**AGM REPORTS 2023-2024**

**Report From The Club Committee [Bar] – June 2024**

The committee for the last year has been David Park, Lee Midgley, Chloe Walker, Sue Piper, Dennis Keith, Mel Seago and Jonty Hawkes. At the first meeting Jonty Hawkes was volunteered as Chairman and Sue Piper as Secretary.

With their hard work and support and the help of all our bar and cafe volunteers we have raised funds in the year to 31st March 2024 of over £ 22,000. The bar has continued to do well with an increase of over £ 3,500 to more than £ 18,500 profit. The cafe has also had a good year with an increase in profit to over £ 3,200. We have continued to ensure that our profit margin remains good by careful buying from a number of different sources (Martinez, Ilkley Brewery, J L Brooks, Bookers, ABV, Tesco & Morrisons), along with tight stock control to reduce ullages (stock going out of date). We continue to keep an eye on all our cost prices to ensure we generate a fair and reasonable margin.

Thank you to Cath L. in the office for sorting out the rotas. With several of our long-time volunteers taking well-earned ‘retirement’ it has not always been easy to fill the rotas. Fortunately, a few volunteers have helped out by doing four or five shifts, helping on the bar, in the cafe, on programmes and as House Manager so a special thank you to them.

We got a few new volunteers after the ‘Volunteer Evening’ in February but more are needed so if you can help or you know someone who might be able to help (volunteers do not need to be members) then please get in touch. New volunteers will be fully supported and will have an experienced bar/cafe person with them to show them the ropes.

The Playhouse Monthly Book Sale continues to open once a month and contributed over £1,000 to Playhouse funds. Thank you to all those who supported the library by buying or donating books. There are now over 1900 books to choose from, for more information go to [www.facebook.com/IPLibrary](http://www.facebook.com/IPLibrary) or email me to be included in the circulation list. The Book Sale is open to non-members so tell your friends and family all about it.

I would like to give a special thank you to three of our committee, Lee Midgley, Dennis Keith and Mel Seago who have all given good service to the Playhouse over a number of years and are now taking a break. We are therefore looking for new people to come on to the committee. It is not an onerous role, if you are interested then please get in touch with me for more information.

And finally, thank you to all our customers, without you we would make nothing!

**Jonty Hawkes**

[jonty@DirectSave.net](mailto:jonty@directsave.net)

**(Club Committee Chair)**

**Co-Artistic Directors’ Report to the Annual General Meeting of Ilkley Players Ltd.**

**June 2024**

**Current Season Overview**

At the time of writing, there are two productions remaining of the current season; *Glorious!* which opens the day after the AGM, and *Honour*, which will play in the Wildman Studio in July. This season has been a strong one, both in terms of quality and increased audience numbers. Our thanks and congratulations to the previous Artistic Director and all the volunteers who have contributed to the success of the season.

**New Season 2024-2025**

Work has begun on the 2024-2025 Season. Our thanks to the play reading and selection committee for their dedication, hard work and support in this. The launch evening in February was well attended, with a very positive response from actors and stage management volunteers showing an interest in the plays and signing up to be involved. The casting process has been completed for the season opener *An Enemy of the People* and is in motion for the next two productions. We are indebted to the members of the casting committee (and others) for their time given. We thank Ian Taylor, co-convenor of the committee, who is stepping down in order to take on the role of Chair of the Theatre Committee from Chrissie Poulter. We would like to thank Chrissie for all the help and support she has given us over the past year since we took on the role of Joint AD. Similarly, we are very grateful to Justine for everything she has done – and continues to do – in terms of help, support, explanations and encouragement; we really appreciate it.

**The Greenroom**

The Greenroom continues to play a significant role in the life of Ilkley Playhouse. The weekly Saturday morning classes attract a good number of young people who come to gain confidence, performance skills and to socialise. Anyone who saw the production of *The IT* earlier this year will be in no doubt about the level of talent and commitment on display. Several members of the Junior class were involved in *The Vicar of Dibley*, and two members of the Seniors appeared in *The Haunting* and *Things I Know to be True*. With both a Junior Greenroom production and *The Trials* taking place in January 2025, we remain committed to giving our younger members opportunities to shine. Many thanks to Andrew Leggott and Lisa Debney for their hard work and commitment.

