



ITE officers:

*Kevin Dowsett – President
Anne Gilmour – Treasurer*

*Aled Rhys-Jones – Vice President
Marjorie Lovegrove – Secretary*

A brief statement of activities.

This report begins on a note of sadness for those of us in ITE and friends throughout the world. It was with deep regret that we learned of the passing of Peter Smith who died on the 19th. January, 2012. Peter was a tireless worker for ITE, a splendid ambassador for our country and a dear friend. He was, as one of our younger colleagues remarked, “A true gentleman.” Peter is greatly missed.

ITE acts as the British ‘umbrella’ organisation for groups and individuals wishing to enrich their love of theatre through world-wide exchange. We have, as an example, the membership of the Little Theatre Guild (LTG). This is an umbrella body for 108 amateur theatres in GB. Each group owns its building. This means that they have to deal not only with artistic matters but with all the problems of running a building. It is possible to access www.littletheatreguild.org for more information.

It is, however, not possible to report here on the activities of our entire membership but below are a few highlights.

Theatretrain had a wonderful visit to the Czech Republic and Pandemonium Company thoroughly enjoyed their first international work as part of the Round and Round project in Slovenia. They followed in the footsteps of Central Youth Theatre, Wolverhampton, who represented our country in Lithuania the previous year. In fact, so much did Pandemonium appreciate the experience that they immediately took themselves off to a festival in France! Central Youth Theatre will be representing us in Monaco this year.

While continuing to proffer advice and guidance on this front we have also had a very busy time at home. As the world knows, 2012 was the year of the Olympics and many of our organisations were heavily involved in cultural events leading up to the Games. For example, Redbridge Drama Centre celebrated by having their own ‘Olympiad’ festival and some of us were part of the Royal Shakespeare Company’s ‘Open Stage’ project.

ITE hosted a meeting at which Ian Wainwright, Producer of ‘RSC Open Stage’, explored the need felt by the Company to create a closer bond between amateur and professional practitioners. This meeting led directly to the Questors Theatre, GB Associate of aita/iata being one of only eight host venues – and the only amateur venue – for the RSC’s country wide skills-exchange workshop.

In fact, The Questors hosted two weekend workshops where representatives from over 50 amateur theatres in the South East of the country worked with RSC practitioners on artistic and technical aspects of theatre. The Questors later became a venue to showcase the productions from amateur groups who had signed up to be part of the project. The theatre is now a Partner



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Theatre and will host meetings and workshops for participants and practitioners wishing to undergo in depth training. There will be an emphasis placed on directing skills. Funding is now being sought by the RSC to build on this work in the future. For more information please access the RSC website <http://www.rsc.org.uk/explore/projects/open-stages/>

We are always happy to diversify and it was with great interest that we learned of a different important international project undertaken by another of our organisations. Redbridge Drama Centre is currently hosting their section of a film venture for young people, mainly undertaken in Eastern Europe. They are thoroughly enjoying the experience and we look forward to the resulting internationally realised film.

In the past two years ITE Board members have added many more miles to their portfolio. This was not only as envoys of ITE but also in their roles as officers for aita/iata, EDERED and AMATEO. We warmly congratulate Anne Gilmour on her appointment as the Secretariat of aita/iata. (We are, however, very relieved that she will still be working with us!)

This brief report is being written in the town of Ipswich which is experiencing the wonderful atmosphere created from being the venue for the GB EDERED Encounter. The President of EDERED, Kevin Dowsett, is also President of ITE and Director of Theatretrain, one of ITE's major associates and who has vast experience of working with young people. Theatretrain gave a splendid presentation at the O2 venue in London and Theatretrain members have been heavily involved in the EDERED organisation in Ipswich. We applaud all the hard work that has gone into this massive undertaking and send our congratulations to everyone for this superb event.

As to the future we look forward to expanding our home base at ITE; to continued involvement with the Round and Round project; to the Redbridge Drama Centre 2014 International Theatre Festival and the many other projects which will come our way.

International Theatre Train (ITE)

GB National Centre aita/iata

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