



**The International Theatre Studio
The President's Report to the AGM on 7th March 2018
Mrs Diana King**

The search for a new theatre venue

We have had another incredible year with three great major productions and monthly events for our members and supporters; but running alongside all this has been a frantic search for a new venue since the sale of the Atalaya Park Hotel last year. Our immediate concerns were allayed when the new owners of the hotel allowed us to continue to use the venue until the end of October last year, which was both a bonus and a relief. We are so grateful to them.

Our Board members visited several venues to try and find something suitable and wrote letters to various councillors asking for help. Then along came another brilliant piece of good news when Paul Crumpler at El Paraiso Golf Club offered us the use of the restaurant space for twelve months. We were delighted! Thank you to Paul and his staff for their kind offer.

In the meantime, we continued to use El Candil Bar in San Pedro, courtesy of Alfonso, for our Board meetings, rehearsals and play readings. We were due to hold this meeting at El Candil but Alfonso said he was closing for a month for renovations. Oh no, just when you think everything is settled! So I would like to thank Paul for tonight and Eileen and Sandra who have hosted recent meetings and rehearsals in their homes. Thank you.

The ITS storeroom

You may recall that two years ago we managed to secure the use of a new storeroom at a much-reduced rent. Karl Maresz has done a superb job of organising the new store. When the hotel closed for renovations in October, we had to remove all our equipment and sets, which was a huge task. Karl has made sure that storeroom remains ordered and accessible and we are very grateful to him. In addition, Eileen and Keith Audas have given us space in their home basement for the temporary storage of some items. Thank you to them too.

The Autumn Production 2017

In October I directed "Haywire" a comedy by Eric Chappell at the Atalaya Park Hotel with a super cast that included three new faces Rebecca Flowerdew, Chloe Quinlan and Theo Wilkins all supported by Russell Hood, Carol Woolnoth and Eileen Audas. Eileen was also the producer. We were delighted to have Sophie Jessen, aged 17, as stage manager. The play was well received by the audiences attending.

A very special event!

In September 2017 we held two wonderful evenings with Bobbye Aaron when she performed a solo production of "Rose" by Martin Sherman. Professional actor, Paul Kloegman, directed it.

We were thrilled when she approached us as we had seen her perform several times at the Salon Theatre in Fuengirola. Both nights were well attended and she left the audiences moved to tears with the story of Rose and her life. We hope to have more collaborative events in the future.

The Spring Production 2018

We are deep into the rehearsals for the next play, which is a farce by Alan Bennett. "Habeas Corpus" is being directed by Peter Brooks and will be performed on the 23rd, 24th and 25th March here at El Paraiso. It has a huge cast of 11 with some familiar faces and some new ones too. You can buy tickets for it tonight.

Our Annual Charity Event

The Lark in Park in June 2017 raised a stunning 4100 € for Age Concern in San Pedro and Marbella. Martin Curd made his directoral debut with the play "Last Tango in Benahavis" and we were entertained by the acts: Stella, Sam Oliver and Karen Danzig organised by Carol Woolnoth. Carmel was our fabulous MC for the event. Jamie did a superb job with the sound and technical support as usual. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed last summer.

This year's event is on Sunday 3rd June 2018 and we hope you will be able to support it.

Special Thanks

Behind the scenes, we have the services of Nina, our brilliant web master, who keeps our website up to date and she makes sure that the online bookings are processed. She did a great job last year of updating the site to make it more mobile friendly and easier to negotiate. The number of tickets bought online is increasing with each production as people get used to using it and see how easy it is. Nina's input always goes well beyond our expectations and I would like to thank her for her work on our behalf.

In addition, we have the services and expertise of Alan Jones who does all our photographs as a volunteer. His images appear all over our website and in our programmes. Thanks to Alan we have a good record of the events we have produced and you can see these on the website.

Play Readings (PR) and staged or pre-rehearsed play readings (SPR)

Our members and supporters continue to tell us how much you enjoy our monthly events programme. The attendance figures for these evenings are usually around 40, more when it's a staged or pre-rehearsed play reading.

So, in response, we organised seven of them over the last year and I am so grateful to the people who kindly volunteered to arrange them as follows:

1. April: "Separate Tables" a PR organised by Carol Woolnoth
2. May: "Millie" a PR organised by Sandra Sprawson
3. June: "Still Life" a SPR organised by Peter Brooks
4. November: "A Barbecue" and "8 Seconds", two short PRs organised by Beverley and Jamie Stonehewer
5. December: "A Christmas Carol" a PR organised by Veronica del Cerro and Andrew Gommersall
6. January: "The Thwarting of Baron Bollingrew" a PR organised by Miles Rendle
7. February: "Ten Little Pigs" a SPR organised by Martin Curd and Russell Hood

Social Events

We held our Christmas party at Urban Chai Restaurant in San Pedro in December, it sold out in 24 hours and we had to create a reserve list. Neil Sweeting and his team

provided a wonderful meal and we had great fun with the entertainment organised by Veronica and Andrew. Thanks to them for their planning and to Ruth who coordinated the menu choices.

Resignations from the Board

Eileen Audas intends to stand down this year; she has been on the Board since 2008. She has been a wonderful treasurer and we will miss her expertise. She was also the membership secretary at the same time for a few years. Eileen has juggled many tasks for ITS including changing our bank, organising the printing of tickets, programmes, posters and usually done all this whilst appearing in the productions at the same time. Her work on the statutes for ITS was an achievement and is part of the legacy she leaves for us. She has promised to still take part in the productions so we will continue to see her. We wish to thank her sincerely for her contribution to the Board.

Jamie Stonehewer has been on the Board since 2002, he is our longest serving Board member and yet he is still the youngest of our group! Sadly, he has also decided to stand down this year. He has been a member of the play reading committee and has been very active on stage as well as behind the scenes as our brilliant sound and technical director for many productions. For our annual charity event, The Lark in the Park, he has spent many a Saturday and Sunday afternoon running sound checks with performers and then sitting in the June heat guarding the set and equipment. Jamie has also directed plays in the past, organised play-reading evenings and hosted rehearsals in his home. We will miss his common sense approach and hope that he too will continue to take part in our productions.

Newsletters

We have produced eight newsletters since the last AGM. These are written by Ruth, our secretary, after the Board meetings to help to publicise our events so that our audiences can plan their diaries.

Membership

Carol Woolnoth took on the role of membership secretary last year. Thank you Carol. Our annual fee is still ridiculously low and we need paid up members to ensure that we can cover our monthly costs that mainly relate to insurance and the rent of the storeroom. We would like to encourage you to ask your friends to join our friendly group please. The annual subs can now be paid online as Carol explained in her recent letter to all current and lapsed members.

The ITS Board

Once again I want to put on record my thanks to the Board for their hard work and commitment to ITS. We meet monthly and we all leave the meetings with tasks to do. We are a relatively small group and I am pleased that they are willing to stand again.

Finally, in appreciation of their contribution to the Board, I would like to call Eileen and Jamie forward to receive a small token of our appreciation. Thank you to both of you.

I would like to thank you for your attendance tonight and I look forward to seeing you at the production of 'Habeas Corpus' here in a few weeks time.