



1 Chadwick Street, Marple,
Cheshire, SK6 7AX
Tel: 0161 427 0317

newsletter@carvertheatre.co.uk



Newsletter October 2020

STOP PRESS!! STOP PRESS!!

We are planning to have a virtual catch up soon with members over Zoom. If you need any guidance on how to set up and get onto Zoom please drop us a line at stage@carvertheatre.co.uk or registrar@carvertheatre.co.uk

Would you like a monthly newsletter while we are in lockdown? [Click here if you do!](#)

New ONLINE content in the Carver Talking Theatre. [Click on the link below.](#)
Build a House of Happiness. Sheryl Haydock-Howorth revives a very dear memory

Chair's Blog

Whilst it is so sad we have been unable to create any live theatre since March (gosh - doesn't Veronica's Room seem a very long time ago), we are starting to see some Carver-related activity that we want to share with all members.

Many of you have already watched and listened to some of the content that is appearing on 'Carver Theatre on-line' via the website. It has made me chuckle and shed a tear. Thank you to all who have been involved so far and I know the production team are very keen to do more - so get in touch on

production@carvertheatre.co.uk, especially if you have skills in videography and/or are keen in acting in these mini-productions.

We have taken the opportunity to move to improve safety at the theatre and have obtained planning permission (thanks to Richard Rhodes for all your work on this one) for an additional fire door from the 'ladies' dressing room and are currently getting prices for this to be installed (see Richard's update).

Many of you will be aware that a local resident, Andrea Watson, set up a crowd funding campaign during the early lockdown period to raise funds for the survival of the Regent Cinema and the Carver Theatre. We received our share of just over £4000 in August and are so grateful for the support of our local community. As we are fortunate to have relatively few running costs (which have been supported by a government grant) we have decided we will put the money towards a capital project that improves the experience of our patrons, possibly to make the building more accessible.

Just before the additional Stockport lockdown rules the Exec completed a COVID risk assessment of the building, looking initially to start to open up for stage and maintenance work, rehearsals (in groups of six) and theatre-related meetings. If everyone obeys the rules, we now have a 'COVID-friendly' environment, though I am sure, with the rising rates of COVID, many won't feel safe yet to re-start these activities.

You will have received a separate communication from Alan about what to do should you wish to do some activity in the theatre building. Whilst we can't plan for a theatre re-opening to the public just yet, we are constantly reviewing the situation with the guidance from the helpful Little Theatre Guild. We will rise again.

All the best to all, and stay safe.

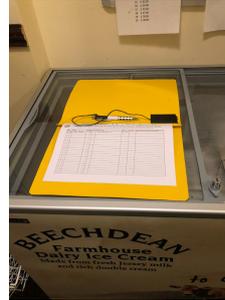
Joanna

COVID SAFETY

Pre-registry of Attendance



Register on Entry



Hand Sanitizers



Safety Guidance Posters



Restricted Toilets



Paying Our Respects



Brian Hargreaves

Sadly Brian passed away at home on 24 August. Brian had a long association with the theatre. If you have any memory snippets you would like to share please write to newsletter@carvertheatre.co.uk Many thanks to those members who sent letter of support to Kariss.



Laurie Finnerty has joined the Carver Theatre family. Laurie is keen to act and help out where he can. Please welcome Laurie.

Members in Lockdown

The following article was written covering the first few months of lockdown (which now seems a distant memory!!) but I thought that you might still enjoy reading how we in the Smith household tried to get to grips with the 'new norm' Jenny

The Smiths in lockdown - June 2020.

As we enter yet another week of lockdown and the prospect of spending time with our Carver 'family' seems a long way off, I thought it would be nice to find out how everyone is doing/coping with this new 'way of life' and to that end give you a glimpse of life in the Smith household during this unique period.

On the whole, I think we're not doing too badly - 'Himself' is abiding by the self isolation rules (being over a certain age) and although my work has had to stop in line with social distancing, the garden has never looked so tidy (not a dandelion to be seen - anywhere) and the house never sparkled so brightly (to that end I spent 10 minutes the other day vacuuming the back of the television - well why not!!!). I've P.E'd with Joe Wicks, cooked with Jamie Oliver and created a whole new routine for my day. It has to be said however, that apart from not being able to visit Wickes (the DIY store not the P.E. guru) I'm not sure that Himself has noticed much difference - ho hum!!!



