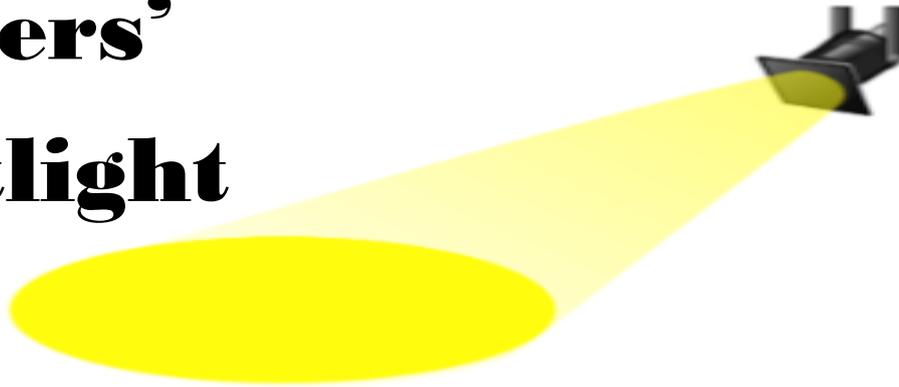


Stagers' Spotlight



March 2022

Chair's Message

It is always very enjoyable to be writing my Chair's message for Spotlight after one of our shows and this time is no different, following the February One Acts.

The One Acts evening offers a chance for us to come together, eat some good food with friends and watch some short plays. Traditionally, the society has used this evening as an opportunity to let new actors and new directors come in and have a go - you can find out more about this later in the issue as we start planning for 2023. This year saw the debut of a new writer as Martin Sims directed his very own play - The Highway Man. It was really exciting to see a member bringing such creativity to our stage and proved to be a brilliant start to the evening.

We have received some lovely comments about the evening and I certainly enjoyed myself watching them on the Saturday evening whilst doubling up as an usher. A big thank you to everyone who supported Front of House, especially helping to get hot food out to the audience each night.

I was also there on the Friday night to give two roses over to Barbie McSean as rent for the scenery shed. As you may know, since 1964 when the scenery shed was built, Grayshott Stagers have paid a single red rose every year for the rent of the land on which it sits, but as we were not able to do the One Act Play evenings in 2021, this year we had to give over two.



It was a very enjoyable evening and all of the plays made me laugh out loud consistently; congratulations should go to each cast member and all of the directors. It can sometimes be challenging to really bring out characters in such a short format but across the plays we met a wonderful and varied ensemble of rogues, ghosts and thespians.

What made the evening really special however, and I have heard this from other members of the audience too, was that alongside the jokes each of the plays had moments of real emotion - joy and sorrow - which left me pondering life, death and the importance of human connection and relationships. You could say that is the role of all theatre or maybe it is the impact of coming back out into the world and enjoying the experience of shared entertainment but I was struck by how moved I was by these themes which ran through the different plays. Congratulations once again to all involved.

Finally, as you may have seen, we received the sad news that we had lost some members of the Stagers family this month. I hope all those they leave behind can find a degree of solace and joy in the memories of the happiest moments they shared. You can see a tribute in the Membership News section as well as a welcome to our newest member.

Go well,

Joe

One-Act Plays

As the recent one-act plays were well received, we must turn our thoughts to the next presentation on 17 and 18 February 2023. We would like one-act plays to be suggested and for new or less frequent directors to offer their services. As we have usually done, we wish to encourage less experienced directors to develop their skills with these plays, including being experimental and avant garde, if you wish. Now is the time to come forward with that play suggestion and to express an interest in directing for February 2023. Please send your details to Ellis Nicholls, convenor of the play selection committee, on ellis.nicholls@grayshottstagers.co.uk as soon as you can. Ellis will be happy to discuss the obligations on a director and to offer advice and guidance both before and during the rehearsals

WhatsApp

Like many societies starting to rehearse shows again we have found a show WhatsApp group useful to connect the cast and share messages of support and urgent updates. We were even able to replace one of the Ushers at the recent One Acts Evening thanks to Susie Gow's rapid response. Based on this we are going to develop the group initially set up for 'There's Business Like Show Business' to a general Stagers' group.

