

Who needs to go to Rio for a Carnival?

Well, certainly no-one who lives in or close to Oxted. This year's Carnival was a monster success, especially for the Barn. Following a few years when relations with the Round Table organisers had been a little, well, delicate, this year was a delight. We appeared to be flavour of the month, and we were welcomed as well as we could have hoped for.

Plans for the usual tea tent and cake stand were well advanced and Caro Rowley had made her usual hundreds and thousands of telephone calls to persuade all our helpers to produce the cakes which we hoped to sell. The response was superb – with a more hopeful pricing policy than in previous years, we stood to make a wonderful profit if only the weather was kind.

Thank goodness, this happened. No downpours, and a good attendance. We did have one wobbly moment, when we were told that the normal burger and hot dog van wouldn't be there, (what about our usual breakfast?) but no worries – the regular van was there and we could order the usual hot dogs and burgers.

A beautiful day ensued, resulting in the best profit for the Barn in living memory – around £840. Roll on next year's Carnival!
Chris Hepher:

'The Crucible'

The Barnstormers : 21st - 24th September 2005

Rehearsals are progressing well for The Barnstormers forthcoming production of Arthur Miller's classic play 'The Crucible'. This drama set



Crucible in Rehearsals

amongst the infamous Salem witch-hunts of 1692 is being staged nightly from Wednesday 21st to Saturday 24th September and once again The Barnstormers will be donating all proceeds from this production to the Barn.

'The Crucible' is a dramatic and powerful piece telling the story of how the small Puritan community of Salem, Massachusetts is stirred into madness by superstition, paranoia and malice, culminating in a thrilling and terrifying climax. The story focuses upon a young farmer, his wife and a young servant girl who maliciously causes the wife's arrest for witchcraft. The farmer brings the girl to court to admit the lie - and here, in this trial scene, is the thrilling climax of the piece. The farmer, instead of saving his wife, finds himself also accused, imprisoned and condemned. Often hailed as one of the greatest plays of the twentieth century, this gripping historical drama draws chilling parallels between the witch-hunts of Salem and McCarthyism, which gripped America in the 1950's. 'The Crucible' is regularly on the syllabus for GCSE and A levels and is a must see for students everywhere.

This will be the first time 'The Crucible' has been performed on the Barn stage, arguably the perfect venue for this historic play, and the talented cast includes many familiar Barn regulars as well as a number of new faces making their first appearance on the Barn stage.

BTN spoke to the director, Paul Longhurst, who told us that "This play deserves our best efforts, and we're pulling out all the stops to try to do it justice. The play itself is an incredible social commentary, full of rich dialogue and complex characters. Luckily, we have a very talented cast who are all working very hard together. Even at this stage of rehearsals, we've seen some incredibly powerful moments, and it can only get better. All the ingredients are there, and when you add our original and ingenious set design and the perfect theatre for the play, I'm really excited about what I know will be a powerful piece of drama".

Paul Longhurst has been asked by the Amateur Stage Magazine to write a 'Director's Diary' about his experiences during this production of 'The Crucible' and his thoughts together with pictures of the production in rehearsal can be found at <http://oxtedcrucible.blogspot.com/> or via the link on The Barnstormers website. The 'blog' as it is known (from 'web log' for those of you that didn't know!) is updated every few days.

Don't miss the opportunity of seeing this exciting production and at the same time supporting The Barnstormers's continued fund raising efforts for the theatre. Tickets are available now from 01959 561811 (office hours) until the end of August and thereafter from Ibbett Mosely Estate Agents in Oxted on 01883 712241. Tickets can also be booked via The Barnstormers website at www.thebarnstormers.org.

FOBS

I spoke too soon about the success of direct deliveries of bar and sweet stock to the Theatre. Yes, you've guessed it, they went to our Chair's home instead and by the time the Barn was reached some of the chocolate had melted and had to be returned. Never mind, a few more rehearsals and we shall be there.

Our bar price increases do not appear to have upset anybody, the extra space of the extension has encouraged audiences to use the bar more, and, we believe, appreciate the pleasant surrounds in a non-smoking area. Some have even commented how cheap we are compared to other venues.

We have certainly had some very good attendances for shows that we have fronted in recent months. Maureen Brown's School of Dance made a very well attended return visit in May and another success was Eunice Walton's School of Dance in July. We read and hear so much condemnation of young people these days yet our theatre is visited by large numbers of pleasant and disciplined youngsters, perhaps taking their cue from adults accepting the same discipline, without which the show does not go on. A lesson for life.

Between the dancers we fronted for "Rip 'Em Off", which 'took the mickey' out of soaps and pop but with some good tunes to boot, a well attended show in association with the Scout Movement.

We now look forward to fronting the annual visit of Kenley Holiday Workshop with "Me and My Girl", 10th to 13th August.

Speaking of shows, it is the practice of our Chair or Secretary to telephone around to arrange Front of House teams, a time consuming and expensive process for them. So PLEASE, we ask our 247 members, or anybody else, to read your 'What's On' or the handbills and call Heather Lloyd on 01883 712140 or Sheila Bennett on 01883 715145 regarding any shows you are able and willing to cover. It will be appreciated.

There are still ten seats available for sale in the Theatre, ideal for commemorating a loved one. Call Terry Rolph on 01883 712725 if you are interested.

Finally, a thank you to all those who kindly made and donated cakes for sale at the Oxted Carnival. Lest you ask, yes I did too, with my own fair hands. So there. *Dave Watkins*

From my Kitchen Window

'What's going on at the Theatre' asked my friend, Pam, when I met her down in Oxted the other day. 'How should I know?' I wanted to say, so I did, except not quite so rudely. You see, I don't REALLY know what goes on, I just watch.

I see men in suits carrying clipboards and taking notes, but I don't know what they are writing. I see vans parked outside and builders going in and out of the theatre, but I don't know what they are doing. I see people gathering in the car park, deep in discussions, but I don't know what they are talking about. I see ambulances arrive but I don't know who it's for. I see cones put up, but I don't know why.

And then there is That Other Question: 'What's on at the Theatre at the moment?' 'How should I know?' I always want to say, so I do, except often more rudely than that. I mean: how should I remember, there's so MUCH going on now I can't keep up. So in future, please don't ask me, come see for yourself, or, alternatively, ask my friend Gill, she usually knows.

Mette Breminer at No 74