



The Club News

A New Year

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It doesn't seem so long ago that I was writing about the exciting plays we had lined up for you in 2002/03. You've seen them now and I hope enjoyed watching them as much as we have enjoyed producing them.

The A.G.M. has been and

gone along with several awards evenings, and all the plans are made for the new season. A brochure of plays is enclosed with this newsletter and again you will see we have something for everyone.

There have been a few alterations this year on the

committee with three new faces joining us - Helen Corrie, Hilary Slater and Barry Swithenbank. John Banks has moved to become our secretary. I extend a warm welcome to the new committee.

Ian Bowden

Membership Fees

At the AGM it was decided, with great reluctance, that we would have to increase the membership fees. The committee had hoped to keep the fees the same as last year. Unfortunately we have been told by our insurance company to increase our insurance cover to the full replacement value of the premises including building a new theatre on the site to current regulations and planning requirements. The cost of this is £1.2 million. We are therefore expecting the insurance to go from the current cost of £2,600 per year to £6,000 - we cannot operate without the requisite insurance so we are forced to pass on the increased cost.

On the bright side even with the new fees you still get a great night out for £5 each.

The new membership fee will be £25.00 per year. A non member will now pay £6.50 for a play ticket. The price for a country member will remain the same at £5.00 plus any tickets purchased.

400 Club

The last 400 club of the season was drawn on 6th May 2003. The winners were

£50 Mrs M Ledger

£30 Mr W R Rimmer

£10 Mrs R Richards
Mrs M Birchall
Mrs R Richards
M & Mrs G R Lane Young
Mrs J S Gregory
Mrs M Doyle

£5 Mrs A Shelley
Mr & Mrs M Smith
Mr & Mrs T E urnup
Mr H Southern
Mrs C Lucas
Ms L Bambury
Mrs M Waterall
Mrs J B Gill
Mr & Mrs G Evans
Mrs H E Gilbert
Mrs J Ankers
Mr & Mrs F R Eades

£50

Mrs M Ledger

Awards and Nominations

This has again been a very hard, demanding and yet, very good season. It was lovely to be able to show everyone, at the AGM, the awards and cups that the theatre has won this year.

ONE ACT FESTIVALS

To begin with, our 'Club Drama' youngsters saw all their hard work pay off as they represented the theatre in both the Hale and the Mid-Cheshire Guild One Act Festivals. They had prepared and presented a version of Shakespeare's well known comedy 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. In The Hale One Act Festival, joint directors Val Harris and Barry Hesketh won the award for Best Director for a Youth Production. Jessica Irving, who played the part of 'Bottom the Weaver', was nominated for Best Youth Actor.

The following week, at the Mid-Cheshire One Act Festival held at Moulton, near Northwich, the group won the Best Junior Production award. Jessica Irving this time won the award for Best Junior Actor while Louise Carson, Michael Ruff and Lucy Spurrell were also nominated in the same category.

AWARDS

The senior section also made their

mark first at the Greater Manchester Drama Federation's Awards Night held this year at the Longfield Suite, Prestwich. Val Harris accepted the Nan Nutall Trophy for Adventurous Work in the production of 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'. At the Cheshire Theatre Guild Awards Night held at Winsford Civic Hall, the theatre won two more awards. The first was the Ron Gleave Shield for Best Lighting and Sound for 'Inspector Drake and The Perfekt Crime' while Rachel Osborne won the Best Supporting Actress for her part as 'Elaine' in 'Arsenic and Old Lace'.

NOMINATIONS

A special mention should be made of all the nominations we received at the awards nights.

At the Greater Manchester Drama Federation awards night, Mike Donohue was nominated for Best Supporting Actor for his role as 'The Dean of Paddington' in 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime' and Peter Nawn was nominated also for his portrayal of 'Sergeant Plod' in 'Inspector Drake and The Perfekt Crime'. John Banks received a nomination for Best Director for the same play. As



well as these individual nominations, we were nominated for the David Lane Trophy for Front of House Management. 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime' won two other nominations for the Design and Technical Award and the Adjudicators Trophy.

At the Cheshire Theatre Guild Awards Night, Peter Nawn was again nominated for his role as 'Sergeant Plod' in 'Inspector Drake and the Perfekt Crime'. Finally, we were nominated for the Bramhall Cup for Best Presentation for both of our productions of 'Arsenic and Old Lace' and 'Inspector Drake and the Perfekt Crime'.

Both of the adjudicators David Wood and Robert Meadows commented that the standard of productions had been very high so we are again pleased that we have impressed.

Many thanks and congratulations to the directors, actors, stage crews and all those people who have worked so hard last season.



**'Club Drama'
Does us proud.**

Slipped Away

It is with great sadness that we have seen several of our faithful members pass away this last year. As mentioned, in an earlier newsletter, we lost the well respected Jack Blackburn. He helped Stella with the ticket bookings and many will remember him greeting everyone as they arrived during play week.

This year also saw the death, at the grand age of 90, of our ex-president, the distinguished stage and screen actress, Dame Wendy Hiller. She was known for her spirit and integrity and became memorable to many, for her broad cheekbones and impeccable enunciation, in a warm but somewhat quavering voice. In 1958 she won an Academy Award as Best Supporting Actress in 'Separate Tables'. As well as treading the boards many times, she starred in a number of films her last being in 1992, a television film, 'The Countess Alice'. She was born in Bramhall on August 15th, 1912 and after completing secondary school joined the Manchester Repertory Theatre. In 1937 she married Ronald Gow and had two children. Her performances were summed up as 'the equivalent of a master class in acting'.

