The Barnstormers have been staging productions and raising money for the Barn since 1999, and so 2019 marks their 20th anniversary year. We couldn’t let this important anniversary go by without some sort of celebration, so we’re delighted to announce that they will be back at the Barn for one night only on Sunday 8th December with their 20th Anniversary show – ‘Encore!’.

‘Encore!’ is a fabulous musical compilation show featuring some of the very best performers and musical theatre numbers presented by The Barnstormers over the last two decades. For one night only, on Sunday 8th December at 7.00pm, you will be able to enjoy the talents of Barnstomer stars from past and present, performing some of the wonderful musical hits from shows like Jesus Christ Superstar, Little Shop of Horrors, Into the Woods, Parade, Nunsense, Sweeney Todd and many many more.

The Barnstormers have raised in the region of £60,000 for the Barn over the last twenty years, and as you would expect, all profits from ‘Encore!’ will once again be donated to the Barn’s charity to help fund various development projects already in the pipeline.

Tickets for this one off gala event are expected to sell out quickly, so we highly recommend you book yours now at www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk or by telephone 01959 561811.
Our May play, 
Pride & Prejudice, directed by Peter Reed was a great success with good audiences and reviews. The cast of 25 worked extremely well together and really enjoyed the experience of bringing this classic to the Barn stage. The production was enhanced by the inclusion of period dancing, cleverly choreographed by Nicky Roberts and by the sound and lighting provided by John Chinnock and Stephen Tickell. Jon Fox of NODA was impressed by the performances of all the actors whether in major or minor roles but particularly praised Beckie Wilkes as Elizabeth Bennet, Sophie MacTavish as Mrs. Bennet and Richard Peachey as Mr Bennet. Jon ended his review saying “All in all, this was a top class production, marvellously directed by Peter Reed”.

Many of our Young Players are now looking forward to our annual August workshop with David Rowan in the Theatre from 18 to 24 August. The children spend the week rehearsing a full length play which is then performed on the Saturday evening. For further details on any remaining availability please contact secretary@oxtedplayers.co.uk.

Our October play (16 to 19 October) is the hilarious comedy The Safari Party by Tim Firth and directed by Peter Shore. Three households have agreed to hold a “safari party” – a dinner party where each course is served in a different house - but it all goes horribly wrong! Luke Grizzell and Rob Medhurst play two young brothers, Daniel and Adam, who have no culinary skills. Their snobbish neighbours Lol and Esther are played by Bruce Christie and Ali Morris with Phoebe Sleeman as their rebellious daughter Bridget and Jenny Roe completes the cast as Inga, a dubious antiques dealer. Tickets available on www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk or 01883 724852.

Our 2020 panto is Treasure Island by Ben Crocker to be directed by Chris Bassett. All are welcome to come to the read through for this exciting production on 15 September at 2 pm at St. Peters Hall, Limpsfield, followed by auditions on Sunday 22 September from 11 am at the same venue. For further information about the panto and characters, please refer to our website at www.oxtedplayers.co.uk or email secretary@oxtedplayers.co.uk. Rehearsals will begin on Sunday 19 October and performances run from 10 to 18 January 2020.

As we previously reported, Aquarian Opera is being rejuvenated by Melanie Vinall, Andrew Claringbull and James Vinall. Aquarian are hosting a Christmas Re-Launch Party in the Barn Theatre bar at 7:30 pm on Thursday 12th December 2019 and hope previous performers and supporters can come along for drinks and nibbles to hear the plans. Melanie will outline ideas for the first production in October 2020 at the Barn of Lehar’s operetta The Merry Widow, which is much loved and has a large cast. Aquarian Opera musical director, Paul Arden-Griffith (the original Monsieur Reyer in Phantom of the Opera) will be on hand and there are some further delights and surprises to be announced. Save the day - Aquarian Opera Christmas Re-Launch Party in the Barn Theatre bar at 7:30 pm on Thursday 12th December.

Kenley Holiday Workshop is 30 years old this year, and to celebrate we are revisiting the show we presented ten years ago, ‘42nd Street’. We were awarded the Noda London Young Stars award for this production, which was directed by Martin Patrick, with choreographer Andrea Atkinson and music director Michael Burbidge. This time we have the same choreographer and music director, with Martin’s protégé Sarah Morrison as director, so the new production could be said to be a tribute to Martin. ‘42nd Street’ is a lively show with great music and loads of dancing, and we have a company of talented and enthusiastic youngsters who are raring to go.

So if you fancy a great night out then join us at the Barn at 7.30 on any night from Wednesday 7th to Saturday 10th August.

Sally Dallosso
In July, Oxted Junior Operatic Society performed Curtain Up! a celebration of twenty-nine of the most iconic Broadway musical theatre numbers. The electric pace was set by Tom Hinchcliffe opening the show as the Emcee in Wilkommen from Cabaret, flanked by a bevy of dancers that most Barn regulars would instantly recognise. We proceeded through the early 1940’s and ’50’s shows with the younger girls performing I’m Gonna Wash that Boy Right Outta my Hair from South Pacific and Tom O’Reilly and Thomas Prebble bringing the house down with Brush up Your Shakespeare from Kiss Me Kate. Moving on to the ’60’s and ’70’s, saw Sophie Calderwood and Alex McTavish wow the audience with Chicago and Sophie Moss reducing everyone to tears with What I Did for Love from A Chorus Line. Zoe Morgan as Annie rounded off a cracking First Act with Maybe and all the younger chorus in It’s the Hard Knock Life. The Second Act moved through the 1980’s, all the way up to the modern day with a continual onslaught of showstoppers.

