



# The Marlow Players

**The 78<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Marlow Players  
held on 20 June, 2019 in The Studio, Marlow**

## **President's Address:**

Good evening to everyone and welcome to this Annual General Meeting of *The Marlow Players*.

It is my privilege to be President and Chairman, so I will combine both functions, if I may, in one speech.

The past year has seen some very distinguished successes in our dramatic presentations, and I believe in our finances. We have offered two very good plays: 'Barefoot in the Park' in November, with a small cast of very well-seasoned players: Brian, Andy, Jen, Hilary, David C, directed by Gloria, and then in April: 'Trivial Pursuits', which involved a large cast with some very welcome newcomers, largely introduced from West Wycombe by Jossy and Max, but also featuring some new members. It has been so good to have Karen (Moyse) as a new member and to welcome Alison (Rogers) and Charlotte (Dodds) and Steve (Powell) alongside Jossy and Max, plus Wendy, Di, Andy and David. For set and costume, we had Jossy and Max, supported by Toby and Raymond & Sons – and of course in France we had help from Gloria. In all, we were a larger number in the coach than in previous years, but it seemed to me to be one of the smoothest journeys ever: no one was late at either end; all the hosts were terrific; the first-timers had a great week-end; the coach-driver knew where to go (except the final 200 yards!) and the performance in the *Jean Vilar* was our best, perhaps, aided by the professionals who did everything they could to help our technology. We particularly thank Brian for his organisation of the coach, for the packing of it, for the set construction and stage management, as I know he would really have liked to act.

We also presented, under Gloria's direction, another Murder Mystery radio play: 'Shooting Shambles at Shrapnel Castle' and this filled Liston Hall to capacity. We are presenting 'Murder in an Ice-Cold Manner' this summer – but with a different dénouement. There were also some very pleasant social evenings: many thanks to Brian for his hospitality and to Di for hers. There was a theatre outing to Open Air Shakespeare, set up by Hilary, and several of the Players went along to Windsor Castle for 'Aladdin', which featured your President villainously. There were also a couple of Workshops. When I became President, I made it my policy to foster links and exchanges with other drama groups and both Maidenhead Drama Guild and Masque Players have exchanged players with us – not to poach, but to co-operate and provide mutual support through audiences and actors. There is a further link to the newly-formed 'Hughenden Valley Players', of which Tony Konieczny is a member, and I recently gave a Workshop on breathing, voice and timing to them, by invitation.

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Few years seem to pass when we can look back without a sense of loss: this year, the dreadful news of James Goodband's tragic death meant that we all have had Laura in our hearts; and last summer, in Marly-le-Roi, my regular host Maryse Fogelgesang passed on. I was, however, delighted to stay with Jean-François, who is well-known as a Town-Twiner. We owe a great deal to the Marly Town Twinners for hosting most of the Players in great comfort and style.

Gloria is particularly good at communicating with *Les Baladins* and we look forward to welcoming them to Marlow at Whitsun next year. We've tried to avoid Tom Kerridge and we do need to get more audience from our own Town Twinners and those in Bourne End – so the new committee [possibly very similar to the current one] will need to get publicity in very soon.

Publicity is an important part of creating interest – in the Library, in the town, in the local press, social media and local organisations, and I thank all those who have helped very much – and to the Front of House teams, taking money, serving drinks and selling the programmes. The upshot of publicity, we hope, is a good turn-out, leading to sound finances and we must all thank Brian that we are in good shape and well set up.

In confidence that we are looking forward - with Gloria's production of 'A Murder is Announced' by Agatha Christie in November and then to further successes in 2020, I sit down and hand over to the Secretary to summarise the Minutes of last year, a copy of which has been on the website for months, before Brian brings us up to date on the Finances.

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