

BARN THEATRE

NEWS

Volume 18 issue 1 February 2014
Dedicated to the memory of
Martin Patrick



Martin Patrick 1946 - 2013

"And though we cannot see you, you are always at our side"

The words above are from a very emotive poem that I was honoured to be asked to read as Martin was interred at St Mary the Virgin, in Caterham on Thursday 9 January. Martin had died on December 14 following a fall at home and a short stay in hospital. The funeral at St Mary's was a "full house" by any standards and the attendance of 300 mourners and the lively service were a fitting tribute to the wonderful man many of us have had the privilege to know.

The Barn was packed afterwards too and there were many reunions and a general atmosphere of shared happy memories, encompassing the busy life that Martin enjoyed. He joined me as a trustee of the Barn in 1998 and through those years we became good friends, both using each other as bouncing boards for ideas and schemes for the benefit of shows or projects at the Barn. He worked tirelessly for the Barn in so many different ways and we miss him very much.

Martin's family moved from Bath when he was 11 years old and he settled with his parents in the Croydon area, attending Stanley Technical School where he perhaps first fell in love with the stage, taking part in school productions next door at the Stanley Halls.

At that time he also became a keen scout and it is possible that we enjoyed the same local activities as we were the same age and I belonged to another scout troop based less than a mile away from his. As a scout he is remembered for his jokes and quick humour and magical comic timing, a part of his character that stayed with him to the end. His dedication to the scouting movement earned him the Queen's Scout award and he was a keen Duke of Edinburgh Award winner too.

As a teenager he joined St Mark's Players and over the next 50 years he was to be seen at many theatres throughout the south east, with Croydon Stagers, CODA, Sanderstead Dramatic Club, Caterham Players at the Stafford Hall, and later at the Miller Centre, Chequer Mead and, of course, the Barn.



From an early age Martin developed a passion for pantomime, becoming an acknowledged authority on the traditional history of this very specialised form of entertainment. Wherever he appeared in panto he was known as Dame Martin and his repartee with the audiences and his perfect impersonation of Danny La Rue ensured that he always played to full houses.

However, his talent was greater than just panto, he was a consummate thespian and highly talented actor and director and would direct or take a part in all types of productions as well as panto. Musicals, cabaret, music halls, period drama, heavy drama, Shakespeare, comedy, farce. You name it and Martin could tackle it with verve, gusto and complete confidence.

At the age of 18 Martin was in at the start of computer technology and was to become a top engineer at ICT before most of his contemporaries even knew what a computer was. This experience stood him in good stead when he retired and his knowledge of computers came in very useful as his various hobbies became reliant on people with computer skills.

Memories of Martin from his Friends



Martin was Editor of the Barn Theatre News from the first issue in 1997, developed and compiled the quarterly "What's On" that accompanies every issue of the BTN, and was responsible for countless advertising flyers and programmes for the shows, both here at the Barn and elsewhere too.

He loved kids on stage and joined Kenley Holiday Workshop in 1996. In his time he directed 13 of their shows, all to critical acclaim. Even when not directing he was always around to offer guidance and ideas.

Martin became Chairman of the Southern Counties Drama Festival in 2007 and brought the festival back to the Barn on a permanent basis from which it has continued to flourish and thrive.



Martin saw festival as a shop window for drama and quickly became involved at Area and National level where he sat on the committee as National Secretary until he retired last year. At the time of his death he was actively involved in planning the semi-finals for 2015 at the Barn, and the British Finals 2015 also.

He joined the Barn board of Trustees and Directors in 1998 and attended meetings giving his wise counsel and advice. It was Martin who suggested that the auditorium should be painted bright red, and my goodness that did receive some comment from the others at the time! It was he who suggested we should draw breath on the new scheme for toilets at the rear and perhaps take a wider view of what we will need for the future, hence the much larger DRIP proposals of today.



"Panto was his passion and he was never happier than hearing children laughing and he took the art of pantomime very seriously"

"He would, at any moment, pounce on an audience reaction and sail off in his own direction, engaging people in the stalls and giving a short display of his mastery of the crowd. He loved it and they loved him for it"

"All staged but brilliantly done - he was quite famous in those days for his stage falls and acrobatics"

"He played Dame and directed the panto from 2000 to 2009 and taught us so much about putting on panto"

"He had such a wonderful sense of humour and brilliant comic timing"

"A lovely elegant and talented gentleman with a great sense of humour"

"Martin has been such a central figure in the festival movement as a whole and I will personally miss his presence and of course his cream tuxedo"

"And what a welcoming, supportive and loyal face it was, nothing too much trouble, no issue too big or small to receive his full attention and always ready to offer unselfish advice at precisely the right level wherever and whenever needed"

"A man who was inspirational in so many lives"

"He had so many talents, he will be a great loss to us all"

Martin leaves a partner Julia and two sons, Andy and Matt to whom we send our love and condolences.

