



Langham Court Theatre Society
AGM Staff and Committee Reports
NOVEMBER 25, 2018

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WRITTEN REPORTS (Departments)

1. Box Office Report

Submitted by Dick Newson, Box Office Manager

1. Total revenue from season plays: \$302,196
 - a) Girl in the Goldfish Bowl: \$37,256
 - b) Les Belles-Soeurs: \$47,429
 - c) Urinetown-The Musical: \$80,431
 - d) Sense and Sensibility: \$49,289
 - e) The Clean House: \$41,123
 - f) A Chorus of Disapproval: \$46,668
2. Other functions and workshops: \$37,945
3. Subscriber seats 2017/18: Season tix 676, Flex Pass 328
4. Total attendance was 15,800 of which 567 were new customers.
We now have 16,000+ customers in our database.
5. Subscriber seats 2018/19: Season tix 796, Flex Pass discontinued.
6. Season ticket sales: \$87,578
7. General ticket sales: \$4,742

We made some significant changes between the end of the last performance in June and the start of new season sales on Aug 13, 2018.

1. We eliminated the Flex Pass subscription and replaced it with an "Early Bird" discount which can be used by any patron for all plays.
2. We changed our online ordering system and added the benefit of allowing patrons to choose their seats.
3. We kept the Season Ticket prices the same as last season but increased the general ticket prices for Friday and Saturday shows by \$2 per ticket.
4. We dropped the special Group rate and replaced it with the Early Bird rate.
5. Online ordering is valid for all regular performances in the season and even for special shows which are added throughout the season.
6. We have returned to one Preview Night per show starting in Sep 2018. Opening Night will be the first Thursday of the run.

We continue to use a customized legacy system for ticket sales which serves us well and is very cost effective. Some important upgrades were made to accommodate the pricing changes as well as the improved online ordering system.

2. Costume Loft Report

Submitted By Colleen Maguire, Costume Loft Manager

- Serviced **new rental clients** in the film and television industry, visual artists, and performing arts groups with a **focus on youth created media**
 - Supported the entry of Langham's first float entry in the Victoria Day Parade, and came in **2nd place in our category**
 - **Trained new volunteers** in The Loft & **long-time volunteers were welcomed** back weekly
 - Purchased an easier to sort laundry hamper, jewelry tower, and shoe racks as a part of a **larger organization effort**
 - Maintained a **welcoming, friendly, clean, and open space**, and expanded our outreach to LGBTQ+ communities through online efforts
 - In January I reported on the changes coming to our annual sale, and set goals
 - The 2018 Annual Sale was **calm, well-attended, and profitable**
 - We raised **\$1721.80 for Wear2Start**, which is x4 the amount of the 2017 donation
 - With a gross total of over \$12,000 and approx. expense report of \$3000, this year is on par with the annual sale of 2017 which was the most successful sale yet with a net \$9000
 - First ever **Preview Night** for the sale was a huge success, with the **Lieutenant Governor** patronizing our merchandise with her entourage
 - Next year we will be able to focus further on **increasing the amount of tickets to be sold** for this exclusive event
 - To **promote identity** for The Costume Loft, you can now find The Costume Loft on Google Maps as a separate business listing from the theatre
 - In the month of August 2018, **The Costume Loft was found through Google Maps 1013 times** and 93% of those views were directed to our business page from related searches
 - 23 people visited our website for the first time, 7 people requested directions to the theatre, and 3 people called us from the listing all in only August. 9 photos I uploaded onto our Google Business page for The Costume Loft were **viewed 986 times** for an average of 109 views each
 - As of today, **our photos have been viewed over 20,000 times**
 - Over **21,000 people have found our online presence** through search terms related to our business
 - Next for The Loft is **expanded storage** in both the front and back stairwells
 - Our goal this year is to have **invoicing and client outreach streamlined** into an efficient customer relationship management software (CRM) in order to produce reports on rentals and profits while automating transaction records and follow-up procedures
 - Time saved during working hours will be spent on **curating a new online shop**, integrated with Langham's existing online presence
 - We will also be introducing a logo and **solidifying our brand identity in The Costume Loft**. Look for new signs on the front of the building soon!
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3. Facilities Management Report

