

BARN THEATRE

NEWS



Volume 20 Issue 2 May 2016

Glow Theatre Group win through to the English Finals of the All-England Theatre Festival

Glow, a resident youth group at the Barn go from strength to strength under their leader Jackie Driscoll and have been winning awards at Southern Counties Drama Festival since they first decided to enter in 2012. This year they swept the board with awards for Best Youth Production, Best Youth Actress, Best Youth Actor, Best Stage Presentation, Best Director and were the overall Festival Winners. Their production of *The Edelweiss Pirates* was faultless and an obvious winner from moments after the curtain opened.

Here Jackie tells us of her recent experiences and what fun the group have competing in the All-England Theatre Festival:-

Glow Theatre Group were delighted to take part in the Southern Counties Drama Festival at the Barn Theatre in February. Their seniors performed *The Edelweiss Pirates*, by Ayub Khan Din, an uncompromisingly bleak portrayal of one of the resistance groups formed by young people in Nazi Germany in the early 1940's. Inspired by real-life events, it is a story of horror, desperation and ultimate failure, but its essential theme



Glow cast of *Edelweiss Pirates*

is courage and fortitude in standing up for moral convictions against overwhelming odds. The play was a challenging project for the group, combining a mixture of realism, flashback and symbolism as the harrowing story comes to completion and the truth and its consequences, are revealed. The Adjudicator, Arthur Rochester, commented that it "was doubtful if there was anyone in the audience who remained indifferent to or unaffected by this powerful performance and it is hard to suggest how the dramatic achievement of the whole company could be bettered." Many of these young Glow actors are Festival veterans, having been part of SCDF for several years and so they know all about the high standards of the plays entered by so many adult and youth groups each year. The group was therefore delighted to win a number of awards for



Jackie Driscoll with the Winners Trophy for SCDF. Patron Nick Owen and Chairman Peter Calver

their performance this year: Best Young Actor to Sean Wareing, Best Young Actress to Charlotte Bridson, Best Stage Presentation, Best Director to Jackie Driscoll, Best Youth Production and Overall Festival Winners 2016.

These results meant that Glow took the play on to the next round of the All-England Theatre Festival, the Eastern Area Final at The Cecil Hepworth Playhouse in Walton on Thames on April 16th. It was a fantastic day and a huge pleasure for the group to be acting alongside three other Festival winners in a hard fought competition. Transferring a play from one stage to another is a challenge in itself, so the Glow team were very pleased and proud to win both the Trophy for Technical Merit and the Winner's Trophy. This success means that the next step for these talented young actors is the English Finals in Maidenhead on June 4th.

Meanwhile, the whole Glow group has embarked on rehearsals for its summer production of *CATS* by Andrew Lloyd Webber, onstage at the Barn Theatre from 6th to 9th July. The fun never stops!



DRIP works progress at a good pace.

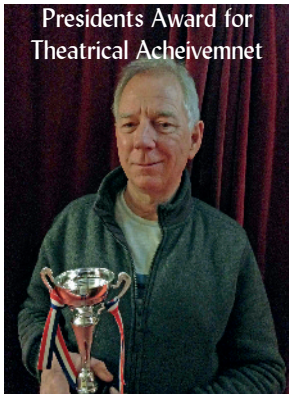
Since the first day on site, contractors S.M. Atkins have made good progress, with the weather only causing minor delays. Walls are going up and the whole building is taking shape as we would wish. All very exciting as we plan our way into Phase Two for which we are still raising funds.

Tea and Cakes Time Comes Round Again

Saturday 2nd 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. Many of you will receive the annual phone call from Caro in the weeks before – please do your best to supply the stall with your usual delicious home-made cakes.

Malcolm Le Croisette

Big Chief in the Corner and man of many awards



Presidents Award for Theatrical Achievement

Stella Thomas, President of the Oxted Operatic Society, had great pleasure at the annual general meeting in presenting the PAFTA cup to Malcolm Le Croisette, our reliable and unflappable stage manager, the Big Chief in the Corner.

Malcolm has been Stage Manager for more than 80 shows in the Barn Theatre, over 20 for the Operatic Society and around 30 for Tops, as well as many visiting companies. He thinks his first show was Oliver in 1989. He even appeared on

stage in a Christmas musical, right at the back. No major disasters but Malcolm admits that at times the adrenalin was flowing fast. "I only want backstage to be a happy place for cast and crew," he says. (PAFTA stands for Presidents Award for Theatrical Achievement)



Stage Presentation Award at SCDF

Following on from this presentation Malcolm went on through February winning the Southern Counties Drama Festival Stage Presentation Cup for the tremendous set he and Jackie created for the Glow Theatre Group production of Edelweiss Pirates, the SCDF



Technical Award at Semi Final

winning entry. More recently Glow were awarded the Technical Award at the Eastern Area Semi Final of the All-England Theatre Festival. Congratulations to Malcolm on his achievements and we look forward to hearing more as Glow move on to the English Finals of the All-England Theatre Festival.

