



**Forthcoming read-throughs, auditions & other production stuff**

- Read-through for 'Entertaining Angels' was on 18 January; **auditions** will be held on 11 February at 2.30pm in Hancock House. There will be additional opportunities to audition on 9 February if you can't make the 11th. See page 4 for more information.
- **Read-through** for 'Lord Arthur Savile's Crime' will be on Tuesday 6 February at 7.30pm in Hancock House; **auditions** on Sunday 25 March at 2.30 in the theatre.

**Remember: a read-through is not an audition!**

Other diary dates (more info on the website)

Next coffee mornings	February 3, 17 March 3, 17, 31
Jazz at the Apollo: Dave Newton Trio	Sunday 11 February 3.00pm
RedTie production: '1984'	16 & 17 February
'The Vagina Monologues'	23 & 24 February
Next social evening (theme: Wales)	Saturday 3 March

# apollonius

Issue no. 262

February 2018

## 'Don't Dress for Dinner'

The fourth show of the 2017-18 season, Marc Camolet's classic French farce, 'Don't Dress for Dinner', went up on Friday 2 February and so far has been proving a real hit with audiences. As the director, Gwen Stevens, says, 'Well, our first two nights have been a great success! We have had great houses with only ten seats left on the Saturday. The following week looks very healthy, too, as far as the audience goes. Not so healthy, sadly, is Steve Taverner, who plays Bernard and is struggling with a serious lung infection. I do hope he manages to get through next week and that he is on the mend.'

Isn't it always the way? You go through weeks of demanding rehearsals, fit as a flea and skipping about like a spring lamb, and the moment the curtain goes up on the first night—wallop! Down you go with a virulent form of lurgi and can barely struggle on stage. But as a musician friend of mine says, 'Doctor Gig' kicks in and somehow you give the impression that you've never felt fitter. Certainly on the night I saw the show, Steve showed no sign of suffering, so all credit to him for making sure the show went on. Spare a thought also for Rose Kelsey, spending as she did the second half of the play in a garment that can



Ness Law and Steve Taverner in 'Don't Dress for Dinner'

only be described as 'skimpy', but if she was shivering it was imperceptible from Row G!

Gwen has nothing but praise for all the cast. 'The whole cast has been a joy to work with (and it's been great to welcome two brand-new members, Ness Law and Steve Taverner, on stage). We haven't had long to rehearse: we started in mid-November and of course there was a break for Christmas, so they have all had to work really hard and I am so proud of all of them. The laughter from the audience made them rise even further to the occasion. I thank everyone who has made this production possible.'



## 'THE APPLE CART'

Michael Arnell, the director of the next play in the season, George Bernard Shaw's 'political extravaganza', 'The Apple Cart', was deeply gratified at the turnout for the auditions on 17 December. 22 members came along to read for parts (despite the freezing auditorium), and Michael is delighted to say that he was able to fill all the

roles (see his remarks on page 7). The cast is as follows:

- King Magnus: **Ian Moth**
- Queen Jemima: **Kathryn Ward**
- Princess Alice: **Susan Simpson**
- Sempronius: **Robbie Gwinnett**
- Tapnell: **Cory Gibbs**
- Vanhattan: **Joel Leverton**

- Proteus: **Ginnie Orrey**
  - Amanda Postlethwaite: **Fiona Gwinnett**
  - Lysistrata: **Marylyn Ford**
  - Boanerges: **Colin Ford**
  - Nicobar: **David Stradling**
  - Crassus: **Chris Hicks**
  - Pliny: **Carole Crow**
  - Balbus: **Nick Turvey**
- The assistant director is Kate Fysh (now recovering well from her recent accident).
- 'The Apple Cart' dates are 23-31 March 2018.**

## The view from the Editor's chair



Well, here we are—another New Year, new excitements, new plans, new resolutions that this year every day in every way we shall get better and better. To all members, whether acting, backstage or front of house, whether active or supportive—a very very Happy New Year to you all. 2017 has seen changes at the Apollo, but in the usual way *plus ça change* but *plus c'est la meme chose*.

The beginning of a new year is traditionally a time for looking back and looking forward. Looking back, in the wider theatrical world we have lost some colossi including Sir Peter Hall, John Hurt, Tim Piggott-Smith and Robert Hardy. The world of British theatre will be the poorer for their loss. In our own Apollonian world, 2017 saw the usual

combination of 'hits' and shows which audiences probably didn't know and weren't prepared to take a chance on. In the first category, *The Lady-killers*, directed by Di Evans, and *The Ghost Train*, directed by Mike Whitehead, brought audiences in droves—perhaps unexpectedly in the case of the latter! On the other hand, audience numbers were down for the excellent and moving but not widely known *The Loves of Cass McGuire*, directed by Maureen Sullivan. We are very fortunate at the Apollo that we can balance our seasons in this way, the popular supporting the less known, and that's as it should be.