Submitted By: Michael Gosselin, Facilities Manager

Electrical Upgrades

1. Backstage has been hard wired, including three glow-in-the-dark switches on Stage Left, Right and the stairs to lighting loft. This is much safer and more energy efficient.
2. We have new Exit/Directional signs. These are on all outside doors and inside emergency routes.
3. Outdoor lights at the back Shop door and under the parking overhang have been linked to one light sensitive photocell. Finally we can see the back stairs in winter.
4. The front stair lights have had their access changed to a switch in the Box Office lobby.
5. We have upgraded the lighting in the Dressing Rooms. They now use a tenth of the energy that was being used before.

Carpet

1. We had most of the carpets professionally cleaned prior to the season opener. This will hopefully be a continuing occurrence.

Sprinklers

1. We have had 16 new sprinkler heads upgraded and updated throughout the Theatre.
 2. We are currently getting the sprinkler pipes repaired, specifically in the costume loft. This may be a continuing project as codes have changed as to the size of piping. [CURRENT]
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4. Front of House Report

Submitted By: Christina Haska, FOH Manager

Summary:

Beginning in the previous season, we added the role of opening night party person. We continue to build capacity with our volunteers through ongoing orientations at the start of every shift. Our volunteer base is strong, but we would like to add a few additional bartenders.

Impressions:

From the front of house perspective, no news is good news. Keeping things running smoothly with a personal touch of classic Langham friendliness is my goal for all patron interactions, and I believe that my volunteers embody this goal. I cannot speak more highly of my volunteers. I appreciate how they each come with such enthusiasm for this community. I have had the opportunity to work with these volunteers for three seasons, and each time I get to meet with them I am really struck by the sense of fun and joy they all bring to the theatre.

I truly believe each of my volunteers takes to heart that they are representatives of Langham court – their kindness, empathy, and willingness to go the extra mile warms my heart and re-ignites my passion for this community every time I come into work. My sincere thanks to every one of my volunteers!

Volunteer Needs:

Currently we are at capacity for ushers. I do not want to get into a situation where we have more ushers than usher spots available, so I am not currently accepting new ushers; however, I am accepting bartenders on an ongoing basis.

CURRENT NOTE: We are going to be joined by three new bartenders, so please keep an eye out for these wonderful folks and say hello if you see them.

We added an official party person for opening night. This invaluable person replenishes food and helps set up and strike the event. This has been an incredibly helpful role and has made opening run much more smoothly. Big thanks to Finn and Em for helping me out in this role!

Training:

We hosted two safety orientation sessions before the start of this season. We reviewed the safety items available and ran through emergency protocols. We focused on our two main responsibilities to patrons: safety and comfort. Focusing on these responsibilities, we discussed how volunteers could best be aware of and report potentially unsafe situations.

Recently added at the start of every shift is a safety brief. Before the start of every shift, ushers are run through key safety items, including AED and first aid kits, the location of the booth/stage manager, and evacuation routes. We go over any potential issues in the show, specifically smoke or lights, and other issues of potential concern.

Bar Stock:

We're constantly adding new items to our snack selection and have had some success with specialty drinks. We had the Sassy Apple (apple juice and fireball whisky) for The Clean House which was received incredibly well. Where possible we will include simple specialty drinks.

We have been incredibly fortunate to have an anonymous donor donate champagne for members of the cast and crew for opening night for our 90th season. We're delighted to have this special treat!

Personal Notes from the FOH:

My work scheduling has been quite a bit busier as of 2018, and I have been incredibly fortunate to have Colleen, and now Leah support me in adding some flexibility (and nights off!) to my schedule. I continue to work hard to balance my Langham responsibilities with my other career, and I always encourage my volunteers to reach out and get in contact if they have any questions or concerns. Thanks as always for the incredible opportunity to be part of this community!

