



Players Patter No 197 - June 2021

www.HaslemerePlayers.com

Treasurer's Report

So the financial year 2020-1 has come to an end and the accounts are in the process of being validated and approved by our independent assessor ahead of the AGM in August. I've mentioned in previous Patter instalments that the unusual year we have just had is also reflected in the accounts which have seen low levels of revenues and expenses. But, whilst our income versus expenditure for 2020-1 was slightly negative, the balance sheet remains healthy and provides us with a sound base to spring back into theatrical action for this new year.

Whilst the pandemic has been challenging on so many levels for all of us, it does not appear to have dented the generosity of spirit that has always been prevalent in our society. The Players have continued to receive membership monies throughout 2020 in spite of the absence of shows and we have also benefited from some generous donations from friends of the society. The Committee has been unanimous in our desire to mirror that generosity by contributing to some important causes such as the Hunter Centre (in memory of our well-loved member Richard Tytler) and also the Haslemere Hall via an additional contribution per ticket sold for Showstoppers.

We have also been keen to invest in our return to the stage in the new year, and as such the Society decided to make a joint investment alongside the Thespians and the Hall to purchase a new lighting desk which has the technical capacity to really enhance the audience experience. Whilst for the Players this new kit will first be used during Showstoppers in July, it had its first outing at the Thespian's June production of Just What the Doctor Ordered where the back stage team were able to really go to town to show the boys from the original cast of the Haslemere Players version of The Full Monty in the most advantageous light!

All in all, whilst reflective about the year we have just had, we are equally poised for a new and exciting year with a full programme of activity that we can all enjoy together. I look forward to seeing you all there!!

Mike Byrne Treasurer (mb.hp.treasurer@gmail.com)

Chairman's Letter

Who would have thought, as the final curtain came down on Evita in October 2019, it wouldn't be until June 2021 that our next show would be in sight. It's been a crazy journey but here we are, preparing to put on our first show in 21 months!!

We are absolutely delighted to be able to confirm that **SHOW STOPPERS, The Show Must Go On** can go ahead as planned. Things were on a knife edge following the changes to restrictions around singing on 18 May (with only one group of 6 in the entire cast being able to sing....not ideal for a Players show!!). However, huge thanks to Christopher Lawrence who highlighted the update to the restrictions on 10 June confirming that commercial events (defined as those for which tickets are sold) can have groups of more than 6 rehearsing and performing together....all with appropriate social distancing, of course! So, as I write, we're looking forward to rehearsing on stage at the Hall this week after 5 weeks of singing and dancing in our groups of 6, either at the studio or in each other's homes. Tickets are on sale via the Haslemere Hall so do come along and support this fabulous tribute to West End Musicals.

Plans are also afoot to start work on **LEGALLY BLONDE** at the beginning of August and, after the longest rehearsal period in history, it will be hitting the stage at the Haslemere Hall at the end of October.

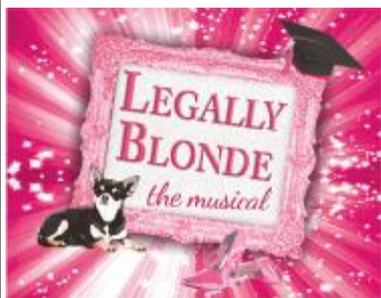
On Sunday 15 August we'll be hosting both the **AGM** and....wait for it....in a change to our usual BBQ a **PLAYERS PANDEMIC PICNIC** (actually, just a Players Picnic but I'm hoping there will be very few opportunities to use the word pandemic in the future and I liked the alliteration!). We're hoping for wonderful weather and the chance to have a long-awaited catch up with all our theatre buddies. Full details are in the Social Report.

It was with a heavy heart that we heard of the passing of Richard Tytler, a member for 40 years as well as an ex-chairman of the Society. Fay Foster has written a beautiful tribute which is included elsewhere in the newsletter and Players were delighted to provide a choir of 6 at his funeral. We send our love to Sue and all of Richard's family.

Please do continue to look after yourselves and we look forward to seeing you very soon.

Vicki Gavin
chairman@haslemereplayers.com

Legally Blonde Update



Rehearsals for Legally Blonde will begin again after Showstoppers on Tuesday 3rd August. We are still waiting to confirm whether we will be able to use the Grove and this will very much depend on how they feel

about the current government roadmap to recovery. Vicki is in regular contact with them and as soon as we have any further information, we will of course let you know. I am looking at alternative locations just in case!

