

BARN THEATRE

NEWS

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The Barnstormers Storm up the hit Parade!

Just prior to our August BTN issue being published, around 120 tired but very contented souls were arriving back at the Barn following The Barnstormers highly successful tour to the Minack Theatre with the musical 'Parade'. They were delighted to have played to packed houses throughout their week in early August, with the show selling out on 6 out of 7 performances, and with total ticket sales of 95.5%. All in all, a truly fantastic achievement!



It was an extraordinary, magical and wonderful week in Cornwall that will undoubtedly stay in people's memories for many years to come. The Barnstormers once again staged a stunning production, with superb and powerful performances by both principals and ensemble alike. The audiences were totally gripped by the poignant and tragic story, and feedback from the Minack Theatre management, staff and audience members has been excellent. 'Parade' has to rate as one of The Barnstormers very best. The Cornishman's newspaper review is printed in full elsewhere in BTN.

Following the end of the Minack summer season last month, we are thrilled to announce that 'Parade' has been awarded the prestigious Minack Trophy for the most outstanding production of 2013. This tremendous achievement is all the more remarkable as this is the first time ever that a touring theatre company has won the trophy 'back-to-back' on consecutive tours to the Minack. With the Minack Theatre regularly featuring amateur theatrical talent of the very highest standard, this award is a huge honour for both the Barn and The Barnstormers. Our warmest congratulations go out to

Richard Allen and his team, the 60 strong cast, and to the large contingent of Barn directors/trustees and supporters that played their part in making this magnificent production such a success.

Not only was this production a huge artistic success, but with higher than expected Minack ticket sales and three well attended and hugely appreciated local previews on the tennis courts (in all weathers!) at the end of July, we understand The Barnstormers have made a healthy profit on the production and will be donating the whole amount to the Barn's DRIP project. The exact figure will be announced at the December 'Christmas' Sunday Club on 1st December (12.00pm – 2.00pm) when there will also be a presentation of the cheque to the theatre. Please come along on Sunday 1st, share a drink or two with friends, and raise a glass to their success.

Spend a penny or two for the Barn

Accompanying this issue of Barn Theatre news is your own copy of the fundraising appeal brochure giving details of DRIP. Our Dressing Room Improvement Project scheduled to start in late summer 2015. The super brochure designed by Martin Patrick shows quite clearly what the plans are for this exciting project and we do hope that you will show your support for the ideas and plans that have been thought through so very carefully over the last year or so. The benefits to all our casts and backstage workers are enormous and will make 'life at the back' much more comfortable for all.

If you have any fundraising schemes that you would like to mastermind, for the benefit of DRIP, then please do speak with Bruce. bruce.reed@btinternet.com or 07802 302025

Bruce Reed

Bee Gees coming to the Barn

Saturday 7th December 2013

Get your tickets for this traditional Barn music night whilst you can, as we can foresee a sell out well on the way, this far ahead of the day. Tribute band 'Jive Talkin', well known in the south east for their consummate musical skills are delighted to be coming to the Barn and we are pleased to welcome them with their repertoire of Bee Gees' sensational music.

Get your tickets now from www.barntheatreoxtd.co.uk or by telephoning 01959 561811.

FOBS

We must start with congratulations to The Barnstormers for winning the Minack Trophy for 2013 for their production of "Parade". Well done indeed! All of our team of Front of House volunteers and audience members who braved a very wet Saturday on the tennis courts in July will now realise how worthwhile that preview weekend in Oxted was in helping the company with its final preparations for the Minack week. The Barnstormers have certainly proved to be great ambassadors for our Theatre.

Another highlight of the past few months has been "Musical Memories" - a fine tribute to Terry Rolph and John Sturgeon for which we thank Graham Wright and his friends.

We are now well into the autumn programme having just enjoyed "Outside Edge" with The Oxted Players and are anticipating "Oliver" with the Oxted Operatic Society. Our list of Front of House volunteers compiled by Pippa and shared with the two resident Societies is being well used. A big thank you to all those who respond to the many requests for staff. We all know that shows need an audience and we cannot have an audience if the Theatre has no staff! Please consider adding your name to our list if you are not already on it.