Tom Hinchcliffe and Lily Brown as the Les Mis Thénardiers were ‘masterful’, Jess Batholomew’s Castle on a Cloud was beautiful. Sophie Moss brought out the hankies again with On my Own, before the cast burst barricades with Do you Hear the People Sing. Seven of the senior singers gave us an unforgettable performance of Rent’s Season of Love before the junior cast belted out Naughty and Revoltin’ Children, from Matilda. Tom Hinchcliffe took over the tearjerker role with Miss Saigon’s Bui Doi, before we hit the Shrek swamp with Gaby Morris, Elena Vinall and Sophie Moss singing I Know it’s Today to rapturous applause. Sophie Calderwood and Lily Brown were Wicked in What is this Feeling and Grzegorz ‘G’ Todryk reigned supreme as George III in You’ll be Back, from Hamilton. The show closed with Rachel Budd and Elena Vinall in Mack and Mabel, singing and dancing with the entire cast to Tap your Troubles Away. Fresh from Wizard of Oz last year, Melanie Vinall directed and Musical Director Philippa Lucas was joined by her Brit School student band, Lucy, Benedict and Reg. Kerry Brackpool had an enormous task creating and arranging the choreography and Ian Caldecourt held the show together as MC and Miss Trunchbull. Ollie Locket made his OOS lighting debut at the Barn to great acclaim, working wonderfully with John Chinnock on sound, who had more radio mics than ever before for this show. All the 34 cast members ranged from age 8 to 18 with some new faces and many seasoned Barn performers. One Barn stalwart said that the show was very slick and fast paced, which is a credit to 17 year old Tom Allgood making his debut as Stage Manager. Tom’s four-man crew, Charlotte, Campbell and Rex were also young, being between 15 and 18, with James being an outlier exception. OOS are extremely proud that such a young cast and crew, under expert direction have delivered one of the most memorable shows for all who saw it. Tom Allgood had the last word when he said it was crime for anyone who loves musicals to have missed Curtain Up!, as both the cast and the audiences wanted to do it all again.

Photos courtesy of Jane Gautrey and words by James Vinall
On 25th October, join musician and composer Sir Richard Stilgoe as he steps on stage with best-selling novelist, television personality and one of the UK's top gardening experts, Alan Titchmarsh.

Alan was the presenter of Gardener's World, the hugely popular Ground Force and The Alan Titchmarsh Show. He writes regularly in BBC Gardener’s World Magazine, Country Life and The Sunday Telegraph, is a Vice President of the Royal Horticultural Society and patron or president of over 50 charities.

You'll take part in a Q&A, enjoy a complimentary drink (post event reception) and meet Alan after his on-stage interview.

All proceeds will go to the Orpheus Centre in Godstone, a registered charity (1105213) and an independent specialist college. They focus on developing independence skills through performing and visual arts and make dramatic improvements to young disabled adult’s lives. They believe that every young disabled person should have the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers and they offer a personalised study programme focusing on building independence, communication and social interaction skills through the arts, supported housing and a personal care service.

Their students are between the ages of 18 and 25 and have learning and/or physical disabilities. They stay at Orpheus for up to three years. Everything at Orpheus is focussed on maximising lasting independence for their students. They have performed at the House of Lords, the Royal Albert Hall and venues across the UK and worked with schools, prisons, community groups and businesses to break down barriers and challenge stereotypes.

Please note: Doors open at 7.00pm and the event will start promptly at 7.30pm. If you or your party have accessibility requirements, please book Row A.

Tickets are £25-£35 via www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk for card purchases or phone 01959 561811.

Better security at Barn
For some time now we have been concerned at the condition of the front doors to the theatre as they begin to show their 95 years of use. We have recently installed a roller shutter door behind the wooden doors which improves security to those doors. Keyholders should please note that this new shutter should be opened at any time the theatre is in use and closed just prior to the lights being turned off.

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.

Electronic copies are available on our web site at 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

Press deadline for the next issue is Friday 18th October

The Oxted Sessions presents... Biggins! Unleashed! on Wednesday 23rd October at the Barn Theatre.

Christopher Biggins has been lighting up British TV for over 40 years, and is one of the UK’s most recognisable and loved media personalities. Biggins has led quite a life: three years as ‘Lukewarm’ on the iconic sitcom Porridge; host of children’s game show On Safari; Winner of I’m A Celebrity... in 2007; a stalwart of the British panto scene… and that’s only scratching the surface of a remarkably varied and successful career.

Biggins will be visiting the Barn on Wednesday 23rd October for an evening of conversation, comedy and chaos! This will be Biggins as you’ve never seen him before, talking candidly about his career, the television industry and the world today. Audience questions will be answered; audience participation will be required; and there may be a surprise or two in store...

Tickets will go on sale Friday 2nd August at 10am. 01959 561811 or www.barntheatreoxted.co.uk.

For more information on The Oxted Sessions, a series of monthly cultural events at venues around Oxted, search @oxtedsessions on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, or email d.damesick@gmail.com.