



Forthcoming read-throughs, auditions & other production stuff

- 'Going Straight' read-through: Monday 17 July, 7.30pm in Hancock House
- 'Going Straight' auditions: Sunday 23 July, 6.30pm in the auditorium

Remember: a read-through is not an audition!

Other diary dates (more info on the website)

'IW Pride' events at the Apollo 11-14 July:

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| 'The Queer Bash' | 8.00pm 11 & 12 July |
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| 'Beautiful Thing' | 8.00pm 13 & 14 July |
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The theatre will be open from 6.00pm on 11-14 July for IW Pride activities

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| Next coffee mornings | 24 June 8 July 22 July 5 August 19 August 2 September |
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| 'An Audience with Johnny Strange' | 7.30pm Saturday 22 July |
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| Jazz at the Apollo: Kate Cuzner & Tony Woods | 3.00pm 23 July |
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apollonius

Issue no. 258

June 2017

'The Ghost Train' leaves the station ...

Mike Whitehead, the director of the Players' current production, 'The Ghost Train' (and incidentally a local celebrity following his interview in this month's Beacon: '*Michael Whitehead—a life in showbiz!*'), is delighted to have brought this play to the Apollo stage. As mentioned elsewhere in this issue, the play is written and set in the early 1920s and Mike made the very specific decision to keep it to period rather than attempt to 'modernise' it. This gave full rein to the set designers to produce a convincingly gloomy, 'cold, wet and disagreeable' station waiting-room – lightened by Paul Hewson's inspired 'railway posters' – and to Wardrobe to indulge themselves in full 1920s costumes, which they have done with their customary energy and skill. However, it is the lighting and sound

team who have been particularly evident in this show, producing convincing and very effective steam train effects which add enormously to the 'thriller' element of the play—particularly impressive because the 'team' consists of Mike! As he says, 'The sound and lighting effects in the original production were produced by ten stagehands! Luckily modern technology has stepped in and made it all just that bit easier!'

Where the cast is concerned, Mike says, 'I'm particularly pleased to welcome three young and very promising Players members to the cast. This is the first appearance on the Apollo stage for Abbi and Joel Leverton and Matt Osborne and they have all thrown themselves enthusiastically into the production. We hope to see more of them in



Ian Moth squares up to Graham Brown while Joel Leverton looks on

the future. [Joel's reaction to the show can be found elsewhere in this issue!] Once I was sure I had an excellent cast who knew what they were doing, we could all work on achieving the authentic 1920s pronunciation—which as Joel says 'makes all their a's sound like e's and all their e's sound like i's'. The cast were sent off to watch period films to get the sound right! It has also been a surprisingly difficult script to learn and I congratulate the cast on their hard work.'

'The Ghost Train' is on from 30 June-8 July.

'The Tamer Tamed': casting call!

Isabel Favell is pleased to report that she has nearly cast 'The Tamer Tamed', John Fletcher's 16th-century comedy of sexual manners, written as a 'sequel' to Shakespeare's 'The Taming of the Shrew'.

Isabel now only needs a few people to complete the cast, notably two young

ladies to play the significant roles of Bianca and Livia, Maria's confidantes, as well as a few ladies to join the feminist chorus of Maria's friends. Isabel says, 'There must be some girls who would like a major part in this fun play. Come and let your hair down and tell the men that

from here on women will wear the breeches ...!'

She is still also looking for a couple of men to take on roles as friends of Petruchio. If you're interested, please phone Isabel on 527553.

Editorial: the view from



At first glance the current play, Arnold Ridley's 'The Ghost Train', may appear a rather dated 'period piece', with its language, mannerisms and attitudes rooted firmly in the early 1920s. However, there is more to this play than a first impression might suggest.

