



# "Curtain Call"

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

Welcome to our first edition of **Curtain Call**, bi-monthly news all about the theatre. We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members a **Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy & Prosperous New Year.**

## **PRE-SHOW SUPPER**

Our neighbours Kelham House Hotel have kindly agreed to provide pre-show suppers at 6.00 p.m. on all evenings of our performances. You can book in advance direct with them on 01636 705266.

### **Mains**

Breast of chicken wrapped in bacon with sage jus  
Grilled pavé of salmon with chive hollandaise  
Mushroom risotto with parmesan

### **Desserts**

Mixed berry Eton mess  
Chocolate brownie and ice cream  
Glazed lemon tart, raspberry sorbet  
2 Courses - £18.00  
Tea & coffee – £1.50  
Cheese supplement - £2.50

Since opening we have had to review our licence for the theatre and our application went in recently under the category of plays, film, live music, dance and similar; this should cover all uses we envisage for the theatre in the future. At the same time we have changed the official opening and licence hours.. The good news is that this has now been approved. Our new Director, Mark Lebeter, is our Licenced Premises Supervisor and will make sure we are legal from now on.

## **Our January Production – The Ladykillers**

The Ladykillers is a classic black comedy; a sweet little old lady, alone in her house, is pitted against a gang of criminal misfits who will stop at nothing. Posing as amateur musicians, Professor Marcus and his gang rent rooms in the lopsided house of sweet but strict Mrs Wilberforce. The villains plot to involve her, unwittingly, in Marcus' brilliantly conceived heist job. With only her parrot, General Gordon, to help her, Mrs Wilberforce is alone with five desperate men. But who will be forced to face the music?

The Ladykillers is a 2011 stage adaptation written by Graham Linehan based on the Ealing comedy film of the same name; which starred Alec Guinness as Professor Marcus, and a young Peter Sellers as 'Arry. It premiered at the Liverpool Playhouse and then transferred to the Gielgud Theatre in London for a successful and extended run before going on tour, having won the WhatsOnStage.com award for best new comedy.

We are thrilled to be one of the first amateur groups to bring you this wonderful play but please book early as we expect to sell out. Production dates are 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> January.

**Theatre now available for hire.....** ideal for family, corporate and community functions.

Stage area with tiered seating for 150 - Male and female changing rooms - Fully equipped lighting and sound facilities - Spacious foyer, bar area and function room - Catering and bar facilities - Private car park - Disabled access and facilities - Space for marquee if required.

The theatre area is ideal for plays, musical productions, dance/music recitals, poetry/story telling functions and workshop/team building events. The reception areas can be adapted for any event; meetings, conferences, rehearsals, exhibitions, birthday parties, wedding receptions, club and social activities.

Our facilities are available either as a package or individually and we would be delighted to quote for your event.

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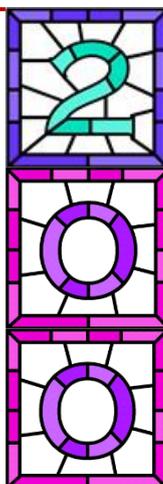


## Our 2015/2016 Season

Early in January we will be planning the next season. We will review any plays that come available and plan suitable dates through the season. It's a huge task with the main aim being to offer a broad selection of entertaining and perhaps thought provoking plays. We know you are all active theatre goers, and it would help us greatly if you could suggest any productions you may have seen that would be good for us to undertake. At the moment *The Pitman Painters* has become available which is a highly amusing and deeply moving story of a group of Ashington miners who hired a professor to teach an art appreciation class, and we will hopefully slot this in to the season. Please make contact with Jean Lebeter on our box office number to discuss any ideas you may have for future productions – we welcome your input.

### RHTC 200 Club Prize Draw SUPPORT THE THEATRE AND WIN CASH PRIZES!

Join our monthly prize draw.  
Subscription of £12.00 per annum.  
Open to all supporters of the RHTC.  
If your membership number is drawn, you win a cash prize.  
Proceeds of the draw will support the RHTC running costs  
Pick up a form at your next visit to the theatre or from the back of our programme.



### Thank You

I'd like to thank all the members who came to see *New Works*. I was worried that we would be playing to a sparse audience of friends of mine and of the cast, especially as so many of you had supported the play the previous week. Although the theatre wasn't full, there was enough of an audience to give us encouragement and applause. We were very grateful to you all.

*New Works* is a new venture and we are hoping that other writers will send us their scripts too. It's important for our viability that we encourage new writers, actors and directors. Six of the actors in my plays had never worked at the Robin Hood Theatre before and they were all impressed by the friendliness and helpfulness of everyone involved in the theatre.