The beginning of the 2017-18 season was sadly

marred by the failure to cast *The Tamer Tamed*, another excellent but less well-known play. However, going forward the Committee have taken the opportunity to review their corporate oversight of the seasons, to give additional support to the Arts Manager, directors and actors alike.

Looking forward, the next three plays from the current season are already under way, and the 2018-19 season has now been confirmed, which is always an exciting time. You'll find it on page 5 of this issue, which has been extended to accommodate it, and on the members' page of the website.

So—here's to 2018, and may it be happy and prosperous for you all.

## News from the Apollo Theatre Trust



The new heater at the Unit has been installed, although it is currently suffering from a few teething problems which the contractor promises to resolve by early February. The heater is designed to warm up the space fairly quickly so it should only require turning on as required for rehearsal and not need to be left running when the unit is not occupied. This should make the unit a more pleasant environment for rehearsal. However this does raise the issue of how much rehearsal space is actually left at the Unit, given the amount of stuff we seem to accumulate. Personally I believe a radical review is required to at very least get back to the situation whereby there was a free area equal to that of the stage. We also need to be careful of accepting more donations of furniture and materials from donors, no matter how well intentioned.

The specifications for the

many electrical jobs we require are being developed in more detail before a fresh attempt can be made to find suitable contractors

Work to improve the over-stage flying of curtain tracks and lighting bars is scheduled for early April immediately after *The Apple Cart*. This will require the stage to be completely clear but it is hoped that it will still be usable in the evenings

Work is proceeding, with the help of a friendly architect, to complete the detailed plans for joining the Theatre to Hancock House at first floor level.

The new emergency exit is now fully functional along with a range of other safety measures which have been installed around the theatre such as fire alarms in the bar area and 'hold-fasts' on a number of doors, which are held open magnetically but automatically close in the event of a fire alarm.

We are now in a position to increase the number of seats in the auditorium.

Every year the Trust receives rates bills for the Theatre (including 124 Pyle Street) and the Unit. These amount to almost £7,000. As a registered charity we are exempt from 80% of this and every year we are invited to apply for exemption of the balance (approx. £1400) based on our contribution to the community. The granting of this exemption is at the discretion of the IW Council. We are about to submit a request for exemption for this year and it is important that we continue to satisfy the council's requirements in particular making the building available for community use i.e. lettings as well as continuing to provide performing arts to the community at reasonable prices.

**Paul Jennings, Chair, Apollo Theatre Trust**

# News from your Committee

Notes from the Committee meeting on 5 February 2018

## DIRECTOR

Pam Underwood has sadly decided that she doesn't really have the time to act as the second Members' Rep so has stood down from the Committee. We are very grateful for her brief tenure, and I know she will continue to help and support the theatre going forward.

My thanks to Carole Crow for getting to grips with her new role and making a difference already.

With regret, it has been decided to cease the 'Friends & Family' complimentary ticket scheme.

## ARTS MANAGER

It's good to see audiences flocking in to see 'Don't Dress for Dinner' and leaving the theatre with beaming smiles. Congratulations to Gwen; bookings are already up in the 75%-90% range so we can expect a very good run. 'The Apple Cart' is well into rehearsals.

## SEE PAGE 5 FOR NEW SEASON INFORMATION!

As **LTG rep** I can report that the National AGM will be held at the People's Theatre in Newcastle-on-Tyne on 20-22 April 2018. There are to be some interesting workshops; I am hoping to be able to go, but it would be nice to have company. If anyone is interested in being a delegate please let me know and I can forward more information.

## MARKETING MANAGER

Publicity for 'Don't Dress for Dinner' has gone well—thanks to Paul Stevens, Dan Burns and Ian Johnston for their help and support.

The new season leaflets are ready to go and will be distributed in tourist outlets throughout the Island from March.

Once the directors for next season have been finalised I will ask them to think about their artwork before the start of the season to aid poster and programme production and website advertising.

I will read each play and produce a basic 'blurb' for each which can then be used on the website and for any other initial publicity purposes—subject to discussion with and approval by the Arts Manager.

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

There has been a very good response to the renewal letters and emails I have sent out. The 'paying in' coffee mornings have been very successful. Welcome to 4 new members: Mike Batchelor, Martha James, Arlindo Jardim and Helen Goddard. There have been 13 membership cancellations, two of whom haven't been members for years.

It has been agreed that Apollonius will be solely for paid-up members.

My next task is to find out where members want to be involved. I plan to invite selected groups to come along to a meeting—on a work night, for example. Looking ahead I want to plan an Open Day, when it's a bit warmer. It could be an extension of a coffee morning or something grander!

## BUSINESS MANAGER

After a robust discussion on the subject of budgets, it was agreed that rather than separate production budgets—which it was felt would be too demanding for directors to monitor—going forward there will be departmental budgets, overseen and monitored by department heads. However, general theatre spending re-

quires more care and all members are asked to ensure that they get best value for money when making purchases for theatre use. I may well follow this up.