Fund-raising for "Drip", the project designed to greatly improve backstage facilities, has made a good start with shows such as "Let Us Entertain You" organised and presented specifically to raise money for the fund. Thank you to all the groups which took part.

2013 seems to have sped by and our next Sunday Club on December 1st will be a 'special' for Christmas. The summer clubs have seen numbers drop somewhat so we hope that you will all come along on the first Sunday of each month through the winter to enjoy good company in warm surroundings. Sunday 5th January will also be a 'special' with Caro's spuds and a glass of bubbly.

Another note for your 2014 diary – our AGM is booked for Monday 24th March.

Sheila Bennett

'Let Us Entertain You'

26th October 2013

What do you get with a cast of 109, 33 chaperones, 30 backstage and other staff and the usual Front of House support team from FOBs all put in place and coordinated by one person, Angie Muscio. The sum total of that is the biggest cast ever, the biggest chaperone team ever and the biggest boost to Barn funds from a one day fundraising event in the history of the Barn since it opened in 1924.

One, and only one, rehearsal all together on stage starting at 8.30am in the morning followed by a matinee and evening performance playing to almost full houses produced a great show that went like a well oiled machine and produced a boost to DRIP funds of £6,100. An absolutely stunning total at the start of our DRIP fundraising appeal.

The talented cast, young and not so young really did entertain their audiences and it was a wonderful day for all who were involved too. The liveliest dress rehearsal I have ever seen with every act supporting the others; it was just like a performance with a great audience.

Our thanks to St Mary's School, Bastet School of Dance, Starmakerz Theatre School, Oxted Operatic Society, Madeline and Matilda Castrey of Charisma, Oxted Glee Choir, all those chaperones and principals of those groups performing, the Barn stage team, the FOBs front of house team, and all those that advertised in the programme. But without Angie Muscio none of this would or could have happened. Thank you so much Angie, this was a day to be remembered by us all.

'Musical Memories'

22nd September 2013

A tribute to Terry Rolph and John Sturgeon, stalwarts of the Barn Theatre.

Graham Wright is well known for his concerts with New Foxtrot Serenaders which Barn audiences have enjoyed for the last 16 years but he is also able, at the wave of a baton, it would seem, to assemble large quantities of musicians to join him when the occasion requires.

This concert, the brainchild of Graham, in tribute to Terry and John was one of these occasions and there were 28 musicians, The Surrey Guards Ensemble, on stage for the concert on 22nd September. The stage specially extended to accommodate the musicians, a record number on stage at one time here at the Barn. The audience were treated to special arrangements of their favourite show tunes under the baton of conductor Ian Harby, whose control of the band and empathy with the audience made for a very entertaining evening of fine music.

The proceeds of the concert are to be shared equally with Help For Heroes and we shall be sending a donation of £2325 to this well deserving charity whilst DRIP benefits from a similar amount. Thank you Graham and Ian and all your friends for such tremendous support to both causes.

Bruce Reed

Noggin & Natter

From noon until 2pm on 1st December, the bar at the Barn will be buzzing as we all get together for our annual pre-Christmas Noggin & Natter.

Do come along, enjoy a drink and some nibbles with your friends and browse the gifts available from our Christmas Market stalls. Cat Longhurst will be selling general gifts and soft toys, Karen Jackson will be selling hand-knitted scarves, wool related Christmas gifts and stocking fillers and Linda Bruce, who cannot be there has roped her Mum and Dad into running her stall, which will be selling general and Christmas cards which she is busily designing at the moment.

In keeping with trying to make this a really special Sunday Club, we are having a number of presentations. Richard Allen from Barnstormers is going to present the profits from Parade at the Minack and we are hopeful that others who have worked hard to support the new DRIP project through the year will also be able to make their presentation at the same time. Those little red buckets may come out of retirement and make a celebrity appearance too.

All are welcome so do bring your family and friends to this very popular annual gathering.

