

The Club News

March Madness

Inside this issue:	
March Madness	1
Race Night	1
400 Club Winners	1
Plucked from the Past	2
Without Trace	3
Busy House Bees	3
Film Society	3
A Handful of Hoovers!	3
Useful Numbers	4
The Pitlochry Festival Theatre	4
The End Bit	4

What a month it has been. First we had the World premiere of *Without Trace*, with the author Brian Clemens attending the Friday night performance. The Friday audience were treated to an impromptu discussion after the production where Brian answered questions

about his philosophy on playwriting and his own experiences. Brian said he was very pleased with the production we put on.

The dust hadn't settled on this production when Club Drama took over the theatre for their show *Mixty Maxty*. It was hard work changing the

lighting over in just two days but the resultant production was well worth it. I'm only sorry we didn't get a larger audience.

A special thank you to everyone concerned in these two productions for their dedication and hard work.

Race Night



On Friday the 14th May starting at 7.30 pm we will be holding a Race Night. This is the first time that this event has been run since the early 1990's. At that time it was presented by ex-jockey, Peter Ball, who these days carries a little extra poundage and so will not be running on the night (he used to carry the horse). Our MC for the night will be Mark Harris.

There will be eight filmed races to bet on, a buffet and prizes for the winning owner. There is a minimum bet of 50p, half going to the winners and half to the Club funds. Overall this is guaranteed to be an excellent evening. Make a note of the date now!! You can buy a horse for the night for only £2.50 (don't forget winning owners get prizes) or sponsor a race for £15. Come along and cheer your horse to victory.

400 Club Winners

The 400 Club was drawn on Thursday 18th March 2004. The winners were

£50 Mrs B Brooker

£30 Mr M Donohue

£10 Mrs K M Waring
Mrs M J George
Mrs M Hardern
Mrs M Smith
Mrs P E Stuffins
Mr M Granger-Brown

£5 Mr H Hince
Mrs J A Granger-Brown
Mr S F Kelly
Mr F R Eades
Mrs G Jones
Mr & Mrs R W Spriggs
Mrs B Coombs
Mrs L Wright
Mrs A Geggie
Dr M E Anderson
Mrs J M Clark
Mrs B M Swales

£50 Winner

Mrs B Brooker

Plucked from the Past



Those of you who saw “Without Trace” on the Friday when Brian Clemens came probably got the impression he enjoyed our production. We certainly hope so, because he gave a subtle hint that he has another play in the pipeline and we may be in the running to be the first to put it on.

Be that as it may, this is your last newsletter of the season, so I’ve been browsing through the archives for something that may interest you. Believe me, I get covered with dust for your sakes! But my art is more important than personal comfort, and eventually I came up with “Dangerous Silence”, written specially for the Club Theatre, and it was first performed in March 1974. Albert Dobson founded the National Playwrights’ Association. He lived in Northern Moor and of course was a friend of David and Vicki Lane. What more natural therefore than that he should agree with their policy of producing a new play every season, and write one for them? Professional companies aren’t experiment with new plays very much, because the financial risks are so great, so it is left to the more adventurous amateur groups to try them first to see if they work. Even amateur groups can find them risky, as they too can easily lose their audiences with something just bad, or too avant garde that doesn’t suit the audience style.

“Some may be hits, some may not make the grade,” wrote

Vicki for ‘Curtain Call’, “but unless amateur societies are prepared to help the unknown playwright, better plays will never be found or written. At least we shall be giving the poor drama critics some thing to watch.”

Very true, but there was never any danger of the Club Theatre of thirty years ago shocking its audience too much with “Dangerous Silence.” The First Night was packed. “Everybody who was anybody in the Manchester Drama Federation and the Playwrights’ Workshop was there”, wrote Tom Wildern for the Manchester Evening News. The play, a drama of blackmail, was not without some minor faults, he thought, and Albert Dobson needed to do a bit of re-writing, but the audience was completely engrossed trying to unravel the twists and turns of the plot and the tangles of human nature.

