

Issue 78

February 2003



THE GRAYSHOTT STAGERS'

Newsletter

Chairman's Note

Once again I have started work on this piece early, and although the newsletter will go out in February, I am thinking about its contents over the Christmas holidays. I hope that you all had a good Christmas & New Year, and that Santa brought you what you wanted. We had a great Christmas in Canada, although having my ranking in the family skiing 'table' very positively confirmed as 'third', with absolutely no hope of ever getting back to my previously held rank of 'first', was a little disappointing, although, I have to admit, not entirely unexpected. The silver lining, as it were, is that there is little chance of further relegation.

Since my last letter, there has been almost as much activity as I reported last time. Regrettably, Kathryn Wignall, our Director for *Annie Get Your Gun*, decided that as we were, at the time, unable to find anyone to play the male lead, and as we were unable to produce the required number of people to participate, particularly in the male chorus, she couldn't continue, and asked to be excused from the production. Of course, I had no option but to accept this request. I am delighted to be able to tell those of you who do not already know that our Musical Director, Doreen Wylde, agreed to take on the entire production, and is now doing both jobs. We are very grateful to Doreen for taking this on, particularly as she is also directing for the Haslemere Players' Spring show, and I hope that everyone involved will give her all the support that they can.

Deathtrap was presented in November, our thanks go to Peter Budd for directing the play, and I would like to compliment the Stage Craft Team on the set. Those of you who saw it will know what I mean, and for those of you who didn't (why not?), there is a picture on the web site.

In December, the Carol Singing evening raised £112.56 for Macmillan Nurses. A dozen or so hardy Stagers braved the elements, and were rewarded with a splendid meal chez Dobson at the end of the evening. In fact, one member joined in the carol singing so close to the end of the tour of the village that we wondered whether the motive was the meal rather than the singing!

The February one act play evenings are now upon us, and we are entering *Alarms* into the festival being organised by the Haslemere Thespians at the Haslemere Hall on the 7th & 8th March. The festival is intended to be a 'coming together' of six societies, each of whom will put on a one act play in front of an audience and a professional adjudicator. Drama Festivals are always good fun, and an opportunity to learn, both from the adjudicator, and from the performances of the other participants. We shall be performing on Friday 7th, and I do hope that some of you will be able to come along to support. Tickets are available from Melanie Tyrrell, priced at £5 for one evening, or £8 for both evenings.

A belated Happy New Year to you all.

Nicky Irvine Performance Workshop

The first **Nicky Irvine Performance Workshop** will take place on Saturday, March 22nd, 2003 at the Village Hall from 10.00 am until 1.00 pm.

The workshop will be run by Martin Wild, director of Forest Forge Theatre, a professional theatre group based in Havant. Based around looking and feeling comfortable on the stage, the workshop will also help with natural looking movement. Communicating character will be addressed highlighting how everybody on stage can add to a scene, however big, or small, their role is. Suitable for all levels of performers, the workshop doesn't just apply to acting - many of these skills are useful in everyday life.

All members of the Stagers are welcome, you don't need to be an experienced performer. The fee for **adult members** is **£5**, to offset part of the costs of the workshop and to support the continuity of the workshops. Members and friends of the Stagers who are under the age of 18 are to be welcomed **free**. It was Nicky's wish by her bequest to encourage and support the involvement of young people in theatre.

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. A proportion of places will be reserved for younger participants.

Don't miss this opportunity to sharpen your performance skills – book your place now.

Contact Richard White: Tel: 01428 643352 or richard@grayshottstagers.co.uk



Social Committee



Since the last newsletter a small band of theatre-goers have been to see *Mrs Warren's Profession*, starring Brenda Blethyn, they also enjoyed a pre-theatre meal.

The Social committee have been busy arranging theatre trips and events for later in the year -if you would like to book tickets or reserve places please contact them. The skittles evening is always great fun and the summer barbeque is making a welcome return again, make sure you put the dates in your diary now.

