

CESHIRE THEATRE GUILD

September 2009 Newsletter

www.ctguild.org.uk

Welcome to the new season and good luck for a successful year of plays.

CHANGES AT CTG

Those of you who were able to come along to the AGM on July 12th will be aware of how important that meeting was - a copy of the minutes was emailed to those unable to attend.

The main item for discussion was the Full Length Play Festival - now split into two sections.

- Section A will cover pantos, youth productions and productions with musical content. Evette Harper will adjudicate.
- Section B will cover plays and will be jointly adjudicated by Jeff Brailsford and Robert Meadows - both members of GODA - the Guild of Drama Adjudicators.

The reason for these changes was fully explained, with plenty of input from the floor and a good deal of support for the exceptional circumstances and understanding that CTG are not alone in finding it more and more problematic to appoint adjudicators.

The other change is that you will now receive more communications from CTG by email (about time some of you might say). This will save us money and make it easier for you to pass these on to your members. It has long been a concern of the committee that our newsletters go no further than the Secretary and, if lucky, are pinned onto a notice board.

SO, WHY THIS NEWSLETTER BY POST?

Well, we need to ensure that we have the correct email address of the person to send the details to - traditionally your secretary. We also need to ensure that if you do not have an email facility you can still receive information by post. Also, in the past we have (as part of our service to you) posted out flyers, season leaflets etc and this will continue.

You will find, with this newsletter, a form for you to complete with your email details or the option of a posted copy.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2009/2010

These are now due (and remain unchanged) and Gerry Card will be more than happy to receive these at an early date. (An affiliation form is enclosed with this newsletter.)

WELCOME to Sheila Hetherington, who rejoins the CTG Committee after a gap of many years. Sheila has been a member of Moulton Drama Group for many years as actress, director, secretary, and all the other various roles that get thrust upon willing workers. Welcome Sheila and thank you for joining us again.

Now for some less serious matters ...

THE PLAY'S THE THING - SO SHHHHH.....

(from the Times, June 19th)

- Don't just switch off your mobile in response to what's very likely a cute invitation from some fake-friendly voice. Make sure it's off before you enter the theatre, thus making sure that you're not publicly humiliated by Richard Griffiths or A.N.Other
- Never whisper, let alone talk during the performance. If you're hard of hearing, hire a loop rather than bother your companion for information about the plot. And don't hum along with songs, even if they're by Rogers and Hammerstein.
- Don't bring picnics. In fact, don't eat anything, not even your fingernails, even if the play is, well, nail-biting.
- If you must buy an ice-cream in the interval, make sure you finish it and dispose of the carton before the restart. The scraping at remnants sounds like scratching on a wall.
- If you fear you'll cough, bring a handkerchief to smother your mouth and pastilles to put in it. Considerate theatregoers would rather asphyxiate than interrupt a good actor.
- Always apologise if someone is forced to stand as you make your way to your seat, but if you are late (and you should never be) reduce your apology to a quick, sorrowful nod.

"Once you're past 90 all you have to do is eat a soft-boiled egg and everybody exclaims about how wonderful you are."

Alan Bennett, (quoted in The Oldie)

ONE MILLION TINY PLAYS ABOUT BRITAIN

These were written by Craig Taylor and are published by Bloomsbury Publishing - (020 7494 2111). The book consists of 95 short (some fill only half an A4 page) pieces of theatre drawn from observations made around the UK. Craig would like 100 organisations - like CTG members - to perform a few of the million plays - a group in Jersey is performing 50 - another is using them as rehearsal warm-ups. Interested? Then please contact the Publishers.

SHOW REPORTS.

Do you produce a report of each performance of your plays - exact running time - audience response and number and any problems that occurred? Well, the Vic at Stoke do as Struan Sewell explained when he led the recent "Stage Further" stage management workshop. Here are three examples distributed to the Director, technical staff etc involved with the production. (I have left out the less interesting and have gone straight to the "juicier" and in some cases more amusing bits.)

