

FUNTINGTON PLAYERS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

This is all about what the Management Committee does, who is on it, and what individual roles the members have.

What does it do?

The Committee is responsible for making sure the Society runs properly and in accordance with its constitution.

- It makes sure that we put on two full plays each year, in the Spring and Autumn, supported by a programme of playreads, studio and 'cafe theatre' productions plus a varied programme of social events.
- It tries to make sure something happening every month, sometimes more often.
- It makes sure by monthly newsletters sent by e-mail or snail mail that the membership is kept up to date with what is going on.
- It keeps the Society financially sound, maintains standards and ensures the Society is well regarded by our audiences and other organisations with which we have contact.
- And it tries (and we think succeeds - but we would say that wouldn't we ?) to do all this in a lighthearted way.
- The Committee puts the fun into Funtington Players -Drama is meant to be fun, not hard work!

So who's on the Committee?

The Committee has four officers, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and four elected members. There are currently two co-opted members, who have special responsibilities, though there can be additional co-opted members if the Committee thinks fit.

The Committee meets each month at the home of one of its members - usually the current Chairman - and has a jolly time sorting out everything; from which member can be inveigled to direct the next play to whether the next social event has to include food and wine if we want lots of members to attend.

If you think you know the answer to this latter question you have the makings of a Committee member, if you think you can manage the former you'd be in line for Chairman.

And who does what?

The Chairman

The first point to note is that we have so far managed to avoid being politically correct about our titles and so the Chairman could be, and has been female, well not him personally but you know what I mean, whereas our current Secretary isn't female (or wasn't the last time he looked).

The main role of the Chairman is to try and keep the Committee in order. This is often not possible.

He/she

- Chairs (of course!) committee meetings and attempts to get the Committee to do things. If the attempts work the job's a doddle but with a Committee like ours...

He and - we'll get generic from here on to save typing -

- Sets the agenda of each committee meeting but adds items if and when requested by other members of the Committee, though this isn't often - we know our place.
- Ensures we have directors to direct and plays to be performed in the future. (Usually, our Chairmen say that the most worrying thing they have to do is to make sure that we have a good director and a good play twice each year but our various incumbents have achieved this successfully every year for more than 30 years now so it can't be as bad as it seems - though very occasionally we have announced at the last minute.)
- Acts as the public face of the Society, which is why we try to pick ones that look fairly tidy, and will give short (we can but hope) speeches at appropriate occasions.
- He has to report on the events of the year at the Annual General Meeting. Depending on the character of the holder of the office this can vary from a simple factual list of happenings to a humorous monologue.

More than any other job on the Committee, the Chairman has the choice to make of it what he will. Which is why the description just written could be a load of tosh when the next one takes over.

No one can be Chairman (see the constitution) for more than three years, just to stop 'em getting too big for their boots.

The Vice-Chairman

This is the best job to have. You rarely have to do anything. Perhaps chair a meeting or make a speech if the Chairman is away. Your main worry is that the Chairman might get sick or drop dead during the year and then you are it. And this just might happen before you have been in the job long enough to upset

sufficient people to make sure they don't vote you in as Chairman when the current one steps down.

The Secretary

This job is mainly behind the scenes so it's not necessary to look tidy or wear lippy but it does help if he/she can spell and write in coherent sentences as well as knowing where to put spaces in between words so the meaning doesn't change.

There are basic duties which have to be done but outside of these Secretary can be as busy or idle as he (generic again) wishes. We are generally a Society that distrusts too much busy-ness in it's officers. Sadly, there are some jobs which can't be avoided:

- Take minutes of Committee meetings.
Try and get them as accurate as possible and record the decisions made. Not easy when half the Committee is talking at once and the other half are on the wrong item on the agenda. But do your best; don't forget the only reason they read the minutes is to find out what you've got wrong. If in doubt write down what you think they should have said.
- Issue the agenda for the AGM, minute the meeting, record the names of members present -don't spell 'em wrong, they are all sensitive souls- and note who has been elected to what, who proposed and who seconded whom.
- Send and receive correspondence.
Not onerous; letters of thanks, letters of support, letters of congratulation, letters of condolence -rarely more than a half-dozen a year. Receive (mainly junk) mail, draw important stuff to the Committee's attention.
- Act as point of contact. Other organisations will have your name, address telephone number and e-mail on their records. Try to be polite when they try to sell or hire you something.
- Make sure that we get performing rights for plays and that enough scripts are ordered.
Everyone involved with a play thinks they need one; they don't. You know the set designer is going to build whatever he/she thinks they can, never mind what the director would like.
- Keep records
Not the ones you would like - Dire Straits, Eagles, ABBA (its OK to admit it

now) and the really scratched old Beatles stuff, but minutes (for perhaps two or three years back) copies of the constitution, and copies of any decision that results in a significant change to how we run.

- Sign things
Legal and other official documents are usually signed by the Secretary, but there are hardly ever any. Sometimes you might have to sign a cheque if the Treasurer is away.

The Treasurer

This is a more difficult job than the others on the Committee because you have to be able to do sums, and get the same (right) answer every time. Few people are able to do this.

There are some fun parts to the job, like taking money off people (any ex tax inspector would make a first class treasurer) and spending other people's money (any married woman will already have practice at this -and now I've offended half the membership though the other half will nod sagely) but unfortunately there is boring work too:

- Keep track of money collected and money spent,
- Provide auditable records and arrange an annual independent audit.
- Ensure standing costs are met. These include things like insurances, hall hire, subscriptions.
- Collect members' annual subscriptions. Most people pay up cheerfully but the Treasurer must also be good at getting blood from a stone if he/she is to guarantee all subs are collected.
- Report monthly to the Committee on monies spent and balances held,
- Prepare an Annual Statement of Accounts for the AGM. This will include breakdowns as to the profitability of each play and any unusual or exceptional costs that cannot be readily hidden such as, for instance, the Chairman's fact finding trip to Bermuda.
- Look very cross when any Committee Member suggests spending money.

Elected Committee Members

Between them the four elected members do all sorts of good stuff.

This includes:

- Keeping the membership lists up to date.
This is more difficult than it seems. It keeps two committee members occupied lots of the time and all members some of the time 'cos people forget to tell us that they have moved house, moved spouse or changed their e-mail address yet again. We accept death (and maybe tax exile) as the only valid reason for not telling us.
- Keeping the 'contacts' list up to date.
Contacts are people who have been to our plays, liked them, and want to

come again. A critical list and it's one of the reasons we manage to sell out productions time after time.

- Preparing the monthly Newsletter.
This is our primary means of keeping in touch with the membership and letting them know what events are planned. It goes out by e-mail or snail mail. We know our members sit anxiously by their letter boxes for long hours in anticipation of the next issue. Eat your heart out Dickens.
- Updating the Website.
Now becoming more and more important as a means of communicating with our members, most of whom will have learned to use a computer purely so that they can read up on the good stuff on the website. And also it tells others something about us - which is probably more worrying.
- Booking the Hall.
Lots of other organisations use the Village Hall and we have to plan years ahead to get the dates we need.

Co-opted Members

Co-option is a good way of retaining or acquiring members with specific skills and experience. At present there are two members co-opted by virtue of the tasks they do.

- One member handles Village Hall liaison:
This is very important as it is our 'home' and we need to be involved in how it is run, identify ways in which we can offer support, either financially or through the expertise of our members, and in particular -as there are plans for a new hall to be built within the next five years- in its future development.
- Another member is Resident Stage Manager:
A critical and absolutely key technical role. Amongst many other things the RSM knows how the hall works, how the stage works, how the lights and sound are plumbed in, where everything is stored, locks and unlocks, fixes things and people, keeps the peace, or not, as the case may be and generally remembers stuff that others forget or think happens by magic somehow.

At least all of the above explains what the Committee is supposed to do, but being a Drama Group it doesn't always happen like this...