Defibrillator launched at Barn Generously donated in memory of Charles Thomas by his widow Stella and with installation arranged by the Oxted Community Responders, the defibrillator at the Barn was commissioned at a small ceremony on Sunday March 6th. Pictured is Stella Thomas presenting Bruce Reed, of the Barn with the defibrillator,



watched by Jeremy and Judy Kean, two of our community responders. The location of the defibrillator at the Barn makes it accessible to all users and visitors and it is handy for the general public too. After a cardiac arrest, every minute without CPR and defibrillation reduces someone's chance of survival by 10 per cent.

26th October, Henry George Murphy with Limsfield Decorative & Fine Arts Society



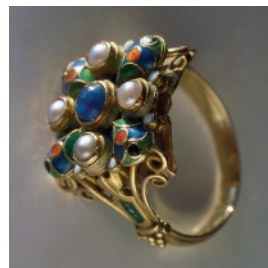
The Princess Royal tiara

SIBALOFF AND CLAUDEY COLLECTION

Come to the Barn on 26 October and hear John Benjamin (BBC's Antiques Roadshow) tell the fascinating story of Harry Murphy, one of Britain's most versatile and innovative jewellery designers of the first half of the twentieth century and one of the most influential silversmiths of the Art Deco era. He had a reputation second to none during his lifetime and yet today he is little known. His friends, supporters and clients included major figures from art, craft, design and education.

He was respected throughout Europe as a leader in the Art Deco movement. He won a gold medal at the Milan Exhibition in 1933 and showed 10 pieces at the Paris Exhibition in 1937. He died unexpectedly at the height of his influence and reputation in 1939. Post-war tastes changed dramatically and he was forgotten.

His Falcon studio in London followed the highest standards of craftsmanship and a fine taste in design, giving a contemporary flavour to traditional forms and techniques. The V&A has some wonderful pieces, including the famous 1933 Milan prize-winning Art Deco silver tea service with its characteristic circular shape. In 1922 he had designed a beautiful gold, topaz and sapphire tiara for Mary, Princess Royal for her engagement and in 1924, designed a delightful miniature version of the crown jewels for Queen Mary's dolls house at Windsor Castle.



It is a fascinating story that sounds almost like a detective novel. As well as being a member of BBC Television's Antiques Roadshow team, John Benjamin is an independent jewellery consultant, gemmologist and Freeman of both the City of London and the Goldsmith's Company.

Tickets to the lecture are free to LDFAS members. Non-members are very welcome and may buy tickets through the Barn Theatre website.





We have had a very busy three months in this 70th Anniversary year starting with our Young Players February half term workshop with David Rowan and 37 children, the younger ones rehearsing and performing “Cars” and the older group the spoof murder/mystery “Inspector Wicket and the Open and Shut Case”, both plays written by David.

Unfortunately a couple of weeks before the Southern Counties Drama Festival due to casting problems we had to withdraw our planned Youth Entry “What You See” written and to be directed by Liberty Bliss. As a result of this and with the permission of the SCDF organisers, we were able to substitute David Rowan's workshop play “Inspector Wicket” which had been rehearsed and performed by our older Young Players the previous week over a period of only 3 days. The 13 strong cast were amazing, giving a polished and thoroughly entertaining performance for the Festival audience, receiving a very encouraging adjudication. The Adjudicator said that he found it hard to believe the play had been prepared in such a short time.

Another highlight in the Festival for us was the award of Best Adult Play and Festival Runner Up to our entry “Lions and Donkeys” by Steve Harper, directed by Ghislaine Bowden. The play is set in an Observation Post in France during the last weeks of the First World War. The Adjudicator praised the direction, stage presentation and acting. Our thanks go to Ghislaine, our excellent actors Chris Bassett, Tom Stiles, James Atkinson and Jim Thurbin and the skilled production team of Amanda, Nick, Ellie, John, Tricia and Patrick who all worked so well together to bring this very poignant but humorous play to the Barn stage. Ghislaine and her actors were invited to perform the play again at the Westerham Royal British Legion on 30th April, the proceeds going to the Charity.

Our Young Players production of “Alice in Wonderland” in March proved very successful both with regards to ticket sales and the great enjoyment it gave to its young performers and audiences. Our thanks go to Director Carly Thompson for her patience and commitment in coaching and encouraging her 26 strong young cast of 8 to 16 year olds to present a very entertaining show.