Spud n' Bubbles

For what has now become a Barn tradition, for the first Sunday Club of the New Year, on 5th January we are again having a simple baked potato lunch with a meat or veggie option and like last year it will also include a glass of 'bubbles' or a soft drink. 'Spud n' Bubbles' will cost £7.50 (all profits to the theatre) and if possible please order and pay upfront. I can collect the money any time I am at the theatre or make contact if you haven't seen me. I shall serve at 1.00pm and everyone who has ordered and paid for their meal by 12.45pm will be guaranteed a spud but after that they will be available to anyone who turns up on the day and pays. Please e-mail me:-

(carolyn.rowley@btinternet.com) with orders as soon as possible (last e-mail orders 3rd Jan) as I intend to restrict numbers to 50, on a first come, first served basis. Also, if you need to cancel please do so by 3rd January or expect to be asked for the money as last year we had some 'no-shows'!

Oxted Operatic Society

Oliver!

Our November production of Oliver!, that classic family favourite of Lionel Bart's, is selling quicker than hot gruel! In fact the Friday evening, Saturday matinee and Saturday evening performances are already sold out so, to ensure a seat, please book your tickets for the first three performances as soon as possible.

Oliver! is guaranteed to engage audiences both young and old with its pathos and drama, while delighting everyone with its outstanding musical numbers. *Food, Glorious Food, I'd Do Anything, Where is Love?, Consider Yourself, As Long As He Needs Me, Who Will Buy* and *Reviewing the Situation* are musical theatre classics. This Winner of 3 Tony Awards has seen several very successful revivals in London, and has only just been re-released for amateur performance.

With our Production Team of Jane Maisey (Director), Martin Colvard (MD), and Andrea Atkinson (Choreographer) rehearsals are well underway and it is already shaping up to be a spectacular production!

We have an extremely strong cast of adults and 2 teams of children numbering 16 in each team, Oliver! has one of the largest casts we have presented for many years

With less than 5 weeks until opening night (at time of writing) there is definite air of excitement at rehearsals and I for one am hugely looking forward to taking my seat as the overture begins!

Pirates of Penzance

Our first production of 2014 is one of Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular operettas, the story of The Pirates of Penzance, which concerns Frederic who, having completed his 21st year, is released from his apprenticeship to a band of tender-hearted pirates. He meets Mabel, the daughter of Major-General Stanley and the two young people instantly fall in love. Frederic finds out, however, that he was born on 29th February, and so, technically, he only has a birthday every leap year and so must serve another 63 years! His only solace is that Mabel agrees to wait for him faithfully. Songs include, Poor Wandering One, I Am The Very Model Of A Modern Major-General and A Policeman's Lot.

Our farewell to Oliver/Hello Pirates will be on Thursday 28th November 2013, 7.45pm at St Peter's Hall, Limpsfield, followed by sing throughs of audition pieces and movement on the 3rd and 5th December with Principal auditions being on the 10th Dec and Chorus auditions on the 12th Dec. *Please note that you have to be a member of the Society to audition!*

Social Events

It still may seem a long way off, but it will be upon us before we know it so pencil in 8th Feb 2014 for another brain bashing Quiz Night.
Dena Watts

Review Of Parade

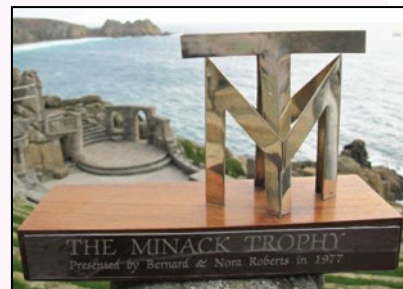
by Jenni Barlow - The Cornishman *****

"Outstanding drama that never falters out on Parade"

This is a magnificent musical, and a stunning and powerful production, but there isn't much Southern comfort in this true story surrounding the murder of a 13 year old factory girl in Atlanta, Georgia, and the conviction of her Jewish boss a century ago.