We were also shook by the very sudden and unexpected death of Lynda Banbury. Lynda not only acted here but was also a member of that elite band the Front of House staff here at the theatre. Members may remember her in her last role as 'Tweedledee' in the Club's last Christmas production 'Alice's Adventures In Wonderland'.

Mr A.F.B. Nall, one of our Vice Presidents, also died this year. He was a long standing member and supporter of the theatre and like all the above will be sadly missed.

A Theatre that never Sleeps!

Well not quite! But it feels like it at times. After 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' we have had productions from Forest School, The LA Dance School and Navigation Road School.

Although no more plays, the summer work on the theatre has begun in earnest and first up has been the resurfacing of the back wall of the stage. We have discovered that in fact, it was only the multi layers of paper that was keeping the plaster up on the wall!



Once this has been done, there are still a hundred and one other jobs that need to be done before the season kicks off again with rehearsals for the first play starting in only 5 weeks time! As well as the actors getting to grips with learning lines and moves, the stage crew will be building the first of the many sets required this season.

There are jobs big and small, from building cupboards, painting to general cleaning so if you can spare any time, at any time please let us know. The same small dedicated group who do most of the work will give you a warm welcome and will be delighted to see you.

Just call Stage Director Steve Smith 0161 941 2116 or Barry Swithenbank on 0161 980 7743.

Help us keep the Quality

As a member of The Club Theatre you can help us in many different ways. First you may like to sponsor a seat or as a present for a friend. These cost just £25.00 and you will have a plaque with your name, or your friends or their company name, permanently fixed to the seat back. Contact the treasurer Roy Burman on the Theatre number if you are interested.

We have had numerous comments about how good our programme is compared to other societies and that it is very good value for money. To maintain the high quality and keep the cost down, we rely heavily on advertising and sponsorship. You can therefore sponsor an individual page of the programme for £10 per play or you could alternatively, of course, put an advert in the programme to publicise yourself or your business, this starts at £45 for the season. If you know anyone who may like to advertise or sponsor us then please do let us know. For more details contact Val Harris on 0161 928 2277

**The Programme,
guarantees more
than just 15
minutes of fame!**

New Committee

We often say 'speak to any Committee member' but many members, new and old, may not know who these people are so here is a brief run down.

Chairman-Ian Bowden. Ian IS the Club Theatre as apart from acting and making costumes he has a hand in almost everything else. On play nights he can be found running the bar.

Vice-Chairman-Val Harris. Can be seen both on the stage as an actress and off it as Front of House Manager. She also holds the position of Chairman of the Play Reading and Casting Committee.

Secretary-John Banks. He acts and is also the theatre's Press Officer.

Treasurer-Roy Burman. If you follow the smoke signals you will find Roy and if you ask him for money and he gives you some, then you are talking to the wrong person!

Stage Director-Steve Smith. Head of all things behind the scenes and can be found in the perch or on stage set building.

Props Master-Charles Thomas. Is rarely seen as backstage is his domain. Yet if you need any useful prop Charles will have it.

Actor's Representative-Christine Heath. This lady acts and is an active front of house person and Sainsbury's shopper!

General Members- Barry Swithenbank, Hilary Slater and Helen Corrie. Barry is our Head of Lighting and chief set designer.while the ladies both act and undertake front of house duties.

More on these people in further newsletters.





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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
Drama School	Val Harris	0161 928 2277
Club Theatre Office		0161 928 1113
Theatre Office Fax		0161 928 1113

Front of House

As reported at the AGM, the 'Sold Out' notices have been the norm and not the exception this last season and we sincerely hope that this will continue. However we always (I know, it has been said before) need people to help Front of House. Many of you have indicated that you are happy to do this but wait for Val Harris to ring you. Could you please, when your booking form arrives, indicate clearly if you can help for that play week or ring Val if that is easier.

It really is an important task and easy when there are enough people and it is not an unpleasant job taking into account the amount of laughter that has comes out of the kitchen. With full houses, it becomes very hard work and a struggle for the faithful few. We are very grateful to the people who do this job on a regular basis and not just for one night only. A few more would make all the difference so again **please don't wait to be rung**, let us know.

Goodbye Shakespeare

After working for six months on their production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' you can imagine that both students and their tutors had had enough of our most famous playwright for a while.

Barry Hesketh, our Shakespeare expert, found this nice little light-hearted poem that we thought was very appropriate and it is here reproduced for your enjoyment.

'Imagine SHAKESPEARE wasn't born!
Imagine that whole canon-gorn!
No more actors, no more dons
No more sodding AVON's SWANS!
No TREVOR NUNN, no PETER HALL!
Fun fairs would thrive, and theatres fall!
No more HAMLET, no more LEAR,
No more wondering, was he queer?
No more JOHNNY, no more LARRY,

No more "Prithee!", "Sirrah!",
Marry!"
No more bloody SCOTTISH PLAY,
No more forsooth, and no more hey
Nonny no! No more, I say
And joy could not be more completer
When once we bid adieu forever to
all that bloody *metre!*

Until the next time!!!!