DON GIOVANNI

Audience Response: Very quiet. Two curtain calls

REPORT:

1. A mobile rang early in the Prologue
2. Mr Corbitt had a lot of difficulty fastening the cuffs on Mr Unwin, SM to check them before the next show
3. The DS door of the vanishing box opened as Ms Thomas was gathering the cords to pull
4. A tassel fell off one of the cushions, please can this be repaired?
5. Ms Crowe was unable to release 'Derek the Pig' on cue so he was mimed by Ms Thomas and Mr Carlile. It was decided to send 'Derek' on in Act 2 as normal because we felt that miming ventriloquism without a puppet was not good enough.
6. The S/C into Act 2 Sc4 was eggy, DSM error
7. Mr Unwin slipped on his way from the coffin to the table, just before his descent into Hell. He was uninjured
8. The captioning rehearsal will be held at 5.30pm on Tuesday
9. Please can Dr Manometer's table and the trick table have their paint effects touched up on Monday?

Don Giovanni

Audience Response: Very good. Two curtain calls

REPORT:

1. Mr Cunningham forgot to set the carpet runner for Act 1 Sc5
2. The bedside table was left on the bed going into Act 1 Sc5. Mr Close set it as he collapsed on the bed.
3. DSM cued end of S/C into Act 2 Sc2 early, so Ms Thomas spoke her first line over the end of the music.
4. The chairs for the trick coffin were set too close together and Mr Unwin & Mr Close had some difficulty setting it on the chairs.
5. Please can the piano tuner be called on Monday, the sustain pedal isn't working. Mr Atkinson says this problem occurred during Oliver and has to do with the piano sitting on a slope.

Oliver

Audience Response:

Enjoyed the show and were very patient considering the circumstances

REPORT:

1. J H (Oliver) was unable to complete today's performance as he was unwell. He failed to re-enter after escaping the Sowberrys for the Consider Yourself scene. There was a long pause onstage as Mr Sewell tried to establish why James wasn't coming

on. He radioed Mr Hall to check where James was and was informed that he was feeling ill and didn't want to go on again. J B was left onstage while this was going on and members of the company entered and interacted with him until it was clear what was happening. Mr Billington then came onto stage and announced to the audience that we had to hold the show whilst we sorted out how we were going to continue - FOH were informed and the house lights were brought up. The decision was then made to contact Megan at her school and see if she would come in to complete the show - which she could. We then held the show until she arrived and was in costume. We restarted the show from the top of Scene 5 and continued as normal. Megan is on standby for tomorrow evening's performance in case J is still ill.

2. Ms Robinson knocked the frying pan during the scene change into Fagin's in Act 2 and the sausage fell down the trap - Mr Thornber was therefore sausage-less for "Reviewing".
3. There was a rogue Mac move in LX 132 - could Ms Beattie have a look.

P.S. For "unwell" read a severe attack of stage fright.

News from Nantwich Players

With the purchase of No 1 Love Lane, (formerly used by a funeral director), fund-raising and applications for grant aid starts. The project will happen in phases and it could be another 5 years before completion. Phase 1 will see the "knock-through" backstage to give much-needed storage and dressing rooms in the new building. The foyer and bar will also be extended and it is planned to increase seating capacity by around 40 extra seats. With full houses the need for these extra seats is obvious, with many people unable to obtain tickets. For this reason an extra night has been added for each play - making a total of 8 performances. An offer to make a DVD about Nantwich Players past, present and future has been accepted.

And finally.....

'I NEVER KNEW THAT ABOUT ENGLAND'

- In 1880, Her Majesty's Theatre in Carlisle was the first in all England to be lit by Electricity.
- Opened in 1766, the Theatre Royal, home of Bristol Old Vic, is the oldest continuously working theatre in Britain.
- Keinton Mandeville (Somerset) is the birthplace of John Henry Brodribb - better known as Sir Henry Irving (1838 - 1905), considered the greatest actor of his time and the first actor to be knighted. His celebrated partnership with Dame Ellen Terry lasted for 27 years. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.