**Internal Projects**

‘*Playhouse Stories’* – the intergenerational project. This project was mentioned in the last three newsletters and there has been a reasonable response from people willing to share their stories. Damien has met with the senior Greenroom members to tell them about the project. We have identified some dates in October ’24 when the Literature Festival are using the Wildman where DOK can work with the young people on developing material for this project. Members who have shared their stories and are able to attend any of these sessions are welcome to join us.

**Partnerships**

Yvette, Justine and Dick met with Lisa Mallaghan from Bradford Producing Hub to discuss potential use of our spaces for rehearsals, meetings etc. Yvette had initial discussions about a link with Ilkley Lit Fest. These will be expanded now that the plays in the season have been announced. Chrissie Poulter will direct the production of *Bronte* in the new season. She has already identified possible links with Bronte Parsonage Museum for projects that could run in tandem with the production. Dick forwarded a message from Ilkley Manor House that they would be interested in hosting an evening event in partnership with the Playhouse. Damien and Yvette will follow this up to discuss the potential.

Ilkley Clean River Group have been identified as a potential link for *An Enemy of the People* and *The River*. Justine passed on contact details for Climate Action Ilkley who are also interested in some form of link around *An Enemy of the People* and *The Trials*. Yvette has been in contact with the groups to follow up and discuss potential links and publicity and YH and DOK met with Esther Abramson from Climate Action Ilkley and discussed these links. She was especially interested in doing some work around *The Trials*. YH has also made direct contact with Becky Malby from The Clean River Ilkley group and a meeting is to be arranged.

**Volunteers**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the brilliant volunteers who work across all areas of the theatre, and who give their time to make sure that our ambitious programme of productions and events is realised. We hope that you have felt welcome and valued as part of the Playhouse family, and that you continue to enjoy your time spent here.

**Publicity and Communications**

It is very pleasing to note that there has been an increase in the number of volunteers who have joined the publicity and marketing team. Publicity is a crucial element in the success of each production and, in turn, that of Ilkley Playhouse itself. Thanks to Becky Carter, Carol Butler and the volunteer photographers, and to Vani Midgely, who has taken on the responsibility of keeping our Instagram and Facebook presence updated. Chrissie Poulter continues to look after the X/Twitter account. Potentially, there are two others who are interested in joining the committee. There will be a new editor of the Newsletter from September. We are delighted that Marie Varney is joining us and will be taking up that role.

**Looking Ahead**

There are ongoing discussions and plans for Bradford 2025 links and events at the Playhouse. Several of the forthcoming season’s productions align with themes in Bradford 2025 or have a local relevance. Yvette is attending a meeting, with representatives from other arts organisations in Ilkley, at the Manor House on June 11 with Gaby Lees, Bradford 2025 Engagement Programme Producer. Reading lists are being compiled for the 2025-26 season. A new director, Rebecca Thomas, is starting in post at the Minack Theatre on June 1 and we are exploring possibilities for the 2026 season.

**Damien O’Keeffe and Yvette Huddleston**

**Theatre Manager Report for AGM 2023-2024**

At last year’s AGM, we reflected on the extraordinary number of productions and events. This financial year has been no different. We have continued with the same commitment to provide a wide range of fantastic entertainment in our bustling, welcoming and much-loved community theatre. We have witnessed some outstanding productions in both the Wharfeside Theatre and Wildman Studio. Overall, the plays within this financial year have been popular with ticket sales better than last year and particularly strong at the end of 2023 with *The Incident Room* and *The Vicar of Dibley*.

Our impressive accomplishments are all thanks to a whole team effort with everyone pulling together: members, volunteers, trustees, and staff. I thank and applaud each of you.

This ability to pull together was wonderfully strong when we hosted a successful Open Evening in February.

Our dedicated teams of volunteers proudly welcomed visitors and encouraged new members to join our Playhouse family. The positive energy from everyone involved and fabulous feedback was simply lovely.