## TECHNICAL MANAGER

Following poor Kate Fysh's accident during the run of 'BOBS', I must take this opportunity to remind everyone that all accidents must be reported in the Accident Book.

The stage will be out of action during 8-12 April while we carry out essential work on the flying and rigging.

I will be organising a tidying-up session in the Unit before or just after the next production. Please come and help—I shall need all hands on deck!

## HOUSE MANAGER

The rotas for this play have been a touch problematical but I have been able to help out more than usual. However, I will be unable to do this for the next show as I am on stage in Shanklin at the same time so I shall need folk to step up to the plate!! Nobody has reported any problems with the side gate. During BOBS there were a few problems such as programmes but they were eventually sorted out. The attendance for BOBS was 24%.

## BAR MANAGER

During the run of 'BOBS' we took £744.30 and the Twelfth Night party added another £273.40. Many thanks to Amy and Steve for the spring clean of the bar.

## YOUTH THEATRE CO-ORDINATOR

The youth theatre has a healthy membership of 24 at the moment, and we are hoping to put together a performance this year. More news when we have confirmed a date.

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

<b>Arts Manager</b> (elected annually in Nov for season beginning following Sept)	<b>Cynara Crump</b> (2017-18) cynara.crump@virgin.net Maggie Cardew (2018-19) cardewmaglet@gmail.com	<b>Technical Manager</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Dan Burns</b> (2017-19) dan@masexodus.co.uk
<b>Business Manager</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Ginnie Orrey</b> (2016-18) gginnie@googlemail.com or info@apollo-theatre.org.uk	<b>2 Members' Representatives</b> (elected annually) (2016-17)	<b>Mark Duffus</b>
<b>Marketing Manager</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Maureen Sullivan</b> (2016-18) msullivan58@me.com	<b>Bar Manager</b> (co-opted)	<b>Paul Stevens</b> postmaster@sleeptite.force9.co.uk
<b>Players' Secretary</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Mike Whitehead</b> (2016-18) michaelwhitehead@yahoo.com	<b>Wardrobe Manager</b> (co-opted)	<b>Peggy Harcourt</b> peggy.harcourt@creekside.plus.com
<b>Membership Secretary</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Carole Crow</b> (2017-19) carolecrow9@gmail.com	<b>Apollo Trust secretary</b> (co-opted)	<b>Cynara Crump</b> cynara.crump@virgin.net
<b>House Manager</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Paul Stevens</b> (2016-18) postmaster@sleeptite.force9.co.uk	<b>Apollo Trust Buildings Manager</b> (co-opted)	<b>Roger Simpson</b> roger.dodger45@yahoo.co.uk



## Entertaining Angels: casting call

The play for May 2018 is the gently comic but poignant play by Richard Everett, 'Entertaining Angels'. Julie Stonestreet will be directing the production and has put out a casting call. For those unfamiliar with the play, here's a synopsis.

'Vicar's widow Grace is contemplating her life of devotion to duty and a lifetime of blameless behaviour while the new vicar and her husband come to visit the vicarage which will soon be theirs. With the loss of her beloved husband, life will change forever. After so many years of being the dutiful and busy vicar's wife she is now bereft of husband, home and job.

'I've poured two hundred thousand cups of tea, made four thousand six hundred medium-sized quiches and personally baked two tons of light crust pastry. And for what?'

What was the point of it all? Can God be trusted to do anything right 'or is the whole thing a divine exer-

cise in trial and error?' Unwilling to let go of her past Grace constantly converses with her deceased husband—which obviously causes her family some concern—and, as she paces angrily to and fro, feels she is now wandering aimlessly. Husband Bardolph reminds her that Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years. 'Only because there were men in charge,' she snaps back, 'and they wouldn't stop to ask the way!'

Ultimately this tale is one of grief, regret, lack of communication within a family, and buried secrets surfacing too late. Everett's witty, perceptive and very funny script also allows Grace to fully enjoy the new-found freedom of being able to do and say exactly as she pleases. But the return of her eccentric missionary sister, Ruth, together with some heart-stopping revelations, forces Grace to confront the truth of her marriage.'

### Characters

**GRACE**, aged 61 (ish!)

**RUTH** (her sister), aged early 60s

**BARDOLPH** (Grace's deceased husband), aged 60-something

**JO** (Grace's daughter), aged early 30s

**SARAH** (the new vicar), aged early 30s

The read-through of the play took place on 18 January and the auditions will be held on Sunday 11 February at 2.30 in Hancock House.

There will be 'extra' auditions on Friday 9 February at 7.00pm, either at the Apollo or at Julie's house, in case there are people who can't make the 11th and would like to audition. Julie lives on the outskirts of Carisbrooke, so it's not too far from the theatre. If you would like to discuss this—or anything else to do with the production—please contact her on [juallin@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:juallin@yahoo.co.uk).

