



# The Prompter



*Workington Playgoers' newsletter – September 2014.*

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

## *'Ladies Down Under'* *Written by Amanda Whittington* *Directed by Pat Brinicombe* *October 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> 2014.*

This comedy is the sequel to the highly entertaining 'Ladies Day'. After hitting the jackpot at 'Ladies Day' in York, the fish-filleting foursome are celebrating in style with the trip of a lifetime to Australia. As they travel from Hull to the Gold Coast, Uluru and the bright lights of Sydney, they embark on a journey of self-discovery. While Shelley dreams of luxury and glamour, her friends set their sights on exploring the outback. As Shelley sees there's more to Oz than sun-kissed beaches, Pearl finds herself with a mountain to climb.



### **Workington Playgoers AGM - September 2014**

#### **REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

I am very pleased to welcome you all to this Playgoers' AGM.

We have staged 6 plays this year starting with *Curtain Up* last September, Ian Hinde's play *Trying for the World* to coincide with the Rugby League World Cup in October and the very successful *Blackadder – The Tudor Years* just before Christmas. Alan Ayckbourn's *How the Other Half Loves* had to be postponed at the last minute in February because of a broken foot, but was eventually performed in May. Agatha Christie's

*The Unexpected Guest* was performed in April and of course many of us enjoyed Ron Dickens' stunning performance last week in *The Ghost of Tommy Atkins* which raised funds for Help for Heroes and The Royal British Legion. We must congratulate all the actors, directors, stage crew and front-of-house volunteers who took part and made these shows so successful. Our stage crew have as always produced some very professional sets and it is good to see so many new members taking part both on stage and behind the scenes. There have been an increasing number of other activities and other groups using the Theatre over the last year. This is all part of our deliberate plan to encourage wider community use of the

Theatre Royal which in turn helps to increase our income, to safeguard the financial future of the Theatre and to justify our BIG Lottery funding application which I will mention later.

We must thank Paul Adams for bringing Jeff Barnhart back to the Theatre in August and for arranging the musical event with the two very talented young musicians, Greg Russell and Ciaran Algar in June. Paul was co-opted on to Council during the year as Deputy Chairman. This is a new post which Council agreed to create because of the increased work load.



On the social side, we had a very successful barbeque in Ron Dickens' garden in July and Morgan and his team put on an excellent Fine Dining event on the Stage also in July.

On the technology front, our website is being regularly improved and updated by Jenni Rushton and the free WiFi in the Theatre is proving to be very useful and popular.

There have been many frustrations during the year. In addition to the unavoidable last minute postponement of *How the Other Half Loves*, we struggle to find good plays with reasonable size casts that will be popular with our regular audiences. The Play Selection Committee chaired by Brian Young and consisting of Pat Brinicombe, Jenni Rushton, Gillian Scholey, Morgan Sweeney, Geoffrey Hall and Ron Dickens work really hard identifying plays that we might consider, but are constantly frustrated because licences are often not available or we have difficulty finding large casts. Casting is increasingly problematic and I don't know where we would be without the stalwarts of the club who often step into the breach at the last minute.

Having said that, the programme for next year is well in hand although the dates will remain uncertain until the outcome of the Lottery Funding is known and the building plans are in place. Provisionally, the programme might include:

*Ladies Down Under*

*When Did You Last See Your Trousers?*

*Victoria Wood - Talent*

*CADS/Playgoers WW1 Play*

*Entertaining Angels*

*Twelfth Night*

*The Vicar of Dibley*

The work to obtain Lottery Funding for the renovation of the foyer, theatre ~~fa~~ade, backstage areas and 30 Wilson Street has been demanding and at times, very frustrating. However we have been persistent and have recently obtained an interim grant of £21,515 from the Lottery Fund as you will know to develop our plans to the next stage. We are now very optimistic that we will be ultimately successful in accumulating almost half a million pounds of grant funding early next year to bring these plans to fruition. Full details of the current situation are provided in the Newsletter which was sent out to Members last week and there was an open drop-in session about the plans in the Theatre last Saturday morning so I do not intend to go into further detail in this report. We can discuss it later of course if there are any questions or comments about the plans or the process.



I am also pleased to confirm that CADS have been successful in obtaining a £9,900 grant from the Heritage Lottery fund to stage a joint World War 1 production in the Theatre Royal and other venues next April.

After a recent conversation with Gordon Rushton, I wonder if we have been diverted by the work to obtain grant funding and that we need to refocus our attention more perhaps on the future health and well-being of Playgoers? Now that the work to get the funding is almost done, I suggest that we arrange an informal evening for Playgoer Members to talk openly about the problems we are facing and the future direction of the club.

On a sad note, Playgoer members Alan Line who was a stalwart on the Stage Crew and that grand old gentleman, actor and raconteur John Holmes both died this year. We also lost Louise's mother Sheila who was a long time supporter of Playgoers in the autumn of last year and long term member Ruby Stockdale in April of this year.

Finally, I would like to thank the Members of Council who have worked so hard all year, to all the helpers who run Saturday morning coffee, to the actors, directors, stage crew, set builders, Prompter editor, ticket sellers and other volunteers who make Playgoers what it is and who keep this lovely old Theatre running. We couldn't do it without you.

