



Players Patter No 162 - Feb 2014

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Chairman's Message

To those of you that haven't been either blown or washed away, a very warm welcome to our Spring (yes....I think that's what we should be calling it!) newsletter.

South Pacific is well under way and, thankfully, giving us the opportunity to think of beautiful south-seas and sun-drenched beaches. We do have one slight problem....you've heard of the show "Five Guys Named Mo" well we've gone one better and are thinking of applying for an official name change from "South Pacific" to "Six Guys Named Chris". The show has attracted (albeit after some sterling PR work by the wonderful Debbie Bowyer) a whole host of new members so a very, very warm welcome to Genevieve Labuschagne (Liat), Rosie Clarke, Linda Fawson, Faith Hallett, Hazel Hawkswell, Elaine McGee, Christopher Sadler (Billis), Tim Spindler (Cable), Chris Cain (Brackett) Dan Clarke, Christopher Lawrence, Christopher Lloyd & Chris Longmore, I've been along to a few rehearsals and the show is looking and sounding absolutely superb. Do encourage friends and family to come along to see the show. So often people assume that amateur shows won't be quite "up to scratch" but I can guarantee South Pacific will give them a very welcome surprise.

I'm also absolutely delighted to be able to tell you that Jonathan Foster has agreed to take on directing this year's **Show Stoppers – Memories of the Movies**. Jonathan's years of experience on stage and his knowledge and enthusiasm mean the show is in very safe hands. He has chosen to focus on one of his areas of particular interest, songs from films, and has already done a huge amount of research and chosen a good number of the songs. More details of the show appear elsewhere in the newsletter, along with details of how to get in touch with Jonathan if you would like to be involved.

Next on the agenda will be **The Producers** and already work has started on sourcing costumes and planning the set. If anyone would like to know more about the show it is being put on by CFAOS (Cody & Farnborough) the same week as South Pacific (25-29 March). Our production will be directed by Hamish Donaldson with Robert Cantan as MD and Angela responsible for Musical Staging.

Chairman's letter cont.

Following on from the Apollo Theatre ceiling caving in, the Haslemere Hall are tightening up the procedures for Front of House. This is a requirement for all Societies and users of the Hall (to include rehearsals and meetings). As it involves so many of you who are good enough to volunteer your services front of house I am writing about it separately on the back page.

In the last newsletter I told everyone the news that Matilda Shapland, one of our Gretls in Sound of Music, was appearing as Young Eponine in the West End production of Les Miserables. I am delighted to say that she has now successfully auditioned for and is now playing the part of Little Cosette. Congratulations again Matilda!

Vicki Gavin, 68 Victoria Way, Liphook, Hampshire. GU30 7NJ 01428 727144 vickigavin@btinternet.com

Treasurer's Report

I am delighted to report the financial result for HMS Pinafore was a very healthy surplus of £1800. Although ticket sales were a bit disappointing, G&S shows are out of copyright so there are no royalties, giving us this fantastic result. Special mention must go to our wardrobe and scenery mistresses and masters who managed to costume and set the show for less than £1200. Those of you who went to see the show will agree the scenery and costumes were of outstanding quality and design.

The costs of staging a show increase year on year, and in addition we have had some major expenses this year with the studio windows needing painting and repair. As always we are grateful to you for supporting the society so please do continue to ensure your member and patron subscriptions are paid and up to date.

Sally Barr sal_barr@yahoo.co.uk

South Pacific

It's time to book your tickets for this great show

How to Book

- **Telephone** the Haslemere Hall on 01428 642161; Payment by credit/debit card.
- **By post** to Haslemere Hall Box Office, Bridge Road, Haslemere GU27 2AS. Payment by cheque made payable to Haslemere Hall.
- **Online** at www.haslemerehall.co.uk (£2 surcharge per transaction; payment by credit/debit card).
- **In person** at the Haslemere Hall Box Office, Bridge Road, Haslemere GU27 2AS, Mon – Fri 9 am to 1 pm; Saturday 10 am to 12 noon.

| | Balcony | Tiered | Stalls |
|-----------|---------|--------|--------|
| Tuesday | £9.50 | £11 | £8.50 |
| Wed - Sat | £13.50 | £15 | £12.50 |
| Sat Mat | £7.50 | £10.50 | £7.50 |

Concessions: Only one applies.

Groups of 10 or more £1.00 off each ticket.

Seniors £1.00 off Weds & Thurs eve & Sat Matinée.

Under 16s Balcony £7.50, Tiered £8, Stalls £7

News from the Studio

The Studio team has been very busy culling, cleaning and generally organising the ladies section so that clothes are accessible either for use in our own shows or for hire to the general public. A particular 'thank you' to Steph and Sue Farley for their continued support. We'll be starting upstairs soon!

As many of you will know, any clothes or old costumes which we cannot use are sent to the Haslemere Care Charity as they can raise considerable sums by selling 'rags'. We feel that it is important to continue to support the local community but would like to raise some money for our own society as well.

