

# BARN THEATRE

## NEWS

Volume 15 issue 2 May 2011



### *Children in Entertainment*

It is a legal requirement that whenever children of compulsory school age are engaged in public performances or entertainment, they must be supervised at all times by an approved chaperone/matron. Recently the Barn hosted two training evenings for supporters who wished to become chaperones and it was wonderful to see 48 people complete their training.

The training was led by Ian Hart, County Child Employment Enforcement and Strategy Manager for Surrey County Council. Ian is an inspiring individual whose passion and desire is for children to have the best possible experience whilst performing. A point Ian stressed is that it is the chaperone who looks after the children and not a "bureaucratic process." Those who attended said that they found the training both informative and interesting and that it removed some of the fears they had previously held about the legislation.

The Barn Theatre website sets out the requirements for hirers who include children taking part in productions. The obtaining of licences does not need to be an onerous task and, in fact, the process, together with good organisational systems, will ensure that your production runs safely and smoothly for everyone. There is also a range of helpful documents available, developed by some of the experienced chaperones who have worked at the Barn. These are available from Debbie Pitt and Angie Muscio.

We would like to express our thanks to Angie who organised the event and also to Bruce Reed, The Trustees and Friends of the Barn for all their support and help in making the two evenings happen, and to Oxted Operatic Society for allowing use of the bar area for the meeting whilst they were rehearsing for *Gigi*.

### *Following in Grandpa's Footsteps*

It is over 50 years since Terry Rolph began building scenery and taking an active part in the life of the theatre and all the family have followed through contributing to the activities here at the Barn.

Recently The Oxted Players presented the theatre with a very generous gift of 20 canvas covered flats (the mainstay of all theatre sets) all very professionally made by Terry's grandson David Sutton. David is a student at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and took advantage of the skills learnt there to construct the flats during the Easter holidays. According to Jeremy Irons "the BOVTS is one of the most outstanding international theatre schools in the world". Well done David and thanks to you and your helpers; your whole family should be justifiably proud of your achievements. Thanks too to dad, Mike Sutton, who arranged the lorry and transported the new flats from Bristol to the Barn. Is it any coincidence that Mike will be the first set builder to use these new flats in his set for *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the TOP's spring production?

### *Barn Sign Renewed.*

All those eagle eyed patrons will be delighted to see that the Barn Theatre sign at high level on the front gable has now been replaced following the damage caused by the weight of snow in January.

The renewal was quite a job as the timber cladding to the gable end was found to be rotten and had to be replaced too. Paul Bowles of Ovenden Signs carefully crafted a new sign finished in gold leaf onto a wrought iron support bracket made by Simon Larkin of Tandridge Forge and James Sharp replaced the boarding and refixed the sign which will now be floodlit at show times.

### *SCDF Success*

The Diamond Jubilee Southern Counties Drama Festival had a real buzz this year and was one of the best festivals since the Barn Theatre took over the organisation in 2007.

The first 'Betchworth Festival' was held sixty years ago to the day on the Saturday night and we were delighted to have in the audience Jill Perry who performed in The Student Players production of *The Red Velvet Goat* back in 1951. Jill as a past winner, met the adjudicator Jill Colby GoDA and special guest Nicholas Owen, himself a past winner, at the reception after the Awards presentation on the last night.

Before announcing the results Jill Colby summed up the week and praised the festival organisers for the superb and buoyant festival in a theatre so different to when she last adjudicated at the Barn in 2001.

Thanks to the continued support from the Gatwick Airport Community Trust, the festival was able to present a cheque for £100 to the team St Paul's Drama Group who now progress to the semi-finals of the All-England Theatre Festival.

Already plans are afoot for the sixty first festival which will be adjudicated by Mike Tilbury GoDA



*Nicholas Owen, Jill Colby & Jill Perry*

# Oxted Operatic Society

## AGM – Date for the Diary

ADVANCE notice to all members, that this year's AGM will be held at 8:00pm on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July at the Barn Theatre, followed by some light refreshment.

