

Welcome to the summer newsletter for 2021, keeping you up to date with news and developments, and hoping that you are all keeping well.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES AND NEWS

After over a year of forced inactivity, certainly with regard to performances in the theatre, I think we are all eagerly awaiting the day when we can once again plan a production with complete confidence, start rehearsals and eventually open the green doors to an enthusiastic audience. As we look forward to that day in this edition of the newsletter you will find details of activities that are intended to build towards that first production. Obviously we are making plans against the backdrop of a changing situation with regard to the scale of permitted activities and cannot guarantee that plans will not need to be moved or even cancelled. However if we wait until all restrictions are removed before we start planning we will definitely not be back in the theatre at the earliest opportunity.

Building project news - Apart from the planned artistic endeavours I can report that at the time of writing requests for tender have been sent to local builders with a view to commencing work at the back of the building later this year. By the time you read this we hope to have received tenders and be in the process of evaluating those and hopefully appointing a contractor. Reaching this stage has only been possible because of the generosity of many members, so a big THANK YOU to all those who have contributed. If the tenders match the estimates prepared for the work we hope to have good news for the development soon. A special thanks needs to go to Belinda Coghlan who has raised and sold many plants on behalf of the Green Room – and sold them from our own forecourt, which in itself acts as a reminder to the community that we exist!



Logo - Hopefully you all remember that some time ago we chose a new logo which is intended to refresh our image. With no plays to promote, the launch of that logo has had to be deferred, but we are optimistic that this is about to change, so watch this space! Alongside the logo the website will be having a make-over to ensure that it looks as up to date and exciting as we can make it, and the permanent sign on Chapel Lane outside the theatre will also be updated.

Looking for actors - Joining an amateur theatre has probably not been most people's first thought in how to fill their time during lockdown and indeed we know that online offerings have sprung up to address the theatrical urge. However I think nothing beats live performance (from either side of the curtain) - so if you know of aspiring actors looking for an opportunity then do push them in our direction: they will be very welcome. The Green Room is more than happy to nurture talent so no previous experience is necessary.

Al Fowkes

OLIVE BRADBURY

On Tuesday 21 September, we will be holding a tribute evening to remember Olive, who, with her husband John, died in March 2020. Their son Philip and granddaughter Heather will join us; they are planning on bringing items collected by Olive that are sure to trigger memories for many of us. Numbers able to attend may need to be limited. Details on how to 'book a place' will be circulated soon.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

The Marketing team have been hard at work to update and refresh our presentation and communications for the start off the season.

Here are some of the key activities that we are undertaking:

Brand Relaunch

On Saturday 14 August we will transfer to the new logo. We are planning a launch event for the new branding to use in relation to sending out a press release and creating some visibility for us.

A new sign will be placed in the front of the theatre and the decals on the forecourt standing sign will also change. The way we publicise our plays will also change this season as we will be using a heavily branded templated poster and flyer design. We are also working on making some merchandise items available for you to order, featuring the new logo - details to follow.



Website

A newly refreshed and updated website with the new branding colourways will also launch on Saturday 14 August. We will be introducing a donation page for the public for when we launch the next phase of the Building Project fundraising. We are also enhancing the members' information on the website which we hope will include the ability for members to renew and pay for their membership through the website. A new branded template will be created for our mailing list emails and our newsletter template will also be refreshed.

Social Media

We will change to the new logo icon on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter from Saturday 14 August and put more focus behind Facebook to promote and advertise the theatre, putting our toe in the water with some paid-for advertising.

We will also run our own Facebook advertising campaign for our first production 'We're Open' - all created in house - and we will send out links to the 10 adverts we are producing, requesting that members then share them on their own Facebook pages. This cascade will help us to get as much free publicity as possible.



Mark Jephcott

Wanted - Press Release and Social Media Volunteer

Are you a good story teller? Do you like writing? Are you good at posting content on social media? If so, you could be just the person we need.

We are looking forward to opening again and telling as many people as possible in Wilmslow and beyond about what is happening at the Green Room. To help us do that we are looking for an enthusiastic member to work with the Marketing and Publicity Committees to raise the awareness and visibility of the Green Room and its various activities, and help to promote tickets sales for our productions.

We hope you would be able to assist us with:

- writing press releases to publicise our productions, liaising with directors
- posting regular content on the Green Room Facebook page and other social media
- ideas to promote and market the theatre
- news items for regular communications to our members and our non-member mailing list

If this is of interest - and we hope that it is! - please contact Mark for more information:

treasurer@wgrsoc.org.uk

Hello from The Social Committee

Thank you all those who took part in the fun quizzes. Even on Zoom, these provided a lovely chance to get together and have a good laugh. We're happy to provide another should the request be made.

Our next venture is going to be a community **Walking Treasure Hunt** in early **September**. Everyone will be free to participate at any time, convenient to them, during an 8 day span. More information about this will be out nearer the time.

And then, of course, there's **'WE'RE OPEN'**... more about that in another area of this newsletter...
EXCITING !!

Chris McClory

PLAY AND STAGE NEWS

At last, after the long lockdowns, we are beginning to gear up again for performance.

The first full production will be **Nell Gwynn** playing from Friday 3 - Saturday 11 December. We were of course going to put this on last summer, but events overtook us. However, we are delighted that most of the original cast and team are still able to be involved. It's going to be a real romp - Renaissance theatre meets Carry On King Charles - and a great way to celebrate theatres opening again. **Nell Gwynn** is directed by Mike Rogerson and Celia Bonner, who are very excited to be putting on the first full-length production back in the Green Room

For Spring 2022 we are bringing back other plays which were shelved because of the pandemic - **Single Spies, God of Carnage** and **Improbable Fiction**. More news on these in future newsletters.

