

newsletter@wgrsoc.org.uk

www.wgrsoc.org.uk



Very best wishes for Christmas, and for a healthy and happy New Year

Some Christmas Cheer!

Join us for The Green Room Advent Calendar on 17 December 7.30

Music, stories, surprises for the festive season

We can't have our usual Band concert in the Green Room this Christmas, so instead we have devised an entertainment specially for our members and we would like you all to join in.

We'd love you to wear your sparkly Christmas jumper or your posh frock and reindeer antlers. Get a few Christmas lights ready, whether on the tree or not, and we'll give the signal to switch them all on together.

There is no charge - BUT - as with any event, we need to know how many people will be joining us on Zoom, so please email Celia Bonner.

We look forward to seeing you on the night.

Play and Stage News

As far as plays in the Green Room are concerned, the latest news on coronavirus means of course that we cannot make any definite plans for plays in the theatre. Instead, we have been working hard on planning the Green Room Advent Calendar evening - see above. We have shifted the Green Room Ode to after Christmas, to enable a few more of you to send your poetry and words to include – thanks to those who have already contributed. We have some really good pieces, but it's not too late to join in.

On 28 January, we are going to have another ZOOM play reading. Do join us for this; it's a great way to include those of you who don't usually appear on stage – no experience necessary, just ZOOM with us for fun, but let Play and Stage know ahead, at pscc@wgrsoc.org.uk if you'd like to do so. We have some ideas for which play we might read, but new ideas are always welcome.

Any other thoughts on ways we can get together while we can't get together, do let the PSCC know.

Celia Bonner pscc@wgrsoc.org.uk

Chairman's Thoughts

THIS EXTRAORDINARY YEAR . . .

This has been an extraordinary year and although the announcements of successful trials of candidate vaccines for Covid-19 indicate that we will be able to resume normal activities in due course, it is still too early to know exactly what will be possible in the first half of 2021. The 'Christmas Event' will provide a great opportunity for members to get together albeit virtually so please do join in. In the meantime we are extremely grateful for your continued support as we work towards a re-opening next year.

Al Fowkes

Welcome to
Steve Williamson,
who has offered to
take on the
organisation
of the rota of
House Managers
when this becomes
needed.

Editor

Little Theatre Guild

We have a new member theatre (no.114) The Davenham Players in Northwich. Their website is www.davenhamplayers.co.uk

It's worth a look to discover their story. Amongst other things, when they applied for permission to make improvements to their building, they discovered that no Deed of Trust existed and therefore the premises had no official owner! No names, no pack drill but one of our fellow South Manchester theatres recently found themselves in the same predicament.

The next national conference will be at **Southport Little Theatre** from **14-16 April 2021** and the Northern conference is planned for October at Carlisle Green Room. Norma and I will be at Southport as it is one of the many theatres where I have been a member (one day I'll get one right!)

Finally, the guild has a new Chairman. Jo Matthews is a member of Questors theatre. Her day job is Friends and Patrons manager at the Globe Bankside where she also fundraises.

Mike Rogerson

THEATRE MANAGEMENT

Safety

The Little Theatre Guild, of which we are a member, negotiated with the Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre to allow LTG members to apply for a 'See It Safely' mark in order to be able to demonstrate that we are a Covid Secure Venue.

The Green Room therefore applied, and have been granted the use of Society of London Theatre & UK Theatre's **See It Safely** mark. This certifies that we are complying with the latest Government and industry COVID-19 guidelines, to ensure the safety of our staff and audiences. You can find out more (at see-it-safely) about the measures we have been putting in place ready for when we are eventually able to open, for your visit, and what you will need to know beforehand.

Though, at the moment, re-opening seems a distant prospect, we are working behind the scenes to ensure that we can open safely at the earliest opportunity.

Rostra

As you might know, on many occasions directors of plays in the Green Room have requested more than one level for staging. This always gives the set building team a challenge, as each platform takes some time to construct, as well as requiring the purchase of much material. As a result, we have recently purchased a set of lightweight rostra which will allow us to construct a variety of configurations quickly. These rostra have been supplied by the company from which we purchased the new seating, so the fittings are compatible with the variable seating rostra we already have.

The full cost of these new rostra has been provided by a generous grant from the Evans Trust, so has not diminished our own financial resources in these difficult times when our income is greatly reduced. We are therefore well set up and ready for future productions when we will be able to get back to what we all want to do, and produce plays in the Theatre again!

Bruce Williams



BUILDING PROJECT

I regret to have to inform members that Ian Cole has decided to step down as chairman of the Building Project committee. The early days (even years) of this project were dogged by difficulties with planning and it is entirely due to Ian's tenacity that we have a set of plans that have met with approval from the planners. We are in his debt. The committee is keen to appoint some new members and needs a new chairman. Anybody interested is asked to contact me or any member of the Executive.