To this end, we have enrolled in a scheme called 'Phil the Bag' whereby clothes and shoes which are still wearable are collected in bags and collected by the aforementioned group. The organisation which has donated goods then receives a cut of the monies raised. The disadvantage is that a minimum of 30 bags have to be filled!

We have made a start but we are hoping that when you, members of the Players, do a post-Christmas clear out, you will consider bagging up your and your family's unwanted clothes/shoes (not books or bric-a-brac) and bringing them to the Studio on any Saturday in March between 10am and 12pm. We can then get the 'Phil' group to collect.

Happy clearing out!

We look forward to receiving your charity donations.

Mary and Mary-Lou

THE PRODUCERS

Our autumn show is The Producers by Mel Brooks, one of the greatest of the more modern musicals. It is the story of an established producer who learns from his auditor that it is more profitable to stage a flop than to stage a success. So they set about staging a musical in the worst possible taste - it's called *Springtime for Hitler*. Well you can probably imagine how funny and non-PC it is.



Here are the main characters:

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Max Bialystock | A Broadway Producer |
| Leo Bloom | An Accountant |
| Franz Liebkind | Author of Springtime for Hitler |
| Roger de Bris | A Director |
| Carmen Ghia | Roger's Assistant |
| Ulla Inga Hansen... | An attractive PA, dancer etc |
| Hold me touch me | } Little old ladies |
| Kiss me feel me | |
| Lick me bite me | |

There are also a good number of cameo parts as well as chorus numbers featuring show goers, accountants (male and female), prisoners (male and female) and little old ladies (male and female).

I look forward to telling you all about it at the read-through on Tuesday 10th June.

Hamish

SOCIAL

There are a number of exciting social items in the line-up for the rest of the year. In addition to the staple annual events (Summer BBQ in August and the inter-society quiz in November) the social team are working hard to come up with a key event to be held in March/April this year which will be fun and include the whole society. Some great ideas have been put forward including:

- Barn Dance - this is proving to be quite expensive and probably not doable due to cost. Any ideas?
- Camel Racing - A similar event was held by another society recently which was apparently great fun!
- Karaoke
- Skittles Evening – A replay of the fun night had at the Black Fox back in 2012!

If anyone has any other great ideas that they would like to throw into the melting pot then please let Mike Byrne know on Michael.Byrne2@Sodexo.com.

[We will keep you posted of any developments.](#)

Show Stoppers 2014 – Memories of the Movies

The theme for this year's Show Stoppers is *Memories of the Movies*. Our director is Jonathan Foster who has devised an exciting programme of popular show stopping songs from one hundred years of cinema, including a tribute to Clark Gable, a salute to Walt Disney and a nostalgic look back at Haslemere's Rex Cinema, and featuring songs from a wide range of films including *The Jazz Singer*, *42nd Street*, *On the Town*, *Gigi*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *My Fair Lady*, *Cabaret*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Evita* and *Mamma Mia*.

Bearing in mind the limited amount of rehearsal time, the emphasis this year is on more solos, duets and small group numbers, but there are also six rousing choruses and a couple of dancing numbers.

If you would like to be involved in Show Stoppers, please get in touch with Jonathan. The cast list is currently top heavy with women, so men are particularly welcome!

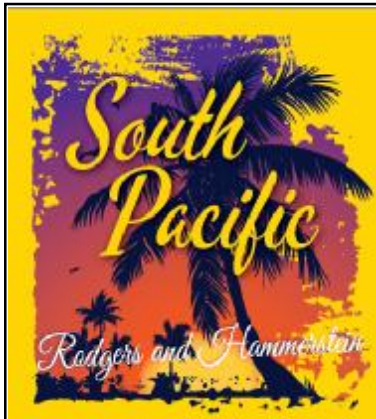
Rehearsals begin on **1st April** and the show dates are **6th and 7th June** at 7.30 pm, together with a Saturday matinee at 2.30 pm.

Jonathan Foster jcpdvfoster@tinyworld.co.uk



Dates for Your Diary

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Fri 21 & Sat 22 Feb | Grayshott Stagers One Act Plays |
| Tue 25 – Sat 29 Mar | South Pacific in Haslemere Hall |
| Tues 1st March | First rehearsal of Show Stoppers |
| Thur 15 - Sat 17 May | The Crucible by Haslemere Thespians |
| Fri 6 & Sat 7 June | Show Stoppers |
| Tues 10 June | Read-through of The Producers |
| Tues 17 June | Players AGM at the School |
| Sun 22 June | The Producers Principal auditions |
| Tues 21–Sat 25 Oct | The Producers in Haslemere Hall |



SOUTH PACIFIC 25 to 29th March

It is February. Midwinter. Outside it is called *and wet*. As I sit at my computer by a lovely fire, I think to myself, "I must get a fireplace and chimney." Anyway, while I'm waiting for the fire brigade,

there's just time for an update.

Less than two weeks ago, we still had to find three important principals. And then, like the proverbial buses, they all appeared at once. Chris Cain (Chris number six) is an authoritative Brackett. Alan Thornhill is a superb Harbison – he knows his lines and moves already. Finally, Tim Spindler is the Cable I have been waiting for - young, appealing and can act and sing; even reaching the high notes. The reason it has taken so long to complete the casting is because we already had some great principals and didn't want to introduce a weak link.

