

FESPA NEWS

Friends of East Suffolk Performing Arts

36th issue

Summer 2010

THE FESPA GRAND DRAW 2010 BOASTS A PRIZE PACKAGE TO BEAT THEM ALL!

**Please help us sell more tickets than
ever before**

Yes, you're right! We've enclosed three books of tickets this year, instead of the usual two. Your Trustees debated whether, after all these years of £1 tickets, it was time to put up the price. (FESPA certainly needs extra funds to finance its work.) But, in the end it was decided that a more acceptable move would be to increase the numbers of tickets in circulation. Our version of 'Quantitative Easing', you could say!

We were encouraged by three facts: 1) that many *Friends* habitually ask us for additional books, 2) that including the extra book does not increase the postage cost and 3) that the extra ticket printing cost is negligible.

But please don't feel that you are being put under additional pressure to sell tickets or buy them yourself. You are not! If you don't want them and can't sell them, just recycle them!

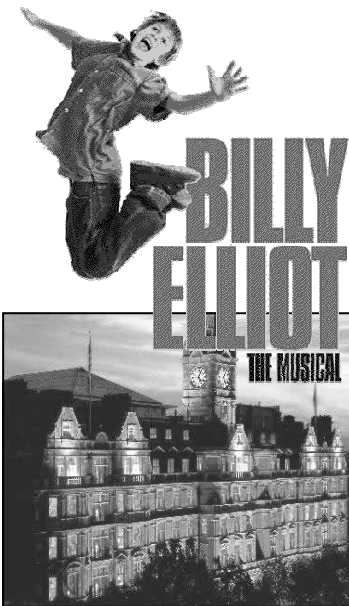
As ever, Michael & Joy Venn are masterminding the draw which will take place at the Theatre Fête on Sunday 27 June and this year, they have assembled a wonderful array of prizes with a top prize to die for thanks to the magnificent efforts of Jill Freud on our behalf...

Let Joy and Michael Venn explain...

Our first prize consists of two tickets for the award-winning hit show *Billy Elliot: The Musical* at the Victoria Palace Theatre, provided courtesy of the production company, 'Working Title'. The tickets are for the Saturday matinée of 4th September 2010 and the prize includes two nights' accommodation in a double room at the **luxury five-star Landmark Hotel** near Regents Park, generously donated by the hotel itself. A truly magnificent prize! Thank you, Jill, for making it happen!

But it is not the only exciting prize by any means; there are lots of other superb prizes, only some of which are listed on the tickets. We are hugely grateful to all the companies and individuals who have been so generous once more despite the difficult economic conditions.

May that extra book of tickets we've enclosed bring you luck!



The superb Landmark Hotel



REASSURING SIGN OF SUMMER

Alan Horne, Master Carpenter (left) and Ian Sheward, Props Master

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PLEASE WELCOME THE 2010 COMPANY

SAYS JOINT ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ANTHONY FALKINGHAM

Well, at the time of writing - late March - all the casting is finished and, so far, all our first choices have accepted to join the 2010 company. So keep your fingers crossed.

We open in a spirit of true celebration with a show based on the life and work of Noël Coward, **COWARDY CUSTARD**, with a cast of Southwold favourites: **Paul Leonard** leads the company. Paul is renowned for his West End work in many musicals including *Les Miserables* and a notable *Sweeney Todd* at Ipswich. Our own audiences will remember him for *Dick Barton* and *The Lady Vanishes*. With him is **Moir Leslie**, who was last with us playing the vamp in *Dames At Sea*. They are joined by **Richard Gibson**, whom you last saw last year as the property developer in *Crooked Wood*, and **Kate Middleton** who, two years ago, was in *Salad Days*, *See How They Run* and *Bedroom Farce*.

With Kate is **Richard Emerson**, whose 12th season this is, and **Amy Price**, who has been in every musical I've done from *The Boyfriend* to *Salad Days*. Amy's leading man in *Salad Days* (a big hit as Timothy) was **Mark Jackson** and he, too is back in *Cowardy Custard*. And so too is **Rosanna Miles** who was with us all last season in; *Love's A Luxury*, *Caught In The Net* and *Gaslight*.

Paul Leonard, **Richard Gibson** and **Rosanna Miles** will be seen again in the hilarious comedy **HOLIDAY SNAP** and making up that company will be our very own **Jill Freud**, **Ann Wenn**, who gave such an accomplished performance last year as Mrs. Manningham in *Gaslight*, **Michael Hoskinson** whom you last saw has Ernest in *Bedroom Farce*, and another of last year's finds **Ben Tillet**.

DANGEROUS OBSESSION welcomes back into the company **Louise Shuttleworth**, last seen in *Outside Edge*. Playing her husband is **Charles Davies**, who was in the same season, as Charley in *Charley's Aunt*, Roger in *Outside Edge* and Greg in *Relatively Speaking*.

