

Stagers' Spotlight



July 2021

Chair's Message

It is such a joy to be writing a Chair's message to you all following our first successful foray back on to the stage. You can read more about our collaboration with Tilbourne Players in this edition of Spotlight so all I will say here is that I am so proud of everyone involved in making the evenings' entertainment such a wonderful experience.

It was also a joy to be working closely with Tilbourne Players; we know that it has not been an easy time for any of the local societies and it is exciting to see everyone starting to put on shows again. I was able to see the recent performance of Love Is In The (Open) Air by FAOS, directed by our very own Heather Legat and starring many familiar Stagers' faces.

We are looking forward to the upcoming Showstoppers from Haslemere Players and you can see the details of this and all other shows from local societies on the Diary Details page on our website (if you know of anything that should be on there but isn't, then please feel free to contact us).

As well as the shows themselves, we have a number of other things coming up for Stagers that you should be aware of and you can see more information on them later in this edition of Spotlight.

We are soon to have our first social get together in far too long: a BBQ on Sunday 1st August. I will be there with the family and hope to see you there too. I am sure you will all join me in offering our thanks to David and Ruth Wilbraham for hosting us.

Soon after that - in early August - we have the auditions for There's No Business Like Show Business and then, in September we will have our AGM; look out for more detail on this in mid-August.

I hope you and those important to you stay safe as we start coming back together.

Go well,

Joe

Dates for your Diary

Sun 1st August Stagers Barbecue (28 Tyndalls)
If you have not already signed up please e-mail ruth.wilbraham@grayshottstagers.co.uk by Friday July 30th 10:00pm

Sat 7th August - Auditions for singing parts in the November celebration in the Studio

Wed 11th August – Auditions for acting roles in November celebration

15th September - Stagers AGM

26-27th November - November Celebration

“There's no Business Like Show Business”

Membership News

Two of our members David and Susie Gow are performing with the Oakhanger players in the play below

Oakhanger Players
present...
The Ladykillers
by Graham Linehan
From the motion picture screenplay by William Rose by special arrangement with Studio Canal
Fri/Sat/Sun 27th 28th 29th August 2021
7:30pm curtain - £8
Doors open at 7:00
The Thatched Barn
Binsted GU34 4PB
please contact Chas on
01420 489089 / 07591 753204 /
chasrocks@hotmail.co.uk to discuss
availability

Finally

Sadly Jan Ashwell has died, following illness. Some of you will remember her working with Sylvia Boddington on our costumes. She was last a member in 2011

Barry Levy's Profile

Who are you?

I'm Barry Levy, I'm married to Jill, and we've lived in Hindhead for 25 years. We're both originally Londoners - she from south of the River, and I from the north.

We're now retired. I did various jobs in the computing industry, most recently in test and quality management; and Jill was a teacher, and worked at Liphook and Highfield schools.

Our son, Oliver, who attended Woolmer Hill and Farnham College, now lives in London.



What is your history with the theatre?

Meagre and undistinguished. I remember being in a play at my infants school where one of the props was a dish of dolly mixtures. The cast were allowed to eat one sweetie before the performance, but I found them so irresistible that I wolfed down the lot - causing significant issues for the rest of the cast. I believe I was banished from the rest of the run.

In another very early production, I was a "reserve" tree. I was always shorter than my peers, so even then I felt I'd been cast against type. Sadly, none of the first-choice trees became indisposed, so I was never called upon to give my interpretation.

What is your history with Stagers specifically?

We first became involved with Stagers during the production of "Oh What A Lovely War". We went along to the meeting that Heather held for the community at large, and we expressed an interest in helping out with the set and props. We ended up painting the complicated backdrop, with its ocean liner, field ambulance, howitzer, bayonet-bearing troops, burning ruins and gravestones, all set within a circus tent.

It must have been OK because we were asked to paint the scene-setting banners and other artwork for the following production "Made in Dagenham". Jill (who, of the two of us, is the real artist) went on to produce the spooky portrait of Septimus Tomb for "A Tomb With A View".

My interests are more in the technical aspects of drama production, and I've lately got involved with the sound side of things, managing the music and sound effects for last year's One Act Plays and the recent joint production with the Tilbourne Players.

