



“Curtain Call”

Our bi-monthly publication with news from the RHTC

August 2015 --Welcome to the 5th edition of our bi-monthly newsletter all about the RHTC. This month we are celebrating the August Summer Bank Holiday after enjoying record summer temperatures and a heart-warming rendition of Hi de Hi.



Morning Campers!

Just when you thought it was safe to come out of the chalet, we are going to enter the gates of Maplins Holiday Camp for one last time. This was a highly entertaining production, directed with innovation and skill by Chris Lebeter, with the colourful costumes and clever lighting creating strong visual impact and the excellent sound score taking us back to the fifties, for those of us who can remember that far back. The set designed by Justin Day worked particularly well, the revolve indicating the various scenes and the door, one of Chris's inventions, ably operated by Kevin Dawson becoming a character in its own right. Richard Kinnaird excelled as the hapless Geoffey Fairbrother, as did Georgina Tagg playing the lovelorn Gladys Pugh, with her poignant rendition of "Anyone who had a heart".

Jo Dewberry, normally more at home on the big musical stage, took on the role of the ever disappointed Peggy with enthusiastic aplomb and her performance of Mr Cellophane *continued on page 2*



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RHTC 200 Monthly Prize Draw

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If your membership number is drawn, you win a cash prize.

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Proceeds of the draw will be used to purchase equipment for the theatre.

Pick up a form at your next visit or from our programme. If you want more information contact Sue Smith at ssconsulting15@yahoo.co.uk.

Morning Campers *.... Continued from Page 1*

not only tugged at our heart strings but provided one of the best scenes changes I have seen for a long time.

Mark Lebeter as Ted Bovis and Justin Day as his sidekick Spike provided much of the humour, with the onstage raffle being another highlight. Rachel Repper and Tony Smith as the Stuart-Hargreaves were delightfully argumentative, as were another cranky couple, Michael Jeffrey as Fred the jockey and Jonty Redgate playing the surly Mr Partridge, another great character performance by Jonty.

Mentioned here must be made of the Yellowcoats, Caroline Hall as the glamorous Sylvia, Betsy Sweeney as Betty, both first timers to the Averham stage and Natalie Abbott, most recently seen as Marianne in Sense and Sensibility, did not have many lines but added great charm and versatility to the production. Together with Dawn Stubbs and Nigel Metcalf, who also played the objectionable Mrs Bovis and the bailiff, they seamlessly changed the scenes in full lighting, no blackouts for Chris, and again this helped add to the visual impact. They also worked hard front of house both greeting and saying goodbye to the audience, adding to a total theatre experience.

Finally, Kenneth Tagg, swapping his suave Regency outfit for one less flattering gave a lovely, if brief, performance as the rather strange Mr Pritchard. As ever at the Robin Hood, we try and bring the audience a variety of styles and Hi de Hi, whilst not having the strongest script, was confidently directed and tackled with great enthusiasm by a strong cast, resulting in an enjoyable evening out for all.

DID YOU KNOW – Bank Holidays

As this issue is issued ready for the Bank Holidays – here are some facts for you....

Prior to 1834, the Bank of England observed approx. 33 saint's days or religious festivals and took them as holiday.

Bank holidays were first introduced by the Bank Holidays Act of 1871 and reduced public holidays to 4 days (Easter Monday, 1st Monday in August, Boxing Day and Whit Monday). The act was introduced by Sir John Lubbock, the 1st Lord and Baron Avebury, (1834-1913), English banker, politician, naturalist and archaeologist.

The 1871 Act was repealed 100 years later and its provisions incorporated into the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971, which remains the statutory basis for bank holidays. Bank holidays designated since the 1971 Act are appointed each year by Royal Proclamation. Additional public holidays appointed for Royal Weddings or the Royal Jubilee is not automatically considered as additional paid annual leave. Currently England, Scotland and Wales all have eight public holidays per year, whilst Northern Ireland has ten.

Let's take a moment to remember George Binks, husband of Carole, local resident, supporter of the RHTC and Averham Church Warden who sadly passed away earlier this month. He will of course be missed by all his family and friends, but also by everyone else who was lucky enough to have known him – a kind, gentle and thoughtful man.

Tickets for all productions are available on our box office number 07733 179986



SPOT LIGHT on David O'Brien

Our next production, *Abigail's Party*, is David's directing debut for the RHTC although we have seen him on stage in *Allo Allo* and most recently *Neighbourhood Watch*. As you can see below, David's interest in theatre goes back to his youth and there have been a few interesting stops on the way.



