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

newsletter@carvertheatre.co.uk



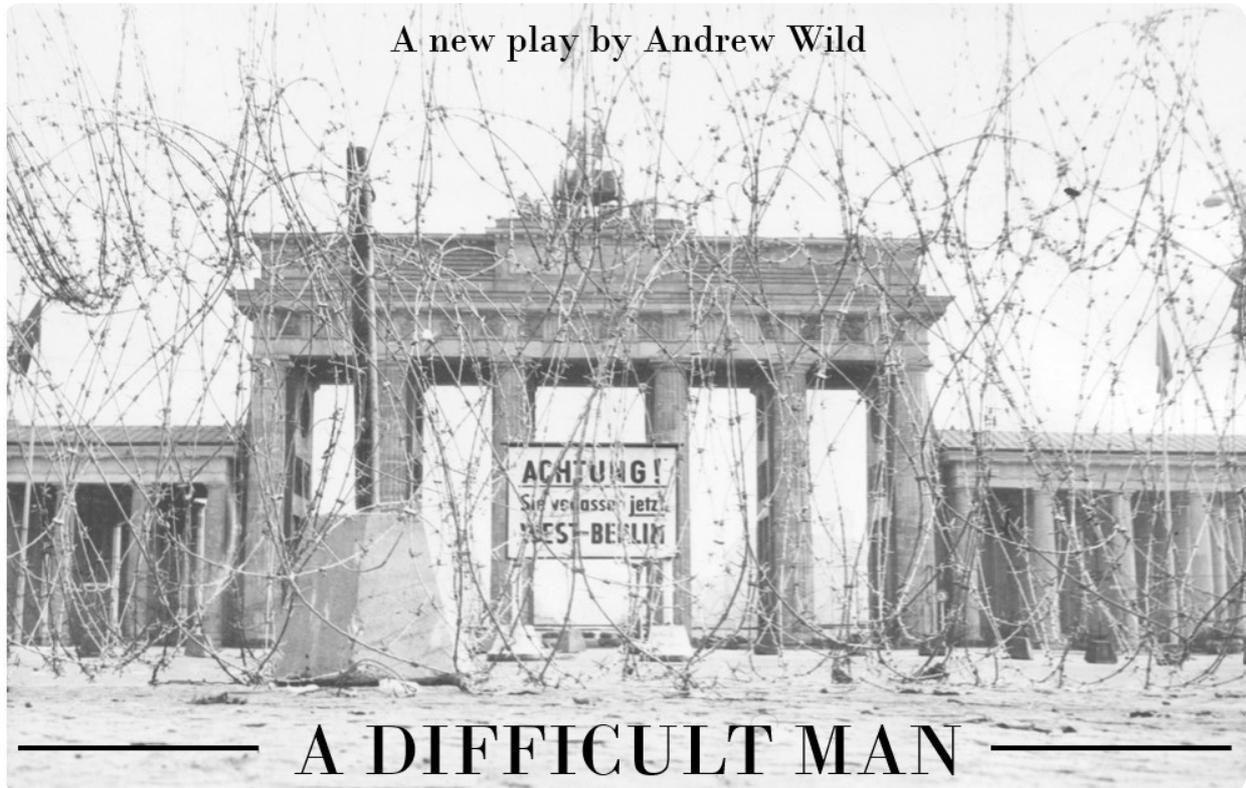
Newsletter May 2021

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STOP PRESS !!

We need volunteers for the first post-lockdown show with our Juniors on 25th and 26th June 2021. Please take a look at carverhelpers.co.uk. Remember you need to log in to this (separate from main site) to be able to volunteer. These dates may change if the government changes the plans for lockdown.

Andrew Wild wins Carver 2021 One Act Playwriting Competition

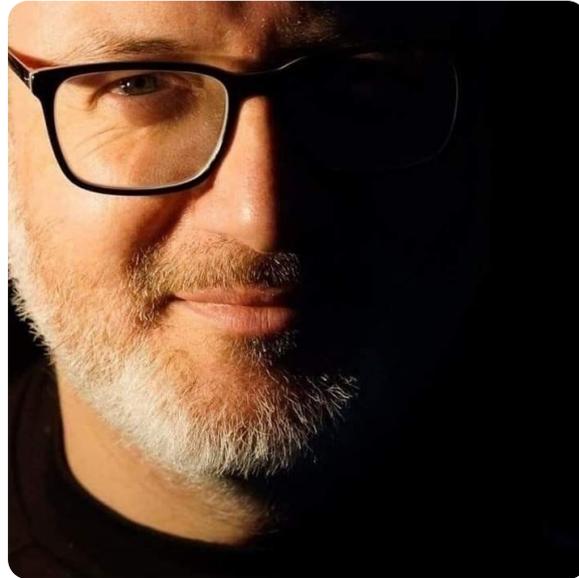


'A Difficult Man'