Thank you too to our Auditor Glynis who keeps us on the straight and narrow, to James Watson who has worked tirelessly with us to obtain grant funding and who is now acting as Project Manager on the BIG lottery project, and to Gwyneth and Nicola who once again have raised funds for Playgoers from their long-distance walking.

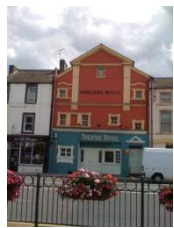
Thank you for your attention.

Peter Inglis

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## Props report for Workington Playgoers A.G.M.

2013/14 Maybe not quite Annus horribilis. Exciting major changes lie ahead with lots of queries, questions and quandaries. There has been much discussion and head scratching over the past few months regarding the funding bid and refurbishment of the Theatre Royal for the



future. Having been in the building business for 40 years and renovators of Victorian properties, one a stone's throw from here, my fingers are crossed that things move on as easily as possible. I think I speak for many members in

saying how passionate we are about this building we are sitting in at the moment. It has played, for me, through from a small part when I was a schoolgirl and member of the Dudley Evans fan club until the great experience of our production last week of "The Ghost of Tommy Atkins", Well done Gwyneth and all involved.

During the past year I was delighted to have two of our prominent actors join Props for Blackadder, we did have to put them in costume and let them pop on to stage now and again. But I am delighted to say Sarah lost no enthusiasm and joined me to prop the fated, but alright on the nights, Ayckbourn play and Jane is lined up for Morgan's play for Christmas. Sarah Newton is eager to discover the fun back stage, hopefully she won't have to wait too long. I look forward to working with CADS for the April 2015 production to commemorate World War 1, Beryl's script read very well last Friday night and if I pass the audition I may have a small part in it.

We are also looking forward to collaboration with "Happy Thoughts Drama Co." and the joint

production "The Lost Boy". Millie Hardy-Simms, who has written the script, is a very talented young lady and I want us to give her maximum support in her production next month.

And just for reassurance to my team, after a very constructive discussion with James Watson last Saturday, never fear - Props could be here, under the stage with improved access and, if we can afford it, a scissor lift – so team props, you can cut back on the Weetabix, life should become easier.

There is much up for discussion at the moment, I do think we need to review our strategy in all manner of promoting this theatre, not just under the guise of youth and community, but under that as one of the last remaining Victorian theatres in the north of England. We need to reach out to all ages in our community and draw them in to share the experience of live theatre in Workington.

Thanks to the team of Proppers for their valued support and here's to an Annus Mirabilis for Theatre Royal in 2015.

Anne Chambers

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## The Wardrobe.-AGM Report

**Our mantra is Space, Money, Time!**

**Space** - Because we have been asked by council to reduce the wardrobe by 50%. Council gave Helen and her team permission to use their initiative and reduce the wardrobe sympathetically. All four of us worked together at different times since 22nd August. We have kept back plenty for playgoers and hiring out.

Many of the items we have agonised over and taken them back out of bags after initially decided to get rid of them. Over the years we have been given a great many items for wardrobe and because we had the space we have accepted most items. A few years ago Pat and I with the help of Gordon and Geoff set to and organised the wardrobe. At the time we filled bags and bags of what could only be called TAT! The men built us proper rails and by putting only one garment on one coat hanger we could at last see what we had. The small room which contained mainly men's clothing was emptied and the items hung on rails which filled the Upstairs Theatre. Pat and I knew then that we would need to go through it all again and greatly reduce it! During the years

since this refurbishment of the wardrobe more items have been added! We never got rid of anything!

### Money

A couple of years ago I had the idea of getting in touch with a recycling company RAG BAG. We made a bit of money - another word in our mantra. I think up to now we have made just over £200. Today another 9 bags were collected and delivered to RAG BAG. There are three other avenues we are using to reduce the wardrobe.

**One is to have a stall and attend local Vintage Fairs.** Pat, Gilda, Nicola and I have already had a stall in Cockermouth. We not only made money but I feel we also raised the profile of the Theatre Royal. We had another one planned for Friday 26th September in Cockermouth but due to other commitments we have cancelled.

**The second avenue is ebay.** The contact we made through the Vintage Fairs, Sue Hern has put some jewellery, shawls, scarves and some of the Victorian mourning jackets on her site. She has £2,000 worth of items of ours on her site at the moment. You can find a link to her site on our website. Out of every £100 sold the theatre will get approximately £66. Sue may not obtain the full price she has asked for but we stand to make money. Sue Hern has been very generous with her time and expertise and has advised us on what will sell, prices and put us in touch with our third means of reducing our wardrobe.

