



# *“Curtain Call”*

**Our bi-monthly publication with news from the RHTC**

**March 2016 – welcome to the 8th edition of our bi-monthly newsletter all about the RHTC. We would like to take this opportunity of wishing a Happy Easter to all our supporters, and we look forward to seeing you at a future production - page 3 has details of our new season!**



Geoff Morgan's production of **'Ladies Day'** was a triumph of brilliant casting and hilarious dialogue. The members of the audience were still smiling as they left the theatre.

For those of you who didn't see it the play was first produced at Hull Truck Theatre ten years ago and won critical acclaim. The Guardian said it was, "Exuberantly up-to-the minute comedy". It tells the story of four women working as fish filleters in a factory in Hull. It is repetitive, boring work but their fortunes are set to change when they find tickets to Ladies' Day at Royal Ascot the year it relocated to York. Out go the hairnets, overalls and wellies as the four leave work and do themselves up to the nines. They head off to the races for a drink, a flirt and a flutter. They discover a lot more than they bargained for, about each other and about themselves. They meet various male characters during their day out.

The ladies drink copious amounts of champagne and bet on all six races, hoping to win the jackpot. Jan, played by Sally Williams, would like to move on with her life but is over protective of and obsessed with her teenage daughter. She performed one of the best drunk scenes I have ever seen, and played the character brilliantly throughout. Kerri Saxby played the outrageous Shelley who wants to be a celebrity at any cost. She is the extrovert of the group, loud mouthed and assertive. Kerri's comic timing is perfect and she was a pleasure to watch. Liz Morgan played Pearl convincingly, a happily married matron who, thanks to the champagne, confesses that she has a secret lover. Lindsey Follen, who doesn't appear often enough on the Robin Hood stage, was superb as Linda, a sad character, nervous of everything and protective of her grasping Mother who keeps her poor. Finally, David O'Brien played all the male roles, switching characterisation with professional ease. His sad, starving jockey was a masterpiece.

The set gave a real feel of a day at the races but there were too many long scene changes for my taste. A more economical use of the fences would have left the audience in no doubt of the different locations and would have added pace to the production. All in all though, an excellent piece of entertainment.

**EDITORS Carolyn Drury - [nearlyinstant@gmail.com](mailto:nearlyinstant@gmail.com) & Jackie Rogers - [jrogers13@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jrogers13@hotmail.co.uk)**



## RHTC 200 Monthly Prize Draw

### SUPPORT THE THEATRE AND WIN CASH PRIZES!

If your membership number is drawn, you win a cash prize.

Subscription of £12.00 per annum, open to all supporters of the RHTC.

Proceeds of the draw will be used to purchase equipment for the theatre.

Pick up a form at your next visit or from our programme. If you want more information contact Sue Smith at [ssconsulting15@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ssconsulting15@yahoo.co.uk).

## SPOTLIGHT ON SUE SMITH

Every month we Spot Light one of our theatre supporters. We are conscious that without our loyal volunteers we would not exist. This month, meet Sue Smith who currently looks after our 200 Club.

I first became involved with the RHTC when my husband, Tony Smith, saw an audition for a play advertised, and got a part. Since then he has been a pretty regular face on stage with the RHTC on tour and afterwards when the company returned to the Robin Hood Theatre at Averham.



I decided that I had no desire to act, but felt that I would like to contribute in some way to this fantastic local theatre. Over the last few years I have served teas and coffees to many of you, worked behind the bar, sold programmes,

and taken tickets at the door. In addition I have helped clear weeds from the garden and car park when we were restoring the theatre. It has been great fun and I have met some lovely people, both RHTC members and the many people who loyally support the productions by coming along to watch. More recently, I have taken on the running of the 200 club, and if I haven't pestered you yet on one of your visits to the theatre, be prepared for me to sell you a membership number sometime in the near future.

Being retired gives me plenty of time to pursue all kind of interests. I have always enjoyed being outdoors and in the spring and summer months my garden takes up quite a bit of my time. New activities that I have started in my more advancing years include zumba and pilates. I have always enjoyed swimming and generally keeping myself fit, and so retirement has enabled me to walk more with our dog, and take up a bit of cycling again. One of our real passions though is skiing, and we try to get to the slopes for at least one holiday each winter. On the less active front I do love to read, especially a good thriller. One thing that both Tony and I enjoy doing together is going to see a good play, whether it is an amateur production or something in the west end. We love live music as well and will be doing our stint as volunteers at the Gate to Southwell again this year.

Of course being retired also means that I have ample time to indulge my grandchildren. I mean to keep spoiling them rotten as long as I am able. Maybe at least one of them will catch the theatre bug!

Don't forget we are always looking for volunteers – front of house staff, or serving coffee, bar, car park. Plus backstage, costumes, props, stage management, set building etc. And theatre maintenance such as gardening, cleaning, painting and general repairs. Just register your interest with our Secretary, Jean Baliol-Key at [rhtcsecretary@live.co.uk](mailto:rhtcsecretary@live.co.uk) and she will pass your contact details onto the relevant person.

