

newsletter@wgrsoc.org.uk

www.wgrsoc.org.uk

Dear Member

Welcome to the new season at Wilmslow Green Room. We are all too aware that we are in extraordinary times, with no clear idea of how the next months will pan out in all aspects of our lives. For the Green Room, the challenges are huge - how to plan for a season that may have to look very different from anything experienced in the past; how to produce plays or events that may not be able to happen on the premises; how to keep in touch; and how to continue to pay our way with no income from productions.

We need your support. Please stay with us as we venture into the next twelve months.

One obvious way of helping is to renew your subscriptions for the year. As Ian explains on page 2, your subs are now due, and are being requested at the same rates as last season, even though our productions have been and are likely to be fewer for some time. We will of course understand if you feel this is asking a lot, but do hope that you keep faith: we will be back when we possibly can be, full of beans and raring to go! As soon as we can bring you back into the theatre safely, as soon as we can publish a leaflet for the new season, these will happen.

Earlier in September, we held our AGM - this time as a Zoom event. Our Chairman, Al Fowkes outlined what we had been able to achieve - three successful shows (**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf**, **Whisky Galore**, and **April in Paris**) that had sold well and involved several new acting members. He reported on the weekly group for juniors now meeting in the theatre (the Wilmslow Academy of Performing Arts) run by Nicola Preston, on the film nights, and Zoomed play readings and variety nights; he was delighted to announce the award from the Evans Trust of funds to purchase staging rostra. Challenges ahead include dealing with restrictions imposed by Covid-19, reaching out to attract new members and build greater community awareness, and knowing how best to proceed with the planned building project and necessary fund-raising.

Mark Jephcott reported on both the Marketing Group proposals to rebrand the theatre with a new logo and signage, and on the Accounts for the past year. With reserves and healthy income from earlier last season, the financial situation is manageable for now.

If you would like to have a paper copy of the Chairman's report, or of the Accounts, please let me know; I can arrange for them to be sent to you.

The other important business at the AGM is the election of officers in the Society. I am including a full list (with some illustrations) on page 4, along with a note of all committee and working group members, so you know who we all are, and - importantly - how to contact us. We have a new President, now David Reynolds, elected in place of Ronnie Dykstra, who has decided to hang up his uniform after nine years in the role; we have a new Artistic Director, Celia Bonner, who will head up the Play & Stage committee; and we have John Chidgey stepping into the role of Registrar. Chris McClory has returned as Chairman of the Social committee.

As I have said, the Green Room needs YOU. Please stay with us. We look forward to seeing you all again, as soon as we possibly can.

Denise Soussi, Hon Secretary



It's Subs time again!!

A little later than in previous years due to Covid-19, but please find attached the forms you need on which subscriptions can be renewed for this season.

The good news is that subscription rates remain as last season's, ie £35 for full members, with a reduction to £30 if paid before 31 October, and £15 for social members.

However, some things are changing! In the past all members have been required to fully complete a membership form. From this season onwards, each member will receive a personalised membership renewal form with all the details held about them being specified.

So, if nothing has changed, all a member needs to do is fill in the appropriate subscription, details for 100 Club membership, and the total being paid. Easier to fill in and will save a lot of time!!

However, there is an addition to both the membership renewal form (and the membership application form), and that is the addition of an 'age range' row. We have added this to give the Executive Committee a better idea of our demographic for marketing and casting purpose. Members are urged to circle their age range as requested.

Once the form is completed, it should be signed, dated and returned to the Membership Secretary together with the appropriate cheque. Contact details are on the forms.

Welcome to new full member Barbara Oldham who has joined us over the summer. Barbara has been a long-time audience member.

Ian McBride

REGISTRAR

Following the AGM, I have taken over the role of REGISTRAR for the Green Room. Ian McBride will continue to deal with the membership details, and be responsible for the collection of subs.

I will deal with the care of members, which includes how we attract and keep new people joining us. Perhaps through a buddy scheme ... we shall see. It is also my intention to make membership lists widely available.

John Chidgey

THEATRE MANAGEMENT

Back in early March, the Set Building team decided to continue to meet to be able to do some of the maintenance tasks which normally have to be delayed until the Summer. After a week, that plan naturally came to an abrupt stop when the full lockdown was imposed.

As things eased somewhat in mid-July, we decided to get together once a week (instead of the normal twice a week) to continue where we left off. The job we have completed, most noticeable for those passing the theatre, is painting the front doors and Abbot window, but other things are going on behind the scenes.

Bruce Williams

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

100 Club

Held as part of the business at the AGM, the draw for lucky winners was made. The following prizes will now be distributed:

Di James wins £85, with a further six winners each receiving £50: Liz Burr, Ruth Hemp, Theresa Kemp, Meera Mohindra, Clare Lewis and Avril Allen.



Please remember to join the 100 Club when you renew your subs. Only members can be winners!

SOCIAL

Hello All - I am now back in the saddle as Chairman of the Social Committee.

I am sad to have to tell you that there will not be a Christmas Band Concert this year due to Covid19. However, we do have a heart-warming event in the pipeline, to welcome Christmas, being organised with the help of Celia and her Play and Stage Committee (more in a later email/phone call).

More than anything, we are determined to keep our members and audiences safe and so will only resume theatre-based activities when we're absolutely sure that we are safe to do so. HOWEVER ... that does not mean that we can't enjoy each other's company.

All ideas for SAFE social events are very welcome. Please contact me with your thoughts. Keep Safe.

