



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

- 'The Ladykillers' read-through: Monday 26 September, 7.30 in Hancock House
- 'The Ladykillers' auditions: Sunday 9 October, 2.30 in the auditorium
- Auditions for Old Time Music Hall: Sunday 18 September, 2.30pm
- 'Wyrd Sisters' read-through: tbc
- 'Wyrd Sisters' auditions: Tuesday 4 October at 7:30 pm at the theatre

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

Other diary dates
(more info on the
website)

Blues & Roots at the Apollo (see p 5)	Fri 16 Sept 7.30
'Lady Brack- nell's Legacy', with James Pellow (see p5)	23/24 Sept 7.30
Newport Jazz Club present Simon Spillett & his trio	Sun- day 30 Oct

apollonius

Issue no. 252

September 2016

'Habeas Corpus': Amy Burns tells us about directing the show

When I first heard about this play, I thought, 'This sounds fun'. I'd never directed anything like it before, so I put my name forward and was accepted as the director; then on the first reading of the script I thought, 'What have I let myself in for?!'. Still, I thought, I've got till February to think about it; then because of licensing problems with 'The Ladykillers' 'Habeas Corpus' had to move forward to become the first show in the season, with the result that I went into the auditions not as well prepared as I would have liked. But I knew I wanted a lively, fun bunch of actors to fill the parts.

A great selection of actors auditioned and the choices were hard, but I feel the group I finally worked with worked well together. They never questioned my mad ideas, and were all willing (I hope) to try everything that I suggested. Rehearsals were fun, and after most of them I went home laughing. Probably the funniest moment was when Fiona got her fungi muddled!

Alan Bennett's idea for a set was simple and plain— three chairs— so designing a space that could cope with different scenes and spaces was fun. My thanks to John Sole for making my sketch a workable space and to Paul Hewson for painting such fabulous scenes through the windows. Huge thanks also to Di Evans, who not only played Mrs Swabb beautifully but also gathered and made all the props. We didn't need many but they were all very important and enhanced the play. Thanks also to Peggy and her wonderful team in wardrobe, who came up with the perfect costumes to compliment the characters and their personalities.

My biggest worry, as you can imagine, was the hanging of Mr Purdue; but my thanks go to Nick for being so trusting when I kept saying, 'We'll work that out when your harness arrives.' Sincerest thanks to John for being an excellent hangman and not getting my actor killed!

I have learnt so much from this play and enjoyed every



Mrs Wicksteed (Fiona Gwinnett) has her credentials checked by Mr Shanks (Paul Gwinnett) in rehearsals for 'Habeas Corpus'

minute of the time working on it. My thanks to the 11 actors who learnt their lines and moves; to my hard-working crew; and to all of you who did duties running the box office, coffee and bar—you were all an essential part of this joyful production. Finally, let's not forget the audiences who laughed along with us and helped us enjoy the production even more. And with 79% houses it was a production to be proud of!

Amy Burns

THE SELKIE WIFE

After long and at times very challenging attempts to cast 'The Selkie Wife', not to mention losing one cast member to Sainsbury's and watching another break her wrist during a performance of 'Twelfth Night', Ginnie Orrey is now delighted to report that she has a fantastic cast and rehearsals for this unknown (in the

UK, anyway) play are under way. This production will constitute the UK premiere, and Ginnie is in touch with the Canadian author, Kelley Jo Burke, who is very excited that her play is to come to the Island. The cast is as follows:

Mary: Maureen Sullivan
Gen: Sue Edwards
Cal: Ian Moth

Brigit: Esther Poucher
Dylan: Josh Pointing
The Singer: Anthea Weekes
The show goes up on 21 October and the assistant director, Kate Fysh, is looking to complete the crew; so if you'd like to be involved, please contact her on katefysh@gmail.com.

