



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

- **'Habeas Corpus'** auditions: Sunday 29 May, 2:30 pm in the theatre
- **'Selkie Wife'** read-through: Monday 6 June, 7.30pm in Hancock House
- **'Star Wars'** workshop: Sunday 29 May 5.30 in the bar
- **'Star Wars'** workshop: Sunday 26 June 5.30 in the bar

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

Other diary dates  
(more info on the  
website)

**Newport Jazz  
Weekend:  
events at the Apollo**

**Thursday 2 June**  
jazz students' concert  
5.30pm  
Nick Page quartet &  
Karen Sharp 8.00pm

**Friday 3 June**  
Craig Milverton Trio  
3.15pm  
Amy Roberts' 'Magnificent Seven' 5.15pm

**Saturday 4 June**  
Dennis Rollins' Velocity Trio 1.45pm  
Tribute to Gerry Mulligan 6.45pm

Jazz: JATP 19  
meets JATA June

Priory School 4-5  
production July

# apollonius

Issue no. 250

May 2016

## 'Little Gem' - an exciting challenge for director and designer

The director of 'Little Gem', Maggie Cardew, first picked up the script some years ago with a view to putting on a production of it for 'Laughter Through Tears', a charity that raises money for Hospice care both on the Isle of Wight and at Lyndsey Lodge in Scunthorpe. She says: 'It was not the right time because I was unsure of my casting and had no director, so I shelved it. When I read it again last year I was surprised that I loved it as much as I had the first time.

It's not an easy piece to stage; there are no set plans, stage directions, lighting, props or furniture lists. You start with a beautiful piece of writing and put in what you feel the audience needs.

The cast is so important and I have five very special people working on this play: the three gen-

erations of women, Kay, Lorraine and Amber, are played by Helen Clinton-Pacey, Amy Burns and Britney Kent, along with two 'living props', played by Carole Crow and Eve Fradgley, who have to trust me to animate the script and stage the production.

Louis Lawrence has designed a wonderful, surreal set which is completely adaptable. I am on a great adventure and I hope the members that I'm taking along for the ride are enjoying it as much as I am. If we get it right the audience will come along with us too and join the rollercoaster that will make them laugh, squirm and cry in rapid succession throughout the evening.'

*Maggie Cardew (Artistic Director)*

Staging 'Little Gem' was a challenge, too. As there are no stage directions in



Amy Burns and Helen Clinton-Pacey in 'Little Gem'

the written script, this Apollo production has created the first and original setting as a totally neutral environment (plain white) for the three women to inhabit, and the audience will imagine the surroundings as each one tells of her life. Louis talks about the staging of 'Little Gem' on page 2.

**'Little Gem' runs from 20-28 May.**

## 'Allo 'Allo!' cast confirmed

Following the auditions on 17 April, though it's taken him a while Steve Reading is delighted to announce the cast for 'Allo 'Allo!', which is the last show of the 2016-17 season. The cast is as follows:

**Rene:** Drew Adcock  
**Edith:** Glenys Williams

**Crabtree:** John Abraham  
**Bertorelli:** Jack P Tutt  
**Michelle:** Maria Wilkinson

**Yvette:** Joanna Jenner  
**Leclerc:** Danny Carmichael

**Helga:** Helen Reading  
**Lt. Gruber:** Dave Newton  
**Colonel:** Ian Moth  
**Herr Flick:** Pete Harris  
**General Schmelling:**

Reuben Loake  
**Mimi:** Esther Poucher

As Steve says, this is 'a comedy that is known to most people—even the younger generation!'

More on this production on page 5.