Also in February, we were delighted to see a large turnout for the New Season Launch night. There was a great atmosphere as people gathered to hear our new Artistic Directors, Yvette and Damien, talk about their vision and to hear from each play director. Thank you to Yvette and Damien for all your hard work picking up this season and creating the 2024-2025 season with the Play Selection Committee.

**Events and Hires**

I am delighted that our reputation as a great destination for an evening of top-notch entertainment continues to grow. I have continued to develop our audience profile by offering a range of high-quality events across theatre, film, music, dance, comedy, poetry, presentations, and festivals.

We have seen consistently well attended events, particularly music gigs which have regularly sold out with every event making a profit and a significant contribution to the bar takings.

As always, I introduced some new bands and welcomed back our most popular: The Yorkshire Swing Collective, Elvis Songbook, Gaelforce, A Night of the Stars, Roisin Ban, Jon Palmer Acoustics, Chris Bannister, Rob Dylan Band, Laurel Canyon Union, Stagefright Comedy Club to name a few. *An Evening in Buenos Aires,* a dance event, sold out both nights within days of going on sale. Last July, for the first time, we welcomed the Ilkley Stage Singers to our Wharfeside Theatre. They were delighted with our facilities and are returning this year. Most recently, a sell-out production of a play about men’s mental health, *Bridge,* was performed by two professional actors who had asked to return after their production of *Letter to Boddah* two years ago because the Wildman Studio is one of their favourite places to perform!

Our regular hires remained loyal. My thanks go to the Ilkley Film Society, Ilkley Literature Festival, U3A Voyagers, U3A Environment, Vintage Fair and Outside the Box. Our Poetry and the Novel, and History of Art courses continued. There were several private parties, a Yorkshire Water information day, a well-attended author event, and Climate Action Ilkley enjoyed our facilities for their presentation day. I met with the Ilkley Literature Festival ahead of their October festival and secured their return to the Playhouse.

**Community**

We are pleased to have collaborated with Wharfedale Amnesty for the film showing of *Aisha* as part of Refugee Week 2023, and we look forward to showing *The Old Oak* in June as part of Refugee Week 2024.

We worked with local learning support groups and have ensured that a relaxed performance of our Christmas production is once again included in our next season. We have continued to work with the Manor House, Ilkley BID, Ilkley Cultural Cooperative, Discover Ilkley and Ilkley Business Forum. Recently, Outside the Box’s drama group returned to perform anotherproduction in the Wildman – the feedback was great with a credit to us in their programme. Thank you, Paul Chattwood, for volunteering to cover the tech again.

Relationships with local schools have continued with Ilkley Grammar regularly advertising our productions via their newsletters, and Sam Hill, presenting our Drama prize at the Year 11 prizegiving evening. Our Christmas Coffee Morning received support from members who gathered to watch performances from our talented Greenroom students. Huge thanks to Andrew Leggott and Lisa Debney. Sam Hill hosted her President’s Party to celebrate our wonderful volunteers and staff. And we held a productive meeting with Bradford City of Culture 2025 and look forward to developing that relationship.

At next year’s AGM, I will be able to share with you the outcome of this year’s July events in the Wharfeside Theatre. Now that the July production has been moved to the Wildman, I am making use of the Wharfeside’s availability for two weekends in July with back-to-back events.

I would like to acknowledge Richard Neale. Richard is a volunteer who quietly and efficiently runs our incredibly successful 100 Club. During lockdown, Richard had the idea to start the Club and since its inception has raised £12,000 for the Playhouse. Thank you to Richard and everyone who has made this scheme successful by joining.

And my thanks and congratulations also go to the Fund-Raising Committee for all their hard work securing several successful grant applications this year.

**Publicity**

Thank you to Becky Carter who has kindly continued to write her super reviews for our plays. Photography continues to run smoothly under Carol Butler’s leadership. Thank you to Frances Kaye for all her support with social media. She recently stepped down and we welcomed Vani Midgley. Thanks again to Chrissie for looking after X (formerly Twitter). And huge thanks to Damien O’Keeffe who is stepping down as our newsletter editor after many years of keeping our members entertained. And a big welcome to Marie Varney who will replace Damien.

