

Board of Directors

Richard Langlois (President)
Wendi Smith (Treasurer)
Montana Tait (Secretary)
Kyle Ahluwalia (member at large)
Suzanne Amey (member at large)
Laurie MacEachern (member at large)
Mathieu Mazur-Goulet (member at large)



Minutes for Annual General Meeting held Monday, June 27, 2016 at
Kitchissippi United Church

PRESENT:

BOARD: Kyle Ahluwalia, Suzanne Amey, Richard Langlois, Laurie MacEachern, Mathieu Mazur-Goulet, Wendi Smith, Montana Tait

MEMBERS: Maureen Amey, Ellen Boynton, Guy Charlebois, Darcy Dalton, Frank Dalton, Dante De Luca, Myrna Ferris, Ron Geyer, Katherine Hobbs, Peter "Sneezy" Hodgson, Tom Hughes, David Jeanes, Victor Laurin, Penny Mapleston, Meredith Matthews, Glenn McCue, David Milne, Kara Morris, Gloria Jean Nagy, Bruce Patterson, Marcella Pauckova, Sue Postlewaite, Morris Rothman, Paul Simonyi, Brenda Solman, Wilhem Van Geyzel, Veronica Verdicchio, Dave Woycheshin

PROXIES: Julie Dustin (held by Penny Mapleston), Bianca Gabriel (held by Meredith Matthews), Lindsey Hawley (held by Montana Tait), Keith Shaw (held by Meredith Matthews), Al Tassie (Meredith Matthews), Heather Zurbrigg (held by Morris Rothman), Gloria Young (held by Wendi Smith).

OTHER: Lyse Van Geyzel

QUORUM MET: Yes

1. Call to Order:

After verifying that more than 50% of the membership was present, Richard Langlois called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

2. Approval of last minutes:

Members were asked to review the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting. Gloria Jean Nagy asked if David Milne was in fact a guest at last year's meeting. Wendi Smith said that she would check her notes and change it if necessary. Motion to approve minutes with corrections if required: moved by Gloria Jean Nagy, seconded by Peter "Sneezy" Hodgson. Minutes of the last AGM were approved by a show of hands.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising from the floor.

4. President's report:

Richard Langlois reported that:

- a. A Grants and Fundraising Working Group was formed to apply for money from government and private sources. While the WG was unsuccessful in securing new funding for Savoy, it resolved an outstanding issue with a past grant and restored its relationship with the City of Ottawa.
- b. *Love and Marriage*: Richard deferred this matter to Wendi Smith to report on. Wendi reported that, for the concert, performers were allowed to choose their own pieces not necessarily from Gilbert and Sullivan. It was a test to see what the members were interested in performing, and not many people chose to perform opera. This showed that the Society may be moving away from opera, though comedy was still popular within the group.

Gloria Jean Nagy commented that the constant change of repertoire upset the accompanist, and that we would need to start planning the concert earlier to prevent this in the future.

- c. *Iolanthe*: Richard noted that, in his view, the Star Wars introductions were a great idea by Julie Dustin. Richard also congratulated the directors and everyone else involved.
- d. Permanent home for Savoy: Everyone loved the stage, and although backstage was slightly packed, it still worked. The stage space was well utilised during the show. It was noted, however, that this year Cedarview Alliance Church gave Savoy a large discount for the rental of the space, and that they have made it clear that they would charge us more if the Society wishes to use the space again in the future.

Wendi mentioned that we took up a lot of the technical crew's time.

Myrna Ferris then asked if we could use our own technical crew because she had found many people interested in doing this. Wendi answered that if we could find others to form a tech crew, it would help. Richard said that the Society would still need to look at other options for the future.

Maureen Amey asked if the change in venue from Woodroffe to Cedarview changed the number of people who attended the show. Wendi responded that both *Pirates of Penzance* last season and *Iolanthe* this season were close in numbers and how both were fruitful. Gloria Jean mentioned that at least one person had informed her that they were inconvenienced by the new location. Brenda Solman agreed, stating that anyone who could not drive was likely unable to attend as the buses were unreliable. Bruce Patterson commented that

he had sold fewer tickets this year because the venue was difficult to get to without a vehicle. Richard responded that people had to share rides to the church, but that this was not a new issue for Savoy.

