

# Committee Reports (alphabetical order)

## Archives Report by Marilyn Kuss

The Archives committee consists of Marilyn Kuss (Chair). My faithful cohort, Daunine Burbank, resigned at the conclusion of the 2023/2024 season. Daunine worked tirelessly designing new posters, displaying old posters and re-designing information from old posters into new posters. Daunine started working with me during the 2017/2018 season. We continued to work during the Covid pandemic, first meeting in the Costume Construction room and later coordinating our efforts but working from home. During the Covid closure, we colourized 17 previously black and white posters. We were a good team for seven years. I offer a sincere thank you to Daunine.

We have been creating new posters for each production as it finishes its run. Our five most recent posters are: *Present Laughter*, *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress*, *Murder Weekend*, *Lost Boy and Maggie's Getting Married*. I will work on the poster for *Ravenscroft* and have it ready for display during the run of *The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley*. If anyone is interested in becoming involved in the making and presentation of the poster archive, please (please, please, please) get in touch with me. I would welcome some help.

As the Langham archivist, I maintain the database. There are now slightly less than 27,000 entries, dating from the very early days of our 95 year old theatre group.

I have recently up-dated our Langham History to include last year's activities. There are copies of this little handout in the Box Office and Lounge.

## Box Office Report by Dick Newson

### Report to the Board of Directors and Membership – AGM Nov 3, 2024

This report covers the period from Oct 1, 2023, to Sep 30, 2024. Revenue received for productions after Sep 30, 2024, is reflected in the 2025 fiscal year.

#### Revenue summary other than ticket sales:

56 Donations directly to the Box Office: \$14,218

9 Patron donations: \$9,300

191 Donations through Thunder Tix: \$1,418

117 Membership (new and renewals): \$895

#### Revenue summary for Production ticket sales:

All production tickets were booked through Thunder Tix either online or via the Box Office. Events that were not Langham play productions were either rentals, collaborations, or co-

productions. Rentals paid for access to the theatre, and co-productions shared the ticket revenue. All tickets, except COMPS and RUSH, are charged a \$2 service fee which covers the Thunder Tix charge as well as the Credit Card payment fee.

Expenses for Langham productions are covered under the Treasurer’s report and are not itemized per show. Co-pros show the amount retained by Langham, in bold, after payment to the other party.

\* Indicates a Langham play.

\* *Maggie’s Getting Married*: Sep 20 - Oct 8 2023, 15 shows: \$31,002

*Victoria Festival of Authors*: Oct 11-15 2023 (NO Langham ticket sales) **\$2,200**

*Halloween Spectacular*: Co-pro Sun Oct 29, 2023 1 show \$684 **\$231**

\* *The Lost Boy*: Nov 15 – Dec 3, 2023 15 shows \$30,152

*The Great Gatsby*: LOST rental Dec 7-10 2023, 4 shows: \$15,640 **\$1,000**

*A Dictionary of Emotions*: HUVI Co-pro Jan 18 – 21, 2024: 4 shows \$12,580 **\$0**

\* *Murder Weekend*: Feb 21 – Mar 10, 2024, 15 shows: \$62,433

*The Value*: Attitude Theatre Collab Mar 21 – 31, 2024, 8 shows: \$0 (59 Tix for –\$118) **\$0**

*Tomatoes Tried to Kill Me*: Co-pro Blue Bridge Apr 5 – 6, 2024 3 shows: \$18,069 **\$3,929**

\* *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress*: May 1 – 19, 2024, 15 shows: \$52,941

*Spring Showcase*: Lifetime Networks Co-pro May 25 – 26, 2024 2 shows \$3,988 **\$2,456**

\* *Present Laughter*: Jun 26 – Jul 14, 2024 15 shows \$37,586 (1 show cancelled -\$2,100)

*Nice While it Lasted*: Reconciliation Theatre Co-pro Aug 2 – 4, 2024 3 shows \$2,009 **\$1,010**

Langham production total: \$214,114 Others total: **\$10,826**

\* *Ravenscroft*: Sep 25 – Oct 13 2024, 15 shows \$52,125 (1 show cancelled -\$2,646)

### Revenue summary for Season Tickets (TT Packages):

This revenue is included in the ticket sales for the five plays of the 2024-2025 season. It is provided here as a reference showing advanced sales by performance day.

Package	Orders	Seats	Revenue	Rank
Week 1 Wed	9	15	\$1,332	12
Week 1 Thu	25	44	\$4,244	6
Week 1 Fri	7	11	\$1,350	11
Week 1 Sat	3	8	\$980	14
Week 1 Sun Mat	27	61	\$6,322	3
Week 2 Wed	14	28	\$3,270	8
Week 2 Thu	28	52	\$6,730	2
Week 2 Fri	19	37	\$4,674	5
Week 2 Sat	13	26	\$3,072	9

Week 2 Sun Mat	37	59	\$6,868	1
Week 3 Wed	7	14	\$1,616	10
Week 3 Thu	9	30	\$3,296	7
Week 3 Fri	4	8	\$960	15
Week 3 Sat	4	8	\$980	13
Week 3 Sun Mat	28	40	\$6,224	4
Totals	234	441	\$51,918	

Prior to the COVID era we had a total of about 420 subscribers. When we started our 2022-2023 season, we dropped to about 220 subscribers. We were able to retain many of those for the 2023-2024 season as well as a good number of new subscribers for a total of 233.