The office has continued to provide daily support for the publicity of all our plays, social and external events and prepare all posters and flyers for distribution. The season brochures, bookmarks, play programmes, posters and flyers are all created by the office with support from Moorprint. Thank you to our team of regular volunteers who help on stuffing days and who distribute our play marketing materials. We are grateful to our programme advertisers.

Our targeting of specific audiences for each play resulted in more group bookings, and our relationship with BBC Radio Leeds, Drystone Radio and Rombalds Radio continued. Productions and events are regularly featured on Ilkley Chat and our plays and events are listed in the Discover Ilkley ‘Things to Do’ section and Bradford Tourism online and the Bradford Visitor Guide, and the Ilkley Business Forum brochure. We are registered with the Volunteering Ilkley website where we advertise volunteer positions. For the first time, you will now see the Playhouse on the Ilkley Tourist Guide & Map.

We have maintained a good press profile with a weekly ‘What’s On’ article in the local newspaper, and radio interviews, thanks to Caroline Mutton. Our members receive a regular ‘What’s On’ email, thanks to Cath Laughey. Rosalia Roberts has continued to look after Membership applications and renewals which have remained steady. I am currently producing our Autumn/Winter brochure which is instrumental in attracting new audiences and hires through our door.

I would like to thank our fantastic committed part-time employees who go above and beyond to ensure the smooth running of the office admin, box office, rotas, membership, publicity, maintaining and cleaning the building, and supporting our volunteers. We are incredibly lucky to have such a dedicated team. It is a pleasure to work with each of you: Cath Laughey, Rosalia Roberts, Cath Chamberlain, Heather Glendenning, Paul Heron, and our freelance evening box office team: Helen Rabbage, Becky Wholley and Jess Redhead.

**Justine Sowden May 2024**

**Chair of the Theatre Committee Report: AGM 2023/24**

It has been an energising year for everyone as the new Artistic Co-directors, Yvette and Damien, took the first steps into their term of office.

The Theatre Committee (TC) has acted as a bridge, knowing how things run but also wanting to hold the door open for the changes new artistic direction is sure to bring. The TC is made up of the heads of different areas and we continue to meet every few months to manage and support all aspects of running the theatre day to day. The teams working on costume, set-building, lights, sound and all things technical have yet again produced a string of excellent shows with top class production values and design.

Then there are the volunteers who make sure that each visit is about more than the show, looking after the audience so well while they are with us. We are looking at how we might improve the facilities in the front of house areas for the café and bar.

The TC Chair attends Trustee meetings, which has been very useful in helping us to have a clearer idea of the work they are doing and making sure they are in the picture about the activity and concerns of TC members and all working to make Ilkley Playhouse the hive of industry and welcome we know it to be. A development this year was the standing invitation to the Artistic Directors who also now attend all the regular Trustee meetings.

The Trustees have been very active in discussing resources, access and sustainability, setting up a small working group to pursue funding opportunities. Members of TC have submitted ‘wish lists’ from their respective areas (backstage, tech, Front of House etc) which have informed the search for grants. Success in terms of external funding for the lifts is matched in terms of delight, with the internal funding provided to install a water heater backstage!

Meanwhile our key source of funding comes from box office sales and we need all members to help spread the word about the programme of theatre and other events, all of which contribute to show budgets, building maintenance, publicity costs etc etc ..

Audiences have continued to recover from the post-Covid lull, helped by a sell-out

run of The Vicar of Dibley and excellent figures from The Incident Room, but things are not yet completely ‘back to normal’, with some good shows getting small audiences for their opening nights as the habit of waiting for word of mouth lingers on.