**'Allo 'Allo!' runs from 8-16 July.**

## Editorial: the view from the Editor's chair

'I was surprised to find there were no stage directions and no previous set design'

### Let's hear it for ... Jeremy Irons

Call me an old fogey if you like (fogette??) but for me, Jeremy Irons is and has been for many decades the ultimate poster boy. Handsome, intelligent and a damn fine actor—what's not to like? So imagine my excitement when I read in the paper recently that he's appearing in 'A Long Day's Journey into Night' in Bristol. I went straight online and guess what? Not an empty seat in the house (what wouldn't we give?). So the best I can do is muse for a couple of hundred words on a chap who,

though he may not give it much thought, is a patron of the Apollo and an Islander by birth. I, like most of the English-speaking world, I should imagine, fell madly in love with him in 'Brideshead' - those who hadn't already fallen for Anthony Andrews, that is (it was a re-run of the Ilya Kuriakin/Napoleon Solo dispute, for those who can remember that far back). He's gone quietly on, playing interesting parts (the gloomy Antonio in the Merchant is a case in point) and popping up from

time to time in 'superstar' roles—however, as he said, 'I became an actor to be a rogue and a vagabond', which strikes me as a perfectly acceptable career objective. And now, bless his cotton socks, he's come out in favour of the 'Fight for the Wight' campaign, in support of his 'beloved birthplace'. Jeremy Irons, Anthony Minghella, Sheila Hancock—is there something in the water, do you think? I wonder whether Jeremy would set foot on the Apollo stage sometime? O just imagine it ...

### Louis Lawrence talks about staging 'Little Gem'

I asked Maggie for an opportunity to design a stage set in the current season, and she asked me to work on 'Little Gem'. When I got the script I was surprised to find there were no stage directions and there was no previous set design illustrated. This is very unusual, as in normal circumstances the playwright is very specific about how they see the play and the settings, leaving little room for anything but surfaces and ambience of décor. Shakespeare, for example, specifies settings and activity and George Bernard Shaw was notorious for meticulous notes about how his plays should be staged. It's not often a set-designer works without any kind of parameter, and it's a challenge. The only previous experience I had of this situation was at Toynbee Hall in the 1950s when a friend of mine authored two plays, both of which sank without trace!

Having read the script

twice, I began to get an impression of how the actors might be moving about, and when I found a critique published after the original show in Dublin, it became clear that the action would revolve around some chairs.

Indeed, the critic seemed obsessed by the chairs, and assumed because they were an ill-assorted lot, that there was some meaning to them, which it turns out there is not other than as seating. It just goes to show that everything appearing on stage, however small, is attributed some significance by the onlooker!

The action of the play could be taking place in a number of locations as the actors speak about their lives and times. It was manifestly impossible to provide all these on the Apollo stage, and multiple scene changes would have been a distraction from the continuity of the action.

When I discussed this with Maggie she agreed with me that a neutral setting would be best

and she asked only for one simple piece of furniture to be available for multiple uses, a raised dais as an acting area, and a prop bed to be brought on (apart from those pesky chairs!)

But how neutral? The ethos of this play lies entirely in the individual actors' monologues and the mental pictures they create for the audience. The stage set could not impinge on or distract. It needed to be totally neutral, undecorated, leaving the audience's eyes to focus on the actors only. From a technical point of view, allowance has to be made for getting on and off, but apart from that it could be all black ... we chose white.

In the actual production I hope the audience will be totally unaware of the stage set - just the players, that's how it should be!

*Louis Lawrence, set designer*

## Notes from the Committee meeting on 23 May 2016

Lots of news from the recent Committee meeting.

### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

First of all, our Membership Secretary, Pam Cranefield, is sadly in hospital at present. The Committee will be sending a gift but any new members who are waiting for membership cards or anything like that should not worry; Pam will deal with any outstanding stuff when she returns, but in the meantime just carry on!

### ALAIN SMITH BEQUEST

You may remember that we recently asked for suggestions as to how to use a small amount of money passed to us following Alain's sad death. It has now been agreed that the money will be spent on glazing and lighting the awards cabinet in the bar—particularly as a couple of Alain's awards are in it. Do have a look at it next time you're in the bar—Roger Simpson and his team are doing their usual craftsmanlike job.