**The third avenue is Addisons the Auctioneers from Barnard Castle.** Two representatives from the company were here today and they are thrilled to be asked to auction our clothes. They produce a splendid brochure. Our items will be part of a Vintage Sale in November and will be advertised as wardrobe from The Theatre Royal Workington. They believe there will be a big interest because it has come from a theatre. They are going to give us our own section in the brochure and at the auction. They also have everything for sale on their website and take website and phone bids. Out of every £100 sold we will get £80. They have waved some of their fees because we are a charity and they think our collection will be a draw for vintage enthusiasts. All we have to do now is put it in a van and take it to Barnard Castle sometime after 'Ladies Down Under'

### Time

All of this takes time but of course we love the theatre and want to do the best possible job on behalf of the theatre and members. Up to now the four musketeers + Nicola have put in a combined total of 109.5 hours. Helen's dream, when the refurbishment is complete, is to have an area dedicated to making and fitting costumes. As the theatre becomes more and more busy we no longer have the luxury of bringing costumes down into the dressing rooms. We will have to keep them upstairs in wardrobe. We will have as much space as we have now but hopefully we will be able to find what we want quickly. There will be none of this "Well I think we have one but where is it?" Actors will have somewhere pleasant to try on clothes and then joy of joys we can bring the clothes down in the lift!

J Rushton

16 September 2014

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## 'The Ghost of Tommy Atkins'

'Oh Gillian, I just have to stop and tell you what an amazing night that was at the theatre last week.

That actor, he was so real. It made it all so believable. But it wasn't just him...it was the whole night from when you went in the door. Fantastic. I loved the food. I'm making chestnut soup in a couple of weeks!' (*From WW1 recipe sheet..ed.*)

That was in the middle of Morrisons and that lady was just one of several who have stopped me in the past few days to comment on our WW1 'experience'. Audiences grew in number as the week progressed and word spread and, indeed, several people have asked if we will be repeating the evenings as they were busy for those three nights. They **were** nights to remember with a stunning and heart-rending performance from Ron Dickens preceded by an erudite and fascinating introduction from Geoffrey Hall. There were few dry eyes.

Entering the theatre, the audience were greeted by costumed staff which set the tone for the evening. Helen Earl, wardrobe mistress, skilfully ensured that all FOH helpers were appropriately



attired and this elicited many, many complimentary comments from the audience who then began their 'immersion' into early twentieth century life. Camp coffee - for the brave - and loose leaf tea served in the finest china in our 'tea room' adorned with appropriate posters refreshed the audience before they entered the auditorium to see the exhibition and sample morsels of (fresh) WW1 food expertly prepared each evening by Morgan Sweeney. Various sheets containing authentic WW1 recipes were available and proved to be very popular.

Anne Chambers did a wonderful job co-ordinating the exhibition which included personal and haunting memorabilia from several Playgoers members (many thanks) and also items from The Helena Thompson Museum. (Again, many thanks). There was also a display of WW1 Poetry with bookmark copies of poems for the audience to take away. All of that before the curtain was even raised!

Under Gwyneth Savage's most skilful direction, Ron Dickens then took us through the life and tragic death of Tommy Atkins. It is no exaggeration to say that he mesmerised the audience. His performance was a *tour de force* which many professional actors would struggle to emulate and it brought home most powerfully the horrors of that war.

Audience members lingered at the end, talking, reading, browsing and seemingly almost reluctant to leave the spell binding atmosphere that had been created in the auditorium. A most unusual night.

Although there was 'just' the one actor in the play, this production was very much a HUGE team effort involving many people both sides of the curtain and thanks are given to all those who helped in any way and to all those who supported the production. A big 'thank you' also to The Royal British Legion and Help For Heroes who manned stalls each evening. ( Gillian Scholey)

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Gwyneth Savage and Nicola Woodier completed a sponsored walk from Chepstow to Land's End.

## Gwyneth's Walk.

**Monday June 16th** saw us doing the long drive to Chepstow Unfortunately Amanda's foot is too painful and she couldn't walk this year so - just the two of us.

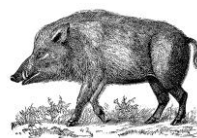
Great fun going over the Severn (M48 motorway) bridge - could feel the vibration of the traffic under our feet. We walked both ways across the Clifton Suspension Bridge and up the Cabot Tower (just because we could)...

**Day 4** saw us heading for Glastonbury, "Do it yourself" electric fencing seems to be the norm in the south...Frankly it isn't the nettles that are the worst on a roadside - it's the amount and type of rubbish thrown out of vehicles - hiding under the nettles - a number of times we aggravated ankles because of bottles and cans etc. Set off up Glastonbury Tor by 6.30 a.m. Magical place. Located path we had arrived by. Once on trail, nettles higher than me. Nicola in shorts - must have had over 1000 stings on legs. Good day - but exhausting. Suffering badly from kleg bites from 2 days ago - arms and legs look like a moonscape now and nettle stings on Nicola's legs could be mistaken for very bad sunburn...

**Saturday morning** we left early. Got onto canal fairly quickly, made good time. Towpaths well maintained but got hot very early. It was like "Springwatch" today - so much animal activity along the canal .

**Sunday** - We walked from Somerset into Devon. Much woodland walking - felt 6ft. tall with a pheasant feather in the top of my pack as did Nicola - but mine was pinched by a low hanging branch before we stopped. Brilliant lunch with Devon cider in Somerset and we even lay down and watched fluffy clouds.

**Day 8** - the 1st day it's gone to plan - Well nearly! Managed 4 miles before stopping, very hot. When we got to Tiverton Basin, found a tea room there



and finally got our first cream teas (Cheers Amanda!)