As part of their review of all aspects of the theatre, the ADs are looking at marketing, with the publicity team, as we fathom how to bring our audiences back out of their houses to fill ours! We definitely need more hands on deck in terms of a live and up to date presence on social media, which needs news and views from everyone – not just information but the human factor coming from rehearsals in the lead up to a show opening. The ADs are in discussion with Bradford 2025 and our 2024-25 season of plays provides a number of themes and subjects which give us an opportunity to link in with local Ilkley groups such as the Friends of Ilkley Riverside Park, and Ilkley Clean River Group (and that’s just for the opening production)

As was said last year:

‘This report is in part an annual thank you to all the wonderful individuals and teams who

put their all into making our programme come alive, and also a rallying cry and call-out to all other members to come and join us for at least one new thing this year’

Stirling work from Janet Park and many others, including an excellent Open Evening early in 2024 has helped boost the band of core volunteers, enabling us to cover most shows in the season with prompts, stage managers and assistants, but we can always use more. There’s something for everyone, no matter how small or large a part you want to play in the backstage team. We still need more hands on deck (pun intended) in the sound and lighting booths, so if you’ve an eye for the technical side of things, do let us know.

The new Social Director, Julia Wilson, has arranged some final night cast celebrations and is looking towards a programme of events for all members to have a chance to meet each other outside of the stressful yet fun environment of putting on a show.

There are two of us writing this report because there was a change of chair in March, when Chrissie Poulter stepped down (as she said she would at last year’s AGM) to focus on a postponed project in Ireland.

Ian Taylor, the Convenor for the Casting Committee, agreed to take up the reins after discussion with the ADs and Chair of Trustees. This is an interim arrangement as the Chair is an AGM appointment, so it will be up to the members to approve Ian as Chair if they agree to his continuing. The TC knows how hard it is to find volunteers for committee roles, so Ian has been made very welcome!

The Theatre Committee once again owe a tremendous debt of thanks for the hard work and infectious enthusiasm of our Theatre manager Justine Sowden, along with her hard-working team of office and box office staff. Without them we would not be here tonight celebrating a year of achievement and looking forward to another to come.

Finally, we thank Yvette and Damien for their first year as Artistic Directors and look forward to more of their ideas bearing fruit in 2024/25.

**Chrissie Poulter and Ian Taylor June 2024**

**Technical Report Season 2023 – 2024**

When I made my report to last year’s AGM we were about to head off to Minack with Blithe Spirit. That was my 3rd trip to Minack, firstly with Kiss Me Kate as a member of the ensemble and prop/furniture builder – next as Stage Manager/builder with Blue Stockings and this was my first visit as Tech Director/Stage Manager and Builder ( special thanks to the Marston’s who organised backstage so brilliantly) – our round carpet got many favourable comments though the idea for it came from my wife – I as ever simply the facilitator!!

From a tech point of view and from a Minack point of view everything went like clockwork unlike previous years – Richard Stageman and Alison from Bingley (who attended at their own expense) handled the lighting and the sound and lighting plot we designed for Ilkley was done so with the Minack stage in mind. As a result, the lighting test was over in about 3 hours and we were away by 9pm …… to get an early night’s sleep after a very long day.

Minack had its excitements – up till 2am with the air ambulance following an accident to a cast member’s partner in the auditorium - I even had to go on stage in a non-speaking cameo role due to cast sickness.

The get out was a dream helped immensely by the cast and all involved – again a team effort all round - and Paul Jay and I set off in the early hours of the morning home – by 11am the same day we were unloaded and all out back at Ilkley Playhouse! – And we made significant profit as well………

Last year you will recall that my concerns surrounded the aging stage of our infrastructure – limited by lack of funds to invest - and the general absence of support in general for running shows and assisting with the tech provision.

I am pleased to say that with an appeal for help we have improved that situation greatly – we still have a “two team” situation which is not ideal but has provided the cover for the shows which we cannot – Paul and I have been joined by Peter Higginbotham, Jackie Campbell and Wander Bruijel and this has meant more involvement for them and a spreading of the load on our part and I extend my thanks for all their hard work and involvement in the making the current season easier.

The infrastructure side of things is more difficult in view of the large costs associated with the ultimate conversion which we will have to do – moving from our old traditional incandescent lighting to LED. There are operating cost savings involved in the switch – one quote we have received was for around £58000 so you can see the scale of the investment and you will see from the treasurer’s report we don’t have that kind of money in the bottom drawer!