Stanley Bowden (Bowden? Where have I heard that name before?) was the adjudicator for the Manchester Drama Federation and he agreed that it was good to see an amateur group fulfilling its proper function of finding new plays and encouraging new dramatists. Mr Dobson owed a debt of gratitude to the Club Theatre for letting him see his play in its true form, rather than words on a

page. The characters could have remained too stiff and conventional; their written dialogue was heavy and stilted; it had a Victorian or Edwardian feel, although it was set in modern times. But the visual presentation overcame these problems. The set could not be praised to highly. The lighting matched the mood. The properties matched the set. The wardrobe was perfect. And the characters came to life on stage! “It was a magnificent production,” wrote Mr Bowden, “and I can only pay the highest tribute to Mrs Lane’s skill in having brought the written play into such vibrant life on the stage.”

And with that memory I have run out of my allotted space for this newsletter. What plays will we put on for you next season? Unfortunately I haven’t the least idea. The Play Selection Committee keeps their ideas Top Secret, for Kremlin Eyes only, Burn Before Reading. I tried thumb-screws, but they were from the joke shop and only made of rubber. As a last desperate resort I even offered to buy drinks, but even that only caused disbelieving laughter. So like you, I shall just have to wait and see – see you all next season. Enjoy your summer and come back in Autumn!

David Eastwood

New Seasons New Plays

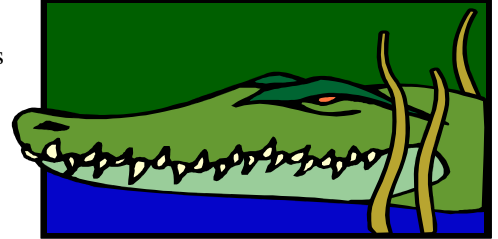


A Handful of Hoovers!

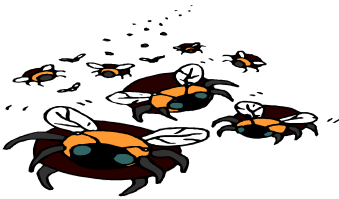
Talking of busy bees there was a sight for sore eyes at our last cleaning day. A fine crowd of helpers were on their marks at 12.30 am and were finished by 2.15 pm and that included their tea break!! We were more grateful than usual as some ‘Club Drama’ tutors, who normally help clean, were tied up with rehearsals for ‘Mixty Maxty II’. You don’t realise how dirty the theatre gets until you give it a good clean. THANK YOU to all those who came and helped deal with this necessary task. Please make a note of the next date which is **SAT 1st May at 12.30.**

'Without Trace'

Well he came, he saw, and he went away very happy and impressed that the Club Theatre had done it again. Our Patron Brian Clemens saw his new play performed on the Friday evening and let it be known that he was delighted with what he saw. Our stage and technical crew outdid themselves and the actors under director, Garth Jones's, guiding hand produced a piece of drama that was full of twists as well as humour. We were delighted to welcome to our stage Darren Smith and Daniel Nkrumah who played the police Captain and his side kick Aboo. Sadly we were badly let down by the local press but were pleased to be able to put the 'Sold Out' signs up by the middle of the week. Some people left it late again to get tickets. If you snooze you lose out and we have advised members on numerous occasions to book early to avoid disappointment. Those who did not take heed missed an excellent production. WELL DONE to everyone who helped put it all together.



Busy House Bees



As acting House Manager for the last play 'Without Trace' I would like to acknowledge

and thank, all the Club members and friends who took time to spare one or two evenings to help on front of house duties.

It was gratifying to see that people are prepared to do the extra jobs, like programmes, coffee & raffle tickets, to

help keep the theatre running efficiently, which certainly happened in this play.

Thank you for your support and efforts and I hope you will perhaps join us again for the last play of the season 'Pardon Me Prime Minister'

Janet Reidsma.