Wilhem Van Geyzel commented that the venue would have to be sorted out well in advance for the show as this would help with advertising. Richard agreed that this would need to be fixed but said that the late advertising had always been a problem for the Society.

Frank Dalton asked what the price from Cedarview included. Richard said that a higher cost would give the Society more time there as we were there late each night. Kyle Ahluwalia mentioned that it had given us access to things we would have needed to borrow otherwise, such as stage lights. Frank asked how much the church where we performed the *Love and Marriage* concert had cost the Society. Wendi answered that it had been very inexpensive, but that it was also very small. She mentioned that Woodroffe was half the price of Cedarview, but that the acoustics there were inadequate. Frank asked if there would be an in-depth analysis of the attendance at Cedarview versus what it might have been at Woodroffe. Richard responded that it would be hard to tell because the Society could not estimate how many people would have attended *Iolanthe* had it been held at Woodroffe.

Glenn McCue mentioned that no one had told the cast or crew that they were running overtime, nor that they were to follow the contract to the smallest detail, and that if someone had, he would have ensured that we were out on time. Wendi and Richard said that Cedarview did not charge the Society more for the extra time, and Richard added that knowing this may help in negotiating with them in the future.

Frank added that Algonquin College and Cedarview were the best stages Savoy has ever performed at, but that both were very expensive. Wendi commented that Cedarview becomes cheaper as more people attend, which once again highlighted the need for better advertising.

e. Long term storage:

Wendi reported that there are still a number of boxes, with props and documents, in Gloria Young's garage and that Gloria would like these items removed. The Society will get a group together to downsize until an alternate storage option can be found. Richard wished that the Society could afford permanent storage space, but it cannot.

- f. Thanks: Richard offered his thanks for the donation of time and their rehearsal spaces from Gloria Jean Nagy and Meredith Matthews. He also thanked Bianca Gabriel's mother, Silvie, for her very generous donation, as well as everyone who worked on the production this year.

5. Producer's report

As there was no producer this year, Suzanne Amey read the report made by Julie Dustin and Gloria Jean Nagy that stated that:

- a. The producers for this year were a combination of Glenn McCue, Julie Dustin, Penny Mapleston, and Suzanne Amey;
- b. The audition panel consisted of Tracy Whalen, a Board Member, Gloria Jean Nagy, and Meredith Matthews, and that it took a total of 10 weeks to cast the show;
- c. Rehearsals took place at Kitchissippi United Church, as well as in Meredith Matthews' and Gloria Jean Nagy's studios;
- d. The pit choir was put together by Gloria Jean Nagy and Maureen Amey, and there were at least two choristers present for each part every night;
- e. The orchestra had fourteen members and was put together by Gloria Jean Nagy and Dave Woycheshin;
- f. Thirty people attended the tech night rehearsal as a fundraiser for CHEO;
- g. The sets were put together by Julie Dustin and Steve LeBlanc and props were done by Veronica Verdicchio and Samantha Boyd. The lighting was done by Carlos Verdicchio. The lighting was fixed above, but floor lighting was also needed. The lyrics were projected on either side of the stage. Microphones were donated by Cedarview;
- h. The stage manager was Rachel Hauraney. It was a bit crowded by the booth with so many people there. The music director would need a headset for next year. The workers at the church were new to live theatre;
- i. The green room dividers were provided by the church. The shared washroom between the cast and the audience was difficult because cast members were unable to go to the washroom during intermission. There was enough storage for costumes despite the small green room; and
- j. The move in, Saturday strike, and final strike all went well.

Richard asked why there was a Saturday night Strike. Suzanne responded the church used the space for services on Sunday morning. David Jeanes commented that he enjoyed the projection on either side of the stage. Dante De Luca said that it helped people who were just learning English because it made it easier to follow along while Gloria Jean commented that someone who was almost deaf was also able to follow the show.

Meredith Matthews asked for the floor at this point. She discussed how long she had been a Society member and made suggestions on how to recreate the old family air.

