

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MINUTES
23rd March 2024 2:00 pm**

Meeting Open

Peter Jones, meeting chair, opened the meeting at 2:30pm

Attendance – At the time of this meeting there were 52 eligible voting members. Those recorded on the Attendance Registration sheet at the meeting numbered 10 and were as follows.

Vince Bagusauskas	James Banger	Alison Jones	Peter Jones	Marion Lawrance
Jo-Ann Noviello	Carol Owen (life)	Isabella Preston	Georgina Topp	Trudi Walters

The following Proxies were received prior to the meeting start -

Isabella Preston to act for Andrew Boak

Alison Jones to act for Phillipa Downes

Alison Jones to act for Gareth Clarke

Peter Jones to act for Steve Saul

All of the 10 attendees were eligible to vote. The 10 eligible voters made up more than 10% of the membership so a quorum was achieved, and the meeting proceeded.

Items of Business

Apologies received

Grace Patt
Gareth Clark
Phillipa Downes
Andrew Boak
Emma Fox
Steve Saul

Accept Minutes of the last AGM

There were no amendments for the previous meeting minutes.

Acceptance of the 2023 minutes was proposed by Carol Owen, seconded by Jo-Ann Noviello and was passed unanimously by those who attended the 2023 meeting - Vince Bagusauskas, Alison Jones, Peter Jones, Marion Lawrance, Jo-Ann Noviello, Carol Owen (life), Isabella Preston, Steve Saul (proxy Peter Jones)

Business arising from the last Meeting

No outstanding actions were part of the previous meeting and no questions relating to the previous minutes were raised.

Presidents Report

President's Report was delivered by Peter Jones.

It does not seem like it was only 13 months ago that we kicked off 2023 with the Theatre Games, A Play in a Day and the Trivia Night, one off productions, but there we are.

2023 was another successful year for ELT.

Once again ELT put on excellent productions which had good attendances and solid financials across the board. I'd like to acknowledge Alison Jones's VDL Nomination for Best Supporting Actress in Almost Maine, and Marion Lawrance and ?? for the Lyrebird nominations for their work on CLUE.

Behind the scenes it was a somewhat turbulent year for the company and especially for the committee members both collectively and individually.

As a committee we had to address a couple of unusual and confronting situations. This was challenging at times but overall, we worked through these issues as a group and dealt with the issues as best we could.

From an individual perspective several committee members faced some challenges and changes in circumstances, including myself.

Speaking personally, the support of ELT members for Alison and I over this period was invaluable and I hope that other affected members felt similarly supported by our ELT family during these times.

The compassion, respect and patience that was demonstrated during these tough times period was a credit to all and demonstrates the values that make ELT a great place to be a part of.

I'd like to thank all members of the current years committee including those who had to step down during the year. It can be difficult at times, but it is extremely rewarding job, working and having fun with a great bunch of committed and talented individuals and helping them to put on great productions.

James Banger and the play selection committee has been working hard to manage late changes needed to 2025 and to finalise productions for 2026.

This work has allowed the publicity team to be pro-active with marketing and production of marketing collateral. This has meant that we have high quality and consistent branding across all our marketing streams and access to lower cost option for printed material. Well-done to Steve Saul and his team.

And talking about being pro-active, we have introduced a new hybrid table seating and theatre seating for 2024. This was a remarkable success in season 1.

A popular addition this year is making alcohol available for sale at interval to complement our ever-popular choc tops and snacks, served by our charming and friendly FOH team.

Both these initiatives have meant quite a bit of additional effort for FOH and substantial changes to ticketing. Thanks to Jo, Carol, Trudy and Alison as Ticket Secretary for this great work.

We continue to collaborate closely with council to maintain and upgrade the theatre.

Initiatives for next 12 months include:

- Replacement of the troublesome auditorium air conditioning and introducing air conditioning to the stage area.*
- Removal and replacement of the backstage wall to make it structurally sound and compliant.*
- Clean out and redesign of the workshop and props area to make it OHD*

Without a doubt we will face more challenges and opportunities this year. I am confident that we can continue to work together to deal with these and make 2024 another enjoyable and successful year for ELT.

