

Chairman's Report – The Repertory Players AGM, 10 April 2016

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen

2015 is done and dusted and Reps is still standing, our Society is still alive and we continue to keep theatre “live” in Zimbabwe. For this I thank each and every one of you, whatever your contribution – on stage, back stage, warming a bar stool, driving a hammer or a screw driver, manning the box office or Front of House, sewing a seam or sending an e-mail or report. Reps could not have survived 2015 without the contribution of everyone involved.

I would like to single out John Bonney for special mention. John took up the office of the Theatre Manager some 5 years ago, and has by hard work, bullying and sheer bloody mindedness, he has got us mostly back onto the straight and narrow! He has instituted financial policies which will guide us going forward. He did all of this for love of theatre and a desire to ensure our future survival – he was not paid one cent.

I mentioned love. When people ask me what I get paid to do a show at Reps, I tell them that I receive nothing, that I do it for love, not money. As an amateur society, we have to rely on the members' love of theatre to keep it all going. I know love won't buy you bread and milk, and I must thank all of those members who renewed their membership in 2015 and hope that they will continue to do so going forward. The Executive Committee instituted the monthly payment option, which while being a bit of an administrative nightmare, was an effort to make things easier for our members to continue as members in a difficult environment.

As you will see in the Production Report, we managed to stage 11 productions last year, including hosting the National One Act Play festival.

We also hired out both theatres on several occasions for everything from motivational speakers to CD launches for gospel artists.

We were busy on the stages and this helped to increase business in the bar. The Bar and Social Events committee had a busy year in the bar. These were not all necessarily well supported by the members however. I urge you to please talk to the members of the committee if you have ideas for social events that you would like to attend. None of us can work in a vacuum and unless you tell us what you would like, we will find it difficult to cater for all tastes.

One of the issues raised at the AGM last year was that of training and development. The Training and Development committee has taken the initiative and is developing a comprehensive training plan for 2016 and into the future. They have thought outside the box and I believe that their efforts will pay off in 2016. Training is going to be the saviour of Reps. My thanks to the committee for the dedication shown to this very important part of the future of Reps.

2015 was a difficult year, of that there is no doubt and it is highly likely that 2016 is going to be even more so! On a positive note, however, we managed expenses well and the outturn was in fact better than 2014 as you will see from the accounts. On the downside, the theatre is looking tired and desperately requires funding to carry out much needed maintenance and repair work, as well as to upgrade some of our facilities. To this end our Fund Raising committee is in the process of putting together appeals to various corporate bodies and potential donors in order to allow us to update our equipment and facilities. We hope that we will be remembered when budgets are formulated.

My sincere thanks go to my committee who have been nothing but supportive and in particular, my two vice chairman, Marc and Mark, for taking on the management of several of the sub committees. Without them, I most certainly would not have coped.

In closing, I ask you to think about what else you can offer the society and add your bit of love to the mix.

Thank you

Sue Bolt
Chairman – The Repertory Players