Andrew Bone will play the mysterious Mr. Barrett. Andrew first joined us two years ago to play the Tramp in *Salad Days*, Toop in *See How They Run* and Trevor in *Bedroom Farce*. Last year he was back in *Green For Danger* and *Crooked Wood*.

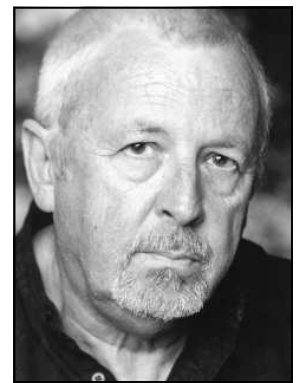
Andrew will later be seen as Rainaldi in **MY COUSIN RACHEL** with newcomers **Imogen Slaughter** as Rachel and **Terry Molloy** as Seacombe. Joining them will be company regular **Clive Flint**, who appeared last year as Charles Pentwick in *Love's A Luxury* and Stanley in *Caught In The Net*, and **Mark Jackson** who takes the important part of Philip.

Finally, for **ABIGAIL'S PARTY**, we have put together an extremely strong cast. **Rebecca Raybone**, whom I have known since she was a student at Webber Douglas, will play Beverley. Laurence, her husband, will be played by **Jonathan Ashley** who was a memorable Jonathan Brewster in *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Her guests, Angie and Tony will be played by **Louise Shuttleworth** and **Ben Tillet** and Abigail's mother, Susan will be played by **Pauline Whittaker** whom some of you will have seen in Gerry Hinks' lunchtime play last year, *Confessions of Honour*.

So many friends: old and new, for you to meet during our 2010 season.

Anthony Falkingham

From the top, left to right: Kate Middleton, Ben Tillet; Amy Price with Andrew Bone in Salad Days (2008); Ann Wenn in Caught in the Net (2009), Terry Molloy (who has recently toured with Triode Productions in Mark Sterling's 2008 Summer Theatre production of The Lady Vanishes), Paul Leonard as Gilbert with Jill Freud behind as Miss Froy in the 2008 production of The Lady Vanishes and Rosanna Miles pictured last year at the Friends' garden party at Westons,



Chairman's report

Spring at last. The skies are blue, the flowers bloom in the gardens and in the countryside and the birds are busy doing what birds do at this time of year, so the new theatre season must be starting soon and, as always, I do hope you are all looking forward to what promises to be another great Season of theatrical delights as we await the return of Jill and the company. Old friends, new friends and the great variety promised to us in this year's programme. How do they do it?

It has been a busy year for your Trustees as we meet not only at our regular formal meetings but at various other times through the year. Many of us help to pack and distribute these newsletters three times a year (See below). We also meet with sub-committees to discuss forthcoming occasions such as the Fête, the social evening at Westons and other fund-raising events, all of which require special planning. The Fête meetings often involve an informal lunch, much enjoyed by us all who thus manage to have a good time whilst doing our bit to support the company.

This year we have had more publicity in the local press about our Bursary programme and already we have been approached by an interesting group of young applicants. I look forward to telling you about them in our next issue.

I was also delighted to receive quite a few letters following my request for new *Friends* to join us and this has already translated into a significant surge in new membership applications over the past two months. That's all very gratifying but please, do not stop recruiting new *Friends*; I am always delighted to send out forms to those interested in becoming one of us.

When you read this the AGM will be behind us (See page 5) and the Summer's delights will be ever closer. Roll on July and curtain up!

Sidi Scott

FOND FAREWELL TO SUTHERLAND HOUSE!

Jill appeals to *Friends*...

"Where can we 'do lunch' next year?"

After a long winter game of 'it's on, it's off', Sutherland House finally opened its doors to us for the lunchtime season in 2010. At the last minute we managed to assemble the lively mixed bag you have come to expect. *The Hand of God* by Alan Bennett is a must, *Sex with Searles* sounds interesting – Peter Searles is a great storyteller – and *Ten Green Bottles* is a premiere. Look on the yellow card and try to come to them all because the Studio is to be converted and this season will see our last lunchtime play programme at Sutherland House.

If any *Friend* can find us another venue for 2011 there could be years of free seats in it!

We could also do with *Friends'* detective work on the Children's shows. For the first time in 27 years, to my sorrow, I have an empty week in Southwold and one in Aldeburgh. We need small companies – no more than two performers per show – who value a week's accommodation by the sea as much as the moderate amount of money on offer. If you know of any such, please contact me with names and details – I put that programme together in January.

How lovely to have such good friends to call on. I look forward to seeing you all.

Jill Freud

DISTRIBUTING FESPA NEWS

An apology, an improvement, an appeal and an innovation

First, an **apology** to those *Friends* who received an unstamped copy of FESPA News 35 in the post and had to pay a penalty charge. I'm not quite sure how many were affected but clearly a small batch of unstamped envelopes inadvertently found its way into the stamped pile we delivered to the Post Office.

