

# BARN THEATRE

## NEWS

BARN100



Volume 26 Issue 2 August 2021

## A NIGHT OF OXTED COMEDY FOLLOWED BY TRIUMPHANT GLOW THEATRE REOPEN THE BARN WITH A MINI MUSIC AND DRAMA FESTIVAL

### Back Together! Back on Stage! Back at The Barn!

Glow has been performing at The Barn for almost 15 years, and I don't think we have ever experienced such a nail biting lead up to a show! Would we or wouldn't we get on stage? Could we or couldn't we have a full cast? Would a 'ping' pop our bubbles?!



Esme Driscoll in CATS

When we, and everyone else, were plunged into Covid Lockdown One in March 2020, little did we expect to have our Glow group split apart for so long. We reconnected with our group whenever we could – exploring Zoom rehearsals, getting back together when circumstances allowed, closing down again when they didn't, learning dance moves outside in car parks, working in small 'bubbles' that didn't mix and sanitising, sanitising, sanitising! It is a testament to the resilience and commitment of our actors that they didn't give up, adapted to new methods of teaching and rehearsing, kept focus on their scripts for over a year, worked around unexpected closures, delays and isolations and kept their eye on the prize...that very long awaited return to the stage.

It was so exciting to get back to the Barn after almost 18 months – and yet at the same time it felt as if we had never been away. Thank you so much to everyone at the Barn who helped us with our return to the stage, including Phil and his Mighty Fogging Machine! That was a new one on us! The theatre felt like a completely safe place to be at all times, thanks to the care and planning put in place by Bruce

and the Barn teams.



In our Glow Theatre Group Festival of One Act Plays, six separate small group plays were performed – Blood Brothers, Katzenmusik, Brainstorm, Romeo and Juliet, Bright Young Things and The Nobodies. All adjudicated with aplomb by Peter Calver at the awards ceremonies! We opened and closed the run with two evenings of Musical Theatre (aptly named "Together!") with a programme filled with performances chosen by our actors

themselves – from Cats, Little Shop of Horrors, Les Mis, Dear Evan Hansen, Hamilton, We Will Rock You, Chicago, The Sound of Music and so many more. It was a fortnight full of smiles and excitement and some awesome performances – made all the more precious by the long road we all had to tread to get there and the pent up energy and talent of our casts. In the words of one of our Glow parents after the shows: it was a well and truly welcomed highlight at the end of what has been a long dark tunnel.

[www.glowtheatregroup.co.uk](http://www.glowtheatregroup.co.uk)

"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being."  
- Oscar Wilde



Extract from the Greatest Show on Earth

**The road ahead will be unpredictable and daunting for theatres, but now is the time to celebrate our new and returning audiences. Without them, theatre ceases to have a purpose, says Pitlochry artistic director Elizabeth Newman**



We are so very pleased to be returning to the theatre after an absence of more than 18 months.

Our Young Players will be the first to benefit during the last week of August with a daily drama workshop organised by David Rowan and ending with an exciting performance on the Saturday evening.

Our adult members will also be launching into rehearsals for our Autumn play, the classic Agatha Christie thriller, *And Then There Were None*.

Ten strangers are summoned to a remote island. All that the guests have in common is a wicked past they're unwilling to reveal and a secret that will seal their fate, for each has been marked for murder. As the weather turns and the group is cut off from the mainland, the bloodbath begins and one by one they are brutally murdered in accordance with the lines of a sinister nursery rhyme.

The production will reveal the two different endings, incorporating in alternate performances the original play ending from 1943 and the ending drawn from the novel in 1939 using Agatha Christie's own words.

Directed by Chris Bassett and supported by an experienced cast of John Barnett, Natasha Palmer, Tristan Philpott, Amy Prosser, Peter Calver, Alex Campbell, Bruce Christie, Anthony Goddard, Kay Sandford-Beal, Phil Fry and Jonathan Tull we promise audiences an evening of mystery and intrigue. Performances are 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 7.30 pm with a matinee on the Saturday. Tickets are £13 and available at [www.oxtedplayers.co.uk](http://www.oxtedplayers.co.uk) or email [tickets@oxtedplayers.co.uk](mailto:tickets@oxtedplayers.co.uk).