### FINAL DRESS REHEARSALS: A REMINDER

Just a reminder that all members are entitled to come along to the final dress rehearsal of any Players production (usually on either the Wednesday or Thursday before the show goes up on the Friday) provided you have contributed to the production by doing a duty. That could be anything—bar,

box office, coffee duty, Y3—anything that supports the production. It's very helpful to the actors to have an audience and we hope it's a small appreciation of your time.

### SCRIPTS & COPYRIGHT

It was noted with some concern that parts of scripts may be being made public via social media. This may well be with the best intentions but we must ask you as a matter of urgency not to do this—we risk breaching the rules on copyright which can have very serious consequences.

### APOLLO PLAYERS AGM

The AGM of the Apollo Theatre Players will take place on Saturday 12 November. This may seem a long way away but this year it's particularly important because all except one of the Committee posts are coming up for election. We are therefore giving you the chance to think about whether you would like to stand for an elected post (they are all listed at the bottom of this page—the only one not coming up is Technical Manager). To help you, in the next issue of Apollonius we will be publishing job descriptions for all the relevant posts. Do please come forward if you think you'd like to do one of the jobs—no-one will bite you and it would be great to see some new faces at the Committee.

We are also introducing a new electronic voting system for this AGM, following the very low turnout at recent ones. There will be a comprehensive explanation of all the changes in a forthcoming edition of Apollonius.

### NEXT MEETING OF THE PLAYERS' COMMITTEE

The next meeting of the Committee will be on 11 July (during the run of 'Allo 'Allo). If you have anything you would like to raise, do please get in touch with your Members' Reps—their contact details are below.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE TRUST

At the last meeting of the Trust Council of Management it was agreed that we proceed with work to refurbish the facade of the theatre and 124 Pyle Street, repairing or if necessary replacing the theatre windows, repairing the left-hand column and carrying out essential repair and decoration of the brickwork. A contractor has been selected; we don't have a timescale for this but it will be publicised once we have a start date. Please note that the AGM of the Apollo Theatre (Isle of Wight) Trust Ltd will take place at the Theatre on Wednesday 27 July at 7.30. Any member of the Players is welcome to attend but only Guarantor members of the Trust can vote.

Theatre Director & Chair of management committee (elected 3-yearly): **Amy Burns** (2013-16) amy@masexodus.co.uk

<b>Arts Manager</b> (elected annually in Nov for season beginning following Sept)	<b>Maggie Cardew</b> (2015-16 & 2016-17) cardewmaglet@gmail.com	<b>Technical Manager</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Dan Burns</b> (2015-17) dan@masexodus.co.uk
<b>Business Manager</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Ginnie Orrey</b> (2014-16) gginnie@googlemail.com or info@apollo-theatre.org.uk	<b>2 Members' Representatives</b> (elected annually) (2015-16)	<b>Drew Adcock</b> drew@orange.net <b>Marylyn Ford</b> marylyn.ford795@btinternet.com
<b>Marketing Manager</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Kate Fysh</b> (2014-16) katefysh@gmail.com	<b>Bar Manager</b> (co-opted)	<b>Paul Stevens</b> postmaster@sleepitite.force9.co.uk
<b>Players' Secretary</b> (elected biannually)	<b>Mike Whitehead</b> (2014-16) 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>Pam Cranefield</b> (2014-16) pcranefield989@hotmail.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> (2014-16) postmaster@sleepitite.force9.co.uk	<b>Apollo Trust Buildings Manager</b> (co-opted)	<b>Roger Simpson</b> roger.dodger45@yahoo.co.uk

## Update on the 2016-17 season



There have been a few changes to the 2016-17 season since the last issue of Apollonius, but we now have a definitive list of plays and directors. There has had to be some moving around—we couldn't get the licence for 'The Ladykillers' for September, so Alan Bennett's hilarious 'Habeas Corpus' has taken its place, with 'Ladykillers' moving to that slot in February. It's still not entirely certain that we shall get the licence for those dates, but we're on the case.

