

The Club News

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Inside this issue:

When you book 2

Stage 80 success 2

Sainsbury's back! 2

400 Club Winners 3

Sounding good! 4

Acts wanted 5

Toadie wins again! 6

Happy New Year!

Do you remember, back in the 1990s, the thought of the twenty-first century was quite bizarre? And now look at us, we've just swanned without a blink of an eye into 2002! Before you know it, we'll all be wearing space suits – or will we?

I know that events throughout the world have left many people wondering just how long the human race has left before it blows itself to smithereens. Certainly those in power seem quite blasé about bringing us to the brink time and time again. I find myself torn between despairing completely, and being full of determination to be positive and optimistic about common-sense and decency finally winning

MOVE OVER HIS PLANTAIN (by Ray Gooney and John Chapman)

If you're wondering how a bedroom farce fits into world peace, I think it goes in the laughter category!

Set in the seventies, and admittedly betraying some of the seventies prejudices, this is still a hilariously written story of three couples all after the same

through.

But we're still left, those of us down at the mundane side of life's street, wondering what we can do to try and make things better. In terms of political things, the answer may well be 'not much' (if someone knows otherwise please tell me, and you'll have yourself a new volunteer!). But there is something we can do, and that's live our lives well, not just for ourselves but for others too. This can be done in all sorts of ways, from cups of tea for friends, to working together to bring enjoyment to large numbers in our locality. And that, for me, is where the Club Theatre comes in. We may not be able to do much about the Middle East, or America, or

bedroom on the same night, while a popular authoress tries to find a new publisher for her Bow-Wow books. I can't say much more than that without giving too much away, but I can absolutely guarantee your ribs are going to be aching. The actors rehearsing it and



Make peace and friendship your aim for 2002.

China's human rights abuse, or famine in Africa, but by God, we can help people here have a good laugh, and remind them that there are still wonderful people, and wonderful things to see and do. And just as each journey starts with one step, maybe world peace starts with friendship and laughter.

So start now!

John Banks the director can regularly be found in stitches in the rehearsal room.

Please read Stella Blackburn's article about booking on the next page, and then get booking. Don't miss it!

When you book, please remember...



Everyone wants the same seat – but only one person can sit there!

From Stella and Jack Blackburn

“We wish to remind all members that there are only 13 seats in row ‘E’. We also only have 22 aisle seats each night. Whilst we do our utmost to satisfy your requests, sometimes it is not possible. Please, therefore, return your booking form as soon as possible. Tickets are allocated on a ‘first come, first served’ basis. Our aim is to send your tickets to you

within 24 hours (Post Office willing!).

When completing your booking form please insert the TOTAL number of tickets (vouchers and paid tickets) required each night in number form and not a tick.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.”

I’d like to add my own endorsement to this plea. Stella and Jack stepped into the breach without hesitation

when we were left without a ticket secretary after the death of Vicki Lane, and since then have worked incredibly hard, and with a speed and efficiency I find extremely enviable. But they can only do so much, and do not have the ability to put seats where there aren’t any!

So please be realistic in your requests. While Stella and Jack can and do achieve an awful lot, the impossible is a bit too much!

Congratulations to the cast and crew of Junior Stage 80 for their successful production of Guys and Dolls – all the best for the future.

Stage 80 success

For those of you who thought the end of Toad would allow us a little relaxation, how wrong you were!

The very next week brought the talents of the young people of Junior Stage 80 to The Club Theatre in their production of Guys and Dolls. I don’t think many of you got to see it – apparently it sold out rather

rapidly! Those of us who were working there didn’t see it either, as we spent most of our time washing coffee cups and bar glasses.

But we heard some of it through the speakers in the bar, and it certainly sounded very good, and the reaction of the audience echoed this.

We were delighted to have Stage 80 back with us after a long absence – not only was

the association financially helpful, but it fosters good relations with another society pursuing the same aims as us.

Our thanks to Junior Stage 80 for choosing us as their host, and congratulations for a highly successful production, and our best wishes for the future. We hope to see you with us again in the future.

Sainsbury’s back in action!



You can park your car in Sainsbury’s again.

We were all somewhat distressed when Sainsbury’s closed for renovations just in time for Toad. And many of us struggled to find parking close by, or made rather longer walks than we’d normally prefer, particularly in the cold snap that arrived just in time for play week.

But you’ll all be delighted to

know that the building work finished dead on time, and Sainsbury’s is now bigger, arguably better, and more importantly, has a car park we can all use again!

And for those who may not know, the car park doesn’t close at night, so there’s no hurry to get out of the theatre on play nights to

avoid getting locked in. And even if they put the barrier down by mistake, we have an authorised key!

So why not stay and meet the cast over a drink in the bar after the performance – we have a good variety of drinks, including plenty of soft drinks for the driver, and we’d love to see you.

400 Club Winners

I have a huge apology to make – I completely and utterly failed to publish the 400 club winners for the first play in the last newsletter. And I have been reminded of this by a number of people (mainly the treasurer, who loves reminding me of things I haven't done!). So I now present to you the 400 club winners for both October and December. If you didn't know you'd won, and/or haven't claimed it, ring the theatre on a work night (Monday, Wednesday or Friday after 7.30 pm) or ask at the bar during the play, and we'll be cheerfully cough up!