6. Publicity Report:

Mathieu began by thanking Gloria Jean Nagy, Sneezy Waters, Meredith Matthews, Victor Laurin, Julie Dustin, Ron Geyer, and David Milne for their group effort on publicity. He then went over the number of posters printed this year and where they were displayed. He noted that the Society developed and printed flyers and that a few small advertisements were placed for the show in the Ottawa Citizen, Brahms Choir, Metroland Media and that two additional listings were also made in the West Quebec post and the Nepean-Barrhaven News. *Iolanthe* was featured in a few articles, which was great for publicity. Mathieu thanked the cast members who appeared on the television spot and mentioned that the recording of *Iolanthe* is now on Youtube. Sneezy helped promote the show in radio interviews, while Julie and Ron made road signs and dressed up as peers to hand out posters.

Mathieu mentioned that the Society is working on a more general pamphlet to show what the Society is for future members. Publicity went over budget this year. Mathieu added that he did not have experience in this, but that finding someone who did have experience would help for future shows. He suggests that in the future, the budget for publicity will have to be bigger. He mentioned that a lack of volunteers was also a problem and that we should print more flyers in bulk to reduce costs. In the future, the Society should have better publicity; our social media pages need to be linked; and the poster needs to be earlier. Mathieu also mentioned that critics were contacted but none attended the show.

Myrna Ferris asked why the poster process took so long, that without the poster, advertising was difficult. Mathieu replied that coordinating people was difficult, as was finding graphic designers. Myrna also commented that the production part should be seen online and that the cast should be allowed to go out in their costumes. Mathieu stated that a social media team was created was unsuccessful. Kyle Ahluwalia addressed the second part and noted that cast members typically did not go out in costumes for costume maintenance. Richard added that this was a tradition for Savoy, but that while it had before been viewed as unprofessional, it could be reconsidered in the future. Ellen Boynton mentioned that the old tradition was that people went backstage to see the cast, but no one went out. Glenn McCue added that it was difficult to get everyone out of the building on time if the cast was still in their costume.

Frank Dalton said that two high schools that got posters from Savoy were Saint Paul's and Notre Dame. He mentioned that Canterbury could also an option.

Gloria Jean mentioned that the poster went through a lot of revisions before the final product. Mathieu responded that the original poster seemed amateurish and that the original artist had been asked to fix it but was difficult to contact. He mentioned that the poster went through seven or eight variations before the final product. He also suggested that we find someone else in the future to design our posters.

Maureen Amey commented that Gilbert and Sullivan's names were not included on the poster. Mathieu answered that they had originally been but had to be removed to cut down space. Sneezy responded by saying that there should have been enough room, in order to honor them. Kyle admitted that it may not have been the right decision, but that this is what happened.

7. Report on Grants:

Suzanne applied for a Trillium Seed grant but the application was unsuccessful as the belief was that Savoy did influenced enough people. The Society will try again in the future. The City of Ottawa grant was prepared by Laurie MacEachern. It was also not successful; Laurie was not given a specific reason but said that she would the City to discuss. Both Suzanne and Laurie suggested applying for other grants or funding in the future.

8. Brief Intermission

9. Programme Report:

Montana Tait began by thanking Marcella Pauckova for creating the poster for *Love and Marriage*. She then began by explaining that using the numbers from the *Modern Major General* concert and *Pirates of Penzance*, the Board had estimated that it could potentially receive a total of \$5,000 in ad revenue for *Iolanthe* and \$1,400 in ad revenue for the *Love and Marriage* Concert, but both numbers came in under. Montana also mentioned that between *Mikado* and *Ruddygore* ad sales were going up, but since *Ruddygore*, the revenue brought in from advertisements is decreasing. She suggested that this could possibly just be that businesses are being forced to downsize because of the economy. She also mentioned that *Ruddygore* was the last year where we offered a discounted rate for black and white ads, which may have contributed to the decreased. She said that a lack from the cast engagement over the past few years has also contributed and that there has to be a way of convincing cast members to sell ads without bombarding them.

10. Treasurer's report

Wendi Smith began by mentioning that the money from the *Pirates of Penzance* is part of this fiscal year because it occurred in June.

- a. Current books: the Society has over \$30K in the bank.
 - i. CRA fillings are up to date. Only programme ads are outstanding.
 - ii. The budget was reviewed. The Society got more revenue from donations and more in membership fees. The Society repaid the Merry Widow Grant to the City of Ottawa in the sum of \$3,000. Funds were raised for CHEO, and the Society lost money on bad debts.
- b. *Love and Marriage*: The Society lost money because of lower ticket sales and fewer advertisers.
- c. *Iolanthe*: The Society still needs to get some money from advertisers. Ticket sales did really well. A lot of items went over budget: pianist, publicity, etc. Wendi commented that the show broke even, and that it was a fraction of the cost of *Ruddygore*. It was a bit of an experiment to see if the Society could produce a show on a smaller scale; it learned that this is as bare as it goes and that nothing else could be taken away.
- d. Financial reports were then presented, showing that the bank grew by about \$11,000 in this fiscal year.