The Mad Hatter's Tea Party

The review by Jon Fox of NODA praised all the performers individually, particularly highlighting the performances of Sophie Moss, Louis Spanton, Vanessa Mesher, Teddy Stevenson and Fern Simmons. On the production side he said “A dedicated and fastidious production team

spearheaded by the imaginative and clearly inspirational director Carly Thompson, together with detailed and splendid costumes by Pattie Thomas-Verweij, assisted by Janet Beatty, alongside clever and a well designed set by David Sutton gave the youngsters a wonderful platform on which to showcase their talents.”

We now look forward to our spring production, Agatha Christie “Murder on the Nile” 18th to 21st May at 7.45 pm with a matinee on 21st. Set on a paddle steamer cruising on the Nile in the 1930s, newly married Simon and Kay Mostyn find that they are being stalked by Jackie, Simon's former fiancée. Then shots are heard and a body found. Canon Pennefather, another traveller, sets about finding the murderer. Originally a novel called “Death on the Nile” with Inspector Poirot, Ms. Christie opted for the stage version to change the title and also to replace Poirot with “Canon Pennefather” as the crime investigator. Under the experienced direction

of June Brown, our main players are Phil Fry, Jamie Heath, Grace Fairbairn, Marion Barker, Amanda Stronge, Steve Bedford, Jenny Roe, Catherine Wyncoll, Richard Peachey, Karl Bristow and Lee Curtis. Tickets are available on www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk for all card payments or 01883 724852 for cheques.

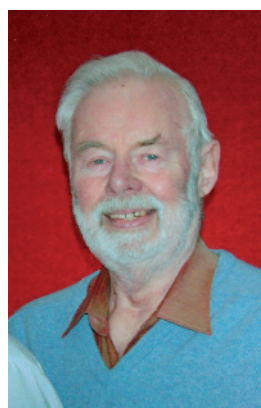
Before going to print, we will have just held auditions for “Macbeth” our October production. There may possibly still be one or two parts to fill so anyone interested in the play please contact us at secretary@oxtedplayers.co.uk

Along with Oxted Operatic, we are urgently looking for lighting and sound technicians to help with our future productions at the Barn. Anyone with experience in these fields or who are willing to be trained are urged to contact either Jonathan Tull on jtull@hotmail.com or David Morgan on havagavelwilltravel@gmail.com.

Finally we would like to join with the Barn Trustees in remembering Chris Hepher who has died after battling illness for several years. His enthusiasm and commitment to the Barn Theatre and our Society will be sadly missed.

Farewell to a good Barn Supporter- John Harris

As a keen member of the Knockholt Amateur Theatrical Society with whom he played in Reviews, Plays, Pantomime and Chairman of ‘Old Time Musicals’, John first visited the Barn Theatre in 1996 to see Oxted Operatic’s production of *My Fair Lady* and fell in love with the theatre. He



joined OOS the following year as a chorus member for the 50th Anniversary Show, and thereafter became a regular in the male chorus, appearing in most of the Society productions over the next 20 years, often entertaining audiences with such cameo roles as Mr Kemp (Mr Cinders); Mr Murdoch (Brigadoon); Sir John Tremayne (Me and My Girl); Merlyn (Camelot); Elisha Whitney (Anything Goes); Rudolph Reisenweber (Hello Dolly); Andrew (Oklahoma!); Bougeron-Couchon (Gypsy); Montague Druitt (Jack the Ripper); Everett Barker (Crazy For You); Edsel Mackey (The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas); Erronius (A Funny

Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum); William Desmond Taylor (Mack & Mabel); Mr Brownlow (Oliver!). Fittingly, John’s final appearance with the Society was as an Ascot Gentleman in our 2015 production of *My Fair Lady*. Off stage, John was a great supporter of the Society, taking the office of Treasurer from 2000 to 2004 and Committee Member until 2010. John was also involved in the Oxted Players Betchworth Festival entry in 2001 as well as taking part in Barnstormers shows at the Minack. When not appearing in shows he was often found helping out with Front of House duties – his particular forte being car parking duty. He will be greatly missed, particular in the male dressing room, always with a tale to tell !





Firstly I must say how sad it is to hear of the recent deaths of two stalwarts of the Barn Theatre and Oxted Operatic Society. Firstly John Harris, a long-time member, ex-Treasurer and great worker for our Society, he was never too grand to turn down a request to tend car parking or any other task that he was asked to volunteer for. He was also a great “Olde Tyme Music Hall” chairman and performer and he will be sadly missed; perhaps it might be the opportune moment to think about a revival of this form of Theatre.

The other sad recent loss was Chris Hepher. Chris and I would often share the train from Croydon and I know that it was a firm wish of his to direct “Salad Days” with the O.O.S. Sadly his death means that he never managed it. He was for some years very active within Oxted Operatic and latterly as a Barn Director, Trustee and Company Secretary. Both John and Chris will be missed by many.