I've had several patrons call after attending the first production, *Maggie's Getting Married*, asking if they can get season tickets for the remaining shows. Since that was not possible through Thunder Tix, I sold them seats for the four remaining shows at the season ticket price. These patrons will probably renew as subscribers next season. Announcing our next season in time to start sales during the run of the last play (May/June) will help increase our subscriber base.

For the current season, I renewed the Packages for the ones that had booked previously and reached out to the many that had not renewed. For the 2025-2026 season I will also pre-book our current subscribers and allow more flexibility through Thunder Tix to encourage further interest.

### **Box Office Operation**

The Box Office is open from Monday through Friday between 10 am and noon, and that is enough time to handle the few (but very welcome) walk-ins and phone calls. Activities include using TT for new orders, order changes, setting up new productions, producing reconciliation reports for productions, and monthly reports.

Online ticket ordering with at-home ticket printing, or tickets held on a personal device, has reduced the Box Office load considerably and I think that two hours per day is sufficient. Fully trained volunteers for the daytime, evening, and matinee performances should be fine with backup from a supervisor.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Newson  
Box Office Manager

## Co-Production Committee Report - 2024

**BACKGROUND:** When Langham Court Theatre reopened in late 2022, it faced a very difficult challenge. Its reputation had been severely damaged and the unanswered questions were: Could Langham rebuild its audiences, re-establish credibility with funding agencies and actively demonstrate its commitment to an inclusive and diverse environment?

While Langham's season of plays (under the purview of the Production Chairs) was of critical importance in this regard, it was also clear that the theatre needed to do more. Rather than simply state that Langham was welcoming and inclusive, it needed to earnestly reach out to the community and demonstrate its commitment to these values. That was the objective of the Co-Pro Committee – an objective which its members were dedicated to fulfilling, with hundreds of hours spent facilitating events and working with a diverse group of Co-Pros to ensure that their Langham experience was positive and beneficial for all concerned.

### **FACTS AND FIGURES:**

For some time now, the committee has been aware of misinformation that continues to circulate in regard to Co-Pros. The facts presented below are provided to dispel that misinformation. They are documented and can be further detailed and confirmed upon request.

- Over the years, multiple boards have contemplated the need to reduce the number of Langham plays from 6 plays to 5 plays per season in order to ease the pressure on the limited number of "in demand" production volunteers (stage managers, producers, designers, construction team, etc.). Going to 5 plays in the 2023/24 season allowed this to take place – with Co-Pros providing significant replacement income, along with filling the open schedule with community-building events.
- Since the first event in 2023, the committee has facilitated 15 Co-Pros (including collaborations and sponsorships events), as well as hosting a theatre workshop for the Filipino Community and facilitating a dress rehearsal for *Filipino-Canadian Pride Vancouver Island*. Co-Pro organizations have included *Reconciliation Theatre*, *Lifetime Networks* (working with disabled actors), *Help Ukraine Vancouver Island*, *Target Theatre*, *Central Middle School*, and many others.
- Since 2023, Co-pro events have generated \$21,484.61 in income for Langham Court Theatre, plus 100% of the proceeds from bar sales.
- Since 2023, Co-pro events have provided \$69,360.85 for the community organizations involved. This includes events that were specifically staged as fundraisers for organizations such as, *Help Ukraine Vancouver Island*, the *Alzheimer Society of BC*, and the *Red Cross Türkiye & Syria Earthquake Appeal*.
- There is no "standard formula" for Co-Pros, as each one presents a unique set of circumstances, needs and opportunities. However, the majority of these events (with the exception of fundraisers) were initiated on the basis of a 50/50 revenue split with Langham. Overall, Co-Pro revenues have resulted in income that has exceeded that of market rental rates – while providing substantial additional benefits.
- All Co-pros were approved by the board before proceeding, and involved written contracts/agreements, including a requirement for special event insurance, if necessary.
- The board provides \$0 budget for Co-Pros.
- To ensure that Co-Pros do not place a strain on Langham production teams, tech for Co-Pros is handled by professional technicians (typically paid by the Co-Pro), with support from members of the committee and other volunteers. Committee members are in attendance to facilitate all Co-Pro events.

- Co-Pro events begin with an introduction on stage from a member of the committee – welcoming the attendees to Langham on behalf of Langham’s members, volunteers, and board of directors. This ensures that attendees are fully aware of Langham’s participation/partnership and support.
- All Co-Pros (except one short-notice opportunity) were booked into open time slots allocated for these events by the Production Chairs and board at the time the Langham season schedule was set.
- Co-Pros have not taken rehearsal spots from Langham productions. Every Co-Pro was booked into the schedule after Langham shows had chosen their preferred rehearsal times (except for one short-notice event which earned the theatre \$5,662.90, plus bar proceeds, in two days).
- Co-Pros have not reduced the standard time designated for set building, or the standard on-stage rehearsal time for Langham shows. A review of past Langham seasons established that the allotted time for set building ranged between 24 and 31 days. The operation of Co-Pros did not affect this timeline.
- Co-Pros offer a tremendous opportunity to showcase Langham to potential patrons and supporters, along with helping to build the Langham volunteer pool. For example, two directors in this Langham season became involved with Langham as a result of their Co-Pro experience.
- Co-Pros (as opposed to rentals) are built on ongoing relationships/partnerships (rather than short term arrangements). They require consistent communication and follow-up, which in turn provides much more benefit than income alone – garnering the goodwill and appreciation of the organizations involved, as well as increasing Langham’s visibility at no cost to Langham.
- Co-Pros are in keeping with Langham’s Constitution, which states that one of the purposes of the Society is *“fostering liaison and cooperation with other societies and groups having similar objectives.”*
- Co-Pros do not detract from Langham events. They expand and amplify the positive reputation of the theatre while enhancing Langham’s valuable contribution as a key member of the Victoria community.