**Carolyn Drury.**

### A Problem Solved

For many years there has been a mystery about why there was often a flood under the stage. David Baliol-Key, Technical Director, Mike Jeffrey, Buildings Director and Greg Wheeler discovered that a rainwater pipe under the stage was blocked and were amazed to find that the pipe was sixty feet long and fed into a drain near the drive to the theatre. The pipe was cleaned out which left the gentleman knee deep in the detritus of many years to clear up. Not a pleasant job. Thankfully this has, we hope, enabled much of our rainwater to clear efficiently and speedily away from the buildings.

As we are discovering, not all of our work is glamorous, but still vital nonetheless.

### Our New Board Members

Following on from our AGM in October we have increased the members of our Board, the people responsible for running the theatre and also trustees of our Charity.

Our Existing Committee consist of: Geoff Morgan – Chairman, Jean Baliol Key – Secretary, Clive Harmston – Finance Director, Director, Dave Baliol-Key - Technical Director, Jackie Rogers – Design Director and Jean Lebeter – Artistic Director.

We are delighted to welcome to our board new members: Mark Lebeter – Designated Premises Supervisor. Michael Jeffrey - Buildings Director, Rachel Repper – House Director and Carolyn Drury – Communications Director.

### Heating...or lack of it.

Apologies to everyone who felt cold during the last two plays. The Board are aware of the problem and measures are being taken to see that it doesn't happen again. We have realised that the boiler needs to be switched on earlier in the day and that the backstage area needs some construction work to eliminate the cold air from the unheated buildings at the rear of the theatre.

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



## **RHTC creating an archive**

We are very lucky at the theatre having people in the past who have stored items of interest, such as scrap books, old photographs, programmes, newspaper articles. They have been kept in boxes whilst we have been closed, and it is our aim to restore/renovate where necessary and look at ways to put some on display around the theatre. We have found a supporter of the theatre, Judith Mills, who is willing to take on this restoration huge task, and other issues, such as bringing the history of the theatre up to date: our current episode stops in the 80's. Judith will be looking at interviewing people who have been involved with the theatre and gathering information on productions and stories about the RHTC. We will be doing everything we can to make all our archive material available for future generations and hopefully there may be a grant available out there somewhere that will help us achieve this. In the meantime if you have kept anything about the theatre, or have any interesting stores to relate, Judith will be delighted to hear from you, just send an e-mail to our secretary or contact the editors of this newsletter.

**There are many people at the theatre who give hours of their time helping in various ways to keep the theatre running. We intend to feature these much valued members in future newsletters.**

### **SPOT LIGHT on.....KEITH WILSON**

After a 15 year career in the R.A.F., many of them spent abroad Keith was offered a post in Saudi Arabia as a Communications Officer, in charge of Ground Communications and the training of Royal Saudi Air Force Warrant Officers. In 1978 he left Saudi and started a career in Purchasing with various companies.

After marrying Val in January 1979 he was introduced to the Robin Hood Theatre and started acting and helping with set building, his first set was for "An Inspector Calls".

In 1980 he became the RHT Production Manager, built sets and staged managed productions both amateur and professional. However in 1986 he damaged a disc in his back whilst moving a very heavy set for "Hobson's Choice", finally having to have the disc removed, which put paid to any heavy lifting for some time. In 2012 the mammoth task of restoring began. Keith, with the help of Nick Timms and Greg Wheeler, began ripping out the kitchen at the theatre, which was the start of the renovation of the hospitality area. He spent 6 long mornings a week, every week, (with the exception of 2 weeks for holidays) for eighteen months working through from the kitchen, the bar, the toilets and the large foyer using various skills including electrics, joinery, plumbing and tiling (in all he laid approximately 1,000 tiles!)

Since then he has appeared in the opening production of "Little Voice" and stage managed the first of the "New Works" productions. On his 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday he decided the time had come to give up heavy lifting. He is still willing to help but nothing to make him have another disc removed – Keith says that the theatre has already had one, which he thinks is quite enough!.



## **The restoration works continue.....**

Leading up to the opening of the theatre early in 2014, we were fortunate that many people donated funds towards the immense task we undertook of restoring the buildings– and we thank everyone that gave their support. We have been donated televisions and it is our aim to use one of them to name and thank supporters who donated funds. Once open we decided to have a break and get the theatre running for at least a year before taking on more work. Of course some tasks have required completion in that time, including wiring in the auditorium. We have to finish the downstairs toilet used by cast and crew, we have carried out repairs to the drive, put devices in the guttering's to stop them getting blocked, and are currently carrying out repair works to badly deteriorated doors and windows. Earlier in the summer the stairs up to the costume area displayed their age and are now unusable, so we are looking at quotes to get these replaced, either inside the building, or outside in their current location. Needless to say we have a lot of work still to carry out and if you are interested in getting involved with any theatre project, or donating to our rapidly dwindling funds then we would be delighted to hear from you.

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