We may have to go for a piecemeal conversion over time when grant funds permit and we are working on a number of proposals going forward.

Of more immediate requirements we need to maintain the current structure and it is envisaged that this summer both theatres will have the electrical circuits and lights safety tested – something that has been outstanding since 2019.

As we are constrained by budget we have been “making do and mending” the existing equipment and that is a policy that is likely to continue as we move forward – things do break however and the Wharfeside Sound desk failed mid show during Nell Gwyn and was replaced by the Wildman desk – an old spare desk replacing it in the Wildman – however that is now showing signs of failure and we will need to purchase at least one sound mixing desk in the coming months. I managed to repair our 20yr old smoke machine but it too could do with replacing etc.

We will continue to work to support plays with ever increasing demands on technical requirements to the best of our ability.

**Chris Cundell**

**Tech Director**

**Publicity Report: Becky Carter, Publicity Director**

The publicity team has had some challenges this year, which although difficult at the time, are now happily resolved.

We started the year in our normal fashion with Carol Butler brilliantly organising the photographers and making sure that images for all publicity were taken and supplied. Many thanks are also due to our team of photographers, who have captured so beautifully the essence of each production.

Caroline Mutton continues to write her weekly round ups for the Gazette which keep the various readerships, both in print and online, informed of all the events that the Playhouse is offering each week. This is another huge undertaking and one for which we are enormously grateful.

We are also grateful to the now smaller stuffing team who continue to prepare the envelopes for posting for those members who prefer to receive paper copies of correspondence.

I continue to write all the reviews which hopefully inspire our audiences further.

Of course, it would be remiss not to mention the massive part played by Justine Sowden in preparing all the programmes and posters for our productions, producing the brochures, as well as organising all the directed mail-shots which are emailed out to relevant interested parties to maximise ticket sales.

We experienced problems in the middle of the year with the continuity of our social media feed. It had been operated very comprehensively by another volunteer until the late Autumn when due to a number of extraneous factors – specifically a family health crisis – the flow was interrupted. After a period of uncertainty, when a number of people worked hard to try to fill in – and many thanks are due here to Chrissie Poulter, Jay Cundell-Walker and Mark Simister in particular for their efforts to prop up our output, it became clear that we would need to replace our social media volunteer.

The Publicity Team was therefore delighted to recruit Vani Midgely to the team who has already taken over in this role and has made sure that there is comprehensive, positive and very regular output across both Facebook and Instagram. For now, Chrissie is continuing with the Twitter (now X) feed. We are aware that this is a responsibility that Chrissie would like to relinquish when possible so any volunteers should make themselves known.

With our co-Artistic Directors, we recently had a very positive meeting where we were able to also welcome Victoria Morrison to the team – she is looking into possibly supporting some of the design elements of our publicity amongst other interests. We were also very pleased to meet Marie Varney, who is taking over as the editor of our newsletter.

We are still conscious that there are long term residents in Ilkley who don’t know that we exist and making ourselves more visible remains a concern. Our building is discreetly tucked away and the publicity team has started to consider new signage, banners and branding which might help to make us more obvious. We are also aware that our very central location does not necessarily make accessibility easier and that carparking is a challenge – in the winter in particular and these are factors that we must take seriously.

As ever, we know that the most positive and valuable publicity that we receive is word of mouth. The more we talk about our shows the better. We have put out some incredibly powerful, well received productions over the past year and we have every reason to be proud about them. So, let’s shout about our success from the roof tops and let it grow!

**GREENROOM ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

**Membership** The membership of the Junior Class has remained fairly stable over the course of the year, at around 15. Membership of the Senior Class is currently 27. Places are available in both classes.

From September 2020, the fees have been set at £50 per term (£45 for additional siblings). These will increase to £55 from September 2024 but the additional siblings fee will remain unchanged at £45 per term.

**Tutors** This was the fourteenth year the writer (Andrew Leggott) had led the Greenrooms, and the seventh year for Lisa Debney as Co-Tutor. Occasional guests tutor sessions.

**Activities** We try to continue to provide variety in our games, exercises, improvisations and script work. However, the glee with which “old favourites” are met is very encouraging.

