



Hello

The trustees have had another busy couple of weeks, making sure everything is shipshape at the theatre in time for the opening of the new season with the brilliant Hay Fever !

We have been tackling, amongst other things; the new look publicity, website, brochures and posters; introducing online and local ticket booking; getting the health and safety paperwork up-to-date; introducing a new membership system and organising a much needed refurbishment. We have also been tackling the important issue of child protection and have appointed a Safeguarding Officer for the theatre - a hugely important role.

Alongside this, we have been working with Lewis on future seasons and I hope, when all is revealed, you will be as excited as we are about the plays we will be putting on and the collaborations with local actors and directors we will be undertaking. We are also hugely looking forward to meeting you all at the Member's Christmas bash on the 19th of December, the first of new planned social events !

Wharf Theatre Chairman • Sarah Williams

NEW Town Box Office !

The Wharf Theatre are thrilled to announce a new Box Office is now operating at the Devizes Community Hub within the Library : 25 Sheep St. Devizes SN10 1DJ



Along with our new look literature and banners, the theatre itself will be undergoing a refresh in October. The Wharf trustees have approved a programme of work that includes redecoration of the bar and foyer areas, new furniture, upgrading the toilets and new energy efficient lighting. We aim to keep any disruption to a minimum but kindly ask all patrons to bear with us during this time.

Our official relaunch evening will take place on the first night of Quartet on Friday the 3rd of November.

Artistic notes

If there is one thing you can be sure of in theatre, you can't be sure of anything ! Mervyn Harrowven and I were convinced that Goodnight Mrs Puffin, a light comedy with a compelling plot, would attract both actors and audiences. We never got to check our theory viz audiences as we had no men audition at all and in the end, we were forced to cancel it. No one's fault - that's showbiz ! But now we have the prospect of staging Ronald Harwood's wonderful four-hander Quartet and director Tess Richards was able to cast from those who turned up to the audition : Jax Brady, Martin Turner, Louise Peak and, er, Lewis Cowen (who's he ?!)

Now I am turning my eyes towards January and my production of An Ideal Husband by Oscar Wilde. It is one of those plays that you read and say to yourself, I've got to put this on the Wharf stage. I have the scripts in my possession and anyone who would like to read it with a view to auditioning, should get in touch : 01380 840 478 / 07523 050 961 or via email lewis@thecowens.force9.co.uk

In between of course, Paul Butler's production of The Yeomen of the Guard will please not only Gilbert and Sullivan fans but all those who enjoy a good evening out with lots of humour and hummable tunes. See the enclosed new season brochure for full details. I am currently working on the programme for 2018/19 so if anyone out there has a pet project they are itching to bring to the stage, let me know. In the meantime, book your seats for Hay Fever. You mustn't miss it !

Artistic Director • Lewis Cowen

HAY FEVER

If the audience have as much fun with this production as we have had in rehearsal, they are in for a treat. I have always said that Noel Coward's 1925 light comedy is the perfect play and I mean it. It is difficult to put a finger on why it is such a success but the comedy is, if you'll excuse the pun, "blissful" and the characters are superbly drawn and interact brilliantly. Of course, it helps having a wonderful cast and I am blessed with an excellent one : Linda Swann, Frank Jones, Oliver Beech, Tor Burt, Chris Lane, Helen Wuscher, Pete Wallis, Josie McBryne and Claire Abraham. I am also grateful to Kathryn Peters, Pete Wallis and his colleague James Savill for a wonderful set and Stage Manager Joan Francis, make up my dream team.

Director • Patricia Nelson



Audition notice

An Ideal Husband by Oscar Wilde

Directed by Lewis Cowen

Playing dates : Friday 26 Jan - Saturday 3 Feb 2018

Audition : 7.30pm Wednesday October 25 at the Wharf.

First staged in 1895, An Ideal Husband is both a political thriller and a satire on Victorian morals and values. Sir Robert Chiltern is an upcoming politician, spoken of as a possible future Prime Minister, but he has a skeleton in his cupboard in the form of a letter sent in his early days, offering for sale cabinet secrets, which is now in the possession of the ruthless Mrs Cheveley. Sir Robert's wife believes her husband to be morally scrupulous and the revelations in the letter are bound to threaten his marriage as well as his career. The set will be minimal but the costumes will be dazzling, as I am sure, will the acting.

CHARACTER LIST

The Earl of Caversham 60-70s

Typically irascible but with a heart of gold

Lord Goring 30s

His son, a close friend of the Chilterns

Sir Robert Chiltern 30-40s

Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Vicomte de Nanjac age irrelevant

Attache at the French Embassy in London

Mason Butler to Sir Robert Chiltern

Phipps Servant to Lord Goring

Lady Chiltern 30s - Wife of Sir Robert

Lady Markby 60s - A friend of the Chilterns

Mrs Cheveley 30s

A former schoolmate of Lady Chiltern

Miss Mabel Chiltern 20s - Sir Robert's sister

The Countess of Basildon

Mrs Marchmont

Copies of the script are available from the director.
01380 840 478 / 07523 050 961
lewis@thecowens.force9.co.uk

Please note that in order to take part in any Wharf Theatre production, you must be holding a current Full Membership.

From the archives

Reproduced from Wiltshire Gazette & Herald archives Thursday February 16th 1968

"A proposal from Devizes Amateur Dramatic Society for a small hall or theatre, with seating for up to 250 people with rehearsal, club room and refreshment facilities was considered by Devizes Borough Council Property Committee on Monday. It suggested that the Town Council might co-operate in such a venture and that the building could also be used in conjunction with other Devizes Organisations. The Society said that in it's 21 year history it had spent many hundreds of pounds hiring the Palace Cinema to stage it's plays and other accommodation for the storage of props and scenery.

UNDER NOTICE : It asked if the Council was interested in the project of which Devizes could be justly proud of in future. The Society said it was under 6 months' notice to quit it's present storage premises belonging to Woodward's the printers. It wanted to know if the Council could provide alternative accommodation and a building suitable for construction and painting of scenery before removal to the theatre. It might be used with other organisations such as Devizes Light Operatic Society. Several buildings were suggested by members of the committee but the difficulty of getting one with sufficiently high access. One suggestion was that Wiltshire County Council's old highway depot which is to be sold might serve the purpose.

GOOD ENTERPRISE : The committee decided to pass the Societies request to it's Social and Recreational and General Purpose committee for consideration. "We have nothing in our province which we are able to offer them" said Ald Roy Kemp (Property Committee Chairman) I wish we could help them. This is a good enterprise and they do a good job" He suggested that committee members should bear the matter in mind." We are still waiting for a reply !

Copy deadline

If you have any articles or notices you wish to feature in the next newsletter, please contact us by email :
publicity@wharftheatre.co.uk by Monday October 16th