To reduce the chance of such human errors in the future, with the help of our database manager, Kathy Oliver, we are introducing a small **improvement** to the way we sort the envelopes. Nearly 200 copies are hand-delivered by nine volunteer *Friends* within their own neighbourhoods. Starting with this issue, all the labels for hand-delivery have been coded with the initials of the deliverer. This should make our envelope piles much easier to sort and we'll know

that anything without a coding is for stamping and posting.

Which brings us to the **appeal!** There are some areas with high concentrations of *Friends* where we have no volunteer distributors. For example, we have 63 *Friends* with a Woodbridge address, 44 in Lowestoft, 21 in Saxmundham, 17 in Bungay, 12 in Framlingham and 10 in Leiston. We could save a significant amount of money if we had willing distributors in those areas. Even if we had to post a single bundle to each distributor it would still be cheaper than stamping every one. If you are game to give it a go, please get in touch with me and we can discuss what you might be able to do.

Finally, the **innovation!** As you probably already know, a few *Friends* have specifically asked to be informed by email as soon as each issue of FESPA News is published on our website www.fespa.co.uk/newsletters.htm. This is quite an advantage as it means they can read the issue about 10 days before the printed copy drops through their front doors.

However, Kathy has pointed out that, in addition to these online readers, her database already contains the contact details of many *Friends* who registered their email addresses with FESPA when they joined. So, as an experiment, we are also emailing them as each new issue goes online. Anyone who would rather not receive the notification can obviously 'unsubscribe'. Equally, do let me know if you'd like your email address to be added to the list. barytolfree@tiscali.co.uk

As mentioned before, we will continue sending everyone a hard copy because of the need to enclose things like draw tickets and subscription renewal forms with at least two of our three issues.

FOR YOUR 2010 SUMMER DIARY

Friday 25 June - *Friends'* Evening at Westons. 6.30. Bring a plate of eats. Collect your supply of programme cards for distribution in your area.

Sunday 27 June - FESPA Theatre Fete at Westons. Gates open at 1.00 pm

Thursday 8 July - Southwold Season opens

Friday 16 July - Lunchtime Theatre Season opens at Sutherland House, Southwold

Monday 19 July - Children's Theatre opens, Southwold

Friday 23 July - Aldeburgh Season opens

Sunday 25 July - Poetry, Music & Wine Evening, Southwold

Sunday 22 August - Life, Love & Laughter. Charity Evening of words and music in Southwold

Saturday 28 August - Last night in Aldeburgh

Saturday 11 September - Last night in Southwold

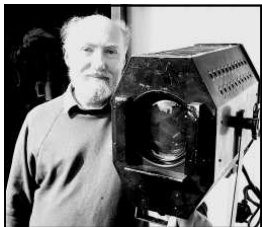


A recent FESPA envelope stuffing party at Wangford Community Centre

THE STORY OF SOUTHWOLD'S THEATRE

Part 3: Richard Graham and The New Southwold Repertory Company, 1961 to 1968– by James Laws

In the last issue, Michael Rowan-Robinson recalled his father, Christopher's, years with the Southwold Drama Group from 1937 to 1954. Although the largely amateur SDG continued successfully under Jane Davey until 1966, two new professional kids were meanwhile making their presence felt on the block... Caryl Jenner arrived with her mobile rep company from 1953 and, in 1961, Richard Graham hit town and was to dominate Southwold's theatrical life through the 'Sixties. James Laws, who has been Lighting Designer with the Jill Freud Company since 1986, worked with Graham for his final season.



James Laws with one of his 'Ancient Lights'

Richard was very much a business manager and you would never catch him on the stage or making a speech. He ran a wide variety of events and I have his 1967 planning diary, which shows his season in Southwold and his many tours, which varied from provincial (*Boeing-Boeing*) to one-man shows by the eminent Irish actor Micheal MacLiammoir. Richard also staged a lot of modern dance, including *Nederlands Dans Theater*.

In this little book he also sketched out his plans for 1968, which was the first Southwold season I was involved in. Whilst nominally Deputy Stage Manager, in practice I ran the lighting and sound every night and helped to build the scenery in the daytime. As I was usually the only non-actor working backstage I was delegated to get the fish and chips, every Saturday between shows.

"I don't think that Southwold was ready for *The Killing of Sister George* in 1967, or that the audience ever forgave this lapse in taste."



A scene from Act 3 of *The Importance of being Earnest*, 1968. L to R: Agatha Carroll, Geoffrey Davis, Anne Rutter, Marjorie Wilde, Julia Goodman, Garrick Hagon & Raymond Somerville. P1120872

Every manager needs an artistic partner and, for The New Southwold Repertory Company, Richard Graham had Geoffrey Edwards, a distinguished West End actor and rep director. Geoffrey ran every season up to 1968, when he absented himself in order to appear in *The Importance of Being Earnest* in London, a play that, ironically, was also scheduled for Southwold that season. Geoffrey delegated directing duties that year to Richard Carey. The company had regular favourites who returned year after year; Raymond Somerville, Marjorie Wilde, Agatha Carroll and George Cooper spring to mind.