Poor Di Evans is beginning to feel a bit got at! Anyway, the plays and **directors** for next season are as follows:

- Habeas Corpus (2-10 Sept): **Amy Burns**
- The Selkie Wife (21-29 Oct): **Ginnie Orrey**
- The Wyrd Sisters (9-17 Dec): **Dan Burns & Eve Fradgley**
- The Ladykillers (3-11 Feb 2017): **Di Evans**

- The Loves of Cass McGuire (24 Mar-1 Apr): **Maureen Sullivan**
- Forget-me-Knot (12-20 May): **Steve Reading**
- Ghost Train (30 June-8 July): **Mike Whitehead**

**All directors would love to hear from aspiring actors and crew who would be interested in being part of their production, so do please get in touch.**

## Casting call for 'Habeas Corpus': auditions 29 May

You'll remember that because of licensing problems, 'Habeas Corpus' will now be the first play of the 16-17 season, playing from 2-10 September. The read-through took place on 9 May, taken by Di Evans, and everyone had a good laugh.

So that takes us to the auditions, which will take place on 29 May at 2.30 in the auditorium. For those of you not familiar with Alan Bennett's hilarious play, it's a farce set in and around the house of the Wicksteed family in the 1970s. There are mistaken identities, misunder-

stood conversations, marriage proposals, first kisses, trouser-losing, secret rendezvous, fun and lots of moving around, so actors should be prepared for some hard work. The characters are:

**Arthur Wicksteed**, a general practitioner  
**Muriel Wicksteed**, his wife  
**Dennis Wicksteed**, their son  
**Connie Wicksteed**, Arthur's sister  
**Mrs Swabb**, a cleaning lady  
**Canon Throbbing**, a celibate  
**Lady Rumpers**, a white

settler  
**Felicity Rumpers**, her daughter  
**Mr Shanks**, a sales rep  
**Sir Percy Shorter**, a leading light in the medical profession.  
**Mr Purdue**, a sick man

The characters' ages are flexible; they can all be played by any age as long as the children are younger than the parents.

If you're interested in this production and would like to know more or read a script, please contact the director, Amy Burns, on [amy@masexodus.co.uk](mailto:amy@masexodus.co.uk) or 07886 389 561.

## St George's Day evening a great success: from Steve Reading



A small but appreciative group turned out for the St George's day social evening. At times they even became noisy! With most people sporting some form of red and white or red, white and blue we were entertained by some interesting short acts on stage. Our very own dragon even turned up! I thought we might last for about 15-20 minutes on stage but in the end the entertainment lasted for almost

40 minutes. The mainstay was David Pratchett demonstrating his psychic abilities. At times it was uncannily real but nevertheless an accomplished performance and very entertaining. Ian Moth regaled the story of his rocket seeds from the ISS. They really are real! Rod Jones read, and John Abraham sang some Noel Coward. And my wish came true - not a mention of Bill Shakespeare all night!!!

With a table of English food to devour and a number of wall quizzes about England to tackle, the ensemble retired to the bar for the rest of the evening. Hopefully this could become an annual social event on the Apollo calendar but support from a larger number of members would be appreciated. Many thanks to those who made it a memorable evening.

**Steve Reading**

## CASTING CALL FOR 'THE SELKIE WIFE'; READ-THROUGH ON 6 JUNE

'The Selkie Wife' will be the second play next season, with production dates of 21-29 October. You may well not have heard of it, so in summary here's what it's about.

The ancient Celtic myth of the 'selkies' underpins the play, which is written by the Canadian author Kelly-Jo Burke. Selkies are seals who have the power to shed their skin to mate with a human male, then return to the water with their offspring; they can revert to their seal shape but only if they keep their seal skin, without which they are doomed to live out their lives as humans and leave their watery lives behind forever.

