



The Prompter



Workington Playgoers' newsletter – April 2014.

Welcome to The Prompter. We look forward to seeing you in the theatre in the near future.

Our next production...

Agatha Christie's

'The Unexpected Guest'

Directed by Gwyneth Savage and Nicola Woodier

Tuesday, 1st April - Saturday, 5th April at 7.30pm

A thriller as well as a puzzle, this mystery opens as a stranger walks into a house to find a man murdered and his wife standing over him with a gun. The woman is dazed, her confession unconvincing and a Pandora's box of loves and hates, suspicions and intrigues is opened to the night air. Can YOU work out what has really happened? Featuring some of our best actors, this is a tale that will keep you on the edge of your seat. Don't miss it!



Suggestions Please!

The Productions team are now looking at the 2015 season. They have some plays in mind, but would welcome other suggestions. Generally speaking the plays need to be ones that would draw in an audience and prove reasonable to cast - ie not a cast of thousands. If you actually have a copy of the play for them to read then that is even better. Please send your suggestions to Brian Young, Artistic Director at bj.young@btinternet.com or leave your list of suggestions in the Front Office.

The Playgoers need YOU!

We are trying to update our knowledge of how you want to be involved with the theatre. Peter Inglis recently sent out an email with an 'interest' slip to fill in, but few were returned. We have tried to update our records from personal knowledge but it is realised that people's interests change and perhaps you feel like branching out into new areas...so, please let us know! A copy of Peter's form is in The Prompter and completed ones can be left in the Front Office. FOH staff may also try to 'catch' you at the next production!

Funding Applications

I thought it might be of interest to our Members to summarise the current situation with our application to the BIG lottery fund.

After our very successful completion last year of the £85,174 energy saving project which included the new boilers and heating system, thermal render and photovoltaic cells, Council were quietly confident that we would be successful in our £351,201 Stage 2 application to the Big Lottery Fund for the major refurbishment of the Theatre and 30 Wilson Street. A huge amount of time and effort, numerous meetings with potential new users of the Theatre facilities and other groups supporting our activities took place before the bid was submitted.

We were disappointed therefore that instead of the mid-February approval we had hoped for, we received a communication from the Big Lottery Fund seeking further clarification on a number of issues including our consultation with 'hard to reach' groups, the proposed split between arts and non-arts activities and future management structure. On a much more positive note, the Big Lottery Fund has acknowledged that our application has areas of strength, that we have developed excellent working relationships with local delivery organisations and that, subject to our response to the various questions now being asked of us, our project is one that the Big Lottery Fund's funding committee may consider taking through to the third (and final) stage. Through subsequent dialogue with the Big Lottery Fund's grant assessor we have already made significant progress in addressing the various questions that have been raised. We have been given until 30 April to submit the revised bid.

Of course, the Big Lottery Fund's contribution is only part of the funding picture. We have also sought contributions from the Monument Trust (one of the Sainsbury's family trusts), the Theatre's Trust, WREN and various other trust funders. In the meantime, the JP Getty Junior Trust has awarded us £20,000 and the Francis C Scott Charitable Trust £10,000. Both of these grants are conditional on our Lottery Fund application being successful.

The fight goes on! **Peter Inglis.**

Stop Press!!

We have just heard that the Sainsbury Monument Trust have awarded us a massive £60,000 to be paid if our lottery bid is successful. They have been so impressed by our theatre and the project that they have offered to write directly to the BIG lottery fund in support of our bid

Peter Inglis

I Could Have Danced All Night...



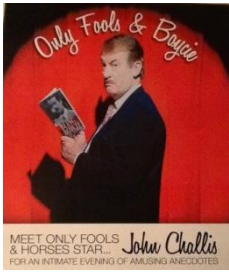
...and they nearly did! Once again Anne O' Hare took over the theatre for almost a fortnight to showcase the dancing talents of Cumbrian and Lancastrian children.

Rehearsals took place for a week before the Festival and then followed several frenetic days and evenings of assorted dance classes. Silverware abounded and limbs were contorted into impossible angles as children of all shapes, sizes and ages sang and chassèd their way to success.