The progress of the building will depend entirely on the rate at which we can raise funds. Approaches to external organisations for support have not been successful. We have commissioned and received a report from a professional fund-raising adviser which has given some avenues to explore. However it is apparent that the current circumstances are not conducive to large scale fund-raising. We are registered with www.easyfundraising.org.uk but currently only 16 members are signed up. Our top two supporters on this site have raised £100 between them - at no cost to themselves: you know who you are - thank you very much for running your purchasing through the site. If you are taking advantage of on-line shopping at the moment please consider accessing retailer sites via easyfundraising - there are about 4000 stores available so it's worth having a look. The fund-raising report was clear that we should have a fundraising lead from within the society - this is an opportunity to make a real difference to the future of the theatre. To discuss further please contact me.

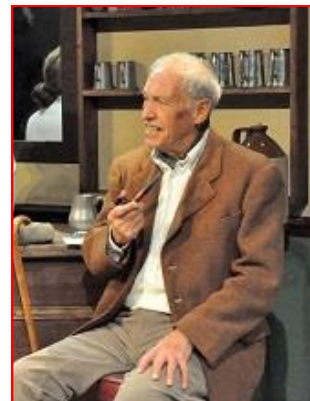
The committee is also considering whether there are any improvements that could be suitable for a 'crowdfunding' initiative rather than simply appealing for money for the larger project. Watch this space!

Al Fowkes, Chairman

RONNIE DYKSTRA -

on his retirement as President

In 1977, twelve members of Styal Players joined the Green Room, amongst whom were Pat Barrow, Mike Janes, Mavis Carlisle and Ronnie Dykstra. Ronnie was immediately invited to join the Executive Committee, and what a foresighted idea that was! Over the years Ronnie, supported by Sonia, has worked tirelessly on behalf of the Green Room, both on and off stage. His first stage appearance was in 1978 in **Aladdin**, when he played Ho Choo Choo, the Emperor of All China, and his most recent was Joe Gates in **Tommy Boy** in 2016.



Fortunately he even managed to survive being hanged in the 1998 production of **Henry V** at Gawsworth, when the mechanism jammed, instead of preventing the noose from closing. Personally I thought he was taking Method Acting too far!

He has worked on Set Construction, been Stage Manager, Prompt, and on many occasions, House Manager. He was also on Team 2 of the Working Party involved in site clearance prior to the development of the premises, working every Saturday afternoon from November 1989 into 1990.

He was Chairman of the Society from 1992 -1993, and President from 2011 until 2020. He still continues to work in his unassuming manner, beavering away behind the scenes. His contribution to our Society is immense, and I would like to thank him, not only for myself, but also for all the members of the Wilmslow Green Room Society.

David Reynolds

THOUGHTS FROM A WARDROBE MISTRESS

In normal times, the Green Room Wardrobe has opened from 7 – 9 pm on a Tuesday for costume hire, free for members, and for a small fee, is available to other societies and the public for parties, events etc. This was great fun.

A couple needed 1940s costumes for a family event. The lady took a glamorous evening gown. The man we dressed as a spiv including watches and nylons secreted. He played the part, much to the delight of his family. On returning their costumes, we discovered he was actually a vicar!

We are always sorting, cleaning and repairing our extensive collection of clothes from different eras, from Grecian to the 1990s

We also managed to celebrate birthdays for each of the Wardrobe team members, which, contrary to common belief, was NOT every Tuesday.

For each play one of the team would take 'the book', reading the script to establish the number of characters, the era, the number of changes, what the director has in mind and then taking the actors' measurements. Each of us works along with another member of the wardrobe team to make sure the outfits are assembled and, if necessary, we beg, borrow, buy or make any items to make the play more plausible .

During the production, Wardrobe members attend to help with hair, makeup, changes or even repairs.

When the production is over all items need to be cleaned, returned ... and then the next play starts rehearsal.

Aah! Those were the days.

Carole Holmes



Subscriptions Reminder

The Executive Committee wish to thank, very sincerely, the many members who paid their subscriptions very promptly in October, particularly at a time when we have been unable to open up the theatre. However, with a vaccine hopefully available in early months of next year, we look forward to being able to open our doors again soon.

In the meantime, it would be appreciated if those members who have not yet paid their subscriptions (full members £35, social members £15) could do so before 31 December. All members received individual membership renewal forms in October; those who haven't yet paid will have had their individual membership forms resent either by email or by post, in case they have been mislaid. And don't forget any 100 Club subscriptions so you can be entered into the next two 100 Club draws!

Cheques and completed forms should be returned to the Membership secretary, whose address is on the form.

Anyone who would prefer to pay their subscriptions by bank transfer, rather than by cheque, should contact the Membership Secretary either by email (membershipsecretary@wgrsoc.org.uk)

We would like to welcome John Kirby, who has recently joined us as a social member.

Ian McBride

Do you have any items for the newsletter, or comments to make about it?
If so, please send any feedback or articles for publication to: newsletter@wgrsoc.org.uk,
or post to the theatre, 85 Chapel Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5JH.

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

The next edition will be published in the Spring.