The Haslemere Players are presenting *Kismet* shortly and a party of Stagers will be going on 27th March. If you would like a ticket, please contact Jennifer before 7th March, otherwise tickets are available from the box office.

Proposed Theatre Dates New Victoria, Woking

(contact Jane Sargeant)

10 April *Noises Off*

16th April *Fame*

26th June *An Inspector Calls*

24th July *Blood Brothers*

10th September *My One and Only* (matinee)

Social Events

20th May Skittles Evening at The Fox

3rd August Barbeque at Beefolds Cottage, Churt



The Social Committee can be contacted on: Barbara Badger (01252 794515), Jennifer Charters (01428 605635), Jane Sargeant (07818 422250).

A Chorus of Disapproval

20 -22 November 2003

A disparate group of actors, members of the local amateur light operatic society, are joined during rehearsal by a diffident young widower who is trying to escape from his loneliness. By accident, rather than design (in fact by not saying *no* to anything be it a request to obtain confidential information from his company or an offer of illicit sex) he advances from a one-line part to the lead role.

I am pleased to be directing this play by Sir Alan Ackbourn. As usual, the author's keen observation of human nature and his skilful crafting of the plot which draws parallels between Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* and the lives of the actors who are performing it, ensures that the audience is treated to a gamut of hilarious and contrasting situations as rehearsals progress under the frenetic direction of a wildly enthusiastic Welshman.

The read-through is on Wednesday May 21st. **PLEASE NOTE THIS IS EARLIER THAN USUAL.** All relevant information will be available then and the extent of the music and arrangements for learning it will be made clear. We need to draw on all our expertise to mount a cast of thirteen (7 men, 6 women ranging in age from 20s to 60s) plus possible extras, to do full justice to this lively play. Do come!

Betty Penny

Future Musicals

The committee are pleased to announce the musicals chosen for spring 2004 and 2005.



2004

Copacabana

Inspired by Barry Manilow's hit song, *Copacabana* is an exciting and passionate tale of love and romance set at the heart of the swinging nightclub scene of the 1940s.

2005

Me and My Girl

Charming and witty, *Me and My Girl* tells of a Cockney lad who inherits the title and fortunes of the Earl of Hareford. Chaos and comedy abound in this toe-tapping musical.



Committee

My apologies for not stating the new committee in the November newsletter - please find them listed below.

Officers:

Chairman – Tony Legat Treasurer – Stephen Penny Secretary – Melanie Tyrrell Vice Chairman – Richard White

Committee Members:

Barbara Badger, Jennifer Charters, John Hilder, Shirley Jelliss, Alexandra Legat, Heather Legat, Thelma Robertson, Jane Sargeant, Alan Stone.



Annie Get Your Gun

24-26 April, 1-3 May 2003



Annie Get Your Gun has now got a full cast and rehearsals are progressing well. However, if there are any men out there who could be tempted.....

All is on target for April/May with Laura Musco drilling us hard on the dancing (with spectacular results and it's only February!), costume ideas beginning to float about and line learning showing signs of happening!

We do still need volunteers for the stage crew, if anyone is interested in crewing or helping with props please get in touch with the Production Secretary, Jane Sargeant, on 07818 422250 or jane@grayshottstagers.co.uk.



The cast is as follows:

Annie Oakley - Alexandra Legat
 Frank Butler - Paul Tapley
 Dolly Tate - Laura Musco
 Charlie Davenport - Peter Jones
 Buffalo Bill - Bob Fells
 Chief Sitting Bull - Alan Stone
 Pawnee Bill - Alan Clarke
 Foster Wilson - Jeff Morris
 Mrs Potter-Porter - Teresa Marsh
 Minnie - Lucy Clayton Jessie - Jessica Lelew
 Nellie - Rebecca Lelew Little Jake - Josh Carpenter

Alex Legat has moved:
 41 Greenhill Way
 Farnham
 Surrey
 GU9 8TA
 01252 718031



Don't forget, 21st-22nd February, the Grayshott Stagers'

One-Act Supper Evening



With 3 plays, a home-cooked supper and a bar, don't miss it.
 Contact Thelma Robertson on (01428 605194) - hurry, tickets are selling fast.