## Tickets Please – All Change!

1<sup>st</sup> June sees a major change in our ticket booking facility as we enable 'On-Line' ticketing for our *OJOS* production of *Disco Inferno*. This has proved a popular facility with many patrons of the Barn, which we would like to offer to our audiences. We shall continue to offer postal and phone bookings for all our productions through our own Ticket Secretary.

After countless years of dedication to the cause, for which we cannot thank her enough, *Moreen Forster* has decided that this would be an appropriate time to step down as Ticket Secretary, and has now passed the mantle over to *Dena Watts*.

Tickets for all future productions can be obtained from:

Ticket Secretary (Dena Watts) 01883 723 084, or on-line at [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk)

## Gigi

Those involved in our most recent production, *Gigi*, will no doubt be reflecting on what a happy production it was under the direction of Martin Patrick, Sue Rowlinson & Andrea Green, whilst those with a keen eye on the finances will be happy to see that it was a near sell-out. Reports back to me indicate that it was very well received by our audiences, and whilst all reviews are not yet to hand, *Theo Spring (Surrey Mirror)* wrote:



"Director *Martin Patrick's* spellbinding production got absolutely everything right. Apart from the superb cast, the other stars of the show were the many hands working backstage. The scene shifting was seamless and the scenes they shifted remarkable in their attention to detail....

.... Agile dancers executed *Andrea Green's* choreography in fine style and the cameo roles and chorus all came up trumps. Wardrobe by *Monica*

*Dena Watts, Peter Calver & Laura Brand*

*Mickels* created the era to perfection and the large orchestra under the baton of *Susan Rowlinson* was note perfect, breathing fresh life into the score. Was I bowled over by this production? Yes, completely!"

## Disco Inferno (OJOS) Weds 20<sup>th</sup> – Sat 23<sup>rd</sup> July

(Evenings - 7:30pm / Sat Mat 2:30pm)

Auditions for OJOS production *Disco Inferno* were of a very high standard, and rehearsals begin this week under the watchful direction of *Janette White, Ian Skipper & Sue Meller*.

It is great to offer our younger members the chance to participate in a full production at the Barn, and we hope you will support them in

their efforts. In addition, we plan to take part in the Oxted Carnival (2<sup>nd</sup> July), promoting OJOS *Disco Inferno* and running an OOS Information Stall, so do come along.

This fantastic high energy musical combines a hilarious script, fantastic characters and a whole score of hits from the unforgettable time of glitter, flares and platform shoes. It's guaranteed to get your feet tapping and leave the audiences reminiscing and with fond memories. We feel sure the production will be a real hit.

Tickets: 01883 723 084, or on-line from 1<sup>st</sup> June at: [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk)

## Return to the The Forbidden Planet

*Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sat 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011 (7:30pm)*

When a routine scientific survey flight crash lands on the mysterious planet D'Ilyria, the crew discovers a dark and terrifying secret which seems sure to *Wipe Out* the crew. Will a *Robot Man* save the day? Or will the ship *Shake, Rattle and Roll* itself to destruction? This fun filled show is great entertainment for the *Born To Be Wild* and *The Young Ones* alike. With an out-of-this-world plot inspired by Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and cult sci-fi movie *Forbidden Planet*, this rock 'n' rolling evening of 50s & 60s hits guarantees to leave you feeling *Good Vibrations*.

Preparing to boldly go where we've never been before, *Peter Reed, Graham Wright* and *Beth Bryant* bring Oxted '*Shakespeare's long lost Rock'n'Roll musical in the style of a 1950's sci-fi B-movie*'. So beam me up Scotty!

Please note the REVISED dates/venues for the diary:-

Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> June – 1<sup>st</sup> Get Together - Goodbye Gigi / Hello Planet (Hurst Green)

Tues 28<sup>th</sup> June – Sing thro' / Audition Pieces (Hurst Green)

Thurs 30<sup>th</sup> June – Sing thro' / Audition Pieces (Hurst Green)

Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> July – Auditions (Hurst Green)

Rehearsals will commence in September at St Peter's

For more information contact Katherine Jones (Production Secretary) 07766 398178.