5. Head Scenic Carpenter Report

Submitted By: Chris Clarke, Head Scenic Carpenter

It was a delight to have started our 90th season with the help of two new volunteers, Tess Weins (also an amazing ASM) and David Riley. We hope to welcome more new volunteers in the months ahead.

Many thanks to all of our volunteers with a special mention for all of the extra help re-organizing and tidying up the shop from David Burbank, Mike Kuss, Alf Small and Toshik Bukoweicki.

I am most appreciative of the kindness and patience off my team and other Langham staff last season when I was unavoidably absent during much of the build of "Girl in a Goldfish Bowl"---again with particular thanks to Mike Kuss.

Thank you to Bill Adams for his assistance with the build of "Les Belles Soeurs" (which he also designed), as well as extensive help with the build and painting of "Sense and Sensibility".

We were relieved and pleased to welcome John Smith's return to form as our painter (on this season's "Goodnight Mr. Tom"). After a fall from a ladder last season during the build of "The Clean House"; John spent some time recuperating after a stay in the hospital, (where many "Langhamites" were able to visit him).

Carl Powell worked in the shop much of last season as well as appearing on stage as Col. Brandon in Sense and Sensibility. Carl is much missed; is a meticulous craftsman on and off stage, and (unfortunately for us) has a full/part time gig at the Museum.

Unsurprisingly, as is the case in the creative sphere, every new project presents new challenges and new problems; many metaphorically out of left field (which isn't to say that they couldn't be literally out of stage left). Conversely, every project is it's own reward, with unforeseen delights. A gag that works just right, a lighting trick that solves a building problem; and its attendant gasp or smattering of applause from the audience---that's what makes all of the hard work worth it!

Presently I am addressing the dust extraction problem in the shop and have completed installation of the SawStop OEM dust extraction kit on the table saw, thanks as well to David Burbank.

We have acquired new hand tools as needed, set squares, screwdriver sets, scissors & drill bits.

I would like to replace the Hitachi sliding compound mitre saw ASAP as it has seen long hard use and is no longer able to make accurate cuts. A new 12" Bosch bevel cut runs about \$700 from KMS.

Another tool which will see immediate use would be a battery air nailer; (DeWalt 18v which shares our inventory batteries, \$400)---no more dragging out the compressor hose just to make a quick repair or add just one more brad (happens more often than you'd think).

In an effort to organize small hardware; mindful of cost, functionality and durability we've tried a few different storage solutions.

Attache sized cases made by Stack-On seem to be working well and fit the bill. They are about \$25 each, are made of high impact plastic with a tough clear polycarbonate lid and contain a set of removable bins. They are similar in design to a popular European system called Sortimo. This an excellent way of organizing (i.e. finding when you need them; screws, brads, staples, small hardware, tool attachments etc.). We could easily fill another dozen of these and fit them into a purpose built rolling cabinet.

We must install a proper paint trap in the drain in the paint room sink.

I would also like to upgrade the lighting in the shop, possibly to LED as with the stage work lights.

At time of writing; we are confident that more space can be found in the backstage storage area with a careful reorganizing and culling of material; we have (for example) a surfeit of doors even despite the needs of upcoming shows.

When I first started as Head Carpenter I proposed the creation of a motto for the shop...I'm open to suggestions; but after much research and testing (in Google Translate) I quite like the following;

in serrago, lacrimus et risus vivamus
in sawdust, tears and laughter live

6. Technical Report

Submitted By: Jason King, Technical Director

This has, outside of one rather large issue that I'll detail below, been a fairly uneventful season at the theatre technically. Operationally, after acting as my assistant for the past while, Perry has stepped down from that role so he can tour with a company for a while and Finn has stepped in, at least for now, to assist and fill in as needed when I am unavailable.

Of course the big news was the replacement of the lighting console near the end of the season after our old one started acting up. While the console we purchased is currently much more than we need, it will allow us to look at other upgrades and grow into it.