During the period when live production was impossible, I organised the two Cornucopia evenings, which saw Stagers members performing songs, poems and monologues over Zoom. The enthusiasm with which everyone embraced those events, and the positive feedback we received afterwards, were really rewarding, and demonstrated how much we had all missed that "buzz"

For the future, I'm looking forward to taking over from John Hilder as our NODA representative when he steps down from the role in September.

Apart from Stagers, what else do you do with your spare time?

One thing I looked forward to on retirement was learning to play the piano. I'm not sure that my progress is commensurate with five years of study - but I'm very good at scales!

We both like to keep physically active. We've walked very many miles in the last 18 months, discovering hitherto unknown parts of Hindhead Commons and surrounding areas, and we go walking with the Midhurst U3A.

My favourite participation sport is racketball (a sort of slowed down, less frenetic version of squash), but with outdoor games being more accessible lately, I've been playing a lot of tennis. I'm a member of the Bourne Club in Farnham.

Our holidays tend to be active and city-based rather than relaxing. We've done several bicycle touring holidays, but they've become less ambitious and demanding through the years!

Plays with Tilbourne Players

The Return to the Stage - *Afterplay* and *Two Purple Gloves*

We're back, after an absence from the stage of 17 months, since the One-Act Plays evenings of February 2020. We joined with the Tilbourne Players to present an evening of one-act plays at Grayshott Village Hall and at the Tilford Institute on 23 and 24 July respectively. Both venues' audiences were of similar sizes, seated in socially distanced arrangements but not requiring face masks.

Both societies provided a bar, which allowed much needed social (but distant) intercourse between old friends. Some feedback sheets were provided to the Grayshott audience, the comments on which showed how the audience welcomed the return of live theatre and how they appreciated the performances of the actors. Those comments, when added to the verbal remarks from audience members, confirmed how much live theatre had been missed and encourages our forward plans.

Four of our members took part on the stages, two of whom are also leading members of the Tilbourne Players. All acquitted themselves very well, attracting complimentary reviews from the audience and demonstrating their versatility. The balance of the two plays attracted favourable comment – not just an evening of light comedy but something to create the atmosphere which the comedy could lighten (as one said!). Minimal sets and standard lighting enabled the travelling players to move from one venue to the other without difficulty, although those unaccustomed to the other stage found it, initially, daunting or inhibiting! However, the high quality of the performances overcame any initial difficulties and the audiences did not notice any differences.

We move on, now, to prepare our celebration of 70 years of the Grayshott Stagers for performance in November 2021. Will we still have to arrange socially-distanced seating and take precautions? Who knows. Come along and join in or, at least, join us in the return of live theatre.
Ellis Nicholls(Stagers)

It was lovely to be back in our beloved venue in Tilford. As the audience arrived the atmosphere built. It was thrilling to see friends and acquaintances greeting each other after such a long period. The idea of collaborating with Grayshott was genius. It enabled us to test the waters, how would our audience feel? Would there even be an actual audience? We need not have worried. The evening was a resounding success. We are now more confident about moving ahead with a programme of events in these strangest of times.
Rob Durrant (Tilbourne Players)

'There's No Business Like Show Business!'

***Final call to join the company for,
'There's No Business Like Show Business!'***

Thank you to those who have already let us know that they would like to audition to join the company in singing, acting or compere roles...or indeed a combination! We will need all auditionee names in advance so please contact us now if you haven't yet registered that you would like to audition to sing, compere and/or act in the excerpts. You are welcome to audition for a mix of roles within the company. Please email Caroline Thompson at ct.phoenix@yahoo.co.uk to register attendance and for information on the audition pieces.

Key dates:

For those wishing to practice with a pianist before the singing auditions, we are pleased to offer :

Singing Audition Rehearsals

Monday 2nd August, 7.30pm (Upstairs Common Room)

Wednesday 4th August, 7.30pm (Studio)

Singing and Compere Auditions:

Saturday 7th August, 2.30pm (Main Hall)

Drama Auditions:

Wed 11th August, 7.30pm (Studio)

Rehearsals will be:

Mondays/Wednesdays at 7.30pm, starting 16th August

Show dates:

Friday 26th & Saturday 27th November, three performances including matinee on the Saturday. The team of Directors (Mary, Lizzie, Heather and Ellis) are looking forward to forming their company and getting started! With all best wishes from the 'There's No Business' Show Team
PS If you would prefer to help at the show in another capacity such as Front of House, Ushering or Bar, please also let us know! All enquiries Caroline Thompson: ct.phoenix@yahoo.co.uk