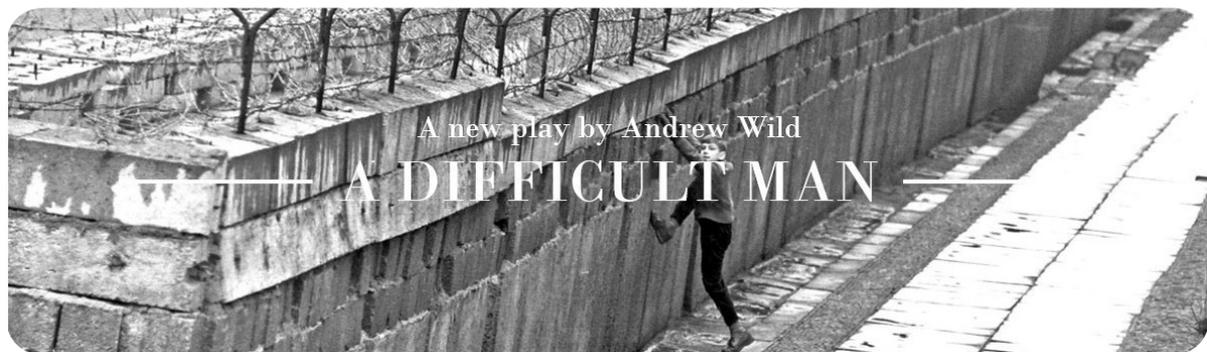
Surely not! But that's the title of the winning entry in our recent one act competition.

Andy is a worthy and modest winner insisting that "there's plenty of work to be done in polishing the script and working out the moves and cues" - but that is just what the Judges were looking for in a winning play. 'A Difficult Man' will go into production as soon as Covid restrictions are lifted.

The author Andrew Wild is well known in local theatre circles as an adjudicator with GMDF. His experience in amateur theatre began in 1991, as stage manager and technical designer for a number of local groups in south Manchester and east Cheshire. His play *The Difficult Crossing* debuted in 2000 and was revived in 2011, Andy's first production as director. Since then Andy has directed a number of shorter, studio productions, preferring the immediacy and intimacy of smaller performing spaces. His directing experience is also evident in his writing and this tightly focussed, compact and engaging play, set mostly in East Berlin, will make a visual and technical challenge for the Carver Production Team.



Congratulations to Andy and thank you to all for your various contributions.



Obituary for Bernice Yates

In mid-March 2021 we lost one of the Carver Theatres's best-loved and talented members, Bernice Yates.

Though you couldn't detect a West Country accent, Bernice was born in Bristol in 1945, the middle child of Jack and Madge Bisacre, Jack an engineer at Rolls Royce aero engines. Bringing up 3 children at that time, spare money was not abundant, but from the age of 8, Bernice went to speech and drama lessons.



She won many awards for her performances including one in the Welsh language. This aroused an interest that would be sustained all her life. She also took ballet lessons and when 14 was chosen to dance with the Royal Ballet in their Bristol production of Coppélia. At 16 she was auditioned by the BBC but told to get involved with a dramatic society to get some experience and then re-apply.

Instead she married Mike in 1963, shortly after her 18th birthday and moved to Romiley, then in Cheshire and joined the first of many dramatic societies, Romiley Little Theatre. She remembered the years with them as some of the happiest and funniest years of her life. There were a couple of house moves during the 1960s leading to involvement in both the St Austell Players and Amersham Players. One notable role was in Amersham was Anne Frank in The Diary of Ann Frank. One scene involved a fight with her stage brother, a young man of 17. At this point she was pregnant with her second daughter Alison and after the first night was concerned that this young man was more than a bit realistic with his fighting so had a word with his dad. The next night he was too frightened to even touch her and she had to instigate the action by pulling him to the ground.

Bernice's association with the Carver Theatre in Marple (or just 'Carver' which is what she would have said) began in the 1970s. She performed brilliantly in over 100 productions, as well as directing. Her pantos were award-winning (on more than one occasion) and her famous 'no smut!' ensured the productions were truly family-friendly affairs. She had a way of making every child in the panto feel special. As well as her acting and directing roles she stepped up to 'steer the ship' spending many years as Secretary and the Production Secretary with an eye on making sure the Carver's productions were as close to professional standard as humanly possible. She was a role model for younger female actors, as describe so eloquently by one of our members, Jess Sanchez:

"If you are a 'female' in theatre' you will know that sometimes they can feel like your only role is to be the 'damsel' , make sure you look good and your wig stays on straight. Whilst blokes get to play the hero or the complex lead parts. And growing up you thought that it was the men that got to be the director, the stage manager or the person running the lighting board.

Then you meet these women in your local theatres who are directing the shows, being a heard voice on the committees, playing those roles that are complex, hard hitting and challenging your views on what it is to be "A Woman in Theatre".

