

Issue 109

April 2013



The Grayshott Stagers

# Newsletter

## Chairman's Note

Hopefully Spring will be showing signs of life by the time you get this newsletter – hard to believe when it's snowing as I write and our daffodils haven't dared to open yet.

However, looking back over the chilly months, we have good reason to celebrate. Firstly, Brezetta Thonger's production of "Calendar Girls" was a record-smashing success, with full houses each night even with an extra seating row added. Wonderful feedback from enthusiastic audiences and a magnificent profit of about £4,500 boosted morale and coffers respectively. Congratulations to all involved in the production. Incidentally, the West End theatre tickets kindly donated to us raised £192 for Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research and were won by Teresa and Peter Marsh. A similar amount was raised for the same cause by the bucket collection in the foyer.

Once again the One Act Play evenings were very successful, thanks to very hard work by the organisers, tasty food and three varied and appealing plays directed by Brezetta ("Green Favours"), Jennifer Charters ("Have a Nice Day") and Susie Dean ("A Jolly Sinister Jape"). Poor Susie was laid low by 'flu a few days prior to the event and sadly wasn't able to see the full fruit of her labours. Pru Harrold returned to cater for us, again on a cost only basis, and we thank her for her skill and generosity. A handsome profit of almost £1,500 was made, one of the best ever.

"Nonsense – The Mega-Musical" is just around the corner with Laura Musco and Rob Miller fine-tuning their cast in the last weeks of rehearsal. Laura has written a piece later in this Newsletter, so I would just urge you to buy as many tickets as you can – it's going to be a fun show.

The presentation and auditions for our November production "A Laughing Matter" will follow the musical; please read Ellis's piece about the play further on and make a note of the dates.

Moving to non-production matters, I am delighted to announce that Mike Lee has accepted our invitation to become an Honorary Life Member in recognition of his loyal, unstinting support of the society over many years.

I am sad to report that one of our former Patron Members, Muriel Smith, has recently died. She was a patron for 20 years until she moved into a home about two and a half years ago. We have just learnt from her solicitor that she has very generously left the society a legacy of £500.

Some of you may have noticed an improvement in the coffee at the One Act evenings. This is because the Village Hall Committee have purchased, with the help of a substantial donation from the Stagers, a commercial machine which produces filter coffee in sufficient quantity for productions, social events and rehearsals.

By the time you receive this newsletter the work on our scenery shed should be almost finished. John Carver from Liphook has renewed the lower part of the front wall and installed four new windows. However, we will need to carry out some roof repairs and re-staining later in the year, so we will be asking for help with this in due course.

Hope to see you at "Nonsense"!

John

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## Nonsense – The Mega-Musical!

Our great cast of 12 is now only a few weeks from 'Showtime' for Nonsense. As mentioned in the last newsletter there were four small parts that were going to be filled from chorus members. These were given to Pauleen Dowsett, Pauline Harries, Shirley Jelliss and Mel Tyrrell. Unfortunately whilst helping Haslemere Players with their production of Calamity Jane, Pauleen Dowsett had her own calamity and broke her foot and has had to pull out of the show. So at quite short notice Jennifer Charters has agreed to step into the breach.



The cast have to fill the roles of a variety of characters including one who's lost her memory; one who used to be a tightrope walker; one who wants to be a ballerina; and another who was pretty handy at stripping down a car engine! I've tried to ensure that each member of the cast has a 'character'. After all you can't look at those on stage and identify them by the costume they're wearing, or the colour of their hair – they're all wearing the same 'dress' and their hair is covered! We ended up with a chorus (i.e. unnamed parts) of just two, after Jennifer took over from Pauleen. I thought that seemed a shame so we've named them Sisters Libraria and ..... Tardia. Hopefully you'll be able to identify them easily and spot the traits that everyone else has chosen.

Nonsense is a very amusing musical and we can promise you an evening of variety, laughter, fun and good music. Although you probably won't know the songs before you see Nonsense I'd be happy to bet that there will be some that you go home humming. Do make sure you book your tickets in good time to come Mount St Helen's School (aka Grayshott Village Hall) anytime between 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> April, when the Little Sisters of Hoboken will be putting on a benefit concert at 7.30pm each evening. At the time of this Newsletter going to print, Friday night was more than 60% sold and Saturday more than 50%, with Wednesday and Thursday also selling so don't dilly dally in getting your tickets. These are available online ([www.grayshottstagers.co.uk](http://www.grayshottstagers.co.uk)) or at Grayshott Books (in The Square, Grayshott).

A competition to win two tickets for Nonsense is also being run. On a chilly Wednesday afternoon in March some nuns finally managed to visit Grayshott, having tried two previous Saturdays when they were beaten by the weather. They had their photographs taken at various places in the village. The first correct entry with the most correct answers out of the hat at our rehearsal on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April will win 2 tickets for Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April. Entry forms can be found at Grayshott Books, on Grayshott Stagers page of [grayshott.com](http://grayshott.com) and at [www.grayshottstagers.co.uk](http://www.grayshottstagers.co.uk). Good luck and do please have a go yourselves and encourage your friends to take part in the competition.