Set off a little later on **Monday morning**, breakfast was wild strawberries! Hadn't even got out of the village. Entered Sherwood Forest - sign that there were wild boar in the wood - and there were!

**Wednesday Day 10.** Wearing sunglasses to hide black eye from another close-up of tarmac at Budleigh. . Saw our first adder of the walk -so we know they are there.



**Thursday** was an interesting day to say the least! Dartmoor. The weather looked good. We steered

a clear path with markers right up through the settlements and chimneys and saw the weather coming in. Quick change to waterproof gear. Stair rods! Wet Boots! We made good use of satmap as paths no longer clear and certain to keep us on the route. We were escorted off the firing range! And we collected another £5 for our funds!

**Friday** gave us the weather we're used to walking in! We got straight into waterproofs and soon needed them! Didn't leave till 9.15a.m. (we walk faster in the rain) At Kits Hill a man directed us to a tearoom down the road. We had a cream tea and realised we were now in Cornwall. Then the heavens opened again, got very wet coming off the hill but there was a fantastic double rainbow.

**On Saturday** we hit first footpath at 9.15 - late - waterproofs - WET BOOTS - horrible! Met an Aussie guy "tramping" - decided he would "tramp" with us for a couple of miles, taught him about wild strawberries - making ascent up steep hill easier - good excuse for a rest while picking - saw him later picking his own.

**Next stop** was Lanhydrock House and gardens - sooner than expected, lovely grounds. Followed "The Saints Way" to Bugle. The first house we encountered was a joy. Great signs "Smile as you drive past", wind chime made from cutlery, a snake made from a waste pipe etc. At Bugle, Ian (host) even did a wash and tumble dry for us!

**On Monday** where the path crossed the railway - footpath closed - Closed from 14th May until 14th June - **2016!** Guy working at entrance to china clay workings said locals use the railway line - just use that! We did.

**Tuesday morning** Ann offered to drop our bags off in Truro. - Great!! Past the tin mine and windfarm. Pretty country lanes into Callestick where the ice cream is made. Turned out the cider farm we'd expected, was just up the road and they also offered cider apple scones, clotted cream and their own apple and blackberry jam. So we had to be tempted - that cider apple scone was good, even worth fighting the peacock for. Thanks again Amanda - today was on you



**Wednesday** was another beautiful day. Found paths easily today Dragonflies appeared again yesterday and today, we hadn't seen them for a while and were missing them. Redruth - a caf 

- enjoyed a Cornish Pasty (had to be done!) drinks and a meringue. Could see the sea today, getting close now!

After wasting the first hour on **Thursday** we sped on through wheat fields and tattie fields View from top over Mount Bay and St. Michael's Mount - amazing, but now clouded over. Decided



not to go over causeway and gaily walked past pubs and tea rooms alike - stopping only to watch kite surfers down on one of beaches and a peregrine

falcon quite happily sitting atop a street lamp by the railway - not disturbed at all by us watching it.

### **Day 19 Penzance to Land's End Fri 4th July Final Day!**

Raining this morning - typical! we joined the coastal path at Lamorna Cove where we stopped for a cream tea and cake - very good. It had rained on and off until this point but became persistent as we left. Minack Theatre, no show on. Steps, lots of steps.



As we walked towards Land's End, Mike met us part way down the hill. He took the obligatory photos of us at the sign and then got us a drink. Dinner in the Land's End Hotel where we got to sit in the window looking out to sea except the weather meant we couldn't really see much in any direction - bit of an anticlimax actually.

**BUT** - Good walk, enjoyed the sun, if a bit too hot. Yes - sore feet again but really enjoyed the entire trip! Thanks Nicola  
Mike travelled 482 miles at ave 58 mph. Took him 8 hours 22 mins at 44.6 mpg.

Total mileage for trip - 316.63 miles. Ave 16.67 miles daily

Total moving time - 134 hours 17 minutes Ave 7 hours 4 minutes daily

Total ascents - 68,786 ft. Ave 3620 ft daily.

*(Full diary and sponsorship figures available from Gwyneth – really fascinating reading).*

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**Hmmmm!**

"I like the ephemeral thing about theatre, every performance is like a ghost – it's there and then it's gone". Maggie Smith.

"The play was a great success, but the audience was a disaster". Oscar Wilde.

## Fine Dining comes to the Theatre Royal



It was at 7:00 pm. on July 12.

Fourteen Playgoers replied to an invitation, on the foyer notice board and in the Prompter, to dine like swells, by special arrangement, on the stage at the Theatre Royal. The stage was set, quite literally, for Fine Dining. Four large, sentinel arrangements of flowers & foliage stood like sculptures at the foot of sweeping, heavy, luxurious drapes, each one richly illuminated from above. A table, specially designed and built for that night to give precisely the right amount of space to each guest, was lavishly covered with fine, white, damasked linen and as the guests gathered for their hors d'oeuvres – those sharp, little spikes of savoury, salt and sour - the dazzling stage-lights played on the plain, white china and sparkling glassware, isolating the dining area from the auditorium's swallowing depths of warmth and darkness. In time, some lively, dry aperitifs and the diverse provocation of canapés led the suave, dinner-suited gentlemen and the chic, demure ladies, so elegantly coiffed and gowned, to their seats and their journey through the lengthy, extravagant and exquisitely-balanced menu began:

**Orzotto:** It's like risotto but, instead of rice, a kind of pasta called Orzo is used. It's the same shape as rice but a little larger. When cooked, it was mixed with a paste, made earlier in the year, combining olive oil, finely-shaved Parmesan cheese, blanched almonds and the wild-garlic which was then in bloom. This was moulded in a ramekin, turned out and garnished with fried, off-cut lardons of smoked bacon.