It will not replace our other communication channels and all important information will still be shared by email but we hope that it will give you all a different way to connect with each other and the society.

So if you have WhatsApp on your phone and would like to be added to the Grayshott Stagers group please email your mobile phone number to our secretary at Jennifer.charters@grayshottstagers.co.uk

Membership News



We were sorry to report in February the sad news of the deaths of Jenny Page and Barbara Badger.

In the late 1980's Jenny began to support her husband, Ian, as he joined Stagers as a regular performer in our productions. She became a member herself in 1992 and was still supporting us as a Patron Member when she passed away. Thank you, Jenny, for all you did, often unseen, for Stagers.

Barbara ('Barbie') officially joined in 2000 but had been introduced to us by Liz Dobson some years before. The following tribute from Marian Walker sums up what Barbie, an Honorary Life Member, had meant to Stagers since that time:

While many Stagers join the society in order to act on stage, some prefer to help in other ways and without them we couldn't exist! Barbie was a backstage star, together with many other members. She could always be relied on with props - managing to gather everything needed for each production. She was always willing to help with all projects, including storage of the February Play items. She was a great member who was always ready to help if needed. She will be much missed.

Our thoughts continue to be with both families as they prepare for private funerals and then celebrations of life. If you would like details, please contact jennifer.charters@grayshottstagers.co.uk.



On a much happier note, we extend a warm welcome to **Kyrie Carpenter** as a new member of the Stagers. You will know Kyrie's dad, Tony, from such productions as *The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes*. We look forward to them treading our boards together as Cat and Ugly in *Honk!*

Honk Update-26th-28th May 2022: including a *matinée*



Rehearsals for Honk! are now underway. It was lovely to have the whole cast together for a read through and sing along, which had been a long time coming. Honk! is an incredibly funny musical for all the family and I can't wait to bring it to life on our Grayshott stage. The box office is now open, so get booking

Book here through the Box Office today

If you would like to help in some capacity; publicity, social media, rehearsals, front of house, back stage bar etc. please email Caroline Thompson, at: ct.phoenix@yahoo.co.uk

Upcoming Events

Come On, Jeeves

24-26th November 2022

Directed by Sara Wilson-Soppitt



The play was written in the summer of 1952, and toured the English provinces in the summer of 1954. Wodehouse adapted the play into the novel Ring for Jeeves, which was first published in April 1953, a year before the play reached production. In the play, the young aristocrat Bill, Lord Towcester, cannot afford to maintain his large country house. He tries to solve his financial problems with the help of his resourceful butler, Jeeves.

2nd July 2.30pm Main Hall: Come on, Jeeves Auditions:
Watch this space for Presentation date details



Quiztastic!

Coming up on Saturday April 30th is Sam's World Scout Jamboree 2023 Quiz Night.

Sam is the son of Alex and Danny Yates and grandson of Heather and Tony Legat. He is a dedicated scout who has been selected to attend the 25th World Scout Jamboree taking place in South Korea in August 2023. To take up his place, representing Hampshire and the UK, Sam needs to raise £4045.

We're inviting you to join us for a fun quiz evening with supper. Quiz Masters will be Joe and Abi White who provided us with entertaining lockdown

quizzes and your dinner will be prepared by the team that catered the 2018 – 2020 Grayshott Stagers February Plays. There will also be a bar so that you can wet your whistle.

Sam's WSJ Quiz will take place at Grayshott Village Hall on Saturday 30th April at 7.30 pm. Doors will open at 7pm. For £15 pp we'll provide you with a 2-course dinner, a pay bar and plenty of quiz fun. Get up a team - up to 8 on a table or we can team you up if you are few in number.

Don't delay – Book your place now: 07879 683787 or alexandra.legat@gmail.com

FAOS MTG

If you fancy another quiz or want a practice run before Sam's WSJ Quiz, FAOS MTG are organising a quiz for Saturday March 19th to raise money for the Pilgrim Project at the Spire. This is to continue developing the Spire Church into a community resource.

Tickets are £15 pp to include curry (vegan option available) and your first drink. Make up a team of 6 and let secretary@faos.org.uk know your team's food choices by March 16th. Quizzers will be expected at the Spire Church, South Street, Farnham (opposite Sainsbury's) at 7.30 for 8.00.