The title of the book refers to the Confederate Memorial Day Parade, during which young Mary Phagan is killed, after collecting her pay from Leo Frank, the factory superintendent, a fastidious and twitchy Jew, who hails from Brooklyn a long way to the north and is finding that "being in the South is like a foreign land".

It was written by Alfred Uhry, who researched thousands of pages of testimonies from the month-long trial. Chief among Frank's accusers is Jim Conley, one of the factory's black workers, and it is that racial mix that sparked huge interest from the Press, and politically weighted public protests from all sides.



The award-winning Jason Robert Brown wrote the music and lyrics with the accent on the soul, gospel and blues of the South and The Barnstormers musical director Patrick Isbell and his orchestra, plus a huge cast and ensemble give us an aptly barnstorming blast of sound.

The stage is set by a huge American oak tree, brilliantly designed by Jill 'Wigs' Wilson with Martin Beatty, giving shade during the colourful flag-waving parade and the Governor's tea dance, and playing its poignant part in the ultimately shocking end, in this production by Richard Allen and director Paul Longhurst, choreographed by Fran Newitt, with costumes by Monica Mickels.

There are many principals both amateur and professional, and they are all outstandingly good, most especially Elizabeth Skinner as Lucille Frank, a superb singer and actor, Dominic Binefa, as her husband, Marcus Ayton as Jim Conley with his chain gang, Colin Warnock as the Governor, Steve Green as Dorsey, Charlotte Antoinette Mills, and Folarin Akinmade and Katanya Pierre-Louis, singing A Rumblin' and A Rollin'.

Was Frank guilty? We'll never know, but there's no doubt that the drama and intensity never waned on this Parade.

Letter to the Editor

the latest edition of Barn Theatre News has just arrived in lovely Chester. It is good to read of the continuing activities and successes of the 'Societies' and of their healthy state. We realise that we now only know but a few of the personalities involved, eg. Bruce, Tony, Stella, Pippa, all 'old' troopers/trouper. The Newsletter gives an enjoyable flavour of what we know will only have been achieved by much hard work and dedication while also giving great pleasure to many and is much appreciated.

Chester has a good deal of theatre/music to offer – we are shortly going to see 'Cyrano' at the Open Air Summer Theatre which is adjacent to Chester's Roman Amphitheatre remains – an impressive site.

Please remember us to our friends at the Barn Theatre and keep up the good work.

Sally and Bert Guttmann.

More for DRIP

We were delighted to receive a cheque for £350 to in aid of the DRIP appeal from this year's organisers of the Oxted Pram race

A Lot of Hot Air

A man in a hot air balloon drifts off course. He reduces his altitude and spots a man below. He descends further and shouts. *“Can you help me? I promised someone I would meet them an hour ago, but now I am lost. Can you tell me where I am?”*

The man below replies. *“You are in a hot air balloon hovering 30 feet above the ground. You are between 50 and 51 degrees north latitude and three and four degrees west longitude.”*

“You must be a stage manager” comments the balloonist.

“Indeed I am” replies the man below *“but how did you know?”*

“Well” answers the balloonist, *“everything you told me was technically correct, but I have no idea what to make of the information you’ve given me and the fact is that I am still lost. Frankly you have not been of much assistance.”*

The man on the ground responds *“you must be a producer”*

“Indeed I am” replies the balloonist *“but how did you know that?”*

“Well” says the man on the ground *“you don’t know where you are going. You have risen to great heights due to a large quantity of hot air. You have made a promise to someone which you have no idea how to keep and you expect me to solve your problem for you. The fact is, you are in exactly the same position that you were in before we met but now, somehow it is my fault”*

TOPS



The cricket season ended on a real high at the Barn Theatre last month with the Richard Harris classic comedy *Outside Edge*. The production attracted large audiences (almost full houses on two nights) and many people have taken the trouble to express their appreciation of the production.

