

Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year
to all
our
Readers



Chairman's Remarks

Bob Graham

First of all, as the year comes to an end, I would like to thank everyone for the hard work you have all put in to keeping the theatre going and getting it back on its feet again. It is beginning to feel all worthwhile as audiences return and people start talking about the quality of the theatre we produce. The road to recovery is well and truly under way and 2022 should give us a bright future to look forward to.



The first three shows have demonstrated that there is still an appetite for live theatre amongst our patrons, but the ticket sales for the Christmas Entertainment at the time of writing are at their lowest for many a year. It isn't coincidental that 68% of tickets were concessions in 2019, and that is the demographic that is expressing the greatest caution about returning to theatre and it is probably only when they return that we will have full houses once more. But it's a start. Following the AGM few changes were made to committee. Anne Booth stood down as publicity manager after a long stint and her organisation, sterling efforts and wise counsel are already greatly missed.

We were unable to recruit a replacement, so, at present we are building a small team of people who will be part of a publicity group that we will be in place by the time we come to recruit staff again to run the theatre, something we have planned for 2022. If anyone has any interest/experience in publicity and would like to offer their services there are a number of opportunities and we would welcome a discussion – you can call either myself or the Vice Chair, Tori.

One area where we are short is in trained box office operatives. We could really do with two or three more volunteers who are confident in working with a computerised sales system or who would be willing to learn. It is quite fun to do and going forward we are likely to be looking for volunteers for both daytime and evening duties, so if anyone is interested e-mail me at admin@rosetheatre.co.uk.

The big announcement is that Nonentities Society is buying itself a Christmas present. On Monday 13th December work starts on the installation of a new central boiler, which will rekindle the old central heating system. We have tried extremely hard to manage heating the building without, but this winter, in particular, we have to take steps to improve ventilation in the building as a measure to help minimise the spread of Covid and this is making it even colder than usual for both cast and audience. From early January we should have a much better heating system in place.

May I take this opportunity, in case I can't do it in person, of wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Roll on 2022.

Members matter ...

Hilary Thompson

When I last wrote, we were building up to Open Day on 18th September. We didn't think there would be much interest with Covid etc. but how wrong could we have been? The footfall was in excess of 120. Some just supporting us, some interested to see their local theatre and some really wanting to get involved after being locked down so long. Many many thanks to loyal members who helped on the day - especially with nearly 25 theatre tours to be done and refreshments!!



On the day I spoke with 24 prospective members and lo and behold... 17 people joined up there and then. Thanks to Jane Holt for getting people involved in FOH. We have at last 2 new prompts up and running, new props people, and folk attending readings and everything on offer. Keith Higgins now has a new set of team members to support him with set and painting. My thanks to Sally Howes for making new painters etc. so welcome. We even have had help with rehearsal teas - much needed.

But long-standing members matter as well. Great to see members of all ages back on stage and back stage. With no paid staff we have been reliant on volunteers for lots of tasks – and a special thanks for Box Office help to Sue, Katy and Chris, without whom we wouldn't have had the sales we have had.

We had a new venture and great day - making props set roses for the Secret Garden as a craft workshop – more of this later in the Newsletter! An opportunity for new and old members to meet up and work together.

Rewarding you ...

As you know we have a Points Scheme for members – one non acting session, doing whatever, equals a point. Six points award a complimentary ticket to any of our shows. I have just started the totting up from beginning of September, together with Jane Holt. Tickets will be sent out. So signing in at the door when you arrive to help is important – we then know who has been in. We are also making a special award to those who worked throughout the summer on theatre maintenance - tickets for all the upcoming shows this season.

Finally just a word of thanks to Anne Booth – who has stood down as Committee Publicity Manager this year. A stalwart member and volunteer, doing so much for our theatre behind the scenes. True spirit of membership. Anyone who is interested in helping with publicity just get in touch please.

The flowers Are Blooming ...



Flowers were needed for the Secret Garden. Jen Eglinton had designed a lovely backdrop on which flowers were needed to appear. Keith Rowland, ably assisted by Sally Howes, had been busy building and decorating a wall to the garden. So we tried a new venture on Saturday 13th November - a craft workshop with a call out to any who wanted to join in. We thought it would be a good opportunity for members, both old and new, to meet up with a really positive piece of work to do.