We will also shortly be auditioning for our January pantomime, *Beauty and the Beast*, which will run from 14<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2022.

When the vain *Prince George* refuses the amorous advances of a witch, she turns *him* into a horrible beast, and his royal servants into household objects. His only hope now, is if he finds true love before the last petal on a magical rose falls.

We are looking to cast 11 principals as well as dancers, chorus and two teams of junior chorus.

We are pleased to welcome Jo Morrison as our director and choreographer, and also welcome back Andy Rapps as musical director. The read through will take place on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 2.00 pm and auditions will follow on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> September from 11 am to 5 pm (venues will be confirmed on [www.oxtedplayers.co.uk](http://www.oxtedplayers.co.uk)).

At our recent AGM, Pat Brown stood down from her role as Secretary. Pat has been on the committee for some 24 years and been Secretary for 10 of those years. It is an extraordinary achievement and her dedication to supporting and running the society will be missed. On behalf of the society, we thank Pat for everything she has done. The society wouldn't be where we are today without her.



**Zoe Lyons is here at the Barn with full supporting cast and tickets are selling fast**

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 7.45pm**

Zoe Lyons took her first steps down the comedy path in 2003 after training as an actress at the Poor School in London. She went on to win the Funny Women Competition in 2004 and her debut Edinburgh show was nominated for the if.comedy newcomer award. In 2008 she won the Dave, Funniest Joke of The Fringe Award. Zoe has appeared in many TV shows including Mock the Week, The Wright Stuff, Michael McIntyre Roadshow, Live at the Apollo, and many more. Her radio credits include Just A Minute, The News Quiz Show and she is a regular guest on the Sandi Toksvig Show. The BBC tapped Zoe, to host "Lightning", a fast-paced quiz show broadcast recently on BBC Two.

Award-winning comic and one-time "Survivor" contestant Lyons said "It's incredibly exciting to be the host of Lightning "It's a dream job for me as I'm a massive quiz fan and – unlike the contestants – I love being in the spotlight".

Fundraising has now commenced in earnest for our Barn 100 project and we are waiting to hear from the builders when they can start works on Phase One, hopefully later this year. 28,000 appeal brochures have been circulated around this and surrounding areas during the last two weeks and the results are already optimistic.

If you have not received a brochure and would like to donate please go to [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk) and press the donate button which takes you directly to Paypal



# Oxted Musical Theatre Company

(formerly Oxted Operatic Society)  
proudly presents

## Jack the Ripper – a musical comedy

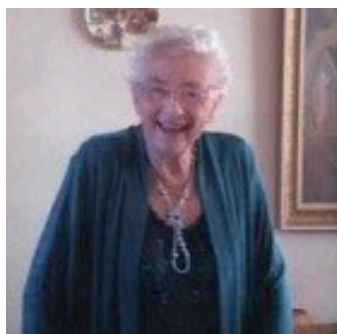
### A ripping romp for all the family

If you like a good knees-up and a comic celebration of the sleazy side of Victoriana, *Jack the Ripper* is sure to entertain.

Nominated for Best Musical in the 1974 Evening Standard Theatre Awards, *Jack the Ripper* was originally written for London's Players' Theatre and is a musical reconstruction of the incidents relating to the historic East End murders of 1888 as told through the company of a Whitechapel Music Hall. The chirpy, Cockney knees-up music sung by bawdy men and women of the night might seem an odd way to tell such a sinister tale, but it keys into the British way of seeing humour in everything and using mockery as a weapon. Nevertheless, there are moments where the revelry and melancholic dreams of the prostitutes achieve poignancy evocative of *Les Misérables*.

The Daily Express called it “a lively musical, exhilarating, melodious, delightfully comic”. Whilst the Daily Mirror referred to it as a “very amusing bawdy knees up. Verve and wit and above all a good musical score”. The Evening News said “I so like this show. It has so much authentic London flavour”. But I think The Sun said it best. “Super *Jack* is a roaring hit. This fast, fun musical is the best to hit town in many a season. RIP, RIP, hooray for *Jack the Ripper!*”

*Jack the Ripper* runs from 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> November with performances nightly at 7.45pm. Tickets are only £17 (group discounts available).



