



APOLLONIUS

THE IN-HOUSE MAGAZINE OF THE APOLLO THEATRE, ISLE OF WIGHT

Forthcoming read-throughs, auditions & other production stuff

- 'Memory of Water' read-through: Wed 23 March
- 'Memory of Water' auditions: Sunday 10 April, 3.00pm in the auditorium (production dates 15-23 July)
- 'Oliver' workshop (children and Nancy) 30 April
- 'Oliver auditions (adult roles) 7 May

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

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT ISSUE:

Wednesday 18 May

Other diary dates

Coffee mornings NEW TIME	Every Saturday, 10.30-12.30
'Gateway Playtime'	2.00-4.00pm Wednesday 9 March, then second Wednesday of every month
Newport Jazz Club returns	22 May
Mitre Theatre return with 'Little Shop of Horrors'	2-6 August (see p.7)

Issue no. 290

April 2022

CURRENT SHOW

The fifth show of the 2021-2022 season is John Patrick Shanley's powerful and brilliant play 'Doubt: a Parable'. Set in a Catholic seminary in the Bronx in 1964, it tells the tale of an unbending nun's doubts about a priest's feelings for a young student, and how she approaches him about it. The play itself ends on a note of doubt, which adds to its brilliance. Susan Simpson has directed our production of it, and this is what she has to say;

'Doubt: a Parable', a play of a Father, a mother and two dominos [you'll need to see it to understand!], has finally come to life after many months of hard work. When Evelyn suggested the play, it immediately took hold of me. Ordinarily I would shy away from a play with such a serious tone and subject matter, but I found the characters an interesting group of people.



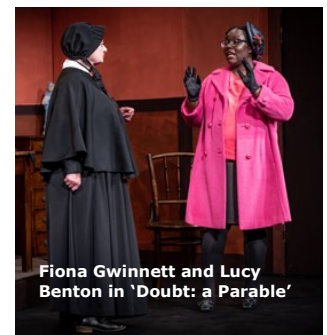
Peter Stockman as Father Flynn in 'Doubt: a Parable'

The cast have all worked hard to develop their characters and we spent many rehearsals discussing motivations, undertones within the script and most importantly, what is the best rehearsal biscuit. Even when we had time off because of the dreaded Covid, they bounced back quickly and were a complete joy to direct and work with.

With the help of Dan and the cast we were able to have quite a collaborative approach and were comfortable giving each other advice and suggestions. A relaxed atmosphere created

rehearsals that I looked forward to, ready for more laughs about William Nosebleed and who is supposed to say what about that wind last night.

My grateful thanks go to all of the crew, props, costume, set builders, advertising, front of house and anyone else who gave advice or aid in making this a brilliant production. I hope that the audience will get as much enjoyment and conversation out of it as we all have. And finally thank you to Evelyn, who found the play and helped push it forward to come to life.'



Fiona Gwinnett and Lucy Benton in 'Doubt: a Parable'

COMING SOON

Watch out for the rose!

The next production after 'Doubt' will be a 1980s psycho thriller, 'DANGEROUS OBSESSION' by N J Crisp (of 'Colditz' and 'Secret Army' fame). The director, Glenys Lloyd Williams, is very pleased to announce her cast:

Sally Driscoll: Holly Squires
John Barrett: Jason Harris
Mark Driscoll: Scott Walsh
Assistant Director is Helen Reading, with additional help

from Evelyn Hicks and Kate Fysh.

Glenys has a plea for members: *'Do you have an over-the-top drinks cabinet (think Delboy!) or posh conservatory furniture, that we could borrow?'*

If you can help, Glenys can be contacted on 07486 914456 or gglenys@hotmail.com



'Dangerous Obsession' is on from 20-28 May.

Editorial: the view from the Editor's chair

Well, for goodness' sake—if it's not one thing it's another! As if it weren't enough to have Brexit followed by a recession followed by a world pandemic (not to mention the climate emergency and a cost-of-living crisis), just as we were thinking the worst was behind us we have the threat of a world war hanging over us. As the Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg said, 'War comes very early to the theatre, then he stands around waiting in the wings.' And to quote another, rather better-known Russian (reluctant though I am to bring Russians into the conversation, sometimes we have to rise above the detail), Lenin remarked: 'There are decades when nothing happens; and there are weeks when decades happen.' Couldn't have put it better myself.

We could, I suppose, be forgiven for simply getting into a hole and pulling it in after us until either the nu-

clear radiation does for us or the clouds roll away—but in either case, there seems so little we can do to change the outcome that the only route open to us seems to be to carry on as normal and hope for the best.

So on that positive note, it feels great to be running a season that feels as near as dammit to normal operations: setting the dates, agreeing the productions, auditions and casting and rotas and audiences and reviews and then starting all over again. Let's just hope that continues.

