



Players Patter No 199 - Feb 2022

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Chairman's Letter

It's nearly 5pm and not dark... Spring on the way! I started my last newsletter commenting on life suddenly seeming very busy and I'm sure many of you will agree, that hasn't changed one bit! There is much to tell you about what's been happening since our last newsletter and the exciting things on the horizon in the coming months.

Firstly, we had our absolutely **AMAZING** production of **LEGALLY BLONDE**. Audiences were astounded by the quality and astonished by the energy. It really was the most incredible show and a massive well done to everyone involved, the wonderful Fiona McGregor making her directorial debut (with a significant amount of style), Justin Luke as MD, Debra Allen, Robyn Davies, Emma Lumb and Becca McGregor bringing the stage to life with fabulous choreography and an incredibly talented and hard working cast and crew. Opening night was a full two years after show week but it was certainly worth the wait!

And now we move from the hallowed halls of Harvard to sunny Folkestone, the setting for our March Musical **KIPPS – THE NEW HALF A SIXPENCE MUSICAL**. This brings something for everyone, some of the more traditional elements of the original, coupled with an update to the lib by the creator of Downton Abbey, Julian Fellowes as well as some new musical flourishes. We're delighted to welcome back the unstoppable Kim Seymour as director (born and raised in Folkestone!) and Justin Luke as MD (no rest for the wicked!). Rehearsals are well underway with more details from Kim about how things are going elsewhere in the newsletter. Tickets are on sale so do get booking <http://www.haslemerehall.co.uk/theatre/kipps/>

After much deliberation, we have decided to make the theme of this year's Show Stoppers **70 YEARS OF BRITISH MUSICALS** to tie in with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This will give us the opportunity to showcase lots of the talent we have in the society singing some of the fabulous music created here on our own doorstep. We are delighted that Kim Seymour has agreed to direct (I said she was unstoppable) along with some team directors who will focus on smaller groups, as we did this year. The show will be from 9 – 11 June, the weekend following the Jubilee celebrations which will include a **JUBILEE PROCESSION** which will include a Players Float. This will give us a wonderful opportunity to promote the forthcoming show and to show off costumes from our fabulous wardrobe, managed so well by Mary-Lou Knox.

Treasurer's Report

Welcome back all, I hope that you have all had a fantastic seasonal break and that you are all ready for 2022!

Having just finished the Players Committee meeting my head is spinning with all of the stuff that is going on this year which should be a 100% full program of events including 3 hall performances and some promotional work for the society.

With all of that going on, we have been keeping a close eye over the coffers which I am pleased to report are still in pretty good shape with a reasonable profit and loss account and a strong balance sheet year to date.

I've said in previous releases that we rode the Covid19 storm reasonably well last year from a financial perspective and this year's challenge has been more one of maintenance of our fantastic assets, in particular the Studio and studio grounds at Chestnut Avenue.

The Studio is such an important asset for the society and is being used for set build, storage, costume hire and even a little bit of rehearsal space when needed. The work done from that space saves us a tremendous amount of money when we put on shows and delivers it's own revenue stream from costume hires and it is important that we invest in keeping it shipshape - you may notice the next time that you are there that there has been quite a lot of work done to control the tree growth around the boundaries and we have some work to do later in the year on building maintenance.

Please make sure that you help the Society by spreading the word about our fantastic costume hires and the expert personal service provided by Mary-Lou and the team for individuals and societies that are looking for great costumes in the local area.

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

Chairman's message continued

I said we were busy and it doesn't stop there!! We're delighted to announce that our October 2022 production will be **ANYTHING GOES** directed by Adrian Stent, with Lizzie Hales as MD, the sensational team that brought you the absolute knock out, EVITA. We last performed Anything Goes in March 2000 when only the original 1934 version was available to amateurs. Since then there have been several updates and we're excited to be able to bring you the 1987 revival version, currently playing at the Barbican. Again, more about that from our director elsewhere in the newsletter.

As well as all of the above (if you're not exhausted just reading about it) we are working on a plan to bring you a big social event in early April. Arran Treacher-Evans is working hard to bring plans together and we'll let you know as soon as we know more.

Lastly, a plea for people to volunteer to train as Front of House Managers. Please see details elsewhere in the newsletter.

All the best to you all as Spring approaches.

