



Board Update January 2021

Happy New Year! And what a year that was...

Whilst the most recent announcement is of course very disappointing, please rest assured that everything in our power is being done to plan for when our doors open again. The pandemic brought our season to an early close and prevents us from opening for now however it certainly is not stopping our progress in other areas; as they say 'necessity is the mother of invention' and invent we do.

In 2020 we saw the expansion of our Picturehouse, the creation of our first play reading group, a new relationship with Radio Alty, and GAPA releasing their first digital production, to itemise just some of the activity. We were very close to hosting the Alty Fringe for two weeks, and the English Touring Opera in October, both of which are being rescheduled. Our Pantomime unfortunately could not proceed in December and January so *Mother Goose* has been moved to Easter as we aim to continue to offer our community a family show.

As a first for the Garrick, we are currently letting out the Lauriston Studio for the filming of a production entitled *No Ordinary Joe*. This is a short form animation written and directed by our very own Barry Purves. This film tells the story of the power boat racer Joe Carstairs, nicknamed the "fastest woman on water" and openly lesbian, and her life with Lord Tod Wadley, her favourite doll.

Theatre Personnel

Last year saw two of our long-standing members leave their roles; Neville Roby (aka Mr Garrick) left his role after sixty years involvement with the Theatre and Sandy McGuire left her position on the Board. We wish both Sandy and Neville all the best for the future.

We are delighted to have appointed Trevor McKie to the Board, with a special focus on our production and technical areas. Trevor brings over thirty years of Garrick experience to our Board, on stage, working backstage, in workshop and set design, and he has deep experience of our finances also. Our search for the remaining two Board positions (as listed below) continues, and the advertisements for these roles will be released this week. These appointments will strengthen our Board and ensure all areas are overseen by Board Members and Trustees who are experts in their fields.

- Marketing / Business Development level Board Member
- Financial Director / Chief Financial Officer level Board Member

Sarah Reilly as Operations Director and Joseph Meighan as Artistic Director have worked exceedingly hard with our staff and volunteers to keep our doors open and swiftly respond each time the rules and regulations changed. As ever we are so grateful to have such dedicated staff and volunteers working tirelessly with them in these unprecedented times.

Financial Position

Despite the Theatre being dark, fortunately our finances remain robust. We are keeping costs to an absolute minimum, while facilitating revenue generation where possible, for example our car park revenue and the letting of the Lauriston for the filming of *No Ordinary Joe*.

The government furlough scheme has been extended, and we are using that where appropriate with the aim of retaining staff for when we reopen.

We need the support of all our members and the wider community to continue until we can open once more. We have received over £16,000 in donations so far, which is fantastic; the majority of this has come from people donating the cost of their unusable tickets. There is much that you can do to support the Theatre, and some are detailed below. Please have a look and share with family, friends, and colleagues.

As detailed in the last Board Update, we are about to close off the accounts for the financial year ending June 2020, which should show us a breakeven position (which means a positive trading cash flow of £20k once depreciation is taken into account). This excludes the major expenditure of the car park renovation in Summer 2019.

The reporting for the first quarter of the 2020/2021 financial year is also underway and will be detailed when completed. This quarter will reflect the financial impact of the changes made in this financial year, including the furlough scheme.

Whilst our cash reserves remain strong, our overheads while the Theatre is dark continue. We have no income from our own productions, the Picturehouse, GAPA, or from lets to visiting productions. While there is limited income from the letting of the Lauriston and the car park, this falls far short of our monthly overhead cost.

We are committed to keeping our cash reserves as strong as possible and, as a Charity, we have a fundamental responsibility to the Charity Commission and to our community. Depleting our reserves to cover our usual monthly overheads would weaken our ability to deal with any large repair or replacement cost for example, such as the roof, or boiler, or the recent water ingress issue. This fund is there for rainy days and, although this pandemic is surely the rainiest of days, our reserves must be maintained as far as possible to ensure we remain in a strong financial position.

We will continue to assess each quarter financially on a rolling basis, with the aim of trading as close to breakeven as possible. We will continue to protect our reserves as far as possible by exploring alternative ways to supplement our income alongside our donation appeal.

We would remind you that changes were made to our purchasing processes and as our own productions are not being staged at the moment, so there should be currently no expenses relating to productions.

Artistic Programme

The advent of Tiers 3 and 4 and the new lockdown have meant our doors are temporarily closed. Work continues on our new season so we can hit the ground running as soon as we are able. Prior to the most recent announcement we were working on the assumption that we can host audiences from February 2021 onwards. It now seems that is unrealistic but we must have a target to aim for and plan and react as best as we can.

Our exciting new season was released on our YouTube channel and social media just before the festive holidays. We were to open the Garrick season on the 1st March 2021 with *The Last Five Years*, followed by *Mother Goose* from 8th to 18th April, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* from 17th to 22nd May, *Talking Heads* from 7th to 12th June, and *Chatroom* from 21st to 26th June. This is now being reviewed along with the booked visiting productions and artists and an update will be announced as soon as we are able to.

GAPA are planning their new year and productions whilst exploring other opportunities for continuing remotely. GAPA are also working on ideas for expansion when we are able.

How can you help?

Our doors may be closed however we continue to need your help with recruiting volunteers, so that we are ready for Tier 2 and beyond. We need to swell our ranks with volunteers for Front of House for our Picturehouse and all of our Theatre events, as well as volunteers in our production and technical areas. Please do get in touch if you can help or point someone in our direction.

Other ways you can help are:

- Share, share, and share again. Spread the word as far and wide as possible. Use social media, like and comment on posts and share updates
- If you are not on social media, talk about our Theatre with family, friends, and colleagues, garner interest and recruit volunteers
- Renew your membership
- Join the 200 Club
- Donate where you can
- Use our Amazon smile account when shopping, [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk/?ref=smile) – this account is in the name of Altrincham Garrick Society Limited and the Garrick will receive 0.5% of your spend directly from Amazon
- Accounts have also been set up with Easyfundraising and The Giving Machine

Working Together

We as a Board continue to meet approximately every two weeks and work closely with Sarah and Joe constantly.

We would ask you to keep communicating with us, and with Sarah and Joe. We as a Board, Joe, Sarah, and you – the active volunteers, staff, and workers – must continue to work together to ensure the future of our Theatre.

The contact details for the Theatre Management team and the Board are set out below, please do not be shy in coming forward with your ideas, thoughts, and questions.

And Finally....

Thank you. We are continually amazed by and grateful for the work and contribution each and every one of you make. Whether paid or as a volunteer, you all go above and beyond to keep our Theatre alive.

Name	Position	Email	Mobile
Joe Meighan	Artistic Director	j.meighan@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk	07900 504 731
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Hugh Everett	Trustee and Chair of the Board	hugh.f.everett@gmail.com	07711 059 360
David Beddy	Trustee and Board Member	david.beddy@btinternet.com	07801 795 721
April Walker	Trustee and Board Member	awalkergarrick@gmail.com	07736 053 200
Charlie Tomlinson	Trustee and Board Member	charlie.tomlinson@hotmail.co.uk	07740 566 857
Trevor McKie	Trustee and Board Member	t.mckie@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk	07864 816 931
David Citrine	Trustee and Board Member	currently on sabbatical	
Board general	Contact address for Trustees	trustees@altrinchamgarrick.co.uk	

THANK YOU AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU SOON!