**The production dates for 'Entertaining Angels' will be 11-19 May 2018.**

## 'LORD ARTHUR SAVILLE'S CRIME': CASTING CALL



Please note the audition date for Oscar Wilde's comedy, 'Lord Arthur Saville's Crime', (hereinafter known as LASC!) will be Sunday 25 March at 2.30 to avoid Easter Sunday. The read-through of the play will be on Tuesday 6 February so that I can be present. Although this is NOT a precursor to auditions it is very useful from a directorial point of view to get an idea of timing, and besides that it is a fun play to read, so please do come along, interested or not.

LASC is a very character-driven play so although some characters must be older (or indeed younger) than others I will not specify ages; if you like a character come along and have a go.

**Lord Arthur Saville:** not the brightest button in the box, well brought up and totally in love with Sybil and

ready for marriage. Very well-to-do (think Importance of Being Earnest with a bit of Bertie Wooster thrown in).

**Baines:** the very faithful butler who is with Lord Arthur all the way - no matter what he has to do.

**Sybil Merton:** loves Lord Arthur to bits and will wait as long as she has to... despite her mother. Very girlie and sweet.

**The Dean of Paddington:** Lord Arthur's Uncle, kindly and well-meaning but not really aware of anything going on around him.

**Lady Windermere:** Lord Arthur's Aunt, still living down the scandal of the fan incident but sensible.

**Lady Clem:** Lord Arthur's elderly aunt, who is lovable, a compulsive gambler and as dotty as they come.

**Lady Julia:** Sybil's mother,

a complete control freak, the cause of all the trouble (think Lady Bracknell).

**Mr Podgers:** a fraudster who is out to blackmail rich people.

**Nellie:** housemaid loyal to Baines who ends up marrying him.

**Herr Winkelkopf:** the most fanatic and the most useless anarchist imaginable.

Because there are few scenes that do not involve multiple characters there will be no pre-ordained audition pieces; be prepared to read any character on the day, although you will be asked to specify your preferences. Hope to see you all at the read-through and at the auditions. Let's end the season with a bang!

**Maggie Cardew**

**The production dates for 'LASC' will be 29 June-7 July 2018.**

## 2018-19 season confirmed

At the Committee meeting on 5 February, the Arts Manager for 2018-19, Maggie Cardew, presented her proposed season. After discussion—focusing on potentially problematic areas such as wardrobe requirements and cast sizes for different times in the season—I'm glad to be able to report that the season was approved. The plays, with dates and cast sizes, are set out below; names of directors will be confirmed shortly.

### ***It Could Be Any One Of Us***

**Alan Ayckbourn**

31/08/18 - 08/09/18

3 Male 3 Female

Comedy

In a thunderstorm in a windswept country house a family of failures wrangles: a detective who has never solved a case; a writer, an artist and a composer whose works have never been published, shown or performed, and a dysfunctional teenager. Here are the prime ingredients for a murder mystery which has a choice of three different endings.

### ***The Private Ear* and *The Public Eye***

**Peter Shaffer**

19/10/18 - 27/10/18

2 Male 1 Female

Comedy

In the first of these two one-act plays, 'The Private Ear' is set in a bedsit, where shy classical music fan Bob is trying to woo awkward co-worker Doreen. He has brought in his much cooler friend Ted to help, but unfortunately the would-be Lothario starts to muscle in on the act, aiming to sweep up Doreen for himself. In 'The Public Eye', Charles and Belinda are an ill-assorted couple who were once in love. Insanely jealous, Charles engages a private eye, Julian, to follow her around London. Julian can only report that she is attracted to someone. When the three meet it transpires that Belinda has fallen for Julian. Deciding to mend a marriage, rather than break it. Julian banishes Belinda to her wanderings but this time to be foiled by Charles.

### ***The Vicar of Dibley***

**Ian Gower & Paul Carpenter**

7/12/2018 - 15/12/18

5 Male 3 Female

Comedy

Speaks for itself. Based on the first episode and carrying through to the wedding of Alice and Hugo. Full of favourite moments.

### ***Bronte***

**Polly Teale**

8/2/2019 - 16/2/19

2 Male 4 Female

Drama

A play by British playwright Polly Teale about the lives of the Bronte sisters, their brother Branwell and their father Patric. It also features characters from the sisters' novels, such as Cathy and Heathcliff from 'Wuthering Heights'.

### ***The Weir***

**Conor McPherson**

29/3/2019 - 6/4/19

4 Male 1 Female

Drama

This play is set in a small pub in rural Ireland, combining tales of the supernatural with closely observed dramatic naturalism. It was first performed at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs on 4 July 1997. Locals Jack and Jim are having a few drinks with Brendan, the pub's owner, when bigshot Finbar arrives with Valerie, a woman in her thirties who has recently moved to the area from Dublin. The men begin to tell Valerie about the local area, including the weir that was opened in the 1950s. As they compete with each other to impress the newcomer, they fall into an exchange of stories of supernatural happenings. As the stories become increasingly frightening, it becomes clear that Valerie has a story of her own to tell—a story of personal bereavement which has a profound effect on the men listening to her.