I know at the last play there was some confusion as to why we didn't do the draw on Wednesday like we normally do. This is because it was decided by the committee that if the adjudicator was in on the Wednesday, we would move the draw to another day, so the adjudicator wasn't left sitting around for ten minutes waiting for the play to start. So, as far as possible the draw will be done on Wednesday, unless we here otherwise from the adjudicator.

October Draw

£50

Mrs H P Farrington

£30

Mr R Fry

£10

Mrs A Jarvis

Mr and Mrs J Bowie

Mr and Mrs R Benn

Mr K McCormac

Mrs A Jarvis

Mrs S M Phillips

£5

Mrs B J Peel

Mrs E Opie

Mrs M D Littler

Mrs G Jones

Mrs P Pickstone

Miss W Hayter

Mrs J Spilsbury

Mrs J M Coldrick

Mr A Eden

Mr R Lucas

Mrs L A Sykes

Mrs M R Dowsett

December Draw

£50

Mr and Mrs D R Graham

£30

Mrs M Nork

£10

Mrs B Brooker

Mrs H Newton

Mr J B Swithenbank

Mr E Stuffins

Mrs Rimmer

Mrs H M Whitesmith

£5

Mr J Grieve

Mrs E Leighton

Mrs E G McKenzie

Mr C Coldrick

Mr P E Peel

Mrs E Opie

Mrs M Archer

Mrs M Hardern

Mrs Granger-Brown

Ian Bowden

Mrs J B Gill

Mr K P McCormick



Be a winner
with the Club
Theatre 400
Club!

Sounding good!

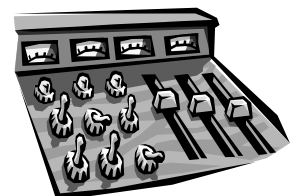
Or is it not so good?

We've been telling you in earlier newsletters about the upgrading of the lighting system that Barry Swithenbank has been in charge of. This is going really well, and the perch is looking quite transformed

now.

And so the plans are now extending to the next bit – the sound system. Sound is just as vital to plays as lighting, but, like the lighting, we're currently working with some equipment that is quite decidedly out of date, and on

its last elbows. Mike Jarvis and Steve Smith are currently pricing up replacement speakers, cabling, mixers and other bits and pieces whose names I don't know, and will be presenting their proposals to the committee shortly. Watch this space!



On the hunt for new
sound equipment!

17 Oxford Road
Altrincham
Cheshire
WA14 2ED
0161 928 1113

For further details, contact
Anna Jarvis, Hon. Secretary
On 0161 941 2116

We're on the Web
www.clubtheatre.org.uk

Acts wanted

We're on the hunt again. But not for money, or equipment, or stage crew (though the latter are always unbelievably welcome!).

No, this time we're on the hunt for YOU!

If you can sing, recite a monologue or poem, dance a jig, or anything else that you think might go in a Music Hall, we want to hear from you. I haven't quite set a date yet, but we're probably talking September or October this year. So get the song books down from the attic and dust off your dancing shoes. If you've always dreamed of being a star, now's your chance. Write to me at the theatre, giving details of what you want to do, and watch this space for more details as to when it will be.

Another thing we're thinking of doing is organising some play-readings. No stage, no props, no movement, just some fine plays read by some fine actors, with maybe some food and definitely some drink. These were very popular in the past, and are a fantastic way of hearing some new and some old plays that we don't have the time to do as a full play. If you have a play you want us to read, particularly if it's one we haven't done before, whether an unknown classic, or a new play, again please write to me at The Club Theatre giving your suggestions and we'll do our very best to arrange it!

Toadie wins again!



Toad of Toad Hall went AWOL in December – but the stoats didn't win for long!

With eight instead of seven performances, probably more of you than usual managed to see this fantastic romp through the Wild Woods, along the river bank and all the way to Toad Hall.

Directed by Val Harris, our musical guru, featuring songs and music written by Val and John Banks, and with a cast of (very nearly) thousands, this was a delight for both young and old.

It took an awful long time – rehearsals, particularly of the songs started way back in September, before we'd even done the first play, while the

building of the various sets, scenery, props (one car and one caravan, for example, all fully mobile), had Steve the Stage Director almost in tears at times. The set, at different times, had to be Ratty's river bank home, Badger's underground home, the wild woods, Toad Hall, a court, a prison, a canal, and goodness knows what else. At times, the set actually spilled over (literally on occasion!) into the aisles, with poor Toadie being chased by police officers and a judge.

It was, in all areas, an extravaganza on a par with

Treasure Island of the year before.

Admittedly the crew were fit for nothing but bed by the end of it, while some of the cast were begging for retirement, at least on a temporary basis.

Extravanzas take an awful lot out of those involved.

But by heck it was good. And while Steve's heart is quailing at the thought of having to do it all again, we may, just may, persuade him to let us do another one next year.

We may not. But we'll try!