Though I must say, as I said when haranguing my hapless songwriter husband recently, there seems little justification at present for writing anything other than protest songs—or plays—that comment on the world as it currently is. What do you think? Should we avoid reading/watching the news and, as theatres did during the last war, concentrate on light-weight distraction from

the fear and terror outside (who now remembers 'Tony Draws a Horse', which was one of the handful of shows to brave it through the Blitz?)? There is a powerful symbol in the bombing of the theatre in Mariupol, where the people sheltering in the basement escaped the worst: perhaps it's an allegory of how theatre can shelter us all from the worst as the bombs rain down.

Or should we be focusing on plays which, like Alecky Blythe's new 'verbatim' play, 'Our Generation'—which, weirdly, I have just discovered is included in Chichester's 2022 Festival Season ('eye-opening, generous and brilliantly inventive' (*Time Out*))—have a different but very immediate way of representing reality—life as it really is? This must be one of the perennial dichotomies facing theatre—and it hasn't changed.

FROM THE THEATRE DIRECTOR

All members should by now have spotted that we are on the process of updating our image on posters, programmes and social media. Joe Plumb (welcome back Joe) has produced a new logo which, while still incorporating the old logo designed in 1972 by Kate Hancock, gives it a fresh, more modern look. Joe has also taken over the layout of the programme and found new printers who offer good value for money and enable us to sell new style larger programmes at a small profit. Many thanks are due to Dan Burns who has been designing our programmes for the last few years taking over from Peter Boffin.

It's good to see the drive for new members bearing fruit and there seemed to be a lot of new faces at the 50th birthday party. We must ensure we take maximum advantage of willing hands by getting them involved with a production, on a rota or attending the Gateway

sessions as soon as possible. It would be interesting to hear the reactions of those new members who have taken on roles so far and any suggestions they may have to make it a better experience for those who follow

Roger and I have been trying to move the development plans forward. The architects are insisting on us employing a structural engineer to underwrite some aspects of the plan but the person we identified and spent 2 hours briefing has let us down and we are trying to get them to accept Roger's calculations instead. Meanwhile Roger is trying to negotiate with the planning authorities who are insisting that while the blue gate is not suitable to perform its current role in the new development its presence now forms part of our listing and so it needs to remain, possibly brought forward a few feet.

There is obviously great

excitement about our staging 'Oliver!' and our next season will burst onto the scene with a bang, albeit slightly earlier than usual. Of course it will present a number of challenges—no least of which will be the timescale coming so soon as it does after 'Memory of Water'. The dates were a condition of our getting the licence, and well done to Helen for completing the deal.

Amy Burns is planning a 'Sparkle Day' sometime in the spring to freshen up the theatre, which is looking a bit sad and worn at the moment. Please come along and help when you get the call. Refreshments will be provided. Amy is also mastering the celebrations throughout our 50th celebration season—look out for details of events to come.

Paul Jennings
Director, Apollo Theatre
Players

News from your Committee
Notes from the Committee meeting on 10 February 2022

- 1 Those present: Paul Jennings, Kate Fysh, Ian Moth, Helen Reading, Martin Ward and Michael Whitehead (Secretary). There were no apologies.
- 2 a) Amendments to the minutes of the previous meeting: these had already been notified; no further amendments were required.
b) Approval. The previous minutes were approved and signed.
- 2.1 Actions and matters arising: minutes will not be issued in draft in future and will be circulated approximately one week after meetings. Matters arising are covered in the Action Log.
- 3 Confirmation of org chart: the chart was tabled and approved but future updates will be required. A new Apollo logo was proposed. See the end of these minutes for both.
- 4 Rising utility prices: after discussion about ways of reducing energy costs, actions were raised to discuss costs with Utility Warehouse and to investigate the use of low-cost domestic lighting where possible.
- 5 Future of the Unit: following discussion, it was decided to postpone any decision about the future of the Unit until at least the end of this year subject to working parties that will clear it out and return it to a useable rehearsal space.

Helen is to look into the use of the Unit and to try and make it more attractive for rehearsals. It was noted that at present it is an extremely expensive storage facility. Martin will supply a statement showing the cost of running it.

6 Proposed developments: a short discussion was held. Kate commented that it would be a good idea to incorporate a lift as well as the staircase to the upper floors, for access by the disabled.

7 Fund-raising: Martin is to approach suitable people whom he knows, to enable us to have a dedicated fund-raiser. Also, he will investigate a possible lottery bid.

8 First Aid: Ian will find out who are trained First Aiders. Would any members who are trained please contact Ian?

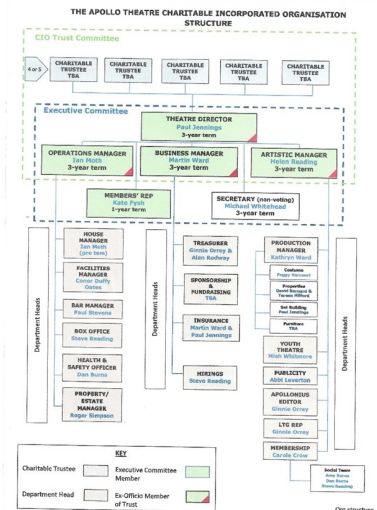
9. Any other business:
i) a timetable for the 50th Anniversary celebrations was proposed, as follows:

- March 25th, a social event.
- April 29th, a wine-tasting evening.
- August 20th, an open day. It is hoped that this could be an annual event.
- August 20th, a Remembrance Day for past members.
- 9th September, Gala Night. This

could be a red-carpet affair with members in costume and short extracts from past notable plays being performed.

