President’s Report

I am pleased to be able to present the presidents report for 2024

Thank you to everyone who has taken time to attend today.

2024 has been another successful year for ELT, both on and off stage.

Importantly, we have once again been able to provide a welcoming, safe and accepting space for all of our members to express themselves. We all continue to learn, grow and improve from our experiences in the theatre and this year was no exception.

All our productions have been very well attended and have generated good profits again this year. This has allowed us to invest in new equipment for lighting and sound which will assist in lifting the quality of our productions even further.

2024 saw a slight departure from our traditional shows with 2 productions featuring younger performers*. Into the Woods* and *The Lion The Witch and the Wardrobe* were different, but both high quality types of productions which were very popular with both regular ELT theatre goers and new audiences.

It was great to see the energy that the young performers brought to the company, and I look forward to making more opportunities available for these talented young performers. In which they can learn and grow in ELT productions.

On that note, we have introduced a revamped youth theatre education program. We will be launching StageCraft Seminars in March 2025. The TheatreCraft training that has been running over many years, has been very successful. I hope that the new sessions, with added committee and membership support will be able to reach a wider audience and prove just as popular and impactful for the participants.

I have been again very fortunate to have worked with such a hard working and dedicated committee members working at ELT.

These people not only serve on the committee but perform multiple roles in the operation of the theatre. I’d like to thank

Alison, Andrew, Bella, Carol, Emma, Georgina, James, Jo and Steve for helping us achieve some great outcomes. These include:

* New air conditioning on stage and for the auditorium
* More efficient and effective marketing and member communications
* Regular and effective links to community groups and businesses
* StageCraft Seminars

We are always on the lookout for people to help on the committee so if you have some spare time we would love to have you on board.

I would also like to acknowledge a few non committee members who have made a real difference to the theatre this year.

* Lena Xiao, Vince Bagusauskas and Sienna Gallagher - Lighting and Sound
* Andrew Cooper and Greg Paul - set construction, props and set decoration
* Marion Lawrance - costumes
* Trudi Walters - continuing FOH support (and amazing cast and crew dinners)

All these people have contributed to this year’s success for ELT.

I look forward to seeing continued success and good times with the ELT family in 2025.

Peter Jones  
President

Secretary’s Report

This is my first year as Secretary and I would like to thank Carol Owen for her support and assistance during my time. I would not have been a success without her.

Our total membership was less than in 2023. In 2023 we had 123 members, with only 110 for 2024. These members were made up of:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Under the age of 15 years old | 20 |
| Between 15-17 years old | 12 |
| Over 18 years old | 78 |
| Recurring members from 2023 | 49 |
| New Members | 52 |
| Previous members from 2022 and prior | 9 |
| Cast & Crew for shows | 66 |
| Youth production parents or helpers | 13 |
| New Members to ELT Front of House | 6 |

As of 10 business days before the AGM, we had 35 financial members for 2025.

During the year of 2024, we sent 131 correspondences to new volunteers who were interested in joining with ELT. I have completed approximately 18 tours of the theatre with prospective members and been successful in getting many of those to join us.

During some down time last year, I also organise and cleaned up the office of the theatre. I took this time in putting all documents, photographs and programs into years and into our filing cabinet for archiving.

During 2024, I also put together eight agenda and minutes for our committee meetings together. Also, during this time, I also assisted in:

* Contacted local businesses and community groups to start and build relationships
* Assisted in putting the 2024 ELT calendar and oversaw ensuring it was up to date
* Assisted in putting together the 2025 ELT calendar
* Worked with others to have our first Planning Day for the following year’s shows
* Organised licenses for all 2025 shows by August
* Sent or replied to 477 emails
* Organised a new PO Box and redirect of the mail
* Assisted in starting again a Youth Stagecraft Seminar
* Completed a Key registration update
* Organised attendance at the Eltham Rotary Festival
* Was the Production Liaison on three separate occasions
* Created a hiring document for anyone using our sound or lighting outside of ELT
* Applied and won a grant with the Diamond Valley Railway Inc community group
* Worked with Eltham Bookshop to promote our Season 5 show of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.

I unfortunately due to personal reasons need to advise I will not be seeking back on the committee and having a break for a while. I hope to be back in the future. I thank everyone for their support and hard work throughout the year.

Andrew Boak  
Secretary

Treasurer’s Report

Good Afternoon everyone and welcome to the AGM for Eltham Little Theatre. It gives me great pleasure to present the financial reports for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Overall we had a fantastic year. 3 out of the five shows presented made healthy profits which far outweighed the 2 small losses made by the others.

