

# FOOTLIGHTS

The Newsletter for Barton Theatre Company

Issue 16: August 2012

## CONTENTS

1. Editorial
2. Summer
3. Quiz
4. Review: Maskerade
5. Dates for your Diary
6. The Curtain Falls



### 1. EDITORIAL

Summer is here at last! Well, it isn't raining *right now*. So of course people will want to take advantage of the good weather (after all it may not last) and do fun things like go on holiday with the family (Are we there yet?). So acting tends to take a back seat

However, that doesn't mean that there's no news to tell you about. There lots of it.

Also just as I was finishing this issue of Footlights, I found out that there was a play on that I really wanted to see. I managed to get tickets for the Last Night

so you lucky people get a last minute review.

There's also the customary quiz. I'm afraid it was inevitable that it would be sports or Olympics based.

Talking of which did anyone see Sir Kenneth Brannagh, dressed as Brunel, quoting *The Tempest* in the Opening Ceremony? Thespians – we get *everywhere!* Oh, and nice sideburns Ken!

Andrew Nevill (Editor)  
[nevillandrew@gmail.com](mailto:nevillandrew@gmail.com)



### 2. SUMMER

The period between our late spring play and the start of Pantomime rehearsals traditionally tend to be quiet, particularly during the summer holidays in July & August. People tend to be on their holidays which makes rehearsing difficult and as for putting on a production ... That said, we usually manage to do something.

This year is no exception.

But we have to start with what isn't happening.

#### HAIR & MAKE UP WORKSHOP

In the July Extra edition, we mentioned that Brian Cogswell was running a Hair

and Make-up workshop on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June.

Unfortunately, due to personal circumstances, the workshop has had to be cancelled – or at the very least postponed

It will happen! Brian has wanted to do this for ages and the Committee has been trying to make it happen for ages. But something always seems to come up.

Our thoughts and best wishes are with Brian.

Now on to things that are happening

### PINOCCHIO 1<sup>ST</sup> READ THROUGH

Joan Breen has finally finished writing this year's pantomime Pinocchio

Everyone is invited to a 1<sup>st</sup> read through at St Mike's on 6 August at 8.00pm.

It's your chance to get a first look at the panto and decide which part you fancy. Joan's got loads of ideas about what we're going to do and this is your chance to find out what Ms Breen has in store for us all.

One thing that is particularly good is that Joan always writes with Barton in mind, making sure she plays to our strengths. The panto we read that evening won't quite be the panto we actually perform. Joan is always happy to get feedback and ideas. If the idea works Joan will do a re-write to include it.

The read-through is your chance to say, "I think I should do *this*" However, a word of caution. You may be joking when you make your suggestion. But if Joan likes it, *she'll use it anyway*. Be careful what you wish for

Did I mention it should also be a lot of fun?

So please do come down, the more the merrier. If you're at all interested in being in the panto, we'd love to see you and it will give Joan an idea of who's potentially available for casting.

Even if you can't be in the panto, the read through is as much a social occasion as a business one. It would be great to have your company.

### ECCLES WAKES MURAL

For those of you who don't know, the Eccles Mural is a mural that was painted on the side of the Help the Aged shop in Church Street in Eccles town centre.

It was a much loved feature of the town until October 2012 when following essential repair works, the mural had to be painted over.

But with advice from the original artist, Ed Povey, a new version of the Mural has been commissioned by the Eccles Rotary Club. Now the Mural graces Church Street once again.



The new Wakes Mural.  
Picture from <http://www.salfordonline.com>

On Saturday 1 September, there will be a celebration of the Mural. The Rotary club will doubtless be there along with Civic officials – and Barton Theatre Company.

We've been asked to perform a short piece as part of the celebrations. As the mural is the Wakes Mural, we'll be dusting off the acclaimed Eccles Wakes piece we performed as part of the Bridgewater Canal celebrations – but, our source informs us, with a tweaks.

So all we need now is some people take part! It should be a lot of fun! I've taken part in many of the community based shows that we've done and always enjoyed it. People are always appreciative and it's a

different experience to being on a theatre stage.

If you'd like to take part, please contact Elly Hayton ASAP. Elly's email is [ehayton@excite.com](mailto:ehayton@excite.com).

Even if you can't be involved, it sounds like it should be really a fun afternoon and it would be marvellous to have a few people come and support our actors

Salford Online has the full story of the mural and a video here. [http://www.salfordonline.com/localnews\\_page/36786-video:famous\\_eccles\\_mural\\_brought\\_back\\_to\\_life.html](http://www.salfordonline.com/localnews_page/36786-video:famous_eccles_mural_brought_back_to_life.html)

---

### 3. QUIZ

This month's quiz has a sport's theme. I did try to avoid it but with the Olympics it was always a race I was going to lose. See, sports metaphors are even muscling their way into my writing.

All the films below feature a sport which is an event in the London 2012 Olympic Games. Simply match the film to the sport.

- |                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1. The Games             | a) Boxing     |
| 2. Million Dollar Baby   | b) Tennis     |
| 3. When Saturday Comes   | c) Basketball |
| 4. Hard Fast & Beautiful | d) Marathon   |
| 5. O                     | e) Football   |

For the gold medal – one of the films is a contemporary version of a Shakespeare play. Name the film and the play it's based on

---

### 4. REVIEW: MASKERADE

Isn't the Internet wonderful? (By the way, it was brilliant to see Sir Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web in the Olympic opening ceremony) With the Internet and websites like Facebook, your friends can, for example, post about the show they saw Friday night that you didn't even know was on, but if you had known it

was you'd have gone and seen it. With Google you can find out that the Last Night of the play was last night (Saturday). With Online Booking you and a friend can still get tickets. You haven't missed out!