- ii) Ian reported that the positions of House Manager and Deputy Operations Manager were still unfilled, also that training for various jobs would be needed.
- iii) An audit of theatre keys is to be undertaken. Anyone who holds keys must contact Roger so that he can update his records.
- iv) The LTG are not coming to us this summer.

10 Date of next Meeting - Monday April 4th at 6pm.



YOUR COMMITTEE			
Theatre Director & Chair of Executive Committee (elected 3-yearly): Paul Jennings (2021-24) paulmartinjennings@gmail.com			
Arts Manager (elected 3-yearly)	Helen Reading (2021-24)	Members' Representative (elected annually)	Kate Fysh (2021-22) katefysh@gmail.com
Business Manager (elected 3-yearly)	Martin Ward (2021-24)	Operations Manager (elected 3-yearly)	Ian Moth (2021-24)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

BUSINESS MANAGER

As a result of further funds being made available by the government due to the prevalence of the Omicron variant, the Apollo recently applied for and received a grant in respect of the leisure and hospitality support that was made available for island businesses. An amount of £2,667 was received in March and this will help the theatre to keep pace with the cost of living increases that are now a normal part of everyday life.

As we go forward with the 2021/2022 season, I have been impressed with how our audiences continue to respond to the programme that we are offering. There may still be some reticence in venturing out due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation but sales for *Breaking the Code* were extremely encouraging and I hope that *'Doubt'*, *'Dangerous Obsession'* and *'The Memory of Water'* will be equally well supported.

There will be more focus during the current year on fundraising and sponsorship, as the maintenance of the theatre and Hancock House continues to be a priority. Any suggestions or ideas in this area would be most welcome.

Martin Ward

ARTS MANAGER

It's been a very busy few weeks and your arts team have been working very hard on the social, performance, marketing and legal aspects of theatre life.

'Doubt' is now running with small, but very appreciative audiences so far. Well done Susan Simpson on directing a strong cast and for tackling a difficult subject. The set is absolutely stunning - so thank you to everyone involved with that.

'Dangerous Obsession' is in rehearsal and developing

nicely under the direction of Glenys. The read-through for *'Memory of Water'* has taken place with auditions this Sunday (10th). It's a superb play with excellent roles so please audition!

We have managed to secure the Performing Rights for *'Oliver!'* to start our 2022/23 season. However, the rights were not available to us after 1 September so, with a little negotiation, we have decided to start our season early this year. Workshops and audition info to follow. Julie Jones, a new member, will be our musical director with Joe Plumb and me as directors.

We have finally managed to rewrite and update our Child Protection Policy for the theatre. This will soon be made available on our website, so if you are working with children or vulnerable adults in the theatre please make sure you have read it! Hard copies will be available in the box office area, in the bar and in the props room. Meanwhile, a code of conduct is included in this issue (see pp 10-11). It is a bit lengthy but it is a requirement of our licence that all members read it (although I can't force you), as everyone must be aware of their individual responsibilities.

A big thank you to all the Arts Team for your support. Extra thanks to Carole Crow for running the Gateway group on Wednesdays as well as the coffee mornings on Saturdays and keeping members up to date with all our events.

That's all for now. Enjoy reading the Code of Conduct; and feel free to email me with any questions.

Helen Reading

artsmanager@apollo-theatre.org.uk
07712050920

MEMBERS' REP

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to my piece in the last issue. Some emailed, some phoned as well as those who met up in the bar after the coffee morning. The consultation was prompted by the ongoing, and apparently increasing, difficulties in filling the rotas, especially for front of house. The range of ideas reflected the diversity of the membership, but some common themes emerged, including a need to look at what jobs actually needed doing; clarity, consistency and communication; updated written guidelines for reference; and an explicit expectation that members support the running of the theatre in addition to appearing on stage.

Although rewards were mentioned, the strong feeling was of a need to build a sense of belonging to a team. Making sure that people were encouraged to attend the final dress rehearsal and the last night party might help to foster this. The past sense of ownership, engendered in part by a strong social aspect, was recalled.

It was also pointed out that it is the norm for only a percentage of any membership to be active, so we need to recruit more, especially younger members. The committee will be discussing how we can improve in this area. I will feed back any resultant changes.

As your Members' Rep I found it very useful and positive and I would like us to meet on a regular basis to share ideas. A monthly Forum, with topics invited/circulated in advance perhaps? What do YOU think?