We have some roles to fill, as some members of the original cast are unable to commit to the new dates. Parts available include Warner Huntington, Elle's dad and Aaron Schultz.

I will be moving the rehearsal videos, music and timetable onto Google drive as I know people were struggling to access information on Dropbox. Please make sure I have your most up to date email address.

If you are coming to see the show and you do not yet have your tickets, please do so now using the link below:

<https://tickets.haslemerehall.co.uk/sales/genres/theatre/legally-blonde>

News from the Studio

It has been lovely to welcome the Showstoppers teams to the Studio after such a long period of inactivity. We are hoping to costume the show (The Show Must Go On) almost completely from our wardrobe to avoid having to spend any money. For obvious reasons we have had no income since January 2020. We have also been able to lend costumes to some of the Thespians for their show.

We were fortunate in being offered a large selection of clothes and props from a house clearance but now we have to find time to go through it all to decide what we can realistically keep. A giant cull is needed!

I would like to welcome Becca McGregor to the wardrobe team. Becca is keen to learn about this aspect of putting on a show and has taken responsibility for costuming one of the Showstoppers teams.

As we gradually emerge from lockdown, don't forget that if you are going to Goodwood or attending a themed party, your own Players Wardrobe has a vast selection of outfits which you can hire for a modest fee. Just email me and I'll arrange a time for you to visit.

Looking forward to seeing more of you in the near future.

Mary-Lou

Social Report

Hello from the Social Committee. It was lovely to see so many of you at Just what the Doctor Ordered, congratulations to all involved. It was a super show and fantastic to be at the theatre again.

Zoom Easter Quiz

The Quiz was held on 2nd April. We had a good turnout, and it was good to see some familiar faces.

Our Gold medal winners were Vicki, Howard, Richard and Jo. Our Silver medal winners were Hamish, Linda, Christopher & family and Jane and Jim McMichael. Our Bronze medal winners were Allie, Lizzie, Alex and Hannah.

A few people have told me they did not come to the Quiz because they were not part of a team, or they didn't want to come on their own. To join in, you do not need to have a team, we will allocate people to teams on the day. Also, if Quizzes are not your thing, come along for a chat instead. Just let us know you don't want to be allocated to a team.

AGM & Players Picnic

This year we've decided to ring the changes with a picnic with games and activities (for those who want to join in)



and a picnic tea to include home-made sandwiches, sausage rolls, cakes and scones. This will follow the AGM at 12 noon on Sunday 15 August. It will be held at Beacon Crescent, Tilford Road, Hindhead, GU26 6UL (old Lloyds Bank Training Centre).

Directions: Coming from Haslemere, take the road towards Tilford/Farnham. Where the road forks, take the right fork towards Tilford and Beacon Crescent is on your right. Use the **second** entrance where someone will be there to open the gate. Drive round towards the exit (the first gate you passed) and visitor parking is on the left just before you go out. Then make your way round to the right of the main building, across the lawn and down to the gazebo/tennis courts.

Cost: £5 pp to include sandwiches and other picnic fayre followed by homemade cakes and scones with clotted cream. Pay via PayPal so we know the numbers.

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=CP2UW5M3RC4LC

Please bring: A chair or rug to sit on, your own drinks, a tennis racket and suitable tennis shoes if you wish to use the tennis courts.

Lizzie Hale's Zoom Classes

Lizzie is still providing dance and exercise classes for people of all ages and fitness abilities. Check out her website for more details

<https://www.haslemeremusicanddancestudio.com/>



GRAPEVINE NEWS OF MEMBERS

Doreen Wylde has now moved to a Care Home at Broadwater and is, in fact, almost adjacent to Broadwater School where she was head of school of many years. She knows some of the residents and there is a piano in the sitting room. She is very happy there and her son, Nicholas, is living nearby. Her new address is Broadwater Lodge Care Home, Summer Road, Farncombe, Godalming, Surrey GU7 3BF.

Sadly we have had news of the deaths of three of our older members. Elaine White was in five of our shows, the last one being the 1996 production of Chess. Elaine was married to Ian, who sang in our Barbershop Quartet and died last year. Elaine was a wonderful seamstress and had made quite a few of our costumes.

Graham Chester died very peacefully on 13th June after spending Father's Day with his family. He had been suffering with prostate cancer. Graham was a lovely man who always took his turn Front of House and will be greatly missed. He was married to Elizabeth and I know you will join me in sending her our thoughts and prayers. Graham's funeral (on Wed 14th July at 11 am) will be streamed so please contact linda@haslemere.com if you would like the link.

