



Players Patter No 200 - May 2022

www.HaslemerePlayers.com

Chairman's Letter

Welcome to the 200th edition of Players Patter. Started by Fay Foster to keep members and friends up to date, Fay completed 88 editions before handing over to our current editor, Linda Donaldson in 1998 who has brought 114 editions to your doorsteps and inboxes over 23 years. Thank you to both of them for bringing us news of members past and present and continuing to keep us up to date.

Are you sitting comfortably? Then let's begin. We have lots to tell you so get yourself a cuppa and a biscuit!

Firstly, news on **KIPPS – THE NEW HALF A SIXPENCE MUSICAL**. As most of you will know, following the lifting of many COVID restrictions in mid-March, the show was badly hit with cast and crew falling ill. We initially thought we may be able to just delay by a couple of days but with 18 out of 33 cast members testing positive either in the couple of weeks prior to the show or early in show week, it just wasn't possible to continue. Thank you to EVERYONE who was so helpful, understanding and supportive. Across the board from cast, crew, the band, the team at the Haslemere Hall and audience we had nothing but a positive response which made rearranging the show slightly less challenging. Taking in to account everyone's availability the new dates are **29 June to 2 July**. This means reducing the run from 6 shows to 5 and starting on the Wednesday but what a show it's going to be! We also have a clash with the Fringe Festival which falls over the first weekend in July so if you're booked to go to the festival, make sure to see Kipps early in the run. **GET YOUR TICKETS BOOKED**. With such a high number of COVID cases in the run up to the show amongst audience as well as cast, people were reticent about booking but we now have a great opportunity to make this a sell-out production (which it truly deserves to be!) and it would be great to have our members and friends leading the way with buying tickets!!

<http://www.haslemerehall.co.uk/theatre/kipps/>

Sadly, the postponement of **Kipps** meant that we had to cancel the Show Stoppers "70 Years of British Musicals" we had planned to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. However, fear not, we will have a float in the **Jubilee Carnival Procession** on Sunday 5 June which will showcase musicals from the 70 years of the Queen's reign. There's lots of opportunity to get involved with both building and decorating the float and/or being part of the procession on the day. What's more, we are delighted to confirm that **the Queen herself** will be appearing on our float (barely any persuading was required....ours was an offer she couldn't refuse) More details are included elsewhere in the newsletter!!

The postponement of **Kipps** has also had an impact on our October production **ANYTHING GOES** so we have made a plan to have the presentation evening and auditions *before* Kipps so we can go straight in to rehearsals on Tuesday 5 July. Our excellent director/MD combo of Adrian Stent and Lizzie Hales who brought together our outstanding production of *Evita* are joined by ex-West End pro, Geogie da Silva as choreographer so this promises to be an absolutely fantastic production. Further details of how to get aboard the *SS American* are included elsewhere in the newsletter.

With this unexpected break between costuming shows, our wonderful wardrobe team, led by Mary-Lou Knox, having been working hard at the studio. We have some absolutely stunning outfits but many of these are unlikely to ever be used in a show so we've had a thorough sort out and now have these sorted in to categories to either be offered/sold to a specialist dealer or in to sets which we plan to photograph and sell online to other societies. We also have a number of items, both costumes and shoes, which we're making available to members of Players and other local societies for a donation. We'll be having a **SALE** at the studio on the morning of **Saturday 28 May**. Mary-Lou has provided further details elsewhere in the newsletter.

We have been invited to perform at The Last Night of the Proms event at St Luke's in Grayshott on Saturday 10 September. The format of the evening is a first half (roughly an hour) of entertainment from Players followed by an interval and then a live stream of the Last Night of the Proms from The Royal Albert Hall. We are delighted that the wonderful Tony Creasey has agreed to be our compere for the evening and we are now looking for performers. This is a great opportunity to get together and perform either solos or group numbers from a variety of musicals that showcase the huge breadth of talent we have within the society so if you'd like to be involved, please drop me an email chairman@haslemereplayers.com.

Lastly, the AGM will be some time in August and we're planning another outdoor (weather permitting) social event. More details will follow soon.