We recently reintroduced the popular Trust Exercises after a break due to Covid and are gradually returning to work involving greater contact and proximity.

**Annual Production – Senior Class**

We entered the National Theatre Connections Project for Spring 2023.

The play allocated was “(Circle Dreams Around) The Terrible, Terrible Past” by Simon Longman, an intriguing and surreal dream-play. Andrew and Lisa directed.

We performed for three nights in the Wildman in March 2023, and once in York Theatre Royal Studio Theatre in April. We were then selected as one of 10 out of 264 groups nationwide to perform our play at the Dorfman Theatre on the South Bank, London in June 2023. What an honour and what a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the 21 students and one youth technician involved! Two nights all expenses paid and performance to a full house.

In March 2024 we presented “The IT”, by Vivienne Franzmann, a powerful piece about adolescent mental health, for three nights in the Wildman, with 16 students and two youth technicians. Not a crowd puller, it was nevertheless deeply appreciated by its audiences as representing a moving examination of a significant and timely topic, as also revealed at the nightly Q and A sessions after the performances.

Next year in January the Seniors will return to the Wharfeside stage in “The Trials” by Dawn King, a contemporary climate change drama, directed by Damien O’Keeffe. Their last production on this stage was “Treasure Island” in December 2021, and it’s been too long!

**Annual Production – Junior Class**

For the first time since “The Snow Queen” in 2020, the Juniors (together with younger Seniors) will perform in the Wildman in January 2025, in the ever-popular “Aladdin”. Lots of fun!

**Christmas Coffee Morning and Summer Showcase Events** These continue to be popular and give extra performance opportunities to our youngsters.

**Involvement in Adult Productions** Opportunities continue to arise for Greenroom members to perform in other Playhouse productions, which could not be mounted without their involvement.

**Chaperoning/Safeguarding** It is vitally important that we replenish our stock of Bradford -approved Chaperones. Students under 16 cannot perform without them. More volunteers are needed urgently.

**Retirement** Andrew plans to retire from Greenroom in July 2025, when he will have completed 15 years in post, and be coming up to his 75th birthday. It’s been an extremely happy and productive time. I’ve loved it. Form an orderly queue please!

***ANDREW LEGGOTT and LISA DEBNEY April 2024***

**Ilkley Playhouse Wardrobe Report for 2023-24**

Ilkley Playhouse has an extensive in-house stock of costumes in the wardrobe, which are available for hire to the public and other amateur theatre groups. We have been running our Costume Hire department in-house this year, with support and help from Paula McKie and our other regular and several new volunteers. If you have visited us up on the 3rd floor, you will see there is a wonderful stock of costumes from all periods, which has been put together over many years. The hire side is run alongside the supervision of the wardrobe and the two areas need to be closely linked. We aim to use the stock to costume our own plays and it provides funding towards future wardrobe provision for the theatre.

An additional group of regular and new volunteers with Kath Potts and myself, also meet

throughout the year on each Monday morning, to look after stock and maintain the costume hire area. Details of costume hire arrangements are on our website, www.ilkleyplayhouse.co.uk. We can take enquiries by phone and email. Contact: message for Rosie Bond via the Playhouse office by phone 01943 609539 or ilkleycostumes@hotmail.com or via the Playhouse email: [info@ilkleyplayhouse.co.uk](mailto:info@ilkleyplayhouse.co.uk).

Costume hire is currently at times by appointment only, usually on a Wednesday evening or group hires can be arranged during the daytime on weekdays with Paula.

In relation to plays, we are costuming from stock if we can, or hiring in and each play needs a “costume co-ordinator” to work with the ladies of the wardrobe. A plea from us, we are looking for additions to a small team to join us to take and share responsibility for carrying out this role for individual plays during the next play season 2024-25. All plays are “costume plays”, whichever period they are set in and the role of Wardrobe involves co-ordinating with the director and set designer from pre-production onwards and with the cast during rehearsals for fittings and then during the run of the play. This year, we have costumed, notably, Blithe Spirit, with a summer tour to the Minack theatre in Cornwall and Nell Gwynn, including a major contribution, using her expertise on wigs, from Sephra Greening-Jackson.