Vicki Gavin

chairman@haslemereplayers.com

News from your Wardrobe Team

You will be pleased to know that since we started hiring out our costumes again last June, we have had a steady flow of requests from other societies, schools and members of the public through our website. This has been hard work but very rewarding financially for the Players.

This activity has highlighted an issue which has concerned us for a while in that so many of our costumes are not labelled. However careful we are with checking costumes out and in, it's easy to make mistakes and things end up not being returned.

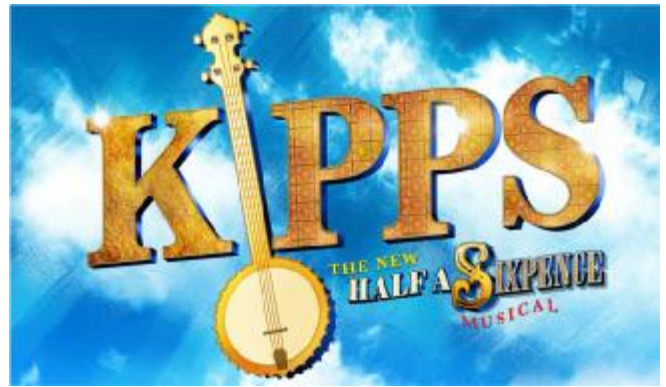
So

On Saturday 12th February between 10 am and 2 pm I would like as many of you as feel able, to come along to the Studio armed with needle and thread to make a start on labelling our most popular items. You don't need to commit to the whole time but if a good number of you could spare an hour, then we can make a difference.

Tea, coffee and biscuits will be provided but please could you bring your own mug? If you don't feel your sewing skills are up to this, perhaps you could volunteer as the tea/coffee maker?

Look forward to seeing you for our sew in!

Mary-Lou



Well, rehearsals for Kipps – the new half a sixpence musical are well underway. In fact, we are doing our first full run of Act 1 this week - exciting! I am loving being back directing for the Players; and genuinely honoured by how many members from My Fair Lady and Showstoppers have chosen to return to be directed by me again. We did have a minor blip before Christmas when we had to cancel the last few rehearsals because of the threat of Omicron and everyone, understandably, wanting to make sure they were fighting fit to see their families for the festive periods. But the cast have all risen to the challenge and worked doubly hard in 2022 so we are back on track. I think poor Mary-Lou had a small panic when she saw we have 12 principals and an ensemble of 24! So big thank you to her for taking on the enormous task of costuming the production. Likewise, thanks to Steph, Allie & Alison who are already sourcing props – anyone got a couple of banjos lying around at home? I must also take the opportunity to welcome three new members – Dawn, Jon and Clare. Tickets are on sale, via the Hall website, so please buy your tickets now, and tell your friends!!

Kim Seymour (Director)

Cast list

| | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Arthur Kipps | Arran Treacher-Evans |
| Ann | Emma Lumb |
| Helen | Alex Boughton |
| Flo Evans | Becca McGregor |
| Pierce | Isaac Lucas |
| Buggins | Zac Rasulian |
| Sid | Tim Spindler |
| Chitterlow | Tony Creasey |
| Mrs Walsingham | Vicki Gavin |
| James Walsingham | Richard Ashton |
| Shalford | Ellis Nicholls |
| Carshott | Andy Boughton |



*In olden days a glimpse of stocking
Was looked on as something shocking
Now heaven knows...*

ANYTHING GOES

Our October 2022 show is the fabulous *Anything Goes*, a tale of romance, subterfuge, music, dance and laughter aboard the cruise ship SS American. The show has a punchy script and a wonderful collection of songs by Cole Porter, including *I Get A Kick Out Of You*, *All Through The Night*, *You're The Top*, *Its De-Lovely*, *Friendship*, *Blow Gabriel Blow*, and of course, *Anything Goes*.

This is a fantastic show for principals and chorus, with challenging lead roles, 15 named roles, several smaller roles, a chorus of crew and passengers, plenty of chorus songs...and tap dancing for those willing to give it a go!

We will provide further details of characters, auditions and dates in the next Players Patter. In the meantime, make a note of the presentation evening: **Tuesday 14th June 2022 at 7:30pm**. We look forward to seeing you there, and if you have any questions in the meantime don't hesitate to contact us!