**Once Again Our
Unsung Heros**

Film Society

Club Theatre members who supported our Charity film evening on Sat. 14th Feb. £678.00 was raised which has gone to the Genesis Appeal fund to build Europe's first Breast Cancer Prevention Centre at Wythenshawe Hospital. Our next two shows are:-

April 24th 'Liberty Heights' 127 mins. USA 1999 cert 15 Dir Barry Levinson.

The year is 1954 is explored through the eyes of a Jewish family living in Baltimore. The two sons, Van and Ben, discover girls, one becoming infatuated with a non-Jewish rich girl and the other befriending his school's first black student. And their father gets out of his depth in a money racket.

Special Offer

On April 24th the film society is showing a comedy "Liberty Heights" and has offered to give us the income on any tickets sold to Club Theatre Members. This is a very generous offer and we hope you will take advantage of the film societies generosity. The tickets are £4.50 each. Please book your tickets direct with John Grieve tel 0161 864 2141 (day) or 0161 928 7472 (evening). You can collect your tickets at the theatre on the day but all tickets must be ordered at least 24 hours before the film is shown. Please make all cheques payable to The Club Theatre.

In the past we have had some excellent films such as East is East and Rabbit Proof Fence which our members have enjoyed.





THE CLUB THEATRE

17 Oxford Road
Altrincham
Cheshire
WA14 2ED

Phone: 0161 928 1113
E-mail: secretary@clubtheatre.org.uk
Website: www.clubtheatre.org.uk

Useful Numbers

There is always someone who will be able to help or put you in touch with the right person if you have any questions or queries about any aspect of the theatre. Feel free to call.

Chairman	Mr Ian Bowden	0161 980 2551
Acting , Front of House	Val Harris	0161 928 2277
Sponsorship	Val Harris	0161 928 2277
Treasurer	Roy Burman	0161 928 1477
Stage Director	Steve Smith	0161 941 2116
Costumes	Enid Holt	0161 928 1113
'Thursday Club'	Barry Swithenbank	0161 980 7743
Secretary/Press Officer	John Banks	0161 486 1843
Ticket Secretary	Stella Blackburn	0161 980 8572
Club Drama	Val Harris	0161 928 2277
Club Theatre Office		0161 928 1113

The Pitlochry Festival Theatre

This splendid theatre set in beautiful surroundings, once again has a super programme of plays for the coming summer season. They are as follows:

- “Engaged” by W. S. Gilbert. A stylish Victorian comedy from May 1st.
- “The Shop at Sly Corner” by Edward Percy. A 1940’s thriller from May 6th.
- “A Small family Business” by Alan Ayckbourn. Award winning comedy from May 13th.
- “Lend Me a Tenor” by Ludwig. 1930’s American comedy from May 20th.
- “The Government Inspector” by Nicholai Gogol. Classic Russian comedy from Jun 24th.
- “The Weir” by Conor McPherson. A modern classic from July 28th.

The first week featuring 4 different plays will be the week commencing Monday May 24th.
5 plays Monday July 5th and all 6 plays Monday August 2nd. The season extends from May 1st to October 16th.

So why not take a short holiday in the beautiful Tummel Valley with an exciting theatrical feast. Full details of the programme can be obtained by contacting the theatre on 01796 484626 or visit their website on www.pitlochry.org.uk

Ian Haselgrove



The End Bit

However hard we try a few embarrassing moments do happen on stage. Most of the time the actors can get away with it as the audience will not notice but when the following happens it might just catch your attention. Like when an actor did not

come on with the right prop and the following line was delivered to an amused cast: “And thus , with this poisoned empty scabbard, I do end my miserable life”

Or better still when one actor didn’t check his prop and was

forced to say:

“I’ve got a gun that works out in the car, damn you. Come with me and I’ll shoot you like a dog”

Sometimes however it can be because there is a problem with the set which in one case

caused one actor to have to cover the problem by proclaiming:

“Never mind Algy, we can easily get to the garden through the fireplace.”

So you see an actors life is not always a happy one!!