Glynn Scurr and his team provided copious refreshments and consequently the theatre made a substantial profit from the venture. It DOES cause some inconvenience to rehearsals and it was VERY hard work for the catering team, but it also brings in new blood to the theatre and, who knows, we may see them in the audience for future productions, or even joining Playgoers now they know we actually exist.

The dancers and their parents -mums AND dads - are dedicated to their hobby. Mrs O'Hare works tirelessly to make the Festival a success and even managed to run part of it from her hospital bed this year as she suffered a heart attack during the Festival. She is fortunately on the road to recovery and we look forward to seeing her during April for her Easter Dance Festival. (Volunteers to help out the catering team by doing a two hour slot serving coffee will be very welcome. Contact Glynn Scurr directly or through GillScholey@aol.com)

'Only Fools and Horses.'



Something very different for Theatre Royal patrons! John Challis who played Boycie in *Only Fools and Horses* and *The Green Green Grass* is going to appear at our theatre on **October 29th**.

During the evening John will recall many amusing anecdotes about *Only Fools*, Sir David Jason and Nicholas Lyndhurst. He will also talk about his time on other TV programmes including *Dr Who*, *Coronation St* and *The Green Grass*. He discusses encounters with the Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Julie Goodyear, Oliver Reed and George Best.

The evening includes, DVD clips including excerpts from *Only Fools* and *Dr Who*. There will be a question and answer session with the audience and a chance to meet the actor after the show.

This is a 'one-off' opportunity and should prove to be a fascinating evening. Tickets will be priced at £15.

noda meeting.

February ... saw the Theatre Royal host a meeting of representatives of local groups connected to NODA. This was run in conjunction with Radio Cumbria and 'Up For Arts', a Voluntary Arts England project and was looking at how local groups could maximise the use of local media for publicity.



'Up for Arts' is an exciting project which aims to get people involved in the arts and crafts and increase community engagement. It 'harnesses the power of speech

based radio to raise the profile of volunteering and inspire people to get creative in their area.' The session was led by Liam Fogarty, a freelance journalist and broadcaster who formerly worked for the BBC, Jennie Dennett from Radio Cumbria and a spokesperson from 'Up For Arts'.

With support from NODA, 'Up for Arts' has recently produced a free toolkit entitled 'Making the most of your local broadcasters'. The toolkit is freely available on both organisations websites and is an essential guide for local groups who want to raise their profile. I also have a copy – please ask if you would like to borrow it.

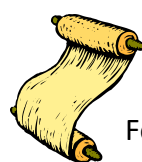
Devised by Voluntary Arts and NODA (the National Operatic & Dramatic Association) the 'toolkit' aims to 'help you make the most of your local broadcasters. There are huge opportunities out there, in local television and radio – and this easy-to-read booklet talks you through who to approach, how to communicate your message and much more.'

The meeting had representatives from groups in Maryport, Gosforth, Barrow, Workington and Whitehaven. Liam Fogarty guided us through the toolkit and spoke about how it could be used in conjunction with Radio Cumbria. Thanks to Pat Brincombe, we already put a number of his ideas into action and it was good to hear our publicity methods endorsed.

Other strategies that were mentioned have been used in the past but would perhaps be worth revisiting in the hope of bringing in new faces. The use of social media was also stressed and this is an area that we will hopefully be developing. Why not visit our website and read about us on Facebook and Twitter?

(All quotes from Voluntary Arts England website.)

Gillian Scholey



Poetry Evening

Following the success of previous poetry evenings, it is intended to hold a further evening ... but with a difference! Morgan is hoping to organise this and he would like members to read out their own poetry. There will perhaps be published poetry as well – the final format is yet to be decided, as is the date. There will be further details posted in the theatre and in the next Prompter but, meanwhile, get scribbling!

Good to see Jane back in action after her accident.



Commemorating WW1

Two ventures are being planned.