Editorial: the view from the Editor's chair

In praise of ... changing your mind

Readers with long memories may remember that in an earlier issue I mentioned/ranted about the fact that Peter Bradshaw, theatre critic on the Guardian, had been very sniffy indeed about live streaming of plays to the cinema. Well, amazingly, he has changed his mind—and had the grace to admit it. He asked himself, 'can livestreaming a stage show in the cinema capture its flesh-and-blood thrills?' He (slightly grudgingly, I thought) compares the

experience less to 'culture' than to sport—making the point that watching a football match on TV can still be a great experience, without worrying that it's 'inauthentic'. And there are always screens at concerts and festivals which are part of the live experience. Welcome to the real world, Peter!

And so, on that note, here's a puff for the latest treat at Cineworld: Kenneth Branagh's take on John Osborne's *The Entertainer*, streamed live on 27

October. Seats at Cineworld: between £15-£17. Travel costs: minimal. Seats in the dress circle at the Garrick for a matinee performance: £57. Travel costs: ferry fare, plus train fare. I believe it's called a 'no-brainer'?



News from the Apollo Theatre Trust



The work on refurbishing the front of No. 124 Pyle Street (aka Hancock House) is virtually complete. All the windows have been overhauled, and with new weights and sash cords they now open and close safely. The façade has been decorated and the front door given a new lease of life. One problem remains: the cast-iron guttering has rotted through and has been causing the damp problems behind the front door. The contractors have been having difficulty find someone to fabricate the replacement parts necessary but we have been promised completion (including the final

coat of paint on the façade) by the end of August.

The Trust have now decided to carry straight on with the more extensive work on the front of the theatre with the same contractors. The work started on Tuesday 13 September when scaffolding was erected. **NO PARKING WILL BE POSSIBLE ON THE FORECOURT** until the work is complete. Please be aware we do not have permission to park in the alley between the theatre and the County Press.

We have recently changed insurance companies following an approach from a broker with specific in-

terest in theatre, in particular amateur theatre, who has already provided insurance for a number of other members of the Little Theatre Guild (LTG). The policy covers both the theatre and the membership (The Players). The conditions of the policy are more understanding of the issues faced by a little theatre and while the changes are largely positive there are a few areas where we need to be more aware of the risks. Hopefully we will publish more details in the next issue of Apollonius.

*Paul Jennings, Chair,
Apollo Theatre Trust*



HOUSEKEEPING: A GENTLE REMINDER!

All members are reminded that running a theatre involves lots of 'little jobs' that should be done by any member. So if you become aware of anything that needs doing, please DO IT!

Note: Cleaning equipment, cleaning materials and toilet-rolls/paper towels may be found backstage and in the cupboard next to the Bar toilets. Bucket and tap for watering forecourt plants, up passage by the stage

door. Bins are located all over the theatre. Finally, if you use anything, please return it to the appropriate place (e.g. wash up mugs), or make any mess (e.g. sawdust), clear up!

Michael Arnell

NOTES FROM THE COMMITTEE MEETING ON 13 SEPTEMBER

Discussion at the slightly delayed Committee meeting focused around arrangements for the forthcoming AGM on Saturday 12 November. You may remember that most of the Committee posts are up for election this year (see below for current postholders), so we've taken the opportunity to review and revamp the system so that most voting—except for members who are not online—will be via online voting. Here is the timetable for standing for election and voting for your chosen candidates.

In this issue of Apollonius you will find an extra sheet of paper which contains two things:

- the formal 'calling form' which lets you know that the AGM will be held on 12 November;
- the nomination form which you must use if you want to stand for election to one of the vacant posts. You will see that you must be nominated and seconded by other members, and you must get the form back to the Acting Secretary by 2200 on 14 October at the latest for your nomination to be valid. Along with the

nomination itself, you are asked to submit some words about yourself—why you want to stand, perhaps something about any experience you may have, what you would bring to the Committee and the Theatre if you are elected and so on—anything you think is relevant to your nomination, to help members decide who to vote for. Don't be constrained by the size of the space available: extra sheet(s) very welcome!