Bruce Reed

Andrew Sees the Light

The photo shows Andrew Bruce at the Aldwych Theatre where he was engaged as the Lighting and Video Operator for Andrew Lloyd Webber's new musical show Stephen Ward.



Andrew is busy studying for his degree in Creative Lighting Control and was able to assist the Lighting Director and Programmer for this show and help with the preparations, installation and technical set up for rehearsals and preparations for the public previews. This then led to him being engaged as principal operator for the lighting and video systems for the Previews and opening Press night plus shows for a few weeks during his university break.

Andrew says it was a marvellous experience and a great opportunity for learning. Andrew has always had an interest in things technical and lighting and since the age of eight has worked on over thirty Barn productions. Mentored and given great opportunities at the Barn Theatre by the late Frank Boonham and also Caro Rowley and Richard Grogan in all things lighting and technical and from Bruce, Malcolm and many others in stage craft – all of which has enabled him to expand and develop very sound foundations on which to base his career aspirations.

Andrew follows in his Dad - Alastair's footsteps –never happier than with a switch to throw or an iris to adjust! "



Andrew aged 10 operating the lighting at the Barn

The Oxted Adventure, Christmas with the Community

The Barn Theatre was pleased to be part of the Oxted Adventure during December, when we pretended to be a 'garage', just like all the others taking part in this fun, community wide event.

Our own 'garage' was held at the Barn on the evening of 21 December where "O Little Town of Bethlehem" was the theme of a beautiful, internally lit display, by Annette Spanton.

Lizzie Skinner and Richard Allen coordinated an impromptu and enthralling performance of carol singing by the Barn Singers, both young and old.

Wiggy together with her friends from the Another Way Theatre Company brought to the foyer a most engaging production featuring the Wabbit family auditioning for their own Christmas nativity play, which entertained all ages, with four performances over the evening.

Caro, prepared and served seasonal refreshments and we were delighted to welcome such a huge number of people through, on what was yet, another very wet evening.

A number of Barn supporters were involved in several of the garages which formed part of this exciting trail through the town of Oxted. Patrick Tricker's art work made for wonderful viewing at the Brown family residence and the Mactavish family performed a "Mummers" play on another evening. Phil Littleford and Richard Grogan were greatly involved in the penultimate garage at St.Mary's Church on Christmas Eve and provided excellent special effects using smoke machines and lighting from the Barn.



Southern Counties Drama Festival

The annual first round of the All-England Theatre Festival returns to the Barn from February 24 to March with 16 plays over 6 nights.

Following the sad loss of Chairman Martin Patrick, we are delighted to welcome Peter Calver as our new Chairman and host for the week together with new patrons Nicholas Owen and Jill Perry, both previous winners of Best Actor/Actress Awards at the festival.

We welcome two new groups this year, Burnt Ash Drama Association and Mole Valley Script Writers Group and a new adjudicator too, Mrs Mary Shackel. Mary has examined for a number of examination boards, including Central School of Speech and Drama and is currently with Guildhall/Trinity. The Oxted Players present their entry, 'The Whores Tale' on the Wednesday evening and would welcome your support. Tickets online at www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk or from 01959 561811.

Re-registering as a Chaperone with Surrey County Council

In 2010, the Barn hosted chaperone training and renewal is looming for most of those chaperones in **March 2014**. Chaperones should already have received notice that their license is up for renewal.

The Barn Theatre is again hosting training for new chaperones on **February 4 and 11**.

SCC have kindly agreed that if chaperones wish to re-register that they can bring their documents along to the session on **February 11** and do so at that time. However you must make direct contact with SCC to arrange this and to receive the appropriate forms in advance. Please telephone **01483 517838** or email childemployment@surreycc.gov.uk to register your interest. This will save you a trip to Redhill or Woking!

We would urge you to apply now for re-registration, because if your registration lapses by more than a year, you will then be required to pay a fee of £30 and attend training again.

Dressing Room Improvement Project

2013 was a good year for Barn fundraising with almost £37,000 allocated towards DRIP, but there is still a long way to go before we can contemplate that planned start of the works in summer 2015.

December Sunday Club was a tremendous event with five presentation cheques given to us and another by us to the charity, Help for Heroes.

