

## PORTADOWN PHOENIX PLAYERS

### TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

As is the case with most societies, Portadown Phoenix Players relies on meetings, with the Executive Committee and the whole committee (which totalled 16 in 2022-2023) both meeting at least once each month, more frequently from May to September. The pace quickens considerably after May each year as auditions are planned for, scheduled and held and rehearsals begin, and then quickens further as the performance dates approach.

The post-Covid year 2022-2023 followed the pattern established over many years, with the Executive Committee planning and overseeing, and the whole team sharing responsibility for fund-raising, supervision of the Juniors (at all times) at rehearsals, on stage, in the wings, backstage and generally anywhere on site within Portadown Town Hall. Rotas were developed and operated for front of house, booking office, interval tea/coffee etc and for the sale of programmes and of those most important raffle tickets. A sub-committee was set up to explore and develop an online booking system.

Getting back to action following the hiatus brought about by Covid proved most challenging. The show chosen for 2022 was "Guys and Dolls". As we began to gather a cast it became apparent that many regulars had drifted away (some losing interest during the enforced break, some to other groups further afield) and that casting our choice of show was not possible with the smaller number available. Auditions were halted and an alternative ("Little Shop of Horrors" was chosen.

We also experienced difficulty with our rehearsal space. For years we have used, free of charge courtesy of the local parish, a long decommissioned Primary School, which perfectly suited our needs. The building had been unused throughout lockdown and had suffered invasion by damp, birds and vermin. An inspection by the Executive Committee determined unsafe and thus unusable. We had to seek alternative accommodation and, because of the dearth of alternatives at such short notice, settled for hiring rooms and stage within Portadown Town Hall, suitable but much more costly than our previous space.

"Little Shop of Horrors" had its technical and dress rehearsals Monday 22 and Tuesday 23 August 2022, with performances on Wednesday 24, Thursday 25, Friday 26 and Saturday 27 August. All involved (committee, cast, parents, director, choreographer and musical director) agreed that it was a great success, notwithstanding such adverse conditions.

Portadown Phoenix Players continues to advance its purposes of "educating the public in the dramatic and operatic arts" and "furthering the development of public appreciation and taste in said arts". "Little Shop of Horrors" marked the return of the annual Junior musical production; the committee is determined to explore avenues to reinstate the annual dramatic production, so cruelly interrupted by the whole lockdown experience in March 2020 at the commencement of a run of Brian Friel's "Translations".

This intention, together with an aim to find an affordable and suitable base, should become the focus for the coming year.