The names of all the candidates, along with their 'manifesto', will be published in the issue of Apollonius which comes out around 26 October. This will give all members more than two weeks to think about who they would like to vote for and to place their vote via online voting (instructions for this will also be in that issue of Apollonius). If you are not online, a postal voting form will be included in your copy of Apollonius. If you would prefer a postal vote even if you are online, please let the Acting Secretary know.

Voting will close at 1200 on the day of the AGM,

and at the meeting the Secretary will report on the members standing, the votes cast and the names of those elected. As this will make the AGM shorter than in the past, we hope to have a bit of a social evening afterwards.

As a reminder, the posts which will be vacant this time round are:

- Theatre Director
- Arts Manager
- Business Manager
- Marketing Manager
- House Manager
- Membership Secretary
- Players' Secretary
- Members' Reps (2)

You need to know that if you plan to stand for Arts Manager for 2017-18 you don't need to have a season all ready prepared. Your words should if possible include some ideas about the sort of play you might include in your season, but the final list will be discussed with and agreed by the Committee early in 2017. Your thoughts about the artistic direction of the theatre are more important than the detail at this stage.

Good luck!

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

Arts Manager (elected annually in Nov for season beginning following Sept)	Maggie Cardew (2015-16 & 2016-17) cardewmaglet@gmail.com	Technical Manager (elected biannually)	Dan Burns (2015-17) dan@masexodus.co.uk Acting Secretary 2016
Business Manager (elected biannually)	Ginnie Orrey (2014-16) gginnie@googlemail.com or info@apollo-theatre.org.uk	2 Members' Representatives (elected annually) (2015-16)	Drew Adcock drew@orange.net Marylyn Ford marylyn.ford795@btinternet.com
Marketing Manager (elected biannually)	Kate Fysh (2014-16) katefysh@gmail.com	Bar Manager (co-opted)	Paul Stevens postmaster@sleeptite.force9.co.uk
Players' Secretary (elected biannually)	Mike Whitehead (2014-16) michaelwhitehead@yahoo.com	Wardrobe Manager (co-opted)	Peggy Harcourt peggy.harcourt@creekside.plus.com
Membership Secretary (elected biannually)	Michael Arnell (interim 2016) margaretarnell@hotmail.co.uk	Apollo Trust secretary (co-opted)	Cynara Crump cynara.crump@virgin.net
House Manager (elected biannually)	Paul Stevens (2014-16) postmaster@sleeptite.force9.co.uk	Apollo Trust Buildings Manager (co-opted)	Roger Simpson roger.dodger45@yahoo.co.uk



Sits Vac: another Bar Manager wanted to join the team

The team in the Apollo Bar are looking to recruit another Bar Manager to share the shifts during productions and external hirings.

Duties include:

- opening the bar approximately 45-60 mins before the performance starts;
- serving customers in a polite and enthusiastic manner;
- taking responsibility for an assistant (where applicable);
- taking responsibility for a cash tin and your theatre

bar keys;

- cashing up after each performance and packaging the takings;
- ensuring that the bar is left stocked and in a clean condition for the next shift;
- removal of rubbish and empty bottles to bins provided;
- generally ensuring that the legal requirements of the Apollo license are maintained.

Full training will be provided, especially in relation to the legal 'dos and don'ts'.

This is a rewarding role within the Apollo and will entail joining a rota that will probably include 2 shifts per run and additional shifts (maybe once or twice a month) for external bookings. It's not onerous, seriously. You'll even be offered the luxury of a Theatre Bar polo shirt!

If you're interested, please email Steve Reading on steverreading104@btinternet.com or catch Steve via Facebook.

MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

As you will all of course remember, we sadly lost our Membership Secretary, Pam Cranefield, not long ago. Michael Arnell has manfully stepped into the breach in the interim; however, circumstances mean that our records are possibly not up to date. If you have not been issued with a membership number to access the members' area of the website, please contact Michael on 296388 and he will give/send you a membership card with your number.

NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE PLAYERS

We have recently welcomed some new members to the ranks of the Players: Joanna Jenner; Reuben Loake; Claire, Brett & Ellen Lamplough; Ray Metcalfe; Jill Bradley. We are delighted that you have decided to join us, and we hope you will enjoy your time with us.

ELECTION OF MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Michael has indicated that he may stand down at the AGM at 7pm on Saturday 12 November 2016, leaving the field open for a new membership secretary; so if you are interested in being nominated for this post, but are not clear about what it might involve, please contact Michael and he will be happy to answer all your queries. You can also have a look at the job description on the members' page of the website (or if you can't access it, contact me at info@apollo-theatre.org.uk and I'll send you one) and follow the instructions in the last issue of Apollonius.

COFFEE MORNINGS

Two of the valuable aspects of our fortnightly Coffee Mornings are the opportunity for members and others to socialise and the offer of a backstage-tour is a profitable way to showcase our theatre. We've recruited many new members in this way who have then become real assets to the Players.

STAGECRAFT WORKSHOPS

Maybe it was the rather small advertisement in the last issue of Apollonius that resulted in only eight members attending the workshop in July. However, those that did attend expressed the wish for these to continue and were keen to focus on staging an actual one-act play for performance. If you are interested in joining us and learning more about stagecraft and the whole *raison d'être* of the Apollo Theatre, look out for the LARGER advertisement in the next issue of Apollonius.

MEMBERS' 'PERKS'

If you undertake any duty for a particular production, (day or evening box-office, coffee or bar staff, wardrobe, set building, etc.), you are welcome to attend the final dress-rehearsal of that play. Of course, because rehearsal schedules are organised by the play's director for the convenience and availability of the cast and crew, you will have to find out the actual date as these are never fixed.

'THE LADYKILLERS': CASTING CALL

Di Evans will be directing the fourth play of this season, Graham Linehan's black comedy 'The Ladykillers', a stage version of the famous Ealing Comedy film of the same title, which is on from 3-11 February 2017. The read-through and audition dates are on the front page, and here's some more information about the play from Di.

The cast comprises:

- **Constable Macdonald**, a very patient policeman
- **Mrs Louisa Wilberforce**, an eccentric old widow
- **Professor Marcus**, the mastermind of the gang

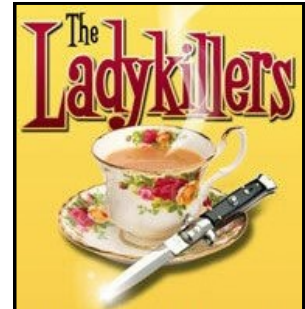
- **Major Courtney**, a con-man
- **Harry Robinson**, a spiv
- **One-Round**, a punch-drunk ex-boxer
- **Louis Harvey**, a vicious continental gangster
- **Mrs Jane Tromleyton**, one of Mrs Wilberforce's guests
- **Mrs Wilberforce's guests**, a gaggle of old ladies

Mrs Wilberforce is delighted to hear Professor Marcus and his friend rehearsing their music in the room the Professor has rented in her house. However, all is not as it appears: they are a gang

of hardened criminals planning a robbery. After the robbery Mrs Wilberforce finds out and threatens to go to the police. The gang decide to kill her—but that doesn't go to plan either! This is one of the funniest scripts I have read in a long time.

Please ring or email me if you are interested and I will arrange to get a script to you; or better still, come to the read-through and share the laughter! If you don't know the film, it's available on YouTube.

Di Evans: 883023
dandclem@hotmail.com

**FILM ACTING OPPORTUNITY FOR APOLLO ACTORS**

We have been contacted by WooHoo Cards, a new Island-based e-greeting card company. They need actors of all ages, ethnicities and genders for forthcoming shoots on the Isle of Wight. Check out their website, www.woohoo.com, for the sort of thing they do; topics of their cards revolve

around holidays, birthdays or special occasions. All shoots last approximately 2-3 hours and the company can be flexible with work schedules. All work is paid.

