

The Club News

Chairman's Chat

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Happy New Year. As I am writing this everyone is getting over the Christmas and New Year excesses.

Some information that came in too late for the main newsletter - Manchester and Salford film society are presenting on 12th February *The Dancer Upstairs* an English language film set in Latin America, and on 5th

March the classic French film *Rififi* both at 7.30pm.

They will be showing two special afternoon films, on 5th March at 2.30pm they will be showing *Lord of the Flies* and on 16th April at 2.30pm they will be showing *To Kill a Mocking Bird*. Both these films are based on books included in this year's GCSE curriculum and they hope that

many students will want to see the films.

Guest tickets are available from John Grieve on 0161 964 2151 (day) and 0161 928 7472 (evening)

The ticket prices are £4.50 for Club Theatre members and a special £2.00 for the special school films.

Another Hand From Alan

For those of us with dodgy knees, bad backs and tired legs a big thank you to Alan Reidsma. Alan has been busy in the time since our last production fixing another hand rail on the other wall leading up to the theatre. So now when you arrive and tackle the stairs instead of huddling and queuing to go up on the right hand side there are hand rails on both sides so that people can walk up and down more easily and with more support.

We are very aware that the stairs are difficult for some of our patrons but we are limited in what we can do at present. In the meantime thank you Alan for your hard work which will make a big difference.



400 Club Winners

The 400 Club was drawn on Wednesday December 12th 2004.

The winners were:-

£50	Mrs J M Clark	£5	Mrs J M Coldrick
			Mrs E Leighton
			Mr & Mrs G R Lane-Young
£30	Mr & Mrs J B Ward		Mrs S C Blackburn
			Mrs J Astles
£10	Mrs B Binns		Mr R Ballantyne
	Mrs J A Granger-Brown		Mrs M Ashley
	Mr M Granger-Brown		Mrs J Ankers
	Mrs B J Peel		Mr R A Lucas
	Mr D Copley		Mr R Rimmer
	Mrs J M Eadie		Mr & Mrs W Hodgkinson
			Mrs J Copley

£50 Winner

Mrs J M Clark

Dear Diary ('The Snow Queen')



18th Oct– Play read through and the only time I see my full cast. Inform the three young people playing my children that due to casting problem I am going to play their Dad. Result is a groan and a cry of 'Oh NO!!'. This sign of confidence bodes well for the next six weeks.

20th Oct -1st rehearsal. Cast members arrive. One red faced from Sainsburys, one white faced with headache and one with beard on face!!

23rd Oct - Meeting with Musical Director. Has scrapped my music for Snow Queen's song as not good enough. Have told her to try, for the third time, to write a decent tune for 'The Hunter's Song'. She in turn told me to write some words otherwise the actors will just have to hum!! Likes the Snow Queen Theme that I composed solely using white keys but she plays it using some black keys. I am baffled!! Finally shows me the score she has written for a scene change. As I can't read music I admire the scribbled up and down lines and nod wisely.

4th Nov - Sound man tells me he can't find sound effect of snapping stick but has good one of fingers being broken! Note to myself to be extra nice to him for the duration of production.

10th Nov - Props man arrives with bundle of wood for Lady of Flowers. So realistic in size and weight she can't lift it! never mind carry it on stage!! A cart is found.

21st Nov - Full run through and first time all cast present!! After counting them twice and having pinched myself I go home and pray that I will see them every night of the play week.

25th Nov - Arrive home after Tech rehearsal. My grey hairs are having a party!!

26th Nov - Dress Rehearsal. Try the white spray dye for my hair. Result looks like an attack by a flock of pigeons after a bad curry. At the end, with emotions running high, hand over my 'baby' to Stage Manager. He disappears into the wings rubbing his hands and laughing hysterically.

28th Nov - 1st night. My daughters and I kick actor playing Erik before the curtain goes up. We feel better for it. Tell him its for luck but then he'll believe anything! 'The Hunter's Song' gets thunderous applause but have to tell actor not to point his gun at audience.

