



International Theatre Studio Marbella

The President's Report to the AGM on 25th February 2020

Mr. Martin Curd

2019 continued much like 2018 with the urgent search for a permanent venue as a big priority. We were offered a lifeline with the promise of financial assistance to purchase a small venue. Sadly, this offer was rescinded soon after for personal reasons that we fully understood. So, we put all our efforts into finding other venues that would allow us regular use for our performances. As a result, we currently have a good arrangement with the Hotel Paraiso as our main venue for the big performances; access to El Trapiche for rehearsed play readings; and to El Candil Bar for play readings, rehearsals and meetings. We are very fortunate. However, we know that nothing is forever and we have to keep on looking for venues that might want us on a more permanent basis.

During the year, as my report will show, we also had the use of Los Arqueros Golf Club, CK La Quinta and Urban Chai Café in San Pedro. We are eternally grateful to the managers of these venues for their support.

The spring production 2019

We opened our 2019 programme with our spring production, "*One O'Clock from the House*" directed by Peter Brooks and held at Los Arqueros Golf and Country Club. Over 300 people attended over the three nights in March. It was well received, well acted and we received good feedback from our audiences.

The Lark in the Park

The charity for 2019 was “*Alzheimers and Dementia Support International*” and we raised 2066 € for them and 2224 € was added to our funds. We are very grateful to everyone who made this annual event another successful one. Sincere thanks go to our entertainers for their time that they gave for free for the charity.

This was the first time that we had ever allocated part of the funding to ITS but we have to meet the requirements of our statutes “*to cultivate and develop a love of theatre by providing access to plays*” and our bank balance was diminishing due to the storage costs, as these are our second biggest expense after storage costs.

This year’s Lark in the Park will be held on Sunday 7th July 2020 subject to the agreement of the Benahavis town hall for the use of the park. The chosen charity is “*Asociacion Adintre*”. They support people who are homeless, those who are living in poverty and those who are socially excluded. They run a day centre providing showers, meals, laundry, haircuts, chiropody, and access to a social worker, health care and a food bank.

Rehearsed play readings

We provided three exceptional rehearsed play readings thanks to the talented directors that we have who always step forward to do these.

1. Veronica Del Cerro directed ‘*The Importance of Being Earnest*’ on 3rd July 2019 at El Trapiche.
2. Peter Brooks directed two short plays: “*Words of Advice*” and “*Hands Across the Sea*” on the 18th September 2019 at CK La Quinta.
3. June Rendle directed “*The Wisdom of Eve*” on 22nd January 2020 at El Trapiche.

We are indebted to Veronica, Peter and June for their expertise, skill and enthusiasm for their work on these evenings. We know

that our audiences love these events and they are always well attended. Thank you to each of you.

Play Reading evenings

We held three well received play readings. Thank you to the organisers of these events, which are always fun and add to our yearly offerings.

The autumn production

Diana King directed: *"Don't Dress for Dinner"* at the Hotel Paraiso and 266 attended over three nights in October. This hilarious play had the audiences giving us standing ovations at the end of each night and such wonderful feedback. I am sure that the new venue helped (along with its well stocked bar). Peter Brooks will be directing there again in spring for *'Towards Zero'* by Agatha Christie.

Auditions

We held several audition evenings last year and these were well attended and gave us the opportunity to meet new members, and offered new people an opportunity to participate. The most recent one was Peter's auditions on the 29th January for the spring 2020 production of *"Towards Zero"* by Agatha Christie.

Cancellations

Sadly, we had to cancel three events this year due to unforeseen circumstances. The murder mysteries promised for April could not be cast as the dates clashed with the rehearsals for spring production. The November play reading due to be held at Urban Chai clashed with a meeting of Thespa in Fuengirola that involved 11 of our members. The Stagecraft event planned for October was also a casualty but it will be re-arranged for later this year. We do not make changes easily to events organised and publicised but sometimes it has to happen. We apologise for any inconvenience.