In Kelly-Jo's beautifully-written play, Mary Hew, a selkie, made the choice to come ashore for love of her husband, Cal. They have a happy family life with their daughter, Bridget, but when Mary's old friend Gen and her companion Dylan arrive unexpectedly Mary is forced once again to consider the decisions she made. The play is a dramatic meditation on love and sex, on freedom and oppression, on making concessions and making choices.

I had the good fortune to see this play in a tiny theatre in the middle of the Canadian prairie and I was absolutely blown away by its power. I went on to

meet the author, who is delighted that we are going to put it on.

The play has a cast of five:

**Mary Hew** and her husband **Cal**, 40-50-ish; their daughter **Bridget**, late teens;

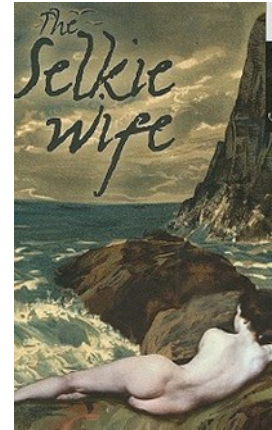
Mary's friend **Gen**, a bit younger than Mary;

**Dylan**, sort of mid-20s.

They're all excellent parts, and if you'd like to read a audition, please email me on [gginnie@googlemail.com](mailto:gginnie@googlemail.com).

**There will be a read-through on 6 June at 7.30 in Hancock House** and auditions soon afterwards; look out for confirmation of the date.

*Ginnie Orrey, Director*



## 'Allo 'Allo!—café patrons and scene-shifters wanted

Steve Reading is working now on the design and concept for the final production of the season, 'Allo 'Allo!. He says: 'I'm hoping that as a theatre we can create the illusion off stage as well as on stage by asking front of house volunteers etc to dress in something vaguely French

while on duty. I'm planning, with the help of Mr Burns, a red, white and blue effect on the front of the theatre with a few other french tricolour buntings dotted around the place. I'm certainly aiming for a fun time on and off the stage and hope that theatre members

will engage. I will be requiring a few cafe patrons for the cafe scenes who will also be asked to carry props and bits of set on and off. If this is something that interests you, please contact me on [steverreading104@btinternet.com](mailto:steverreading104@btinternet.com) or via facebook.'

**I shall say  
this only  
once ...**

### POSTERS

Please remember to put up the poster for 'Allo 'Allo that you should find with this issue—either electronically, in which case please print it off, or a paper copy for those of you who receive your 'Apollonius' by post. Getting more posters out there is a fundamental part of our marketing effort and we ask all members to help.

### EXTRAS WANTED FOR A FILM

We have been approached by an Island film-maker who would like to use the Apollo and about 20 actors for a couple of hours on Wednesday 1 June. There are no lines to learn; the actors are required just to look smart and sit and listen, possibly take notes.

If you are able to help please let Amy Burns know immediately on [amy@masexodus.co.uk](mailto:amy@masexodus.co.uk) or 07886 389561.

### WEBSITE LOGIN

Some members have been having difficulty logging in to the Apollo website, [www.apollo-theatre.org.uk](http://www.apollo-theatre.org.uk), so here's a reminder of how to get in:

1. Go on to the website and hover over 'membership' and the 'members' area' tab should drop down;
2. Click on that and you'll get the message 'We're sorry, the content you are trying to reach is restricted to members only';
3. Click on 'member login' and you'll get a drop-down box containing the two areas 'username' and 'password';
4. In the top area enter your username, which is always first name.last name (remember the dot between the words but no spaces), and in the bottom box enter your password, which is your membership number (from your membership card);
5. This should get you straight into the members' area. If not, please let me know as I may have to consult an expert, but follow these steps first and see how you go.

*Ginnie Orrey*

## Report of the LTG 70th Anniversary Conference & AGM

held at the  
Crescent  
Theatre,  
Birmingham  
8-10 April  
2016

### From your LTG rep, Cynara Crump

From stepping through the Crescent's front door on Friday evening I was aware of a greater buzz around because of the special importance of this Conference; everyone was happy and smiley among the welcome team to deal with Registration, to take coats, to point one in the right direction and to deal with any problems.