If you'd like to audition to appear on their cards, send a headshot, links to video reels or any other samples of work along with your con-

tact details to zee@guerillafilm.com. If you don't have a headshot, you can take pictures of yourself on your mobile or digital camera and send them.

Good luck!

**Actors
wanted for e-
greeting card
company film
shoots**

OLD TIME MUSIC HALL

Sharp-eyed theatregoers may have noticed a publicity flier on the desk in the foyer recently, asking for contributions to an 'Old Time Music Hall'. Helen Clinton-Pacey has hired the Apollo to put on a show scheduled for 24-26 February 2017 (including a matinee), and the purpose, apart from fun of course, is to raise funds for the Heart Foundation in memory of our own

late Alain Smith and others including Helen's father-in-law.

Auditions for the music hall will be in the theatre on **Sunday 18 September at 2:30pm**. Full details are not available at this stage, but there will be a requirement for variety acts as well as singers, dancers and in fact anything else you can think of!

Although songs and music were the mainstay of

music hall (the clue is in the name!) there had to be other acts in between to keep the pace up and the audience amused. If you have any useful ideas or a party piece that could be worked up into a music hall act, do please get involved.

If you're interested, do come along on 18 September or contact Helen via the pigeonholes at the theatre.





'Outside Edge': 15-17 September at Trinity Theatre, Cowes

A summer idyll: a sunny afternoon, the sound of leather against willow and the occasional cry of 'Owzat!' Surely nothing could be amiss in such a perfect scene?

Poor Roger is trying to get eleven players to face the might of the cricketers of British Railways Maintenance Division Yeading East. Everyone is very keen—apart from Kevin, fighting off injury to his

spinning finger and an over-affectionate wife, and Bob, who believes it's a good idea to do odd jobs for his ex-wife behind his current wife's back. Dennis' better half has turned into a compulsive house-mover, and what's happened to Alex's new girlfriend? Is Roger's happy marriage all it seems? Can the team overcome such challenging odds? It looks as though it could be a real test match for all con-

cerned!

Trinity Theatre present Richard Harris' classic comedy, 'Outside Edge', on Thursday 15-Saturday 17 September at 7.30pm, directed by Apollo Players member Gwen Stevens and with a number of Players in the cast. Tickets, price £8, are available from www.caods.org.uk, by phoning 01983 295229 or on the door.



Nick Cane, whose band will be headlining on 16 September

BLUES AND ROOTS RETURNS TO THE APOLLO: FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER, 7.30PM

Blues aficionados will already be familiar with the regular 'Blues at the Apollo', or BATA, concerts. The next one has now been announced, with a slight variation—'Blues and Roots at the Apollo' (though we resist calling it the BRAT concert!). Some of the usual suspects will be appearing—the Nick Cane Band are headliners, with the able assistance of newcomers to the Apollo the Tea & Biscuit Boys, with their unmistakable tea-chest bass and lively, up-tempo vibe. Also appearing will be the Dropouts, featuring the voice and guitar of Mark Fennel.

Arrangements will be as always: doors open 6.45 and tickets are £10, payable on the door.



Coach Trip
Origins Theatre

Origins Theatre Company present 'Coach Trip' at the Quay Arts

A new comedy by Kevin Wilson, 'Coach Trip', is to receive its premiere at the Quay Arts on 22 and 23 September at 7.30pm.

The play tells the story of a group of older people on a journey to visit the war graves in France, in the company of George the coach driver and his lovely assistant, Mabel ...

The play aims not only to

offer plenty of laughs and a good evening's entertainment, but also to raise funds for this year's Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Kevin, a member of the Apollo Players and a well-known Island playwright, has written the play as a tribute to those who gave their lives in active service, as well as their descendants and also those who survived.

Kevin's innovative Origins Theatre Company, whose actors include members of the Players, has performed at venues all over the Island and the South of England.

The play will be performed in the Anthony Minghella Theatre at the Quay Arts; tickets are £10 each.