In my efforts at spring cleaning the house I've also been delving into the dark recesses of the drinks cupboard - now, come on, admit it - I'm not the only one opening those long forgotten bottles of booze now that going out to Tesco is such a tedious pastime - but can you beat this ?..... I have been using, to marinate our 'healthy' fruit salads, a bottle of banana liqueur bought in 1993 after a holiday to Antigua (bought in an attempt to recreate some cocktail or other if memory serves!!) I haven't yet re-visited the 85% proof Antiguan rum (purchased from the same holiday) or the bottle of strawberry Pimms (revolting) that are skulking in the same cupboard, but who knows how long this lockdown may last!

We have taken the concept of social distancing very seriously here at No2, however, with Himself spending a large proportion of the last few weeks on the roof, as can be seen in these photos.



Please note I did put the ladders back each evening so he could come down for his tea!!!



And with so much extra time on our hands we've started playing charades - with a twist- rather than mime a book, film or play you have to dress up in such a way as to depict it - as you can see from the photo below, Himself is putting a lot of time and effort into 'busting' the film he is portraying ... no?- answer at the end of the article!



But just in case you think that lockdown has been one endless barrel of laughs here in the Smith house, new skills are being learned – not for us the run of the mill Zoom ‘conferences’ or InstaApp-Snapchat chats (whatever they are!!) but Himself has been receiving some online horological tuition from the Carver’s very own Mr Tinsey and in the very near future I hope we will have a clock that tick tocks rather than tock ticks!

We have also been trying to keep our cultural tanks topped up awaiting the re opening of our lovely little theatre and to this end Himself has even consented to watch a couple of the ‘NT At Home’ broadcasts with me, namely ‘One Man Two Guvnors’ and ‘Frankenstein’ – although comments have been varied, notably regarding the former “well I’m glad I didn’t pay to see that ” (please insert your own adjective), I’m sure James Corden will be devastated if he ever gets to hear.....

So that was life for us at the start of all this madness and there were days I can tell you when the trials of Sisyphus seemed trivial in comparison, what I’d have given to shove that rock up hill instead! But looking back I tried to decide what (if anything) we’d learnt during the initial phase of lockdown and came to the following conclusions:- don’t watch/ listen to the news (or indeed any media outlet) unless you have a repeat prescription for Prozac to hand, this caused more stress in our house than anything else and in fact we now actively don’t watch any sort of ‘news’, so negative has been the coverage, and at times like these you learn what truly constitutes friendship and support from those around you.

Take care, stay safe and see you on the other side of all this - **Jenny xxxxx**

(oh by the way, in case you didn’t guess it – the film being depicted by ‘Himself’ was ghost busters – the original of course)

If you want more instalments from Jenny click [here](#)

Carver Talking Theatre



We hope that you remain safe and well during these difficult times.

While we remain closed we have developed an online approach - Carver Theatre Online - with a number of productions which might be of interest.

Build a House of Happiness.
Sheryl Haydock-Howorth revives a very dear memory

Blessed with the NHS. Performed by The Carver Juniors & families,

A Lady of Letters. Adapted from Alan Bennett's Talking Heads. Performed by Pauline Rowe.

The Last Bus to Whitby. Written by Martin Paul Roche. Performed by Julian Winstanley

Breaking the Routine. Written by David Lodge. Performed by Tonia Williams.

The Beggar. A short poem to make you think... Performed by Pauline Rowe.

If you're involved in the Talking Theatre please drop Gerard a line at stage@carvertheatre.co.uk or Pauline at production@carvertheatre.co.uk

The Carver Theatre Team

Theatre Improvements

Our Building

One of the unexpected issues associated with the effect of Covid-19 on our activities has been a tussle (i.e. protracted correspondence!) with our Insurers regarding them maintaining full insurance cover on what they are classifying (incorrectly) as a potentially "unoccupied" building. We are not alone in this, owners of other theatres and similar buildings are experiencing similar difficulties with their insurers.