In the meantime we are flexing our performance muscles and getting back to playing before an audience by means of a summer entertainment which we have called Together Again. It's a mixture of poetry, readings, sketches and play excerpts, just an hour long, put together by John Chidgey and Celia Bonner. Our first performance of it is a private one; we have been invited to perform at an event being run by the East Cheshire Hospice.

Our second outing, where we hope to see you all, is very exciting; please see the next column for more details.

In September we shall perform Together Again in the Green Room as part of We're Open.

Celia Bonner

	DIARY	
Sunday 8 August	TOGETHER AGAIN A Summer Entertainment	At Gawsworth Hall Garden open 2 pm Performance 4 pm
Saturday 14 August	LOGO LAUNCH The big rebrand!	
Early September	Walking Treasure Hunt	More information to follow nearer the time
23 - 25 September Thursday - Saturday	WE'RE OPEN	7.45 at the theatre
3 - 11 December Friday - Saturday	NELL GWYNN	7.45 at the theatre
<i>All events and productions subject to permissions and safety considerations applying at the time</i>		

Together Again at Gawsworth Hall



For the first time for some years we are performing in the grounds of Gawsworth Hall, where we have put on so many productions in the past, both of Shakespeare plays and others.

The date is **Sunday 8 August**

Gawsworth grounds will open at 2pm and we will have exclusive use of the grounds that afternoon. You can come along, enjoy your picnic and a stroll round the grounds and attend our performance for £10. For £15 you can make a real event of it by enjoying a scone with jam and cream, plus a cup of tea or coffee, in Gawsworth's lovely Tea Room.

At 4pm we will perform Together Again and then everyone can make their way home.

Gawsworth are not having a grandstand this year, so even if you are not having a picnic, you will need to bring your chairs if you want to sit for the performance - and wet-weather gear just in case the sun doesn't shine.

Tickets will be available via Ticketsource - more details to follow as soon as possible.

WE'RE OPEN

Thursday 23 - Saturday 25 September

As mentioned in Celia's article, the first full production for the new season will not be until December. In the belief that you, like us, might be keen to return to the Green Room as soon as possible, we will be running three special nights of varied performances in September. Still in the planning stage, these events will include another chance to enjoy Together Again, a rehearsed reading of some short Alan Ayckbourn plays, and a musical evening called The Mill Ballads, written by Keith Harris and accompanied by Trebuchet. Do reserve these dates!

Denise Soussi

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

We are pleased to announce that Lorna Kong will assume the role of Child Protection Officer on behalf of the Green Room. She will be the 'named person' within the organisation, liaising with all adults involved in productions, and safeguarding any young people taking part.



Little Theatre Guild

In their most recent newsletter, Michael Shipley looks back over the first 75 years of the Little Theatre Guild

May 1946 – Hard to realise that 75 years ago the Guild was founded by a mere handful of committed enthusiasts, devoted to the arts of amateur theatre. Just to remind you, the inauguration took place at the Waldorf Hotel in London on 18 May 1946'...

The objectives included: *To promote closer co-operation between the little theatres constituting its membership, to act as a co-ordinating and representative body on behalf of the little theatres and generally to maintain and further the highest standards in the art of theatre ...*

'There were nine founder member theatres. By 1951 there were 17 ... today there are 120. Of course, over the years quite a few members have resigned or sadly ceased to function, but nevertheless the story is one of continuing success.'

The Green Room became a member of the LTG in early 2000. Our faithful representative is Mike Rogerson.

LIZ COOK

It is with deep sadness that we have to inform you that Green Room member, Liz Cook passed away on Thursday 27 May.

Liz first arrived at the Green Room to be a 'buxom wench', at Gawsworth Hall, in **The Merry Wives of Windsor**. This was one of her only two appearances in front of an audience. The other one (and she would be pulling a face at the mention of it) was as an incognito belly dancer in **The Merchant of Venice**.

She loved being a member of the Green Room family, and, from the start, became part of the fabric of many Gawsworth productions. Our Archive records her involvement in over 40 productions over the years, both in-house and beyond.

Liz showed numerous talents backstage. She was a wonderful stage manager, and very efficient. You certainly knew that her 'Shhh!' meant it, but it was always followed by a friendly smile. Cast and crew were always delighted when Liz was on the team.

Many Green Room acting members valued her friendship, calmness and above all, her welcoming smile as they came off the stage wondering what they were doing next. She would always point them in the right direction and give them the encouragement to 'go back out there'.

Liz fought her illness bravely and with humour. She was, quite simply, 'one of us'. We will all miss her, not just for her work at the Green Room, but also for her kindness and support.

Our hearts go out to her husband, Charlie and her children Mike and Emma.



Chris McClory

Liz (right), with husband Charlie and friend and fellow cast-mate, Val, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, summer 1990

Charlie has requested that we add a message for you all:

'I was moved by all the kind cards and comments about Liz from members of the Society. I do not have the addresses of many of you so I would like to take this opportunity to thank those I have not been able to contact.'

Do you have any items for the newsletter, or comments to make about it?

If so, please send to: newsletter@wgrsoc.org.uk,

The newsletter is edited by Chris Hills for the Wilmslow Green Room - registered Charity Number **1153665**.