

Carver Theatre Newsletter

February 2014



Dear Members,

Welcome to the February newsletter. I am standing in for Stuart again, though I am happy to report he is making an excellent recovery and will be taking up the role of Newsletter editor again very soon.

As those of you who came to see Sleeping Beauty will have noticed, we decided to try out the selling of Ice Cream at the interval. It seemed to be a huge success and so we have decided to continue to sell Ice cream during the all productions. Huge thanks to Matt and Victoria Kayes, Paula Whittleworth and everyone else who had a hand in this new venture. I'm sure that the ice creams will go down well in future shows, particularly during the summer when the weather is a bit warmer than now.

Discussion around the possible refurbishment of various areas around the building are still taking place at the exec and as part of this we are hoping to run some kind of membership and patron survey during the next play.

The Executive Committee would like to thank the Juniors for representing the theatre at Marple Christmas Cracker. We hope you didn't get too cold!

Joanna Bircher

From King Floristan

This year, the carver panto committee took a risk. Directorship was handed over to one of our younger members, a man who had shown enormous amounts of enthusiasm, but without a track record of organising something as large as a pantomime. Jordan Barton pulled off a masterpiece this year with Sleeping Beauty. A show that he wrote, directed and lived and breathed for a good 4 months of the year.

He didn't do it alone, and as always the Carver Panto brings out the best of teamwork. Jordan appointed, the talented Lyndsay Legg to choreograph the dances, the marvellous Fay Sidebottom and James Hirst to tinkle the ivories and Matt Kayes stepped forward to stage manage in his usual skilled and reliable way.

This year's panto for me, has been one of the most relaxed I have been involved in, because of Jordan's 'arms length' directorial style. The show slowly came together in a fluid way, without any bossing, shouting or tears. I can honestly say I haven't seen a better behaved group of children who really stepped up to the mark in being responsible for their costumes, dance moves and learning of lines. Cast members contributed to the way the show turned out, with innumerable suggestions on the way, which were encouraged and welcomed.

In the background was a team of solid organisers. Panto tickets were sold on line, ice creams bought and sold, teams of people painted, make up rotas arranged and the costumes were unsurpassable. If you haven't seen the dragon costume, you have really missed out.

I think we learned a lot. Enthusiasm matters, and rousing speeches don't. Jokes about eggs, are not what they are cracked up to be. It may have felt like we were running behind schedule right until the end, but the theatre magic really does make things come right on the night. And a jolly good belly laugh in the bar afterwards makes the stress and tiredness disappear.

We owe a huge thank you to Jordan and his team, but also we should pat ourselves on the back. It's hard to estimate how many people contributed to making this show so special, perhaps a hundred. I have a feeling they will want to step forward next year to help again.

Richard Bircher

Message from Pam, Our Registrar

We would like to extend a warm welcome to James Hirst (aka Percy) as most of you will know as our pianist for the panto. He has expressed an interest in helping backstage during productions, working behind the bar and working with the juniors.

I am delighted to report that Stuart Vaughan is well on the road to a full recovery, as is Brian Swann who was taken ill recently whilst on duty at the theatre. We look forward to seeing them both soon.

Message from Bernice (Standing in as Production Secretary)

LADIES DAY by Amanda Whittington is the first play of our new season (Friday 19th September – Saturday 27th September 2014) and a play reading and casting has been organised for Friday 14th March at 8pm.

Sally Jolley is the director. Please try to attend if you are interested. If you cannot attend please let a member of the Production Committee know of your interest. They are Bernice Yates, Tonia Williams, Kirsty Jackson, Chris Sturmey and Gerard Lennox. Or you can send an email to production@carvertheatre.co.uk to let them know your intentions.

We would like to get to know the new members that have joined this year and who are interested in acting to come along to a evening of reading plays, so that we can meet and find out the sort of plays and parts in which they are interested. This has been arranged for Wednesday 2nd April at 8pm at the Carver and we would be pleased if our regular members would come along and join in the play reading.