That's all from me for now. hopefully you haven't let your tea go cold, maybe make yourself another cup whilst you read the rest of the news

Vicki Gavin
chairman@haslemereplayers.com



Kipps, the reprise!

Kipps, the second!

Kipps, the great return!

As you will know we sadly had to postpone our production of Kipps, the new half a sixpence musical, in March. We had a really successful get in and dress rehearsal. The lights were blocked, the costumes were hanging up, the band were tuned, even Justin was smiling.... literally all we needed was an audience. Then one by one the double dreaded lines of the positive Covid tests started. At the final count it was an impressive 25 of the cast of 38!

Anyway, we are back! The new performance dates are Wednesday 29th June to Saturday 2nd July. Rehearsals start again next week and my goodness we need your support. Sadly, tickets sales were disappointingly low and now we have of course lost some bookings along the way (and raised the costs).

So, this is a really call to arms for ALL members please. We need your help to promote and support the show. I personally guarantee you an evening of pure joy with wonderful songs, humour and the best of British musical theatre. Please buy your tickets and share, share, share with all your friends and family.

See you there.

Kim (director) xx

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 so we can arrange a training session.

News from your Wardrobe Team

With the postponement of Kipps and no Showstoppers show to costume, the Studio has been a hive of industry as we attempt to cull clothes which are seldom, if ever, used and which don't go out on hire.

We are hoping to sell a considerable amount to a vintage dealer but there are many items which we feel could be used by our members or members of other societies.

So..... **We are going to have a sale on Saturday 28th May from 10am 'til 2pm.** Tables will be put up outside the Studio and you will be spoiled for choice with the wide selection of articles for sale!

We'll have both men's and ladies' clothing (currently no children's) and shoes which you will of course, be able to try on. If anyone would like a man's suit, please let me know in advance so I can include some.

There will be no set price for things but we hope you will make a minimum £5 donation to the Players. Don't worry about bringing cash – we have a card reader.

So make a note in your diary and come along with friends and family members and pick up a few bargains.

Looking forward to seeing you on May 28th.

Mary-Lou

QUEEN'S JUBILEE

SONG FOR THE COMMONWEALTH

There is an opportunity to get involved with performing a number of songs at the lighting of the bonfire at sunset (9.13pm) on Thursday 2 June at Woolmer Hill. The performance is to include Jerusalem, Land of Hope and Glory, God Save the Queen and a new song for the Commonwealth, Life Filled with Grace, especially composed for the occasion.

Hamish Donaldson is masterminding this event and is able to provide sheet music and mp3 versions of the different parts so please do get in touch with him at donaldson@haslemere.com if you'd like to be involved in this special event.

Here is a YouTube link to the song so you can hear just how beautiful it is.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leRoEyc09Gc&t=28s>

Vicki Gavin
chairman@haslemereplayers.com



Join us for our October show!

A tale of romance, subterfuge, music, dance and laughter aboard the cruise ship SS American, *Anything Goes* is a great company show with 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*, *It's De-Lovely*, *Friendship*, *Blow Gabriel Blow*, and of course, *Anything Goes*.

Auditions for *Anything Goes* will now take place BEFORE the *Kipps* production dates, as follows:

Presentation evening: Tuesday 31st May 7:30pm

Audition rehearsals: Thur 2nd and Wed 8th June 7:30pm

Auditions: Sunday 12th June 2pm Haslemere Hall

First rehearsal: Tuesday 5th July

(Venues will be advised nearer the time).

Anything Goes is a great show for principals and chorus, with challenging lead roles, several smaller roles, a chorus of crew and passengers and plenty of chorus songs.

We are delighted to be joined by ex-42nd Street professional Georgie da Silva as our choreographer, so we'll be looking for some great tappers as well as those who are beginners and keen to learn!

