

Issue 84

November 2004



THE GRAYSHOTT STAGERS'

Newsletter

Chairman's Note

Cabaret will be presented in two weeks' time. From what I have seen of rehearsals I can tell you that we are in for a treat, so order your tickets as soon as possible. The Box Office is now open at Grayshott Books in The Square, Grayshott, or give Thelma a call on 01428 605194. I announced last time that we would be presenting the Saturday performance in a "Café Theatre" style, but I regret that this was not possible to do, and the seating layout will be as normal.

The presentation meeting for *Holiday Snap* will be on Wednesday 1st December, in the Common Room at Grayshott Village Hall. Please try to get along as it will be a good evening, and will whet our appetites for the greatly entertaining show to come.

I would like to express here my thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of the *Grayshott 24*. If there was a weak link in the show it was probably the direction, this being my first time as a director. If I hadn't had help and advice from Doreen Wyld, I don't know what might have happened. A report that was sent to the local newspapers appears elsewhere in this newsletter. A number of people have remarked that they would welcome the opportunity to do yet another '24', perhaps in three years' time. I should welcome comments from anyone who is interested.

A suggestion was made at the AGM regarding the possible distribution of the newsletter by electronic means, primarily to save on postage and paper. As some of you will be aware, I usually post a copy of the newsletter on the Grayshott Stagers website, but as this is a publication for members, the version posted on the internet does not usually contain financial information as it is nobody's business but ours. If anyone would like to receive their newsletter, in Acrobat format,

by email in future, please let me know by emailing newsletter@grayshottstagers.co.uk and I will ensure that it happens next time.

Postcard Piece

I did say that I would report on the US Grand Prix at Indianapolis, and although I could happily drone on about this for hours, I thought that I'd share some of our experiences from the Summer.

Driving into Central Florida the day after hurricane Charley had passed through was quite an experience. There were a few warning signs as we left Georgia suggesting that people should stay away from Florida if their journey was not essential, but as our accommodation and other arrangements were already booked, we decided to press on. There were an enormous number of emergency vehicles, particularly belonging to the electricity companies, on the road, in convoys, and it seemed that every electrician in the USA was headed for Orlando and Kissimmee. When we arrived at our resort we were relieved to find that the storm damage there was minimal, but only a few miles away the devastation was immense. If you cast your mind back to the Great Storm here in 1987, and the number of trees that were blown over in the Grayshott & Hindhead area, you would begin to get the idea of what it was like. We saw an aircraft hanger at Kissimmee Municipal Airport that had been blown over, damaging all thirty five light aircraft stored inside.

Happily, by the time we left Florida, delayed this time by hurricane Gaston, electricity had been restored to almost all residents, although more bad weather was in store for them with hurricanes Francis and Ivan on their way.

Tony

The Committee

This year's A.G.M. was attended by 34 Stagers' members, many of whom stayed on after the business to chat and enjoy the 'lite bites' and wine provided by the Committee. During the meeting we said *au revoir* and thank you to outgoing Committee members Alex Legat, Jane Sargeant, Alan Stone and Vice Chairman, Richard White. The remaining Officers and Committee were re-elected, with John Hilder taking on the role of Vice Chairman, and new members Marcus Shepperdson and Mary Terry welcomed aboard. There are still two vacancies on the Committee to make us up to our full complement. Please don't be shy, it's not too late to put yourself (or somebody else) forward! Please contact me (01420 22291 or e-mail melanie@grayshottstagers.co.uk) or talk to any Committee member.

Chairman: Tony Legat
Hon. Treasurer: Stephen Penny

Vice Chairman: John Hilder
Hon. Secretary: Melanie Tyrrell

Hon. Auditor: John Marshall
Jan Ashwell, Barbie Badger, Sylvia Boddington, Marcus Shepperdson,
Thelma Robertson, Mary Terry, Marian Walker

The February One-Act Plays

The plays chosen were *The Janna Years* to be directed by Betty Penny and *Split Ends* to be directed by John Hilder. The read through for the one-act plays took place on September 22nd and the auditions were held 10 days later on October 2nd and the casts were chosen as follows, with a one role still to be arranged :

The Janna Years

Ruby	Barbara Netherwood
Abe	To be cast
Fleur	Helen Laver
Hollie	Katy Boddington
Chas	Marcus Shepperdson

Split Ends

Cyril	Alan Stone
Nancy	Mary Terry
Norman	Adam Coyte
Susan	Susanna Meadowcroft

As production secretary for this popular event may I make a request for people willing to help out in various ways : making coffee during rehearsals, prompts, props, costumes, back-stage, front of house, etc. etc. All offers will be most welcome.