Kate Fysh

01983 717618
membersrep@apollo-theatre.org.uk

OPERATIONS MANAGER

The lack of a House Manager and deputy Operations Manager is having the expected effect on organization and efficiency. If you are interested in helping in this area do please come forward. We should be getting smart meters installed soon. It will help if all members keep a watch out for any places where we are consuming energy without obvious benefit. Staffing for productions has shown some shortcomings recently but we are making improvements. Volunteers should approach either me (Ian Moth) or Steve (Reading) or email

boxoffice@apollo-theatre.org.uk or operations@apollo-theatre.org.uk

Remember that nothing is fixed until you get a confirmation email. We are thinking of simple perks for doing these essential staffing jobs: ideas welcome. You may have noticed evacuation information in the last programme. Please could you all make yourselves aware of the details. We are thinking of getting some hi-vis jackets or tabards for front of House and G15, who will be responsible for overseeing an evacuation if needed. Familiarization and training with backstage duties and sound and lights is still available; however it seems progress is being impeded by more pressing activities. If you'd like to discuss this aspect of theatre I'd be pleased to hear from you.

Ian Moth

operations@apollo-theatre.org.uk

From your Membership Secretary

It's been a busy a busy couple of months! With Amy's announcement of a member's night to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the very first production at the Apollo the idea of The Gateway Club putting together a little entertainment for it popped into my head. Like Topsy it grew into quite a production! Evelyn abridged Noel Coward's 'Present Laughter' into three short scenes, giving the opportunity for newer members and those not usually seen on stage to perform. Under Michael Arnell's wonderful direction, we were able to pull it off with just four rehearsals during which we all learnt an awful lot about stagecraft and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

Just to remind you that every Wednesday afternoon between 2-4 we have an activity in the theatre. On 30 March there was a play reading in the Bar which will be continued next week (6

April). Everyone is welcome to join in or sit and listen. We each put a pound in the pot to cover overheads and refreshments are included.

As an extension of the highly popular Wednesday Gateway series, Glenys Lloyd Williams invites you to join in with Gateway Playtime, when we invite you to meet a local author and work on a particular play that they have written.

The first sessions will work on 'The Charity Shop', a light comedy written by Diana Kimpton. It is ideal, as it offers a range of characters, with one scene setting. It is also a familiar place to most of us, somewhere we can relate to.

Wednesday 9 March 2-4pm, and the second Wednesday of the month thereafter.

We will use the play to develop the characters, try out different walks and voices, discuss how the stage should be set, use props, and improvise. Diana will

explain the play and its motivations to us, then we will have a go. Diana is eager to be fully involved too, so it should be fun.

If you would like to join us, please contact Glenys on glenys@hotmail.com or 07486 914456. She's looking forward to welcoming you.

Don't forget also our Saturday morning get-togethers in the bar for a coffee and chat, now from the new time of 10.30 to 12.30 to allow Youth Theatre parents and guardians the opportunity to pop in.

Please welcome new members John Byrne, Teresa and Peter Reed, Neil Barnes and Jenni McCabe—we look forward to seeing you around the Theatre!

Carole Crow

membershipsecy@apollo-theatre.org.uk

Ch-ch-ch-changes!

Hello fellow Apollo members! As you know, we're going through a number of changes at the moment. One of these is the fact that I am now your Publicity Manager—ooh! I have been joined by Joe Plumb (on the graphics side) and Ginnie is still maintaining our website and editing Apollonius for you to read and enjoy.

So ... did you know that we have social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram & Twitter?! Search @ApolloTheatreIW and you'll find us - large as life!

I also have a favour to ask: as your new Publicity Manager I know full well that I

can't do this alone. I need your help.

If you're on any social media platforms and see an Apollo post that's relevant, please like, share & re-share to help boost the Apollo's profile—we really want to get audiences in again and that means all of us doing our bit.

Also, if you are able to take posters from the foyer and (even better!) put them up or distribute them somewhere they will be seen by the public, that would be amazing! Thank you so much to those of you who already do this, it really is appreciated.

Also, if you're part of any

creative group on the Island and you have an upcoming show or event, please do send me the details—we want to promote the arts in general. This meets our objectives as a theatre and gives us the chance to go to some interesting events ourselves (group outing anyone?).

We also have lots of opportunities for businesses to sponsor us—please get in touch with me if you or someone you know is interested.

Thanks again! Onwards and upwards!

Abbi Leverton publicity@apollo-theatre.org.uk

A message from Glenys Lloyd Williams, director of 'Dangerous Obsession': 'Could I ask you all to take at least one or two posters/flyers and put them in a local shop, hall or hostelry? If you know of any groups who may be interested in coming, please let me know.'

To book space in the theatre, go to <http://diary.apollo-backstage.org.uk> and log in with the same details you use for the website (name and membership number). You can make bookings (including repeat bookings for rehearsals) and edit and delete your own bookings. It's not possible to double book – the system won't let you – and you can't delete other people's bookings. The system automatically records who made which booking and lists this as part of the diary entry. For pictures and step by step instructions go to apollo-backstage.org.uk/diary.

membership matters

Access details to the members' area of the theatre website

- Go on to the website and hover over 'membership' and the 'members' area' tab should drop down;
- click on that and you'll get the message 'We're sorry, the content you are trying to reach is restricted to members only';
- click on 'member login' and a drop-down box will appear containing the two areas 'username' and 'password';
- In the top area enter your 'username', which is first-name.secondname' (remember the dot between the words), and in the bottom box enter your password, which is your membership number.