The Southwold watch committee was ever vigilant

Occasionally productions could be quite adventurous but I don't think that Southwold was ready for Marjorie Wilde in *The Killing of Sister George* in 1967, or that the audience ever forgave this lapse in

taste. This was the era of three decent acts & two decent intervals. The Lord Chamberlain may have been losing his grip on censorship but the Southwold watch committee was ever vigilant.

Seats were 10/-, 7/6d and 5/- + 3d Selective Employment Tax in all cases. This equates to a range from 51p to 26p per seat. The locals paid 7/9d for the back row where the seats were plush upholstered refugees from the recently closed cinema. All those in front of them, even in the ten-bobs, were canvas stretched on cold steel.

Talking of old money, the only phone in the hall ran on 4 pence for a local call and the other slot machine was in the kitchen, controlling the gas. If you were very careful you could boil a kettle for 1 old penny. That's 240 kettles to the pound!

Tea party etiquette

Every year there was a Somerset Maugham play and in 1968 we presented *Smith*, with David Beale as the black sheep who makes good and Paula Topham as the maid with the title role. This was much to the liking of our regulars, who settled down to the matinée and were in their element during Act 2, when there was a full Edwardian afternoon tea party on stage, as part of the action. Perhaps the most unlikely and unsolicited audience participation I have ever heard started with the unassuming line from the lady of the house on stage: "*MIF or MIL, dear?*" There was an unscheduled pause in the action whilst the audience noisily sorted out the merits of *Milk In First* or *Milk In Last* and voted on this vital topic of social etiquette!

The company mustered at the Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds for a week of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which was also our first play in Southwold, hence the pictorial record by Southwold's own photographic studio, Norman Jenkins. I think it was Mrs Jenkins who balanced her plate camera on a school desk and herself on a tall chair.

We moved from Bury to Southwold in a single-decker bus, as was normal then for small-scale touring. The oldest bus in the operator's fleet had seats on one side only and the scenery for *The Importance* went down the other, empty side, behind the driver.

There were 8 plays in 8 weeks, of course, and a first night every



From Act 1 of *The Importance*, 1968, with, L to R: George Cooper, Garrick Hagon, Anne Rutter, Geoffrey Davis and Agatha Carroll. P1120874

Thursday. We built and painted the scenery for all the other productions in the old bus garage in Mill Lane (where the Buckenham Court development is now). There was no electricity and an earth floor – hardly ideal in a very rainy summer. Blyth removals took our newly painted sets to the theatre with blankets between each piece to stop the thick layers of paint from chafing. The scenic flats were held together on stage by sash cord and an incredibly heavy ceiling that stopped everything wobbling.

The last show in 1968 was *Relatively Speaking* by Alan Ayckbourn. As it was a new play, few actors had played in it. The actress playing the mother in this four-hander was taken very ill on the second night. We couldn't open that night but the ever resourceful Richard Graham found Josephine Stuart, who had just played the part in Cheltenham and she came to Southwold for the rest of the run. Actually, she was to feature in Southwold summer seasons for the next three years, because Richard Graham had decided to cease running summer theatre here and his successor, John Ridley, was Josephine's partner.

In our next issue Jim Laws hopes to back-track a few years to 1953 in order to tell the story of Caryl Jenner and her touring rep. If you have any memories or photographs of the early days of theatre in Southwold or Aldeburgh, we'd love to hear from you.

Elucidation...

In Michael Rowan-Robinson's piece in our last issue he wrote that his father, Christopher, started the Solebay Bookshop in the retail unit that now houses the Black Olive delicatessen – No 80 High Street. One reader offered the suggestion that the Solebay Bookshop was actually next door at No 82 (now Mantins Solicitors). We consulted Mr Ronnie Walters who has researched the history of Southwold's shops over the past century. He confirms that both memories are substantially correct. No 80 (which is now occupied by two shops - Chattertons and The Black Olive) was similarly divided at that time and 80a was Christopher Rowan-Robinson's Solebay Bookshop from 1948 to 1950. The London Central Meat Company had the rest of No 80. In the early 50s the Solebay Bookshop moved next door to 82 and, in 1954, it was sold to Mrs Neame and later to Mrs Read. It closed in 1990. With thanks to Mr Walters for clearing this up.

'H' is for 'Holy Grail'



The Southwold box office may be just about to open to the public (28 May) but Rosemary Digby has been selling tickets to the *Friends'* on the Advance Booking hotline for the past 11 weeks. And, as happens every year, one row has been virtually fully booked since the beginning of April, for every performance of every production.