We were saddened to learn that Jill Perry had passed away peacefully at home on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Jill and her parents moved to Oxted during the war and she went to Oxted School next door to the theatre. Jill loved performing and as soon as she could, she got involved with the theatre, first performing in *Yeoman of the Guard* in 1947 and meeting her first husband there. She joined Oxted Operatic

Society and the Student (now Oxted) Players, appearing many times for them. Jill also performed for local WI's in Betchworth Festival plays. In later years she was delighted to be asked to be Vice-Patron of the Southern Counties Drama Festival where she shared the stage with Nicholas Owen the newsreader. When she no longer felt able to perform, Jill supported the theatre as much as she could, usually sitting in seat F14. Our condolences go to her daughter Lynne, son-in law Martin and their family.



## DAVID PHIPPS DAVIS

David has volunteered and been elected by the committee to become Chairperson of OMTC to the end of the year.

He joined the company to play the Major-General in 'The Pirates of Penzance,' back in November 2019. He then joined the committee as a general member in January and has stepped up to be the chairperson. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience of dramatic committees and the industry in general. His previous roles in Oxted are Pirelli in 'Sweeney Todd' and the Narrator in 'Into the Woods,' both for the Barnstormers. David is a professional actor, singer, writer and director whose credits include 'The Phantom of the Opera' and innumerable pantos, primarily as dame. He and the committee look forward to working towards increasing the size and diversity of the company, the size of the audience, and the size of the company bank balance.



In the ten weeks before Easter the Barn car park became a hive of activity every Saturday morning as scores of supporters delivered cakes and pastries for delivery to hospitals, vaccination clinics, paramedic and ambulance bases etc. An initiative of Barbara O'Neil, supported by Phil Littleford, and Caro Rowley and a fleet of delivery drivers over 15,000 items were donated and delivered during those 10 weeks before Easter. Barbara has continued baking with a few friends since then so we don't know what the total was but thanks to Barbara and all her team for such a magnificent effort.



## Peter Ramage, Master Set Designer, musician and amazing artist dies aged 73.

Shown here painting the mural at the end of the bar, Peter has during his time at the Barn, painted in excess of 100 scenic backcloths, many of which are still in regular use. He was an accomplished set designer and builder, talented musician, raconteur and impersonator. An accountant in the family firm by profession he declared his hatred of HMRC and dislike of most politicians frequently and loudly. Peter died of Leukemia and his funeral was held on 28<sup>th</sup> July at St Milburgers Church, Church Stretton, the village he had chosen to retire to some years ago with his wife Delana. The funeral service was live streamed around the world so his many long distance friends could attend virtually.

## What did you do during the lockdown?

Here at the Barn we were like a jack-in-the-box, one minute open then closed, then open again. However courtesy of the Christmas show, *A Not So Silent Night* we accomplished some notable donations to other charities; £750 to *The Theatres Trust*, which supports out of work theatre professionals and £4,000 to the *Open Hands Food Bank* that operates out of Reigate Baptist Church. Organised by Angie Muscio and her usual team, the remaining £2,600 proceeds from the show were donated to the *Barn 100* project

If you are looking for space on the Barn stage in 2022, 2023 or 2024 do please book as early as possible. The remainder of this year is full and we only have six Saturdays left in 2022. Weekends are always the most popular times and there is very little space remaining. Telephone now, 01959 561811

# Lullaby of BROADWAY

A Celebration Of The Great American Songbook

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 7.45pm

The New Foxtrot Serenaders are proud to present the Great American Songbook featuring the music of George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Hoagy Carmichael, Rogers and Hammerstein and many more. Tickets £17.50 from [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk) or from the Box Office 01959 561811.