**Indian Candy:** A way, used by North American Indians, of preserving the glut of North Pacific salmon. They are cut into steaks which are very sweetly cured in maple syrup, salt and honey then oak-smoked. In Canada, they are

subsequently dried and eaten cold like biltong or beef jerky. The fish is so sweet that the sugars crystallize out. It's like candied fish; literally like eating sweets that also taste of fish. Sounds awful, I know, but it's sublime. We didn't dry ours but served it cold, plump and succulent with capers, lightly-pickled cucumber ribbons, tiny bagels and soured cream.

**A Sorbet of Gooseberry and Elderflower:** Wines made from the Sauvignon Blanc grape can often give a sharp reminder of Granny Smith's or Gooseberries so we used a bottle from Marlborough, NZ to poach hand-gathered hedgerow gooseberries and wild elderflowers, creating a sweet, fragrant syrup, freeze-churned with stiff egg-white and garnished with Borage flowers. It made a rich, sharp, palate-cleansing bridge between the fish and the meat.

**Duck Confit:** Duck legs, cured with fennel, slow-poached in duck fat and crisped beneath the grill then served with garnished cauliflowers, braised, fragrant stems (fennel, celery and leeks) and potatoes baked in cream and garlic.

**Crepe Suzette:** A familiar dish of pancakes with cream and a rich caramelized sauce of oranges and Grand Marnier.



All this, served by a pair of glamorous waitresses, eaten with finely-burnished silverware, accompanied by a wide selection of cheeses and wines from throughout Europe and the New World, represented extraordinarily good value at a cover charge of £15.

You should consider coming yourself, whenever the club decides to do it again. I'm sure you would enjoy it.

After all, it's just friends meeting and eating.

It looked and sounded as though everyone properly enjoyed themselves. At any rate, when I left, some time after 11:30 pm., all the guests were still sitting round the table enjoying good conversation, and the sound of them, still talking and laughing and joking, followed me down the auditorium, through the foyer, out of the building and into the street.

Morgan Sweeney





## **“The Lost Boy”:**

***Coming to the Theatre Royal in October!***

An exciting new project is taking place over five days this month. Based on the life of playwright J. M. Barrie as he wrote the infamous play ‘Peter Pan and Wendy’, this play brings the story to life in a fun and moving way.

Playwright Barrie is down on his luck after the flop of his last play. During his search for inspiration he meets widow Sylvia Llewellyn-Davies and her four imaginative sons. The boys help Barrie discover a land of pirates, Indians, fairies and mermaids, find the lost boy within him and write the most magical story ever told.

Written by locally acclaimed playwright and amateur director Millie Hardy-Sims, who has been writing and directing amateur plays for four years, the play brings the lesser-told story of the man who created Peter Pan to life on stage and celebrates 110 years since the enchanting play was first performed.

The project is open to anybody aged 10-18 who is interested in acting and performing on a real stage, dedicated to learning lines and wanting to access the lost boy inside themselves.

‘Auditions’ will take place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2014, 10am – 12.30noon at the Theatre Royal. Anybody who auditions will get a part, regardless of skill or experience. For more information, or to gain an audition pack for the play, please visit

**[happythoughtsdramaco.wix.com/happythoughtsdrama](http://happythoughtsdramaco.wix.com/happythoughtsdrama)** or email

**[happythoughtsdramacompany@yahoo.com](mailto:happythoughtsdramacompany@yahoo.com).**

After auditions, there will be four days of workshops at the Theatre Royal within the October half-term, from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October, 10am – 4pm. These intense workshops will see the play from script to stage and culminate in a performance at 6.30pm on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October.

For those interested, please note that a membership fee may occur. Please contact [happythoughtsdramacompany@yahoo.com](mailto:happythoughtsdramacompany@yahoo.com) for more information regarding fees.

We hope to see you there!

*“So come with me where dreams are born and time is never planned,  
Just think of happy things and your heart will fly on wings,  
Forever, in Never-never-land.”*

~ J.M. Barrie

**Millie Hardy-Sims Director**

**Happy Thoughts Drama Company**

A green poster with an orange border. At the top, it says 'Happy Thoughts Drama Company & Theatre Royal, Workington present'. The title 'The Lost Boy' is in large, orange, stylized letters. Below the title, it says 'The story of the man who created Peter Pan'. Further down, it says 'A 5 day project for young actors aged 10-18yrs'. Then, 'Auditions' is underlined, followed by 'Saturday 18th October 2014' and 'Theatre Royal, Workington 10am - 12.30pm'. Next, 'Rehearsals' is underlined, followed by 'Mon 27th, Tues 28th, Wed 29th & Thu 30th October'. Then, 'Performance' is underlined, followed by 'Thursday 30th October 6.30pm'. At the bottom, it says 'Project Fees Apply - For more information or a project pack, [happythoughtsdramaco.wix.com](http://happythoughtsdramaco.wix.com) - [happythoughtsdramacompany@yahoo.com](mailto:happythoughtsdramacompany@yahoo.com)'.