For example, to twenty-first century ears, lines like Charles' 'Great Scott! Bolshies!' could appear simply laughable; but modern audiences should try to remember that the play was written at a time of huge societal upheaval. The First World War – the war to end all wars – had ended only four years before; in Russia, Bolsheviks had murdered

the Tsar, a close relative of the then English royal family, and all his family and brought about radical change to Russian society; and the General Strike was only a couple of years away. There was a widespread fear that revolution could easily happen in Britain; so Charles' exclamation is the equivalent of someone in 2017 saying, 'My God! Al-Qaeda!' Spiritualism was on the rise, with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle one of its most committed proponents, as hundreds of thousands of bereaved families tried to contact sons lost in battle. We should also remember that female emancipation was only in its infancy: a very limited number of

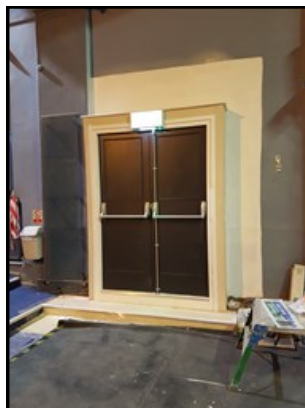
women had been granted the vote in 1919 and for most women the only way of achieving security in life was still to marry. By giving Elsie lines such as 'I don't need protection and I won't be domineered' and making Julia an independent woman with her own agenda Arnold Ridley was demonstrating a relatively enlightened view of women's opportunities in life.

We hope audiences will be able to look beyond the sometimes unfamiliar idiom to remember that 'The Ghost Train' is not only a play of its time, giving us an absolutely authentic window into the attitudes of the time, but in many ways speaks to all of us, even a century later.



News from the Apollo Theatre Trust

If you have visited the theatre in the last few weeks you will have seen that the new emergency exit is virtually complete. Roger Simpson has done his normal job of meticulous planning which has resulted in a structure which has minimal impact on the auditorium. It was a condition of our being able to create the new exit that the doors opened within the thickness of our walls and didn't impinge on the external passageway. Although the building work should be completed by the time Apollonius comes out the exit may not be ready for use. It has to be connect-



ed to the emergency lighting system and there is unrelated plumbing work to be completed before everything can be closed off and decorated. A folding ramp for wheelchair use, to be stored next to the exit, is on order. It's also worth noting that this will be a fire exit only, not a thoroughfare, unlike its counterpart on the other side of the auditorium. The 'Faces of Oliver' bas-relief sculpture has been collected from the foundry after cleaning and repatination (very kindly paid for by Larry's widow, Julia Holofcener). This has greatly enhanced its appearance and brings out the fine detail, highlighting the artist's skill, which can be seen in the small detail above. It is now stored in a secure location while it is prepared for mounting. One of the radiators in the auditorium is to be relocated to accommodate it. The event to celebrate its



unveiling is on track for 1 November and the working group organising it will be calling for help at some stage.

Progress has been made on other minor work. A new heater has been installed in the props room. The equipment to improve heating in The Unit is on order and we are awaiting an installation date from the contractor. When we had the theatre façade decorated we took a decision to decorate the side of Hancock House ourselves, using our own access tower. So look out for pleas for help with that and other tasks such as clearing weeds from the side of theatre.

Paul Jennings, Chair, Apollo Theatre Trust

Notes from the Committee meeting on 3 July 2017

News from your Committee

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Members may remember that changes to box office rota arrangements were set out in the last issue of Apollonius. Just as a reminder:

- the box office and the bar will be open and ready to serve at 6:30pm;
- daytime box office will only be open on the Saturday before and the two Saturdays of the run;
- the phone number for the box office has changed to a virtual phone number which can be redirected to any phone number we like, so weekday box office will be manned by volunteers on their own (home) phones who will have access to the booking system (your numbers will not be given out);
- members volunteering for Y3 will be asked to undertake another FOH job during the same run. Although staffing Y3 is a requirement for health and safety, it is also a 'perk' to watch the show;
- the director of the subsequent show should where possible put forward the cast for FOH duties during rehearsals for the previous show—specifically, ushering for an hour before rehearsal.

The committee has also decided that with effect from next season, students and unemployed will be able to benefit from discounted £5 tickets, hopefully making the theatre more accessible, broadening our 'reach' and increasing our houses.

HOUSE MANAGER

I'm delighted to report that for the first time in quite a

while we have a full rota for the run of Ghost Train. It took a great deal of pleading, some arm twisting and a generous director (thank you, Mike!) but thank you to all volunteers. The scanning of tickets continues to go well despite a few hiccups and the use of the new virtual phone number is also going very smoothly.