In November, The New Aquarian Opera Company will present its first production : A Night at the Opera, including Gilbert and Sullivan's

## Improbable New Musical: Less Miserable!



Imagine Gilbert in heaven, bragging that as fathers of the modern musical, all new musicals are basically just variations on their own plots. Sullivan challenges him to tell the story of the world's longest running musical using only their own songs. Gilbert agrees, but only if

no one dies and he can make some changes to ensure an implausibly happy ending! Expect all the usual Gilbertian elements: an abandoned baby, ridiculous disguises, love at first sight and silly dances, all set to original music and lyrics from the Savoy Operas.

This hour-long G&S musical was written by Susan Ellerby and this will be the first production since its award-winning debut at the 2019 Edinburgh Fringe.

*Less Miserable* will be performed alongside a first half concert of Opera and Operetta Showstoppers at the Barn Theatre from 24th - 26th November 2021 @ 7.45. Tickets will be priced at £12 and £17.

If you are interested in performing with us, as either a principal or as a member of the ensemble or would like further information, please email [melanie@aquarianopera.com](mailto:melanie@aquarianopera.com)

### To all our readers

If you no longer wish to receive this Barn Theatre News and the show information pack in paper then please do let us know at [publicity@barntheatreoxted.co.uk](mailto:publicity@barntheatreoxted.co.uk).

Electronic copies are available on our web site at [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk/btn.html](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk/btn.html)

The Editor of the Barn Theatre News is Bruce Reed and contributions are always gratefully received.

Copy should be sent to [barntheatre@btinternet.com](mailto:barntheatre@btinternet.com)

Press deadline for the next issue is Friday 15th October



It is so good to be back again after our enforced absence and to be able to update you on what FOBs has planned for the coming months.

I would like to start by offering my sincere thanks to those of you who kindly volunteered to undertake front of house duties when we were allowed to open between the various periods of lockdown. Social distancing in the theatre brought with it many new challenges, and we were proud to be able to support the Barn by providing volunteers for the productions in December and, more recently, in June and July. No fewer than 104 duties were filled for Glow Theatre's recent run of performances alone, which is no mean feat considering that restrictions were still in place at the time and we were unable to call upon the services of many of our regular helpers.

A few months ago I wrote to everyone on our Front of House Volunteers list so I could check that our records were accurate and ensure that the list was fully up-to-date. If you did not receive a letter from me but wish to help with any of the various roles we need to fill for each public performance please email me ([fobs.chairman@barntheatreoxted.co.uk](mailto:fobs.chairman@barntheatreoxted.co.uk)) or call me on 07970 847515.



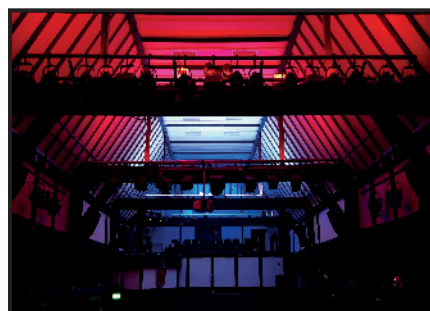
Those of you who enjoy any of the Westerham Brewery ales we sell at the bar may be interested to know that the brewery has recently made the decision to move away from selling their beers in bottles to cans. The environmental advantages of this are that, compared to glass, when a tonne of aluminium packaging is recycled it saves 333 times more electricity, 344 times more oil and 5 times as much landfill. As cans weigh almost nothing compared to glass the carbon impact of the transport costs is very significant too. The range of 440ml cans available at the bar includes Spirit of Kent, British Bulldog and Grasshopper.

Sunday Club has continued to be a popular event, and we have been fortunate enough with the weather in recent months to be able to hold these outside whilst the social distancing restrictions have been in place. The bar is open from 12.00 till 2.00pm on the first Sunday of every month, and it provides the perfect opportunity for anyone associated with the Barn to come along and enjoy a drink or two in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and catch up on what is going on at the theatre.

An important future date for your diary is the Sunday Club on 7<sup>th</sup> November when we would like as many people as possible to come and help us to help celebrate FOBs 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

We look forward to seeing you again at the theatre very soon.

Paul Robinson – Chairman



### New flexible colour auditorium lighting

during lockdown, and with funding courtesy of an anonymous donation the Barn has invested in new auditorium lighting. Lighting designers and directors can now choose what colour they want the ceiling for their production at the flick of a switch.