Marian

e-mail: marian@grayshottstagers 'phone: 01428605046

Bits and Pieces

The Annual Inter-Society Quiz

The inter-society quiz will take place in Farnham on 4th December. If anyone wishes to take part and be a member of the team, please contact Barbara Badger (01252 794515).

Even if you do not wish to be on the team we still need supporters to cheer the team on. Please put it in your diary.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Since the last newsletter we have welcomed new or re-joining members Alex Boughton, Angela Cantan, Elizabeth Chester, Helen Hamilton, Rebekah Lawes, Susanna Meadowcroft, Rachel Perkins, Racheal Roberts, Jane Whalley and Natasha Wheeler, many of whom are in the cast of Cabaret.

Related congratulations go to Sally Crossley who got married this summer and is now Sally Gray.

Jeff Morris has 'retired' from performing to become a Patron Member and is joined by Marian Walker's husband, Alan. We are also pleased that Ian Badger has become a Patron member.

If we have overlooked anybody or any event, apologies, please let us know.

Rod Hall Memorial Award

Rod Hall was a literary agent who was murdered in London earlier this year. He dealt with the screen rights etc for films such as Billy Elliott and the Full Monty.

The biennial award will be open to unrepresented playwrights aged 18 - 30 who will be invited to submit a full length stage play. On offer is a £5,000 award and the Soho Theatre have offered to work as a receiving house should the play be produced.

If you would like further details about this award, please contact Lynn Patton.

Pattsey@btinternet.com



Carol Singing

The carol singing evening is booked for 17th December. The evening is always enjoyable, whatever the weather, with a warm up and bite to eat afterwards. Please come along, the more the merrier. Contact Barbara Badger (01252 794515) if you are interested in joining us - proceeds are to Macmillan Funds.



Holiday Snap



Our full length play for May 2005 will be **Holiday Snap** by Michael Pertwee & John Chapman.

Tony Harris will be directing this hilarious farcical comedy and will be looking for a cast of 4 men and 4 women.

The laugh-filled tale of mistaken identity unfolds as a Portuguese time-share villa has been double-booked without the company representative, the shortsighted and tipsy retired English Commander Chittenden, knowing. When Mary and Henry arrive shortly after Eve and Les, the confusion is comically complicated when each couple mistakes the other for the servants!

Henry seems to have the upper hand when he discovers that Eve is married, but not to Les, when his mother-in-law arrives and he has to bribe the other couple to impersonate his alibi, Sir Piers and Lady Marchbanks. It looks as though things will work out until the real Sir Piers arrives, followed by Henry's wife!

The read-through of *Holiday Snap* will take place in the Grayshott Village Hall Common Room on 1st December and auditions will take place in the main hall on 8th January. If you are interested in taking part please make a date in next year's diary and if you'd like to help behind the scenes please let me know. *Marian*



Cabaret



We are now within a few weeks of staging **Cabaret** – a musical play with music by John Kander and lyrics by Fred Ebb. First produced in New York in November 1966 it starred Joel Grey as Emcee. Fifteen months later **Cabaret** hit London's West End and starred Judi Dench as Sally Bowles. A film version was produced by Allied Artists in 1972 with Joel Grey, Liza Minnelli and Michael York. Both stage and film versions received rave reviews and both have taken their places in the halls of fame of all-time great productions.

The show is set in the sleazy Kit Kat Klub, 1930s Berlin at the time of the upsurge of Hitler's Nazis. The show is noted for its memorable songs such as 'Willkommen', sung by the androgynous and bizarre Master of Ceremonies (Emcee), and of course, 'Cabaret', immortalised by Liza Minnelli. The show is spectacular for the exaggerated dancing of the Kit Kat Girls reflecting Berlin's pre-war status as a seedy melting pot to which Bohemians of all nationalities were drawn.