2nd Dec - With mind in turmoil miss my fall mark on stage and crash into fireplace. Frantic radio message sent to Stage Manager from the perch. 'Is the fireplace okay?'

3rd Dec - Wake up stiff and sore, feeling like I have been hit by a bus. Arrive at theatre to be summoned by Stage Manager. Informs me fireplace has luckily survived and instructs me to please fall more quietly as it is deafening the sound man through the stage microphones.

4th Dec - Last night and arrive home exhausted. Tomorrow trip to the bottle bank.

John F. Banks - Recovering Director

**Something
sensational to
read in the bar.**

'Deathtrap'

From the snows and cold of northern Europe we move across the ocean to America for our next production, 'Deathtrap' by Ira Levin. Jean Drinkwater who directed 'Plaza Suite' takes charge of this production which is expected to be a big hit with fans of the thriller gene. There are that many twists and turns to make you perfectly dizzy and it is quite a physical play for the two lead actors as you will discover. We welcome back to the Club Theatre stage, after a very long absence, Steve Abel who takes on the role of Clifford Anderson the fledging new writer.

Opposite him Bob Homer, last seen in 'The Importance of Being Ernest', plays the part of Sidney the experienced and now unsuccessful Broadway writer looking for a hit to take him back into the limelight. The other people who make up this small cast are Caroline Lucas, Kathy Roberts and Alan Gibson. So don't leave it to late to book your tickets .



Melting Hearts

Our congratulations to John Banks and all those who made this production so successful. We have been trying to make our second production of the season different every year and one that everyone can enjoy. We do like to hear from you and the feedback has been quite surprising and shows we seem to be on the right track as can be seen by these written comments sent to the Chairman. Thank you for all these.

“We had mixed feelings about seeing ‘The Snow Queen’ but what a surprise. It was absolutely magical, the settings, scenery and actors both young and old were perfect. It is a memory I will cherish and I personally look forward to seeing next years play.”

“It was refreshing to see the younger members team with the more experienced actors and it worked very well. We have been members since 1961 so have experienced a lot of productions. Keep up the good work, it is much appreciated”

“Congratulations on ‘The Snow Queen’. Excellent performances from all but especially Frances Waite, what a delight. The forest and the Ice Palace were spectacular, breathtaking, music and songs were super.”

“If any group can be identified as setting a local standard for what is best in amateur theatre, that group must be the Club Theatre”

“Thank you for a lovely performance. The children thoroughly enjoyed it and were quite convinced that John Banks was actually blind.”

“I have to say that it’s about the best performance/play I have ever seen at the Club Theatre”

“It was really first class. The more I think about it the more amazed I am”.



Our Day Out...Two

On December 22nd, I once more found myself on the platform at Stockport station waiting for the 8.50am to Euston. This time I was accompanied by my daughter-in-law Andrea and six year-old grandson Adam. After our successful trip to see ‘Cloaca’, we were off to the Old Vic again, this time to see the pantomime ‘Aladdin’ starring no less than Sir Ian McKellan as Widow Twanky. This time the train was forty minutes late and it was raining so the coffee, courtesy of Virgin Trains, was very welcome. Once at Euston, we made for Regent Street to have lunch and to take Adam to Hamley’s Toyshop. The lunch was very easily sorted – NOT Hamleys! It was heaving with Christmas shoppers – the queue to pay 30 minutes waiting-time. Much to Adam’s disappointment, we left empty-handed otherwise we would have been late for the show