Ticket sales were well up from the previous year. Front of house sales were also up due to increased audiences and the introduction of EFTPOS facilities (which were long overdue). All of this translated into a $16,822.95 net profit for the year.

Increased revenue meant that we had the funds to spend money on a new sound desk and a 2 way radio system. Both of these things improve the quality and smoother running of our shows.

Our bank accounts at the end of the year were all healthy and all accounts have been paid.

We have completed Season One so far for 2025 and by all accounts we have started 2025 as well as we finished 2024. Well done to everyone involved.

Jo-Ann Noviello  
Treasurer

Ticket Secretary’s Report

I am pleased to present the ticket secretary’s report for the 2024.

# General

The ticket secretary is responsible for the overall management of ticket sales and bookings, email, phone inquiries and some Facebook posting. This includes membership, subscriptions and non-performance events like the awards nights and covers the set up and management of events on the Trybooking website. The ticket secretary has been assisting directors with audition bookings if they wish to use Trybooking. The TS is sending out the Chookas Newsletter and event emails to our mailing list. The direct mailing list subscription problem has been fixed, so I only have to add members to the mailing list manually. Collection data shows that many bookings are coming from the regular newsletter emails.

The increase of bookings requiring personal contact with the ticket secretary as ELT has continued and is attracting more Probus and Rotary Club group bookings and older patrons who have limited online skills. Invoices are now being issued directly to Treasurers for payment of reservations. One area that continues to be frustrating are the Raffle Winners certificates. Many winners, lose, misplace or do not recognise ticket emails containing their certificates.

Complimentary invitations to Opening Nights to our Community Radio supporters has decreased due to Brian Amos retiring and Peter Kemp’s limited availability. VDL reviewers continue. Weekend Notes of Melbourne now requires a paid subscription to review so is no longer contacted. Local radio station Plenty Valley is promoting our productions on their webpage and during their programs. I have stepped back from asking for reviewers from Andrew G and Warrandyte Diaries and adding to What’s On in Nillumbik. This has been picked up by Communications.

# New Initiatives

The annual Play Subscription package is attracting more subscriptions, with repeat patrons. The initial work in setting this up was time consuming as it needed to be created as a separate event for all 5 seasons. However, now a clone option on Trybooking shortens this for future package offers. The creation of the entire future year’s productions on Trybooking at the end of the previous year has helped reduce the overall work load for the TS, however, this can be complicated when Director’s wish to make changes to the seating arrangements for set design later in the year.

The combined table seating (dinner theatre) with standard seating continued in 2024. This took considerable time to create with several drafts as it is not a standard feature, however, should now be easier with the Trybooking cloning option. For seasons 1, 2 and 4, the table seating BYO Food and Beverages option is for the purchase of an entire table of 6 for $120. Not individual seats on a table. There have been a few hiccups with the cloning, but are not identified until the events are been created. I need to keep on top of this.

ELT continue to extend ½ price tickets to U3A members on Thursday and Sunday performances in memory of Lynne Chappel. The Opening Night weekends remain the most difficult to fill and the discount offers have brought more patrons. The listing of limited amount of tickets for certain performances on the promotional website called “On the House” has ceased due to the process becoming more complex with GST and invoices being required by the service. The possible small financial gain was not worth the effort on the Ticket Secretary’s part.

# Room for Improvement

We continue to increase our volunteer base. Timely communication of details between all areas of the committee roles has been essential, especially the website management, publicity and FOH.

The new Square at the Box Office and kiosk seems to be working well, except when the theatre phone is required for logging in. Trybooking events online continues to remain open until 20 minutes after the show commences for any last minute walk in purchases.

# Thank Yous

I wish to extend a massive thankyou to the Committee of Management, Publicity Team, Front of House and the PSC for continuing their hard work, dedication and commitment to providing the best theatre we can offer our community.

I look forward to being involved in what I am sure will be another great year for ELT.

Alison Jones  
Ticket Secretary

Front Of House Report

The FOH sub-committee is made up of Jo-Ann Noviello, Trudi Walters and myself. During 2024 we regularly met prior to each ELT season to organise the FOH troops. The jobs FOH sub-committee are tasked with include organising rosters, FOH preshow preparations, the purchase of supplies, cast dinner, post-show cleanup and special events like today’s AGM continue to be processed in a timely and efficiently manner

Special thanks to Trudi Walters who always seems to be available to do the cast dinner (and sometimes now lunch) for each show on Tech Day. It is always appreciated by cast and crew.

