role, we were left without lighting and technical support but Andrew Gommersall, with a briefing from Jamie and well supported by Richard Packman, did a superb job and showed yet another of his theatrical skills.

We were asked to take this production on tour to The Salon Varietes Theatre in Fuengirola in May 2016, which we did for three nights despite the difficulty of keeping the script fresh in the minds of the cast. We seemed to be rehearsing for most of the year!

Play readings (PR) and staged or rehearsed play readings (SPR)

There is no doubt that our audiences thoroughly enjoy these, as they are always popular, well attended and enjoyed by many.

We managed to produce six last year as follows:

1. June Rendle led "Hay Fever" at Friends Restaurant in April. (SPR)
2. Peter Brooks led "Anastasia" and "The Rose and Crown" at Aloha Golf Club in June. (SPR)
3. Sandra Sprawson led "Careful Rapture" at El Candil in September. (PR)
4. Veronica Del Cerro led "An evening of David Ives" at Atalaya Park Hotel in October. (SPR)
5. Veronica Del Cerro led "A Christmas Carol" at El Candil in December. (PR)
6. Carol Woolnoth led "Separate Tables: Table One" at El Candil in January. (PR)

I am very grateful to those mentioned above who made the time to organise and direct these events for everyone to enjoy. Thanks too to Karl for organising the sets, to Jamie for the technical support and to Eileen for coordinating the ticket money, when needed.

Social Events

Kate Jackson organised our Christmas celebration dinner at La Grappa and Veronica Del Cerro organised our Valentine Pot Luck Performance Dinner at Lucas Restaurant in San Pedro. Both were well attended and it is good to get together to socialise. These events are always well supported. Thank you to both of them for their planning and organisation.

Marketing, newsletters and communication

We are doing some work to review our website image and logo plus increase our online presence. Andrew Gommersall set us off last year with a Facebook page; Veronica del Cerro has now taken this on. She is doing a great job of publicising our events and is reaching different, and sometimes younger, people. Alan Jones continues to take brilliant photographs of our events for our programmes and for our website. Thank you to him for his work.

Ruth Baldwin, our secretary, produces our newsletters, and she wrote six last year to help to keep everyone in the loop with what we were doing. She does a sterling job keeping us all organised.

We have a small sub group (Ruth, Veronica del Cerro and Beverley Stonehewer) looking at how we can improve our marketing.

Nina, our web master, is doing some good work to improve the effectiveness of the website for use on mobile phones plus streamlining it for quicker access. Very importantly she is also creating an online booking system for ticket sales for our performances. I will update you further on this in the coming weeks. I am really grateful to everyone for his or her work on this.

Sadly, Peter Rogers, who did our publicity and programmes for all our productions for several years, resigned last year. We miss his expertise and experience in this respect. I would like to publicly thank him for all his work and we wish him well for the future.

The ITS Storeroom

You may recall from last year's AGM that we had secured the use of a new storeroom at a much reduced rental price. Karl Maresz did an amazing job of sorting out all our resources and equipment with the help of many individuals. He has organised the storeroom and Eileen Audas is helping to make a catalogue of the contents. This has been a huge piece of work over the last year and I would like to thank all those involved but especially Karl.

The Lark in the Park 2016

Our annual charity fundraiser was a success yet again. Kate Jackson organised a superb line up of acts for our entertainment and Andrew Gommersall directed the play "Background Artiste". 2650 € was raised for Caritas. We were very grateful to the acts: Stella, Too True and The Art Thieves for giving their time for free; and to Benahavis Town Hall for the use of the park. Ibex Insurance kindly sponsored it all. Our next Lark is on Sunday 4th June 2017.

Our Autumn 2016 Production

Kate Jackson directed "Going Green", another comedy by David Tristram in November 2016. This was another successful event with very good feedback. It was a different kind of play demanding a high level of technical support, which was ably provided by Andrew Gommersall assisted by Veronica Del Cerro. Sandra Sprawson produced it.

The Spring Production 2017

Peter Brooks directed "Kindly Leave the Stage", a farcical comedy, written by John Chapman earlier this month. Karl Maresz was the producer. With a cast of eight on the small stage at Atalaya, it was a challenge but our audiences loved it. We had two young people involved in the play. Georgia Souter, aged 17, played "Angela" and Sophie Jessen, aged 16, was our prompt. It is good to know that we can attract new members as well as retain the expertise of more experienced performers.

The Atalaya Park Hotel

We have enjoyed using the venue for many years and it is popular with our audiences as it provides an intimate theatre experience plus it has great car parking, once you know where you are going. However, the hotel has been sold and our future in the hotel is very uncertain so we are seeking alternative venues.

We will of course keep you updated on this issue. On behalf of everyone involved with ITS, I would like to publicly thank the previous owners for their generosity in letting us use the hotel discotheque for our productions.

Membership

Eileen Audas, our treasurer and membership secretary, did a great job last year to increase the number of new members and to chase up lapsed members. We do need fully paid up members to keep ITS solvent and we are grateful to those of you that do pay your fees on time. If you know anyone who might like to join please let one of the Board members know. Last year, we offered Clive and Mary Jacklin, honorary life membership for their generosity in donating a very good sound system for our productions.

The ITS Board

The Board continues to meet each month at El Candil in San Pedro, courtesy of Alfonso who owns the bar.

We were delighted to welcome Martin Curd as a new member back in October. As a local businessman and newer member of ITS, he brings a wealth of experience to the Board. Later, on the agenda, we will hopefully ratify his position.

Carol Woolnoth took a sabbatical from March to December but I was pleased to welcome her back at the last meeting of 2016.

Sadly, Kate Jackson our Vice President, resigned in November. Known for her parts in many ITS plays and as a director, Kate is already much missed. I would like to publicly thank her for all her excellent work as a Board member. But I must not forget to thank John Jackson too as he has also resigned his voluntary role as one half of the front of house duo for our main productions. A sincere thanks to both of you, we will miss you both.

I have asked Sandra Sprawson to be Vice President and she has accepted. Again, I hope this will be ratified later.

I am very fortunate to work with a very dedicated team on the Board and I would like to place on record my thanks to all of them for their work.

Our statutes

Last year, we approved our new statutes at the EGM that preceded the AGM. We are now working to these.

In light of this, I wanted to make you aware of the commitment of our Board members before we reach that part of the agenda where we ask for support for their re-election.

1. Diana King: President (on the Board since 2010)
2. Sandra Sprawson:(on the Board since 2014) Up for ratification as Vice President in 2017
3. Eileen Audas: Treasurer/Membership (on the Board since 2008)
4. Ruth Baldwin: Secretary (on the Board since 2015)
5. Jamie Stonehewer (on the Board since 2002)
6. Paul Baker (on the Board since 2005) * Standing down this year
7. Karl Maresz (on the Board since 2009)
8. Carol Woolnoth (on the Board since 2012)
9. Andrew Gommersall (on the Board since 2015, ratified 2016)
10. Martin Curd (on the Board since 2016, up for ratification 2017)

After almost twelve years, Paul Baker has decided not to stand for re-election. He has promised that he will continue to act in our plays and play readings. He is a well-loved and talented actor with a wicked sense of humour. I would like to thank him for all his work and ask him to stay close to ITS in the future.

In conclusion, I hope that we can continue to bring you lively and entertaining theatre events for the following year 2017.
Thank you for your attendance here tonight.
Diana