Happy Thoughts Drama Company  
& Theatre Royal, Workington  
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## **BBQ**

July 20<sup>th</sup> dawned cloudy and looked quite ominous at first but by late morning the sun was blistering the sky and The Playgoers once again struck lucky with the weather. Ron’s garden looked delightful as usual and by lunchtime about fifty people were revelling in the joys of Neil and Ron’s cooking and Louise’s organisation. Thanks also go to those who provided a colourful array of salads and the most delicious desserts all of which lifted our BBQ way above ordinary ones!

It was lovely to see members both old and new basking in the sunshine and chatting happily over their food and drink. Hot weather meant the bar staff were kept very busy although Ron also ended up doing a brisk trade in thirst quenching mugs of tea! It was a lovely way to spend a beautiful summer’s day. (Gillian Scholey)



## Play Suggestions

As another year rolls by, the Productions team are wondering what you may have read or seen in the last twelve months that may be of interest to us. All suggestions are welcome – it could be a ‘bums on seats’ play or something that might be a little more challenging. Please either mention your suggestions to one of the Productions team – Brian, Pat, Gill, Jenni, Ron and Morgan – or email one of us with details. Small cast plays are especially welcome.

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## Casting for...

### When did you last see your trousers?

(BY RAY GALTON & JOHN ANTOBUS)

To be performed - December 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>

This year’s Christmas play is a farce.

Now, you may think you don’t like a farce. They’re strained, out-dated, raddled with innuendo and plotted with unacceptable degrees of coincidence. They ridicule a bygone era and a bygone English social class that is so absurd already, it defies the need for satire.

Or, of course, these may be the very reasons why you enjoy it.

So, if you do like a comedy (played absolutely straight) that demands you chase each other round and round the stage, bounce in and out of doors and cupboards like a jack-in-a-box and get trapped outside on a window ledge, in which policemen and Cabinet Ministers lose their dignity, au pairs lose their clothes, you completely lose track of your own trousers and everyone leaves pursued by a gorilla - then this is exactly the show you have been waiting to appear in.

For those of us who love to laugh until they weep, who laugh so hard they fear asphyxiation, and who want to share the gifts of weeping and asphyxiation with others, there will be a read through on...

**...THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup> - AT 7:30 PM - IN THE THEATRE**

I look forward to seeing you there. ( Morgan Sweeney)

## Jeff Barnhart and Friends



A lot of people missed a treat on this fine August night. Whether they thought it was ‘same old/same old’ or they were on holiday or they

just shied away from what they thought was a night of Jazz, I don’t know. What I do know is that they missed some dashed fine entertainment from some outstanding musicians and singers.

This year’s concert differed from past years in that we were without the musicianship of Spats Langham and Paul Adams but we had the added bonus of some spectacular singing from Anne Barnhart. So much talent in such a tiny frame. If you shut your eyes and just listened you were transported to a down town, smoky nightclub with tiny tables lit by guttering candles, the air oozing sinful sex and everything in black and white! It was quite a shock to be disturbed by someone rustling their Werthers in the next seat!

Featuring a host of new numbers, few of which could be classed as ‘Jazz’, the music was, as usual, laced with anecdotes, humour and the facts behind the songs. That man certainly knows how to connect with his audience. John Hallam – another musician who excels in ‘mood’ music – and the talented Roy Canfield completed the line up. An excellent night. Many thanks to Paul Adams for arranging it.

Gillian Scholey

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## Scripts

It has become increasingly difficult to keep track of scripts. This can prove costly when they are library scripts! Council have therefore decided that, in future, those involved in a play will be asked to pay a deposit – probably £5.00 – when they borrow a script. This will be returned when the script is returned!

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“To enter a theatre for a performance is to be inducted into a magical space, to be ushered into the sacred arena of the imagination.”

— Simon Callow, *Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World*

# Shakespeare Workshops

At the Theatre Royal, 8th–9th November,  
Rosehill Shakespeare Players//Workington  
Playgoers

**SATURDAY 8TH NOVEMBER, 11am to 4pm**

This workshop will focus on a show called 'Fanfare for the Common Wo/Man', to be presented at The Theatre Royal, Workington, on 9th and 10th January 2015 as part of Open Stages, a Royal Shakespeare Company mentoring scheme. In 2013, around 200 amateur companies from across the UK applied to this scheme. The Rosehill Shakespeare Players were fortunate enough to be one of the companies selected. The show will include scenes from several Shakespeare plays, focusing on the ordinary people – the artisans, traders, inn-keepers and foot-soldiers – rather than the kings and queens. To find out more about this exciting project, visit: [www.rosehilltheatre.co.uk/news/open-stages-and-the-rosehill-shakespeare-players](http://www.rosehilltheatre.co.uk/news/open-stages-and-the-rosehill-shakespeare-players)



**SUNDAY 9TH  
NOVEMBER,  
11am to 4pm**

This workshop will focus on Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night', which will be presented at The

Theatre Royal, Workington, in Autumn 2015 as part of the Workington Playgoers season. The director, Laurie Mansfield, has set up a website for this production at: [www.twelfthnight.org.uk](http://www.twelfthnight.org.uk) These workshops will be of particular interest to people who are involved in these two productions but can also be attended by anyone interested in learning more about acting and Shakespeare. Each day will begin with a two-hour session from 11am to 1pm, followed by a one-hour lunch break, and then a second two-hour session from 2pm to 4pm. Participants should bring their own drinks and lunches.

