

# Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre

charity no. 516040

*registered address c/o Bron Cafnant, Llanfair Caereinion, SY21 0BP*

Trustees' Report and Accounts ~ 01/09/07 - 31/08/08

~~~~~

## 1. Introduction

The Annual General Meeting of Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre, held on 5 April 2008, elected the following Trustees :

Jane Howells; Eileen Roberts; Charlotte Durie; Jennifer Wilcox; Geraint Owen; Jacqueline Langston; Hilary Clark. The Trustees are the Management Committee of the Youth Theatre.

Sam Hewitt and Ani Bardsley were elected as member representatives to serve on the Management Committee alongside the Trustees.

At a subsequent meeting, the following officers were appointed :

Chair : Jane Howells  
Treasurer : Eileen Roberts  
Secretary : Charlotte Durie

The Objects of the Society (Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre) are as follows :

- to foster and promote the education of young people, in Welsh and in English, in the appreciation and practice of Drama in all its aspects, and to co-operate with Local Authorities, Educational Institutions and Cultural Societies relating to the practice and presentation and study of Drama in order inter alia to promote better knowledge and more widespread interest in the practice of the performing arts.

In furtherance of these Objects, during the twelve months which are the subject of this report, Montgomeryshire Youth Theatre has engaged in activities and delivered a programme detailed in subsequent paragraphs.

## 3. Appointment of Trustees

The Management Committee of the Youth Theatre comprises its Trustees (appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting), coopted members with specific artistic and other skills, and representatives elected by the youth members. They meet regularly throughout the year, on a quarterly basis, with

on-going contact outside these meetings between the Artistic Director and officers/individual management committee members.

New Trustees are apprised of their duties as Trustees, and the governing document and policies are used as points of reference in all decision-making.

#### **4. Policies and Practice**

The Youth Theatre operates under the following policies :

The Protection of Children and Young People;  
Disability;  
Equal Opportunities;  
Guidelines and Procedures for Health and Safety.

As part of the induction and/or training of any persons working regularly with the Youth Theatre, the provisions of these policies are made clear, and adherence to them a provision of engagement.

Although it has no written policy for the use of the Welsh language, the Youth Theatre attempts to work bi-lingually whenever appropriate, with its annual reports published in both languages.

On their children joining the Youth Theatre, parents are given a letter setting out the practices under which it operates, and their signature of consent is obtained before the child begins to work in any group. Consent is also invited for the use of the child's image in any publicity, and for contact details to be held on a database. Essential medical information is noted, and handled on a need-to-know basis. The Youth Theatre has full public liability and employee insurance.

All persons working on a regular basis with young members have regular CRB checks. Any persons coming into contact with members on a more occasional and detached basis (such as front-of-house duties) are not required to have such checks, but are never in such contact without the attendance and supervision of a checked person.

The Youth Theatre is a registered voluntary youth group with Powys County Council, fulfilling the criteria set out by the local authority.

#### **5. Finance and Fundraising**

The Youth Theatre enjoys the financial support of Powys County Council and Welshpool Town Council, these grants being listed in the end-of-year accounts which form part of this Report. Other income is received from membership and project fees, and box office returns. All artists working for the Youth Theatre are paid at agreed professional rates; however, a great deal of voluntary work by members of the management committee and others is essential to the viability of the organisation. The free provision of workshop space and venues by Welshpool High School is again acknowledged with gratitude.

The Youth Theatre has a reserves policy of £2000. An annual budget is agreed at the first committee

meeting of each year, and financial reports and updates are presented at each subsequent meeting.

The accounts are scrutinised by an independent examiner.

## **6. Organisation and Membership**

A total of approximately 30 workshops were held throughout the year for each group, with additional rehearsals in production periods, at weekends and holidays.

Membership levels have remained high throughout the year, with an average weekly attendance over the three groups of around 60 young people. The junior group caters for school years 5 and 6, intermediate group years 7 and 8, and seniors from year 9/10 upwards. Because of the pressure of numbers within the senior group, it was not possible to take any year 9s into it until the summer term, when some seniors dropped out to concentrate on examinations. However, some provision was made for those people, and others on the waiting list, with a "Play in a Weekend" (described below).