As Rosemary says: "The view of the stage at Southwold is pretty good wherever you sit but people have developed this exaggerated idea of the virtues of certain seats and Row H is the Holy Grail!"

Not that everyone knows it's called 'Row H'. Callers are often more likely to say "You know, that row where the seats go up and there is lots of leg room!" The reasons given for especially wanting these seats usually involve husbands and their legs, says Rosemary... "My husband is quite short so he has difficulty seeing but he has very long legs" is one of her favourites. "My husband's knees are bad and he needs to stretch them out" is another old chestnut and one that has caused more than one nasty interval trip

Friends increase subsidy to Summer Theatres

FESPA President, Margaret Chadd presented Jill Freud with cheques totalling £7000 at the AGM on 23 April. This was £2000 more than in 2009, the additional sum being to help cover the rising costs of the Children's programme and the Lunchtime Theatre.

Accepting the donation, Jill said that she and her company were deeply grateful to FESPA. "Without help, especially from the *Friends*, we simply couldn't do what we do." She reminded the meeting that the reason Margaret Chadd had founded the *Friends* organisation way back in 1986 was specifically to help publicise the shows by getting together a small team of volunteers to distribute the programme cards each season. "We couldn't afford to advertise then and that is still the case. We depend on the *Friends* as much as, if not more than, we ever did."

She welcomed FESPA's initiative in launching its student bursary scheme and was pleased to report that one of last year's recipients, Charlotte Barker is to join the Company as a student stage manager this season following her year at RADA.

Chairman Sidi Scott said that, following extensive local press coverage of the FESPA Bursary scheme, there had been a record response from applicants this year. Selection of 2010 bursary recipients would be made during the summer.

She added that she was gratified by the response to her appeal in the last newsletter for *Friends* to attempt to recruit new members. There had been a noticeable increase in numbers during March and April but she urged that the efforts should not be relaxed.

Two Trustees, Jack Clayton and Peter Gibbs, retired by rotation but were both re-elected for a further three-year term.

After the official business was concluded, *Friends* enjoyed a glass of wine, followed by a talk by guest speaker, actor/director, Alister Cameron who delighted the audience with his often hilarious memories of his long association with Jill Freud and the Summer Theatres and of some 15 years running Richmond Productions, touring British theatre throughout the Middle and Far East and Eastern Europe.

over the years.

Sometimes people are even more demanding: "Can I have H1, near the door so that I can feel the breeze at the interval!" or "I'd like an aisle seat so I can be first in the ice-cream queue."

Heading for a good old row!

The really regular theatre-goers often have unshakeable seat preferences and can be very possessive about them. "If they can't get their favourite seats for a particular performance, they'd rather change the night they come than the seats they habitually sit in." Only very rarely does anger and frustration boil over, says Rosemary. "But sometimes it's only just below the surface!"

Just as Row H represents the somewhat undeserved peak of desirability to ticket bookers, certain rows have equally undeserved reputations as 'The Pits'. None more so than Row A. "It's amazing how reluctant some people are to sit in the front row... They think they will spend the night craning their necks and not being able to see the back of the stage. But Southwold's stage is so low that this doesn't really apply at all – and there's plenty of leg room and ice cream at the front!"

Rosemary puts in a final plea for due recognition of her own favourite row yet one of the least sought after in the house...

"Now, Row N... There's a lovely row if ever there was one. Quick entrance and exit, close to bar and loos, handy for ice cream... and there's a rise. And, if you choose seats 10 to 13 on the right hand side you're in for cosy family evening with nobody else on either side of you. Oh, and - don't tell anybody - for some unaccountable reason, the price is the cheapest in the house!"

GET READY FOR A FABULOUS TWENTY-TEN SUMMER FÊTE

SEE YOU ON SUNDAY 27 JUNE FROM 1 PM AT WESTONS, WALBERSWICK

Every year, the Summer Theatre fête at Westons creates its own legend. Each one is special in its own way. Everyone who knows it makes sure the date is inscribed indelibly in their diary as a not-to-be-missed afternoon.

Ben Marriner has taken on the top job this year. What a star!... Particularly as his predecessor, Val Anderson, has run it so impeccably for so many years. Val remains very much involved and she and Ben have been working as a team for several months now in preparation for the big day.

As always, our fête is a grand entertainment as well as a fun marketplace. This year there is even more planned for kids. There are new attractions as well as all the old favourites.

And there's the real prospect of more visitors than ever now that 'staycationing' has allegedly become the holiday of choice.

This could be great news because, remember, this is our biggest fund-raising event of the year.

Please read through all the attractions on these pages and decide how you can contribute... whether it's rootling through the loft, shed or garage for saleable stuff, selling draw tickets, baking cakes, volunteering to help on the day or lending equipment such as gazebos. Whatever you think you can do, the number of the person to ring is shown here, under the relevant stall. Of course you can always bring along sale goods on the day but most stall holders would prefer an advance call if possible.