MARKETING MANAGER

Whether you're a new director to the Apollo or an old hand, as Marketing Manager I will try to make life as easy as possible for you in publicising your play. Usually we provide: your poster; banner; article in the season leaflet; social media coverage; press release and photographs; programme; blogs and publicity material to a range of media outlets.

I will email you around the time of your read-through to give you full details, ask for any particular requirements you may have and request the information we need to produce everything on time. I would be really grateful if you could keep to the deadlines and work with us to make sure as many people know about your play as possible—so that your hard-working actors (and you!) are rewarded by appreciative audiences. However, there are important things to remember about your **ART-WORK**. All Directors must remember that the poster for your play has to be ready on the opening night of the play prior to your production. Before that deadline the poster has to be compiled, checked, sent to the printers, printed and collected. While Michael Arnell is very willing to provide artwork for a poster that fulfils your requirements, it is vital that you give him all your ideas and instructions at least **six weeks before the deadline**.

Publicity for 'The Ghost Train' has again gone well: people are taking posters, Facebook and Twitter attracting comments and Vectis Radio giving us mentions on air plus three separate invitations to talk about the show. There are now two banners, one outside the theatre and one at Sainsbury's: many thanks to Roger for his work on this. We are prepared for the new season: each show for 2017/18 has text and image ready for the website and the new season leaflet (thanks to Dan for his work on this). This is an improvement on timings last year and will avoid us having to pester directors for an image for the poster when they are busy casting and rehearsing. The next challenge is the new season programmes which will include advertising, and I will be following up potential advertisers in the next few weeks.

ARTS MANAGER 2016/17

I have so many people to thank for the help I've received over the past couple of years: every single member of this theatre deserves recognition. Thank you to the entire membership for your time, enthusiasm, talent, good humour, advice, patience and very hard work. You should all give yourselves a hearty pat on the back and feel damned smug.

Maggie Cardew

AND FINALLY ...

As every year, there are plans for a 'sparkle weekend' over the summer. When the date has been confirmed, Gill Kennerly and her team will be looking for volunteers to help give the theatre its annual deep clean. If you have a pair of Marigolds, enthusiasm and a few hours to spare, please come and join in.

Theatre Director & Chair of management committee (elected 3-yearly): Amy Burns (2016-19) amy@masexodus.co.uk

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Arts Manager (elected annually in Nov for season beginning following Sept) | Maggie Cardew (2016-17) cardewmaglet@gmail.com; Cynara Crump (2017-18) cynara.crump@virgin.net | Technical Manager (elected biannually) | Dan Burns (2015-17) dan@masexodus.co.uk |
| Business Manager (elected biannually) | Ginnie Orrey (2016-18) gginnie@googlemail.com or info@apollo-theatre.org.uk | 2 Members' Representatives (elected annually) (2015-16) | Helen Reading redtietheatre@hotmail.co.uk; Steve Reading steveready104@btinternet.com |
| Marketing Manager (elected biannually) | Maureen Sullivan (2016-18) msullivan58@me.com | Bar Manager (co-opted) | Paul Stevens postmaster@sleeptite.force9.co.uk |
| Players' Secretary (elected biannually) | Mike Whitehead (2016-18) michaelwhitehead@yahoo.com | Wardrobe Manager (co-opted) | Peggy Harcourt peggy.harcourt@creekside.plus.com |
| Membership Secretary (elected biannually) | Drew Adcock (2016-18) Apollo- theatre@membership@outlook.com | Apollo Trust secretary (co-opted) | Cynara Crump cynara.crump@virgin.net |
| House Manager (elected biannually) | Paul Stevens (2016-18) post- master@sleeptite.force9.co.uk | Apollo Trust Buildings Manager (co-opted) | Roger Simpson roger.dodger45@yahoo.co.uk |

LOOKING AHEAD:**'THE APPLE CART', THE PLAYERS' PRODUCTION FOR MARCH 2018**FROM THE DIRECTOR,
MICHAEL ARNELL**The Ghost Train (or the supernatural public transport):
a response by
Joel Leverton****Upcoming at the Apollo: An Evening with Johnny Strange**

It has become apparent over recent years that the proliferation of Island drama groups has put a severe strain on the finite pool of Island actors. Consequently, as many directors will confirm, it has become often very difficult to cast a play from those actors choosing to audition.