Lastly, but by no means least, I have to report the death of Richard Tytler on 24th May. Richard had been ill for some time with Motor Neurone Disease and Alzheimers, and Sue had been absolutely wonderful in looking after him. The church was full for his funeral in Fernhurst and six of us made up the choir, as we were not allowed to have more. There were some wonderful tributes and the Vicar said that he had not had such a large congregation for a very long time! Afterwards 64 of us gathered in the garden at the Red Lion and drank his health. Fay Foster has kindly written a tribute.

RICHARD TYTLER

Richard Tytler, who died on 24th May, has been one of the most consistent members of the Players for forty years. He was a very competent actor and singer and could be relied upon to produce a polished performance every time he appeared on stage.

Amazingly he appeared in 68 productions and took numerous major or minor leads. But he was always perfectly happy to be in the chorus and he and his family could often be found helping to paint or build sets. He also served for many years on the committee as well as stints as business manager. He was chairman of the company from 2001-2006.

When Richard first joined the Players in 1975, he was immediately given a small role in "My Fair Lady" and he appeared in almost every single show thereafter, the last being in "Showstoppers, Memories of the Movies" in 2015.

Richard can be remembered for a large number of leading roles, most notably as Danilo in 'The Merry Widow' (1977), Emil de Becque in "South Pacific" (1982), Horace Vandergelder in "Hello Dolly" (1990), Captain von Trapp in "The Sound of Music" (1993) and Captain Smith aboard "Titanic" (2007). He excelled in the many Music Halls put on in the late '80s and '90s where his comic touch amused the audiences as he led them in such numbers as "The Gate Song" and "The Marrow Song".

When Richard first joined the Players he was often playing alongside his wife Barbara, a talented dancer. On her too early death the Players attended her funeral en masse and provided the choir. Some years later Richard met his second wife, Sue Whalley, in the company and the pair have been happily married since.

Richard's passing will sadden many former and present members and the audiences who have appreciated his friendship and many fine performances.

May he rest in peace.

Fay Foster

GOING GREEN

As you may know, back in November 2020 Haslemere Players went Green by joining the Terracycle Free Recycling programme. We have since collected 35kg of Lavazza Eco Pods for recycling. This translates to a payment to our charity of £35.00.

The more we collect, the more donations we receive so please do donate your Lavazza Eco Pods to the collection bin situated outside The Studio, and recommend us to your friends and families. It helps the environment and it brings a little bit of money in for our fantastic Charity too. For more information on which coffee pods are accepted as well as for more information on the Lavazza Eco Programme please go to <https://www.terracycle.com/en->

Dates for Your Diary

10, 11 & 13 July	Love in the open air by Farnham Operatic
23 & 24 July	One Act plays by Grayshott Stagers
29 – 31 July	Showstoppers by Players in the Haslemere Hall
15 August	Players Picnic & AGM
19-Aug	Hairspray Players outing to London Coliseum
30 Sep – 2 Oct	Nell Gwynn by Haslemere Thespians
26 – 30 Oct	Legally Blonde by Players in the Haslemere Hall



Desert Island Discs with Bob Cantan

In the last few editions of the Players Patter some members with great experience have kindly written about the shows that have stayed in their memory for various reasons and this time Robert Cantan, who was our only Musical Director for many years, has shared his most entertaining memories with us. Thank you Robert.

It is a rather sad that some of my recollections of working with the Haslemere Players have coincided with the passing of Richard Tytler whom I worked with on a number of productions. Because we joined the society at around the same time, it has highlighted the fact that far too many years have somehow slipped by. He was always diligent in his approach to the character he was playing and was a pleasure to work with. I am also reminded that he pursued my wife on at least one occasion and was also the father of my youngest son. But more about that later.

With a Little Bit of Luck (My Fair Lady 1975)

This was my one and only show as a performer. At that time, I was only interested in classical music and was reluctant to join the chorus. However, it was 'with a little bit of luck' that the production was *My Fair Lady* - one of the greatest of all musicals. Not that the week of performances was without its dangers. At the final dress rehearsal, as the chorus slowly drifted off stage singing *With a Little Bit of Luck*, there was a tremendous crash. One of the upstage lights had plummeted to the stage narrowly missing the remnants of the Cockney chorus. A little bit of luck indeed! In addition, nearly demolishing Covent Garden, almost joining the band in the pit - the painful way - and causing two separate arguments involving two separate couples in the audience, persuaded me that joining the band in the pit - the not-so-painful way - was a better option. Oh, and someone in the Thursday night audience thought I had an artificial leg!