Tickets for all productions are available on our box office number 07733 179986



## 2016-2017 SEASON

Unbelievably we are already more than halfway through our second full season back in the theatre and so it is time to announce what we hope will be another exciting selection of plays for our 2016/2017 season.



Starting in September our first offering is ***My Mother Said I Never Should*** by Charlotte Keatley. This play moves back and forth through the lives of four women and reflects the enormous social changes of the twentieth century. Both hilarious and poignant in turns, it has been translated into twenty two different languages and performed across the world, and is one of the great success stories of modern British theatre.

This will be followed by a recently released play first performed at Shakespeare's Globe in 2011. ***Anne Boleyn*** by Howard Brenton gives a different insight into the turbulent life and death of this reckless young woman, seen from the viewpoint of King James I; an intriguing character in his own right. Compelling, witty and often laugh out loud funny, this is a very theatrical version of a dramatic period of history.



After the great success of *Ladies' Day* earlier this year, next January we will once again be meeting that fish filleting foursome - Pearl, Jan, Shelley and Linda in Amanda Whittington's funny and heart-warming sequel, ***Ladies Down Under***. After hitting the jackpot at York, our feisty lasses from Hull decide to celebrate in style with a trip of a lifetime to the land of Oz. They meet up with Joe once again along with other diverse characters, but as you can imagine, their dream holiday doesn't exactly go to plan!

Our April production is another recently released play, the award winning ***One Man, Two Guvners***. Based on the classic Italian comedy *The Servant of Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni, this new version was created by prizewinning playwright Richard Bean, and proved to be a smash West End hit. Now set in 1960s Brighton, a socially naive and permanently hungry Francis Henshall becomes separately employed by two men, a local gangster and an upper class criminal, and in order to stay in work, must keep them apart, resulting in a frantic, hilarious, farcical entertainment.



And finally in June, something for all the family in David Wood's version of ***The Witches***. This is a faithful adaptation of Roald Dahl's classic story in which Boy and his Grandmother struggle against the Grand High Witch and her followers. No pointy hats and broomsticks for these witches, they look just like ordinary women, much more scary! While the kids will be thrilled by the story and its characters, their parents and grandparents will be no less engaged by the sly humour of this delightful play.

Robin Hood Theatre Company hope that once again we are presenting a rich and diverse offering to our loyal audiences. We know that we can't please all of the people, all of the time, but we intend to try!

For further information visit our web site – [robinhoodtheatre.co.uk](http://robinhoodtheatre.co.uk)



## So, the next step..... Calling all Potential Directors

If any of you are interested in directing any of the plays in our new season then we would welcome written proposals with a deadline of April 25th.

With the possible exception of *Ladies Down Under*, which we anticipate will be the same cast and production team as *Ladies' Day*, please check before applying.

We would like as much detail as possible on how you would approach the play, any challenges you foresee and how you would try and resolve them. We would also be interested in your ideas about casting and the rehearsal process and your thoughts on setting, light and sound and any costume and props difficulties.

The RHTC board formalised this process for the current season and all participating directors submitted proposals including those with experience and members of the board. We are constantly seeking to build on our high standards and feel that the director plays a key role in this quality control. Should there be more than one submission per play, myself as Artistic Director and selected members of the board will make the final decision.

If anyone is interested in being a future first time director, please let me know and we will arrange for you to shadow an experienced practitioner during the coming season. Similarly if we have anyone wishing to be involved in stage management and on the technical team, then this can also be arranged.

Reading scripts are available from the theatre so please contact me on 07733 179986. Please send all proposals to me on [jeanelebeter@hotmail.com](mailto:jeanelebeter@hotmail.com) or post to the theatre for my attention. Looking forward to another exciting and successful season.

**Jean Lebeter Artistic Director**



## Don't forget your tickets to Gaslight 19-23 April

As the gaslight flickers and the floorboards creak around her, Bella Manningham becomes convinced that she is losing her mind, as her mother did before her. But does the terror exist only in her imagination or does the house contain darker secrets? The arrival of the genial Mr Rough, however, reveals the startling truth that will shake her respectable Victorian marriage to its core.



*Gaslight*, written by Patrick Hamilton in 1938, is a thriller set in fog bound Victorian London. There was adulation from reviewers, as well as his peers (Coward among them). George VI and Queen Elizabeth hastened to the Apollo Theatre to see what the fuss was about, and after a six-month run in the West End, *Gaslight* - retitled *Angel Street* - went on to wow Broadway for four years and inspired two film versions: the first British in 1940, the second American in 1944. However, *Gaslight* is not just a piece of nostalgia, revised recently at the Old Vic, with great success, it has much to offer a modern audience, and still packs a powerful punch. As ever, the Robin Hood Theatre Company try and bring the audience a variety of styles and genres, so come prepared not to giggle, but gasp as you enter the murky world of the villainous Jack Manningham.

This classic Victorian melodrama will both thrill and intrigue you. What is the real reason behind the psychological torment of Bella Manningham by her husband, and why does the gaslight dip so ominously every evening?

