

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – 28 April 2016

In this anniversary year of Shakespeare, Shav's voice is still heard. Since the last AGM, at Ayot *Mrs Warren's Profession* and *You Never Can Tell* were performed. The Park Theatre staged *Village Wooing* in which our Vice President, Toni Kanal, was the elegant and enigmatic *Dark Lady of the Sonnets* and a script-in-hand performance of it produced by Sue Morgan was performed in drizzle – but was none the less poignant – at Ayot. The summer evening on Bernard and Charlotte Shaw's lawn performances were *Mrs Warren's Profession* and *John Bull's Other Island*. And I remind you all that *The Philanderer* will be opening at the Orange Tree Theatre Richmond on 12th May until 25th June. Last June on the anniversary of Magna Carta, Lorenzo Mason directed a script-in-hand, costumed performance of *On the Rocks*. Also *You Never Can Tell* as a DVD here in the Conway Hall generated lively discussion.

Evelyn Ellis, Sue Morgan and Anne and Martin Wright attended the International Shaw Society's Conference in New York in October. Dr Anne and Professor Martin Wright presented the fascinating film of Stanley Weintraub's tour of the house at Ayot that was the Shaw's home for some 35 years, which we subsequently saw at our London meeting. And we await with interest their film of an interview with our venerable vice-president Barbara Smoker. Also in New York Evelyn Ellis, who walked many miles over the vast area of Greater London in the footsteps of Shaw, described her contribution to the project GeoShaw. Incidentally, Evelyn has retired as Treasurer of our society and we cannot thank her warmly enough for the fifteen years she has undertaken the task. Happily she is to continue to be our Secretary.

We congratulate Alan Knight for running the popular Shaw Society play-reading group and thank Eleanor Wooldridge for hosting seven of the past year's meetings, and for her two year service on the committee. More from Alan on the play-reading group shortly. Thank you Sue Morgan for administering the TF Evans Award on which she will be updating us. Our monthly meetings continue to attract a small but loyal audience. We should like to appeal to younger people but hope that our aspirations towards education will eventually prove fruitful. The evening devoted to the book sale was popular and made £300 though books being heavy entailed manual labour which devolved on only a few committed people – and not those with the largest muscles!

Shavian news continues to be carried via the Shavian to the UK, continental Europe, Canada, Australia, the USA, Japan and Korea for which we thank Mark Egerton and his editorial team (Sue Morgan and Anne Wright). We all look forward to the next issue.

Peter Sims, and his wife Linda, have moved to Bath but happily Peter will remain in touch and continue to maintain our website.

This year is prestigious. On 26th July 2016 it will be 75 years since the Shaw Society was founded (during the second World War) on Bernard Shaw's 85th birthday. A suitably Shavian celebration will be arranged. Anne Wright has ideas!

Long may our society, with our aspirations to recollect and benefit from Shaw's wisdom and to educate our young, flourish.