James Pellow as Lady Bracknell

Lady Bracknell's Legacy: a 'bittersweet comedy' by James Pellow at the Apollo: 23 & 24 September

It's Thursday afternoon at Meadowcroft, 'Residential Accommodation for Those in the Theatrical Profession'. Two contrasting theatricals are caught in reflective mood. Devonia deRudge is a self-styled 'Grande Dame' of the English stage. 'I played Lady Bracknell, you know ... my performance

stopped the show'. Naturally cheerful, Freddie Farnsworth is immaculately and colourfully dressed. The friendship that has developed between these two is as charming as it is surprising. They both reflect on what might have been, and it's this that somehow unites them. James Pellow plays

both characters in this poignant and witty piece.

Tickets, price £10, can be bought online from www.ticketsource.co.uk/apollotheatre or from the box office from Saturday 27 August.

THE WYRD SISTERS—CASTING CALL

Dan Burns and Eve Fradgley will be directing the third play of the season, the stage adaptation of Terry Pratchett's 'The Wyrd Sisters'. Dan sends this message about the production.

'I think the best way to sum up this production is to quote the back of the script ...

"Terry Pratchett takes Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and then turns it up 'till the knob comes off. It's all there - a wicked duke and duchess, the ghost of the murdered king, dim soldiers, strolling players, a land in peril. And who stands between the Kingdom and destruction? Three witches: Granny Weatherwax (intolerant, self-opinionated, powerful), Nanny Ogg (down-to-earth, vulgar) and Magrat Garlick (naïve, fond of occult jewellery and bunnies)."

The cast:

Granny Weatherwax – A Witch

Nanny Ogg – A Witch

Magrat Garlick – A Witch

Verence – Late King of Lancre

Leonal Felmet – Duke of Lancre

Vitoller – An Actor-Manager

Mrs Vitoller – His Wife
Fool – A Fool

Tomjon – Son of Verence

Hwel – A Playwright

Sergeant

Demon

Robbers, Players, Guests, Guards, Peasants

As you can see, there's a wide range of parts, including opportunities for new members. Eve Fradgley and I are directing so it should be quite enjoyable too!

The production dates are 9th - 17th December.

Maggie Cardew is arranging the read-through (date will be announced either in Apollonius or via email).

Auditions will be Tuesday 4th October at 7:30 pm at the Theatre – exact location TBC but we'll make it easy to find! Audition pieces will be available at the audition (don't worry – you will be given some time to prepare!)

If you want to take a look at the script, please contact Eve (you can try contacting me, but I'm away for a fortnight so won't be much help – hence the slightly late audition date!).

Dan Burns'





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

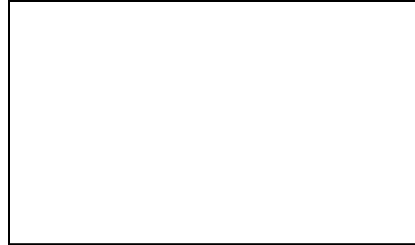
Phone:
(01983) 527267
email:
info@apollo-
theatre.org.uk

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

www.apollo-theatre.org.uk

**Any unsigned
copy in this publi-
cation is the work
of the Editor,
Ginnie Orrey, and
expresses her
opinions. Con-
tributed copy
must be signed.**

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



The Apollo Players' next production



'The Selkie Wife'
by
Kelley-Jo Burke
21-22 & 25-29
October 2016

An ancient Celtic myth explodes in the centre of a modern family. The Apollo Players are delighted to present the UK premiere of this strikingly original and beautifully written drama by Canadian playwright Kelley Jo Burke.

When Mary Hew gets a surprise visit from her old friend Gen, we learn that Mary has a secret that could threaten her life with her husband Cal and teenage daughter Brigit. And this is no ordinary secret – Mary is a 'selkie', a seal who sheds her skin to mate with a human male, then returns to the water with her offspring. But Mary, happy with Cal, made the decision to stay on land. And now, twenty years on, Gen has come to take her back into the water.