Laura

# Autumn Production 2013

## A Laughing Matter by April De Angelis

An irreverent look at the theatre backstage at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in 1773. David Garrick, who has been both the leading actor of the age and the theatre manager for many years, is debating whether he should present the new play by Oliver Goldsmith called "She Stoops to Conquer" or whether he should give in to the pressure from the Duchess of Kingston (upon Hull!) to perform a new play by the Reverend Cumberland called "The Fashionable Lover". Garrick is under pressure from the members of the Turk's Head, a literary circle presided over by Dr Samuel Johnson which includes Oliver Goldsmith but which has chosen to exclude Garrick, partly because he desperately wants to be a member! Into this mix comes Mr Samuel Catherley, a young gentleman recently returned from his 'grand tour' who now seeks a life in the theatre. Should Garrick cast him in a play? Alongside these events are the members of the Drury Lane company who include Mr Charles Macklin, an Irish actor who claims to have taught Garrick everything he knew, Mrs Susanna Cibber and Mrs Peg Woffington, both leading actresses of the day, and other members of the theatrical company.

Garrick chooses The Fashionable Lover which provokes a riot when it is performed. The company is forced to abandon the performance and to substitute that old favourite 'King Lear' at short notice. Lady Kingston, mistaking Charles Macklin in costume for Garrick in costume, seduces Macklin in a wicker basket on stage during the course of the production.

The events set out in A Laughing Matter have some links to historical reality although the writer has taken certain liberties with the historical timeline. It is certainly true that Garrick turned down the opportunity to present She Stoops to Conquer which was then presented at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden to great acclaim. Most of the characters are historical people although not all of them were witnesses to the events. Susanna Cibber and Peg Woffington, for instance, had both died before these events took place, although they were leading actresses of their day. Lady Kingston was an infamous society lady of the day who was in due course tried before the House of Lords for bigamy having been married to both the Earl of Bristol and the Duke of Kingston (upon Hull) at the same time.

There is a large cast, particularly of men, of varying ages. It will probably be necessary for several actors to double or triple individual parts. The play will be performed in period costume and will be a considerable challenge. There will be a minimum of set but considerable use will be made of the thrust stage to bring the action out to the audience. I hope to use contemporary theatre music from the likes of Thomas Arne to help bring the production to life. The presentation of the play will be at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 22 May 2013 and the auditions at 2.00 p.m. on Saturday, 8 June 2013, both at Grayshott Village Hall.

Ellis Nicholls

# One-Act Plays 2014

The Play Reading sub-committee are busy short-listing suitable plays for next February. We are looking for Directors for these plays and would welcome any offers from members. If you have not directed before this would be an ideal opportunity to try your hand – you can be assured of our full support. We would also welcome potential Directors from outside the society if you know of anyone who might be interested.

Please contact me in the first instance, I will be able to chat to you about the plays on offer and answer any queries.

Angie - ([thehilders@hotmail.com](mailto:thehilders@hotmail.com) , 01428 751898)

## Financial Report

### February Plays 2013

		<b>Initial Budget</b>	<b>Current Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>
4001	Tickets Sales	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,726.00
4003	Bar - Nett Profit	400.00	400.00	573.71
4004	Raffle - Nett Profit	200.00	200.00	279.15
4006	Acting Fees	77.00	77.00	84.00
4009	Cast Meals Sales	0.00	0.00	50.00
6007	Miscellaneous Income & Sales	0.00	0.00	12.50
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>3,177.00</b>	<b>3,177.00</b>	<b>3,725.36</b>
3001	Royalties	220.00	220.00	220.00
3002	Hall Hire - Grayshott Village Hall	585.00	585.00	517.60
3005	Publicity	50.00	50.00	54.00
3006	Ticket Printing	0.00	15.00	12.40
3008	EHDC Premises License	21.00	21.00	21.00
3009	Set Construction	25.00	25.00	31.78
3010	Properties	25.00	25.00	0.00
3012	Sound & Effects	10.00	10.00	0.00
3014	Wardrobe	50.00	50.00	0.00
3015	Make-Up & Hair	15.00	15.00	0.00
3022	Rehearsal Material Hire/Purchase	0.00	0.00	42.00
3024	Catering Expenses	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,304.64
3027	Programme - Production Costs	0.00	0.00	14.48
3999	Miscellaneous / Contingency	20.00	5.00	0.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>2,221.00</b>	<b>2,221.00</b>	<b>2,217.90</b>
<b>Profit/(Loss)</b>		<b>956.00</b>	<b>956.00</b>	<b>1,507.46</b>

# Membership News

We were very pleased when Valerie Shears joined the Stagers to tread the boards in a one act play in February. We now welcome Gloria Simpson and Naomi Ahmed, both of whom will be singing and dancing in “Nonsense; the Mega-Musical”.

Following a lovely wedding in Wales, Tom and Emily Hilder have now emigrated to Australia with their young family. We wish them all the very best for the future.

Mike and Diane Clarke have moved their home in England to Eastbourne. We hope they'll come back to see us sometimes.

With apologies, as always, if I've overlooked anybody or any significant events. Do let me know if you have important news and we can help you share it with other Stagers. It doesn't have to wait for a Newsletter.

*Jennifer*

## Dates for your Diary

2013	Event	Venue
24-27 April	'Nonsense the Mega-Musical	Grayshott Village Hall
13 May	Society Pub Night	Fox and Pelican
22 May	'A Laughing Matter' Presentation	Grayshott Village Hall
8 June	'A Laughing Matter' Auditions	Grayshott Village Hall
10 June	Society Pub Night	Fox and Pelican
11-15 June	Farnham Operatic – 'A Sparkling Affair – 85 Musical Years'	
29 June	Murder Mystery Play and Supper Evening	Grayshott Village Hall
September	AGM	Grayshott Village Hall
22-26 October	Haslemere Players 'HMS Pinafore'	Haslemere Hall
21-23 November	'A Laughing Matter'	Grayshott Village Hall

Keep checking our website for diary updates