A total of £18,603 was presented to Bruce who was somewhat overwhelmed by the generosity of the donors. Angie Muscio, mastermind behind the Elvis and Starmakerz show and also Let Us Entertain You presented £8,078. Barnstormers presented £7,000, which when added to proceeds from Parade in Oxted, brought their total to £11,270. Graham Wright £2,345 and a similar amount for H4H from the Musical Memories concert. Kenley Holiday Workshop £350, Oxted Operatic Society £500 and Oxted Pram Race £350.

A tremendous response to our appeal for funds and our grateful thanks to all of them.



The amazing cheque presentation at December Sunday Club



Graham Wright presenting Bruce with a cheque for Help for Heroes for £2,325 from the concert, Musical Memories, that was held in memory of Terry Rolph and John Sturgeon

Oxted Operatic Society

Oliver

Those of you who came to see our last production of 2013 couldn't fail to notice the non-human member of the cast, namely Harvey Herpe in the role of Bullseye.

Whilst walking my two black Labradors sometime in early 2013 I saw Harvey walking towards me and he had "Bullseye" written all over him with a perfectly patched eye (no need for mascara here!). Harvey's owner, Dave, was somewhat surprised to be accosted by a strange woman and asked if his dog had any acting experience. The first reaction was an understandable "No and I don't think he will" but we exchanged mobile numbers and left it at that.

I was delighted to receive a text from Dave a couple of weeks later advising that, after discussing it with his family, they had all agreed to give Harvey a try out. Harvey came along to a few early junior rehearsals to see how he coped with the noise (and, believe me, it was noisy!). All went well and Harvey was offered the role.

What I didn't realise was that Harvey was a rescue dog from Foal Farm Animal Rescue Centre in Biggin Hill and the Herpe family asked if we would be willing to have a retiring collection in aid of this worthy cause. They also wanted to raise awareness that Staffies make great family pets when treated and trained correctly.



In the event, with the Barn Theatre's blessing, the collection raised £350 for Foal Farm and I received a letter from them to the Operatic Society expressing their sincere thanks for the donation. So, on their behalf and from the OOS, may I thank everyone who contributed to the collection, Bruce Reed for authorising it and the Herpe family for allowing Harvey to take part in the show and bringing their two daughters along every night to hold the little red buckets!

Pirates of Penzance

Rehearsals for Pirates began in early January and I am reliably informed that the vocals sounded great from the very first sing through! With a very strong cast, namely Jo Silcox as Ruth, Laura Brand as Mabel and Fiona Steel, Jane Gautrey and Megan Whitely as Kate, Edith and Isabel respectively, Peter Calver as Frederic, Bob Wilson the Pirate King, Peter Reed the Major General, Martin Barlow as Samuel and Mike Tomlin as Sgt of Police supported by a strong chorus.

We still need a "few good men" to be pirates/policemen. If you think you could fit the bill, please contact Teresa Reed at teresareed@btopenworld.com or telephone 01883 625731.

Show week is **8 to 12 April 2014** and, as Oliver was a virtual sell-out, it would be wise to book your tickets early! Tickets are available online at www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk or by calling **0753028094**.

The initial get together for **OJOS Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat will be on Tuesday 18 February, at Oxted Community Hall from 7.15pm to 9.00pm with auditions on Sunday 23 February at Hurst Green Community Centre.** For more information, please email Steph Hornett Johnson at stephaniehornett@hotmail.com

Social Events – NB Change of date!

Please note that, due to clashes with other Barn events, we have changed the date of our Quiz Night so please pencil in **Saturday 8 March** in your diaries.

Dena Watts

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 March Sunday Club I shall do the same again and hope we get even more people joining us. Please put **2 March** 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.

Little Barn

After almost 40 years the Little Barn Nursery has closed due to financial problems leading to an inability to pay rent from last September. The Trustees are anxious to replace that lost stream of income as quickly as possible and are currently in discussions with other interested parties.

FOBS

The year has started on a sad note as we have said 'Goodbye' to Martin Patrick, a Barn Theatre stalwart and great supporter of the FOBS. Martin could always be relied upon to help us with our flyers and programmes and to take us patiently – yet again – through the intricacies of his ticketing system. The splendid programme which he put together for the Memorial Concert for Terry and John last September will have pride of place in the **FOB's** archive.

Pippa is already hard at work on teams of Front of House volunteers to cover a busy schedule for the first half of 2014. Please respond positively to her requests wherever possible. The week of the Southern Counties Drama Festival at the end of February is particularly demanding for **FOBS** as we need to provide all the staff for 6 nights.