Kipps

Kipps is the contemporary stage version of the timeless musical treasure Half a Sixpence and is based on the H. G. Wells semi-autobiographical novel, Kipps: The Story of a Simple Soul. This amazing show cleverly reinvents the classic Half a Sixpence for the modern age – but with even more Flash-Bang-Wallop! Masterfully written by Julian Fellowes, (Downton Abbey) with a brilliantly infectious new score by George Stiles and Anthony Drewe (Mary Poppins), this uber talented team updated this very British musical and took the West End by storm, with dazzling showmanship, joyous verve, cracking humour and amazing song and dance numbers.

Arthur Kipps, an orphan, is an over-worked draper's assistant at Shalford's Bazaar in Folkestone, at the start of the last century. He is a charming but ordinary young man who, along with his fellow apprentices, dreams of a better and more fulfilling future. A chance meeting with Mr. Chitterlow, a burgeoning playwright, leads Kipps to find that he has unexpectedly inherited a fortune, which then propels him into high society and confuses



everything he thought he knew about life in general. He has the attention of two young ladies in his new world – his childhood friend and not quite girlfriend, Ann Pornick and the beautiful and classy Helen Walsingham – both of whom claim to love Arthur. With the help of his friends, Arthur learns that if you want to have the chance of living the right life, you need to make the right choices – so who will he choose?

This fabulous night of fantastic and uplifting entertainment is on from 22 to 26 March 2022 at Haslemere Hall. Book now on haslemerehall.com or 01428 642161 to avoid disappointment.

Comedy Training

You may recall that we promoted Chris Mead's Improv Comedy School in our last Spotlight.

He thanks us and reports that the first course at The Maltings Farnham was a sell-out. He is following it up with:-

Improv Comedy for Beginners - from Thursday 31st March (for complete beginners)

Improv Comedy: Next Steps - from Tuesday 29th March (for anyone with some stage experience who doesn't need the basics)

Click on the links above to see more details.

Please let us know if you join any of these classes. There could be an opportunity for you to display your talents at a future Stagers' event!

Committee Profile

Who are you?



Eric Collins - recently given the opportunity to take over the lead of the Grayshott Stagers' publicity sub-committee and forgetting everything experience has taught me, accepted the challenge. My history includes a long military career as an engineer followed by 25 years in engineering insurance and IT. I thought I had retired but seem to have turned my car restoration hobby into a

full-time job and am as busy as I ever was.

What is your history with the theatre?

I had absolutely no desire to tread the boards but as a parent of a long-standing junior chorus member was involved on the periphery. Some five years ago my daughter went for a junior chorus role in the Haslemere panto and volunteered me for men's adult chorus. The panto was Aladdin but if it had been Snow White I could have played Grumpy! However, after only a few rehearsals I began to realise what a thoroughly rewarding and fun time I was having and went on to appear in shows such as The Full Monty and Shakespeare's Twelfth Night to name but a few.

What is your history with the Stagers specifically?

I joined the Stagers shortly after my first Panto chorus appearance as I had been asked to take a small chorus part in The Revenge of Sherlock Holmes. At one of the early rehearsals I was asked to read in for PC Bottomley and found I had been cast! Since then I have appeared in Menage a Trois, Made in Dagenham, A Tomb with a View, The Wrong Ladder, There's No Business Like Show Business and Accommodation Haunted most recently. Hugely rewarding, challenging and fun and it is hard to imagine a more welcoming and encouraging group of people to do this with.

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

As a parent of a number of children (mainly adults now) my spare time, such that it is, is largely consumed by eleven grandchildren. I still enjoy challenging myself with long distance walking events as the marathon running is now a distant memory and hope to complete the 60 mile Queen Elizabeth Country Park to Brighton race course challenge for Oxfam again when it's next organised.



22nd-26th March 2022: Kipps (Haslemere Players)

26th-28th May 2022: Honk

2nd July 2.30pm Main Hall: Come on Jeeves Auditions

24-26th November 2022: Come on, Jeeves

Visit our website for more Information
<http://www.grayshottstagers.co.uk>

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