Another very successful year of service from the Front of House general volunteers who continue to deliver excellent service to our patrons. We had a great group of volunteers 2024 who worked well together and enjoyed their rostered on time. We are always looking for more to work on FOH to lessen the load on those who do it regularly. Because we now have added the alcohol sales to our repertoire we need at least 4 volunteers per performance when the audience numbers are 40 or more, including someone with an RSA.

The purchase of the Square has been a wonderful addition to the FOH sales process. Apart from a few start-up teething problems the Square has worked well. Customer can now choose to pay in a number of ways electronically

* tap their contactless debit and credit cards and complete the sale in seconds.
* use their smartphones and watches with Apple Pay and Google Pay.
* insert chip cards into the credit card machine and, if needed, let customers enter their PIN on Terminal.

It is really a much better system when you don’t have to handle cash, although we are still happy to take cash if that is the customers choice. The Square has been easy for the volunteers to learn and use adeptly, helping sales to be efficient and convenient for patrons.

FOH are looking forward to welcoming the audiences to the 2025 ELT seasons.

Carol Owen  
Front of House Sub-Commitee

Play Selection Committee Report

As of March 2025, and for much of 2024 since the previous Annual General Meeting, Eltham Little Theatre’s Play Selection committee has five active members. These members comprise the following, with myself as convenor:

James Banger (convenor) Alison Jones Georgina Topp Lisa McNiven Roderick Chappel

As of this meeting, three members are also involved with the primary Eltham Little Theatre Committee, in the respective positions of Vice President, Ticket Secretary and Welfare Officer.

2024 was a successful year for the PSC. Four plays and a youth musical were selected and approved by the primary committee as follows:

Yes, Prime Minister

The Peppercorn Tree

Into the Woods Jr

Veronica’s Room

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

The Peppercorn Tree was that year’s VDL entry, directed by PSC member Roderick Chappel. Unusually, the youth musical was not the highest grossing production of 2024. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe took this position, requiring an additional matinee to meet demand. This gave further merit to producing shows featuring combined adult and youth casts. As such, these opportunities became an important factor in PSC decisions going forward.

The Peppercorn Tree was also that year’s Australian offering, with the PSC looking to feature at least one Australian play every season. It was written by Melbournian playwright Alison Campbell Rate, further promoting local talent. Alison has since continued to offer her plays.

The Woman in Black was previously set for Season 4, but rights were not granted due to a professional production running at the Atheneum Theatre. Veronica’s Room was offered by prior PSC member Drew Mason as a play tonally similar, suitable for a season nearing Halloween.

2024 was also the last year in which the youth production would run consecutively as a musical. It was decided that youth and adult musicals would alternate every second year, providing further opportunities for youth otherwise restricted to chorus roles. Season 4 every second year will be an adult and youth combined musical, following a youth play. This initiative will commence in 2025 with The Addams Family, directed by Bella Preston.

The PSC is currently reviewing plays for 2026, looking forward to another successful year.

James Banger   
Play Selection Committee Convenor

Publicity Committee Report

Last year, the publicity team built on the successes and lessons of the previous year. To our small team of Ada, Alison, Bella, Peter and Steve, we have now added Charlotte Moore as a part of the social media sub-team. Andrew Boak also spent a large amount of time helping us with community outreach and – together with Bella – organised a very successful presence at the Rotary Eltham Festival. Andrew also teamed up with Eltham Bookshop in the first of what we hope are many joint marketing efforts for our plays and their related books.

Although quality plays and dedicated, talent actors and crew played a large part (as usual), our continued push to refine and expand our publicity outreach has contributed to steadily growing ticket sales.

Late last year, as we sought to add more contributors to the team, we also restructured and renamed the Publicity team to Marketing and Communications, acknowledging the fact that the team also bears responsibility for community outreach and all aspects of our Internet presence, as well as the core responsibility of publicising our efforts on stage.

I’d like to thank the team and to offer a special thank you to Ada and to Andrew, both of whom have contributed greatly during their time in the team, and both of whom will be leaving us for this year.

We look forward to another exciting year of growth as we look to find new ways to engage with our community and welcome our growing group of loyal patrons.

Steve Saul  
Publicity (Marketing and Communication) Committee Convenor