As part of installing the new console, and after consultation with our regular stage managers, I reconfigured the booth and put the console on the left hand side. This allowed for better placement of the two touch screen monitors and also allowed us to move the stage manager position to the center of the booth. I also retired the old tube TV we were using for the night vision camera and replaced it with a used flat screen which I relocated to the left of the stage manager position. I picked up a used iPad which is in use as a remote for the console so that light levels can be adjusted onstage. Basically it acts as a wireless version of the wired one we had on the old console.

Everyone has been getting used to the new console and I think it's safe to say that it is a big hit and definitely worth the investment.

We once again hosted the Fringe which was very successful with no major issues to note. We also had a number of successful outside rentals which, while they also went well, has highlighted some of the areas in which we lack in the technical department. Specifically, we really need to look into

purchasing some modern wireless microphones and also look at how we can upgrade our lighting so that we can accommodate outside renters without affecting any of our regular productions.

Other welcome work has been electrical upgrades backstage to bring us in line with codes. Work lights now have their own dedicated switch and plugs and we removed the non-conforming conduit and power bar combination stage left. Many switches now also light up so you can find them in the dark.

Going forward my next short term project is looking at replacing the stage monitor camera and screens with a modern HD system and also look at gaining the ability to route the signal to other areas of the building such as backstage.

7. Production Chair Report

Submitted By: Alan Penty

This last year as production chair has been an adventure. It began with Pat (Rundell) having to step down and me deciding to proceed solo. The 90th season began and so far has been better than I could have imagined in both quality of productions and audience response. I enlisted Quinn as my assistant because I am generally a little technologically challenged and he has been amazing. We gathered our reading committee around and began to meet and talk about what next season should look like. This group of people have been invaluable to me whether they could make the meetings or not. Their notes and comments have guided me in all my decisions. Thank you. On reflection, I do think this job is too big for one volunteer and I would have had a more structured approach to the reading committee and the play selection but the job demands such a learning curve that errors are bound to occur.

I look forward to guiding and helping the new production chair(s).

WRITTEN REPORTS (Committees)

1. 90th Anniversary Celebrations Committee Report

Submitted By: Toshik Bukowiecki

The committee is composed of Pearl Arden, Michelle Buck, Vinnie Chadwick, Sally Crickman, Jean de Cartier, Marilyn Kuss, Quinn MacTavish, Drew Waveryn and Toshik Bukowiecki (chair).

The committee first met in February 2018 to start discussing possible events and ways to celebrate our 90th Anniversary. We decided on three major events during the season and several other ways to mark this milestone in our history.

The first thing we did was announce our upcoming 90th Season with a float in the Victoria Day Parade in May. It took 2nd prize in the Community Entrants category. Thanks to everyone who helped prepare it and took part in the parade. (See the Victoria Day Parade report in the June newsletter.)

We were also represented in the Oak Bay Tea Party Parade by Antoinette Church and Ned Lemley in a lovely old classic convertible courtesy of Colleen Maguire and Peter Gatt. Thanks to everyone who participated.

On September 2nd, we had the first of our major events - our sold out, Champagne Gala at Craigdarroch Castle to start the 90th Season off in grand style. Thanks to all who help organize and run that event. It was a “smash” hit, we hear. (See the September newsletter for photos from the event.)

We decided to try something different with publicity for our 90th season and had our season advertised on the sides of four transit buses during the month of September. I am not aware of any feedback from trying this but it was great to something new and different for this special season. You will have just heard of our upcoming, 2nd major event which will take place at Government House in February 2019. This will be our official 90th Birthday Party and the committee sends huge thanks to the Lieutenant Governor and the staff at Government House for supporting us and helping to make this a very memorable occasion. Details of the event will be announced shortly.

The last major event we are planning will be a Wrap Party at the end of the season that we are hoping to make into a combination of our regular Volunteer Appreciation party, a Block Party, an Open House and a Reunion. Details are still to be work out but we are planning a Beer Garden and BBQ in the parking lot. That's not a done deal yet but that's what we have in mind. You will be kept informed.

2. Archive Report

Submitted By: Marilyn Kuss

Mission statement – To make the Langham archive interesting and accessible to all.