Once you've done this you should get straight into the members' area. If not, there's a problem and you need to let Ginnie Orrey (webmistress) know, but try these steps first.

'Behind the Circle at the Apollo there is a little room where magic is worked ...'



Behind the Circle at the Apollo there is a little room where magic is worked. For every production, from shelves of fabric, jars of haberdashery, piles of patterns and racks of garments, costumes are conjured up to help bring the characters on stage alive. In this room in 2001 our wardrobe mistress, Peggy Harcourt, joined her predecessor, Nina French, to begin 21 years of creating costumes; and this article marks Peggy's decision to step down from a long, demanding, creative and joyful period in charge of wardrobe.

Peggy had a long and illustrious career in fashion design before she joined us, which of course made her uniquely suited to run our wardrobe team. She grew up on the Island and went to Sandown Grammar School, followed by a four-year intensive course in fashion design at Portsmouth College of Art, leading to a National Design Diploma and a City & Guilds in dressmaking. She often says she would have loved to train in theatre design as that was where her heart was, even then. Her first job—straight from college—was in a garment factory in Islington, where she designed and made clothes for the likes of C&A, BHS and Littlewoods and honed her pattern-cutting skills. As she says, it was a far cry from the Isle of Wight! This experience stood her in excellent stead for the first Apollo production she dressed, 'Pyjama Game', in 2001 (below).



Peggy went to Cyprus in the 60s, where she was able to continue with her love of costume—a particular high point came with a production of 'Persephone and Demeter' in a Roman amphitheatre. Between two tours of duty she was able to pursue a teaching career in Surrey Adult Education, first part-time and eventually

rising to Head of Department, planning and overseeing day and evening courses in 'fashion and creative crafts' over nine venues. Eventually with other wives and children Peggy was evacuated from Cyprus in 1974 when the Turks invaded (one suitcase, two children) leaving husbands behind; but she was able to return to her job until her retirement in 1995.

Her plan to return to the Island was fulfilled in 2000, and having seen several plays at the Apollo she knew that theatre costume was the way forward for her. In the 21 years since then she has come to love every aspect of theatre. Quite apart from designing, pattern cutting and creating new costumes from scratch, she has gradually brought her wardrobe team up to strength, in the process creating the biggest amateur costume collection on the Island (if you haven't visited the 'racks' in the roof space above the sewing room, you have a pleasure in store!). She greatly enjoys the creative role of 'picking' from stock or making new creations; her favourite is the Regency period, with its wonderful gowns and pleated brocade coats, but the breadth of her and her team's skills is such that whether it's a 'fat suit' for 'Body Language' or a glori-



first time sewing the complicated pleated black and white coat (above right) and she timed herself—18 hours' work! Like all such garments these are a 'couture sew'. The brocade is mounted on cotton to give stability and made up, interfaced, then lined throughout and wide lace trim used down front and large cuffs.

The team often go on stage in crowd scenes when the need arises, and they love that too; Peggy even had two lines in 'The Railway Children'—which she can still remember—and various roles including a tavern tart in 'Lock up your Daughters'.

So on stepping back from her role as Wardrobe Mistress, Peggy would like to reassure people that she will still be around the theatre: volunteering front of house, sewing for the team at home and joining them backstage during a run and generally continuing to be a part of the theatre as she has for so long. The cast of 'Toad of Toad Hall' will remember how essential that support during a run can be—Peggy had to carry out 'running repairs' to Toad's costume during an unexpected trouser crisis! In that production Peggy unexpectedly met up with her former English teacher, Evie Watts, and dressed her as a turkey (see photo bottom left)!

She also knows that she leaves the room behind the Circle in good hands, and that the wardrobe team—Liz, Mary, Pam, Maggie and Carol—will continue to give our casts the costumes that are just right for their character.



ously complex outfit for Lady Bracknell (left), nothing fazes them. They love researching historic costume so shows like 'Amadeus' and 'The Country Wife' were a dream project: the regency costumes were really exciting. Peggy had made these before and cut the patterns herself but it was Mary's



Peggy feeding Evie a biscuit during the interval!

Honestly, you wait and wait for a casting opportunity, and then two come along at once! Note dates and times of the auditions.

- OPEN AUDITIONS -

THE MEMORY OF WATER

by Shelagh Stephenson

Three sisters meet on the eve of their mother's funeral. As the conflicts of the past converge, everyday lies and tensions reveal the particular patterns and strains of family relationships.

Vi: 55+ A no-nonsense apparition who is still giving advice from beyond the grave.
The three sisters (ages between 28-40)

Teresa – still suffering from middle-child syndrome despite entering her middle age. Bitter about having to have looked after Vi. Over-organised and bossy. Gets drunk.

