

Membership Sec Report 2020 AGM

It's been a very encouraging year as far as the welcoming of new members is concerned. We have been joined by newcomers Georgina Lilley, John Simpson and family and Lisa Fitzgerald, whilst the new members from last year Damon Pattison and Emma Rouse have stayed with us. All these new members have had acting roles in this year's plays. Although Irene Morris has moved away she has retained her membership and managed to participate in one or two events.

In addition to new members we maintain a contacts list of nearly 20 who have expressed interest in joining the society in the past and to whom we send copies of the newsletter each month. I am hopeful that several of these might join us in the future. We've had help in the lighting and sound area from Dan Al Jassas who has helped Neill Hewitt during the Sunday set up and with lighting and sound during the last play. Johnny Jarman attended the BBQ, the NODA presentations and the WDS dinner and one of the scripts he has written has been circulated around the Play Selection Group. We are currently in contact with two potential new members, one on Jan Westgarth's recommendation, but the current virus situation does not lend itself to recruiting. Chris Brooker was unable to continue with our photography because of health conditions and after an impressive 16 years helping and tolerating us he arranged for a photographic club colleague, Peter Wilson, to take over the reins. Chris also passed the poster and handbill work to Ellie Metherell who has since taken over poster and programme design. Ellie arranged a WDS poster-like back page on the quarterly Village Pump Magazine which was published at the beginning of last August.

Subscriptions. Approximately 45 members have paid subscriptions this year with perhaps 4 (at most) to come including the usual laggards. Reminders are sent out periodically with the newsletter. This is a very similar figure to the last 3 years for our paid membership.

It was clarified this year that our insurance policy provides no cover for those over 80 years old who now comprise about a quarter of our current membership.

Newsletter.

The Newsletter is only one aspect of keeping in touch with members, forming as it does part of a group, WDS website, Facebook and Twitter. As editor I'm appreciative of member comments and contributions and have to thank Bruce King and Milada Cook for their continuing efforts this last year.

Newsletter costs have come down in recent years as most are sent out by e-mail. Costs have now bottomed out and I doubt there are more savings to come. Looking back over past costs they are approximately (for each calendar year):

2015 – £495

2016 – £376

2017 – £259

2018 – £189

2019 – £201

Postage still accounts for over 80% of the cost, and increased again in April by 5%. These figures also include the relatively small costs of AGM and sundry papers. Currently a hardcopy newsletter costs just over 80p, including postage and material, and amounts to about £10 annually for each hardcopy recipient – only just covered by the annual membership fee. E-mail copies are considered to have zero charge.

Typical Newsletter monthly distribution is about 92, made up of:

- 45 emailed to members,
- 14 hard copies to members,
- 14 emailed copies to potential new members or those who have expressed a past interest,
- 19 email copies to non-members.

The distribution changes with Newsletters that coincide with the Play Production months or AGM month are accompanied by handbills or AGM papers and these are usually sent out as hard copies.

Programme Slips:

The practice of inserting slips into the programme seeking audience details, should they wish to receive play notifications from us, again produced results. Our circulation list is now over 30 but it is still planned to trial a brighter design on resumption of productions to see if this increases the uptake.

Len Skilton 15/5/20