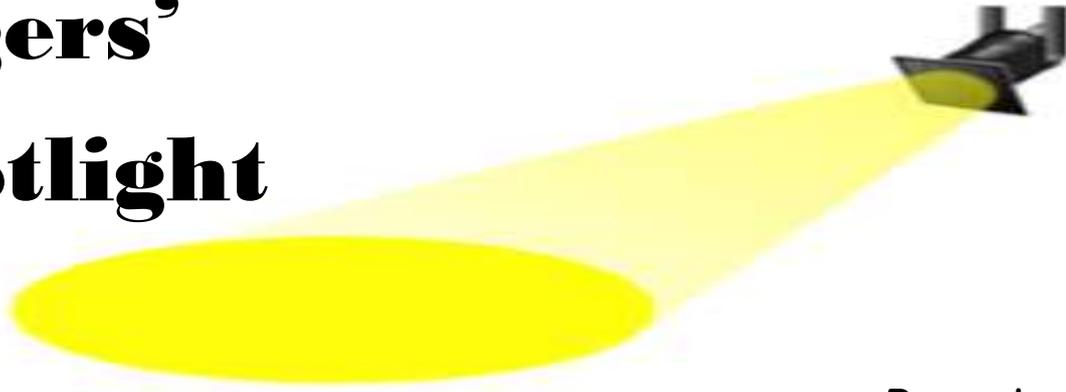


# Stagers'

# Spotlight



December 2020

## Chair's Christmas Message

Welcome to the Christmas edition of *Spotlight*. Normally, I would be looking forward to seeing you all for a spot of Christmas cheer combined with something alcoholic as we navigate the office Christmas parties and the crowds of carol singers for the annual Christmas drinks in the Fox and Pelican. Sadly, that is the latest in the list of ongoing traditions that has fallen victim to this strangest of years.

However, we have also seen new traditions rise and perhaps one such will be the Stager's *Cornucopia*. When we first discussed an online get together for members to give some sort of performance I must admit I was a little cynical of how things would work in a virtual space but, despite some small technical issues, I had a brilliant evening and don't think I have laughed so hard for a long time.

Thanks to all the performers, everyone who joined to watch, the team who helped prepare everything and especially Barry Levy who worked so hard to bring it to life. Who knows, maybe it is the first in what will become an annual tradition. You can see a full rundown of the evening later in *Spotlight*.

We continue to do our best to plan for next year despite the uncertainty of the situation and I want to thank Helen Coyte, Ellis Nicholls, Martin Sims and Sara Wilson-Soppitt for all stepping up as directors for our various productions, at this time. Whilst we do not know *if* the shows will go on next year, we are operating out of hope rather than expectation and putting in the work to give everything the best possible chance of succeeding. We are, of course, ready to respond to any change in Government advice and will keep you all updated if anything changes.

I hope you have a wonderful time over the festive period however you are able to celebrate and here is hoping for an altogether more joyful 2021 that sees us all back putting on and supporting shows sooner rather than later! Go well, Joe

## Upcoming Events

### Wanted- Singers

Haslemere Players will be doing another lockdown song and this time have chosen the fabulous RHYTHM OF LIFE from Sweet Charity, which was staged by Players back in October 2003. They'd love to have as many people involved as possible and with all of us missing out on performing at the moment they would welcome any Stagers who want to take part.

So, if you' are interested and want to know more please email: [players.sing@gmail.com](mailto:players.sing@gmail.com) to register your interest and let them know which voice part you'd plan to sing (SATB). Don't worry if you're not sure, this won't be set in stone and you can have a listen when the music is emailed out and see which part suits you best. All they're looking for at the moment is an indication of the numbers of high and low voices.

Their chosen charity is THE HASLEMERE HALL which is facing a challenging time this year with so many shows having to be cancelled so would love to get as much support for them as possible.

They are hoping to get the music out in time for everyone to record their part over the Christmas break so if you are interested be sure to contact them as soon as possible.

## February One Act Plays

19th & 20th February

(See below for details)

## **Rave Reviews for Stagers' Cornucopia**

*I just want to let you know how much I enjoyed the Cornucopia. It was a wonderful initiative, brilliantly managed ... just what we needed as we approach the end of this very difficult year*

*Really enjoyed the entertainment last night ... lovely to see so many good friends ... a super way of keeping things going during these very difficult times, well done to all involved!!!!*

*That was such fun, thank you so much. Really well organised, compèred and performed.*

The Cornucopia, which took place on Saturday evening, 5 December, was an evening of live online entertainment comprising a series of short performances by Stagers for Stagers.