At the theatre, it was ‘spot the celebrity’ time, the most instantly recognizable being Jeffrey Archer and his wife. We were sitting in the Circle this time round and had a good view of the stage and, as it was a matinee, there were lots of children, so a lovely audience for the cast of the pantomime. It started well with Roger Allam as the ‘baddie’, Abanazer, getting well booed from the off, but then Aladdin arrived with a broad Glaswegian accent and wearing tartan baggy trousers. He could possibly be a fairly good Blue Peter presenter but an actor? – No! He couldn’t sing or dance and was extremely irritating. Maureen Lipman played the part of Widow Twanky’s sidekick, Dim Sum and was rather subdued. According to the programme (£3.00), she actually rang up to ask if there was possibly a part for her but the character was undemanding and I felt that her talents were not used profitably. The Emperor was played by Sam Kelly of ‘Hallo, hallo’ fame and he fared slightly better. The Princess looked fine, could sing but made little impact but then, not many principal girls do have much of a chance to shine – do they! Her ‘best bit’ came when she was joined by Aladdin to sing a song especially written by Elton John for the show. This they put over quite well but I cannot see the number called ‘I believe in you’, getting into the charts.

The chorus worked hard but, as Andrea whispered to me at one point, were not dancers and it showed. The Brokers Men, a man and a woman (political correctness rears it's ugly head), worked hard and rushed around a lot. A slapstick sequence involving ladders and paint was amusing and the children loved it, which is, of course, what it is all about!

Now I come to the star of the show and he really was outstanding. His costumes got better and better as the show went on and he had a ball! A big impact was made when he appeared dressed as the blonde one from ABBA – white satin figure-hugging jumpsuit, long blonde wig topped by a little juliet-cap but, when he walked on towards the end of the second act dressed as Britannia, he brought the house down! He carried a shield and wore a helmet, two fairly large bows and little else. As Ian McKellan has very good legs, he carried it off most successfully.

I could write so much more but the editor might complain that I’m taking up too much room so I will conclude by saying that although I seem to have been slating this production, we did have a good time. For me, watching Adam’s face, especially during the ‘he’s behind you’ bit, made my afternoon. When I asked him which bit did he like the best, he just said, “All of it”. What more can I say.

Val Harris



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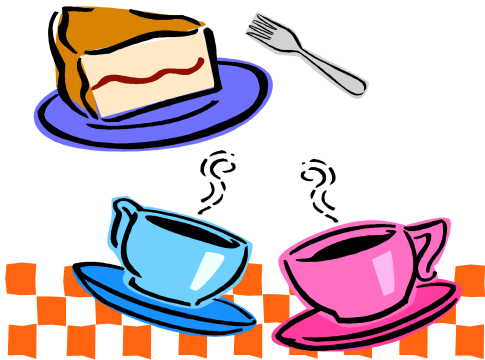
Phone: 0161 928 1113
E-mail: secretary@clubtheatre.org.uk
Website: www.clubtheatre.org.uk

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

Dust & Shine



Christmas is over and with the new year comes the time to get our theatre ready for our third production. Again we ask you if you can spare a little time to come and help us get the place looking and smelling spick and span in the space of a couple of hours. A lot of new people have visited our theatre in the last few months and have made some lovely comments about it and we are determined not to see standards drop.

So if you can help us keep up the good work then please join us on **SAT the 22nd January at 12.30** when we will be getting dusters out before 'Deathtrap'. Again wonderful tea/coffee, good company is guaranteed and if we are lucky a piece of wonderful cake from that redoubtable baker Val Harris!!

The End Bit

I was talking to a friend of mine just before Christmas who works in a place where people don't go to have a good time and he gave me the following. I thought that wherever you go or work it is very apt and so here it is to share with you.

John F. Banks

Smiling

Smiling is infectious
You catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me
today
I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner
And someone saw me grin,
When he smiled I realized

I'd passed it on to him.
I thought about the smile
And realized its worth
A single smile like mime
Could travel round the earth.
If you feel a smile begin
Don't leave it undetected
Lets start an epidemic quick
And get the world infected.



We are always looking for fresh, amusing news items, articles or stories for this newsletter and the programme. So if you fancy seeing your name in print or are a writer then please send in your work or any thing you think may be of interest to our members and we will consider it.