There were no questions raised by the attending members for the President pertaining to the Presidents report.

The President's report was proposed for acceptance by Peter Jones, seconded by Alison Jones and was passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Secretary's Report

The Secretary's Report was delivered by Carol Owen

I would just like to start by thanking those of you attending the meeting today. It is a time consuming process to organise the AGM and, as we are legally required to have a minimum number attend in order for the meeting to go ahead, your attendance means the work done in preparation is not done in vain.

As Secretary one of my duties is to report on the membership status for 2023 at this AGM.

Eltham Little Theatre had a total membership of 123 members In 2023. The breakdown of this number falls into the following categories

Youth Membership 33 comprising of 12 under the age of 15, and 21 aged between 15 and 17
 Adult Concession Membership 27
 Adult Ordinary Membership 55
 Show Parents 10
 The number of Life Members remains at 15

Membership for 2024 currently sits at a total of 52 members.

My thanks to the rest of the committee for their hard work in 2023.

There were no questions raised by the attending members for the Secretary pertaining to the Secretary's report.

The Secretary's report was proposed for acceptance by Carol Owen, seconded by Peter Jones and was passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report was delivered by Jo-Ann Noviello.

Financial Statements for 2023 -

Balance Sheet	
Eltham Little Theatre Inc.	
As of 31 December 2023	31 Dec 2023
Assets	
Bank	
Float - Box Office	100.00
Float - FOH	100.00
Westpac Cash Management	46,919.24
Westpac Cheque Account	2,219.49
Westpac Solutions Account	629.43
Total Bank	49,968.16
Current Assets	
Prepayments	4,582.18
Total Current Assets	4,582.18
Fixed Assets	
Epson Photo Printer	999.00
FOH Freezer	569.00
Ladder	596.60
Lighting and Lighting Desk	34,680.00
Sets & Props Retained in Store	1,301.26
Tech Equipment	3,741.00
Total Fixed Assets	41,886.86
	96,437.20

Current Liabilities	
Accruals	614.88
Total Current Liabilities	614.88
Total Liabilities	614.88
Net Assets	95,822.32
Current Year Earnings	(182.00)
Retained Earnings	96,004.32
	95,822.32

Profit and Loss	
Eltham Little Theatre Inc.	
For the year ended 31 December 2023	
	2023
Trading Income	
FOH Sales	5,151.00
Interest Income	620.73
Membership Fees	2,277.50
Subscription Packages	855.00
Ticket Sales	52,381.27
Total Trading Income	61,285.50
Cost of Sales	
Costumes	1,142.99
Front of House/Catering	5,536.30
Sets and Props	2,363.96
Theatre Rental	21,498.60
Total Cost of Sales	30,541.85
Gross Profit	30,743.65
Operating Expenses	
Apparel for Shows	1,637.74
Awards Nights (Including VDL)	838.10
Awards/Prizes	974.30
Bank/Merchant	1,315.27
Insurance	3,444.54
Internet/E-mail etc	1,813.40
Licenses and Permits	8,255.13
Maintenance & Repairs	1,037.73
Miscellaneous Expense	63.60
Office - Supplies & Equipment	464.04
Photographs - Cast	599.85
Postage & Couriers	156.14

Production Costs	574.50
Production Costs: Equipment Rental	7,123.95
Publicity	844.45
Publicity: Advertising	302.50
Software Expense	835.41
Subscriptions to Other Bodies	385.00
Telephone	260.00
Total Operating Expenses	30,925.65
Net Profit	(182.00)

2023 bought another successful year for Eltham Little Theatre. We put on 4 seasons, 3 of which returned reasonable profits. We tried something a little different to start our year with 3 individual nights of fun and games throughout March. While these events were enjoyed by all who attended they did end in a small loss overall.