Storage of our sets and equipment

The largest expenditure in our budget is for storage costs and you will be aware that we reduced these several years ago. However, since the loss of the Atalaya Park hotel these costs

have crept up again. We were lucky to be able to use a space that Eileen and Keith Audas had in their home; and a space in Sabinillas loaned to us. Fortunately, the Hotel Paraiso has allowed us to store the stage in the hotel and this has allowed us to reduce the amount of storage needed. We are very grateful to Eileen and Keith, and to Christa for their generosity.

Resignations

You will see from the agenda that Karl Maresz has decided to resign from the Board. Karl has worked tirelessly and without fuss on all our sets over the years. He has worked with the directors to design and build the set for each of our major performances and many of our rehearsed readings. He has produced plays for us and has been stage manager. Our storeroom is immaculate under his management; he has everything well organised. He has organised the transportation and storage of all the sets and equipment for many years and are very sad to see him leave. But we are eternally grateful to him for all his work and for his presence on the Board since 2009. Thank you Karl.

Sadly, Russell Hood has also resigned and we will miss him too. Russell has acted in several plays in recent years. We hope to entice him back if he moves closer to the area again.

Last year we reported that Andrew Gommersall had resigned from the Board but that he would still be involved in ITS. Sadly he and Veronica Del Cerro have now moved to the north of Spain. We will miss them both and their enthusiasm, but of course we wish them well.

New Board members

Pat Kelly and Jane Cartwright have agreed to join the Board. We hope you will support their appointment as they both bring varied experiences and expertise to the Board.

Last year we reported that Sheila Mellor had had to resign from the Board but we are delighted to tell you that she was only away for a few months and has since returned and picked up the membership secretary role again. Thanks to Eileen Audas for doing this job in her absence.

I am very lucky to work with a very dedicated team of Board members who commit to a monthly meeting to plan all our events. I would like to thank them all most sincerely for all their work.

Communication

We have produced several newsletters since the last AGM to help to keep everyone informed about what is happening. Ruth, our secretary, writes these for us. PJ keeps our Facebook page up to date too. Nina, our brilliant web master, keeps the website up to date.

Membership

We have many new members this year and the average age of our membership is actually decreasing as we attract younger people. The pool of talent is increasing and this can only be a good thing. It is not that long ago that we had a shortage of male actors but this has changed too. Thank you to Eileen and Sheila for their work on membership during the last year.

We desperately need volunteers for work back stage on lighting and technical support, set design and construction and stage management. Please let us know if you are interested or have anyone in mind that could help

Honorary members

Since ITS began in late 1975, we have never had any honorary members and we only have six life members. The life members, with a two exceptions, purchased the life membership many years ago as a way to raise funds for ITS. The Board feels it is now time to identify individuals who have contributed exceptionally to the success of ITS over many years. We are proposing Ann Shaw and Fred Wallis as honorary members posthumously plus Barbara Mitchell and Peter Rogers as honorary members.

Sandra will now say a few words about each of them.

Thank you

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of ITS over the last year. And I do mean everyone, no

matters how small or large the contribution, it all matters and it all makes a difference. We have a great team of people who work well together to produce some great theatre for a team of great people whom we call our audiences.

The Board would like to thank the following people for their exceptional contribution to ITS and for their long service:

Eileen Audas
Jamie Stonehewer
Karl Maresz
Nina Montabalo
June Rendell
Peter Brooks
Alan Jones

Finally, I would like to offer my personal thanks to two people without whom I couldn't carry on in the positions of both President and Treasurer.

Eileen, who keeps the books of ITS in such a professional manner. She is always on-top of our expenses and income and has produced the accounts for tonight's meeting and those of our board meetings. THANK YOU!

My sincere thanks also to Ruth who, as our secretary, keeps the Board in order, manages the majority of the administration and manages to smile no matter what! Thank you!

And finally, a big thank you to each and every one of you for attending this evening, and we all look forward to another very successful year with ITS.

Martin Curd, February 2020.