Chris McClory

The SHEILA HINE AWARD

The annual **SHEILA HINE AWARD** was presented posthumously at the AGM to Olive Bradbury, in recognition of her long service to the Society, and in her memory, following her death in the Spring.



Her son Phillip was able to join the meeting by Zoom to accept the award, which he said would mean a lot to his whole family.

BUILDING PROJECT - Update

The Building Project committee met earlier this month, when we made recommendations to the Executive as to what we feel could happen next. Over the summer, the Society employed a professional fundraiser, Georgina Ralston, for two months to advise the theatre how it could possibly move forward.

The Executive has now received the full report from Georgina regarding how we might proceed, and the recommendations from the Building Project team, and their decisions are now awaited.

We have received the result of one fundraising bid, to the Theatres Trust, which was sadly unsuccessful. Watch this space and emails as to what happens next.

Ian Cole

Little Theatre Guild

The LTG northern conference at Chads scheduled for October is now on hold.

Importantly, the LTG has sought and received regular advice and guidelines from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. They have issued a grey paper on the tricky business of how to open securely and legally, a copy of which has been passed to our Exec.

Further guidance is being requested from the DCMS as to how the new '6 person rule' affects the situation, set alongside advice that amateur theatres **are** allowed to reopen with social distancing inside Covid secure premises.

More information will be available in due course, which will of course affect decisions within the Green Room.

Mike Rogerson

PLAY & STAGE NEWS

Don't hold your breath...

During lockdown the Play and Stage Committee chose three plays that we could read over ZOOM and also, with the help of Chris McClory and her expertise in this area, set up a couple of Monologue and Music evenings. Those who took part had a great time but it would be really good to include more of you in these on-line events in the future.

As summer continued it looked as though theatres could start to think about re-opening; professional theatres first and then amateur groups like ours. So we provisionally planned three productions for the Spring and Summer 2021. We picked three of the plays originally scheduled for next season, choosing those with small casts that could be prepared and rehearsed in accordance with the guidelines for social distancing. We knew there were some difficulties where members of the original teams are no longer available, but were working to sort these out.

Now the most recent pronouncements have thrown these plans into confusion.

Better news

We have a couple of distance events planned and you have had details of the first of these, the Green Room Ode. I already have some lovely lines of poetry or suggested words and thoughts, but we could do with some more – let us know what makes the Green Room special to you. It doesn't have to be poetry, just a sentence or two will do. We really want to use this as a way to let people outside the theatre know about us. If you want to know a bit more about it, ring me.

Christmas is coming...

and we are planning, together with the Social Committee, a celebration. You know when you have an Advent Calendar you open each little door and don't know what surprise will be behind it? That's the idea behind this. You might have a poem, a piece of music, a story, a special memory. You might want to show a toy you had one as a Christmas present and still cherish. You might want to sing or play a Christmas Carol. You can do something by yourself or get together over the internet to prepare with someone else. It doesn't matter if you have never performed anything before, we'd love you to be part of our Green Room Advent Calendar. We had hoped we might be able to put this on in the theatre, but it will almost certainly be a ZOOM event. Watch out for more on this.

Celia Bonner



Al Fowkes
Chairman



Mark Jephcott
Treasurer



Ian McBride
Memberships



John Chidgey
Registrar



Lorna Kong
Vice Chairman



Alison Fleming
Hon Solicitor

WHO ARE WE ALL?

OFFICERS 2020 - 2021

President	David Reynolds
Vice Presidents	Jeremy Cleverley, Ronnie Dykstra, Sue Offer
Chairman	Al Fowkes
Vice Chairman	Lorna Kong
Hon Treasurer	Mark Jephcott
Hon Secretary	Denise Soussi
Artistic Director	Celia Bonner
Theatre Director	Bruce Williams
Registrar	John Chidgey
Membership Secretary	Ian McBride
Social Committee	Chris McClory
Hon Solicitor	Alison Fleming

You can make contact with any of us by email - executive@wgrsoc.org.uk

COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

You can make contact with any of the following by email, as shown

Play & Stage

Celia Bonner (Chair), Helen Bingle, Tracy Burns, John Chidgey, Belinda Coghlan, Alison Fleming, Ewan Henderson, Di James, Victoria Johnson
pscc@wgrsoc.org.uk

Theatre management

Bruce Williams (Chair), Diana Boswell, John Coghlan, Keith Cooney, Ronnie Dykstra, Fenella Fowkes, Ian Kennedy, Adele Taylor
theatremanager@wgrsoc.org.uk

Social events

Chris McClory (Chair), Colette Fitton, Adele Taylor
social@wgrsoc.org.uk

Publicity team

Shan Bristow, Anne Cichocki, Alison Fleming, Veronica Fleming, Hilary Pinnock, Denise Soussi, Richard Barraclough (website), Chris Hills (newsletter)
publicity@wgrsoc.org.uk

Wardrobe team

Pat Barrow, Jacque Bilsborough, Linda Batson, Jo Everett, Carole Holmes, Di James, and Eva Krystek
wardrobe@wgrsoc.org.uk

Film group

Anne Cichocki, Ewan Henderson, Hilary Pinnock

Marketing group

Al Fowkes, Mark Jephcott, Richard Barraclough, Chris Hills, Donna Johnstone, Denise Soussi

Building Project group

Ian Cole, Belinda Coghlan, Ronnie Dykstra, Al Fowkes, Mark Jephcott,

Ronnie Dykstra - ex-President - still in uniform, but taking a moment to reflect and look back



David Reynolds
President



Celia Bonner
Artistic Director



Chris McClory
Social committee



Denise Soussi
Hon Secretary



Bruce Williams
Theatre Manager