For general enquiries call Ben on 01502 722488. He would especially like to hear from you if you would be prepared to help manning the gate and supervising parking.

Val once again has generously offered to provide temporary storage for sale items in advance of the fête at her home, Hedgeley, The Green, Walberswick. Any stallholder or donor who would like to take advantage of this, **please ring Val on 01502 724609.**

BEN MARRINER WRITES...

I find it hard to believe that we are nearing another FESPA Fete and that we are all a year older. Looking ahead, we desperately need some younger members to help us to maintain this ever-popular fete which contributes so much to FESPA's funds. It is a lot of fun and really doesn't take up a great deal of time, so do, please, get in touch.

This year, in addition to all our usual popular stalls and games, we have a painting competition for children, organised by local artists Lenny & Frankie Townsend. And, in between enjoying the acts in the Barn, you can up the tempo by having a go on the dance machine, or amuse yourself with the other great games we have on offer this year.

Meanwhile, the urgent need now is for things to sell. So please look in your attics, garages and greenhouses and apply the golden rule: "If you haven't used it for two years, you don't actually need it!"

We look forward to seeing you all on Sunday June 27th.

KIDSTUFF

Children's Lucky dip – This favourite is being organised this year by **Jeannette Radley-Kane**. Thank you SPOTS (Southwold Post Office & Toy Shop) for your generosity in supplying gifts. Toys are still required for both the Lucky Dip and the Toyshop (See below.)

Toyshop – If your own have grown out of them, but they still work and are clean and undamaged why not put them to good use. Not just toys but games, puzzles, dolls, too. Even tiny novelty items are welcome for the Lucky Dip (See above) **Connie Barrett** is the one to contact. She is on **01502 575756**.

Face painting – Our make-up artist this year is **Denise Brentnall**. Denise would welcome some help so, if you can lend a hand, please let her know on **01502 722923**.

Kids' Painting Competition – We've been wanting to do this for years and now well-known local artists, **Lenny and Francesca Townsend** have enthusiastically taken up the challenge. With grateful thanks to SPOTS (Southwold Post Office & Toy Shop) for supplying materials. **01502 724556** if you'd like to help.

Games – **Ben Marriner with Frank and Barbara Devereux** are looking for helpers to man the various games and competitions. If you'd like to muck in, call Ben on **01502 722488** or Frank on **01502 572472**. Naturally, there will also be a **Bouncy Castle** guarded by **Roger & Elaine Munting**, plus a range of great new amusements like table tennis and table football courtesy of the Freud family.

Pony rides – Supervised by Westons' experienced stable staff.

Children's dog show – Kindly run once again by **Bob and Julie Cronin** with prizes generously donated by Muffets pet supply shop in Southwold High Street. The categories are: 'Best Trained', 'Waggiest Tail', 'Most Interesting Trick', 'Most Entertaining Handling' and 'Best in Show'. The more dogs, the more fun. So bring yours along and register there and then.

Junior Tombola – If you have suitable new or almost new toys, games, books, DVDs etc, the people to ring are **Jim & Teresa Fyfe** on **01986 875641**.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Our entertainment programme, arranged by **Sidi Scott**, is probably our best ever... Our regular **Youth Brass Band**, of course, but would you believe **Belly Dancers!... Rod the wandering magician!... a set of stocks** complete with all the wet sponges you can chuck!... **a dance machine** (whatever next!)... and, not least, **Tracy Marriott and her "Showstoppers" junior dance group** who will give a series of 10 minute performances throughout the afternoon.



WIN WIN!

Grand Draw – Always the highlight of the show. Once again it is being run by **Joy and Michael Venn** and this year the prizes are more exciting than ever, topped by that amazing two-day luxury London theatre break arranged for us by **Jill Freud** (See front page article). The draw will be at about 4.20 pm. As you will have seen, we have enclosed 3 books of tickets for you to sell, buy, return unsold or chuck away. Of course, if you think you can use some more, just ask Joy or Michael on **01502 711707**.

Tombola – Good quality as-new products, preferably in their original packaging, wanted here. It's the ideal 'good home' for those well-meant but unwanted gifts. Call **Paul & Wendy Thompson on 01473 735344** and do try, if possible, to make them available before the opening to allow time for ticketing.

Whisky Draw – Organised and run by **Jack Clayton**. If you'd like to offer him a (full) bottle he'll be more than delighted - **01986 872425**.

Bottle stall – **Marie Holmes** and **Sybil Cave** can use any number of bottles of alcoholic or (healthy) non-alcoholic beverages. A special plea: it really helps if as many bottles as possible could be delivered *before* the opening to give Marie and Sybil time to do the ticketing. All drinkable, in-date bottles are welcome; really nice ones especially so. No unhealthy childrens' pop, though, please. Another helper on the stall would be an asset, too. Call **Marie on 01728 668559** or **Sybil on 01394 385222**.