#### **CHALLENGES:**

Given the wide range of benefits that Co-Pros bring to Langham, one would hope that these events would be universally supported. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Over the past 1 ½ years, a small number of influential Langham members have consistently denigrated the value of these events and objected to their staging – in our opinion, to the detriment of the theatre. While the motivation of these individuals is unclear, their unwarranted and persistent disparagement of both the committee members personally and the events themselves has had a cumulative effect – the committee members are no longer willing to continue to facilitate these events.

#### **THE FUTURE:**

There have been concerning attempts (including proposed motions at the board level) to severely restrict Co-Pros at Langham Court Theatre. The committee believes that this effort is exceedingly misguided. Should it occur, the consequences will be a substantial reduction of income, the diminishment of Langham’s reputation as an open and inclusive organization, and the loss of opportunity to share our wonderful theatre with the wider arts community – and that will be truly sad.

The Committee wishes to thank all the Langham members and volunteers who have supported the Co-Pro events, especially Communications Director, Kathy Macovichuk and Technical Director, Jason King. We also wish to thank Dick Newson for his assistance in the box office and the ushers and bar staff who have generously donated their time to help make these events successful.

Co-Production Committee: Wayne Yercha (Past President and Co-Production Coordinator), Andrew Gabriel (Vice President and Committee member).

## **Costume Loft Report** by Misty Buxton

### **Costume Loft Highlights for the Victoria Theatre Guild AGM October 2024**

The previous Loft manager left at the end of May to work full time on her movie, and I started officially as the Loft manager in June. I had already had 2+ years of volunteer experience working here at the Loft so most tasks transitioned over smoothly. I was already familiar with the use of the new Square POS and the policies with other community theatres. Deanna and I did spend the last week of May transferring over various accounts for emails and social media.

The new Square Point of Sale system has made a huge difference on the way transactions are handled in the loft. Since the Pos handles just about any type of payment, this encourages the use of credit cards over cash. The Loft also no longer has to deal with creating additional receipts or invoices forms as most customers are satisfied with the paperwork generated by the system. The major change the POS implied is the abandonment of credit card number storage. Previously this information was just written down on our carbon copy sale book forms which made some customers uncomfortable. The Loft never generally charged late, damaged, or replacement fees onto the customer's stored credit cards but the possible threat was there. Despite this change, the records indicate that our costume return rates have increased since the implementation of the system.

The Loft continues to support and work with Langham designers, schools, theatres and the public in supplying distinctive costumes for their unique projects and productions. Previous years the Loft has had large rentals go out for film companies, music videos, commercials and individual film projects. This summer the Loft lacked any big projects in the film industry but we did get repeat customers for music videos and independent short films.

Additionally, our annual sale that happens during the summer was cancelled due to a number of factors. Since the Loft manager changed over in June it was felt that the sale might need to be postponed until later in the summer. Unfortunately, due to the theatre having inside and outside renovations a date change did not seem possible so a decision was made to cancel it for the year.



One of the effects of my becoming the new Loft Manager is that the Loft was down to only one volunteer. Previously, when the old Loft Manager needed help with scheduling coverage I was the one she called since I was proficient with the Square system. I am now training a new volunteer who I hope will be able to fill the gap. I am still looking for another possible volunteer and a couple of seamstresses. The sewing workload can pile up and having an extra set of hands that can take items home to sew would be beneficial.

Over the summer Wendy and myself took the time to purge, reorganize and repair items in the Loft. I purchased a number of commonly requested rental items online and drove out to a liquidation store in Mill Bay to acquire items from a recently closed costume store in Vancouver. As always we received loads of donations from individuals and organizations which impacted the storage space in the loft and the theatre's sewing room. Volunteers Wendy and Leslie were the driving force behind the massive cleanup of the sewing room. Wendy worked with the guys in the construction shop to get new shelving installed and had the existing shelving re-enforced for safety. Leslie gave the final push to get it organized and accessible for everyone that uses the space. Leslie is now helping out Jean with organizing in the props room.

Lastly, the Loft is trying out a program with the Fine Arts department at Camosun College. This is a collaboration with the photography students in Professor Nancy Yakimoski's classes. Her students are granted access to borrow any items in the Costume Loft for their photography assignments. Assignments are due every two weeks so it works well with our current rental time period. There are no rental fees for the students, but instead they permit the use of their assignment photos on our social media accounts as payment. This type of collaboration is something the Loft has been trying to get going for sometime. We have so many vintage and delicate pieces that rarely gets used in productions and never rents out to the public.

Respectfully submitted,  
Misty Buxton

28 October 2024

## **Cultural Committee Report 2024** by Andrew Gabriel

Two years ago, I (Andrew Gabriel) was brand new to Langham Court Theatre and the local Victoria theatre community. I came to Langham as a full-time drama student, performing in the first production after the re-opening of the theatre. My wonderful experience with that show (Almost Maine), along with my great appreciation for Langham, led me to step forward to serve on the Board of Directors as Vice President, to become a member of the Co-Production Committee, and to take up the position of Chair of the Cultural Committee.

