



Newsletter

July 2020

newsletter@wgrsoc.org.uk

www.wgrsoc.org.uk

Enjoy this summer edition of the Green Room newsletter
Plenty of important information below from Al Fowkes, our Chairman
See also p3 - for details re our new logo
And on p4, there's an inventive piece about the 'would-have-been' Nell Gwynn

Chairman's report

AGM

The AGM this year will be held on Thursday 17 September, following a decision at the EGM to move the date away from its previous July slot. Members will appreciate that it is likely that the Society will not be able to hold the AGM in the theatre, face to face. We are therefore planning for a virtual meeting to be held using Zoom. This measure is fully in line with Charity Commission guidance for charities. Relevant paperwork will be sent by email where possible, or as paper copies for those who need posted material. Preliminary documents will be sent out in early August, including asking for resolutions you might wish to propose; invitations to the AGM, the agenda, and voting papers on any resolutions we receive will follow by the end of August. Please bear in mind that nominations for officers and roles within committees are vitally important. We do want new people to put themselves forward if at all possible; please contact chairman@wgrsoc.org.uk or secretary@wgrsoc.org.uk if you are interested in learning more.



Subscriptions

We are all too aware that our current season has been disrupted, and your chances to be involved - whether in the audience or on stage, behind the scenes or socially - have been curtailed. There have of course been very successful play readings and a music and monologue night; we have tried to keep in touch via emails, phone calls to members, and regular newsletters - all of which we hope you will have enjoyed. But none of us has been able to experience a whole season's worth of Green Room life. In recognition of this lack of opportunity the Executive will be giving careful consideration to the rate at which membership renewal will be proposed for the 2020 - 21 season. Given that we are in fund-raising mode, if members wish to pay the difference this will be gratefully accepted and treated as a donation. Further information will be sent to you as soon as possible.



Evans Trust

We are delighted to be able to report that the Trustees of the Evans Trust have indicated that in principle they are prepared to support our proposal to purchase staging rostra for the theatre. The Trust's representative will be meeting with us shortly to get a better understanding of the plan and the benefits that this will bring to our productions. The Executive is optimistic that this will allow us to proceed with this project.



Al Fowkes, Chairman

The newsletter is produced on behalf of the Wilmslow Green Room - registered Charity Number **1153665**.
You can contact the editor at any time via the theatre, or by email: newsletter@wgrsoc.org.uk

PLAY & STAGE NEWS

As most of you will know, I have taken on the role of Artistic Director from John Chidgey, a change that will be ratified at the AGM. I have obviously taken over the PSCC at a rather strange time. The last two shows of our season, **Single Spies** and **Nell Gwynn**, had to be postponed because of Covid-19. We have re-scheduled these plays for inclusion in the 2020-2021 season and the publishers/agents have been helpful over altering the licenses, but at the time of writing we still do not know exactly what is going to be possible in the theatre or what audiences we can accommodate.



With the Green Room out of bounds during the pandemic we have been able to help members flex their acting muscles with the help of ZOOM. First we had a Midsummer Night's ZOOM, when some 25 members shared out the parts to read. As you can see from the photo, some people chose to wear appropriate costume, Snout had an indoor wall and one member joined in all the way from the Caribbean (well, that's what his background showed...).

We followed The Dream with the ZOOM-ing Rivals, another play with a good mix of parts for people to try. Eighteenth century comedy isn't the easiest language but several of the participants commented on how good it was to read a play they were unfamiliar with.

Our next venture was a Monologue and Music evening, so of course we asked Chris McClory to take charge of that one, and we were delighted that a mixed evening of music and speech included contributions from members we do not usually see on the Green Room stage.

These ZOOM occasions have been a great way for members to keep in contact in difficult times and as lockdown eases we shall continue to try to keep acting until we can do so back in the theatre. I am very grateful to John Chidgey for hosting the ZOOM meetings, and for staying on the committee to continue to bring his experience, knowledge and ideas.

Celia Bonner

Dates for scheduled events -

Music and Monologue Night 7.30 pm Tuesday 28 July

It would be good to include contributions again from members who do not usually appear on stage, so if you have something you would like to read or play or sing, this is your chance.

Play Reading - An Ideal Husband, by Oscar Wilde 7.30 pm

Tuesday 4 August (part 1) and Tuesday 11 August (part 2)

As before we will share the parts out in advance between all of those who want to take part, so why not have a go? Please say by Monday 27 July if you want to be included so we can divide the play up and send everyone the link to the script.

How to join in -

If you would like to read or perform on any of these evenings, or if you want to listen in, please contact Celia Bonner

The link to the ZOOM event will only be sent out to those who have said they want to participate or be 'audience' so do make sure you register your interest.

GMDF Awards

We were delighted to learn that two Green Room nominees from **Whisky Galore** were named ahead of the annual Awards Night for the current season.

Ali Davenport was nominated as Best Female Actor for her role as Aileen McCormack, and **Eilidh Pollard** was nominated for an Adjudicator's Award for her musical composition and performance seamlessly integrated into and enhancing scenes in the production.

Congratulations to both. Eilidh is in the photo with her violin; Ali is wearing a bridal veil.

And even more special congratulations to Eilidh for being a winner at the Awards Ceremony.