LET THEM EAT CAKE!

Cake shop – Can you offer to make cakes, biscuits, tarts, flans, buns, scones or pies to deliver fresh on the day? If so, please call **Sue Flack 01502 725396**. (See also 'Refreshments' below.)

Refreshments – **Anthea Marriner** is taking control again this year. The strawberries-and-cream innovation that went down so well last year will be back!. Can you supply the strawbs? Anthea needs at least two more willing helpers throughout the afternoon - ideally four more - and, like Sue Flack in the Cake Shop, relies on as many people as possible baking as many cakes, scones and buns as possible. Also needed are savouries like quiches, sausage rolls etc. If you can help, call Anthea now on **01502 722488**.

Stop me and lick one - Munchies' ice-cream bike will be in attendance for the first time this year. Cool!

BARGAIN HUNT

Picture gallery – If you paint or draw and have one or two pictures you could spare **Barry & Viv Tolfree** would be really grateful. Also, please raid your loft and garage for forgotten paintings, prints and art work of all kinds – framed and unframed. Also very welcome would be the loan of any portable easels to help us display the work. Call **Viv and Barry on 01502 722582**.

Bric-a-Brac – Last year **Ken & Jill Hanham** managed to make this stall look more like the Antiques Roadshow than a junk shop. It's all about display! Every house has loads of bric-a-brac. It's just a matter of recognising it and then calling **Ken & Jill on 01728 453745**.

The Book Browsersy – Managed this year by **Merwyn Cunliffe**. You're bound to have plenty of books to donate, so please call **01394 382199**.

Sound and Vision Store - DVDs, videos, CDs. Go and thin out your collection right now and call **Peter & Wendy Gibbs 01502 723390**

The Garden store – Not just plants and garden tools but garden and home produce, too - whether it's jams, chutneys, honeys or dried flowers. Now's the time to start potting up those spare seedlings and fledgling tomato plants. And what about clearing out those unused tools and pots from the shed? Call **Doris & Clive Brynley-Jones 01502 724592**.

Jill's 'Special Stall' - You'll be surprised what Lady Freud has found in her attic!

WHAT FRIENDS NEED TO KNOW...

Date - Sunday 27 June 2010

Venue - **Westons** - on the left as you drive into Walberswick. Just follow the Clown signs.

Opening times - Gate opens at 1pm for a 1.30 official opening by Lady Freud. Grand Draw is at approximately 4.20. Fête closes at 4.30.

Master of Ceremonies - Our own **Sidi Scott** (Sound system kindly provided by Nick Westwood)

On-site parking and entry charges - The car park at Westons will be open from 12 noon. The charge for the day will be £3 (the same as the village car park). The parking fee includes entry to the fete for all the car's occupants (including one fête programme). Entry for pedestrians is 50p including programme.

Stall holders and helpers...

Parking is free, naturally! After off-loading, please park at the FAR END of the field. Stall holders can start setting up their pitches at 10.30 am which should give them ample time for a break for lunch before being back at their stalls by 1pm.

Donors

Stall holders are grateful for donations at any time - even on the day. But if at all possible, it does make their job easier if goods arrive in advance. This is especially the case with donations for the bottle stall and tombola where preparing tickets takes time and can be difficult to complete when the stalls get busy.

STOP PRESS

General Manager Peter Adshead needs more volunteers to help front-of-house this season. Could you lend a hand - on the bar, at the raffle table, in the foyer? Even if you can only commit to the occasional evening, call Peter on 07930 530 948 or have a word with him at the Members' Evening at Westons on Friday 25 June from 6.30 pm.



UPDATE FROM 2009 FESPA BURSARY RECIPIENT EMMA LOUISE BENNETT

A regular Summer Theatre ASM, Emma began her first year of the Drama Course at Exeter University last September with a small but useful bursary from FESPA. Here is her update.



My first two terms have been really enjoyable. The course has been so different from what I had expected - and a lot harder! But it has been so interesting.

In both terms we have had a theoretical module in which we have looked at just about every aspect of theatre, including the economics. We have also had one practical module each term; last term it was 'Acting and Not Acting' which culminated in a group of us devising a 15-minute piece.

This term our module is 'Research and Performance'. My group is focusing on Carnival. Just this Sunday we had our final first-year performance which was a 40-minute devised piece titled 'Feast of Fools' in which we had to use everything we had learnt. A group of us used Commedia Dell'Arte characters for our inspiration and I was a zanni or servant. (I'm the one in the front on the left! It was a highly physical piece and the performance day was exhausting with more than four performances as well as a get-in and get-out.

As our course is based on continual assessment we don't have exams next term. Instead we have a 'third term committee' whereby we can put on a variety of performances (just for drama students) and get work experience to broaden our CVs.

This year has really been a foundation year with no choice in our modules but it has been interesting



to look at things which I don't think I would have chosen on my own. I am looking forward to next year and to focusing more on my own interests.