With twenty plus years of business analysis, quality assurance, and information technology experience behind me, I formed the Cultural Committee with assistance from elected Member-at-Large, Katlia Lafferty, who was also new to Langham and the theatre community. The primary goal of the Cultural Committee was to first establish the validity of the Inter-Cultural Association's report with regard to the newly opened theatre, and then to evaluate the theatre's ongoing cultural dynamic.

Prior to becoming involved with Langham, I had been aware of the negative media coverage surrounding the theatre, but had made a determination to approach my view of the organization objectively, with optimism and fresh eyes. My extensive involvement allowed me the opportunity to delve deeply into all aspects of the organization – speaking directly with Langham members and volunteers, patrons of the theatre, students from the drama school, outside groups, and several external organizations. From this experience, I determined that the vast majority of Langham's community are truly wonderful people dedicated to building an inclusive, dynamic and creative environment that is welcome to all. Langham is the theatre where I became a professionally trained actor, and these people made it a beautiful and life changing experience.

Unfortunately, there is more to this story. As time went on, I discovered that there is a small group of individuals within the Langham community that view the theatre as a “club” rather than a community – a club that, by my experience, does not welcome alternative viewpoints or perspectives.

At the hands of these few individuals, I have watched Langham's spirit of inclusion slowly erode. Rather than viewing the opening of the theatre to local groups as a valuable addition to Langham's 5-play season, these efforts have been met with resistance at nearly every turn. Communications from this group have often been hostile and dismissive: One particularly troubling instance was when a group that had recently been awarded a multiculturalism grant for anti-racism work, was callously branded as an “outside occupation” by one prominent individual after I had previously welcomed the group into the theatre and encouraged them to feel at home. What I didn't realize at the time was that I too was likely being seen as an outsider by this small but powerful group of detractors due to my work in helping to open the theatre to the wider community.



In another instance, I watched as a valuable partnership with the very drama school I trained with was ruined, not by circumstance, but through sheer disrespect, costing Langham financially and tainting the theatre's reputation.

Personally, I have faced multiple instances of such disrespect, which at times have left me feeling isolated, disillusioned and unwelcome. More troubling, I am not the only one. Other members and volunteers have confided in me that they too do not feel valued by this small group, yet they do not wish to speak up for fear of being ostracized.

While I continue to believe that the vast majority of Langham members and volunteers are caring and dedicated people who value collaboration and inclusivity, I am equally aware of those who wish to exert control over the direction and operation of the organization. The vision of those individuals does not represent the theatre that I believe in and care so deeply about. As members and volunteers, if we wish to create a bright future for Langham, we must be willing to speak out against behavior that is detrimental to the good of the theatre, and to embrace and support openness; I am hopeful that is the path we choose.

In closing, the committee also wishes to express its gratitude to Past President, Wayne Yercha, who has demonstrated the courage to tackle the sensitive issues, and work with the committee to address them.

Andrew Gabriel

Vice-President & Chair of the Cultural Committee

### **Custodian's Report 2024** by Chris Clarke

I would like to like to thank everyone for their assistance with general house-keeping at the theatre. As many of you know by now, my wife Zenaida helps me with most of the cleaning that we do at Langham.

I note also that Mike, Charley et al have done repairs, changed out expired batteries etc., which I have been slow to attend to; again apologies and thank you.

Further to general maintenance, we have just had our annual inspection of the fire sprinkler system, backflow test, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers. Please note that the latter were also upgraded with replacements and additional extinguishers following last year's inspection. At time of writing (10/OCT/'24) we are still awaiting receipt of the report.

It was gratifying to hear that our AED was put to use and saved a life! I recall that when it was last checked there had been some difficulty getting new batteries and pads during the Pandemic.

It has only recently come to my attention that there is a defective fluorescent fixture in the Costume Construction room; possibly a faulty ballast. I will try to address this when I am able.

Finally, it is not without regret that I have decided to resign my position at the soonest opportunity convenient to the theatre. I am employed full time at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and anticipate an increasing workload there which makes my tending to Langham more difficult.

Again, thanks for your patience and kind assistance.

Christopher & Zenaida Clarke

## **Finance Committee Report** by Gordon Alexander

The finance committee has met bi-weekly since January 2024 to assist the board with administering the society's finances. Mike Chadwick worked with Marilyn Kuss to pay bills and deposit revenues. Gloria Di Ioia assumed oversight of Langham's insurance coverage (saving the society about 35% of the previous year's premium), coordination of the Vinnie Chadwick lounge renovation, and the exterior painting and lighting contracts. Gordon Alexander dealt with grants received by the society in 2021 which largely paid for upgrades to the sound system, tree limbing, roof repairs, tower reconstruction, minor parking lot repairs, and other smaller tasks. In total, roughly \$125,000 was spent of which about \$50,000 was Langham money.

Mike Chadwick has been treasurer formally or informally for 25+ years; Gordon is a life member who has focused on building sets widened his focus for a year's stint as grant tsar; and Gloria is relatively new to the group with a wealth of skills and experience. Together, they set their own agenda, engaged relevant people to coordinate necessary tasks, and had great fun in the process. We encourage all volunteers and members to do the same in your area(s) of expertise and interest. The Langham Court Theatre Society needs your input and action.

We also reflected on Langham's short and medium term viability. It is evident that thought needs to be given to growing the various revenue streams available to the society. Ticket prices should be reviewed. The five play season has reduced annual gross revenue by \$30,000 to \$50,000. Co-pro activities have not filled that gap. VADA have ended their \$14,000/year contract. Memberships, donation/bequests, sponsors, and grants may be able to provide additional revenue. The 2023-24 season had a surplus of about \$100,000, largely due to the unpaid effort of hardworking volunteers. Another cost-conscious year like this will enable the society to build its cash reserves, minimize the risk of financial loss, and permit the development of a business plan.

