



## AGM 2023

### Chairman's Report April 2022 to March 2023 and beyond

This report is for the financial year (FY) up to March 2023, our 10<sup>th</sup> year, having launched in April 2013. We held a lovely 10<sup>th</sup> birthday event in May 2023 (actually in the 'next' FY!).

#### Highlights

I would like to give a big thank you to all those who contributed so positively to those activities we ran during the FY, which I'll now summarise.

- **Events**

Once again, we held our regularly monthly "Second Tuesday" events, now all in person as the pandemic fades. Events are usually run by volunteers, perhaps our members or our friends from show business and beyond, who share their expertise and experience with attendees. This FY has included workshops on Accents, Blood effects, Improv, New Writing as well as readings.

We see these regular events as a way of maintaining the STC community throughout the year, and providing an entry point for new members too. They continue to be free to members and only £3 for non-members.

- **Productions**

Post-pandemic, we have only managed to stage two productions this FY.

Attempts to stage a pantomime 'Dick Whittington' were thwarted due to lack of potential performers auditioning for the main parts.

We were able to stage a musical hall/variety show 'No Turn Unstoned' for the Streatham Festival in October 2022, inspired by a talk given by Liz Burton and In Freeman at our July 2022 event. Featuring a range of music and comedy 'turns', this was well received, though audience turnout was lower than hoped. Having individuals or small groups doing separate turns made rehearsals easier post-pandemic.

For our first "proper-play" since before COVID, in January 2022 Gabriel Kellett proposed directing 'God of Carnage' and was able to cast it, with a good turnout of auditionees. Unfortunately, a professional version was announced so the performing licence was no longer available. Gabe was able to find an alternative play using the same cast 'Consuming Passions' which was recently very successfully staged (actually in FY 2023-24).

One perennial problem for us is finding local venues to stage shows which are practical, available and affordable. Practical in terms of facilities (like lighting) and capacity; available for get-in, rehearsals and performances; and affordable so that we don't waste money.

Most local halls are very busy with community user groups and have few facilities, meaning we have to "build a theatre inside" before we can perform. Our local theatres are either closed (Streatham Hill Theatre/bingo hall - where we have performed before) or unaffordable (Streatham Space Project which is around ten times more expensive than local halls). The Streatham Library hall is also unavailable due to staffing constraints. We have flagged up the issue with Lambeth and will keep in contact with them. I am trying to arrange a meeting with the cabinet member for community.

- **Members and Friends**

We welcome members from a diverse range of ages and backgrounds - some are completely new to theatre and several have made their stage debut with STC. Others have amateur and professional experience which they share with others through our activities. We keep our annual subscriptions low - still £10 after 10 years - and don't charge participation fees unlike other groups.

Our online community is kept in touch through our email list (now with a new provider), our website, Facebook/Instagram and Twitter.

Terry, our Membership Secretary, will report more shortly.

- **Finances**

We will have a full report from Liz our Treasurer shortly.

As a non-profit organisation we don't plan to make a profit! Any income goes into running our activities, with surplus going into our reserves to support us over any future bad patches - like COVID-19.

In an ideal world, subscriptions would cover our fixed costs (like insurance) and income from tickets would cover production costs plus leave some over for events and other activities. In practice there's some "swings and roundabouts" here, but it all works out in the end.

- **Moving on**

We are constantly looking ahead to our future programme of productions, and welcome proposals. While open to any kind of production, we need shows which we can realistically deliver given our constraints in venues, budgets and availability of participants! We also need directors/producers to drive forward these ideas and turn them into reality.

We would usually aim to stage 3 or 4 productions a year and like to maintain a rolling programme for the next few shows, but getting back into rhythm post-COVID has been slow.

We will continue the regular second Tuesday events, which are important to maintain an ongoing community. We are always open to suggestions for events, and for volunteers to run them!

- **Conclusion**

In conclusion, I'd like to express great thanks to everyone who provided support and encouragement from all around Streatham, and all those who have volunteered their time and expertise to stage our shows and run our events programme. Plus of course our committee, members, patrons, followers, and audiences and anyone I've left out.

Finally, a special mention to Mel Newman who has left the committee this year due to work commitments for her work as Secretary and on Streatham Shorts; to Barbara Lee who has stepped down due to health reasons for work as Secretary and Events; and to Esh and David who are always willing to help with our activities.

Volunteers for committee and other roles are always welcome!

*You have all continued to help put theatre into Streatham. Thank you*

**David Harvey**

Chairman, AGM 2023