Dates for your Diary

2003

21-22 February, Grayshott Village Hall
 07- 08 March, Haslemere Hall
 22 March, 10am- 1pm, Grayshott Village Hall
 24- 26 April, Grayshott Village Hall
 01-03 May, Haslemere Hall
 21 May, Grayshott Common Room
 21 June, Grayshott Village Hall
 03 September, Grayshott Small Hall
 10 September
 17 September
 11 October
 20-22 November, Grayshott Village Hall

February One Act Supper Evening
 Haslemere One Act Play Festival
 Nicky Irvine Workshop
 Annie Get Your Gun
 Annie Get Your Gun
 A Chorus of Disapproval Read-through
 A Chorus of Disapproval Auditions
 Annual General Meeting
 Copacabana Presentation
 2004 February One Acts Read-through
 Copacabana Auditions
 A Chorus of Disapproval

2004

27-28 February, Grayshott Village Hall
 29 April-01 May, Grayshott Village Hall
 06-08 May, Haslemere Hall
 08 September, Grayshott Small Hall
 25-27 November, Grayshott Village Hall

February One Act Supper Evening
 Copacabana
 Copacabana
 Annual General Meeting
 Cabaret



Newsletter compiled and edited by Alexandra Legat (alex@grayshottstagers.co.uk).

Below is the draft copy of a 1957 letter inviting members of the village to become patron members of the Stagers. Hope you enjoy it

DRAFT LETTER TO PROPOSED PATRON MEMBERS.

Dear

The aims of The Grayshott Stagers as defined in the Society's constitution are to stimulate the study of Drama in all its aspects, and forms and to give public and private presentation of plays of good quality..

In broad interpretation of these aims during the 6½ years of its existence the policy of the Society has been to welcome very cordially to membership all in any way interested, not only in the study of the Drama itself, but in presentation, of dramatic works and organisation of allied social events for the enjoyment of the whole community in which we live.

Accordingly, some 16 plays have been produced in Grayshott since 1951, 4 of which have been musical plays. Additionally, the social section of the Society ,particularly over the past four years, has developed very strongly with the two-fold intent and result of providing recreation for members and for the community as a whole, at the same time thereby acquiring funds wherewith to supplement production ticket sales and thus make possible the presentation from time to time of reasonably ambitious dramatic productions.

These social occasions, consisting as they have done, of novel parties, theatre excursions whist drives with a difference, etc have we believe been enjoyed by all sections of the community and, together with the play productions have provided during Winter months useful and interesting recreation for many in the village and surrounding district. A full social programme of similar events has been designed for the current season.

In view of the very considerable development which has taken place in the Society's activities which have apparently become major events in the life of the district, and, born of a pardonable pride in its achievements as reflected in the ever-growing patronage of its occasions, my Committee now feel that the time has come to dignify the status of the Society through the appointment of a number of local alumni as Patron Members.

To this end they have asked me to approach you with a unanimous invitation to become one of the first Patron Members. Should you agree I am afraid it will involve you in an annual subscription of £2. 2/- but will entitle you to 2 preferential top-price tickets for each production at the Village Hall, Grayshott, of which there are normally 3 annually.. In addition, you would receive details of all Society activities, copies of all circulated literature including the periodically issued "bulletin", and would be welcome, of course, at all meetings rehearsals and functions.

If, as we sincerely hope, you would care to avail yourself of this invitation we ask you to allow us to print your name on our Programmes as a Patron Member, thereby permitting us to give rein to a very proper pride in such authoratitive recognition of the useful work we are endeavouring to do in the district.