Tickets: 01883 723 084, or on-line from 4<sup>th</sup> October at: [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk)

## Future Productions

We are very excited about our plans for our three 2012 productions, the first of which will be *Godspell (Tues 17<sup>th</sup> – Sat 21<sup>st</sup> April 2012)*, directed by *Rob Stevens*, featuring material and orchestrations newly available to amateurs.

We have a slot at the Barn for an *OJOS* production next *July*, with the show yet to be confirmed, and we complete the year with *Chess (November 2012)* directed by *Paul Longhurst*.

Looking further ahead to 2013, we have now secured licences for *The Sound of Music* (April) and *Oliver!* (November).

For further information regarding any of our productions please contact:-

Dena Watts (01883 723084 email: [denalynwatts@virginmedia.com](mailto:denalynwatts@virginmedia.com))

PJR

## Troy Boy

Professional touring company, The Merry Opera Company, brings lashings of sunshine to the Barn Theatre on June 4<sup>th</sup> with its fresh and lively production of *Troy Boy*, Kit Hesketh-Harvey's translation of Offenbach's *La Belle Helene*.

## FOBS

A big thank you to the 60+ members who came to the AGM and the 30+ who sent apologies. It is really encouraging to have that level of support. A most enjoyable social gathering took place after the meeting. If you missed it for any reason you still have the possibility of spending a pleasant evening with friends at our Theatre on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June when the AGM of the Barn Theatre will be held at 8pm. You do not have to be a shareholder in order to attend and the meeting itself is interesting with drinks and nibbles afterwards – so do try to come along.

The summer season sees us welcoming a number of youth shows to the Theatre. 'Starmakers' and 'Glow' will be back and it is good to see that Maureen Brown is also making a welcome return with her Dance School. It is the turn of Oxted Operatic Juniors to take over the Theatre in July and Kenley Holiday Workshop can be relied upon to give us a rip-roaring *Oklahoma* in August. A group named 'Courtyard Theatre' are making their first visit to present *Ruddigore*. I do urge you to check your programme information and come along to as many shows as you can. There is an amazing pool of talented youth locally and we are privileged to support them by buying tickets and/or working for them Front of House.

Those of us who were involved in the Barnstormers' award winning *Jesus Christ Superstar* last year are very excited that our 'Jesus' – Stuart Matthew Price – is coming to the Barn on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> June. This is an evening not to be missed.

Your committee was re-elected en-bloc and has held its first meeting of the current year. We'll be thinking about ways to improve our service to our patrons – and also about how to keep our prices as low as possible during this difficult economic time whilst still generating funds for the Theatre through our efforts.

We have been very pleased to welcome some excellent new Front of House Managers into the team over the last year – do look out for new faces and give them a cheery greeting when you come to shows! By the way, you do not have to be a FOB (Friend of the Barn Theatre) in order to work as a Front of House volunteer – although we are always delighted to have you join us. You may be a member of the Oxted Players; the Oxted Operatic Society or simply a general supporter of the Theatre with no particular allegiance to a resident group. Many FOBs are also members of the other resident groups and we all regard ourselves as part of the 'Barn Theatre family'.

Sheila Bennett

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## The Oxted Players

### Busy Start to the Year

Having seen the worst of the winter out on a high with our record breaking sell out pantomime, *Cinderella*, we moved seamlessly onto Southern Counties Drama Festival with our adult and youth entries which both did very well. Our adult entry, *Mantrap*, by Paul Reaves and directed by Tricia Whyte won the Stage Presentation Award. Against strong competition, our youngsters performed admirably and four of our Young Players, namely Cameron Arbuckle, Libby Bliss, Hollie Pitt and Chris Zabilowicz, were mentioned in the category of Best Young Actor/Actress for their performances in our youth entry, *Press Gang*, by Ellen Dryden directed by June Brown. The play was also mentioned by the Adjudicator in her shortlist for the category of Best Youth Play – very welcome recognition of the talents of all our Young Players and their production team.