My parents were both active participants in amateur theatre, in fact it was how they met, so it was probably inevitable that I would follow in their footsteps. However, it wasn't until I was aged 15 that I plucked up courage to appear in my first play – Henry VIII in *A Man for All Seasons* at school. After that, my English teacher persuaded me to audition for the National Youth Theatre. I can remember being ultra nervous for my first audition, but they kept me waiting so long that my nerves disappeared to be replaced by annoyance and the audition went well enough for them to invite me back for a second. That led to three happy summers appearing with the NYT in London alongside a few people destined for acting careers (Liza Tarbuck, Gina McKee who played Hugh Grant's sister in *Notting Hill*) and even a mention

for me in a play review in *The Times*. I did drama at university for a year, but opted to drop it and complete a French degree instead – studying plays wasn't as much fun as acting – although I did combine the two by directing and acting in *La Cantatrice Chauve* by Ionesco which we toured to a few other University French departments. After university, I joined the Oasthouse Theatre in Rainham, Kent, appearing in 28 productions and directing 5 more. I can be that precise because a small group of us collated the full history of the theatre in 2003 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of purchasing their own theatre and we turned it in to a book (I still have a box of them in my garage favourite appearance was playing half of a music hall mind-reading act with my mum in *All for Your*



Delight. We worked out a proper mind-reading routine where I would take items from the audience and my blindfolded mum would identify what I was holding – all done with key words and lots of practice and even the other cast members didn't work out how we did it. My biggest achievement (big-head alert!) was winning the Best Actor in the On Stage in Kent Awards for the Prosecutor in *The Vigil* – no one from our theatre had won it in nearly 30 years of trying and the award was presented

at a black tie dinner in the Henry VIII Banqueting Hall at Leeds Castle (full circle in a way from my first performance). On moving to Newark from Kent 3 years ago, I was delighted to find that the RHTC is a lot like the Oasthouse Theatre with a friendly, dedicated group of people and a lovely historic venue so it's easy to feel at home.

For further information visit our web site – robinhoodtheatre.co.uk



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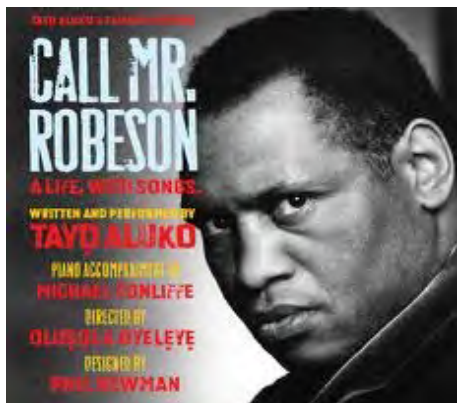
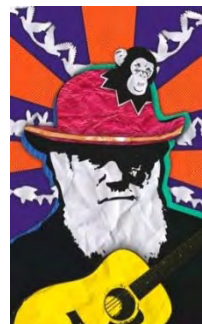
We have been fortunate enough to become a venue for Village Ventures. This means that we will be presenting three professional shows this season.

COOPE, SIMPSON, FRASER & FREYA



The first will be shown at the Robin Hood Theatre on Saturday December 12th. It is a Christmas show called 'Hark,Hark', produced by Coope, Simpson, Fraser and Freya. It is described as not just a bunch of folk with good voices belting out traditional carols. It's a welcoming hotch-potch of stories, poetry and jokes threaded through with carolling and wassailing, both acapella and accompanied by a proper bagful of instruments, blown, plucked, bowed and struck. The show is rich in the Variety tradition – there are various nods to music hall – and steeped in folk's past and present, and the way the show veers effortlessly between solemnity and silliness makes it a wonderful, and wonderfully warm, winter night out.'

On Thursday February 4th Tangram Theatre Company will be at the theatre to perform 'The Origin of The Species' which is advertised as suitable for children from eight years old as well as adults. It tells the incredible story of how Charles Darwin came to discover the secrets of evolution and why it took him over twenty years before plucking up the courage to publish his remarkable idea. It's a show packed with big theories, terrible puns, brilliant physical comedy and six original songs about everything from blasted boring barnacles to the perils of marrying your cousin.



On Saturday March 12th we will host a show called 'Call Mr. Robeson', which has won many awards, both in the UK and the USA. Performed by Tayo Aluka, it tells the life story of Paul Robeson who was a famous actor, singer and civil rights campaigner. This journey through Robeson's remarkable and eventful life highlights how his pioneering and heroic (but largely forgotten) political activism led many to describe him as the forerunner of the civil rights movement. The show features much fiery oratory and some of his famous songs, including a dramatic rendition of 'Ol' Man River'.

We are all very excited about these new additions to our programme. Tickets will cost the same as we normally charge and we recommend booking early to ensure your seats.

This is our 5th edition of Curtain Call – if you have any comments about the contents we would love to hear from you via our editors, Carolyn and Jackie.

The next issue will be released mid November, commemorating Remembrance Day; let us know if there is any subject you would like included. By then we will have enjoyed Abigails Party, and will be preparing for Pitmen Painters – two entertaining plays, so get your tickets organised now!