The Playhouse was host to another two of Jill Coulson’s Saturday Vintage Fairs in Autumn 2023 and April 2024, which were very successful and popular busy events. There is another Vintage Fair planned for a Saturday at the end of October 2024.

Alterations, some making of costumes and props, providing accessories, laundry, ironing etc. are the responsibility of the “Sewing room”, who meet at the Playhouse on Wednesday evenings. We welcome new recruits to this very valuable team of volunteers, who work all year round to maintain our stock. If you have an interest in sewing or costume please contact us via the Playhouse office. We are very grateful to all our helpers, who have been extensively involved in costume hires, sewing room and maintaining and costuming plays in rehearsal and behind the scenes throughout this year.

**Rosie Bond, on behalf of the Wardrobe group, April 2024**

**Little Theatre Guild Report for 2023-24 for Ilkley Playhouse**

The Little Theatre Guild grew out of a common idea that independently controlled amateur theatres might benefit from regular meetings to discuss problems, experiences and standards. The Guild now represents around 124 member theatres throughout the United Kingdom; all have sole control over an established theatre through ownership, lease or contract; are independent and self-governing; produce a regular programme of stage plays and are non-commercial in character. Ilkley Playhouse has been an LTG Member since 1972.

The LTG’s website can be found at **‘www.littletheatre.org’** publishing updates and an annual yearbook listing all member theatres and their productions. The Conferences are a great opportunity for networking with other theatres, keeping updated, sharing experiences and having an enjoyable theatre weekend.

The **LTG National Conference and AGM for 2023** was hosted by **The Questors Theatre** in **Ealing** in **June 2023.** I attended as LTG Rep and was accompanied by Sam Hill and Jonty Hawkes. The Questors is one of the founding members of the Little Theatre Guild. Producing 18 – 20 productions a year, including a Christmas Panto; they own their theatre, which has a 350-seater main auditorium, thrust-style, the Judi Dench Playhouse and a 100-seat Studio theatre. They run an Acting Academy and a Youth theatre. On the Saturday night, we watched an impressive professional performance, the opening night of their run of **“*Arcadia”, Tom Stoppard’s time-jumping play***. The weekend programme was packed full of workshops and visiting speakers in puppetry, design in stage, running archives, intimacy training, improvisation techniques, reminiscence theatre (QE extra verbatim – Home Is, a record of migration to Ealing) and sustainability issues relevant to theatres. The AGM Q&A tackled issues including membership of ABTT (theatre technicians), production rights queries with royalty holders and an update on the new Martyn’s Law, Duty to Protect.

**Bolton Little Theatre (BLT)** hosted the **Northern LTG Conference** in **October.** Their theatre is an old, converted foundry, built in the early 19th century, based west of Bolton city centre. Like us, also Lottery funded in 1998/99. They have two stages: main stage theatre seats 160, steeply raked, proscenium arch. Also, a 60-seat studio space, fixed seating in the round, The Forge. An entrance/box office/coffee bar/bar area, two dressing rooms, large rehearsal room, and several storage rooms for costumes and props, etc. complete the facilities; all housed in a two-storey building. They stage 8 plays in a season, 4 in each theatre, each for 6 or 8 performances, apart from the Christmas pantomime, with 11 performances in December. Again, Sam and Jonty attended with me. Workshops offered: Wigs, Hair, Make-Up and Tattoos; Writing Reviews and Theatre Anecdotes. Q&A on Storage of Armoury, Employment of Staff and PPL/PRS fees. The play performed for us by BLT on Saturday evening in The Forge Studio Theatre was **‘Blue Stockings’ by Jessica Swale** (our Minack production in 2019).

**Future conference dates in 2024:**

**National Conference & AGM 2024: Sutton Arts Theatre, Sutton Coldfield, 22nd/23rd June 2024**

**Regional Conference Northern 2024 – Caxton Theatre, Grimsby, October 2024**

**Rosie Bond, LTG Rep Ilkley, April 2024**