It is not good enough to have boxes and filing cabinets in my basement, and/or in U-Vic's basement. The more people who know of Langham's vibrant past, and know of the documents that prove this statement, the better for Langham.

The 10 Year Plan

Survive the 90th Anniversary season. (2018-2019)

It has been a busy spring and summer preparing displays (like those at the Gala) of Langham through the decades. There is a series of posters that list the plays produced at Langham along with photographs of those plays. There is also a series of posters that chronicle the history of the Victoria Theatre Guild and the building it occupies here on Langham Court. There is also a series of inserts that accompany the play programs – the first was the 4 Blithe Spirits, the second Langham's Animal Parade and next to come will be Musicals at Langham. In the upstairs hallway, there is a timeline and other archival material. Some of this will be reduced to letter-size, printed in-house and bound and put on display on the archive shelf in the lounge.

2019-2020 season - Finish what I call Ned's book.

It is a chronological pictorial book about the plays produced at Langham during the decade 2000 to 2009. Each play is displayed on a two page spread and has a review (or two), lists of cast and crew and photographs as space permits (or are available). This book will be printed in-house and bound and put on display on the archive shelf in the lounge.

In the archive, the series of posters that chronicle the history of the Victoria Theatre Guild and the building it occupies here on Langham Court will be updated annually.

2020-2021 season - Begin work on a book for the decade 1990-1999. Use the same format as above. Update history.

2021-2022 season - Begin work on a book for the decade 2010-2019. Update history.

2022-2023 season - Begin work on a book for the decade 1980-1989. Update history.

2023-2024 - (95th Anniversary season)

2024-2025 season – Begin work on a book for the decade 1970-1979. Information may be incomplete. Update history.

2025-2026 season – Begin work on a book for the decade 1960-1969. Information will be incomplete. Update history.

2026-2027 season – Begin work on a book for the decade 1950-1959. Information will be incomplete. Update history.

2027-2028 season – Begin work on a book for 1929-1949. Information will be incomplete. Update history.

2028-2029 (100th Anniversary season) - The chronological pictorial books about the plays produced at Langham Court should be complete with the information from the Langham archive accessible to all who are interested. The series of posters that chronicle the history of Langham Court should be up-to-date and ready for use.

Life Members put forward and accepted in the previous year were: Jeanie Reynolds (JAN 28, 2017) and Wendy Mahagay (JUNE 24, 2018) and, at this AGM tonight, three new life members, names as yet not released.

From the Life Member Committee – A gentle reminder to both those giving non-program points and those getting non-program points, be sure to use the system so that all points earned are credited.

Summary – this year, the 10 Year Plan has been greatly aided by the help of Daunine Burbank. There is so much on-going archive work that it can be difficult to take the time to organize and make earlier productions and historical information available to others. However, on behalf of both of us, it is an honour and a privilege to work on the Langham Archive.

3. Readers' Theatre Report

Submitted By: Wendy Merk

The 2017/18 season included a wide variety of offerings, including home-grown ghost stories, original plays, and famous radio scripts. Many volunteers performed both on and off-stage, including producing, directing, writing, acting, stage managing, ushering, bartending, and operating lighting and sound. Many more attended the performances, making this a popular activity for theatre-lovers of all kinds. As always, thanks to grant funding, the productions are free of charge and include free refreshments after every performance.

October 28, 2017: THE HAUNTING OF LANGHAM COURT THEATRE, directed by Wendy Merk.

1. TRUE GHOST STORIES OF LANGHAM COURT THEATRE, as told by the volunteers and staff of the theatre
2. THE SPIRIT IS WILLING by Nicola B. Quinn
3. HECATE'S TEAM, an original script by Barbara Julian and Wendy Merk

February 10, 2018: Beyond Belief, a thought-provoking drama by Jason Vikse, directed by Keeley Teuber.

May 12: The Readers' Theatre Festival

1. FOILED BY PRESIDENT FRED by Spike Milligan, performed by students of Monterey School, directed by Mitch Barnes
2. FIRE HOSES AND FAMILY, a thoughtful comedy written and directed by Mitch and Jo Barnes.