Langham continues to flourish because of the collective efforts of generations of members who have built both a physical structure and an organizational culture. The society requires continuous volunteer engagement to sustain itself and fulfill its mission "**To provide our community with engaging theatre and opportunities to learn and collaborate in a welcoming and inclusive environment**" and its mandate "**To produce and facilitate amateur community theatre, develop skills, and provide opportunities for all who wish to learn more about theatre arts.**"

## **Gardeners' Report** by Geli Bartlett

Comprising: Pearl Arden, Geli Bartlett, Lise Chartrand, Corinna Gilliland, Don and Jennifer Illingworth

The group worked most Friday mornings from March to October this year. Job one was to clear up after winter; then we assessed how well the current plantings have worked. We found that most of the previous year's plants had taken well and some had outgrown their spaces.

Many thanks to:

Pearl, for consistently watering the plants, making coffee and ginger cookies and keeping us all in the loop.

Corinna, for keeping the grounds neat and tidy and for her good companionship.

Don, for dividing and transplanting the huge clump of grass beside the handicapped parking.

Don also "adopted" and transformed the promontory bed across from the little free library (and his front window!); pruned the holly above it and emptied our bins of debris.

Jennifer, for regular help and mid-week watering in the dry periods.

Don and Jennifer, for hosting our coffee breaks in their cool oasis back garden.

Lise Chartrand, for pitching in and keeping an appraising eye on the overall design, and for using us as test panel for her always tasty date square experiments.

Langham's Scene Shop Team, for fixing the steps near the library and the split pavement near the box office.

This season we had a whole lot more company on Friday mornings with the painters and carpenters hard at work. I hope and believe that we managed to respect each other's space requirements. I, for one, enjoyed watching the restoration!

Wish list: in ground watering system?

Respectfully submitted by Geli Bartlett

## **Human Resources Committee Report** by Jacqollyne Keath, Amanda Heffelfinger, Caroline Herbert

There are three members on this committee- Caroline Herbert, Amanda Heffelfinger and Jacqollyne Keath.

The committee met to go over the job description and remuneration for the Costume Loft employee. Shortly afterwards we needed to run an ad for a new Costume Loft Manager. We held three interviews and Misty Buxton was the successful candidate.

Currently the committee has been busy looking at job descriptions for three part-time positions to help streamline the operations at Langham Court Theatre. These will be presented to the new board and finance committee for consideration with an anticipated staggered start dates for these positions.

### **Lead Carpenter Report** by Mike Kuss

Since the 2023 AGM, the Set Construction crew has built everything from an extremely luxurious Chelsea apartment (Present Laughter) to a very minimalist country house (Ravenscroft). In doing so, we were able to involve several new people: builders Bruce Dzioba, John Clarke, Marcus Handman; painters Lise Chartrand and Bert Laging. In addition to the sets, the build crew also assisted in Langham's various renovations: Charley Encell and David Burbank upgraded the Costume Construction area, Alf Small rebuilt our iconic tower, Gordon Alexander oversaw numerous repairs: roof, gutter, tarmac (with John and Bruce) and electrical repairs (with Colin Houghton), while Charley, John, Bruce, and Lise worked on the Lounge reno. Shop equipment remains in good repair and shop expenses have been kept at a minimum through the careful recycling of supplies.

### **Lead Usher Report** by Marilyn Kuss

The Lead Usher Committee consists of Marilyn Kuss (chair), Geli Bartlett, Heather-Elayne Day and Caroline Herbert.

When we, the membership, got the theatre back up and performing, Jean Topham, Geli Bartlett and I took on some of the duties of the no-longer-affordable Front of House position. The three of us became "Lead Ushers" and worked with rotating group of two ushers for each performance. We designed training materials and offered two training sessions for all the ushers. We have continuously sought to encourage more "Lead Ushers" to join our little group. We've had some nibbles, but branching out has been difficult. Fortunately, Heather-Elayne Day offered to become a Lead Usher. Unfortunately, Jean Topham, resigned at the end of the 2023/2024 season. Jean was there at the very beginning. When we started we had no names for potential ushers, no paperwork (just in the nick of time Christina Haska found and shared her old training materials) and, initially, no idea of what we were pledging ourselves to do. Jean was very much of the opinion that if you had a job to do, then you should do it well. Have a procedure and follow it. We all benefited from Jean's sense of responsibility. So, I think I speak for all Langham volunteers when I offer Jean Topham a much deserved thank you.

We have training materials readily available for new ushers and anyone wanting a refresher overview. Last season, we added some new safety information. We are making sure ushers

know where the fire extinguishers and first aid kits are located, as well as the muster station. During a recent health incident at Langham which resulted in the theatre being evacuated, the public spoke highly of the professional manner in which the event was handled. Already under discussion was another first aid training session, now scheduled for November 8 (evening) or November 9 (day).

Langham lead ushers continue to work with the stage managers during non Langham events.

The lead ushers have been trained on the use of the new sound equipment in the Lounge as well as the new tv/monitor.

All in all, life is good -- Geli is a marvelous Lead Usher, totally dependable and warm and welcoming to all; Heather is a natural Lead Usher having been involved with theatre for many years, and Caroline, probably the first Langham President ever to take on the responsibilities of a Lead Usher, is engaging in Langham in a new role as well as allowing Langham patrons and members to engage with her.