The Bar, the first port of call, is a large room but was already filling with delegates and the noise gradually increased as more and more came in. There were in the end nearly 150 people in there and an endless supply, or so it seemed, of the Crescent's young people helping to remove glasses or helping with refills. The entertainment for the evening took place in the main auditorium, reached by a short corridor, and was billed as Barbara Nice who proved to be a comedienne, much appreciated by her audience. This was followed by supper, with everybody beginning to get into party spirit, then back to our hotels.

On Saturday morning the real business began with a formal welcome by the Crescent's Chairman, who just happens to be also the LTG's Chairman, and then to your first choice of the five Workshops on offer. I had a special enquiry to make so was very happy to be in Michael Corbridge's

Workshop. He is a Voice and Text Associate with the Royal Shakespeare Company, and although I have been lucky enough to have attended three of his Workshops at other Conferences each has been partly similar but with differences. Although he uses Shakespeare as his starting point from there on it is relevant to stage speech and action in general.

A break for a coffee then to the next choice of Workshop; I went to the Digital and Social Media Marketing Forum of which I knew very little.

This was given by a Crescent member who happens to be doing this kind of thing, very successfully, I would think, as her daily job. I was fascinated to hear of the differences between Facebook and Twitter and of how each should be treated differently, giving out messages in different ways. I was a bit lost after that because Jo was getting into high philosophy of the distinctions.

It was time then for a very short break and we returned to the Auditorium for a Looking Back session with Michael Shipley of Bolton Little Theatre and Patricia Clough of Bingley Little Theatre. These two and their theatre societies have both been associated with the LTG for a long time and the stories they had to tell were hilarious.

After a very good buffet

lunch the AGM was held; it began with an important announcement whose content we had been made aware of during the Welcome speech by Andrew Lowrie; the LTG is very pleased to announce that it has a new patron in Sir Kenneth Branagh. Otherwise it was the shortest AGM that I can remember. I had very little time then to get back to my hotel and change for the evening and return to see an excellent Gala Production of 'Hayfever' with a wonderfully colourful set.

That led on to Cava and canapes and general chat before the Gala Dinner & Dance.

On Sunday morning we saw four short performances by four member theatres, each of them interesting and well performed, some condensed and some a brief extract. My personal favourite was called 'The Pitmen Painters'.

After Andrew Lowrie formally closed the Conference it was time to collect your picnic lunch, if you had asked for one, and say goodbye to friends until the next time.

The Conference, was great fun, as the Crescent had planned, but also, as usual, it was very instructive in many different ways.

Oh dear, I find out I've left out the Open Forum. Oh well!!

## THE APOLLO YOUTH THEATRE SHOW

On Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 April the Apollo Youth Theatre put on a show, consisting of a variety of songs and sketches for the first half and extracts from 'Godspell' for the second half. Some of the choir members from Hunnyhill primary school joined us for a few songs and joined in the finale.

Everyone who came said it was a very good show and very entertaining; but most of all the kids had fun and learned a little about what stage performing is all about. The show raised the grand sum of £216 for Children in Need, and some money is going to the theatre too.

It was a shame, though, that hardly any members of the Apollo came to support the children, as I always nag them to support the 'adult' shows. These kids are the next generation of performers and very worthy of your support. They pay to be part of our theatre and as much time and effort goes into their show as anyone else's. Thank you, however, to those who did support them or help in any way.

**Gwen Stevens & Pete Harris**

## THOUGHTS ON THE APOLLO YOUTH THEATRE

When I became a teacher, after ten years in commerce and industry, I was surprised that children were still expected to express themselves almost entirely on paper. My experience in the 'real world' showed me that people communicate most effectively face-to-face. Surely children needed to learn the skills of listening, thinking and debating to gain self-confidence and a sense of worth.