We have changed the method of reporting in 2023 to the accrual method. This allows a more accurate matching of income to expenditure over the reporting period than the cash reporting method used in the past. As a result, this year I have not included a comparative year as I did not see the point in reinventing the wheel of prior years.

Overall, for 2023 we made a very small loss of \$182. Due to the different format of events for the year income overall was down but like everywhere these days costs never seem to go down. All accounts were paid for the year and we have a reserve of \$47,000, slightly up on last year, and \$2,900 in the everyday bank account, a good start for 2024.

We have already completed a successful Season One for 2024 with good audiences and a profit. I am looking forward to yet another great year at ELT.

There was one questions raised by the attending members pertaining to the Treasurer's report.

What is required to change the method of reporting to the accrual method do this?

The accrual method it requires matching income and expense for the year instead what you spend with what comes in and things paid for in this year may not be in the current year.

The Treasurer's report was proposed for acceptance by Jo-Ann Noviello, seconded by Vince Bagusauskas and was passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Ticket Secretary

The Treasurer's Report was delivered by Alison

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. Recently, the ticket secretary has been assisting directors with audition bookings hopefully providing a more streamlined booking process and is linked in with the publicity team. The ticket secretary has also taken over the Newsletter and event emails to our mailing list. One frustration regarding the mailing list is due to the manual adding of new subscribers every few weeks. Publicity is looking into a better option for the website upgrade.

There has been an increase of bookings requiring personal contact with the ticket secretary as ELT is attracting more Probud and Rotary Clubs group bookings and older patrons who have limited online skills. Also some gift certificate holders and general production information. One area that remains frustrating are the Raffle Winners certificates. Many winners do not hand in their winner slips on the night, lose, misplace or do not recognise ticket emails containing their certificates.

Complimentary invitations to Opening Nights to our Community Radio supporters continued as well as did the VDL. The Melbourne Observer no longer has reviewers over this side of town who are able to attend. Weekend Notes of Melbourne was added to the reviewer's invitation list for further promotion to reach potential new audiences, however, invitations have not been taken up for the last few productions. Invitations to the Mayor and Sugarloaf Councillor for each season have been ceased due to councillors not

allowed to accept freebies. Local radio station Plenty Valley is also promoting our productions on their webpage and during their programs.

New Initiatives: The annual Play Subscription package attracted 4 double 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 workload 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.

2024 is trialling the combined table seating (dinner theatre) with standard seating. 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 our Season 1, the table option was attractive to many patrons. 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.

Promotions through social media have continued with offers of discounted tickets to performances. The idea of this was to increase audience numbers especially on slow nights. These promotions proved popular and produced lots of engagement and positive feedback. 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 continued for performances low on sales. These were in the form of 2 for 1 or ½ price ticket offers. Purchases from this platform range from 2 to 12 for each production over the year and brought some new patrons to the theatre. Monies for these purchases need to be requested by the Ticket Secretary to It's on the House at the end of each production.

Room for Improvement: We continue to increase our volunteer base. The Box Office has merged with Front of House into one volunteer pool, as it is no longer possible or reasonable to expect the ticket secretary to attend each show. A Box Office roster has now been added to the FOH roster for each show and volunteers from members and the committee have filled the vacancies. The training of other committee members in the operation of the Ticket Secretary role and management of the Trybooking site, has become necessary and essential to continue the smooth efficient handling of ELT's bookings.

Timely communication of details between all areas of the committee roles has been essential, especially the website management, publicity and FOH.

The lack of an electronic POS facilities at the Box Office remains an issue and generates frustration for staff and patrons as walk ins need to use their own phones and book online if not paying cash, which can hold up the flow of patrons entering before performances. Trybooking event online now remains open until 20 minutes after the show commences for any last minute purchases.

I wish to extend a massive thankyou to the Committee of Management, Publicity Team and the PSC for continuing their hard work, dedication and commitment to providing the best theatre we can offer our community. On a personal note, I want to thank every person in my theatre family who reached out and helped Peter and I during a very stressful and difficult time last year. You made a huge difference to the outcome and our sanity.