In Dahomey! (Showboat 1975) *Showboat* was the next production and my first as Musical Director. I was fortunate that the first few musicals I did were all classics but this first one proved to be a steep learning curve. It was the first of a number of shows I did with Doreen Wylde who was very helpful and patient and I was very lucky to have Geraldine Evans and John Daykin as rehearsal pianists. *Showboat* contains much wonderful music and songs but I have chosen *In Dahomey* because on the Thursday night performance, I learnt a very valuable lesson. At that time, stage sets were constructed with huge, tall and cumbersome 'flats'. I had already had one painful, face-to-flat encounter when I walked into one during *My Fair Lady*. This time, the front blue curtain became entangled with the top of a flat and it took some time to free it. The Play-Off music had a constant, fast drumbeat and lasted thirty seconds. The band had to play

it eleven times! The next scene was quiet and rather sad. Unfortunately, it opened with the audience cheering enthusiastically.

Little House of Uncle Thomas (The King and I 1976) My third musical is memorable for two reasons....children's auditions and children performing. For *The King and I*, we required children who could sing, act and dance balletically. Fortunately, not every child had to do all three although that didn't stop some of them attempting it at auditions. My abiding memory, which still make me smile, is the moment when the centre doors of the hall were flung open, an early boomblaster - booming and blasting out music - shot through and slid to the middle of the hall. At the same time, a young girl exploded onto the stage doing her 'act'. She was very good though and, if you want

to get noticed, that's the way! Two boys were needed as principals, one of whom was Don Stacey's son, Ian. We also had auditions for children of the King and for those who had to dance the "Ballet", *Little House of Uncle Thomas*. After a week conducting that, I felt prepared for anything. Except I wasn't!

To Life (Fiddler on the Roof 1976) At the read-through, the Annexe was filled to overflowing - we even had auditions to be in the chorus. In those days auditions for the principal parts could go on for hours and it was a brave audition committee member who answered their phone during the next couple of days. Despite this, we ended up with a superb cast including Graham Maguire as Tevye, Anne Manning as Golde, and Barbara Thomas as

Yente. Hamish also made his first appearance as Lazar Wolf the butcher. I mean no disrespect when I say that no other Lazar Wolf that I have seen has been so loud and overbearing - exactly as the character should be. The song, *To Life* with Tevye and Lasar, remains a highlight. One requirement for a Musical Director had so far escaped me - protection from flying debris. At the end of Act One (when the Russians ended the wedding feast) cups, saucers and plates were hurled to the floor sending pieces of broken crockery across the footlights onto the band, their instruments and yours truly. After the dress rehearsal, the band players sported crash helmets or held parasols. Being in full view of the audience, I had to duck.

My Motter (The Arcadians 1978) This 1909 Edwardian Musical Comedy is something special. Each musical number is a gem and the book (libretto), if edited sensitively, is well constructed. It has no hope of a major professional revival in the West End or anywhere else for that matter. Very few amateur societies would now take it on and I have to thank Fay Foster for promoting it at the time. Doreen made an excellent job of adapting the very long script which, under normal circumstances, would



Graham Maguire & Anne Manning in *Fiddler on the Roof*



The company in Arcadia (with Bob Cantan's head)

have shortened the show considerably. However, she found a vocal score which contained all of the songs ever written for the show and we put most of them in with the result that the curtain came down at 10.35 p.m. My personal memories involve spending the whole of the half term holiday in October orchestrating the extra songs while Angela (no introduction necessary!) was heavily pregnant and memories of Don Stacey, who played the part of Doody the jockey, singing the immortal lyric, "Cheer up, Doody, you'll soon be dead!" The rest of the cast, fronted by the brilliant Brian Cockell, was also perfect.

We're Looking For A Piano (Salad Days 1981) This small ensemble piece was very enjoyable with a talented cast accompanied by two pianos. I remember it well for two reasons. One of the pianos has to have a 'honky-tonk' sound for some numbers. Electronic keyboards were still expensive and not particularly good. John Daykin's answer was to place sheets of toilet tissue behind some of the



Linda Donaldson, Fay Foster & Maureen Shepherd in Salad Days

strings - this was when toilet paper resembled tracing paper. It was very effective but John had to remove it each time and replace it when needed again. Quite

what the audience thought about John regularly standing up waving a roll of Izal or Bronco. We nicknamed it the All-Bran Show. More worryingly, during the interval of the second performance, I lost track of time. I was on my way, ready to make an entrance for Act 2, when I heard the two pianos start to play the Entracte. I had to make an undignified entrance crawling on my hands and knees. So much for being indispensable.