Gwyneth Savage has obtained the rights to a very moving one man play entitled 'Tommy Atkins'. It is hoped that this will be staged in early September 2014. Written by a relatively local playwright, it tells the story of one soldier and the horrors that he faced during the war. This will not be part of our main season. The number of evenings is still under discussion but it will hopefully be on for three performances. We understand that this will be the first time this play has been performed by anyone other than the author. More details at a later date.

Our second event will hopefully be a joint production with CADS. This will take the form of a revue/commemoration tracing a soldier's war from signing up until the end of the war. It will involve letters, music, poetry, play extracts, novel extracts and factual documents. It is very much in the planning stage at the moment. Actors, directors and technicians from both groups will be involved and it is currently being planned for February 2015. Again, more details as plans develop. If you have any suggestions for items to be included in this production, please contact Gill Scholey, Morgan Sweeney or Pat Brinicombe.

Cornwall, to be Invaded!

Warn your Cornish relatives, the emmets are about to invade – but it's for a very worthy cause. Once more the Playgoers' intrepid walkers Gwyneth Savage and Nicola Woodier, assisted by Mike Savage, are about to embark on a leg of their trek around our country.

Aiming to cover 239 miles, the tireless trekkers are intending to walk from Chepstow to Land's End. The walk will take them three weeks and **they hope that you will sponsor them** with funds going to our theatre and to The Henderson Suite – much needed help for cancer care - at West



Cumberland Hospital. Sponsor forms are currently available in the theatre and will also be available during the run of 'The Unexpected Guest' which Gwyneth is co-directing. They would very much appreciate whatever you can afford to give. Between them they have now covered over 800 miles and raised over £6000. A remarkable achievement.

Quick Quiz.

Now where have I heard that before...

Can you name the play and the playwright for each line.

1. A kiss is a message too intimate for the ear.
2. You can be young without money, but you can't be old without it.
3. It's the wanting to know that makes us better
4. He's not the finest character that ever lived. But he's a human being and a terrible thing is happening to him.
5. I know little of women. But I've heard dread tales.
6. We wait. We are bored. No, don't protest, we are bored to death, there's no denying it.
7. Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.
8. These impulses come over me all of a sudden, and I just can't resist them
9. One of the hardest things for boys to learn is that a teacher is human.
10. You've taught me things a girl shouldn't know until she's been married at least three times!

Please let Pat know if you want to use the theatre as she has the bookings diary...keep bringing in books for the book shelf...volunteer to help with coffee - contact Viv Young or Jane Douglas...volunteer to do a shift on the bar – contact Heather Scholey h.scholey1991@gmail.com...let us have your email addresses...come to see 'The Unexpected Guest!

Bar – by popular demand, we now stock Rosè wine!

Live Music First!

On the **25th of June** the Theatre Royal is going to do another first – a ‘live’ concert is going to be filmed for a **DVD release**. It’s not quite the first time the theatre has been used for DVD filming: a Jazz recording session was filmed in 2010 (you can watch a clip of it on Youtube – search for the ‘1930s Recording Project’), but that was not a concert and has not been released yet. In June the concert will feature **Greg Russell & Ciaran Algar**. Greg & Ciaran are two hugely popular young folk musicians. Last year they won the **BBC Young Folk Award** and this year they have just won the **Horizon Award** (best newcomers) in the **BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards** which was televised from the **Royal Albert Hall** last February.



Bouzouki

They have reached this position in just over two years. I produced their first CD in 2012 and their second should be released by the time of the concert. When I say they are young, they really are: Ciaran was taking his GCSEs and Greg his A levels when we recorded the first album. Ciaran will just have finished his A levels when the concert takes place and Greg is two thirds of the way through a sabbatical year from University. Greg is a very powerful singer and plays guitar,

bouzouki, banjo and concertina; Ciaran is a wonderful fiddle player who also plays guitar,



Bodhran

bouzouki, bodhran and sings (actually he plays about 10 instruments in all!). They are exciting to watch, and really know how to engage an audience: their stagecraft, like their music, is of a very high standard.

They are also two of the nicest lads you’ll ever meet. You can find loads of **Youtube** clips of them (including Ciaran’s famous acceptance speech at the **Young Folk Awards** which has been dubbed “best acceptance speech”).