Finally, for anyone thinking of joining our team, we will welcome you with wide open arms.

### **Life Member Committee by Marilyn Kuss**

The Life Member Committee consists of Marilyn Kuss (chair), Dick Newson and Caroline Herbert.

The Life Member Committee met on September 13, 2024 and decided to make two changes in policy recommendations to the Board. The first change was that the committee recommended that volunteers needed to be responsible for tracking their own non-program hours. The second change the committee recommended was that the 25 Year Rule as outlined by John Gilliland in a May 10, 2003 presentation to the Board entitled, "Policies on Awarding Guild Life Memberships" be implemented. This rule had been moot until this year because no member had reached the 25 year threshold since 2003.

The Life Member committee uses the Langham database to track the points and years accumulated by members. This information is used to make recommendations to the Board for their nomination for Life Memberships. This year the Board is pleased to nominate five eminently worthy Langham members.

We also maintain the "In Memoria" book. Upon their passing, the life member photograph in the Lounge is put in the book along with a write up that documents the contributions of the Life Member. This book, displayed in the Lounge, continues to be appreciated and admired by both one-time visitors and members and friends of Langham.

## **Membership and Volunteers Committee**

### **New Volunteers Report** by Jean Topham

It is with great pleasure that I have been able to welcome 25 new volunteers to our Langham community, most of whom have become active participants in the life of the theatre whether as ushers, bartenders, producers, painters, etc. etc.

Most enquiries come through the box office, although a number do also come from current volunteers who have introduced friends or family to the idea of volunteering at Langham. Once I receive notification of a volunteering inquiry from Dick Newson or one of our volunteers I follow up with an email and then with a phone call. I discuss with potential volunteers all the various volunteering opportunities available at Langham whether general activities such as ushering or bartending or working on particular productions. After these phone conversations I send whatever area they are interested in to whoever is in charge of that particular area, whether it be the Production Chairs, Producers, Head Carpenter, Ushering etc.

These phone calls are wonderful, we invariably end up talking about all sorts of things and these conversations help me to better understand each individual. The added bonus is when I get to meet them in person and to see them become actively involved with the life at Langham.

Last summer Dick undertook to create a data base incorporating all our volunteers at Langham - old and new. Once again THANK YOU to Dick.

### **Production Co-Chairs report 2023-2025 Season** by Toshik Bukowiecki and Jacqollyne Keath

Coming back, after having the theatre closed due to the CoVID 19 pandemic, had its challenges. It was very difficult to find production teams. The two workshops that were done (Stage Management and Producers) yielded new volunteers and new interest. From those two workshops we were able to augment all shows for both seasons.

The 2023-2024 Season was financially successful, as verified by the Treasurer's report. The Season brought in over \$200,000 in season and individual sales. We spent approximately \$28,000 of the \$30,000 allotted to the production budget.

In addition we had other events outside of the regular season that caused problems, confusion and difficulty for most shows. Both Production Chairs fielded a lot of comments and complaints, and had to deal with unnecessary confusion which led to extensive communications before and during the main shows rehearsals and show builds. In hindsight it would have made for a smoother Season had everyone met to discuss all the events in the season and plan how to best facilitate them together.

Our play reading committee had two new members this past year, although they came onboard very late in the process (Susan Leslie and Amanda Heffelfinger). Total shows submitted for both seasons were approximately 50. Musicals were excluded due to royalty cost and a desire to keep our costs down. The committee looked at a shorter list for the second season and came up with a five show season. Unfortunately we were unable to obtain suitable rights to three of the shows - partly due to one show being available to professional companies and the delay in the Board approval following our report. Alternates were found quickly and we opened this current season with *Ravenscroft* by Don Nigro which drew over 80% houses and brought in over \$50,000. (Coincidentally it was attended by a Mr and Mrs Ravenscroft- their first time at Langham Court Theatre.)

We will gladly meet with the next Production Chair(s) to share lessons learned and hand over scripts we did not select.

## **Properties Report**

The Props room and furniture loft continues to have a steady stream of rentals bringing in a moderate revenue. The last month with a new volunteer Leslie Simpson, we have put in eight hours, so far, of cleaning and reorganizing the props room, with more to hours work ahead.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Jean de Cartier

## **Readers' Theatre Report # 1--** Respectively Submitted by Claire White

Report from RT on "Tom, The Birth of a Legend"  
Written by local playwright Terry Oliver

Performed on October 8, 2024  
Director: Tony Cain  
SM: Claire White

Expenses: \$28 for water bottles, drinks and cookies.

4 rehearsals and 1 performance

Performed on stage with 10 Actors sitting on stools and 1 in a chair.  
Actors were a mix of age groups consisting of veterans and acting students.  
Actors dressed in black.  
Actors stood when speaking.  
Scripts on Music Stands (on loan from Pacific Christian School) as LCT music stands were not in good condition.



Water bottles with pop open lids were used.

Sound Effects used in the play

Lighting Effects used in the play

Actors encouraged to use face and hand expressions during play.

Hats were used to identify different female characters.

Some Actors played additional roles.

Coloured program provided (showing painting done by Tom Thompson) with disclaimer regarding language, sexual content, historical period.

2 Act Play with each Act lasting approximately 45 minutes each.

About 40+ in Audience

\$152 collected in Donation Box

Lounge and Bar open after the performance. Some food was provided.

Playwright not in attendance as he had died a couple of weeks before performance and unfortunately none of the remaining family were able to attend.

Some comments from members of the Audience:

“Best RT they had been to”; “Really enjoyed the show”; “When are we putting on the play?”