The following roles will be auditioned:

RENO SWEENEY, an evangelist
turned nightclub singer

RENO'S SHOWGIRLS:

PURITY, CHASTITY, CHARITY & VIRTUE

HOPE HARCOURT, a debutante

EVANGELINE HARCOURT, her mother, a widow

LORD EVELYN OAKLEIGH, a wealthy Englishman

ELISHA WHITNEY, a goggle-eyed tycoon

BILLY CROCKER, Whitney's young assistant

MOONFACE MARTIN, a hapless gangster,
Public Enemy no.13

ERMA LATOUR, a gangster's moll

SHIP'S CAPTAIN

SHIP'S PURSER

For details of auditions and access to audition materials please email

anythinggoes@haslemereplayers.com.

If you have any questions about the show or the auditions please don't hesitate to contact Adrian on adrian.stent@woodlawns.com

We look forward to seeing you at the presentation evening on Tuesday May 31st!

All the best,

Adrian, Lizzie and Georgie

JUBILEE CARNIVAL PROCESSION

We'll be taking part in the Jubilee Carnival Procession on Sunday 5 June as part of Haslemere's celebration of the Queen's 70 Year reign. Adrian Stent and Gary Moorshead have agreed to lead our float building and design team and would welcome helpers when it comes to constructing and decorating the float.

We're also keen to have lots of people walking alongside the float, showcasing our incredible selection of costumes from musicals from the last 70 years and Mary-Lou will be looking after this side of things.

Luckily, *Half a Sixpence* was first performed in the West End in 1963 so this gives us a great opportunity to also promote our upcoming show.

To get involved in any aspect, please drop me an email and I'll put you in touch with the relevant people.

Vicki Gavin

chairman@haslemereplayers.com

SOME OF MY FAVOURITE SHOWS (by Tony Creasey)

When Linda invited me to submit my list of favourite shows that I have been associated with I told her that, although honoured to be asked, I thought the privilege was reserved for 'more mature' members of the Players. As I started to recall favourites from a long list it then occurred to me that I am now, officially, an old fart! Over quite a few decades I have been lucky enough to have been involved with so many fantastic musicals with Haslemere Players (HP), Grayshott Stagers (GS) and Farnham (FAOS) that I've found it difficult to pick just eight but these are they:

Half a Sixpence (GS – 1979)

My first lead role (Kipps) aged 19. Doreen Wylde (Director) and Bob Cantan (my Chemistry teacher!) (MD) gave me a huge opportunity which I grasped with both hands. Blame them that I've been around ever since!! With 19 scenes, the show presented some challenges to the elderly stage crew at Grayshott and I recall the curtains jammed at the start of The Old Military Canal number. Undaunted, the chorus sang it behind a closed curtain while the stage manager climbed a step ladder to free the metal track. Mission accomplished, the curtains then opened to reveal him at the top of the step ladder much to the amusement of the audience. This was followed by a short scene near the end of the show which involved a functional door that didn't close properly. During it Kipps receives the news that his investment in Chitterlow's play has been successful and I couldn't resist adding a line about spending some of the money on getting the door fixed. The audience loved it but Doreen was wild! My Half a Sixpence story goes full circle as I am playing Chitterlow (Covid willing!) in Kipps in June!

Me and My Girl (HP- 1998)

Another gem of a role as Bill Snibson and, with Doreen and Bob at the helm, another stonking show. It had only just been released for local performances following an update by Stephen Fry. A fantastic cast, great musical numbers, lots of fun, some clever backstage props, my first opportunity to display my tap dancing skills, tiger wrestling ability and the only time I'll get to be a peer and wear a huge ermine and velvet cloak in which I grew six feet (taller - not limbs!).

Guys and Dolls (GS – 1990) (HP -2011)

The show in which Lynn and I met!! I played Nicely-Nicely Johnson (GS) and Nathan Detroit (HP).

Great cast(s) (mainly close friends!) playing fantastic characters, brilliant music/numbers, fun rehearsals and a wonderful show to be in (thanks Steph and Edward).

Summer Holiday (HP – 2008) (or as Carolyn Lane refers to it – On The Buses!!)

