

PARADE Marches on?

Preparations continue in earnest for The Barnstormers much anticipated forthcoming tour to the Minack Theatre (www.minack.com) in August this year with their production of the musical *Parade*. Rehearsals are due to kick off shortly with a huge cast of around 60 performers, featuring many Barn regulars, together with a healthy influx of new talent joining The Barnstormers for the first time:-

Leo Frank	Dominic Binefa	Britt Craig	John Wade
Lucille Frank	Elizabeth Skinner	Minola McKnight	Lesley-Anne Miller
Jim Conley	Richard Youman	Newt Lee	Kob Yeboah
Mary Phagan	Beci Sageman	Luther Rosser	Paul Grace
Frankie Epps	Alex Johnston	Young Soldier	Matthew McBrier
Hugh Dorsey	Steve Green	Iola Stover	Laura Brand
Governor Slaton	Colin Warnock	Monteen	Alice Wright
Tom Watson	Seb Junemann	Essie	Marissa Beatty
Judge Roan	David Morgan	Sally Slaton	Cat Longhurst
Mrs Phagan	Katy Davies		

Supporting this strong line-up of principals is a large Ensemble of around 40 experienced performers, and the whole production team can't wait to start working with this exceptional cast on what is undoubtedly an immensely exciting project. Due to personal reasons, Ian Skipper has regrettably had to withdraw from the show; however, The Barnstormers are delighted to announce that Patrick Isbell will be joining the team as Musical Director. His considerable talent, experience and passion for this musical make him the perfect replacement, and we are sure he will be made to feel very welcome at the Barn.

Set in the Deep South of America in 1913, 'Parade' is a multi-award winning musical featuring a powerful and gripping storyline with rousing and soaring music, drawing on influences from Sondheim to rhythm & blues, ragtime and gospel.

Leo Frank, a Brooklyn-born Jew living in Atlanta, Georgia, is put on trial for the murder of Mary Phagan, a young factory worker under his employ. The murder having taken place on the day of the Confederate Memorial Day Parade. Already guilty in the eyes of everyone around him, the sensationalist press, a politically motivated prosecution team and a janitor's false testimony seal Leo's fate. In fact, the only person who eventually steps forward in his defence is his wife, Lucille, who finds the strength and love to become his greatest champion.

The musical focuses on the evolving relationship between the accused, Leo Frank and his wife, Lucille, who fall in love in the midst of adversity. This is a tragic and inspiring love story that will stay with you for a long time to come.

Please come and support The Barnstormers on Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th July, when there will be a chance to watch a number of local Preview performances of *Parade* staged in the open-air on 'The Larks' (formerly Laverock School) tennis courts located adjacent to the Barn Theatre's rear car park (access via the Barn). Tickets for these Previews are now on sale via the Barn Theatre website www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk (credit/debit card bookings) or by telephone on 01959 561811. Please note these will be open-air performances and no seating will be provided. Members of the audience are invited to bring their own deck chairs, rugs, picnics etc. As with every Barnstormers production, all profits from *Parade* will be donated to the Barn Theatre's development fund. For further details, please visit www.thebarnstormers.co.uk or alternatively contact Richard Allen on richard@thebarnstormers.co.uk.

Sausage Sunday!

Last year we had a couple of Sausage Sunday Clubs which seemed to be very popular – all 96 sausages in buns were eaten each time. So, for the April Sunday Club I shall do the same again and hope we

get even more people joining us. Please put 7th April in your diaries now and if you are able to let me (Caro) know you are coming on publicity@barntheatreoxted.co.uk it would be much appreciated so I know how many sausages to buy. Veggie sausages are possible as long as you let me know a reasonable amount of time in advance.

FOBS

First, an important date for your diaries: we have our **Annual General Meeting** booked to take place in the Theatre, by kind permission of Oxted Operatic Society which will have taken up residence in the Theatre in order to start building the set for *The Sound of Music*, on: **Monday 25th March at 7.30pm** Official notices will be sent out at the beginning of March but do put the date in your diaries now please; and think whether you would like to stand for and / or nominate other members to stand for election to your committee for the coming year.

We have enjoyed two occasions since the last Newsletter with splendid 'nibbles' provided by Caro for which we thank her – the Christmas Sunday Club closely followed by the New Year Sunday Club complete with 'bubbles' in addition to the now traditional jacket spuds.

Pippa has once more provided the Theatre with the necessary teams of volunteer Front of House staff for all visiting companies throughout the past year. This is perhaps the most stressful job on the committee as the Theatre cannot function properly without a competent Front of House team. We are all most grateful to Pippa and to all our volunteers for the time which they so generously give. During the past year Bruce has organised training for all Front of House Managers so that shows are managed in the same way. He has also brought the guidance notes for Front of House Managers up to date and this has proved to be most helpful. The next major 'challenge' for Pippa and the FOBs is to provide teams for the Southern Counties Drama Festival which takes place at the Theatre during the week 25th February to 2nd March. This involves the use of about 80 volunteers so please respond generously to Pippa's request for help. Several of our regular volunteers have felt the need to step down from duties during the past year – mainly because of their advancing years! – so we are always happy to recruit new active members. During the week there will be the opportunity to watch 16 one-act plays of various genres and we urge all FOBs members to make an effort to support the Theatre, which is hosting this event, by attending for as many evenings as possible.

As I write this the snow is falling but, hopefully, by the time you read it we'll be all set for a pleasant spring, *real* summer and an enjoyable and successful 2013 at our very own Barn Theatre.

Scenery Painters

For some time now all the societies at the Barn have had to rely on very few scenery painters for their productions. In fact 'Patrick the Painter' has painted numerous sets completely on his own. No particular experience is needed, as anybody who is artistic and creative can learn the ropes very easily. Even if you aren't artistic but would enjoy getting involved with scenery painting and the creation of sets, do please get in touch with Bruce Reed on: barntheatre@btinternet.com. Bruce would be delighted to receive an e-mail from you. If you are not sure what is involved and whether you would enjoy it please get in touch and we can arrange for you to come to the theatre and find out all about it.