## **REPORT # 2 FROM READERS’ THEATRE BY CLAIRE WHITE**

Claire White is currently mentoring with Wendy Merk to assist with Readers’ Theatre (RT) at Langham Court Theatre (LCT). To assist the membership of what is involved with RT, here is the process of what goes on behind the scene before a performance takes place at LCT (please note this is a work in progress and changes may be made, as time progresses and what is learnt at each RT performance. Comments welcome):

- 1) The Readers’ Theatre Producer (RTP) take requests from directors and playwright/directors to produce plays in RT. This could be via email, mail or by direct conversation. Directors should have a specific script in mind; if it's their own or a colleague's, they should be aware that no royalties are paid and that everyone works for free. If it's a previously published play, it should be in the public domain, i.e. royalty-free. If it's not in the public domain, and we do not have the permission from the playwright, then RT would decline the request. It is hoped that RT will give new and upcoming playwrights the opportunity to have a venue for their play to be heard. It is hoped that LCT and RT will encourage playwrights from all ages, all backgrounds, all aspects of a diverse community and our Indigenous community to submit plays for consideration to RT. RT will produce 2 plays a year.
- 2) The RTP will assess the length of the play and decide accordingly if the play can be produced in its full length (preferred) or if it is a really long play, if it needs to be shortened, by summarizing

some of the play before the actual reading. This will be fully discussed with the Director/Playwright.

- 3) The RTP will assess the content of the play and its language to ensure that there are no words, references or language that would be considered derogatory in today's world, even if the play is written historically. The playwright would be contacted to advise of this policy and if they are prepared to make changes to their play. If the playwright is not available and the director is able to make those changes, then the play will be considered. If the playwright or the director are unable to make any changes that LCT and RT would consider unsuitable under our policy, then the play would be declined.
- 4) The RTP will work with the director's schedule, and research the online booking calendar to find suitable dates/times for rehearsals and performances; usually 3 rehearsals (lounge, rehearsal room, or auditorium), and 1 performance (lounge or auditorium). The RTP will communicate the available dates to the Director/Playwright. The RTP will ensure the dates do not affect any of the mainstream season shows, rehearsals or time on stage, as the season's shows take priority on the space available at LCT.
- 5) The RTP will provide door codes as needed for those involved and will explain the process of locking up if they are the last to leave the building.
- 6) The RTP will publicize the event via social media (facebook) and LCT newsletter and anywhere else that seems appropriate. The can use royalty-free images if required.
- 7) The RTP will ensure the Director has the basic equipment needed. e.g. chairs, stools, music stands, water and anything else the Director would like for the performance.
- 8) Auditions are not normally held, but notices can be sent out regarding readers needed for it, with interested readers to contact the Director. RT is open to everyone regardless of abilities, age, previous experience, etc. It is an opportunity for new actors to experience being directed, performing on stage and learning to project their voices.
- 9) If a printed program is wanted, this is done in conjunction with the Director. It is usually on one page, one-sided, in black and white. LCT can photocopy the programmes.
- 10) As RT is free to the public, the RTP will arrange for a donation box to be set up at the entrance and then move it to the Lounge afterwards, if the Lounge is open at that time. All monies are remitted to LCT. The funds will go towards the RT budget. The amount of the budget is yet to be decided. (?\$40 per each performance). If there are any expenses e.g. water bottles, tea, coffee and cookies etc. for rehearsals etc then these need to be given to the RTP who will then arrange reimbursement from LCT.
- 11) The RTP can work with the Director and the LCT Bar Volunteers to see if the lounge can be open for the Performance. This gives the Director, Playwright, Actors and Audience a chance to chat afterwards on how the play was received, anything that needed to be learnt and for LCT to make some money from the bar sales. The Donation Box is placed on the Bar to encourage donations from the public.
- 12) The RTP will arrange to have an usher or two available for the performance for safety reasons.

13) The RTP will arrange for someone to run lights and sound - usually just lights up and lights down. So, one person can do both jobs. If the director wants sound effects this can be discussed. This is a great opportunity for a new lighting and/ or sound operator to get more experience during a live performance. If it is required to have a stage manager to call the Cues and /or help backstage, then the RTP will arrange for someone to assist with this and again great experience for new SM or ASM

14) The RTP will arrange for LCT to make copies of the Scripts - unless the actors and the Director have printed their own. There are black binders for the scripts and these binders belong to LCT, so will need to be returned for the next RT performance.

15) The RTP would like the actors to use water bottles that do not spill on the stage, as most often the stage is set up for the regular season show and spillages of water could ruin what is on the floor I.e. carpet.

16) If there is no Director appointed for the show, then the RTP will direct the play, if they feel capable. It's a good way for the RTP to get your experience at Directing at LCT.

17) After the performance, the binders are to be returned to the RTP. The stage is to be cleared and everything put back as it was for the show that is currently using the stage ensuring no props have been moved. If the Lounge is being used to host the audience and friends of the cast and crew, then this would be a good time for the RTP to find out how the experience was for the visiting Director / Playwright and if anything can be learnt as to how the process went. Good, bad and tricky comments are welcome.

18) The RTP and SM/ASM (if required for the performance) will ensure everything has been cleaned up in the Lounge, Stage, Green Room and Dressing Rooms. The RTP collects the funds from the Donation Box and will hand this into LCT as soon as possible. The RTP will ask the ushers how many patrons turned up to watch the show and if there were any comments or issues that needed to be addressed.