Mindful of the financial demands on many of the families whose children attend on a weekly basis, with the increasing cost of travel, the membership fee was kept at £25 for a term's workshop attendance, including extra rehearsals in production periods: this sum is reduced in cases of hardship.

## **7. Staffing**

The Youth Theatre is fortunate to have retained the services of Penny Jones, Sarah Owen and Ginny Graham, who work regularly on a freelance basis as workshop leaders and directors. Other artists involved during the year in various events and activities are the musician Iris Gordijn, the poet Chris Kinsey, and visual artists and facilitators Ingrid Maugham, Karen Gomm and Alwyn Wesson.

## **8. Productions, Performances and other events**

The 25th year of operation of the Youth Theatre was exceptionally full, with a packed programme of activities, all of which were fully supported by members, and by the general public who support as audience members. These are set out chronologically.

*Herod and the Slaughter of the Innocents* and *The Llandinam Mummings' Play*.

These were central to the Llandinam Twelfth Night Celebrations, held in the church and village hall at Llandinam. The youth theatre was invited by TAsC (Traditional Arts in the Community) to stage these performances. A small group of senior members, working with their director, Ginny Graham, undertook a short intensive rehearsal period to present the Herod play from the Coventry Cycle of Mystery Plays, and a mummings' play, working with local musicians in an evening of traditional celebration.

*A Door Opens* and *Cresswell House*.

The junior and intermediate groups presented a double bill over two nights in Theatr Clera, based on

devised work. For many of these young performers, it was the first time they had acted in public at this level, and both groups offered polished, disciplined and entertaining work to large audiences. *A Door Opens* (directed by Penny Jones) was based on the theme of childhood ambitions and rivalries taken into adult life, *Cresswell House* (directed by Sarah Owen) presented a day in the life of the inhabitants of a block of flats. This production used Trestle masks, handled with great skill and conviction.

#### *Play in a Weekend.*

To make some provision for young people in year 9 who were waiting for a place in the senior group, Sarah Owen led a play-making project over one weekend, with the resulting performance presented to an invited audience. A wonderful spoof detective drama, this was delivered with great panache and skill by the participants, and hugely enjoyed by the audience.

#### *Reunion and Celebration.*

To commemorate the 25th birthday of the Youth Theatre, a reunion was held in April, attended by ex-members from throughout the UK, and further afield, with one (now a successful actor) arriving from New York. This was a joyful occasion, combining nostalgia with congratulation, both to the Youth Theatre and to all those who had been (and still are) a part of it, many of whom now had well-established careers in the performing arts. Amongst the dozens present were representatives of the cast of every major production with the Youth Theatre had staged since its inception in 1983. As part of the event, the senior group presented *Celebration*, a play which combined and reflected many of the company's past productions, together with workshop practices and games, offering back to their audience something of their past lives.

#### *Encounters*

This production involving the senior group was a unique collaboration between the poet Chris Kinsey, the a capella vocal group Vox Orbis (led by Iris Gordijn), youth theatre director Ginny Graham, and Oriel Davies Gallery, Newtown. Combining poetry, music and dialogue, in the setting of an exhibition of works by William Roberts, the work was experimental and absorbing, enjoyed by audiences on two nights in the gallery, transferring to Theatr Clera for a third night.

#### *Animal Farm*

The summer project this year was a dramatisation of the political satire by George Orwell, by special request of some members. A cast of nine of the most senior members worked intensively for eight days over the summer holidays, on a spare, challenging presentation of a demanding play, and toured it to Hirnant and Llandinam, before two final performances in Welshpool. The Llandinam audience included a large group of performing arts students from Llanidloes High School, attending as part of their examination projects.

#### *ArtsDay and PlayDays*

Working in collaboration with Play Montgomeryshire, the Youth Theatre organised an ArtsDay for teenagers with special educational, physical and emotional needs, held during the summer holidays at Theatr Clera. This involved four artists (two performance, two "making"), and many volunteers, some of whom being youth theatre members. Working on the theme of "The Sea", the day culminated in a dazzling performance, using the props and costumes in a dramatisation created during the day. Subsequently, the youth theatre provided similar activities at four integrated PlayDays, held in Newtown.