Some Enchanted Evening (South Pacific 1982) Richard Tytler played Emile de Becque, the plantation owner who takes a fancy to Ensign Nellie Forbush (Angela Cantan). *Some Enchanted Evening* is sung by Emile very early in the show with very little 'warm up' beforehand. Richard sang it with all the drama and emotion it requires and he also triumphed with Emile's big Act 2 hit, *This Nearly Was Mine*.

He was a very convincing Emile. In fact, we had a strong cast all round including Barry Day as Lt. Cable, Anne Manning as Bloody Mary, Judith Forde as Liat and the ubiquitous Brian Cockell as Luther Billis. We used a large pit band and this was before the use of radio or stage microphones. Before shows were videoed, I set up a



Richard Tytler & Angela Cantan in South Pacific

a microphone at the front of the stage to make a sound recording. One evening, during the interval, someone in the audience

came up and said that, because there was a microphone at the front, they could hear every word even when the orchestra was playing loudly. The power of suggestion!

So Long, Farewell / Climb Every Mountain (The Sound Of Music 1993) *The Sound Of Music* was a family affair involving both Angela as the Baroness and my youngest son, Nicholas who played Friedrich. Richard Tytler was Baron von Trapp, therefore father to Friedrich. Nicholas has fond memories of taking part and of Richard blowing the ship's whistle to summon the children. In *So Long, Farewell* each of the von Trapp children had their own solo. Friedrich's solo finished with a top G lasting seven beats. Nicholas made it last much longer. Nuns often crop up in Players' productions even when they are not in the script. *Climb Every Mountain*, sung by the nuns as they watch the Trapp family trudge over plywood Alps, should carry an emotional punch at the end of Act Two. It certainly did for the audience each night. At a final rehearsal, however, half of the children went Stage Left to Switzerland and the other half went Stage Right to Italy. The Nuns continued singing regardless whilst the Mother Abbess climbed every ledger line to reach her personal top G. The show must go on...



Angela Cantan, Richard Tytler, Jo Boughton and the children in The Sound of Music



From The Secretary
Torwoodlee, Mowatt Road
Grayshott, Hindhead
Surrey GU26 6EY
01428 605237 07786906681
✉ pameladepledge@talktalk.net

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Haslemere Players will be held on Saturday 15 August 2021 at 12 noon at Beacon Crescent, Tilford Road, Hindhead, GU26 6UL (old Lloyds Bank Training Centre).

A G E N D A

- 1. Apologies for absence
- 2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (on the website)
- 3. Matters Arising and Correspondence
- 4. Hon. Treasurer’s report
- 5. Chairman’s report
- 6. Subscriptions for 2021. The outgoing Committee’s recommendation is that the subscription for members should remain at £30 per annum; the subscription for students and non-acting members is £10.00. New Patrons £20.00 per family.
- 7. Election of Officers and Committee
- 8. Nigel Oldham has agreed to remain as the Independent Examiner.
- 9. Any Other Business

The present officers are as follows:

President: Mr Hamish Donaldson Chairman: Miss Victoria Gavin
Hon. Secretary: Mrs Pamela Depledge Hon. Treasurer: Mr Michael Byrne

The present Executive Committee consists of the following members: Sally Barr, Hannah Lucas, Jane McMichael, Mary-Lou Knox, Verity Foster, Fiona McGregor, Alex Boughton, Andrew Johnston. The officers and committee are standing for re-election except for Mrs Sally Barr who wishes to stand down.

It would be appreciated if nominations for the election of officers and committee, proposed and seconded, could be sent to the secretary by Saturday 16 August. No nominations will be accepted once the meeting has started. Please note that only paid up members may vote at the AGM. Subscriptions for the coming year become due for payment immediately following the AGM.

A copy of the Minutes from the 2020 AGM will be displayed on our website and will be available at the meeting.

Mrs Pamela Depledge
Hon Secretary June 2021

Agenda Item 7 Nomination Form

We, the undersigned, wish to nominate

to the executive committee / to the position of

(delete as required)

Proposed by..... Seconded by.....

I agree to stand for the position above (signed).....



The Haslemere Players, Founded 1905, Charity No 1172917, Company no 10433813
Affiliated to NODA