As the director of this topical Shaw comedy due to be staged in March next

year, I have already been approached about the availability of scripts. However, because the French's version of this play is currently £15.99, it would be economic folly to purchase them before the play is satisfactorily cast.

If you are interested in auditioning, you can read the synopsis and the complete play text by Googling 'The Apple Cart, GB Shaw, full play script'.

In the October issue of 'Apollonius' I will be publishing the audition details and make the audition piece available for those interested.

Note: If I cannot cast the 15 actors required from those willing to audition, it has been agreed I will replace this play with 'Home' by David Storey, which requires 2 women, 2 men, 1 other.

Michael Arnell

This is a play that resonates beautifully with me; particularly so because my father played the role of Teddie Deakin years ago and I now follow in his footsteps. I particularly remember that when my father was playing Teddie we were inundated with Cornish accents, ghoulish voices and the occasional whisper, 'Where do it come from? Where do it go?' followed by hysterical and frightening laughter.

Yet the play itself is nearly a hundred years old—it has dated so much that during the read-through we nearly wet ourselves with the newly found connotations of certain phraseologies a century later. How, after so long, can it still hold sway over our imaginations? Even as we rehearse we're saying to each other, 'We must take this seriously because it'll turn into a farce if we don't.' It's surely not a play for our time, is it?

Definitely. How so? Consider how modern technology can create atmosphere on stage more realistically than could ever be produced before. Sound and lighting are beyond the comprehension of a 1920s theatre producer and at the very heart is the desperate need in people to be emotionally moved. Yes, the audience want to be affected somehow—people want to be scared. As the stationmaster tells his ghost story, that audience wants to fall for it, hook, line and sinker. And those special effects are going to cement that feel of a cold, wet station, haunted by The Ghost Train.

But there I stand, script in hand, lines highlighted, waiting for the dreaded stage direction '*screams with laughter*'. My character is described, among other things, as 'potty', 'batty', 'infuriating' and 'a waste of space', which begs the question, where's

the appeal? A bunch of characters, trapped in a room, speaking in accents which make all their a's sound like e's and all their e's sound like i's, terrified of the supernatural. I believe there's a relatively simple solution—it doesn't matter who or what the characters are, or what they say or do, it boils down to the fact that audiences love a good scare. Why see a ghost story otherwise? Audiences aren't going to watch this play for its actors—they're going in order to get in touch with their imaginations ... and they will, because we as actors, directors, SFX crew and all are going to help them get there.

So, as I sit in rehearsal and see my wife in character, gazing into her fictional husband's eyes, I find myself thinking, 'Well, it may be old tosh, but it's good tosh.'

Isle of Wight comedian Alex Watts brings his new series to his second home, the Apollo Theatre, on 22 July. 'Something Strange' sees Alex bring back one of his career friends, stuntman Johnny Strange. As the owner of 12 official Guinness World Records and an exceptionally sharp wit, and one of the last members of the SSAI (Sword Swallowing Association International), Johnny will sit down with Alex to do a rare interview,

chronicling his illustrious career from the moment he dared consider juggling a chainsaw blindfolded to what possessed him to pull a plane with his ears. It will be an evening of two halves: firstly, Alex will interview Johnny in his trademark informal style while taking questions from the audience to give an hilarious, insightful and unique glimpse behind a very well protected curtain.

In the second half, Johnny will demonstrate to the Apollo Theatre why he is one of the most exciting and sought after performers in the industry, juggling chainsaws, swallowing swords and other terrifying stunts. After his demonstration, Johnny will attempt to gain his 13th Official Guinness World Record with a brand new stunt.

Age limits: none, but children under 15 must be accompanied by an adult.

