

The Oxted Players

We enjoyed success for both our Youth and Adult entries to the Southern Counties Drama Festival at the end of February coming second and third respectively out of eleven entries. For the fourth year running our Youth entry won best Youth Play and for the third year running was Festival Runner Up. Our adult entry, *Alternative Accommodation*, directed by Tricia Whyte, won the Best Stage Presentation award. As Runners Up, the Young Players performed *1 of 56*, which was written and directed by Ben Atterbury, at the Walton Playhouse in the Quarter Final round of the All England Drama Festival where Ben was awarded the Adjudicator's Cup for his writing and direction.

Hot on the heels of our Festival achievements, twenty-two more of our Young Players performed *The Adventures of the Faraway Tree*, an adaptation by Ruth Summerfield from the Enid Blyton classic *The Folk of the Faraway Tree*. Directed by June Brown, the three performances played to full houses and the play received an excellent review in the both *The Surrey Mirror* and *Words & Music* from Peter J Reed who praised the technical team and in particular Bruce Reed's set. Peter also complimented June and her cast. There was also excellent feedback from the very appreciative audiences.



Jack Chilcott, Alice Goddard & Lauren Franklin
Photo Fran Chalmers

Our Spring production of Alan Bennett's, *Habeas Corpus*, takes to the stage from 12 to 15 May 2010. In this wickedly funny play we meet the Wicksteed family from Hove, a seemingly respectable GP (Peter Damesick), his sexually frustrated wife Muriel (Janette White) and their hypochondriac son, Dennis (Henry Tredinnick). With his ever roving eye for the ladies, Dr Wicksteed takes a fancy to a young patient, Felicity Rumpers (Laura Brand), who in turn takes an interest in Dennis. Added to the mix we have Constance (Rhian Lally), the Doctor's sister, who is more concerned about her flat chest than her courtship with the limp but good-natured vicar, Canon Throbbing (David Fanthorpe). Keeping a watchful eye on the goings-on is Mrs Swabb (Wendy O'Mahony), the aptly named charlady, who delights in gossiping to the audience. The line up of dysfunctional characters is completed with Sir Percy Shorter (Duncan Browne) as the President of the British Medical Association, Mr Shanks (Mike Rourke), a "bust" fitter salesman from Leatherhead, Lady Rumpers (Ghislaine Bowden) and the hapless manic depressive, Mr Purdue (Chris Hopher). With this excellent cast and under Peter Shore's direction, our audiences can expect a very entertaining evening. Please don't miss this production. Tickets are £9.00 (£7.00 for students) and are available through the Ticket Secretary on 01883 724852 and also on line at www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk* (*booking fee applies) (click on *What's On*). However, in order to assist our local theatre goers, tickets will also be available for personal callers to purchase at Ibbett Mosely at 101 Station Road East, Oxted.

The read-through for our Autumn production (13 – 16 October 2010), *The Happiest Days of Your Life*, to be directed by Guy Hudson, will take place on Monday, 17 May 2010 at 8.00pm in the Green Room of the Barn Theatre followed by auditions on Friday 19 May 2010 at 8.00pm at Hurst Green Community Centre. The Pupils and Teachers of St Swithin's School (for girls) are relocated to alternative accommodation as their own school was a casualty of wartime bombing. Thanks to a bureaucratic mix-up they are billeted at Hilary Hall School (for boys) and the teachers try desperately to avoid the parents finding out that the boys and girls are being housed together. This is delightful comedy has 7 male and 6 female parts of varying ages. If you are not already a member and would like more information about the play please email us on pebrown007@btinternet.com and we will send you the synopsis and character list. You will, however, need become a member to audition.

FOBS

Your re-elected committee thank you for your continued confidence and support. We were greatly encouraged by a turnout of 68 members for the AGM and also by the fact that a further 20 members took the time to send apologies. A pleasant sociable time was spent enjoying drinks and nibbles in the bar after the meeting.

Members who were not at the AGM will be pleased to know that we were able to present Bruce with a further £3,000 raised by our Front of House activity, which brings the total donated to the Barn Theatre Trustees during the past financial year to a very handsome £11,000. Well done and thank you everyone. Please contact Pippa if you would like to join the band of volunteers and help to raise money for our Theatre in this way. Fobs teams provided volunteers for 52 performances during the past year and Bruce told us that the Theatre is becoming more and more popular with outside hirers. You do not have to be a member of FOBS to volunteer – although we are always looking to entice new members.

On the subject of new members, we are considering a possible rise in subscription rates. FOBS have always believed that recruiting Friends is more important than making money from subscriptions. However, the committee also feel that it is important that subscriptions actually cover the cost of running the society so that all monies raised by our Front of House activity can be handed over to the Barn Trustees for the support of the Theatre. Members at the AGM were asked to consider whether a rise to £5 for one year and £12 for a three year subscription would be likely to lose us members and potential members. At the moment the present rates do cover costs but, with increases in the cost of postage for example, this may not be so by 2012. If members raise no objection the committee intend to propose the rise at the AGM next year- so do please let us know your views. Committee members can always be found in the bar at Sunday Clubs on the first Sunday of each month – these gatherings offer an excellent opportunity to have a chat when people are not 'on duty'.

At the end of this month a large team will be presenting a production of "Jesus Christ Superstar" at the Minack Open Air Theatre in Cornwall under Richard Allen's 'Barnstormers' label, hugely supported by the Barn Theatre technical team. We wish Richard, an Honorary Life Member of FOBS in recognition of his support for the Theatre, and his whole Company artistic and financial success with the venture. FOBS volunteers will be playing their part by helping to steward the 2 open air dress rehearsals in Oxted and we hope that many patrons will be able to travel to Cornwall to see the show in the spectacular setting on the cliffs at Porthcurno.

Please remember to make a note of the FOBS late summer BBQ in your diaries – SUNDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER AT NOON.
Sheila Bennett