We were treated to a varied selection of "party pieces" - songs, poems, monologues and readings - beginning with a poetic drink to lockdown and ending on a more forward-looking note with a Christmas-themed trilogy.

As this was the first time we've attempted anything of this sort, it wasn't without technical risks, but in the end there were no serious issues. The decision to let all microphones remain open for audience reaction during the acts was fully vindicated, and made for a lively informal atmosphere.

Such was the success of the Cornucopia that we're very likely to do it again. It's not too early to start thinking about what you'd like to perform!

## **Honk Update**

As we move forward towards the end of the year, we are starting to look forward to 2021 and hopefully the return of live theatre with the Stagers. Wednesday 18th November saw the cast meet for a virtual read through via zoom. We were unfortunately without Dan Wigmore as 'The Cat' who has had to stand down due to the postponed date conflicting with his Masters at Guildford School of acting which he starts this academic year. We wish Dan all the best in his academic and performing endeavours. We will look to re-cast this part in due course when it is safe to do it face to face. We also had to sadly announce that the show is again without an MD. If you know of any MD's available February through to the end of May please let us know. As a director trying to put together a show in the current climate is proving challenging, particularly with government restrictions (6 max on stage at 1 time is proving a particular headache), however I am hopeful that come February when we aim to start rehearsing again, things will have changed again. For now we are happy honking along to the soundtrack at home and learning lines.

Helen.

## Membership News

### **Subscriptions Final Reminder**

A final reminder that subscriptions became due on 1st July. If you haven't already paid and wish to continue your membership please let me have your payment by 31<sup>st</sup> December – details of subscription rates and how to pay are given below.

Please remember that if your subscription remains unpaid at 31st December your membership will lapse.

If you are unsure if you have paid please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you

Stephen Penny (Honorary Treasurer)  
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01428 606964

### **Subscription rates:-**

Ordinary Members - £20.00

Patron Members - donations of £22.00 or more

### **How to Pay:**

Internet banking: Account Name Grayshott Stagers, Sort Code 09-01-51, Account Number 09375505

Please quote your name and 'sub' as the reference and

email [treasurer@grayshottstagers.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@grayshottstagers.co.uk) to advise that you have made payment

Credit / Debit Card:-

visit <http://www.grayshottstagers.co.uk/subs.html>

By Post:- Please make cheques payable to the Grayshott Stagers and send to:- Stephen Penny, Odessa, The Avenue, Grayshott, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6LA.

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## February One Acts

Last Wednesday a small group of Stagers were able to get together in a socially distanced manner to read through the plays which we hope to put on in February for our evening of One Act Plays. Whilst we will not know until much closer to the time if we will be able to stage them it was great to see the interest that there is amongst the membership to get back to performing in some manner, slightly cold and muffled by masks in this instance

For those of you who were not able to join us, here is a quick overview of each of the plays and the people who will be involved in the socially distanced rehearsals to prepare them:

**1. Two Purple Gloves by Michael Park** will be directed by Sara Wilson-Soppitt and will bring a bit of Christmas joy and wonder with it in to February as we join security guard Connie keeping watch over a shopping centre at night. Once the festive shoppers have left she meets Harry Hollingsworth, an old man looking for a place to sleep, and as they talk they find out they have more in common than either of them would have suspected. This is a warm-hearted look at how the festive spirit can bridge the generation gap.

**Connie Franklin:** Helen Phillips

**Harry Hollingsworth:** Ian Wilson-Soppitt

**2. Accommodation Haunted by Alan Richardson** will be directed by Ellis Nicholls. In this light and dark comedy, we join Brian as he finds himself on an unexpected visit to a property letting agency... for ghosts.

**Brian:** Eric Collins

**Lucy:** Jennifer Charters

**Eleanor:** Melanie Tyrrell

**Sarah:** Ingrid Collins

**3. The Highwayman** by our own Martin Sims who is not only directing a play for the One Acts, he has also written it. In the bleak winter of 1750, two mysterious strangers meet in a desolate wood. But who are they and can anyone be trusted.

**Katherine:** Caroline Thompson

**Thomas:** Richard White