

# Barn Theatre

Eightieth Entertaining Year 1924-2004



# News

Volume 8 Issue 1 February 2004

## No! – It is not finished – we still have a way to go

Now that carpeting has been laid in the bar area the common feeling is that the Barn 2000 project is complete and that fundraising could cease. This could not be further from the truth and it is important that the notion is scotched sooner rather than later. Yes the bar area looks very smart and we have enabled this as a priority to demonstrate our thanks to all our patrons and supporters but the scheme was not just about the bar and there are still works to be completed in other areas for which funds are needed. It was always intended that the Bar area would be independently heated in order that it could be hired out as a separate function room. The present temporary heating arrangements simply borrow heat from the main theatre system and are neither adequate nor efficient for the purpose; furthermore we do not wish to heat up the whole theatre simply to use one room. The cost of Air Conditioning this area to provide both heating in the winter and cooling in the summer compared with simply providing heating is such that it is affordable and this is the choice we have made, much to the delight of many of our patrons and users of the facilities.

## Wheelchair friendly loo

As a result of a most enjoyable and successful Race Night at St Peters Hall in early November, Ash and Dee Thakar have presented the Barn with a personal donation of £1800 towards fitting out our new Wheelchair friendly toilet. This very generous donation from Ash and Dee is the result of the second Race night they have organised for us and we really are very grateful to them and to Pippa Bridges who, having worked tirelessly behind the scenes was suddenly required to run the whole evening due to the delay of the incoming flight on which Ash was supposed to arrive to mastermind the evening – well done Pippa.

## Thanks to so Many

The first week in December 2003 must surely have been a record breaking week with 6 totally different shows or functions over the 7 days. 2 performance of Aladdin, the Christmas panto for local schools, a dance show, a housing launch, the Barn Sinfonietta Christmas concert, Sgt Pepper the Beatles Tribute Band and the Christmas Drinks reception followed the next week by more Aladdin and then the fantastic Christmas Cracker.

During this hectic time we were able to rely on the excellent organisation of the FOBs for all front of house duties and I should think that they were very glad to see the end when it finally came. Our grateful thanks to Heather and Sheila, their committee and their teams of helpers who turned out to assist.

During this busy time we managed to raise some £3000 for Barn 2000 from these events, a tremendous total and this would not have been possible without the FOBs and all those who helped in other ways be it car park, Front of House, behind the scenes and on stage. Thanks to you all.

Apart from this installation we still need to provide the electric/hydraulic lift for wheelchairs from the dressing room areas to the stage, much of the backstage area has not been redecorated since suffering the ravages of the main building works and there are external landscaping requirements from the planners still to be completed. We require something in the order of £20,000 before we can relax and look to the next scheme of improvements! It is worth remembering that this project, forecast to cost £300,000, is still within budget having cost some £240,000 to date. Many thousands of pounds have been saved by doing the works with our own volunteers and those from Community Service teams, the rear car park, a prime example showing a saving of £25,000 against anticipated costs.

Please do continue to support us financially, particularly the retiring bucket collections, which on their own have raised over 10% of the £240,000 raised so far.

Bruce Reed

## FOBS

We were so busy I didn't even have time to write to Father Christmas, so it's another year without that train set. We had been warned that there were ten shows coming at us from the start of November, in addition to helping out with Oxted Operatic's 'Gypsy'. The season developed into a seemingly endless procession of dispensing sweets and drinks, stocktaking and topping up again. All good for the Barn and seemingly enjoyed by all. No selling was required however, when the Cat's Grin presented 'Aladdin' to audiences of very young school children. All we had to do was regulate the car park, listen to the audience participation and enjoy the happy faces emerging. For some it was their first time in a theatre. So inspired they may become stars of stage and screen ... or work the Barn Theatre car park in the rain. All good fun.

We closed the year with 'A Christmas Cracker', a variety show which included the usual mulled wine produced by Terry Rolph and dispensed by him with mince pies.

The FOBS were greatly helped in all the Front of House activities by not only our members but others on the Theatre bank of volunteers, and we have been pleasantly surprised by the speed with which new workers become efficient team members. For bar work they are at first placed with a skilled experience person such as ... well, modesty forbids. Seriously, it is a happy reminder that we are not indispensable when newcomers learn so quickly, and enjoy it too. May they keep coming.

There is plenty to keep coming for with Barn Sinfonietta on 31<sup>st</sup> January, Phoenix Theatre's 'Once Upon a Mattress' 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> February, and A2 Group's 'HMS Pinafore' 14-15 February. We then have the Betchworth Festival to cater for with a break until The Foxtrot Serenaders entertain on 12th March.

Owing to the sad loss of Doreen Roose we are without a Membership Secretary. Sheila Bennett is filling the gap but is a very busy lady and would welcome relief. Please see separate notice.

PLEASE NOTE: The Annual General Meeting of The Friends of the Barn will be held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March at the Barn Theatre at 7.30pm. All members welcome, drinks and nibbles afterwards. Come and join at the door! **DW**

Wanted by FOBS  
Volunteer for post of  
Membership Secretary  
Interested persons kindly telephone:  
Sheila Bennett on 01883 715145  
or  
Heather Lloyd on 01883 712140