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

There were two questions raised by the attending members pertaining to the Ticket Secretary's report.

1. Raffle winners are unable to make payment on a table booking. Can we do anything to resolve this situation? Action – This will be discussed at the next committee meeting and reported back to the membership.
2. What can we do about getting Point of sale happening.? Action – The committee is already looking into obtaining a Square that will be able to be used at future performances. We hope to have this sorted in the next month or so.

The Ticket Secretary's report was proposed for acceptance by Alison Jones seconded by Marion Lawrance and was passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Other Sub Committee Reports – to be accepted in one motion at the end of the reporting

Front Of House Report

The Front of House Report was delivered by Carol Owen on behalf of the FOH committee.

Front of House in 2023 continued to deliver outstanding service to our patrons during production runs. I would like to thank those who have volunteered their time to get the job done.

Early in 2023 we ran a Responsible Serving of Alcohol course which resulted in a lift in the RSA qualified numbers in the pool of volunteers. This allowed us to cope with the addition of alcohol sales at interval to the patrons. The selling of drinks started out slowly but has grown to be more popular in recent times.

We now require 4 volunteers per performance which needs to include one RSA, one Box Office and 2 general FOH. Volunteers were encouraged during 2023 to work as lead which has resulted in a number of FOH taking up this challenge. However, while we have increased our number of FOH leads we have not increased total numbers of volunteers participating in FOH resulting in some working more than their fair share of shifts. These low numbers and last minute cancellations, has at times, forced us to enlist the assistance of backstage crew.

The FOH working group of myself, Trudi Walters and Jo-Ann Noviello continues to work efficiently organising rosters, show preparations, supplies, post-show cleanup and Tech day production dinners.

No questions were asked at the conclusion of this report.

Play Selection Report

The Play selection report was presented by James Banger.

ELT Play Selection Report 2023 At the conclusion of 2023, the Play Selection Committee included eight active members. This was down from nine members, with one departing that year due to competing commitments. As of the AGM, eight members remain – including myself as Play Selection Committee Convenor.

The primary business undertaken by PSC members in 2023 was selecting plays for Season 2024. Five plays were ultimately selected as follows, with directors attached to all proposals.

SEASON 2024

Yes, Prime Minister Directed by Samuel Chappel

The Peppercorn Tree Directed by Roderick Chappel vdl choice

Into the Woods Jr Directed by Gareth Clarke

Veronica's Room Directed by Drew Mason

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe Directed by Jason Triggs

The Peppercorn Tree was nominated and accepted by the ELT Committee as the 2024 VDL entry. The Woman in Black was originally proposed for Season 4, but a professional production meant rights could not be obtained. Veronica's Room was proposed as an alternative and accepted by the ELT Committee. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe was proposed as a combined adult and youth production.

Secondary business in 2023 involved outlining Season 2025. Emphasis was placed on finding female directors given those directing Season 2024. As of the AGM, Season 2025 is as follows:

SEASON 2025

The Diary of Anne Frank Directed by Steve Saul

One Act Play Season

The Peace of Angels – Director TBC Red – Director TBC Napoleon in Exile – Directed by James Banger

Newsies Jr Directed by Ash Farrough or TBC Directed by Carol Owen

The Addams Family Directed by Bella Preston

Whodunnit Director TBC

The Diary of Anne Frank was nominated and accepted by the ELT committee as the 2025 VDL entry. The youth production currently has two potential directors, which is to be decided within the next month. The Addams Family was proposed for Season 4, following committee approval to stage two musical productions in 2025. Whodunnit was moved from Season 4 to Season 5 when Bella Preston became unavailable to direct then. A director is still being sought as such.

Finalization of PSC matters was somewhat delayed throughout the year due to competing demands on the convenor. This will be addressed throughout 2024 and beyond. Assistance was provided by fellow PSC member Alison Jones, whom I would like to thank. The next in-person meeting will consider options for Season 2026.