JOINING THE APOLLO: A NEW MEMBER'S REACTION I had always wanted to act, but the last thing I appeared in was our production of 'Jack Sheppard' at high school. For years I put it off, somehow always finding an excuse to delay my inner passion for acting. Eventually, though, it was as if a switch was flicked in my brain saying 'Join the theatre!' and I joined the Apollo Players in March his year. Initially I sat in on rehearsals for 'Forget-Me-Knot'; the team were all lovely and very welcoming and I sat in on many rehearsals, eagerly awaiting my chance to audition for something—anything! I ended up being the ASM for the play, on the basis that it would give me a chance to get to know people and how the theatre worked. I must say I most definitely enjoyed that job, so following that, I auditioned for and ended up getting a role in 'The Ghost Train'. I have to say it has been enormous fun! Everyone in the production from the actors to the props, costume and design team are incredibly friendly, and once the lines go in, the flow is right, there is nothing better! I would recommend anyone who was even slightly interested in acting to join and try it out—you won't regret it! *Matt Osborne*

A POET AT THE APOLLO One of our members, Dave Talbot, who is appearing in the current play, 'Ghost Train', is something of a poet. This may not be news to many of you but it certainly was to me, and when I read his 'slim volume', entitled 'Such Is Life' (copies are on sale in the theatre bar), I was very taken by Dave's short but pithy thoughts on life. The poem 'Theatrical Times' is particularly relevant to the Apollo: *I like to make this life of mine/Theatrical, jolly and fine/I like to take in a play/Think about it afterwards and say/Yeah that was an awfully good day/It's what one needs to make life just fine.*

The poem was illustrated by a photo of the Apollo logo, emphasising Dave's commitment to the theatre and all we stand for. Dave's second volume of poems, 'Such Is Life—More Thoughts', will be available soon.

First staged in 2004, 'Going Straight' provides laughs aplenty, with some mysteries along the way. Mickey was a villain, back in the day: leader of his own gang—sorry, firm—in the East End of London. He not only admits that — he's proud of it. Ray was his head honcho, his second in command, always ready to 'give someone a slap' if they deserved it. But times have changed: now in his sixties, Mickey is 'going straight' in a luxurious Spanish villa with his glamorous second wife, and he hasn't seen his old sidekick for two years. So why has he invited Ray to stay with him now? Ray's wife Brenda is apprehensive: does Mickey just want to renew

old friendships? Or has he another agenda? And when Polly, a Channel 4 journalist, turns up to interview the men for a new programme, Ray and Mickey have their suspicions. Does she too have a secret agenda? Why does Mickey still keep a gun in the house? What is the significance of a renewed investigation in to the murder of an old 'associate'? In fact, how many of the party are keeping secrets? And from whom?

'Going Straight' starts as a comedy, but as events start to spiral out of control it develops into a thriller, with plot twists and turns which surprise everyone!

'Going Straight', by Richard Harris: performance dates 21-28 October; directed by Amy Burns and Di Evans.

Characters (ages only an indication):

Michael Kavanagh (mid 60s)
Brenda Barrett (early 60s)
Ray Barrett (mid 60s)
Francine Kavanagh (40s)
Polly Phillips (20s)
Man's voice (Spanish)

There will be a play reading in Hancock House on Monday 17 July at 7:30pm and auditions will be held on the stage on Sunday 23 July at 6.30pm. If you would like a script, please contact Amy on 07886 389 561 or email her on amy@masexodus.co.uk.

You may remember that a number of events during the sixth Newport Jazz Weekend at the beginning of June were held at the Apollo, including the prestigious opening and closing concerts and the world premiere of Nick Page's 'Isle of Wight Suite'. Obviously events of this

standard place demands on the venue, and Amy Burns would like to offer sincere thanks to everyone who helped out during the weekend. In particular she would like to mention Eve & Shane Fradgley, Teresa Milford, Maureen Sullivan, Roger & Hilary Simpson, Helen & Steve Reading, Ian Moth, Michael

Arnell, Paul Stevens, Glenys Lloyd Williams, Sue Edwards and Dan Burns for their help and support. The five concerts at the Apollo were sold out, helping to support the weekend and make it possible for the organisers to keep bringing this amazing event to the Island.

membership
matters

**Richard
Harris'
'GOING
STRAIGHT' -
the Players'
October
production**



Our new patron, Jennie Linden



As I'm sure most of you will know, over the years a number of rather prestigious theatrical names with Island connections have agreed to be patrons of the Apollo—the late great Anthony Minghella and the thankfully very much current Jeremy Irons and Ray Allen, to name but three. We are very fortunate that another theatrical 'great' has recently agreed to join our patrons—Jennie Linden lives in Bembridge and has had a long and illustrious career on stage and screen.