### Important Handbag

We are now putting the final touches to our Spring play *The Importance of Being Earnest* which begins its run on Wednesday 18 May

at 7.45pm. Enhanced by the cleverly designed set and costumes of the period, this promises to be an excellent production. The play is a much loved classic by Oscar Wilde. There are few works of literature, either novels, poems or plays, which most people could identify from simply two words contained within them. However, if you say "A

hand-bag?" almost everyone will immediately know that you are referring to possibly the greatest comedy written in the English language in the last two centuries.

This play is a witty outlook on the Victorian upper class, exposing a world of shallow indifference to true love. The young



Julie Parry & Mike Hill

Jack Worthing and his good friend Algernon find themselves in a ridiculous situation after their fiancées learn they are coincidentally engaged to the same man. A glorious rendition of mistaken identity, Wilde's play is sure to get people of all ages, if not realising themselves, the importance of being earnest! This classic play will appeal to old and young alike and this production should not be missed. We have an excellent cast with Barn regulars, Peter Calver (Jack), Cat Longhurst (Gwendolen), Laura Brand (Cecily), Janette White (Lady Bracknell), Guy Hudson (Lane), Mike Hill (Canon Chasuble), Duncan Browne (Merriman) and Julie Parry (Miss Prism) and we welcome newcomer Danniell Horton (Algy). Tickets are available from the Ticket Secretary on 01883 724852 and also if you prefer to use the internet at [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk) where a small booking fee will apply.

### Guessing Game

Our October production (19–22 October) is *The Unexpected Guest* by Agatha Christie to be directed by our Chairman, June Brown. This murder/mystery promises to keep our audience guessing to the very end in classic Christie fashion. By the time this Newsletter is published there will have been a read through and auditions will have been held on 8 May.

### Jacks Back

We are also pleased to announce that our January 2012 pantomime has now been chosen and will be the family favourite, *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The very successful team of Chris Bassett (Director), Fran Newitt (Choreographer) and Jamie Cordell (Musical Director) are joining forces again to bring us this colourful festive offering. There will be a read through at Hurst Green Community Centre on Sunday 5 September 2011 at 2.00pm followed by auditions on Sunday 12 September from 10.00 am but you will need to be a paid up member of the Society to audition. If you are interested in joining the Society, please contact our Membership Secretary on 01883 716566 or download the application form by using the Oxted Players' link on the Theatre website at [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk).

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## Barn Theatre AGM

Will take place at the theatre on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June from 8pm. All are welcome; you do not need to be a shareholder just a supporter who enjoys the Barn.

## Time for Stuart

Originally from Kidderminster Stuart grew up in Portsmouth and started singing from a very early age. At the age of 16 Stuart moved to Croydon to attend the BRIT School on their Musical Theatre course. After BRIT, Stuart couldn't decide whether to pursue a career in composition or acting and took a few years out of education. After a holiday to New York his spark for performing was reignited and in 2004 he began training at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts in North London where he graduated with BA Hons First Class Degree in Musical Theatre.

Since graduating he has travelled the world performing, singing and writing including a few shows in London such as *The Cradle Will Rock* at the Arcola Theatre, *Merrily We Roll Along* at the Donmar, and *Beyond the Gate* at the Gate Theatre, Notting Hill. He has also toured around Germany as the youngest person to play Riff Raff in *The Rocky Horror Show*. One of Stuart's highlights was playing Jesus in Barnstormers' production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. "JCS will always be a very special time for me; I had the chance to work and meet with incredibly genuine and supportive people who have a real love for every second on stage. With such a lovely and warm bunch of friends, it was nicely topped with the gorgeous and stunning back-drop of the Minack Theatre. Being crucified 200ft in the air isn't something you get to do often!"