Your committee has been made aware that there are people out there who are not sure who the **FOBS** are or what their function is in the Theatre. In order to try to address this problem we are inviting all who would like to know more and / or become more actively involved to come along to an Open Evening on **Tuesday 29 April** when we will have members available to tell you about the various aspects of our work for the Theatre. We also propose to hold a training session dedicated to bar work one evening soon after that as this is perhaps the aspect with which most volunteers are least familiar. There is a limited time in which to serve drinks during the interval so that it can become quite stressful unless staff know the routine and work well as a team.

Another 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 "Pirates" – on

Monday 24 March

Official notices will be sent out to members at the end of February but do put the date in your diaries now please. This is another opportunity to learn more about the FOBS (Friends of the Barn Theatre) and everyone is most welcome to come along to the AGM although, of course, only members will be eligible to vote.

Sheila Bennett

Bottle by the Bar

I am sure many of you will have noticed that the large whisky bottle at the end of the bar is filling up VERY slowly. It was about five years ago that the bottle was last emptied but as we now have a real need for the money it would be great if we could fill it up more quickly this time. So, if you collect small change and don't know what to do with it please bring it down – we are a charity, or if you are standing by the bar and have change in your pocket or are given it after you have paid for your drinks do please put it in the bottle. All the money will go towards DRIP, the improvement scheme for backstage.

Every little helps!

Sobering thought from Paul Longhurst

"I know it's the easy route but I've decided to learn from the mistakes of others who take my advice."

TOPS

Our January pantomime, *Ali Baba*, has now been put to bed after three months of preparation and ten performances. Directed by Chris Bassett with lively choreography by Aimee Marie Bow and music from Jamie Cordell the show was a sell out and delighted our audiences. During the run of the show, Michael Hayes who played *Ali Baba*, his first principal role, celebrated his sixteenth birthday and was brought on stage during the community number so that the whole audience could wish him Happy Birthday.

Our thanks go to all the performers, the production team, technicians, backstage crew and chaperones without whom the show would not have been possible. We are also grateful for the support of the Front of House teams who manned every performance. Everyone is now looking forward to our 2015 pantomime, *Puss in Boots*.



Fatima, the Princess and Ali Baba

On 15th February, the Society is hosting "Top Hats and Tiaras" at the Royal British Legion in Limpsfield. This is an evening of 1920s nostalgia with ragtime and jazz music from a live band and a curry meal, all for the price of **£15.00**. We anticipate many will dress *Downton Abbey* style and this should be a fun evening. There are still a few tickets available so even if you are not a member please contact **Jon Tull** on jtull@hotmail.com to book your place.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the start of the Second World War and our Young Players commemorate this event with their production of '*Carrie's War*' adapted from the novel by Nina Bawden directed by June Brown on 14 and 15 March 2015 at 7.30 pm with a matinee on the Saturday. Young *Carrie Willows*' life changes dramatically when she and her brother *Nick* are evacuated from their home to escape the bombing in London. The pair are whisked off to the small town of Druid's Bottom in North Wales where they live with manipulative shop owning *Mr Evans* and his kind hearted sister *Aunty Lou*. The children make friends with *Albert Sandwich*, a fellow evacuee, and *Mr. Johnny* who speaks his own language, and also encounter *Hepzibah Green*, a character who brings a touch of magic through her enchanting tales of ancient legends and curses. An exciting tale with humorous moments.

This play is recommended for junior school age children and above. We have a very talented and enthusiastic cast

bringing you this entertaining production. Tickets are £8.00 and available now on 01883 724852 or online at www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk.

Our May production is *Gaslight* by Patrick Hamilton (14 to 17 May 2014). Directed by Peter Shore, this classic thriller is set in a sinister and gloomy Victorian London. *Jack Manningham* (Peter Damesick) is slowly, deliberately driving his wife, *Bella*, (Laura Brand) insane. He has almost succeeded when there is an unexpected arrival on the scene by *Rough* (Chris Butler), an obsessive and eccentric former detective, who believes *Manningham* guilty of a brutal murder many years previously. Tickets are now available on 01883 724852 or online.

Looking forward to October, we are commemorating the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War with *My Boy Jack* by David Haig (directed by Elizabeth Callow).

Finally, following the success of Panto this year The Oxted Players are delighted to be able to donate £5000 to the Barn Theatre DRIP fund. We wish the Barn every success in their fund raising efforts and will continue to support them in any way.

Pat Brown

Barn 90th Anniversary

The Barn celebrates the 90th anniversary of opening this year. The celebrations start with a grand launch concert by popular band Randy and the Rockets on Saturday 31 May. On the following day, 1 June, there will be a celebratory luncheon with a few surprises and our very own Stella Thomas MBE as guest speaker. Stella is a brilliant raconteur and will make this special occasion very enjoyable. Do book your lunch tickets early as there is only limited availability.