One of the reasons I chose Exeter's drama department was what I saw as its friendliness and this has definitely proved true. Initially friends in halls kept saying they thought drama was going to be an easy subject, but I have had at least double the number of working hours of most of my friends.

Outside our course I became involved as ASM in a production of Mary Chase's *Harvey* by EUTCO (Exeter University Theatre Company) which was staged in February at the Exeter Northcott. My job was to find props at the cheapest possible prices and also to help paint sets in a freezing-cold warehouse. It was a great experience, though, especially as I was one of the few freshers involved in the production and it enabled me to talk to the second and third years about our course. They have been so helpful and friendly, advising me on modules to take next year and lending me books for my essay work.

Harvey was great fun but extremely tiring as the get-out lasted until 3am. Luckily that week was my 'reading week', meaning I was able to sleep during the day. Seeing the set progress from flats on the warehouse floor to being put up in the Northcott gave us all a sense of satisfaction, especially as it was all our own work. I learned a variety of new skills from wallpapering to attaching skirting boards and architraves. I definitely don't think that I would have got a role on the production if it wasn't for my previous experience at Southwold.

The bursary has been of great help as it has enabled me to see a variety of productions both at the Northcott and at the Phoenix. I have also used some of the money to put a deposit on a student house for next year which is certainly a weight off my mind.

WHISTLE-STOP TOUR SUCCESS FOR *THE LADY VANISHES*

The production was launched at the 2008 Summer Season and became famed for Maurice Rubens' amazing animated train. This winter, with sponsorship from FESPA, it was taken on a nationwide tour by its director, Mark Sterling and his company, Triode Productions. Mark reports...

The show starred Penelope Rawlins and Clive Flint from the original production and also featured Summer Season stalwarts, Jane Evers as Miss Froy, Andrew Bone as Clive's double-act partner, Caldicott and Nia Davies as Gladys. We were fortunate to secure Darrell Brockis, as the romantic lead, Gilbert, and Terry Molloy as the villainous Dr Hartz. Terry, known for his roles as Mike Tucker in *The Archers* and Davros in *Dr Who*, was a great asset to us as he was interviewed by the media in every town we visited. (Terry is also in this year's Summer Season. See opposite.)

After two weeks of very cold rehearsals in Southwold, the show took to the road, opening at Hull New Theatre (also very cold!) on 2nd February. Although it was the largest theatre we played, the show sat very well on the stage and managed to attract audiences to rival those of Nigel Havers in *Rebecca* a few years before. Our review, in *The Hull Daily Mail*, praised the performances and thought the play "possessed all the hallmarks of a Hitchcock thriller".

The following week saw us in Winchester at The Theatre Royal - a smaller stage and a smaller auditorium - but the set proved its versatility. Helped by a review in *The Winchester Daily Echo* ("gripping, genuinely funny and a huge success") we achieved 84% capacity over the week's run.

However, the train hit the buffers in Newcastle: The Journal Tyne Theatre is a huge Victorian Theatre with genuine stage machinery but its play-going audience is also a thing of the past and, despite a good review ("combines intrigue and suspense with drama and comedy and it is wonderfully nostalgic") the total audience was small - though very appreciative.

Steaming down to the south coast, the show opened at Poole

Lighthouse on 23rd February and immediately took-off. The audiences swelled again and everyone had a great time.

For our last two dates it was closer to home. At Chelmsford Civic Theatre and the wonderful Georgian gem of Bury St Edmunds Theatre Royal, we had almost full houses. We achieved the rare accolade of Five Stars from the respected Whatsonstage review website whose critic thought it "extremely clever" and "thoroughly enjoyable".

We closed at Bury to the great sadness of all involved. I hope we succeeded in promoting the virtues of a Jill Freud Company production both within the touring company and to the towns and cities far afield. So, it is with enormous gratitude that I thank FESPA and the many individuals who supported the enterprise. As to the future? We are now planning a new journey for the train starting in spring 2011.

FRIEND, PETER EVANS OF COLCHESTER WRITES...

I thought other members would be interested to hear about the 2008 production of *The Lady Vanishes* on tour. I saw the original version and was interested to see how it had survived. All was well when I went to see it the Civic Theatre in Chelmsford. The house was all but full and they enjoyed it, although the Civic does not have the atmosphere of either Southwold or Aldeburgh.

It always was a good plot and I am still fascinated by the wonderful scene change as a hotel becomes the inside of a train, then turns itself around. Penelope Rawlins remains the heroine and Clive Flint is still Charters to the life. Familiar faces pop up to play other parts. As an *Archers* fan, I was interested to see Terry Molloy (Mike Tucker) in action but it took me a while to realise that he was the over-the-top hotelier as well as the nasty Nazi.

I do enjoy FESPA News, especially the articles on the history of the theatre.

Best wishes, *Peter Evans*