Cabaret is a musical play in which the depth of the dialogue is clearly shown as it addresses the moral and political issues of the day. The strong story lines are interwoven into the glitz and sleaze of the Kit Kat Klub where 'life is beautiful'. The show features a talented cast which has captured the exciting, yet malevolent, mood of the era and portrayed fully the 'laissez-faire' attitude of society at a time when Germany was embarking on a disastrous political course. The play is full of memorable songs and the dances capture many of the ideas of the unforgettable choreography created through the genius of Bob Fosse.

It runs for three performances only, 18-20 November, so book now to avoid disappointment.

Andy Boughton

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2004

18–20 November, Grayshott Village Hall

01 December, Grayshott Hall Common Room

04 December, Farnham

17 December, Garyshott Village

2005

08 January, Grayshott Village Hall

25–26 February, Grayshott Village Hall

19–21 May, Grayshott Village Hall

08 June, Grayshott Hall Common Room

07 September, Grayshott Village Hall

01–03 December, Grayshott Village Hall

08–10 December, Haslemere Hall

Cabaret

Read-through of Holiday Snap

Inter-Society Quiz

Carol Singing



Auditions for Holiday Snap

February One Act Supper Evening

Holiday Snap

Me and My Girl Presentation

Annual General Meeting

Me and My Girl

Me and My Girl

The Grayshott 24



The Grayshott Stagers presented Rogers & Hammerstein's *Oklahoma* to an appreciative audience at 7.30 on Saturday night at Grayshott Village Hall. What made this show rather different was that none of the performers, or the musicians, or indeed anybody else involved, other than the organising committee of three, had any idea which show they would be performing until 24 hours earlier. This was the second "Grayshott 24"; a challenge to put on a full musical, properly set & costumed, in 24 hours, the first having taken place in 1998.

Twenty one brave souls volunteered to take part, and settled down to the task ahead of them as soon as the show was announced. Whilst a small committee discussed the casting of the show, the musical directors set to work teaching everybody the music. One of the pianists, Graham Ross, said that he didn't know the show at all, but you would never have believed that if you had heard him play. Graham suggested early on that in view of the amount of time available, the cast should just concentrate on two lines of harmony, but the cast were not impressed, and gave us an impressive four part harmony to all the ensemble numbers.

Rehearsals continued around the clock, and while scenes were being blocked on stage, other people were using different parts of the hall, and spare rooms, to rehearse other scenes, learn and practise dance steps, and learn the music. A full run-through was attempted at midday on Saturday, followed by a dress rehearsal at 3pm.

During the first full run-through it was discovered that the two pianos in the hall were not in tune with each other, and although a number of people said "you'll never get a piano tuner out on a Saturday afternoon", they under-estimated the Grayshott Stagers, and a piano tuner was tracked down to deal with the offending instrument.



Rehearsals finished at 6.30pm, and everybody worked hard to clear the hall and set out chairs for the audience.

The costume department, Jan Ashwell and Sylvia Boddington, worked wonders and everybody was correctly attired. Stephen Penny and David Peerman produced a set which included Laurey's Farmhouse, Jud Fry's Smoke House, a picket fence, and an impressive ground-row of waving wheat. The props team were given a list of requirements at around 7.35 on Friday, and by the morning had produced, among other things, four bales of hay, and a butter churn.

When the show was announced at 7.30 on the Friday, a giant digital count-down clock was started so that everybody could see the time ticking away. This clock had been made for the occasion by Richard Batten, who also lit the show, setting lights while the rehearsals were in progress.

The main characters were cast as follows:

Curly: Paul Tapley

Aunt Eller: Jacqueline Protheroe

Gertie Cummins: Rachel Davison

Laurey: Susie Hond-Stiff

Ado Annie: Alexandra Legat

Ali Hakim: Colin Wolrich

Jud Fry: Phil Street

Will Parker: Richard Milla

Andrew Carnes: John Hilder

The pianists were Graham Ross & Chris Lillywhite, and the conductor was Jeremy Legat. The instigator of the Grayshott 24, Chairman of Grayshott Stagers, Tony Legat, also directed the show, with a lot of help from Doreen Wylde.

Walter Plinge