No questions were asked at the conclusion of this report

Publicity Report

The Publicity Report was written by Steve Saul and presented by Peter Jones.

The publicity team consists of Steve Saul, Peter Jones, Ada Jean, Bella Preston and Kelly Sharples. This year, we added Alison Jones to the team, in recognition of the many hours of unsung publicity work she has done over the years.

Our main focus this year was on consolidating our procedures and practices. We had a meeting early, in which we laid out all the elements that go into publicising a play season. Specific roles were allocated to individuals and work was begun toward establishing timelines for the tasks required.

Our main focus for the coming year is to refine and establish our timeline and to formalise both this and the roles and responsibilities in writing. The interactions between publicity, production liaisons, directors and the ELT committee will be a special focus.

I would like to thank all members of the team and all those who have helped us along the way, particularly, in recent times, Andrew Boak. The efforts of all have played their part in the increased attendance at our plays.

No questions were asked at the conclusion of this report

The sub-committee reports were proposed for acceptance by Carol Owen, seconded by James Banger and was passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Election of Committee Officers 2024

The ELT Committee positions were declared vacant by Peter Jones.

ELT President 2024 Election

Carol Owen presided over the election of the 2024 ELT President. No nominations had been received prior to the meeting for the position of President. A call was made to the membership present, and one nomination by Emma Fox was proposed Peter Jones for this position. As there were no other nominations Peter Jones was declared ELT President.

Peter Jones then returned to chair the meeting.

ELT Vice President 2024 Election

No nominations had been received prior to the meeting for the position of 2024 ELT Vice President. A call was made to the membership present, and one self-nomination was garnered for this position being James Banger. As there were no other nominations James Banger was declared 2023 ELT Vice President.

ELT Secretary 2024 Election

1 nomination was received prior to the meeting for the position of 2024 ELT Secretary by Andrew Boak by nomination form signed by Bella Preston who was also his proxy.

A call was made to the membership present and one nomination was proposed by Jo-Ann Noviello for Carol Owen.

Due to the fact that there were 2 candidates nominated an election was held.

The counting of the votes cast revealed 6 votes to Carol Owen and 8 votes to Andrew Boak

Based on the results of this election Andrew Boak was declared the ELT Secretary for 2024.

ELT Treasurer 2024 Election

No nominations were received prior to the meeting for the position of ELT Treasurer. A call was made to the membership present, and one nomination by Carol Owen was proposed for Jo-Ann Noviello. As there were no other nominations Jo-Ann Noviello was declared ELT Treasurer 2024

ELT Ticket Secretary 2023 Election

No nominations were received prior to the meeting for the position of ELT Ticket Secretary. A call was made to the membership present, and one nomination was proposed by Peter Jones for Alison Jones. As there were no other nominations Alison Jones was declared ELT Ticket Secretary 2023

Set the Number of ELT Ordinary Committee Members 2023

Number of ELT Committee Ordinary Members to be elected to the committee was opened up to discussion. At the end of that discussion a proposal for there to be a total of no more than 6 ordinary member was put forward by Carol Owen. It was seconded by James Banger and was passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Election of ELT Committee Ordinary Members 2023

No nominations were received prior to the meeting for the position of ELT Committee Ordinary Member. A call was made to the membership present, and 5 nomination were garnered being Isabella Preston, Georgina Topp and Carol Owen. As there were 3 nominations for 6 ELT Committee Ordinary Member positions, the nominees were accepted and declared as the ELT Committee Ordinary Members 2024.

Review of Annual Subscription Fee

Annual Subscription Fees were proposed to stay the same by Carol Owen and seconded by Alison Jones and passed unanimously by the attending membership.

Set Membership Renewal Date

Membership Renewal Date for 2024 was set at 31st of January 2025.

General Business

There were no items of General Business received by the Secretary from the membership prior to the meeting.

Meeting Close

The Meeting was declared closed by Peter Jones at 3:20pm.