RHTC Workshops

As you know we have been running some workshops at the theatre, and these have proved to be very successful. Nearly everyone who attended the acting workshops had never been to the theatre before. Two people said that although they had lived in Newark all their lives they had never heard of the Robin Hood Theatre; obviously not readers of the Advertiser then! However, everyone was impressed by the theatre and went home Clutching leaflets about future performances. Several people have since signed up as volunteers. I ran the Acting workshops assisted by a different Theatre Practitioner each week. The first half of the session involved building up confidence through improvisation and exercises, and the second half was spent introducing script work, with special reference to characterisation and voice. We had a lot of fun and there was plenty of laughter throughout. It was very rewarding to see people who were nervous on arrival who were positively buzzing when they left the theatre. The feedback from participants has been excellent. David Baliol-Key organised a Lighting workshop on Saturday 8th August. Kevin Cutts, Technical Manager at Loughborough Town Hall Theatre ran the workshop which attendees agreed was a great success. We are planning a stage Management Workshop in the New Year with another Acting workshop organised on Saturday 14th November from 2.00p.m. to 5.00p.m. Members are welcome to attend. We are very grateful to Newark and Sherwood District Council who have funded the marketing and fees for the Theatre Practitioners. As Directors, Dave and I did the work for love! *Carolyn Drury*



Corporate Board News

The Board meets monthly to review all the company's activities. In the last two meetings we have:

- Appointed a leader for the RHT Youth Group and agreed that the programme will start in September;
- Reviewed our architect's first report and commissioned the next phase of his work to fully survey the buildings and work with Newark and Sherwood building control department to agree an approach to completing the extension building;
- Decided to replace the four old wooden windows at the front of the building with UPVC double glazed windows that will improve the appearance and the security of the building;
- Agreed that volunteer helpers should be offered a complimentary drink for each performance evening (actors will continue to get hot drinks and water backstage);
- Reviewed our decision making hierarchy and procurement processes to ensure that, as our activities widen, Directors and Board sub groups are clear on what they can decide and what needs to be referred back to the Board.
- As well as monitoring our finances and initiating the next 3 productions.

Building development update:

The installation of lighting and power circuits in the backstage rooms is complete - the dressing rooms and backstage facilities now have normal lighting, show running state and emergency lighting systems as well as sockets for hair dryers and similar appliances. Dave Baliol-Key has worked flat out since the end of Hi-de-Hi to ensure that this upgrade would be ready for the new season. He has had help and encouragement from a range of members who have each done a few days from their spare time. We have also decorated the backstage toilet now that the roof has been repaired so the facilities for performers and crew are considerably enhanced. We are also very grateful to Vodafone for sending a team of volunteers for a day who did a lot of clearing up around the site. They removed all the piles of old bricks and sand from the front of the building and cleared the gardens along the drive. The gardens are not actually our property but the owners of the Rectory were very pleased to allow this work and joined in with the clearance agreeing which small shrubs and trees could be removed. We hope to agree a ground cover planting scheme with them to preserve the improved appearance.

Tickets for all productions are available on our box office number 07733 179986



Wings 'n' Wheels, Averhams own Village Fete and Air Display is back again on Saturday 5th September from 12.30 to 5.00 at Rectory Farm.

The Robin Hood Theatre is joining in with the event by hosting an Edwardian Photo Booth. We are providing a selection of costumes for people to put on and pose for their Edwardian style picture. Our booth will be next to the Gilded Age recreation of a WW1 airfield and trench and we look forward to seeing you there so come and join the fun – all funds raised at the event go to Beaumont House and Lincoln & Notts Air Ambulance.

STOP PRESS - RHTC Youth Theatre Restarts

Yes, the Robin Hood Theatre Company, having settled into our newly refurbished theatre, are delighted to announce that the Youth Theatre is restarting in September. It has always been our company policy to have an established Youth Group, and will include:

- A full length production as part of the RHTC programme.
- Other smaller productions to showcase the work of the youth group throughout the season.
- Workshops in all aspects of performance with opportunities to learn stage management and other technical skills.



We are thrilled to have gained the services of Shauna Dennett as our new Youth Leader. Shauna has been passionate about theatre since attending a NITS session at the age of 6 and has been heavily involved in youth theatre ever since. She has gained qualifications in performing arts and drama from Grantham College and University of Lincoln. Shauna says "My passion in life is inspiring young people to perform and love theatre as much as I do. The workshops will be fun and entertaining as well as instructive and I am very excited at the prospect of building a new and vibrant Robin Hood Youth Theatre".



We commence with a free taster session on 6th September between 4 and 6 pm. Thereafter every Sunday at the Robin Hood Theatre at a cost of £6.00 per week - payable half termly in advance. If you know anyone aged 11 to 18 who is interested in drama and would like to be involved in an exciting new venture, get them to come along and join in the fun.

For more details contact Jean Lebeter, Artistic Director on 07733 179986 Or Shauna Dennett - Youth Leader at shaunadennett@icloud.com