But it is not just the principals who are so good. In December, we only had three Seabees. Now we have a wonderful men's chorus who can not only sing well but are literally throwing themselves into their roles. I never imagined that they would be able to (deliberately) collapse like ninepins at the end of the "Dames" song. Not one of them needed the attention of a nurse at the end although that wouldn't have been a problem because we have an equally good girls' chorus of nurses. They, too, are being just as versatile. For example, when the nurses are "relaxing" on the beach, they invent their own little scenarios. I especially like the one who is texting her folks back home, the couple watching the recent Hollywood film, *Gone With The Wind* on a portable DVD player and the two who are playing the latest computer game on a laptop.

Finally, as I hear the fire engine approaching, mention must be made of the scene building team - Adrian, Hamish, Gary, Luan and others who are doing a magnificent job and also of Vicki, Mary and Mary-Lou who have been tearing my hair out to find the most suitable costumes. This is going to be a very special production – the cast have bought tickets to watch it - so please sell and buy as many tickets as you can. The cast deserve it, the backstage team deserve it and the cost of putting it on is Bali Ha'i. Bob

FRONT OF HOUSE

I mentioned a bit about Front of House in my chairman's letter and I know a few people have raised questions, having heard rumours about changes to the responsibilities of the Front of House team so here is a bit more information.

The FoH team is made up of a minimum of four people, one FoH Manager and three ushers. Their responsibility is to ensure the safety and comfort of everyone watching the show. This involves welcoming audience members, checking tickets, selling programmes and, if necessary, showing people to their seats. But that's the easy stuff.....it may also involve dealing with late arrivals and deciding how/when you are going to get them in to the auditorium....where are they going to sit.....will letting them in cause disruption? You may be faced with someone who has been taken ill.....what are you going to do? And, worst case scenario, if you need to evacuate the hall.....where do you start?

All of this is covered in the Front of House training sessions which are now being run by the Haslemere Hall. All Front of House Managers must attend a course, and act as Front of House manager three times during the course of the year to retain their "accreditation". Ideally, ushers should also undertake this training and we'd like to thank those of you who have already been kind enough to give up your time to do this. We know that lots of you have been doing this for many years and may struggle to see the value of the course but if something goes wrong and someone is injured, as a society we have to be able to say, hand on heart, that we did everything we could to ensure that our volunteers knew exactly what to do.

If you have volunteered to be part of the FoH team for South Pacific, you will be sent full details/a reminder of what is required, prior to the show. However, here are a few bullet points.

- If you have agreed to be an usher it is **vital** that you arrive 15 minutes before the doors are due to open so there is sufficient time for the FoH Manager to brief you.
- If we do not have a full FoH team present/ready, we **cannot** open the doors to the public.
- If you don't turn up, the hall may need to provide alternative cover for you. **This will cost the society £72.** Please do not be that person!
- The FoH team must help to pick up rubbish in the auditorium and fold all seats up at the end of each performance.
- The FoH team **must not leave** until the last member of the public has left the building and the doors have been locked.

Again, thank you to everyone who helps front of house. We don't want to make the job difficult or onerous for anyone.....we just want to do it right....and don't forget, all going according to plan, as an usher, most of your evening is spent just enjoying the show!!

Vicki



GRAPEVINE NEWS OF MEMBERS

Congratulations to Rebecca Lucas who gave birth to little Zachary Oliver on 2nd February weighing in at 6lb.3oz. Mother and baby are both doing well.

Sadly I have to report the death of two members. Ken Draper died on 17th December. He was 98 and had moved to Chiddingfold to be nearer his daughter. Ken will be remembered with great affection especially by the set-building team. Right up until his last days in Haslemere he was to be seen helping at the Studio. He was also a great supporter of the U3A Men's Cookery Class where they have great fun creating wonderful dishes (men only!) Sadly neither the U3A or the Players knew about his funeral which took place on 6th January as we would certainly have been there to give him a good send off.

I also have to report the death of Thelma Robertson. Thelma joined the Players in 1974 for Viva Mexico and her last show on stage was in Fiddler on the Roof in 1999 when she played Grandma Tzeitel. However she continued to help Front of House making the teas and coffees for many years.

On a happier note, congratulations to Matilda Shapland, one of our Gretls in the Sound of Music who is playing the part of Little Cosette in Les Miserables at the Queens Theatre in London twice a week until June.

Stephanie Goodfellow is producing The Memory of Water for the Midhurst Players. This will take place from 9th – 12th April. Do go and see it if you can.

Also one of our new members in South Pacific, Christopher Lawrence, is playing Orpheus in Orpheus in the Underworld at Alton from 5th – 8th March.

Please send any contributions and news items for the newsletter to me [-linda.haslemere@btinternet.com](mailto:linda.haslemere@btinternet.com)

If you receive this newsletter by post and would be happy to receive it by email please let me know.