All the best

Adrian Stent & Lizzie Hales

Desert Island Discs choice for Pamela

1. **Die Fledermaus** 1965 - my first show with Players, having been persuaded to go by Shirley and David Ellis, who were both playing principal parts and that was me hooked.
2. **The Gondoliers** 1969 – my first G&S show, which I have been in more than once but it is a happy, colourful show with a 'reasonable' story and enjoyable music.
3. **Camelot** 1968 and 1995 – a stunning, dramatic show with a West End director the first time and also professional costumes from the Drury Lane production. I played the part of Nimue, the temptress, which gave me a lovely solo song to sing. I did a radio interview in Guildford and was asked to sing the song, but I was too nervous and missed my chance of fame!
4. **The Sound of Music** 1973, 1993 (2012) – good story and lovely music. I had a small part as one of the nuns and led on the nuns' chorus to open the show. I have been singing the title song ever since, including in one of the Show Stoppers productions.
5. **South Pacific** 1982, 1997, (2014) – good dramatic story, lots of humour, great songs with meaningful lyrics.
6. **My Fair Lady** 1975, 2001 (2017) – Great story, set in London, my home town, wonderful witty lib and a classic George Bernard Shaw story. I was a maid (of course) and have enjoyed singing several of the songs since.
7. **Titanic** – the Musical 2007 – great drama and wonderful music I did not know. True story that has haunted me ever since. Sadly, I was drowned when the ship sank but I loved the song we sang at the end.
8. **Robert and Elizabeth** 1989 – another interesting, true story and I sang the duet (with a man!) at my daughter, Sally's wedding.

I have also enjoyed singing a solo in most of the Music Hall and Show Stoppers shows until 2017, my first one being in May 1987.



The company aboard Titanic



GRAPEVINE NEWS OF MEMBERS

Following Peter Depledge's funeral, Pamela would like to thank everyone for their kind words in cards and emails and also for coming to the funeral service for Peter. It was very much appreciated by the whole family

Sadly we have to report the death of two of our older members.

Joanna Hoare died just shortly after our last Newsletter. She had been ill for some time with dementia. Jonathan Foster writes that her wonderful soprano voice graced 19 shows over a period of 20 years. She had joined the Players in 1969 as Gianetta in *The Gondoliers* and went on to sing many principal roles. In 1977 she devised and directed the Players Minstrel Show and went on to direct *The Boyfriend* (1980), *South Pacific* (1982), *The Gondoliers* (1984) and *Carousel* (1985). She also served on the Committee as Business Manager. Joanna was married to Philip, DFC, a long-term Patron. Their daughters, Debbie and Sam, played Louisa and Brigitta in *The Sound of Music* (1973) before graduating to adult roles.

We are also sad to report the death of Sheila Williams who died over the Christmas period. Sheila had been a key member of the Production team for our Old Time Music Halls which began in 1987 with her husband, Graham, as the consummate Chairman controlling the proceedings with a paternal air which belied the fact that everything he said was carefully rehearsed! The Music Halls became very popular and attracted a cult following. Sheila also played supporting roles in *Mrs. Purkiss* in *Match Girls* and *Mrs. Smith* in *Blitz*. At her funeral, Sheila had a hearse with a glass-front pulled by two black horses with full funeral plumes. Her son in traditional undertakers outfit with top hat lead the procession – a very fitting and theatrical finale and an eloquent tribute to a life lived to the full.

FRONT OF HOUSE

As many of you know, we need to provide a trained Front of House Manager and Ushers for each performance and we'd love to expand the number of people able to take on this important role.

If you'd be willing to do the training to be either a FoH Manager or an Usher, please email chairman@haslemereplayers.com by 20 February so we can arrange a training session before Kipps at the end of March.



Dates for Your Diary

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|---------------|--|
| Sat. 12 Feb | Sew-in at The Studio from 10 – 12 |
| 18, 19 Feb | Grayshott Stagers One Act Plays |
| 22-26 March | Kipps in Haslemere Hall |
| 10,11 June | Jubilee Show Stoppers in Haslemere Hall |
| Tues. 14 June | Presentation of Anything Goes |
| 25-29 October | Anything Goes in Haslemere Hall |

Contributions to the Newsletter to

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