### ***Natural Causes***

**Eric Chappell**

17/5/2019 - 25/5/19

3 Male 3 Female

Comedy

Vincent is a professional suicide merchant who has been engaged by Walter Bryce and mistakenly assumes that his potion is for Walter's consumption. Eventually it becomes clear that Walter's wife Celia is the client—or is she? Why are her suicide letters typed and unsigned? Several attempts to do away with various characters results in multiple poisoning of a rubber plant. Will anyone actually drink the potion?

### ***Every Christmas Story Ever Told—And Then Some***

**Carleton, Fitzgerald & Alcaraz**

5/7/2019 - 13/7/19

3 actors, any gender

Comedy

Instead of performing Charles Dickens' beloved holiday classic for the umpteenth time, three actors decide to perform every Christmas story ever told, plus Christmas traditions from around the world, seasonal icons from ancient times to topical pop culture, and every carol ever sung. A madcap romp through the holiday.

If you read the Observer newspaper, you can, as they say, look away now. Everyone else may be entertained—in a terrifying sort of way—by this short play which the late Harold Pinter's wife, Antonia Fraser, recently discovered in one of the playwright's notebooks. It's fortuitous that in issue 259 I took the opportunity to ruminate briefly on the place of theatre in a world where two overgrown children have their chubby fingers on the nuclear button (and thank you very much to one member who took the trouble to drop me a line about it, evidence that at least one person reads my leader articles!). Here's evidence that Pinter too was grappling with these issues right up to the end.

*Pres ruminating. Officer reading Washington Post.*

P: OK. Get me Strategic Air Command.

O: Yes, Mr P. Anyone in particular?

P: Who do you think?

O: Well, I –

P: The Commander. The Commander.

O: Yes, Sir.

*Dials*

O: Commander? The President of the United States.

P: Hi, there – who's this? Yes, I know you're the Commander, but which one? Do I know you?

*Voice*

Charley! Of course I know you, Charley! How you doing?

*Voice*

Good. Good. And the folks?

*Voice*

Great. That's good news. Now hear this. This is a Presidential Command and I want it deployed forthwith. Get me? Nuke London.

*Silence. Voice*

That's right. London. That's right. London. Straight away.

*Voice*

Congress? Fuck Congress. What are you talking about?

*Voice*

What international community? Are you joking? Listen, I've said it once and I'll say it just one more time. Nuke London. This is a Presidential decree.

*Voice*

OK. Good. And let me know how it goes.

*Phone down. Silence*

## The Pres and an Officer by Harold Pinter

You know what I'd really like? A double Jack Daniels on the rocks. But of course I gave up booze for God. The whole world knows that.

O: You just gave instructions to nuke London.

P: You bet. They've had it coming to them for a long time. What do you think?

*Rubs his hands*

They've had it coming to them and boy are they going to get it.

O: But I'm just mildly surprised that it's London.

P: Those cheapskates. Those horizontal pricks. Those scumbags. An elephant never forgets. Nor does a President.

O: But I thought they were on our side.

P: Our side! Traitors! Stinkypoos. Can't speak a damn word of English.

O: They can't speak English? Why not?

P: Because they're French, you fool. They live in Froggy land. Well, the Froggy Circus is over. Jesus, I think I'll have a drink. I know God won't mind. He's very fond of me.

O: London is in England.

P: What?

O: London is the capital of England. They are our allies. Our best friends. Our only friends.

P: London? What do you mean?

O: London is not in France. Paris is in France. Paris is the capital of France.

P: I thought Paris was the capital of England.

O: France.

P: You mean I'm nuking the wrong place?

O: Afraid. So.

P: Call Charley. Tell him I

revoke the order.

*O dials*

O: Commander. The President says revoke his last order.

*Voice*

O: Thank you. (to P) London is being nuked at this very moment.

P: But can't somebody explain it to them? I just got it wrong, that's all. Don't we have an embassy over there, in London?

O: They're all dead. London is gone.

P: OK. I'll tell you what I'll do. The bastards. I'll tell you what I'll do. Give me the Commander.

*Phone*

P: Charley? It's the President. How are the folks?

*Voice*

P: Good. Great. That's good news. Now listen. They're not going to get away with this. The bastards. Nuke Paris.

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**FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Firstly, let me WELCOME four new members this month – Arlindo Jardim, Helen Goddard, Martha James and Mike Batcheler. Martha is interested in being involved with front of house (I know she'll get a warm welcome there!) and Mike is a seasoned thespian and will be taking an active part on and off the stage. We look forward to seeing you both around the theatre.