Jennie became an actor in the early 1950s, after training at the Central School of Speech & Drama. She started in rep and then went on to work in radio, TV and theatre (including the West End), playing leading roles including Thea Elvsted in

Trevor Nunn's production of Hedda Gabler opposite Glenda Jackson for the RSC, which later became a film. Other notable film roles included Ursula in Ken Russell's iconic 'Women in Love'; and for those of us of a certain age she will be remembered as Barbara in the first Dr Who film. As she puts it, 'In my day actresses were expected to be able to do most dialects and accents and play against how you looked in costume, comedy, Shakespeare or farce. This in fact gave us more opportunities as actors and expanded our abilities.' She goes on to say, 'I loved acting, but it's a hard career to have, as you're only as good as yesterday's performance, as they say, and always have to be ready to go to the next job; so the

word 'resting' is a misnomer!'

Jennie retired to the Island five years ago; her husband, Chris's, family have had links here for over a century and as she says, 'we feel this Island to be very special place.' She has a message for Apollo members: 'I feel very happy and honoured to be a patron of the lovely Apollo. I'm really looking forward to meeting some of you and being part of your audience. The theatre is very sweet and I shall enjoy getting to know it; especially as I hope to perform my 'retrospective' in conversation with James Vaux here later in the year. I wish you all joy in your acting work, and I hope you find as much pleasure in creating 'people' and characters as I did in my career.'

IW Pride at the Apollo

The Apollo is delighted to support redTIE Theatre and 'IW Pride' week with four days of events leading up to the main Pride event on 15 July.

The Apollo will throw open its doors to the community, with a drop-in and information service available from 1.00pm every day from Tuesday 11-Friday 14 July. This will allow people the chance to find out more about Pride and talk to some LGBT service providers on the Island, including AgeUK, Breakout Youth

and the Hampshire Police LAGLO service. Or if people just want to drop by for a cup of tea and a chat, everybody will be most welcome.

From 6.00pm each evening there will be free live music and spoken word performances from a mix of Island bands and talent and local performers reading the written word. The theatre bar will be open and anybody is welcome to come and enjoy this free event. On Tuesday & Wednesday evenings, 11 & 12

July, there will be performances of redTIE's 'The Queer Bash' and on Thursday and Friday, 13 & 14 July, of their 'Beautiful Thing'.

There is interest in this event from all over the South of England and the organisers would be very grateful for any Apollo members who would be able and willing to help out at any of the activities over the four days. Please contact Helen or Steve on the email addresses on page 3.

Live screenings from Cineworld



Not so much to report this month, as we approach the artistic 'down time' of August. However, there's still some enticing stuff being streamed at Cineworld (check their website for more info).

Theatre

20 July: Angels in America part 1 (NT Live)
27 July: Angels in America

part 2 (NT Live)

9 August: Titus Andronicus (NT Live)

31 August: Yerma (NT Live)

7 September: An Evening with George Smiley (from RFH)

Opera

28 June: Otello (Jonas Kaufmann) (ROH)

5 July: La Boheme live

from Taormina

6 July: Hamlet (Glyndebourne)

3 August: La Clemenza di Tito (Glyndebourne)

14 September: Carmen on the Lake (from Lake Constance)

20 September: The Magic Flute (ROH)

3 October: La Boheme (ROH)

Best books on ...

Members who read the magazine 'The Week' will be familiar with the regular column in which an individual recommends some of his or her favourite novels on a particular theme. Nothing loth, I have decided shamelessly to pinch the idea, and to recommend five of my favourite novels set in the theatre. You may well be familiar with some or all of them, but if not, perhaps you might want to give them a go – they are genuinely favourites of mine and I think you'll enjoy them.

