

# *The Oxted Players*

We ended our play season in May on a high note with *Habeas Corpus*, Alan Bennett's hilarious comedy. Under the direction of Peter Shore and with excellent performances by the cast of eleven including Peter Damesick, Janette White and Wendy O'Mahony, the play was described by reviewer Derrick Graham as "a brilliant play, superbly performed by The Oxted Players, realistically cast . . .". We played to very full and appreciative audiences. We think it is fair to say that all the cast really enjoyed playing their respective characters and were grateful for the audience support. This play brought to end a season which was successful for us in both financial and entertainment terms.

Our AGM on 21 July saw the departure from our Committee of three long serving members, one of whom, Tony Goddard, has been on the Committee for 25 years as Treasurer, and he felt he deserved a rest! We also said a fond farewell to Pippa Bridges and David Fanthorpe. Their hard work and dedication over the years has been very much appreciated. In their place we welcome our new Treasurer, Alan Webber, and three new committee members, Angie Muscio, David Rose and Jon Tull.

Looking forward to our 2010/11 season, we have plenty to offer. From 13 to 16 October we present *The Happiest Days of Your Life* by John Dighton, a farce set at the end of the Second World War. The pupils and teachers of a South Coast girls' school (St Swithin's) are relocated to alternative accommodation as their own school has been a casualty of wartime bombing. Thanks to a bureaucratic mix-up, they wind up sharing the quarters of a boys' school (Hilary Hall) in Hampshire. The harried headmaster and headmistress, together with both sets of teachers, try to keep visiting parents from discovering the dilemma as the whole thing turns into a battle of the sexes. This play was first performed in 1948 at the Apollo Theatre in London and was followed by a film adaptation in 1950, which starred Alistair Sim, Margaret Rutherford as *Miss Whitchurch* and, in one of her best-remembered roles, Joyce Grenfell as *Miss Gossage* - one of the most unforgettable films ever. A hard act to follow but we are confident that Guy Hudson's chosen cast led by Peter Calver, Tony Goddard, Ann Lovell, Jo Silcox and Bob Wilson will ensure raucous laughter fills the theatre. We are also pleased to welcome two of our Young Players, India Castle-Gibb as *Barbara* and Jake Willis as *Hopcroft Minor* who join Laura Brand, Bill Penford, Catherine Webber, Duncan Browne, Dena Watts and Mike Rourke in their supporting roles. Tickets are available now on 01883 724852 from the Ticket Secretary and will also be available on line at [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk) from 1 September.

The highlight of the Barn Theatre's year is our annual pantomime which in January 2011 will be the family favourite *Cinderella* directed by Chris Bassett and Fran Newitt. Fran will also choreograph the production and we welcome back Ieuan Rees as Musical Director. The show runs from 7 to 15 January (excluding the Monday and Tuesday) with 10 performances. The read through will take place on Sunday 5 September 2010 at Hurst Green Community Centre at 2.00 pm and the auditions for paid up adult members of the Society will follow the following Sunday 12 September from 10.00 am onwards. Please note that our Junior Membership List is full and therefore only our current young members can audition. Any adult wishing to become a member of the Society in advance of the auditions should contact [membership@oxtedplayers.co.uk](mailto:membership@oxtedplayers.co.uk). If you want more information about the pantomime please contact [publicity@oxtedplayers.co.uk](mailto:publicity@oxtedplayers.co.uk).

Our Spring 2011 Production will be *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde directed by Chris Hephher (19 - 22 May 2011). Auditions will take place in November/December and any-

one wanting more information should contact Chris on [cih@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:cih@tinyworld.co.uk)

Finally, following the success of last year's event when £900 was raised for Breakthrough Breast Cancer Charity, we will be holding a Barn Dance at St. Peter's Hall, Limpsfield, on Saturday 13 November 2010 commencing 7.00 pm. Supper will be included in the ticket price. The proceeds will be donated to a charity which specifically gives support to children with heart problems. To find out more or to reserve places, please contact us on [publicity@oxtedplayers.co.uk](mailto:publicity@oxtedplayers.co.uk).

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## **FOBS**

Over the early summer months - summer did actually arrive - we have been delighted to support several shows involving young people; our regular visitors from 'Glow', a return visit from the Difford School of Dance and a first visit from Laura Bruce's Dance Academy. These groups introduce new audiences to the Theatre and all seem very impressed by our facilities and the warmth of the welcome extended by our Front of House volunteer staff - thank you all. Regular visitors also are most complimentary as these remarks received by Jean, our membership secretary, along with subscription renewals, indicate:-

*"Many thanks. We always enjoy your shows."*

*"The Barn is looking fantastic."*

*"We have always enjoyed the times when we have come to the Barn Theatre."*

*"I think the Barn Theatre makes a wonderful difference to many people's lives."*

During August we'll be supporting the Kenley Holiday Workshop group once more with their production of *Summer Holiday*. This show has a great 'feel good' factor and a dose of 'feel good' will surely lift our spirits, so make sure that you respond to Pippa's request for volunteers and/or secure your tickets in good time.

This Barn Theatre News issue is a good opportunity to say a special thank you to those Front of House volunteers and audience members who supported the Barnstormers on that sizzling hot Sunday when they treated us to a preview of their production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The show was destined to open at the (contrasting wet and cold) Minack Theatre - the following weekend. Thankfully, the weather in Cornwall improved once the Bank Holiday was over - surprise! surprise! - and the show was a superb success, playing to capacity audiences the whole week. Congratulations to Richard Allen and all his team! The large team of cast, crew and support staff 'bonded' really well and we hope that those who were new to the Barn will keep in touch. Our bar in the Theatre opens from 12 to 2pm each month on the first Sunday and a warm welcome awaits you.

ON SUNDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER there will be the additional attraction of a BARBEQUE so do come along and join our regular Sunday Clubbers at what has become a most enjoyable annual occasion.

Sheila Bennett

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## **Getting to Know You**

In the last issue of BTN we mentioned the open morning on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August for those interested in how the Barn works.

So far only 4 persons have registered their interest so what conclusion do we draw from that? The morning starts at 10am and if you are likely to be coming along please give your name Bruce Reed at the office by telephoning 01959 561811 now, before the event is cancelled due to a lack of people.