Gloria Jean asked why there was such a low budget for the rehearsal pianist, saying that next year the budget should be about \$3,000. Wendi answered that we did not expect the pianist to be at every rehearsal. Kyle added that a producer would have helped to lower this cost, and Richard mentioned that due to previous numbers, we had budgeted this way.

Glenn added that this was not the full cost of the show and that many had volunteered time and materials for the show. Richard agreed, adding that people should come forward with their costs, whether or not they want compensation, so that we can see what it really cost to put on this production. Gloria Jean commented that we should adjust the budget for this. Maureen Amey asked about where the makeup had come from. Richard said that it was volunteers but added that until we know what was spent, we cannot properly raise the budget.

Mathieu asked about last years end amount; Wendi stated that it was under \$29K.

Morris asked if we had any debt, and Wendi said no. He also asked about the number for crew liability came from, and Wendi responded that it was a check from Pirates that was moved to this fiscal year.

Penny Mapleston asked if we needed an audit for this year, and Wendi answered that we are not big enough of a company to require one yet.

Frank Dalton asked what we got from *Pirates, Love and Marriage*, and *Iolanthe* and there was a reduction. Wendi answered that 30K is all we have left in the bank, and that the bank grew by about \$11,000.

Motion to accept the financial report: moved by Morris Rothman, seconded by Bruce Patterson and Frank Dalton. Motion carried.

Motion to discuss Meredith Matthews' honorarium: moved by Penny Mapleston, seconded by Ron Geyer and Wilhem Van Geysel. Motion carried.

Penny mentioned that Gloria Jean and Meredith were being paid two different amounts. Wil asked why there was a discrepancy between the two directors. Richard answered that he did not know why, but in the history of Savoy, the Stage Director and Musical Director were never paid the same. He added that Gloria Jean also acted as Orchestra Conductor and traditionally, the Music Director got \$1,200 for each role while the Stage Director got anywhere between \$1,000 and \$1,200. Meredith Matthews clarified that the Music Director was paid more due to union rules. Penny said that from her recollection the Stage Director's pay was between \$1,200 and \$1,400 depending on experience.

Penny read a letter written by Meredith which explained the motion. Meredith felt like she was lied to by Wendi. She thought she was getting paid \$2,000 to donate back, and she believed no one was getting paid but then learned that Gloria Jean and the accompanist were both being paid hourly. She added that the use of her home was also a problem, as well as her having to take on many roles. She was told later that she would be paid in advertisements, which she refused. She believed that the Board offered her money to save their image and mentioned that she would never direct for Savoy again.

Wendi responded that she believes she never told Meredith that no one was being paid. Richard added that the past is the past, that this was a question for the membership, and that the membership should be reminded that this would reduce the bank to \$26,700.

Maureen Amey asked if DeNeige Dojack was paid. Wendi replied that DeNeige received a small honorarium. Tom Hughes said that the Musical Director always got paid more in his time, and that he does not think arguments about the past will help. He added that he had donated his money back when he directed. Richard responded that we have to be careful how this is done, as we cannot require them to pay it back. Glenn McCue added that it is illegal to ask them to give it back.

Morris Rothman asked who else got an honorarium. Richard said that we had to start skimping due to lack of funds, but that Meredith was offered \$1,200. Wendi said that Julie Dustin, Ron Geyer, Paul Matthew, DeNeige, Penny and Gloria Jean all received one.

Penny asked what the performance fee for Gloria Jean was. Gloria Jean and Wendi said that it was a small fee. Wil Van Geysel said that we should have all the numbers with us. Wendi responded that it was about \$300.

Myrna Ferris asked why we only budgeted \$3000. Richard said that he and Lisa Birt had waived their honorarium and all was to go to Gloria Jean, but then both had to drop out due to personal reasons.

