

President and Chairman's address

The Marlow Players Annual General Meeting 29th June 2021 8 pm

The Meeting was held using videoconferencing facilities.

Few of us would have thought that this would be the second AGM to be held using video conferencing, and we had hoped that the later date of this AGM would allow us to meet in the Studio. But the "third wave" of the "Delta variant" has meant that the regulations have yet to be relaxed although we might have met outdoors.

I should like to thank the Committee, who have met regularly to plan how we can continue with activities under the circumstances, and have set an Agenda and continued with their most valuable work: Brian continues as Treasurer, Hilary as membership Secretary, Gloria, Alison and Andy as committee members, and to date I've continued as Chairman and Secretary, assisted by Hilary and Gloria in recording meetings if unable to be there myself. Since the last report, we have had twice-weekly meetings and on Tuesdays produced performances and recordings of one act plays, directed by Gloria and Andrew, and held "Club Nights" on Thursdays, consisting of bring and share Poetry and Prose, "Desert Island Discs" and those monthly Quizzes. The chief amusement of the last is the backchat and wrangling over whether there should be half marks and this has provided many a laugh to relieve the situation.

We began the year with Gloria's production of *Lucifer Struck at Blazes* : a Murder Mystery which she had adapted for Marlow from the group in Mold who have supplied us with our others.

During the Autumn of 2020 we recorded "Tobermorey" a Saki short story, "The Bear" by Anton Chekhov, "the Dark Lady of the Sonnets" by Bernard Shaw, and "The Importance of being Earnest" by Oscar Wilde. Continuing into 2021 We had a further Saki short story adaptation by Andrew Stafford: "The Easter Egg" and a recording of "Shooting Shambles at Shrapnel Castle" another Murder Mystery adapted and directed by Gloria .

In these recordings, we were very lucky to have the expertise of Brian and also the wonderful sound that Andy was able to layer. If you listen to "The Easter Egg" on headphones, you will hear a most convincing soundscape which really lifts the whole piece into a professional level.

I would also commend very strongly the excellent performances for these recordings. As well as our experienced actors, we welcomed Michelle Spencer Hatfield who has proved herself most versatile and able: a real "trouper" in fact.

We then went on to read some One Act plays including two very good ones by A A Milne, and by Synge Lady Gregory and others: these were discoveries which may yet prove useful to be staged once we are able to resume.

We also enjoyed a picnic on Marlow Common (socially distanced in separate groupings) and most recently were able to meet face to face in Andrew's Garden for Pimm's and a chat. This was not quite the usual "drinks and nibbles" which we would have had, because of Covid, but we have planned that we can meet in Brian's garden once restrictions are lifted, and may even get into a canoe or two!.

We are grateful for all the loyalty and support the players members offer. We must finish with our thoughts for Olive and Alan as Olive contends with illness and treatment, and for Michelle at a very sad time.

Let us hope that there is better news for the Autumn, when we hope to stage in Liston Hall a new Murder Mystery (Home grown) and welcome a few new members- and plan for a resumption of our exchange with Les Baladins, who have been in a similar plight.