Tickets for all productions are available on our box office number 07733 179986



## Old Time Music Hall

Your Chairman: Mr. David Baliol-Key

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a compilation of Sonorous Solo Songs and Sensational Sketches

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Musical Medleys and Delightful Dances

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Novelty Acts from a Monster Variety Company

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The nights of excitement, amusement and grand entertainment are on  
Friday 20th & Saturday 21st May 2016 at 7.30  
in the comfort of the Robin Hood Theatre

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Music halls can be traced back to the taverns and coffee houses of 18th century London where men met to eat, drink and do business. Performers sang songs whilst the audience ate, drank and joined in the singing. By the 1830s taverns had rooms devoted to musical clubs. They presented Saturday evening Singsongs. These became so popular that entertainment was put on two or three times a week. At Evans' Song and Supper Rooms in Covent Garden singers were paid £1 a week and free drink.

By the 1850s, the tavern landlords had moved into purpose built halls. The format of the evening was unchanged: a Chairman would introduce song and dance acts onto a simple stage, whilst trying to keep order with a gavel. In all cases, eating, drinking and smoking continued throughout the performances. The audience heckled and joined in with their favourite songs and performers.

The growth of the Halls was rapid and spread across Britain with the first great boom in the 1860s, so that by 1870, 31 large halls were listed in London and 384 in the rest of the country. In addition, performers now became a professional workforce, appearing in London at several Halls each night and making frequent provincial tours. At its peak, music hall was the television of its day. Its stars were enormously popular. They had their songs specially written for them, and permission would have to be sought if other performers wanted to sing them in public.

The songs are still familiar and we have a large selection of them for you to enjoy. Performed by members you will recognise and artistes we've invited from far and wide, the show has a variety of acts which we hope you will enjoy. We hope you might like to dress up in Victorian costume but it is not obligatory. Just come along and experience the delights of this traditional Variety Show. Sing, laugh, and charge your glasses.



### Sunday Pub Nights

The inaugural opening on 13<sup>th</sup> March was a great success. We welcomed around 45 people who all took part in the quiz. A lovely atmosphere throughout and we have received some great comments. We have decided to continue with the pub nights initially 4 weekly. We can have too much of a good thing! We can always review this and open more if we think it's beneficial to everyone. The next 2 pub nights are Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May. And we have activities for you to enjoy. The reason we have gone for these 2 dates is the following Mondays are bank holidays so no work for most. (Sorry if you are away).

1<sup>st</sup> May we are having a beetle drive. Fun for all the family. Very easy to play. Don't worry if you've never played, full instructions will be given. 29<sup>th</sup> May we are running a race night so cash to be won! Haven't decided yet whether this will be horses or greyhounds but either way it is a very exciting evening.



## Village Ventures

We have had two more professional shows in the theatre since the last newsletter, both of which were well supported and much appreciated. We have averaged audiences of eighty-five for these events, which is, we are told, better than at most venues but of course, we would always like to have full houses. We hope that next season we will have more visitors at these events.

In February we welcomed 'Tangram Theatre' who performed 'The Origin of the Species'. John Hinton was the sole performer, playing Charles Darwin and dozens of other characters. There was quite a lot of audience participation which was amusing rather than threatening and most of the audience joined in good naturedly. The play was informative and very entertaining. The company has other plays in their repertoire which we hope we can book in the future.

This month we welcomed Tayo Aluko performing 'Call Mr. Robeson'. Again, this was a very enjoyable evening telling of the singer's career and his troubles with anti-communist authorities and racist attitudes in the United States. The show was compelling and we especially enjoyed 'Old Man River', the song which Paul Robeson made his own. We will soon know which shows Village Ventures will have for us next season and we are sure that they will be performed to the same high standard.

## Notes from the Board

### Corporate News

In the last three monthly Board meetings we have:

- Decided on the forthcoming season which is one of our most important decisions and consequently takes a lot of time and debate;
- Appointed 2 new members to the Board – Karen Peck and Martin Williams both of whom have been members for many years and bring a range of experience to the Board in place of Rachel Repper who stood down at the AGM.
- We have had two reports from our Architect Clive Brooks on the progress he has made in identifying the best way forward with the extension building. He has agreed in principle with Newark and Sherwood Building Control Team what needs to be done to ensure the building is compliant with building regulations. As the discussions have progressed the scale of work has become much more manageable and he is now preparing design solutions for each issue. The most noticeable will be revised accesses between the stage and the dressing rooms
- We asked the 200 Club to fund the purchase of a branded ice cream display fridge for the foyer;
- Our finances continue to be reasonably healthy enabling us to commit to small packages of developments.

### Building developments

We have upgraded the railings to the ramp through the link corridor into the auditorium so that they are much stronger and extend for the full length of the ramp. We have also filled all the holes in the drive using a stronger stone mix and a whacker plate to compact it better. The Sound System in the auditorium has been upgraded so that we have a four speaker system and a network of microphones suitable for enhancing musical performances. All the trees have been removed from our side of the drive reducing the amount of material falling into the gutters and drains.

Don't forget we are always open to ideas on how we can improve our facilities at the theatre, so if you have any suggestions/recommendations we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact us via our secretary, Jean Baliol-Key at [rhtcsecretary@live.co.uk](mailto:rhtcsecretary@live.co.uk).

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