BUILDING PROJECT - Update

It has been decided to postpone the Garden Party to Saturday 22 May of next year as it was becoming obvious that with the present Covid restrictions, we would be unable to run it in the manner we would have liked.

We will be running only limited Fundraising activities in September and waiting until the New Year to launch the main schemes for the same reason. It is hoped that by then we will have a clearer idea as to when the theatre can reopen.

Georgina Ralston, the professional fundraiser employed by the theatre on a two month contract is working on recommendations as to how we can raise the £160,000+ needed for the new build and will be presenting her report to the Executive on 18 August.

I do hope you are still all in support of the project.

Ian Cole

Coronavirus and theatres

As you will know, the Chancellor has made known a programme of financial support for theatres - much to the relief of many professional organisations. There will be £1.15bn made available through grants and loans.

Other Government announcements relate to their so-called 'roadmap', with five stages for reopening theatres and putting on performances - with the latest permission to resume business extending to professional, outdoor shows. The Minack Theatre in Cornwall, and an event at Muncaster Castle, have both been able to take immediate advantage of this relaxation.

The Green Room Executive committee is of course mindful of the guidelines, and will let you know as soon as possible how and when we will be able - safely and viably - to bring our own little theatre back to life.

MARKETING GROUP NEWS

Following the vote taken across members and audience for a new logo design we are delighted to announce that there was a clear winner! Thank you to everyone who voted.



In order to ensure maximum impact - although the new logo is shown here for your information - our aim is to release it simultaneously across all channels – through printed materials such as the newsletter, fliers, programmes etc and media: website, facebook etc.

We also hope to replace the sign on the front of the building and are looking at options relating to the illuminated board at the front of the forecourt.

The exact timing of the launch of the new logo will be determined by both the time needed to get the new design incorporated into all our materials and the date of our next production, whenever that may be, as we would much prefer to promote a theatre that is active as a theatre!

Al Fowkes
Marketing Group

The SHEILA HINE AWARD

The annual **SHEILA HINE AWARD** is presented each year at the AGM, to any Green Room member who is deemed to have put in effort over and above what might be expected in roles they have filled.

The Award will be made as usual this year, in spite of restrictions.

Please send in your nominations by Monday 24 August latest, with a short statement giving your reasons, to:

Lorna Kong
Mark Seyler
Di James

Pat Wheeler

During June, we were informed of the death of Green Room member Patti Wheeler. A long-serving member, she worked backstage on several productions, was involved in the work of the Social committee for some years, and served as Front of House Manager. She was a loyal and popular colleague.

Pat had suffered a stroke and was affected by dementia in later years, and a fall at Christmas sadly caused some on-going difficulties.

Notes from the directors, sent Friday 5 June 2020, following the 'would-have-been' final dress rehearsal

To the cast and crew of Nell Gwynn

This is to wish you all the very best for your opening night **tonight**.

You have all worked incredibly hard over the last six weeks of rehearsals and before that the restoration dance classes.

We are so pleased with the Final Dress last night, but must apologize for the late finish at 2.30 am. The power cut half way through Act One scene 9 was beyond our control but congratulations to Bruce for the supply of two dozen wax tapers so we could complete the show...the effect was stunning.

However, as directors, we are always striving for perfection so here are few final *notes* for tonight.

Health and Safety. We are delighted that you are all keen to make the first song such a rousing number, but do remember on the line "bang the drum and the thumper" it is your neighbour's tankard you hit and nothing else.

Lorna Thanks for a lovely sexy performance as Nell, just be a little bit careful as to where you put your oranges.

Steve Your KC2 is just right. However, if "Cromwell" your King Charles spaniel misbehaves himself again tonight, try and avoid dripping over row A. Well done S.M. Steve for your quick improvisation with the spare wig to mop up.

Sonia Your Old Mother Gwynn is satisfyingly revolting but the use of dried grass cuttings in your pipe was too much of a fire hazard. However the resulting haze made the candle light even more effective.

David Another outstanding performance as Lord Castlemaine. How you can move your upper and lower lips so independently and creatively is a source of wonder to us. One word of caution however, your use of flashing fairy lights on your gold chain of office at the curtain call was a little OTT.

Victoria Your Portuguese is impeccable. We also loved the way you fondled Charles's Bernini.

Belinda We are pleased that you aim for the authentic and Nancy is clearly a good seamstress, but talking with a lot of pins gripped in your teeth does mean we do lose clarity.

Eilidh You look lovely as Louise. Just be a little careful in the final dance number not to slip into River Dance.

Robert You look fetching in drag, but remember when you strap your boobs on they go in front.

Diana Well done for prompting in Portuguese and French and for your swift action when KC2 forgot his finest English sausage.

ASMs Remember we decided against real ink for Dryden. **Mark's** enthusiastic penmanship (his signature talent) is creating polka dot frocks and a hefty dry cleaning bill.

And of course, **Chris and Ann**, your work on the lute and virginals will go down in the legends of WGRS.

We have had a lovely time working with you all and we can now announce that the show is a complete sell out.

Good Luck for Tonight

Celia Bonner & Mike Rogerson (Carry On up the Restoration)

More images from the Archives . . .



The Murder of Maria Marten
or The Red Barn 1984