The only show I've directed for the Players (personally I thought we did a half decent job!!). A talented cast including eight brilliant YOUNG leads (most of whom have turned professional), an amazing (almost full scale) on stage Routemaster bus (constructed by Alan English with assistance from Hamish and several others), an equally amazing small (but to scale) wooden bus made by Roland Couvela, musical staging by Angela Cantan and well known Cliff Richard and The Shadows music played superbly by a small professional band led by my friend Ian Young. The band also played 1960s songs and music for half an hour

prior to the production which created a lovely atmosphere. One of the band members flew to the States at the end of the run to take up his appointment as tour manager for Diana Ross!

Mack and Mabel (HP -2001)

Another Doreen production – honestly anyone would think I paid her to be cast?! With music by Jerry Herman, made famous by Torvill and Dean (no please don't ask me to ice skate!!), I played Mack Sennett opposite a very talented Sally Rowlandson. Great songs and staging, interspersed by excerpts from movies, with a strong cast made this another fun show to be in. Mack is seldom off stage and I (with Lynn's help) made sure that I learned all the lines and songs well in advance which I know some of you will find hard to believe! It's also the only show in which I've had to undergo a facial shave on stage (thanks David Fear for being so handy with a cut throat razor or perhaps it was a missed opportunity!!).

La Cage aux Folles (GS – 2000)

This Jerry Herman masterpiece HAD to be in my list. Heather Legat (director) and Grant Hossack (MD) gave me the once in a lifetime opportunity to play the star part of Albin. Lynn costumed the show and the array of outfits she put together is probably the best there has ever been on the Hall stage (I think the budget for them alone was twice the entire budget for most shows!). Fantastic cast (including 6 guys who dragged up for the occasion – 7 if you include Richard Tytler at the end of the show!), brilliant music and standing ovations from audiences who appreciated the balls needed to stage such a production. I live in hope that the show might be performed by the Players at some stage.....

Little Shop of Horrors (GS -1997)

Another brilliant Heather Legat production in which I played Seymour. Brilliant role, brilliant music, brilliant effects, brilliant cast (including Richard Tytler, Jo Blagden, Andy Boughton). It's just brilliant!! My favourite musical in case you hadn't guessed.

Cabaret (GS -2004), Best Little Whorehouse in Texas (GS-1991), Chicago (GS – 1998), 42nd Street (HP 2005), Crazy For You (HP – 2002), Copacabana (GS – 2004), Billy (GS -1995), Windy City (GS 2002), The Producers (HP – 2014), Spend Spend Spend (GS – 2009), Sister Act (HP – 2016), Annie (GS -1989) (HP- 2010), Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (GS – 2017), The Full Monty (HP – 2018)

I couldn't decide my eighth choice!!!



Alan English's Bus



Sadly I have to report the death of Robert Gillman who passed away very peacefully on 12th April in Warwick Hospital. Robert was the accompanist for many of the Players shows and would also accompany groups of Players who sang at Nursing Homes. He was a gentle man who was loved by many for his kindness, humour, compassion and his faith. His funeral was on 27th April at Stratford on Avon.

On a happier note, we had a chance meeting with Jamie Atkin at Winkworth Arboretum. He looked exactly the same and sends his love to all his old friends, especially Alan Clarke and Rick Clements. Jamie joined the Players for South Pacific in 1997 until Fiddler on the Roof in 1999. He is still living near Guildford.



Dates for Your Diary

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26 - 28 May	Honk by Grayshott Stagers
Sat. 28th May	Wardrobe Sale at the Studio
Fri. 2nd June	Singing round the Jubilee Bonfire at Woolmer Hill
Sun. 5th June	Players Float goes down the High Street
29 June – 2 July	Kipps in Haslemere Hall
31st May	Presentation evening of Anything Goes
2nd & 8th June	Audition rehearsals at 7.30 p.m.
Sun. 12th June	Auditions for Anything Goes 2 p.m. Haslemere Hall
Tues. 5th July	First rehearsal, Anything Goes
13 - 16 July	The Producers by Farnham Operatic
Sat. 10th Sept	Last Night of the Proms at St. Luke's, Grayshott
25 – 29th Oct	Anything Goes in Haslemere Hall