## PRICES FOR THE WEEKEND (WHETHER YOU ATTEND ONE OR BOTH DAYS)

Members of Rosehill Shakespeare Players/Playgoers: £30 full price, £15 students and unwaged

Non-members of Rosehill Shakespeare Players: £40 full price, £20 students and unwaged.

To book a place in advance, contact Rosehill box office on 01946 692422

For further information, contact Tony Parker on [parkerstbees@aol.com](mailto:parkerstbees@aol.com) or tel: 07864 682733

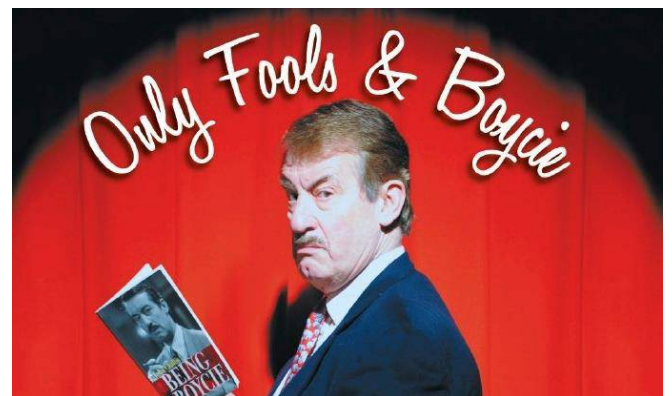
These workshops will be delivered by Bardy Thomas and Jennie Buckman. Bardy was Dean of Studies at RADA and Jennie was Head of Acting. They have coached many famous actors, including Lenny Henry, Hugh Grant, Harriet Walter, Matthew Mcfadyen and Helena Bonham-Carter. To find out more, visit their websites: [www.jenniebuckman.com](http://www.jenniebuckman.com) and [www.bardythomas.co.uk](http://www.bardythomas.co.uk)

**( Photograph – Twelfth Night. Deverell)**

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## Only Fools and Boycie – Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>.

Enjoy an intimate evening with John Challis, one of the nation's greatest comedy actors, best known as Boycie in BBC1's Only Fools and Horses. In this one-off show the national treasure will reveal secrets from the set with stories and anecdotes from his dazzling career.



Having worked with some of the biggest names in show business, he'll be spilling the beans about Only Fools and Horses co-stars like Sir David Jason and Nicholas Lyndhurst and friends and fellow performers like The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Oliver Reed and George Best. He'll also recall tales from his time in Dr Who, Coronation Street and other TV classics.

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"The theatre is a place where one has time for the problems of people to whom one would show the door if they came to one's office for a job."

— [Tennessee Williams](#)

## CADS/Playgoers Joint Production

You may have seen a recent news article in the 'Times and Star' about this. If you missed it, it is available on our website. The headline news is that CADS and The Playgoers have been awarded almost £10,000 from The Heritage Lottery Fund for a WW1 production written by Beryl Ballance from CADS!

Originally the two organisations were going to stage a revue which would also feature excerpts from 'The Accrington Pals'. It was then realised that if we wanted to access Lottery Funds, something with a more local slant was needed. From that need, a whole new play emerged! It is set in West Cumbria and includes 'bits of Workington, Harrington, Cockermouth, Maryport and Whitehaven.' Some scenes are based on real events that happened during WW1 in those areas and the story is told from both the point of view of the soldiers and those left at home. Featuring live music, singing and acting, this promises to be an innovative and exciting venture for both groups.

An open reading was held earlier in September and there are various castings throughout September and October. You have the opportunity to take a leading role, a smaller speaking role, a non-speaking role or to read one of the WW1 poems which are interlaced throughout the very moving play. It is hoped the play will have a full run at the Theatre Royal with additional performances at Dean School. The make-up of the Lottery funding means that tickets will be free. Dates for future castings are below.

**Thursday 25th September 7.30 - Casting for Soldiers. Conservative Club, Cockermouth. (upstairs.)**

**Wednesday 22nd and Friday 24<sup>th</sup> of October 7.30- Casting for singers and also actors for crowd scenes. Theatre Royal. ( With Mike Ames, Musical Director).** A casting/reading for the ladies' roles was held on September 17<sup>th</sup>. If you missed this and are interested please contact me. Beryl intends having individual castings for the poetry /voiceovers. Anyone who is interested can either email or ring **Beryl** on **01900829104**. Scripts and character profiles are also available from Beryl or me and I also have further details about the event. Gillian.

