

The Oxted Players

The Jewel that is June

At the AGM on 11 July 2012 at the Barn Theatre, June Brown retired as Chairman of The Oxted Players.



June has been a member of The Oxted Players for 63 years. She began performing for the Society as a young girl when she appeared as a Jewel in Aladdin's cave, and continued to sparkle in a further 25 pantomimes as well as 22 plays. She also either jointly or solely directed 16 pantomimes, seven full-length youth productions and four adult plays.

June joined the TOPS Committee 40 years ago and was secretary for seven years before becoming Chairman in 1992. June is also a long serving Trustee of the Barn Theatre.

When so many drama groups have struggled to survive over the years, under June's Chairmanship TOPS has gone from strength to strength, staging five or more productions each year. To show their appreciation and to mark this special occasion, June was presented with two plaques depicting the inside and outside of the Barn Theatre, two tickets for the Orient Express, a Golden Ticket for all future shows by TOPS and a bouquet of flowers.

June fully intends to continue her association with the Society and new Chairman Jonathan Tull had great delight in appointing June as President. She will also continue to manage the Society's vast costume collection and to direct youth and adult plays in the future.

2011 Season ends on a High

We ended our 2011/2012 theatrical season in joining the scores of other groups, both professional and amateur, during the World Shakespeare Festival, in celebrating the works of William Shakespeare. Our contribution was the delightful comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* skilfully directed by Martin Patrick. During a relatively short rehearsal period, the cast truly lived "the Dream", their performances enhanced by the magical set designed by Bruce Reed, lighting designed by Carolyn Rowley and the colourful costumes of Elizabeth Callow and Sally Dallosso, not forgetting the delicate choreography by Andrea Green for the fairies.

Andrew Creggan reviewed for Words & Music saying "The direction was smooth and the pacing frenetic but never out of control and the choreography fitted in perfectly. The four lovers (Sophie MacTavish, Laura Brand, Paul Farrell and Steve Bedford) had excellent chemistry, as well as demonstrating phenomenal physical comedy skills. I enjoyed Farrell and Bedford's performance immensely."

He went on to praise the performances of the Mechanicals which reminded him of the Crazy Gang. He also considered that David Morgan's performance as *Quince* was outstanding and Clive MacTavish brought humour to the part of Bottom with his portrayal of an ordinary, clumsy, clueless, overweight, middle-aged character. Particular praise was also given to young Tom Violet for his excellent performance as *Puck*. The play was a resounding success on all fronts.

Forthcoming Productions

Our Young Players' August Workshop this year with David Rowan is entitled *Dr Frankenstein's School of Horror* and is yet another of David's clever adaptations – a mixture of Hammer horror and St. Trinians. Our youngsters will rehearse the play during the week (20 to 24 August) and then perform to an audience of family and friends on the Saturday evening 25 August. Participation in the workshop is limited to current members. If any of our Young Players have not yet signed up and would still like to enrol there are a couple of spaces still available. Please contact Janet Magnay on 01885 713507 or email: jeff.magnay@ntlworld.com.

Our Autumn production is *Life x 3* written by Yasmina Reza, the author of the award winning West End hit, *Art*, and will be directed by David Fanthorpe. *Life x 3* could be described as a comedy of manners, verging at times close to farce. The play runs from Wednesday 17 to Saturday 20 October 2012 at 7.45pm. Tickets are £9.00 for adults and £7.00 for students and are on sale now from the Ticket Secretary on 01883 724852 or on line at www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk

Moving on to panto, we are delighted to welcome back Janette White as our Director for January 2013. *Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp* will be performed from 11 to 19 January 2013. Jamie Cordell is Musical Director and Aimee-Marie Bow is Choreographer. There will be a read through at Hurst Green Community Centre in Pollards Oak Road, Hurst Green, on Sunday 9 September 2012 at 2.00pm followed by auditions at the same venue on Sunday 16 September from 11.00am. Any adult who is not already a paid up member of the Society and who wishes to audition will need to join before auditioning. Regrettably our Young Players' membership is presently full and only those who are currently members will be able to audition. If you would like more information about the panto please contact us by email on secretary@oxtedplayers.co.uk and if you would like to join the Society please email: membership@oxtedplayers.co.uk or download the application form on the Oxted Players' membership link at: www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk.

We shall once again be participating in the Southern Counties Drama Festival at The Barn in February 2012 and our adult entry is *Moving On* by Richard James, directed by Chris Hepher. The read through/auditions for the play is on 25 September in the Theatre at 8.00pm with further auditions if required on 2 October 2012, again in the Theatre. *Moving On* is a play for three adults - two female, one male. More information can be obtained from Chris on chris.hepner@btinternet.com.

Our youth entry will be directed by Flo O'Mahony who successfully directed our 2012 entry *DNA*, winning the Adjudicator's Award. This time the play will be written by Flo. Flo will be running a day long workshop exclusively for our members aged 14–18 on Friday 31 August 2012. This is not intended to be linked to the actual casting of the Festival, and Flo wishes to stress that it will be a valuable workshop as a stand-alone. Flo intends to run drama games, exercises and activities based on her training with the National Youth Theatre and the Fourth Monkey Theatre Company. Those of our members who have not yet registered their interest should do so without delay as places are limited so please email: floomahony@gmail.com.

We would also like to remind everyone of our Spring 2013 production *Calendar Girls* by Tim Firth which will be performed from 15 to 18 May 2013. Director, Catherine Webber, will be looking for a strong cast of six women and three men. The read through is on 30th October with auditions planned for 6th and 7th November 2012. If you want to know more or register your interest, please contact Catherine on catherine.webber@btinternet.com or telephone 01883 724896 to ensure you receive full details of the characters and rehearsal commitment.