Thank you for responding to the 'paying-in coffee morn-

ings' so positively; not only did members drop in to pay their subs, they lingered for a cup of coffee and a chat. The first two mornings were so successful that I have decided to add another on 3 February and extend the deadline for payment to give those who have been sick, on holiday or having a lean January, time to recover!

My next task is to compile a list of where your interests lie, a questionnaire similar to the one on the 'application to join' form. Unfortunately I have no

record of the original forms so am starting from scratch. I will be emailing you a questionnaire shortly and would really appreciate your completing it, because it will help me to ensure you are getting what you want from being a member.

I intend to be present at as many coffee mornings as possible so please do pop in; you'll find your Members' Rep, Mark Duffus, in attendance as well. It's good to talk!

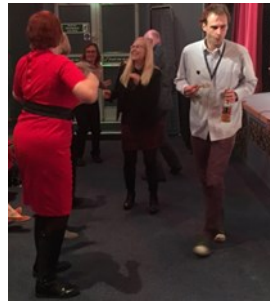
**Carole Crow**  
[carolecrow9@gmail.com](mailto:carolecrow9@gmail.com)

As you may remember from a recent email, Mark Duffus reached the grand old age of 40 on 28 January [young whippersnapper! Ed.] and a celebratory party was held at the theatre. It was very well attended by a combination of Mark's friends from the Apollo, the Crispin and the Newport Tavern and



Mutley chills out

more than 60 people danced, drank, ate and had a great evening. It was really good to see some new faces in the theatre. The band played some good cover versions and they and Mutley, the dog, went down very well. Mark was overwhelmed with all the good wishes, presents and party atmosphere. The band, 'Conspiracy', played blues and rock and roll for a couple of hours and Paul Jennings and Nigel Stotesbury made a couple of moving speeches in Mark's honour.



Di, Helen C-P, Naomi and Howard provided the birthday cakes—all 4 were gorgeous—and many Apollo friends contributed food.

My sincerest thanks to all the members who attended the auditions in December for 'The Apple Cart'. The standard of your performances was very high and having twenty-two to choose from for a cast of fifteen, made selection both very easy and very difficult. Rehearsals are now in progress. Thank you all again.

For the play, eight chairs are required that will be decorated and sprayed gold. Two sets of four would be OK as

long they're not soft seated. If you can donate such chairs it would save us buying them.

[NB: we are all mindful of the Business Manager's report in the last issue: *"We're not by any means on our uppers, but it will behoove us all to ensure that we think carefully about our expenditure going forward. As a result, I shall be thinking about budgets for future plays, based on figures for past seasons."*]

We also need to borrow a 12-inch hand-held embroidery hoop and any large artificial pot plants suitable for a grand conservatory. By the way, does any member know the whereabouts of the theatre's two large sprays of artificial red lilies?

If you can help with any of this, I'd be really grateful; please contact me on 296388.

**Michael Arnell**

2018 started with a bang at our hugely successful 12th Night celebration. With over 40 people turning out it would be fair to say the bar was a little crowded at times! We had wines from every continent and an assortment of cheeses that would have done Monty Python proud. Thanks to everyone who turned up to make this event by far the best social at the Apollo in years. It was also encouraging to see a number of friends and non-members present. We mustn't be inclusive at these socials! We had some fun with the Apollo Big Fat

Quiz of the Night along with an assortment of well-dressed folk who went to great lengths to try and win 'best dressed person'. Congratulations to Paul Hewson who was deemed the best dressed and to the Cardews et al who stormed home in the quiz. Prizes all round. At the party, Adrian Brewer, from Vectis Sunrise Rotary club, took the opportunity to present the Trust with a cheque for £250 as a donation from their Christmas funds. We are very grateful indeed for their support.

The next social evening is Saturday 3 March. Dress code is



'Wales', so leeks, daffodils, dragons, etc. In place of the quiz we will be playing Pointless in teams. Prize for Pointless winners and best/original dressed. Open to friends and non-members.

**Steve Reading**



## Your letters

*I'm very pleased to say that lots of members have been moved to write to the Editor—so much so that I had to consider making the letters page into two pages! If you feel strongly about something you want to share with other members, do please write in. It doesn't have to be a complaint (you have Members' Reps for that!); just something you think would interest other members, or perhaps spark a conversation. The Editor reserves the right to edit letters but will only do so with good reason and after consultation with the author.*

### From Di Evans

At the end of his letter in the last issue, Steve Reading called on us all to 'work together to share the load'. I could not agree more!! However, his list of problems and failures made me sad, so to cheer myself up I want to sing the praises of four young men who went 'above and beyond' to support the Christmas production, 'The Boadicea of Britannia Street'. My first hero is Tom. Originally agreeing to ASM, he doubled with the role of Stage Manager when the person who was going to do it dropped out. Then there were issues with the cast members being the pantomime cow ... so Tom now had a third role: 'half a pantomime cow'.