19) The RTP will make a short written report to LCT on how the performance went, how many patrons attended and funds donated. They will advise if there had been any issues as well as any accolades regarding RT.

20) Now it is time for the RTP to sit down and relax!

It is hoped that RT will attract more patrons to attend the performances and become part of the LCT Season in its advertising. RT would like to bring more people into LCT to explore a different way of seeing theatre and encourage more opportunities for the community LCT serve. The benefit of this will increase the income to LCT.

### **Safety Report** by Don Keith

It is my pleasure to submit the Safety Report for 2023-24 to the AGM of Langham Court Theatre.

Safety is a very important aspect of all the work we do at Langham, and it is especially important for rentals and other events located in the theatre. Safety is everyone's responsibility.

There are several aspects to Safety at the Theatre including -Patron Safety – procedures followed by the Front of House volunteers; Actor Safety – procedures followed by the Actors before, during and after all rehearsals and performances; -Production Safety –Procedures followed by all crews while preparing for and running shows. This includes set construction and decoration, the lighting hang, etc.; -Department Safety - Procedures followed by paid personnel and volunteers in the costume loft, props area, box office and lounge.

All procedures and practices are outlined in The Safety Manual, and it is expected that everyone will read and follow the practices. It is expected that Stage Managers, Department Heads and Lead volunteers will enforce all Safety Practices and inform the Board of any violations or unsafe actions.

Incident reports - Forms are available online, and at The Box Office. All department's should have copies of the blank report forms. For most incidents it is required that they are filed with the Box office and the board.

Further tasks undertaken by the Safety Committee include:

- regular restocking of all FirstAid Kits in the building
- Supply Safety Procedures Booklet to the producer, director and stage management of all production
- Review all Safety Manuals and revise
- Restock the supply of hard hats, goggles, earplugs etc. The safety board is located beside the stairway leading to the Workshop SR

Langham Court Theatre is a member of ActSafe BC, a Provincial Organization under the umbrella of Worksafe BC and Workmans Compensation. ACTSAFE BC has sponsored workshops for us in the past that the membership has found helpful. We will sponsor several more workshops over the season. Dates to be announced soon for 2025. These workshops are very beneficial.

Commendations to all volunteers who have assisted in Safety issues this year. Thank you so very much. The Safety Committee will respond to all Safety Concerns as needed. Suggestions and comments are welcome.

Stay Safe and healthy!

Yours truly

Don Keith

## **Social Committee Report** by Julie Newson

Since the last AGM, we have organized six Happy Hours and five coffee mornings with a break from June-September when the lounge renovation was in progress. The next coffee morning is next Wednesday, November 6 from 10-11.30am and we hope you can join us.

We also organized the first Christmas (Holiday) party since 2019 which was a huge success.

We look forward to many fun events in our beautiful new Lounge in 2025, including a Pub Trivia night and a Mardi Gras party!

## **Strategic Planning** by Caroline Herbert

When I started out as President, I wanted to look at Langham's strategic direction. The Strategic Plan committee of myself, Toshik Bukowieski, Alan Penty and Gloria Di Ioia sat down and realized that although the list of things that needed to be addressed was very long with an overriding theme; to improve Langham's financial situation.

## **Technical Director's Report** by Jason King

It's been a year of great change at the theatre from a technical standpoint. After a couple of seasons of trying to get a donated "new to us" paging system working, we finally gave up and thanks to a grant, were able to install a brand new system. Warren Busby, Technical Director at the Royal and McPherson Theatres, helped with the programming and installation which we divided into two phases.

Phase one is complete and entailed installing new touch panels and a new paging processor in the booth. The touch panel in the booth allows the booth to page the dressing rooms and turn on and off the program mic from the stage. There is also a built-in 20 minute intermission timer that can be activated and will also display the countdown on the other two panels.

The panel near the dressing rooms can be used to turn on and off the program mic, as well as turn it up or down. It can also be used to turn on the program mic feed into the rehearsal room and sewing room should they be needed for dressing rooms for larger shows.

The panel in the lounge has a mic that lets the FOH manager page into the lounge. They also have access to pre-recorded 5 and 2 minute warning announcements complete with bells. Additionally, they can control the volume levels of feeds from the booth mixer for pre-show music and the program mic. There also is a built in music player with a selection of music from different genres that can be used for pre-show music or events and finally, there is an "iPod"

input so that a phone or laptop with a headphone jack can be used for music playback in the lounge as well. We now have the second best paging system in the city!

Phase two will entail replacing most of our old amplifiers with a new 8 channel model that also will allow the booth and lounge panels to page the entire building in case of an emergency. We hope to get to that phase in the next couple of weeks.

We also will be installing two new microphones for program sound that will also feed into a new streaming video mixer that will allow us to either livestream shows if suitable, and offer that ability to outside groups and renters.

Perry Burton has been working hard on an overall network infrastructure update for the theatre with the most noticeable change right now being a new communications rack (donated by Nic Hume, thank you Nic!) in the far corner of the props room. This location was chosen as it makes the most sense to terminate network runs there.

When finished, we will also have updated wireless access points and different subnets for different theatre functions, such as point of sale machines, to help keep things secure. This is a project that has long been needed so many thanks to Perry for taking it on.

Other projects included replacing the camera feed to the lounge, dressing rooms, and backstage with a new HD camera and moving and upgrading the lounge TV as part of the lounge refurbishment.

The hope now is we can get further grant money to upgrade our lighting next year.

Jason King  
Technical Director  
Langham Court Theatre