*Playgoers are pleased to announce a performance by*

## 'GALLIARDA'



This renowned group of highly respected performers play Renaissance and Baroque music 'from Byrd to Handel'. Playing a variety of instruments including viols, recorders, flute, lute, early guitar, theorbo and percussion, they have recently completed a tour of Great Britain where they played in a range of country houses and historical settings. Interspersing their musical numbers with 'witty readings' and demonstrations of their instruments, they promise to be 'highly entertaining'.

Their programmes include English, French and especially Hispanic music, with a strong current of traditional music. They also present a very popular programme of Spanish and Catalan Christmas music, 'Josep i Maria', which is featured on their latest CD.

Tickets £11.00. **Date - December 12th**

This event is being sponsored by Trevor Roberts of Cockermouth.

## New LTG Website Launch

**( Taken from the LTG Newsletter)**

At the end of the AGM & Open Forum session at Oast Theatre Tonbridge on 4th May, Vice Chairman **Andrew Lowrie** revealed and launched the new LTG website. **[littletheatreguild.org](http://littletheatreguild.org)**. **Twitter: @LTGtheatres**.

**Facebook: [facebook.com/littletheatreguild](https://www.facebook.com/littletheatreguild)**

The site contains a Home Page; "About Us"; Productions Diary; "Our Theatres" listed by region with links; a "Backstage" area for Grey Papers, Yearbooks etc., password protected; a Forum; and a "Find your nearest LTG theatre" using post codes.

Andrew pointed out that the scrolling banner pictures are designed initially to display your building and your production photographs – these should be sent at any time to Michael Shipley, who will pass them on to Andrew Lowrie, as well as using them in the Newsletter. Similarly the Home Page News Section will display up to

date news from you – again all news should be sent to Michael Shipley, for use in the Newsletter and onward transmission.

The website will continue to evolve over the summer months and new functions may be added. The Backstage area is password protected. For details of how to log in, contact [andylowrie@aol.com](mailto:andylowrie@aol.com)

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## Some 'Rules' for Directors

1. Always choose good collaborators. The best disagree with you.  
It means they're passionate, have opinions, and they'll only ever say yes if they mean it.
2. Try to learn how to make the familiar strange, and the strange familiar. Direct Shakespeare like it's a new play, and treat every new play as if it's Shakespeare.
3. Learn to say 'I don't know the answer'. It could be the beginning of a very good day's rehearsal.
4. Confidence is essential, but ego is not.
5. Theatre is the writer's and actor's medium. The director comes a distant third.
6. Run a theatre. A play is temporary, a building is permanent.
7. You're never too old to learn something new. But don't be scared of feeling like a complete twit. It's an essential part of the learning process.
8. There is no right and wrong, there is only interesting, and less interesting.
9. 'The Journey is the destination' said Peter Brook. Do not think of product or audience response. Think only of discovery and process.
10. Learn when to shut up.

## Dates for Your Diary

September 25<sup>th</sup>  
September 25<sup>th</sup>  
October 7-11<sup>th</sup>  
October 18<sup>th</sup>  
October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>  
October 26<sup>th</sup>  
October 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>  
October 29<sup>th</sup>  
October 30<sup>th</sup>  
November 8<sup>th</sup>  
November 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>  
November 15<sup>th</sup>  
December 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>  
December 12<sup>th</sup>

Casting for 'Soldiers' for April Play – Tommy's Story – **Cockermouth Cons Club**  
Casting for 'When Did You Last See Your Trousers'  
'Ladies Down Under'  
Auditions for 'Happy Thoughts' Youth Theatre Project  
Music/singing casting for 'Tommy's Story'  
'Peter Pan' – a 'Theatre Stars' Dance Spectacular  
'Happy Thoughts' Youth Theatre Project  
'Only Fools and Boycie'. John Challis  
'The Lost Boy' – Youth Theatre performance – 6.30.  
WADAMS Junior Concert  
Shakespeare Workshops  
Steve Whetton Charity Concert  
'When Did You Last See Your Trousers'  
Galliarda – classical music

11. When you have a cast of 20, you have 20 other imaginations in the room with you. Use them.

12. Learn to accept the blame for everything. Build up your shoulders, they need to be broad. And never, ever, forget how lucky you are to do something that you love.

(Attributed to **Sam Mendes** and taken from the Newsletter for Ilkley Playhouse.)

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## Interested in Visiting Famous Theatres?

How often, when on holiday or visiting a new town or city, have you passed an old theatre or opera house, and wished that you could take a peep inside, or better still, a guided tour. They are usually open to view, but only at specific times, invariably when you cannot make it!! So forward planning is essential.

To help you, just look up [www.visittheatres.org](http://www.visittheatres.org) and see what you can find out. You will discover tours available in Great Britain, the Netherlands and Belgium, and for those travelling wider afield, look up European Routes of Historic Theatres. For the UK, the database of the Theatres Trust is another place to start. Go on – explore behind the scenes, front of house, and exhibitions and archives!

( Article taken from the LTG Newsletter)

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For info.

Playgoers' website – [www.workington-playgoers.org.uk](http://www.workington-playgoers.org.uk)

Facebook – Workington Playgoers at the Theatre Royal.