

# HOORAY FOR HOLLYWOOD!

**THE NEW FOXTROT SERENADERS** are returning to the Barn Theatre on Friday 11th March 2005 at 7.45pm for an evening celebrating the Hollywood musicals of the 30s and 40s. Remember Busby Berkeley, Fred and Ginger, Gene Kelly all dancing to the music of Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Hoagy Carmichael and Irving Berlin? Well come along and you can enjoy a wonderful evening of music from the glamorous movie era and hear for yourself the fantastic sound of this authentic British dance band.

**Tickets £10. To book telephone 01959 561811 (available on this number until 18th February) and thereafter from Ibbett Masey 01883 712241.**



**The New Foxtrot Serenaders**

## THOSE WHO CAN....

...act, those who can't, direct, or so the saying goes (probably, at a guess, coined by an actor) but is it true?

Undoubtedly, directing is hard work. You work with a diverse group of people, all of whom are volunteers and could walk out at any minute. They all have specialist expertise or skills but only the Director has the 'vision' for the production. Bringing your backstage team up to speed with how you see the finished product is essential and at the root of success.

Preparation therefore is vital, the importance of clear communication cannot be underestimated and keeping everyone motivated and having fun (which, after all, is why we do amateur) is the hardest job of all. As much, if not more, work goes on behind the scenes as it does at rehearsals. To use a cliché, everyone needs to be pulling in the same direction.

Of course, the same cliché holds true for the actors. Casting must take account not only of who read well, but also of their interpretation, general approach and sometimes appearance. It's difficult to explain to someone that often they did nothing wrong in their audition (and for another Director they may have been perfect), but they are simply not what you envisage on the stage. It's a very personal thing! And it doesn't finish there; throughout rehearsals imposing your interpretation of a part on someone also requires considerable 'people' skills.

So it's not just about artistic expression and creative vision. It's also about maintaining a happy team of people who get together with a common aim, to put on a quality production at the end of it. I believe that whilst an actor *can* selfishly work in a vacuum, they are a *better* actor if they perform with consideration for others as part of a team. A Director *cannot* work in a vacuum. You

need to carry too many people with you to do so and the best, happiest productions are often those where that spirit of teamwork and common purpose has been created.

Anyone who's tried it will know it's not easy! With any group of people, you will get personality clashes and opposing opinions. Much time is spent reconciling those, knowing when to compromise and keeping up the momentum as well as being 'arty'.

So is the saying true? From experience, I'd say not. As a Director, also being a performer yourself definitely gives you an edge (chiefly because you know what it feels like to be on the receiving end) and many of the best Directors I've met have also been superb actors. But there's a lot more to it than that!

**JW**

## The Crucible

**The Barnstormers : 21st - 24th September 2005**

As reported in our last issue of BTM, The Barnstormers will be making a welcome return to the Barn in September this year with their production of Arthur Miller's classic play 'The Crucible'. This drama set 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. The Advanced Box Office is now open and tickets can be reserved by calling 01959 561811 (office hours).

The production team includes Richard Allen as Producer, Paul Loughurst as Director and Production & Set Design by Paul Bowles. 'The Crucible' requires 10 male and 10 female players representing a wide age range from the young teenage girls who accuse the villagers of witchcraft, to the accused members of the community, to the senior judges who preside over the witchcraft trials. The production team is particularly keen to hear from anyone interested in auditioning for the various teenage girl roles, which have an important part to play in some of the most dramatic moments of the piece. There are five named young female roles in the play to which it is hoped can be added four or five other girls to maximise the dramatic impact of their scenes. A full list of characters is available to download from The Barnstormers website at [www.thebarnstormers.org](http://www.thebarnstormers.org).

Please contact The Barnstormers if you are interested in being involved with this production either on or off stage. Cast auditions are likely to be held during April, but prior to this there will be a Get-Together/Workshop evening at the Barn on Sunday 20th March starting at 7.00pm. This evening will be an opportunity for anyone considering being involved with 'The Crucible' to register their interest and find out more about The Barnstormers' plans for staging this production, the character roles available and details of the auditions. There are also plans to hold a short workshop session looking at one or two of the major scenes from the play.

For more details of how to get involved, or if you wish to register your interest in auditioning or helping backstage, please contact Richard Allen on 01883 346093 or [richard@thebarnstormers.org](mailto:richard@thebarnstormers.org). More information on this and past Barnstormers productions can be found on their website at [www.thebarnstormers.org](http://www.thebarnstormers.org).