

WALBERSWICK AMATEUR THEATRICAL SOCIETY
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016 for the Annual Parish Meeting

"This above all – to thine own self be true" ~ HAMLET Act 1, Scene 3.(said by Polonius, father of Ophelia).

This year is the 400th Anniversary of the Bard, William Shakespeare. I wonder if WATS will last as long as the plays we can enjoy from Shakespeare. Strangely (or not) we have never/rarely read one; probably because they are better seen on stage.

It is my belief and understanding that WATS began with a few like-minded friends gathering together at each other's home as a social event. At this time there would not have been television, scanty radio, but a wealth of literature in the form of plays to draw on, reading together for pure enjoyment.

Like Topsy, WATS grew and at one time there were 60 or so members, thus the Cast and now an audience to listen.

WATS was much personalised as the meetings were by invitation to members' homes. From time to time a play would take to the stage. All of this much like it is today, but now with more sophistication.

An Annual Party would have been quite an occasion and entertaining ourselves was much more the 'order of the day', and a great but simple pleasure to those involved.

What has changed with WATS down the years? Not a great deal. Homes may be a bit more luxurious; warm and comfortable. Our plays now include today's modern ideas, plots, and language. Some of us have had to adjust, and sometimes question the language and detail of a particular script; after all we are reading the play in other people's homes!

This moving forward has, however, enriched and coloured our repertoire of plays, and brought 'though provoking' ideas, and interesting discussions.

This year we have read:

12th October at Field Cottage by kind invitation of Doris & Clive Brynley-Jones,

"The Other Woman" by Jan Etherington & Gavin Petrie,

Produced by Julia Sowerbutts and Mark Aldridge.

9th November at Seven Acres by kind invitation of Jill & Bill Willison,

"The Happiest Days of your Life" BY John Dighton,

Produced by Doris and Clive Brynley-Jones

14th December at Hoist Wood House by kind invitation of Judy & Brian Morton

"Seasons' Greetings" by Alan Ayckbourn,

Produced by Margot Godbold

16th January 2016 the Annual Party at the Village Hall.

A themed evening "Story Books", and an entertainment **by Mary Nuttall,**
"The Sailor and the Laundry Maid". Produced by Mark Aldridge and set by Mark Aldridge.

15th February at the Village Hall Annex. **"Dangerous Corner" by J.B. Priestley,**

Produced by Judy Morton.

14th March at Millcroft, Millfield Road by kind invitation of Diane & Edward Wright,

"Stones in his Pockets" by Marie Jones

Produced by Ben Cardwell

Average numbers of members attending was 33.

We have also been out and about with Julia's many trips to the theatre. We sincerely thank Julia for planning and organising these most enjoyable outings.

Again this year we have been light on Committee Meetings as there have been holidays, family commitments, and a great planning through the winter months for "When we are married", which took its cast from several WATS members, and of course Clive was Director, and Doris his right hand man. Very well done Clive and the amazing team, for the wonderful production. We all had great pleasure and delight from attending performances.

As a Committee we have used email, notes and telephone calls often, rather than a meeting, to get a consensus of opinion on the odd situation which occurred. I believe that members were not in any way put out and probably not even aware.

A huge thank you to all our Hosts and Hostesses for opening their homes to us once again, and this year we had the pleasure of going to a new venue by kind invitation of Diane and Edward Wright.

It is quite a task setting up "theatre style" in your sitting room for, often, and unknown number of audience. To help this procedure, we will make sure that all members have telephone numbers and email addresses (as far as possible).

I also thank Mark and Wayne for their kindness in organising chairs and crockery each month from the Village Hall for our performances. We are most grateful.

Also many thanks to Dione who allows us to put our poster board on her gate, central to the village.

Many thanks to our Producers. It is an enjoyable task to choose a play, but really quite time consuming. We may need to read through several scripts before alighting on a play which takes our interest and which will suit WATS readers. We then cast the play, not only appropriately, but also mindful of members who would like to read too. If less able readers are not included they will never have the chance to improve, and we may find a talent we did not know they had; as we have discovered in the recent past!

Our Annual Party was very thin on the ground this year. It may have been that members were away on holiday at that time, or for another reason. It was a very good party; the entertainment (one of Mary Nuttall's earlier plays) was well performed, and many thanks to Mark whose professional direction led us all to a successful performance. The food and service was excellent.

We held our Annual General meeting on Monday 18th April 2016, which was followed by a Cheese & Wine Party and an Entertainment ~ the reading of members' 50 word stories and some charades.

Judy Morton ~ Chairman 2016