The O.O.S. A.G.M. was held in February and is now over for another year and unfortunately, due to poor though improving health, Dena Watts was unable to stand again as Chair. As the only nominee I was voted in and I hope that I can fill Dena’s shoes as well as she did. My fellow Committee members are: Janette White (Treasurer), Teresa Reed (Secretary), Geoff Martin, Sean Eldridge, Jackie Huke, Carol Moss, David Sutton and Stephanie Hornett Johnson, so a great team is in place and willing to move forward.

Just over a fortnight or so ago our spring show “The King and I” closed to rapturous applause and rave reviews and congratulations must go to everyone involved. I know just how hard you all worked, as I was at most rehearsals after Easter and every performance, and believe me the hard work paid off. The official reviews are not yet available, but we expect them to be glowing! Well done to the Production Team of Peter Reed, Kerry Brackpool and Sue Rowlinson and we look forward to working with them again some time.

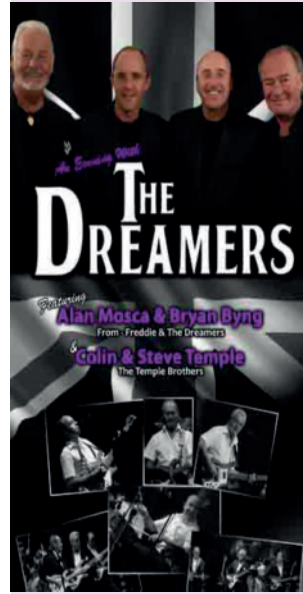


But now to the future. The initial get together for “Sister Act”, our autumn production, is to take place at the St. Peter’s Hall on 14th June and the Production Team of Sarah Morrison, Catherine Blundell and Steve Geraghty will put forward their vision for the show and explain what it’s all about (and it’s not just dirty habits – sorry!). Following that, the dance and choral get together will be on 16th June and Principals auditions will be on 21st June, both at St. Peter’s. The chorus and dance auditions will be held on 23rd June at a venue T.B.A. Please come along and enjoy this fabulous upbeat show with some glorious musical numbers and some great character parts.

Finally, the Society is joining with TOPs for a special celebration in the autumn marking our joint 70th anniversaries. In these cash strapped days, to have two such healthy societies in Oxted after 70 years is a real achievement and we are holding a black tie Dinner and Dance on 24th September at Bletchingley Golf Club. Tickets are available to paid up

members only until 31st May at a special concessionary rate of £25 per ticket which includes a three course dinner, welcome drink and dancing to a live band. After 31st May tickets will go on general sale and will cost £30, so make sure you reserve yours early.

DAVID MORGAN
Chair O.O.S.



**Sunday 11th December
at 7.45pm**

Formerly ‘Freddie and The Dreamers’, The Dreamers remain one of the best known named bands on the sixties music circuit. Two original members... Alan Mosca and Bryan Byng are joined by The Temple Brothers, Steve and Colin who have toured extensively with their Everly Brothers tribute show and Midnight Dynamos rock and roll band. The band perform the hits of Freddie and The Dreamers and the most popular songs of the fifties and sixties together with those best loved numbers of the Everly Brothers.

**Chris Hepher,
farewell to another good and
loyal friend of the Barn
Theatre community**



Chris, was a well known figure at the Barn having spent almost 40 years of his life either as a performer, director, stage crew, car parker, Barn Trustee and Company Secretary. He performed and directed for other local amateur dramatic companies too. Chris was articulate and wise and many sought his counsel as a good and loyal friend. As a Licensing Solicitor his skills on the board were much in demand as the theatre grew and the requirement for a large licensed bar became necessary. At one time he arranged the training and induction of the 9 trustees who now hold Personal Licences. He was well known at Tandridge Council too, where he gave training to their Licensing Department and the Barn was often visited by other local authorities, held up by Tandridge as a good example of well run and managed licensed premises. Chris had been unwell for a few years with frequent visits to hospital but his sudden demise at age 64 years was still a shock to those that knew him well and we shall miss him terribly. He leaves a daughter Diana and we send our condolences to her at this time.

Sheila Stevens (aged 87) passed away on the 23rd February 2016. Sheila was a very keen supporter at the Barn for over 50 years, seeing her Sister, Pat perform in the early days with the Student Players. Sheila enjoyed the Barn (and the plays), but especially at Christmas time with the Panto, we had a job to keep her seated. Sheila will be greatly missed by her Family and close friends.

The Editor of the Barn Theatre News is Bruce Reed and contributions are always gratefully received.
barntheatre@btinternet.com
Press deadline for the next issue is Friday 22nd July