#### HERO!

But Tom was only half the cow. The other half was Mark who came every evening to don the other half of the cow costume and walk across the stage. As small parts go this must have been one of the smallest! His reward for this was to be included in the 'cast clean up' list and was heard cleaning the floor of the dressing room well after the rest of the cast were in the bar!

#### HERO!

Then there was Joel, who deserved a medal for staying calm 'under fire'. He signed up to operate the lights, only his second role backstage. All was well until the second Friday. The story is as follows ... Tom had his work's 'Christmas Do' that evening, so Conor (of whom more later) had agreed to cover. However, Conor was delayed and couldn't get to the theatre before 7:30 (blame Southern Vectis). That left Joel to open the show single-handed apart from one daft old woman who was doing the props. He did all the pre-curtain calls, then dashed round to the lighting box to co-ordinate the opening by talking said old woman through opening the tabs. Throughout he remained totally calm and didn't shout even when the old woman had to have two goes at getting them open!

#### HERO!

Now we return to Conor, who agreed to come in on that Friday even though it meant that he would not be home to greet the 'love of his life' when she returned for Christmas after being away for months.

#### HERO!

So, what's my point? Well, I don't really have one. Yes, this tale raises the question of why we were so thin on the ground backstage and I would urge all members to contact Dan and volunteer their services; but really I just wanted everyone to know about these four splendid young men.

### From Joel Leverton

Following Steve Reading's comments in the last issue of Apollonius, I feel called to write in, if nothing else as a show of support for his viewpoint. The issues raised are a reflection of the people involved. One must always remember that we aren't paid to be a part of this theatre—in fact, we pay to be involved. So to some degree or another, it would suggest that we as a whole are united in seeing the Apollo theatre and (one would hope) the arts across the Island be a success.

So the issue is in the 'degree'. Mark Duffus recently approached me (as a member's representative) and asked why Abbi and I are still here ... not grouchy, like, but in the interest of membership retention (an astute question, Mark—well done that man). Abbi and I are still mucking in with the Apollo because we have a deep seated passion for theatre and a desire to see it thrive, and we genuinely enjoy it (as well as getting on with the folk involved). We're here because we want to be. As a result, however, we have standards that we would hope are met not just by ourselves, but by other members also e.g. punctuality, attendance, supplies, a clean theatre, professional and friendly service, comfortable and high quality entertainment etc. But we are aware that not everyone has these standards, and it is important to remember that one can only ask, not demand that such measures are maintained. Unfortunately, in so doing, you run the risk of two outcomes:

- those with lower expectations will bring down the standards that we associate with a top-notch theatre, all in the interest of involving people and

seeking to retain their services; or

- the few who put in more than is expected are the ones who end up doing everything.

What is the answer? Who knows? Training, maybe? Delegation? Taking on someone who regulates theatre standards? Only taking on people who meet our needs (sort of defies the point really, doesn't it?)? We want everyone to be involved in some capacity and we want to encourage the community to consider supporting their local theatre and even becoming members, but we want consistently high quality—how do we meet that need? I don't have the answer, but it's encouraging to hear that others feel the same way.

### From Michael Arnell

As Editor of 'Apollonius' for very many years in 'the good old days', I would like to offer a word of caution about having a Letters Page. It sounds very sensible and sociable in theory, but ....

As those of you who use an online social network may know, it is very often merely a platform for venom or vanity. After my own alarming editorial experiences and those of the Questors' magazine editor, with whom I shared my concerns, may I suggest the following guidelines for contributors?

If you have a grievance with any member or officer about their actions, take it up with them. If you identify a problem, do not complain: suggest a solution. Remember, we are all volunteers with a common purpose, and courtesy really works well.

### From Drew Adcock

I'm just taking the opportunity to write to all my friends at the theatre to say I'm so very sorry to have been out of circulation for a while. I've had a pretty horrible time recently, all things considered—family, health and work have been more than challenging of late and I've had to move house as well, but I do apologise for the lack of contact. I'm starting to get myself back on my feet; however, I fear I shan't be able

to come back and involve myself with the theatre again until various things are resolved. I do hope and aim to be back at the theatre before the end of 2018.

In the meantime, I wish my successor as Membership Secretary the best of luck and the theatre the very best for the rest of the current season, and I'm looking forward to seeing what the plans are for 2018-19. I'd love to hear from any of you who would like to get in touch: my new email address is [drew.adcock33@outlook.com](mailto:drew.adcock33@outlook.com).

### From Peggy Hewson

I have a point I'd like to raise and Letters to the Editor seems a good place. I do think the idea of a 'Readers' Letters' section is brilliant and I hope it's successful. [Thank you! Ed.]