Motion to vote on instructing the new Board to give Meredith Matthews an honorarium of \$4,500, equal to Gloria Jean Nagy's honorarium: moved by Morris Rothman, seconded by Wilhem Van Geysel.

Sue Postlewaite asked what this would mean, and Richard answered that the opinion of the members would be given to the next Board to discuss. Penny added that if the members did not agree with this amount, that the motion could be amended and re-voted. Victor asked if the amount to be voted on was equal to the amount Gloria Jean was to be paid total with what she was paid for conducting the orchestra, and Richard responded that no, the motion was for the full amount.

Eighteen members in favour, four voted against, and five abstained. Motion carried.

11. Changes in by-laws:

Wendi mentioned that the Province of Ontario keeps changing their mind on when the changes need to be made by; and in any case, they will give us 2 years notice and 3 years to do it.

Gloria Jean mentioned that it should be changed soon though as the by-laws are 40 years old.

12. New business:

The current Board made suggestions for the future of Savoy:

- Recreating a Gilbert and Sullivan work and putting on a concert in May. *Trial by Jury* would be the easiest to rework. This may help us to get grants; members have expressed interest in this; and some members have actually commented that they have done similar things in the past.
- Finding a public domain opera where the composer has been dead over 70 years. The Board has had a couple of suggestions but the suggestion was made to take a look at the work, who is cast, the type of show, and if/how it works for the Society.

- Going dark for a year or dissolving the Society. The Board does not recommend this option, though it is an option. The money would be given to CHEO or some other non-profit theatre group.
- Staging Gilbert and Sullivan again by doing *Gondoliers* next year.

Myrna asked if the Society has any corporate sponsors, and Richard answered that it does not and that most sponsors think we are too small of a company. He noted that others are getting these sponsorships through personal relationships. Myrna argued that we should not push this off the table as there is no reason we cannot try.

Katherine Hobbs asked if this could be put off to a special meeting for the membership. Richard answered that we were putting the vote to the membership. Kyle replied that it was just an expression of interest, and that it would not be binding to the next Board. Frank clarified stating that the membership would act as the committee informing the Board.

Penny mentioned that they had tried this before, and it had been shelved. Ellen added that Bruce had rewritten a work that we could possibly use.

Dante DeLuca asked how we have the finances for something else. Richard mentioned that a different show may be easier to cast as Gilbert and Sullivan require a pretty large cast. Kyle added that the first try would be a concert version, which would have a small-scale shorter run of rehearsals, fewer costumes, and sets. That would hopefully increase interest in the Society.

Katherine asked about the impact on grants. Richard answered that we are unlikely to get grants unless we do something new. Suzanne added that we need to figure out how to impact more people.

Motion to vote on Board suggestions for the future of Savoy: 20 members were in favor of doing a completely new work, 20 were in favor of doing a different musical, zero were in favor of going dark, and eight were in favor of doing another Gilbert and Sullivan piece.

13. New Board:

The proposed slate of eight directors consisted of Suzanne Amey, Katherine Hobbs, Richard Langlois, David Milne, Montana Tait, Morris Rothman, Al Tassie, and Wilhem Van Geyzel. Outgoing directors Kyle Ahluwalia, Laurie MacEachern, Mathieu Mazur-Goulet, and Wendi Smith were thanked for their service.

Mathieu asked to discuss the proposed slate, arguing that Al Tassie would not be a good fit for the Board as he takes things very personally. Wendi added that Al is

confrontational. Ron Geyer replied that he would still be a good asset, while Gloria Jean added that Al had simply been frustrated before.

Motion to accept the slate as proposed: moved by Ron Geyer, seconded by Frank Dalton. Nineteen members accepted. Motion carried. Motion for the membership to exit while the Board retires: moved by Suzanne Amey, seconded by Frank Dalton. Motion carried.

14. Adjournment:

The AGM adjourned at 11:30 pm.

Secretarial note: The Board of Directors retired to the kitchen to decide on positions. Al Tassie was not present. By the unanimous vote of those present, the new President is Morris Rothman; the new Vice-President is Suzanne Amey; the new Treasurer is David Milne; and the new Secretary is Montana Tait. Katherine Hobbs, Richard Langlois, Al Tassie, and Wilhem Van Geyzel are Members-at-Large.

One revision from the original: Lyse Van Geyzel was added to the attendance of the Annual General Meeting.