It has to be said that the early stages of casting met with some difficulties. We needed five men and four women and whilst there was a lot of interest from the ladies, we were struggling to fill the five male roles. It seemed that men were in short supply

many having been snapped up for other local productions. By early August we were still looking for two principal cast members. We struck lucky when Glyn Rogers who lived the other side of the County misread our location as Oxshott in an audition notice he had seen for the play and as Oxshott is only 10 minutes down the road from where he lives, he decided to apply. When he realised his mistake he decided nevertheless to come along for an audition and afterwards was shown around the Theatre. Glyn was so smitten by its charm and facilities that he decided to accept the part of Roger despite the downsides of the travel distance, involving the use of the M25 in peak periods. Glyn did not regret his decision and looks forward to being involved with other productions in the future.

Barn regular Peter Hogg was interested in the part of Kevin but work commitments meant he could not do the Saturday matinee, so we made the decision to withdraw that performance. We would like to convey our sincere apologies to those who had already booked tickets for that performance but the bottom line was that it was that or no show! With leaflets already printed we then had the task of

amending as best we could the 6000 leaflets and 80 posters. However the end result was a great play, excellently performed, which provided enjoyment to a lot of people over its four day run. Reviewer Theo Spring hailed the cast’s interpretation of the characters as “first class” and gave credit to Peter Reed, the director, for bringing out every single nuance of comedy and for moving his cast round the set with such skill. Theo gave particular praise to Helen Byatt who had the rather thankless minor role of Alex’s girlfriend Sharon but turned this into a major success and rather stole the show, hopping from one foot to the other whilst waiting desperately for the loo. Our grateful thanks to Peter, Ghislaine, Glyn, Amanda, Peter, Dena, Guy, Helen, Alex and Tony and the production team.

Something New in Store

While preparing for *Outside Edge*, we were also very busy overseeing the move from our costume store in Lingfield where we had been for some 6 years to new purpose built premises in Nutfield at Mercers Farm. We had amassed many more costumes since moving to Lingfield and our stock of furniture and props had also expanded tremendously so many trips had to be made to transfer everything and we are grateful to all those who lent a hand and transport. June Brown and Muriel Lister have done an excellent job in organising the new store with props and furniture downstairs and costumes upstairs and it is hoped in due course to perhaps open one morning a week so that people can visit and see what is available for hire. Other enquiries for costume hire can be directed to June on 01883 714460 or j.brown306@btinternet.com.

Panto

Pantomime rehearsals for *Ali Baba* directed by Chris Bassett are now in full swing with the 36 strong cast currently being put through their paces by Aimee Marie Bow, our Choreographer. They are no doubt losing a few pounds in the process with the energetic dance routines. By way of a change, this year, we have a young man as principal boy, *Ali Baba*, namely young Michael Hayes. Peter Calver returns as Dame, with support from Faith Anderson, Angela Rose, David Morgan, Jonathan Tull, Mark Mear, Clive MacTavish, Archan Mohile, Croia Reilly, Carly Thompson and a strong chorus. We are pleased also to welcome the return of Jamie Cordell as Musical Director. Tickets have been on sale since 1 October but there is still availability for the evenings and 5.30 pm late matinee performances so don’t delay, book your tickets now on 01883 724852 or www.oxtedplayers.co.uk or www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk.

Ben Atterbury

I hope this email finds you well I thought I would update you since I ‘moved on’ I have finally graduated Cardiff so now I’m a fully qualified literature graduate ready to take on the world. I’ve also been really fortunate to wind up with a couple of days work as an office and marketing assistant in a small theatre education company, Actors Workshop. At the moment I’m doing that alongside the bar work I’ve been doing for the past year or so but I’ve also just managed to get onto a scheme called the BBC production talent pool. The talent pool is a scheme aimed at getting young creatives a foot in the door at the BBC. They will provide me with opportunities to work as a paid runner on a number of productions as well as giving me an opportunity to network into other more creative roles. They take about 130 people onto the scheme from 4700 applicants so it’s a really golden opportunity and one I’ll be hoping to take advantage of over the next year or so in Cardiff before looking to move out into Bristol or London. So fortunately for me, unlike a few other graduates, I’ve managed to land on my feet a little bit and we’ll see what the next twelve months brings! Hope all is well at the Barn!

Best wishes,

Ben