Since performing in JCS Stuart has gone on to record his first debut album, *All Things In Time*, which supports and promotes new musical writing by British and American composers. Stuart is only just setting out on his journey into musical theatre, but is loving every second of it. As a result he is returning to the Barn Theatre where he hopes to share his journey and these new songs with the Barn audience. You can also find him on stage at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane for this year's new production, *Shrek The Musical* (based on the hit Dreamworks animation film) which also features Nigel Harman, an ex-Barn Theatre child prodigy. Stuart is delighted to have the opportunity to return to the Barn Theatre and is looking forward to seeing his Oxted friends at this intimate night of song.

Tickets are available from [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk) or by telephoning the office on 01959561811

## Surrey Opera

Britten's *Albert Herring* at the Barn

Surrey Opera will be bringing an exciting new professional production of Benjamin Britten's comic opera *Albert Herring* to the Barn in September, with performances on Tues 20<sup>th</sup>, Wed 21<sup>st</sup>, Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> and Sat 24<sup>th</sup> at 7.30p.m.

*Albert Herring* is a stunning piece, very witty and musically ingenious. The Barn Theatre is an ideal setting for this opera with its hilarious plot, which tells the story of rural life in a Suffolk town, where no girl is pure enough to be May Queen, so it is agreed that they only have one option – to crown someone May King – guess who? Albert of course, the shy young greengrocer! But all is not necessarily straight-forward!

Nationally respected conductor and musician, Jonathan Butcher, returns to his home town to conduct the opera, with a talented young production team – Director, Joe Austen and Designer, Simon Kenny – promising to bring the comic masterpiece to life. The cast is made up of young professional opera singers accompanied by professional chamber orchestra, so this really will be a quality production not to be missed!

Tickets can be booked through the Surrey Opera Box Office on 0208 657 7909 or online at [www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk](http://www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk)

## Kenley Holiday Workshop

Oklahoma!

The talented youngsters of KHW will be returning to the Barn Theatre once again this summer with their latest production, *Oklahoma!*, the ground-breaking first musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein. Against a background of conflict between farmers and cattlemen, *Oklahoma!* tells the tale of farm girl Laurey and the two rivals for her affections; happy-go-lucky cowboy Curly and the sinister farm-hand, Jud. This wonderful hit show includes such classic numbers as "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'", "Surrey With a Fringe on Top", "People Will Say We're in Love", "I Cain't Say No" and "Oklahoma!"

The show runs from Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August and if you want to see if the corn is really as high as an Elephant's eye you can book your tickets now on 01883 331400 or online at [www.kenleyholidayworkshop.co.uk](http://www.kenleyholidayworkshop.co.uk)

## Government cuts to the arts budgets

You will all be delighted to learn that the resolute independence of the Barn Theatre keeps it safe from the recently announced government inflicted cuts to the arts industry. Many other splendid organisations will founder without the financial support they have grown accustomed to over the years.

## Tea and cakes time comes round again

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July is the annual Oxted Carnival and as usual the Barn stalwarts will be out on the field early erecting the tea tents ready for the afternoon crush of visitors. Always a fun day, getting some fresh air and working in daylight rather than a dark theatre it is the opportunity for the theatre to support the community as we hope they will support us.

## Dinner with an AfterGlow

Fresh on the heels of their entry into the Southern Counties Drama Festival, the AfterGlow performers at Glow Theatre Group are embarking on a brand new venture in June... Interactive Dinner Theatre. Concentrating on the skills of improvisation, the group will present *Murder at the Lodge* to their audience, who during dinner will then have chance to interrogate the actors, before making their allegations as to who may have "dunnit"! Taking this show out of the theatre and into a venue in which actors can move amongst the audience will be a challenging and interesting experience....Glow loves to be different!

Meanwhile, the main Glow Theatre Group has taken on the giant that is Disney... David and Goliath springs to mind! With a production of *High School Musical* set to take to the stage in June and July, in December the group will present Disney's *The Jungle Book*. Glow was recently asked to sum up what the group is all about. It's hard to encapsulate your raison d'etre into one phrase, but after looking at the growing faith in themselves from the children and their ready smiles, enjoyment and love of performing, in the end it was easy.... Glow Theatre Group - For A More Confident Future!