Wow! We ended up with about twenty helpers coming - lots of flowers made and lots of chatting done. The pictures tell the story. Thanks to everyone who came and helped, especially Teresa Curzey, one of our new members, who arrived in true Rose form with a big container of home made cakes.

The
Secret Garden
Team



Committee members

2021 - 22

Honorary Officers

Chair	Bob Graham
Vice-Chair	Tori Wakeman
Secretary	Maureen Higgins
Treasurer	David Wakeman
Artistic Director	Jen Eglinton

Executive Managers

Stage Director	Keith Higgins
Membership	Hilary Thompson
Front of House	Jane Holt
Properties	Ros Casewell & Helen Speake
Technical	Amy Baker
Publicity	vacant
Wardrobe	vacant
Box Office	vacant
Maintenance	vacant

Members' Representatives

Katy Ball
Richard Casewell
Colin Hill
Tony Newbould
Hannah Tolley

Trustees

John Gaston
Pam Meredith
Colin Young

Message from Jane Holt (FOH)

My thanks to everyone for helping. You are all very much appreciated for giving your time to help make our performances an enjoyable night out.

Anything drama related you want to share with our members? Perhaps it could be included in the March edition? Please send it to me (sue2hunt@yahoo.co.uk)

Sue Hunt (Newsletter Editor)

Murder Mystery

Murder Mystery is one of ten plays that focus on the stereotypical view of Amateur theatre and specifically that run by a group of ladies from an imaginary Townswomen's Guild.

It's a play whereby the play they are attempting to perform goes horribly wrong. Lines are forgotten, even several pages of script are omitted, props fall apart, sound effects arrive before or after the cues, costumes are mislaid, and it's an evening of total incompetence.

'Of course getting things wrong perfectly, is an art in getting it right and to do so means you need a degree of skill. Fortunately first time Director Tony Newbould and Jen Eglinton just about manage to keep things on track to the final curtain.'


'The leader of this dramatic clan is Mrs Phoebe Reece, played joyously to excess by Amy Cooper. Thankfully Miss Cooper's experience managed to lift the actual chaos into more organised scripted chaos and chaotically keep things going.'

'Katy had some of her funniest moments with Stage manager Gordon, who had been drafted in to play the part of Inspector. Gordon was played by relative Nonentities newcomer, Jonathan Flowers and alongside Katy Ball had the task at one point of delivering a song and dance routine from the musical Grease. Of course they performed it badly, which meant they did it well, I think?'


'Katie Brown was suitably over melodramatic and was skilfully non plussed in all the right places. Jessica is another young member of the company's team and acquitted her performance with confidence.'

'Mystery is a real fun filled chaotic evening of slapstick physical comedy and whilst there are no laughs to be had at the petrol pumps at this time, you will find plenty here to fill up on.'


All quotes from 'Behind the Arras'




'The Nonentities return to full force with a gripping production of Patrick Hamilton's 1938 acclaimed thriller, *Gaslight*. The title of the play has passed into infamy as a single word 'Gaslighting', which has come to represent the abusive and demeaning nature of one individual against another person or group, in order to belittle and thereby control them.'



'It's never easy playing the villain and Martin Salter as Jack Manningham treated the character with the contradictory attitude it needed. Polite and engaging one minute and sneeringly dismissive of his wife Bella the next.'




'Nonentities' mainstay, Stuart Wishart handed in another stellar performance as the detective Mr Rough. Rough's description of his presence neither gives the game away or predicts the outcome and therefore it's imperative that an actor should be very precise in his delivery as to critically move the plot forward with clarity for the audience. Mr Wishart performed that task admirably and further points were added for his light but persistent Scottish accent that never faltered.'



'The role of Bella is a complex one. Constantly expected to have to break down, cry, protest the disbelief and exhaustion that the act of Gaslighting eventually brings to an individual, is a heavy undertaking and Bethany Grainger in the role was superb. Featuring in about 90 per cent of the play, all of which take place in a single parlour room, she never once missed a beat and her scenes with Mr Rough were fluent and focused, commanding the full attention of the near full audience.'

'Great support came too in the form of Faye Bingham as the flirty maid Nancy and Hannah Tolley as Housekeeper, Elizabeth.'

All quotes from
'Behind the Arras'



'Directed by Tori Wakeman this crafted Victorian thriller is the blueprint for so many 'living with the enemy' thrillers that followed. No other play has targeted a human failing so well as to have its title posthumously elevated to a general an example of the condition.'