As a set painter/builder's widow (in the context of Golf Widow!) I would like to draw attention to an issue. Work nights are on Mondays and Tuesdays, but many bank holidays are also on Mondays. Would it not be possible, in bank holiday weeks, to move the work nights to Tuesday and Wednesday, providing the theatre is not in use on the Wednesdays? My particular SP/B is not only very conscientious but also extremely keen, working on coffee morning Saturdays and some Wednesday and Friday daytimes when he feels it necessary. I know that attendance is voluntary but it would be nice for some of us if the volunteers did not have to make the choice. Am I asking too much?

### From Mark Duffus

The party was the best ever and it was great to see so many of my friends from the Apollo and elsewhere turn up and join in the celebrations. The band were amazing and we all had a good dance. My proudest moment was when I realised that the bar takings for the night broke the current record!! Thanks for the year's supply of cakes and all the presents.

Love from Mark

## 'The Vagina Monologues' coming to the Apollo

I am delighted to be directing 'The Vagina Monologues' at the Apollo this month to raise funds for WightDASH projects, including WOW, and I would love lots of members to come along and see it. For those who don't know, 'Women On Wight' (WOW) is a women's centre in St James Street, Newport (just by the Route 1 bus stop) open to anyone who identifies as female. It has a varied programme of activities and drop-in sessions ranging from Pilates

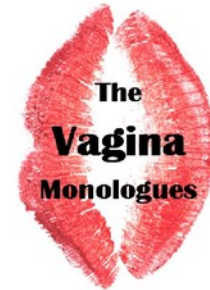
and mindfulness to art & craft and cooking sessions, alongside hosting support groups of all kinds. Further information can be found on its Facebook page or the website at <https://www.wightdash.co.uk/new-index/>

'The Vagina Monologues' will be staged at 7.30pm on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 February. The Friday performance will be open only to a female audience, while Saturday's show welcomes

all, and as a result, Amy has kindly suggested that the staff and crew of the Apollo are also all-female on the Friday. With that in mind, if any member would like to offer their services front of house or backstage we would love you to be involved.

Tickets are available via the Apollo website—or just turn up on the night and enjoy the show!

**Maureen Sullivan**



RedTie Theatre are very pleased to present their adaptation of George Orwell's '1984'. Directed and adapted for stage by Carl Burch, Mimi Poulton and Imogen Stone, this production provides a few new twists on one of the most famous and well respected

literary works of all time. Come and see this brilliant production at the Apollo Theatre on Friday and Saturday, 16 & 17 February. This will be unmissable. Starring: Joe Davies, Imogen Stone, Carl Burch, Kieran Jenvey,

Mimi Poulton, Sam Woodley, Rob Ellis, Leo Popov and Esther Poucher.

Ticket prices are £8.00 (adults) and £5.00 (students) and they can be booked online or by telephoning 07580 563 931.

**BIG  
BROTHER  
IS  
WATCHING  
YOU**

As always, lots of good things in store from the live streamings at Cineworld (and occasional other places as well, which the CP usually picks up on). Here are the latest:

### Theatre

14 February: **Twelfth Night** (RSC)  
22 February: **Cat on a Hot Tin Roof** (NT Live)  
20 March: **Lady Windermere's Fan** (OW season, Vaudeville Theatre)  
22 March: **Julius Caesar** (NT Live)  
28 March: **Messiah** (Bristol Old Vic)

### Opera

7 February: **Tosca** (ROH)  
10 February: **L'Elisir d'Amore** (MET Opera)  
24 February: **La Boheme** (MET Opera)  
6 March: **Carmen** (ROH)  
31 March: **Cosi Fan Tutti** (MET Opera)

### Ballet

28 February: **The Winter's Tale** (Royal Ballet)  
4 March: **The Flames of Paris** (Bolshoi Ballet)  
27 March: **Bernstein Centenary** (Royal Ballet)



**LIVE STREAMING**

**FROM CINEWORLD**

- 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 number. 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*

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





The Apollo Theatre Players  
Apollo Theatre  
Pyle Street  
NEWPORT  
Isle of Wight PO30 1JT

tel:  
01983 527267

**ticketline:**  
**01983 210010**

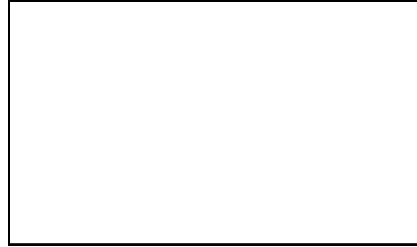
email:  
info@apollo-theatre.org.uk

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

[www.apollo-theatre.org.uk](http://www.apollo-theatre.org.uk)

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Ginnie Orrey, and  
expresses her  
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Bringing good theatre to the Isle of Wight for more than 40 years



## The Apollo Players' next production



# 'THE APPLE CART'

BY  
GEORGE BERNARD  
SHAW

One of Shaw's 'Plays Political', 'The Apple Cart' is a witty satirical comedy which follows the fictional English King Magnus as he spars with, and ultimately outwits, Prime Minister Proteus and his cabinet, who seek to strip the monarchy of its remaining political influence.