Catherine – the youngest and still footloose and fancy-free. Lost in her own world and wondering why her relationships don't work out and how much therapy she should have to sort herself out.

Mary – workaholic successful doctor with a secret past and present.

Frank – husband of Teresa. Trying to make a success of his own business. Used to the sisters and their odd ways. Solid and reliable.

Mike – lover of Mary. Living a double life.

Auditions on Sunday 10th April at 3pm | Production dates 15th -23rd July
For more info email Maggie Cardew (Director) at cardewmaglet@gmail.com

5 DRAMATIC YEARS

APOLLO THEATRE - ISLE OF WIGHT

OPEN AUDITIONS

LIONEL BART'S

OLIVER!

PERFORMANCES 19TH -27TH AUG AT THE APOLLO THEATRE

WORKSHOP FOR ALL CHILD ROLES AND NANCYS	AUDITIONS FOR ALL ADULT ROLES
30TH APRIL 3PM-5PM	7TH MAY 3PM-5PM

CHOOSE ANY SONG FROM THE MUSICAL TO SING
FOR MORE INFORMATION
EMAIL JOEPLUMB.THEATRE@GMAIL.COM

I'm not exactly sure where to start, with so much happening over the last few weeks!

We have been struggling to cast adults of a suitable age for 'His Name is Zak'. We thought we had it sorted out, but unfortunately the actor playing the role of Zak's mother didn't have the time to commit. This has been our problem all the way through in that people of a suitable age to play the part are busy with work and bringing up families or are so sought-after they're busy with other productions. This threw a massive spanner in the works and as a result we have had to reschedule. We have now been able to recast the part and the performance will be going ahead on June 10th & 11th. 'His Name is Zak' gives an insight into the thoughts and

relationships of a 16-year-old trans-gender boy. We see the inner turmoil of these relationships and ultimately how fragile they are. The performance includes film so we're hoping that the weather will soon warm up as these have to be filmed outside by the beach! 'His Name is Zak' does contain strong language and themes of suicide but it is a strong story and one I really feel needs to be told. It is suitable for an audience of 12+ (approximately) and tickets are on sale now.

We have been invited to take part in a parade through Newport for the Queen's Jubilee celebrations on June 4th. My initial thoughts are that we should maybe go as a 1977 street party for what was the Silver Jubilee. So get those flags waving when you see us coming by!

I have been approached by Groundlings theatre in Portsmouth regarding the possibility of a joint production with their youth theatre in the summer. I think it would be a great idea with performances in both Portsmouth and the Island. Not sure if this is going to happen yet as we will need Wightlink or Hovertravel to offer free travel so that the two groups can meet regularly.

Helen has created much excitement with the announcement of 'Oliver!' and though it isn't a youth theatre production as such, there are many members who are hoping to take part (myself included!). So all in all it looks like it's going to be a very busy summer for us at the Apollo Youth Theatre.

Mish Whitmore

Youth Theatre Co-ordinator

NEWS FROM THE YOUTH THEATRE





Your letters

I'm sure many of you will be familiar with Eddie Harrison, who attends practically every production we put on and always has appreciative and thoughtful comments to make. He came to 'Breaking the Code' and has very kindly taken the trouble to write to us (see his letter below). This is about as good a letter as we could hope to receive, and it reinforces our congratulations to Martin Ward, the director, and all the cast. It's a testament to the effort and skill everyone brought to the play. Well done all! *Ed.*

13 February 2022

Paul Jennings

Director Apollo Theatre Pyle Street

Newport

Dear Paul

I endeavour to attend every play you put on even if it does not really appeal to me because I believe it is so important to protect 'live' performances, and you do it so well!

I attended 'Breaking the Code' on Saturday 5 February and again on Saturday 12 February. There were many reasons for the second attendance. It was tastefully and expertly performed by all actors but especially Joel Leverton. How did he remember all the lines?

I have visited Bletchley Park and seen the room Alan Turing had as his office in a wooden RAF type hut and also the various computer designed pieces of equipment. A coach company in Newport runs day trips which are excellent.

Congratulations must also go to the staff who designed the sets, lighting and who do all the backroom activities and not forgetting the front of house volunteers.

The story was so sensitively presented to the audience complete with interjections of humour. It is a difficult subject, homosexuality (Gay) but it was handled with due professional and sensitive delivery. Fortunately, we have moved on from the way Alan was treated and his royal pardon was totally appropriate.

Please pass on my congratulations to all the company.

Yours sincerely

Doctor Eddie Harrison

Psychologist in self-harm

From Ginnie Orrey

I had the 'interesting' experience the other night of watching a production of JM Barrie's 1920 play, 'Mary Rose', brought to the Island by a touring soi-disant 'professional' company from Worthing.

Hats off to them for stamina—they performed at 26 venues all over the country in the space of two months. However, if I were them I think I would have put all that energy into a show with rather more to it than this very dated, over-long 'ghost' yarn: in fact, Barrie's very sad backstory was rather more interesting than the play itself. I would also have employed a wardrobe manager who didn't, as this one did, deserve to be shot, and a cast who sounded as though they meant it.