Later, as a new member of the Players, I realised that drama could do what schools weren't doing. To this end, about thirty years ago, I established the Apollo Children's Theatre (ACT) with Judi Didham. We met regularly on a Saturday morning. Edna Crosbie took over from Judi and the group thrived. It was wonderful to note the increased confidence of the children and we had regular positive feedback from parents.

Some children went on to

become involved in both amateur and professional theatre, on stage and backstage.

After staging some very popular and lucrative shows we handed over to a series of other members who led the group to further success. Gwen Stevens, with the sterling support of Peter Harris, has been the leader for many years. They recently staged a lively show that provided a wonderful opportunity for the children to realise their worth by the enthusiastic approval of an audience.

Sadly, apart from a handful of adults working backstage and FOH, I saw no other members present at either performance. Surely the least we can do for our young members is to support their efforts and show the Youth Theatre leaders that we value their commitment and hard work.

**Michael Arnell**

## Star Wars—Verify, a New Hope

There was a small but definitely perfectly-formed turnout for the first meeting about Drew Adcock's 'new members' project, William Shakespeare's Star Wars. This really is one of the funniest and cleverest scripts I've come across

and Drew is very much hoping for some more members—new or not—to come on board. If you enjoy Shakespeare and Star Wars—and they're not mutually exclusive! - or just want to be part of something a bit different, do

come along to the next event, a 'finding the character' workshop run by Michael Arnell in the theatre on 29 May. The bar will be open from 5.30 and the workshop will start at 6.00. To find out more, contact Drew on [drew@orange.net](mailto:drew@orange.net).



O help me, Obi-Wan Kenobi, help. Thou art mine only hope.

## Shakespeare Live at the RSC

Maggie Cardew, current Arts Manager, had the good fortune to be present at the Shakespeare Live celebrations at Stratford on 23 April (are we jealous? Nooo ...). She tells us about the experience.

'We reached Stratford about 2.30 and the whole place was HEAVING. After a quick shower and change we were off to the RSC restaurant for pre-show dinner. This proved a wise move, because every bar in the building was rammed with people waiting to go in and we could

chill after our meal with table service until it was time to move. We were given a quick pre-show lesson by Greg Doran on when NOT to clap, and then we were off.

If you haven't watched this extravaganza on the BBC iPlayer, you must—it was amazing. The stars came thick and fast and included Dame Judy Dench, Benedict Cumberbatch, The Royal Ballet, the National Opera, Simon Russell Beale ... the list just goes on and on. The stage crew re-laid the floor TWICE

during the show for the dancers (no clapping allowed) and did it in about two and a half minutes both times—and of course removed it too. There was a full orchestra and a royal performance (which was short enough to be enjoyed). Free drinks in the interval and after the show, plus hot dogs and a plethora of luvvies to rub shoulders with. A quick walk to the church to see the Bard's resting place and the whirlwind abated. Fab!'

**Maggie Cardew**





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info@apollo-  
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To book tickets or find  
out more about our  
productions, go to:

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

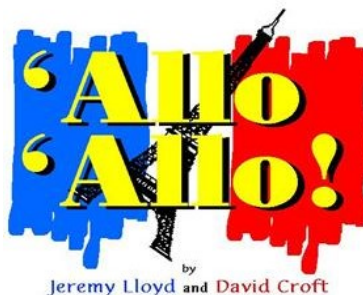
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## The Apollo Players' next production

*sponsored by Roger Dixcey Builders,*  
[www.rogerdixceybuilders.co.uk](http://www.rogerdixceybuilders.co.uk)



**'Allo 'Allo!**

by

**David Croft &  
Jeremy Lloyd**

**8-9 & 12-16 July**

**The stage play derived from the long-running, popular television series of the same name. Set in Nazi-occupied France during the Second World War, 'Allo 'Allo! tells the story of René Artois, a café owner in the fictitious town of Nouvion, who, while trying to remain impartial, has been dragged into the war by both sides. A clever and hilarious show to conclude our 44th season.**