To maintain our full insurance cover, we have agreed to undertake at least one full working day's activities in our theatre each month; such activities can be split into 3 or 4 separate visits if need be. The purpose is to give our building and its services what you might call a thorough "workout". This is in addition to the weekly visual inspections which are being carried out by Exec members.

Obviously we need to keep a record of these activities for insurance purposes, which is another reason for the booking in/out system initiated for the more obvious Covid-19 related health and safety measures we have put in place for members' safety. And of course such activities will need to comply with the government's ongoing decrees/regulations; currently we understand that building maintenance and anything that can be classified as "work" is a legal activity. At the time of writing (Sunday), social activities are under review, under review, under review.....

continued...

Maintenance and Associated Improvement Work

We would like to compile a list of specific maintenance and improvement jobs to be undertaken during this "downtime" for our theatre, so that we can make the most (legally of course) of what is turning out to look like a protracted "quiet" time for our theatre, away from the pressure of doing such work amidst an ongoing programme of productions. In this way we can get something productive for our theatre out of the pandemic time.

The jobs will be carried out by strictly limited numbers of pre-booked members at any one time, perhaps 2 or 3 (never alone), following any safety measures described in the COVID Risk Assessment.

Members are invited to suggest tasks they feel would be useful to carry out; please email me at facilities@carvertheatre.co.uk.

New Basement Fire Door

You will recall that the Exec took the decision to install an additional external fire exit door in the Ladies Dressing Room, opening onto Chapel Fields. Planning Permission has been received, the Building Regulations application is in hand and quotations have now been received for the building work and a builder will shortly be appointed.



Richard Rhodes

As many of you will know I am involved with the GMDF all of which keeps me in touch with many of the people outside of the Carver who are involved with amateur theatre. You may also be aware that I have been getting heavily involved in producing theatre on the Internet.

Why am I telling you this - well several months ago I was talking with my old friend Mike Lawlor. Many of you will remember him from shows at the Carver and other theatres. Mike was determined to not lose the festive spirit just because panto could not be put on in the conventional way. He put out a call to the wider amateur theatre world to see if anyone had any ideas. It became clear that we probably would not be able to do anything in front of an audience. Which led to us discussing the practicality of doing a mini 'National Theatre' and live streaming a show over the Internet.

Those of you who still bear the emotional and mental scars of 'Fairy Susan' from a few years back will be delighted to hear that my involvement is on the technical side of the show only.

The plan is to create a celebration of the magic of panto without doing a panto in the normal sense. Mike wrote a script highlighting many of the things we all love in panto and uses the experience of the few people who contacted him back in the summer. Then we ran into a problem, that grew into a major problem. No suitable stage to perform on. By now I was heavily involved so I asked the Carver Exec if Mike and I could use our stage in Marple assuming we kept to the relevant health and safety guidelines.

The Exec kindly agreed for which Mike wanted to thank the Carver by promoting that it was being done in conjunction with the Carver even though it is not a Carver production.

At about this time it occurred both to Joanna and I that perhaps there could be a role for some of the Carver Juniors. Matt Kayes, Mike Lawlor and I have worked out how we can involve some of the juniors as a chorus without breaking the limits on numbers. We are going to film them separately and merge their parts into the live show.

Mike has recently added a short scene for two new characters called Smash and Grab. We are looking for two 'not so bright' actors, so if you are interested in either acting or helping with clearing and preparing the stage please get in touch with me by email at gerard@lennoxonline.net

There will be just one performance on Saturday the 12th of December, filmed and streamed live (except for the pre-recorded juniors' scenes) with an invited virtual audience who will be heard on the soundtrack.

The original plan was to make all this available on the Internet for free but there will be some costs for costumes and other expenses. Rather brilliantly Mike is experimenting with a crowd funding initiative. The plan is that anything raised above the direct expenses of putting on the show will be donated to the Carver to be distributed within the amateur theatre community.

It is not panto as we know it, but it will be a fun evening. Both Mike and I thank the Carver for providing the stage so we can keep the magic of panto alive.

Gerard Lennox



And Finally



GMDF are planning ahead...

Outdoor theatre when you can't plan to be indoors. [Click here to contact GMDF.](#)

Stay home! Stay safe! Live theatre!

Contact Us



[Visit Our Website](#)

**The Carver Theatre
1 Chadwick Street
Marple
SK6 7AX**

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