'Opening Night' (Ngaio Marsh): written in 1951, this is a classic detective story featuring the famous Inspector Alleyne. Despite elements which date it – Alleyne is able to scrape the greasepaint off the victim's face with a knife; the 'ingenue' character bemoans being untimely enticed from 'fortnightly rep' to work in a London theatre – Marsh brilliantly conjures up the atmosphere of the theatre and the characters rise above the potential for melodrama typical of the era. Lightweight but gripping.

'An Awfully Big Adventure' (Beryl Bainbridge): aficionados of Bainbridge will recognise her inimitable style in this story set in a provincial theatre just after the war. Readers must

keep their wits about them; clues to the final denouement lie scattered throughout the book but its true horror is only recognised in the final pages.

'Mansfield Park' (Jane Austen): not a truly 'theatrical' novel in the conventional sense, but the whole story turns on the 'theatricals' held by Henry and Mary Crawford at Mansfield Park during the absence of its owner, Sir Thomas. The play crystallises Fanny's mistrust of the Crawfords and shows them for the amoral beings they are, enables Edward to see her as more than the 'poor relation' and incidentally contains a character, Mr Rushworth, who in his self-absorbed focus on his minor character and costume unwittingly presages Jim Carter's character in the film *Shakespeare in Love* who, when asked what the play (*Romeo & Juliet*) is about, says, 'Well, there's this nurse ...'. A wonderful classic which I return to over and over again.

'The Lyre of Orpheus' (Robertson Davies): readers not familiar with the Canadian author Robertson Davies' remarkable novels are, frankly, in for a treat. This one is the third volume of the 'Cornish' trilogy; the overall theme is too long

and complex to summarise here, but in this book a group of executors of a will decide to invest in the completion and production of an unfinished opera entitled *King Arthur, or the Magnanimous Cuckold*. The plot twists and turns but the final scenes, as the opera comes to its triumphant conclusion, are truly magical.

'The Playmaker' (Thomas Keneally): set in 1789 in Sydney Cove, the remotest penal colony of the British Empire, a group of convicts and one of their captors unite to stage George Farquhar's 1706 play *The Recruiting Officer*. As felons, perjurers, thieves and whores rehearse, the director (or 'playmaker'), First Lt Ralph Clark, is derided by authority but becomes strangely seduced by the rich, varied life of this primitive land. The novel is the basis for Timberlake Wertenbaker's play *Our Country's Good* but is a wonderful read in its own right.

Do you have books, shows, theatrical experiences you would like to share with other members? We'd love to hear from you. Email me on info@apollo-theatre.org.uk and see your name in print!

Ginnie Orrey, editor



In what may turn out to be an occasional series, Ginnie Orrey recommends novels set in the theatre

How to get into the members' area of the website: a standing item

Instructions for accessing the members' area of the Apollo Theatre website.

- Go on to the website and hover over 'membership' and the 'members' area' tab should drop down;
- click on that and you'll get the message 'We're sorry, the content you are trying to reach is restricted to members only';

- click on 'member login' and you'll get the drop-down box containing the two areas 'username' and 'password';
- in the top area enter your 'username', which is 'firstname.secondname' (remember the dot between the words), and in the bottom box enter your 'password', which is your membership num-

- ber. Your membership card has your number on it, but if you can't find it check with the Membership Secretary or me;
- once you've done that, you should get straight into the members' area. If not, there's a problem and you need to let me know, but try these steps first.

Ginnie Orrey, webmistress





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01983 210010

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To book tickets or find
out more about our
productions, go to:

www.apollo-theatre.org.uk

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must be signed.**

Bringing good theatre to the Isle of Wight for more than 40 years



The Apollo Players' next production



A classic Jacobean comedy of sexual manners, 'The Tamer Tamed' was written as a response to 'The Taming of the Shrew' and can be seen as an early feminist play. Petruchio has married again after the death of Kate, 'the shrew', but his new wife, Maria, is determined to show him who's boss!

The play focuses on Petruchio's increasingly desperate attempts to manipulate his wife and Maria's resourceful tactics to get what she wants, and there's plenty of fun along the way.