Whenever I go to a show, whether professional or amateur, my first thought is 'could we do that?'. In this case the answer was a resounding 'yes—and a damn sight better'. How about taking the Apollo on tour, Arts Manager?

Ginnie Orrey [sorry—didn't mean to hog the letters page!]

From Peggy Harcourt

You may have heard through the Committee that I am stepping down from my role as Wardrobe Mistress at the end of this season. After 21 years of seven shows a year I have run out of energy and inspiration, and with the new structure it seems that the time is right. I leave six very competent sewers to continue the team work.

I shall still be a part of the theatre of course, it's a big part of my life, so if I'm asked, I shall sew costumes at home, fill in backstage as dresser during a run and do some work front of house for a change. Of course wardrobe has always willingly 'dressed up' for the stage when a crowd has been called for so it would be fun to keep that contact too.

I've had a ball dressing all the casts and I hope to keep in contact with everyone. Yours as ever

I think this is a letter that none of us expected or wanted to see! But see p.6 for a tribute to the unstinting hard work Peggy and her team have brought to the Apollo *Ed.*

Peggy xxxx

From Ginnie Orrey

I was, as so often, greatly entertained recently by an article in the Guardian about babies who perform on stage, and the pitfalls of working with them (never work with children or dogs, remember); mainly because, while the very concept fills me with horror, it reminded me, in a very good way, of our production of 'Under Milk Wood' back in 2012. The part of Polly Garter's baby was played by the very very young offspring of one of the actors; I happened to be sitting downstage when the baby was brought on and I heard a very audible whisper from the front row: 'That's a real baby!' Which indeed it was; she behaved impeccably and of course stole the show.

Ginnie Orrey

The Mitre Players was formed in 1973 by a group of enthusiastic school-leavers from Trinity, a well-respected private school in Croydon, who wanted to continue drama. It was originally set up for like-minded Old Boys of the school and their families and friends to put on plays and pantomimes, but it proved so popular that over the years the club has diversified and membership opened up to everybody. We will be celebrating our 50th anniversary next year; many of the original members are still involved and the society is very much founded on strong and lasting friendships—as well as talent and technical expertise of course!

In the early years two of the founder members, Colin Warnock and Martin Tyrrell, were prolific writers and wrote & composed original pantomimes and musicals which drew in large crowds and gained a reputation for being good quality, great fun and with their own unique Mitre style, quite unlike the more traditional pantomimes that were performed by other amateur companies. We also produced high-quality, challenging dramas which entered and often won awards at drama festivals in the South. Colin Warnock is our current Chairman and is usually found in the band playing the keyboards. He is the MD for this year's touring production to the Apollo Theatre – 'Little Shop of Horrors'

We now produce a varied programme of plays and musicals and pride ourselves on being one of the leading amateur companies in the south-east. We have benefited over the years from being able to use the fantastic theatre facilities at Trinity School and having the Old Boys' clubhouse with its bar providing a useful place to meet, socialise and rehearse. The hall in the clubhouse transforms into a 60-seater studio theatre and we put on many of our shows here. In the 80s

we started to explore the possibility of taking a production on tour where the cast and crew would enjoy putting on a show for a week in a new theatre while enjoying a holiday together. Our first tour was to the Falmouth Arts Centre in 1987 and during the holiday we had a trip to the fantastic open-air Minack Theatre in Cornwall to see a show. It became our dream to perform there and after several more years touring to Falmouth for a week in the summer and inviting the Minack production staff to come and watch our shows we were granted a week's slot in May 1992. We performed 'The Wizard of Oz' and were invited back two years later to perform 'The Man of La Mancha'. Since then we have been lucky enough to be invited back every two or three years and have built a great reputation among locals, tourists and other theatregoers.

In the years in between performing at the Minack we continued to tour to Falmouth and then Dawlish but having exhausted all the holiday activities in these towns we decided to expand our horizons further and take a trip across the Solent. An advance party was sent to visit the theatre and look for prospective accommodation where the whole company could stay together and in 2019 we visited the Apollo Theatre for the first time with our production of 'Bugsy Malone', staying all together at the Island Riding Centre. We had a fantastic time, thoroughly enjoying all the wonderful amenities on this beautiful island but also learnt lessons. The show was well received and enjoyed but selling tickets was not easy without the benefit of being well-known on the island. Publicity when visiting a new venue is always a challenge and we hope this year to benefit from some of the lessons learnt. We were originally booked to return in 2021 but COVID scuppered those plans; but we are delighted to have the opportunity to return this

August with our production of 'Little Shop of Horrors'.

'Little Shop of Horrors' is set in a decade not too long before our own and it tells the story of Seymour Krelborn, an orphan taken in by Mr Mushnik, the owner of a rundown florist on Skid Row. He is secretly in love with the other employee, Audrey, but she is out of his league and seeing a successful dentist (who just happens to be a nitrous oxide-using sadist!). Seymour's fortunes are turned around when he finds a weird and interesting plant while walking through the wholesale flower district. As long as the plant is growing, so is his success. The only snag is that feeding the plant requires a secret ingredient that's easy to come by as long as you don't mind getting your hands dirty!