See back page for more details of the 2 week festival

An invitation from the FOBs

The Friends of the Barn invite you to join them for a relaxed social evening where you can enjoy a drink and some nibbles with all your Barn friends and find out a little bit more about what FOBs have planned for the future!

The FOBs have been supporting our wonderful theatre for many years and are keen to tell you how you can join them and do your bit for the Barn. Your theatre needs you! So we look forward to seeing many of you at the Barn, on **Tuesday 29th April from 19:30**.

Lizzie Skinner

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 on barntheatre@btinternet.com. If you are not sure what is involved and whether you would enjoy it, please do get in touch and we can arrange for you to come to the theatre and find out all about it.



We have recently acquired this fine drawing of the Barn by Eli Ofir and hope to find a space for it in the bar area soon. The image is available on various gift items that would make ideal presents for friends and family. Please enquire of Bruce at the office for more details and prices on barntheatre@btinternet.com or 01959561811

All profits will go towards the DRIP fund.

Performing Rights Society

PRS and PPL are the licensing authorities for any music played at the Barn Theatre and a substantial fee has to be paid to them each year. Since the start of licensing we have enjoyed the status of a “Community Building” and paid a flat fee each year based on a percentage of our income.

However, last September there were changes in the licensing requirements and due to our success as a theatre, they upgraded us to something other than a community building. With that came the necessity of keeping a record of each and every piece of music played at the Barn based on around 7 different tariffs. An administrative nightmare for the volunteers that undertake all tasks of management here at the theatre. I am delighted to report however that following the involvement and help of an organisation called “Community Matters”, discovered by Caro trawling the internet, and some hard talking by our Company Secretary, Chris Hopher, we have now been reinstated as a Community Building.

Damp Floor in Dressing Room Replaced

There has been much frustration over the past few rainy months with damp penetrating into the rear dressing room, which is partially underground. Something has obviously changed or failed under the structure causing this dampness to permeate and create a very uncomfortable dressing room during our busiest time of the year. The floor has now been completely removed and replaced and we hope that these works will prevent a repeat of the problem in the future. The builders worked against the clock to get works completed between shows and achieved it with just 2 hours to spare.

Editors Bruce Reed & Caro Rowley
Email barntheatre@btinternet.com



The Minack Theatre have now unveiled the poster below which is resplendent in the museum opposite the door to the box office at this beautiful Cornish theatre. Richard is particularly pleased with this presentation as it highlights some of the important elements from within the show. The final total donated to DRIP from the productions in Oxted and Cornwall amounted to £11,270, a stunning total.

THE MINACK THEATRE TROPHY

The Barnstormers are a project company based at The Barn Theatre, Oxted in Surrey.

They have two principal aims - to put on the best show possible with the most talented cast and production team they can find; and to raise as much money as possible for the Barn Theatre's charity fund.

The Barnstormers

Barn 90th, a festival of entertainment

May 31st to June 14th

All enquiries and tickets 01959 561811.

Saturday 31st May at 7.45pm

Festival launch by that "seriously good local band"
Randy and the Rockets
tickets £12.50

Sunday 8th June at 11am - 3.30pm

Barn Theatre Open Day
meet the resident societies and Friends of the Barn. Guided
tours of the theatre and your chance to get involved in any
way you like.

Sunday 1st June at 12.30pm

A very special 90th celebration luncheon at the
Barn with guest speaker Stella Thomas MBE.
tickets £25, limited availability

Sunday 8th June at 7.00pm

FOBs Quiz night
pit your wits against the area's champion quiz teams
tickets £10

Sunday 1st June at 4.30pm and 7.00pm

The return of the Wonderful Wabbit Family
Those engaging Rabbits fresh from their success in
other burrows. Suitable for all ages if you are young
at heart
tickets £8

Thursday 12th June at 7.45pm

An evening of music, song and and dance with
Oxted Operatic Society
tickets £12

Thursday 5th June at 7.45pm

An evening of drama
2 one act plays
tickets £9

Friday 13th June at 7.45pm

Nicholas Nickleby
Celebrating Charles Dickens 200th Anniversary
performed by Charles Dickens great great grandson
Gerald Dickens
tickets £14

Friday 6th June at 7.45pm

Cheek to Cheek
A celebration of the legendary song and dance man
Fred Astaire with a little help from Ginger Rodgers
New Foxtrot Serenaders
tickets £14

Saturday 7th June at 7.30pm

Let Us Entertain You Two
A compilation of music, song, dance and drama by
talented local performers
tickets £12

Saturday 14th June at 7.30pm

Barn Schoolfest
An evening of entertainment, to close the festival, by pupils
from local schools
tickets £12