## 9. Collaborations and Networking

The names of some collaborating bodies and organisations have already appeared within the body of this report, but are repeated here. The Youth Theatre has enjoyed good working relationships during the year with TAsC, Play Montgomeryshire and Oriel Davies Gallery. Its on-going relationship with Welshpool High School operates mainly on an informal basis, with each party supporting the other in artistic projects: the school's major production of *Oliver* had the services of Penny Jones as wardrobe mistress, with many of the Youth Theatre's properties and costumes being used in the production. The Youth Theatre's use of the school's premises has already been acknowledged. Within the wider community, the Youth Theatre has loaned lighting equipment to primary schools and other organisations for performance purposes. Ginny Graham is Chair of Powys Arts Forum, an organisation which operates throughout the county, in close contact with the arts officers of Powys County Council. The Youth Theatre enjoys good press coverage for all its events.

## 10. Publicity and Publication

To commemorate its 25th anniversary, the Youth Theatre published a booklet illustrated by many production pictures and comments from present and earlier members, detailing its history, which was widely disseminated. During the year, it also set up a website ([www.mytheatre.org.uk](http://www.mytheatre.org.uk)) which is regularly updated with pictures, news, and information.

## 11. Conclusion

The conclusion of this report must make mention of the successes of some past members, and acknowledge with thanks the work of supporters. The reunion brought news of the careers in the performing arts and allied professions of many earlier members, so many that it is impossible to mention all of them by name. However, representative of them all are the following: Idris Jones, who has been working widely in Welsh language theatre and television for many years; Maggie Williams, who has been working with the Actors' Studio in New York; Nikki Jaye Witt, who is developing a highly successful career as an actor and stage combat director in Australia; Lu Corfield, based in London, whose stage and television career is becoming firmly established. Amongst those who have just left us, whose performances in some of this year's productions will be well remembered, are Michael Gries, going to Bristol University on a director's course, Jamie Panton, studying film at Cardiff, and Catrin Owen, now at the Birmingham School of Acting. We would also like to record our thanks to two long-serving trustees who have now resigned, Caroline Clegg and Lesley Cookson, whose invaluable work and support of the Youth Theatre made a strong contribution to its success.

At the end of a memorable year, the Youth Theatre looks forward to a successful future, for itself, and for the young people it serves.

*Jane Howells*  
Chair

**MONTGOMERYSHIRE YOUTH THEATRE**

registered charity no. 516040

**Income and Expenditure : 01/09/07 - 31/08/08**

**Income**

Opening balances :

|             |           |
|-------------|-----------|
| current a/c | 4,261.77  |
| deposit a/c | 13,055.71 |
|             | <hr/>     |
|             | 17,317.48 |

interest on deposit a/c 376.64

Grants :

|                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| Powys County Council   | 6,958.00 |
| Welshpool Town Council | 600.00   |
|                        | <hr/>    |
|                        | 7,558.00 |

Other income :

|                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Members' subscriptions          | 3,565.00 |
| Box Office                      | 905.00   |
| Sales (badges)                  | 47.00    |
| Internet donations (Everyclick) | 25.72    |
| Sale (reunion refreshments)     | 112.00   |
|                                 | <hr/>    |
|                                 | 4,654.72 |

29,906.84

**Expenditure**

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Director's Administration Fees | 4,162.00  |
| Artists' Fees                  | 7,882.50  |
|                                | <hr/>     |
|                                | 12,044.50 |

Production Costs 131.93

Other expenditure :

|                                           |          |
|-------------------------------------------|----------|
| Travel                                    | 629.10   |
| Translation                               | 113.02   |
| General Administration/marketing          | 286.40   |
| Insurance                                 | 270.12   |
| Accounts Examination Fee                  | 75.00    |
| ex gratia payment to WH School            | 200.00   |
| 25th Reunion costs incl. booklet printing | 665.89   |
| Purchase of badges                        | 192.70   |
| Equipment PAT testing                     | 127.61   |
| Transfers to Petty Cash                   | 600.00   |
|                                           | <hr/>    |
|                                           | 3,159.84 |

15,336.27

Closing balances:

|                            |          |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Current account            | 6,018.62 |
| less cheques not presented | 1,030.00 |
|                            | <hr/>    |
|                            | 1,850.40 |
|                            | <hr/>    |
|                            | 3,138.22 |

Deposit account 11,432.35  
14,570.57

29,906.84