What Bev and I didn't miss out on was Stockport Garrick Theatre's performance

Terry Pratchett's *Maskerade*, adapted by Stephen Briggs. The plot centres on two of Terry's most popular characters, the witches Granny Weatherwax and Nanny Ogg.

Granny is bored. Nanny knows that a bored witch... well, they could start cackling and making people *think* they've been turned into frogs. A bored witch might do *anything*!

So Nanny lets Granny persuade her that they need to go to the big city, just to check up in a friendly way, definitely *not* interfering, on local girl Agnes Nitt who's run away to become a singer at the Ankh Morpork Opera House.

But the witches and Agnes find that all is not well. There's a killer ghost stalking the corridors, and a mysterious stranger is giving singing lessons. As they investigate a mystery that has *some* similarities with a popular West End musical, they'll discover that the ghost isn't the only one wearing a mask.

The setting for the play was the beautiful art deco style Plaza Theatre which doubled magnificently for the fictional opera house. The set itself was minimal with scenery representing seating areas, a box and an office in the opera house with a curtained off area that could be opened up to represent various other places. The large stage was used effectively.

The only problem with the set was with the curtained off area. The curtains were black gauze which became transparent under light and moved easily. Scene changes made behind the curtains whilst the action proceeded could be seen to be taking place and at times this was distracting. Heavier curtains would have solved this.

The main challenge with *Maskerade* is that there are several scenes in multiple

locations particularly in the first act. This means many scene changes which can lead to the play losing pace – and with it the audience. This was solved to some degree by having the changes covered by appropriate music and the scene changes themselves were mostly quick and efficient. That said though there were at occasions where the audience seemed to stare at an empty stage for some time.

Casting was excellent with everyone physically looking as you'd expect the characters to. Acting and characterisation was excellent across the board. The stand out was Anji McGregor's Nanny Ogg who made a superb 'disgusting old baggage' (to quote Terry's description of Nanny). Anne Davies made a very good Granny Weatherwax but at times needed to be a little nastier. Lucy Barker as Agnes Nitt was also very good but could have played some of the lines with a little more sarcasm.

With a large ensemble cast, this review would take forever if I picked everyone out. However, Keziah Ford deserves a mention. Her Christine was the perfect airhead – just as she should be.

Costume was also very good. A highlight was when Granny posed as a rich opera patron. Past productions I've seen usually put Granny in an elaborate evening dress. Here she wore a sophisticated black and silver (she is a witch) Thirties style Flapper dress complete with feather in a headband that was perfectly in tune with the art deco surroundings.

The only discord was that when portraying the Ghost (in full evening dress) part of the actor's regular costume could be seen. The observant may well have been able to guess the mystery at the heart of the play.

Overall this was an excellent production and a brilliant night's entertainment which Bev and I thoroughly enjoyed. Whilst we

might have a few minor quibbles, these are because Bev and I are huge Pratchett fans and we've definite ideas on how the characters should be portrayed. With the technical stuff, we probably only spotted

them because when you're involved in drama yourself, it's hard to completely switch off and not look to see to how it's being done (especially when you've got the reviewer's hat on too).

---

## 5. DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Barton Theatre Company Dates:  
**Hair and Make-Up Workshop -**  
CANCELLED

### **Pantomime**

*1<sup>st</sup> Read Through:* Monday 6 August – St Mike's – 8.00 pm  
*Set Build:* Sunday 2 December 2012, Salford Arts Theatre  
*Performance:* 6 – 9 December 2012.  
Matinees 8 – 9 December, Salford Arts Theatre

### **Committee Meeting:**

15 August 2012 – 8pm – Elly's House

### **Eccles Wakes Mural**

*Performance:* Saturday 1 September.  
Event starts 1:30pm - Church Street, Eccles

*Rehearsals* – To be confirmed

### Smiths Bite Size Theatre

Organised Chaos Productions presents

### **Bottled Wasps**

October 2012

Details to Follow

<http://www.smithsrestaurant.net>

### Salford Arts Theatre:

No current listings on website

<http://salfordartstheatre.com>

### Edgefold Players

No current listings on website

<http://www.edgefoldplayers.co.uk/>

---

## 6. THE FINAL CURTAIN

That's all for this edition of Footlights.

With thanks to Elly Hayton for contributing the information regarding the Eccles Wakes Mural.

**Contributions:** Always welcome. Please submit to the email address below. You will receive full ~~blame~~ credit for anything used in the newsletter.

**Subscription information:** If you know someone who would like to receive Footlights, please send their email address to me (with their permission) or ask them to email me at the address below

### **If you no longer wish to receive**

**Footlights** please send an email to the address below and I will remove you from the mailing list.

### **Quiz Answers:**

1. d
2. a
3. e
4. b
5. c

The contemporary version of a Shakespeare play was film 5 – O. It's a retelling of Othello

**Contact Information:**

Email: [nevillandrew@gmail.com](mailto:nevillandrew@gmail.com)

Barton Theatre Company Committee  
Chair: Brian Cogswill, Treasurer: Elaine  
Hayton, Secretary: Andrew Nevill  
Officers: Joan Breen, Beverley  
Greenhalgh, David Milne, Janet Johnston,  
Val Ridings

Web: <http://www.bartontheatre.co.uk>

All opinions are those of the author and  
not necessarily those of Barton Theatre  
Company, its associates and affiliates

Copyright Andrew Nevill 2012. All Rights  
Reserved. All Wrongs Revenged