Filming will be in the capable hands of **Edward Cooper**, lecturer at the University of Cumbria who already has a reputation for the quality of his work, particularly his DVDs of the band **Bellowhead**. We will have up to six cameras in

operation. I chose the **Theatre Royal** obviously because I’m connected with it but also because it has excellent acoustics and looks good. I will also be using some of the young people I have trained to look after the P.A. sound and the film sound recording. Of course, we need a full house for the filming, but, given their national reputation that should not be a problem. So, if you want to be part of it I suggest you book as soon as possible: the **Carnegie Box Office** is now open.

I would also remind you of the annual concert with **Jeff Barnhart**. Jeff always gets a good crowd who have a good time. This year’s concert is on **Friday 22nd August**.

Paul Adams

Quick Quiz Answers

1. Edmond Rostand – Cyrano de Bergerac.
2. Tennessee Williams – Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.
3. Tom Stoppard – Arcadia.
4. Arthur Miller – Death of a Salesman.
5. Harold Pinter – Moonlight.
6. Samuel Beckett – Waiting For Godot.
7. William Shakespeare – King Lear.
8. Henrik Ibsen – Hedda Gabler.
9. Alan Bennett – The History Boys.
10. Harold Pinter – The Birthday Party.

2014 Season

At last, hopefully, the season is in place!

April 1st-5th- Agatha Christie’s The Unexpected Guest. (Use your Season Ticket)

May 13th-17th - How The Other Half Loves. Alan Ayckbourn. (Use your Season Ticket)

(July 20th – Playgoers’ BBQ)

September – Tommy Atkins. Laurence Nelson

October 7-11th - Stepping Out. Richard Harris(Use your Season Ticket)

October 29th ‘Only Fools and Boycie’. John Challis

December 2nd -6th – When Did You Last See Your Trousers. John Antrobus and Ray Galton (Use your Season Ticket)

chamdean@gmail.com

Off to find a couple of guns, blank bullets, 1950's newspaper and a Stag's Head!

Anne Chambers

Please Complete.

Forms can be posted to the theatre, left in the front office or handed to a member of Council.



Props

Reading through a script for the first time can be enjoyable, daunting or a cause for sheer panic. I'm not talking about learning lines and stage direction but the search for all those props you see on stage.

At Theatre Royal we are extremely fortunate in having a great store of furniture of all shapes, sizes and period. Hand props are sourced from our "shed", loaned from members or begged and borrowed from anywhere we can think of. As yet we haven't resorted to stealing, been tempted though! Who would have thought a rusty old parrot cage you saw in "Allo Allo" could be transformed into a bingo-ball machine for "Curtain Up"? Muriel did and John was the transformer.

I became a "propper" many years ago, officially an ASM (Assistant stage manager) and have enjoyed the challenge of tracking down those vital elements for each production. We have an excellent team on the Props committee and our meetings prior to a play come up with weird and wonderful ideas on how to overcome any problem item. Recently we noticed Martini bottles have changed in shape and style of labelling, shock horror as we have no old ones in store! We're ransacking drinks cupboards at the moment in search of bottles with stage potential.



Newspapers have been crucial in several productions, and that can be anything from a Victorian issue through to present day. T'internet

has been a godsend in reproducing a lot of paper props but if any of you out there have a stash of ancient newspapers do let us know, we might be happy to borrow one from time to time.

If I have inspired any Prompter reader to find out more about back- stage work and joining the team of prop-hunters I'll be delighted to hear from you. Saturday morning is a good time to call in for best value coffee and cakes in town and have a peep into our Props treasure trove. Otherwise contact me 01946 862566

APRIL 2014

APPEAL TO ALL MEMBERS OF PLAYGOERS (from the Chairman)

NAME	
Telephone No	
Mobile No	
E Mail	

Are you interested in the following (even if only very occasionally):

Please tick.

Acting - any size of part	
Acting - small parts only	
Directing	
Set building	
Set painting	
Stage Management	
Sound and lighting	
Prompting	
Wardrobe	
Props	
Publicity	
Front of House	
Bar duty	
Saturday Morning Coffee	