After the very successful 2 day Acting and Directing Workshop last Summer, Production are hoping to invite Abi Anderson back again to run more workshops. This had been ‘pencilled’ in for April, but is now likely to go ahead later in the year. Watch this space...

Tonia and I went to Hyde Festival Theatre to see Romiley Little Theatre’s production of ‘The Graduate’ with a view to Carver including it in a future season. Romiley Little Theatre is a small society with limited facilities, but they managed to stage an excellent production of this play, well-directed and very well cast with extremely good acting. It was a hugely entertaining evening. We discussed on the way home whether Carver could put on this play. With our facilities, and the revolve, we could stage it well. However, as to the casting, Ben is a massive part for a young person, BUT who would be prepared to play Mrs. Robinson????

Panto Committee

Every February we appoint a new Panto committee, which is then ratified at the AGM. There will be a nomination sheet on the notice board soon so please put your name on the sheet if you are interested. The panto committee acts as a production committee

just for panto and chooses the script and director and then supports the director to deliver the show. It's a great thing to get involved with.

Business Matters

It is six months now since I took over as Treasurer and much has changed. The first thing I did was to purchase a new accounting system. The cost of the new system and the associated annual maintenance contract is a fraction of the cost of the old one. The Finance Report to the Executive has also changed considerably and shows more detailed information. You can see this in the published minutes of the Exec on the Members' Area of the web site. If you would like your own copy please let me know. Our auditors, Geoff Harrison and Mike Yates, have been keeping a very close eye on the changes and are happy that their life will be easier when it comes to doing the audit and producing the published accounts at the end of the year.

We have moved to carrying out all the banking with RBS on line and this has meant that we can get a daily view of the bank accounts to monitor the flow of cash through the bank. We have set up BACs payments for all expenditure to eliminate the hassle of writing cheques and for recipients taking them to the bank to pay in and then waiting several days to clear. The Exec has agreed that from now on all payments will be made by BACs and that cheques will no longer be used for making any payments. The BACs system is very reliable and is the same method that you get your pension or salary payments. All expenses are generally paid into your bank account within a few hours of receipt by the Treasurer. The whole process is quicker and more efficient and we get a good audit trail. We have moved away from using personal credit cards to pay for large cost items such as licences, scripts, programs etc. and all suppliers now email their invoice direct to the Treasurer to be paid by BACs.

As far as the accounts are concerned at the end of January we are showing a small contribution, having been running at a loss for the first six months of the year. Without detailed analysis of previous years to compare with I have been assured that this is normal. Since October we have been giving shows a budget to work within, with marginal success, in that "We'll Always Have Paris" came under budget and the Panto went over budget. But the big success is that it has made directors think what they need to spend the money on and whether it really is necessary. I can now record expenditure by show in greater detail and section secretaries can see how much has been spent and on what and by whom in their areas.

Since November I have taken over the liaison with the cleaning contractors and a cleaning schedule up to the AGM has been agreed with TBCT Gary McCurdy. If you have any comments regarding cleaning of the theatre please let me know.

Various projects are under consideration mainly for on-going maintenance and asset protection including a new racking system for the wardrobe, finishing the DMX installation, blocking off the hatch in the bar floor and creating a cellar storage area in the stage entrance corridor (plans currently being worked on), removing the cellar downstairs and reinstating the dressing room, and gathering together some quotes for upgrading the heating system to replace the two boilers, associated pipework and management systems. We have also taken the opportunity of acquiring some additional lighting and related kit at very little cost from a local theatrical hire firm who have decided that they no longer want to be in the business. Longer term projects are still under consideration to refurbish the bar, library, foyer and linked areas and replace the auditorium seating. We would hope to get some support funding from external sources for these longer term projects but there is no guarantee that this would be available.

Mike Strivens - treasurer@carvertheatre.co.uk

Dates for your diary

If I Were You	28 th February to 8 th March 2014
Pack of Lies	9 th to 17 th May 2014
Carver Youth Summer Show	11 th /12 th July 2014
Annual General Meeting	Wednesday 30 th July 2014

