

Barn Theatre News

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BarnCool Hotting up

The period just before Christmas saw a leap in the fortunes of BarnCool with a tremendous and generous donation from Richard Allen of Barnstormers in the sum of £8100 as a result of the successful tour to the Minack in the Summer of 2007 with *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. The cheque presentation was made on the occasion of Richard's 40th birthday celebrations at Lingfield Park fireworks party. Richard, is of course no stranger when it comes to handing over large sums of money to Bruce. Over the years the generosity has been overwhelming and it was a delight to watch Richards face when shortly after the presentation, Sheila Bennett, Chairman of the FOBs presented Richard with an Honorary FOBs membership in recognition of all his good work. The last person made an Honorary FOB was the Duke of Kent so Richard is in good company.

Apart from Richard we were also very fortunate in receiving substantial donations from other sources all around the same time. The FOBs very kindly donated a further £4000 with a further £1000 promised at their AGM bringing their total towards BarnCool to £10,000 during the period of the appeal.

By the beginning of December the little red buckets had done a stirring job of raising a further £1150; the FOBs ran an auction, courtesy of Pippa Bridges, for 2 Mamma Mia tickets which brought in another £100; Kings Church sent us £200 from their Party In the Park concert and good houses saw welcome profits from the Rhapsody Concert and Christmas Cracker. To top all this we also received an extremely generous donation in memory of Elsie Hallson, who, with husband Eric, helped backstage for so many years making props of all sorts for the various productions. I am sure many of them came out at panto this year and I expect to see even more next year.

As a result of all this orders have now been placed for the air conditioning equipment and it is proposed to close the theatre during June for the installation to be completed.

An astonishing £72,000 raised to date in less than 15 months. It takes some doing but we have only a little way to go to complete the appeal. A big thank you to all who have helped in whatever small or large way – without you it would not have been possible.

E-communication

With more and more people communicating by e-mail the Barn plans to send out occasional communications in this way. If you are happy to receive reminders about Sunday Club, notification of advance ticket sales for some Barn shows and other sundry matters please let us have your e-mail by sending a message to the theatre e-mail at Barntheatre@btinternet.com.

Your e-mail will not be given to anyone to use for anything other than 'Barn' matters.

Your Legacy

By making provision for the Barn Theatre in your will, you would be making a lasting gift for future generations. The theatre, now protected as a charity has endured for over 80 years and every sum, no matter how small, is welcomed and spent entirely on vital conservation and improvement works that will ensure that the Barn continues to be accessible for everyone to enjoy. Thank you for your interest and support – we could not do without it.

The Young Ones

This year really sees the young ones infiltrating the Barn with a vengeance as we have a record number of shows involving youngsters. First there is the Southern Counties Drama Festival which has a number of youth groups taking part including last year's winners of the youth award, The Young Oxted Players, who then return in May with their production of 'The Pied Piper'. This will be followed by Maureen Brown's Dancing School Show who make a welcome return in April, as does Melinda Cherrett's Stagecoach in July. In August we have regulars Kenley Holiday Workshop, always a highlight of the Summer, and the prolific Young Oxted Players Workshop. Not to be outdone the Oxted Junior Operatic will be making their debut appearance at the end of July.

So, there will be a crowd of chaperones and mayhem of matrons all trying to keep order while the Directors pull their hair out. Talking of which, when are we going to see the first production of 'Hair' followed by 'Hairspray' at the Barn?!