

TVCT
Committee Meeting
24/04/17

Statement by John Somers

TVCT developed from an invitation from Alf Boom, then a Payhembury resident, to develop a production to commemorate the turn of the millennium in Payhembury. The result was *'Parson Terry's Dinner and other Stories'*, a promenade production performed in various sites in the village. Since then, a range of productions have been made, most springing from my creative impulse and covering a range of sites in and around the village and employing varied theatrical approaches and performance styles. The most recent were *'Supporting Sally'*, an Interactive Theatre programme dealing with the onset of dementia in an able woman employee, *'Letting Go'*, an Interactive Theatre Programme on the tribulations of a farming family in financial difficulties and *'They Dream of Home'*, a promenade production in Payhembury to commemorate WW1. The TVCT website shows all previous productions – tvctheatre.org

In 2016 I had a knee replacement operation and needed to recuperate from that. This necessitated a lull in TVCT productions. Now that I am mobile again I have questioned my ability to commit myself to continuing to front the work of TVCT. It has been a wonderful organisation, supported by dedicated committee members and a wide range of participants have taken part from age 5 to 85 (I estimate around 1,000 roles have been created since 2000). Rather than allow TVCT to limp along under my leadership, my instinct is not to try to attract other directors as its genesis was in Payhembury and it would be difficult to transfer its' work to other contexts.

My feeling is that it should close and that the remaining money should be used to fund:

- The cost of editing and producing video recording copies of *'They Dream of Home'* (some costs will be recouped from video sales);
- A party to celebrate TVCT's achievements;
- A final creative event;
- The remainder (if there is any) should be destined as described below.

The first few productions were financed by grants sought and achieved by me – DCC, EDDC, Arts Council etc. However, when I retired from Exeter University in 2005, I transferred money from my *'Professional Development Fund'* to TVCT. This was money I had earned or applied for in order to support my extra-curricular work whilst at Exeter. This was several thousand pounds – I am not sure how much I put in but the accounts should reveal it. After the costs listed above have been covered, I wonder if the Committee would agree to the return of the remainder to me in lieu of the donation made by me in the past. I have never sought any fee for my work with TVCT although I have claimed basic expenses incurred in making the theatre pieces.

I am most grateful for the great support I have received from Committee members, past and present, who have been dedicated, encouraging and hard working over many years of support.

John Somers