

Aquarian Opera are delighted to be returning to the Barn for the second time this year from 17th to 20th of September. It is Aquarian's 10th anniversary in September and we have decided that *Carmen* by Bizet is a fitting production to mark this momentous occasion. *Carmen* is packed with so many well known, rousing tunes that we will send you home, humming and probably driving your family and friends mad for days after!!

The production will be in English which will help the audience to appreciate Bizet's wonderful story line.

Catriona Gallo will be playing Carmen for us. She has already sung the role several times in Europe, and is the epitome of what Carmen should look and sound like. Complementing Catriona will be full line up of wonderful soloists for you to enjoy.

Come and join us, tickets will be available from 01959 570868 from the beginning of June.

CHILDREN SHOULD BE SEEN AND HEARD

The Barn Theatre seems to be a breeding ground for young talent. It cannot have escaped your notice that we are blessed with so many youth groups performing at the theatre particularly during the summer months and this year is no exception.

What is really impressive is the sheer quality of talent that these youngsters have. Being heavily involved with one of the groups I never cease to be amazed at what they are able to achieve. My group, Kenley Holiday Workshop, have now been performing at the Barn for twelve years; I can hardly believe it as I look so young! We have just had auditions for this year's summer show, *Les Misérables*, and I was bowled over by the very high standard of those auditioning. What a difference a year makes; it seemed like it was only yesterday that they joined as 8 year olds and now here they are, young teenagers, battling for leading roles, in what is a very complex musical. They are so mature, professional and dedicated: we could have cast the show several times over. I feel honoured to be part of them.

Then there are 'The Young Oxted Players' who have a very fine reputation for good drama and for whom 2008 is becoming a prolific year. We have just seen over 30 Young Oxted Players in a very enjoyable production of *The Pied Piper* directed by that champion of youth theatre, June Brown. But the highlight of their year so far must surely be the fantastic success they had in this year's Southern Counties Drama Festival of One act plays in February, when they walked away with 6 awards, and went on to compete in the quarter finals of the All England Theatre Festival of One act plays. The group are back again in August with their annual weeklong workshop.

Then we have the new kids on the block, the 'Oxted Operatic Juniors' who take to the Stage in July with the musical *Back to the 80's* (me I go back to the 60's - Ah mini skirts and thigh high boots...!)

Not to be outdone, youngsters from 4 local Stagecoach schools will be performing here in July to raise money for charity.

'The Maureen Brown Dance School' were here in April; Maureen is another stalwart supporter of young dance talent.

All in all I think Mrs Worthington was given bad advice and we are reaping the rewards.

Of course it is not only on stage that you can witness the young talent. Back stage at the Barn has also seen a large number of youngsters taking up the challenge of supporting those on stage and have been involved in a range of skills such as stage management, set building, lighting, sound and music.

Bruce Reed and the Barn Trustees continue to foster and encourage youth groups to use the Theatre and are always willing to offer help and advice on all aspects of theatre life. You can do your part in supporting them by coming along to see and hear these children in their productions this year.

YOUR LEGACY

By making provision for the Barn Theatre in your will, you would be making a lasting gift for future generations. The theatre, now protected as a charity has endured for over 80 years and every sum, no matter how small, is welcomed and spent entirely on vital conservation and improvement works that will ensure that the Barn continues to be accessible for everyone to enjoy. Thank you for your interest and support – we could not do without it.

NEW BARN SIGNS

Many of you have already remarked on the splendid new signs at the entrances to the theatre which have recently been erected. These new signs together with a reduction in the height of the Hawthorn hedges at the front have opened up the front very considerably and we are looking very smart. Our thanks to Chris Bassett who dug the holes for the new posts and to Paul Bowles, keen thespian and Barn supporter and owner of Ovenden Signs Ltd for his generous help with the signs.

BARBARA CIESLWICZ

As we go to press we have been given details of the funeral arrangements for Barbara. The funeral will take place at St Mary's Church, Oxted on Friday 09 May at 12.30pm followed by refreshments in the Community Hall.