It's been nominated for Tonys, Oliviers and Grammys, there's a hugely successful movie (with a remake on the cards in the next couple of years) and it's had revival after revival on Broadway and in the West End. Our production will owe something to the phenomenal Regent's Park production from 2018 in style and direction.

We hope anyone who saw our version of 'Bugsy Malone' three years ago will be eager to return and we promise you a great night out at the theatre when we visit you in the first week of August 2022. We have a young and very talented cast of 20 who are keen to entertain, a crew of 10 or so working behind the scenes, a live band and a whole team of supporters – husbands, wives, mums, children all excited to visit for a week's holiday together. As fellow thespians we would love your support and please spread the word and bring all your friends. We will be in the bar after the show so come and say hello.

The show runs from Tuesday 2nd to Saturday 6th August, so please keep those dates free. Tickets go on sale on May 1st.

You may remember that the MITRE PLAYERS visited the Apollo a few years back with 'Bugsy Malone'. They're returning in August with 'Little Shop of Horrors' - here's a preview from the company



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE APOLLO THEATRE

This code is designed to protect both children and adults working with children in the theatre. **'A child' is defined as young person under the age of 18 years.**

Most of the code also applies to any adult at risk. Definition: *An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs is unable to protect themselves.*

This behaviour code outlines the conduct that The Apollo Theatre expects from all our members and other participants. The behaviour code is there to help us protect children and young people from abuse. It has been informed by the views of children and young people.

The Apollo Theatre is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

This behaviour code for adults working with children is supported by: nspcc.org.uk/learning learning@nspcc.org.uk 0116 234 7246 @NSPCCLearning © NSPCC 2022. Registered charity England and Wales 216401.

The role of members and other participants

In your role at The Apollo Theatre you are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model by young people and are expected to act appropriately. We expect people who take part in our services to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place online.

Responsibility of staff and volunteers

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children and adults at risk
- providing a safe environment for children and adults at risk
- ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
- having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- following our principles, policies and procedures including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, whistleblowing and online safety
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and adults at risk to follow
- challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and child protection procedures. This includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

Respecting children and adults at risk

You should:

- listen to and respect children and adults at risk at all times
- value and take their contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible
- respect their right to personal privacy as far as possible
- if you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or adult at risk at the earliest opportunity.

Diversity and inclusion

You should:

- treat everyone fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that all are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviours that make them uncomfortable.

Appropriate relationships

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid showing favouritism
- be patient with others
- exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or adults at risk
- ensure your contact with children is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children
- if a situation arises where you are alone with a child, ensure that you are within sight of or can be heard by other adults
- if a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible, unless it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

Inappropriate behaviour

When working with children and adults at risk, you must not:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children
- make inappropriate promises to children
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive, including having any form of sexual contact with a child
- let children have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children and adults at risk
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children.

Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you. If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you might be asked to leave The Apollo Theatre. We might also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services. If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Kate Fysh is the DSL for the Apollo Theatre
 Email: membersrep@apollo-theatre.org.uk
 Tel: 07708 703677

Helen Reading is the deputy DSL for the Apollo Theatre
 Email: artsmanager@apollo-theatre.org.uk
 Tel: 07712050920

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

The thinking behind this policy is to remind members of the consequences of both negative and positive comments once they are in the public domain.

Be Positive: we are trying to promote and encourage new members, more hirings and to set a good example to our young people. Every positive comment makes us look good (and we are) and helps with Brand Enhancement.

Like and Share: please like and share any posts generated by the theatre publicity team. This takes very little time and is a great help in getting our Apollo Theatre seen

Problems: any issues you have with the way the theatre is run or any disagreement you have with a theatre member should not be aired on social media. Please contact the person individually, or your members' representative, Kate Fysh. Email: membersrep@apollo-theatre.org.uk Tel: 07708 703677

Anything that is deemed inappropriate by the administrators of the page will be removed. We're going for positivity!!!



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

www.apollo-theatre.org.uk

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



The Apollo Players' next production



PERFORMANCE

DATES:

20-28 May

A man obsessed with pinning the blame for his wife's accident on someone enters the Driscoll home and shatters their marriage, in NJ Crisp's compulsive psychological thriller, first staged in 1987. The scene is set on a sunny afternoon in the home counties, where Sally Driscoll is watering plants in her luxurious home. It's a peaceful scene until John Barrett suddenly appears. Dangerously obsessed, Barrett slowly strips away the conflicting secrets of Sally's apparently perfect life with her husband, Mark. What exactly happened in Torquay? And will Sally and Mark ever feel safe in their home again? Answers will be revealed in this edge-of-your-seat production, written by a master of the thriller genre.

Inside Story Headline

Inside Story Headline

Inside Story Headline

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