One of those women was sadly lost this week, I hope that she knew what an incredible mentor she was to other "Women in Theatre" and her standing out from the crowd made it just that bit easier for those who followed.

Thank you, Bernice, from one woman following your cue."



Bernice will be missed by all who knew her.

Joanna Bircher
Chair of Carver Theatre Exec committee.

If you are wanting to attend the memorial service for Bernice at 2:00pm on 24th July at St Martin's Parish Church, Brabyns Brow and have NOT already let Dr Mike Strivens know, please do so at treasurer@carvertheatre.co.uk

Production Update

LET'S TAKE THE LETHARGY OUT OF LOCKDOWN!

We are delighted to announce that *Salt of the Earth* (written by John Godber) will be our first new season production on the Carver Stage this year. Eight performances will take place between Friday 8th October – Saturday 16th October 2021.

We are so happy to be back, treading the boards and rehearsing.

Salt of the Earth----The action takes place in the Yorkshire mining villages of Upton and South Kirkby. This compelling saga spans three generations, from 1947 to 1980's It vividly captures the dreams, ambitions, joys, fears, heartaches and disappointments of the Parker sisters, Annie and May, whose hopes centre on May's son, Paul, and his academic success.

Chair Blog

Just a brief note from me this month as you will be hearing from other Exec members in this newsletter about the progress we are making towards re-opening and some of the early plans for a 2021/22 season.

Thanks again to all those (have to say especially Keith Frazer) for doing a great job with a paint brush. The men's dressing room has never looked so good. Was thrilled to pop in and see the good work last weekend. Richard Rhodes and I were trying to reassemble the carpet tiles in the ladies dressing room (after the new fire door we reconfigured the sinks and somehow managed to make the smaller side of the dressing room appear twice the size it was). This proved to be a bigger challenge than we had thought as the tiles all seemed to have grown. Lots more storage there too now for shoes and bags to be tucked away in cupboards which should be a godsend during panto.

As well as this we now have a new broadband provider with much faster and wider coverage across the theatre. The edges of the building have also been weeded and sprayed, so it looks loved again.

I wanted to ask those of you who like to help out front of house if you could have the dates of 25-26th June on 'standby' to help with the Junior Show. Clearly things are still uncertain, but currently all is on track for them for to present 3 performances (Friday night and two on Saturday) at least to a limited audience of friends and family. The dates are already on the Carver Helpers volunteering website assuming, all goes to plan. Fingers crossed.

All the best to all, hope to see you soon 'in real life' and stay safe.

Joanna
Chair

Membership Update



Becky Woolstencroft joins us wanting to act and help build and run a show. Welcome Becky.

Sue Stagg also joins us wanting to act and help behind the scenes or front of house. Welcome Sue.

Victoria Mackie also joins us wanting to act but is heavily pregnant just at the minute ("unless a pregnant woman is required for a role soon," she says). Welcome Victoria.

Alan
Registrar

Carver Juniors

The Show Must Go On 2021 and being “A little bit naughty” in 2022.

After over a year of strange times we have been living in, we have been able to shine a little bit of normality into the Carver Juniors lives. Carver Juniors COVID safe workshops have returned and safely rehearsing for a summer show based on extracts from various Schools Musicals Company shows. These have been made free to be used to get people back into Theatre.

Understandably not all Juniors wished to return this side of September which we fully appreciate but 17 were chomping at the bit to do something. The Show Must Go On 2021 was born. The set is up, lighting and sound going in with a little bit of painting left to finish it off. Providing the COVID rules do not change we will be staging it in the Theatre on Friday 25th and Saturday 26th June. Tickets will be available soon.....watch this space.

Sadly, we may have to limit the number available based on any social distancing. Whoever manages to get to watch it live will be in for a real treat. The Juniors are doing a fantastic job and most important of all having fun being back together.

Due to lockdown, all the rules and wanting all the 40+ juniors to take part, we have moved the summer show of Sherlock and Cinders to June 2023. Why 2023 you may ask? Well as the title of this newsletter article suggests we have been “A little bit naughty” and have managed to secure the rights for Matilda Jr for June 2022. We are all extremely excited about bringing this amazing musical to the Carver Stage. When the Juniors found out they were bouncing with excitement. We have three years of fantastic shows planned!

Who knows what else we can do with the Juniors! No wonder the waiting list to join keeps getting longer.

You will also have seen the Carver Theatre Society rules changed to facilitate a new Youth section at the Carver: this will start in September with more information available soon.

Exciting times are ahead for all the young people in the Theatre.

**Many thanks, Matt on behalf of
The Carver Juniors Team**

Facilities & Building Work



The Gents Dressing Room has had a wonderful facelift thanks to member Keith Frazer. Sincere thanks to Keith for helping with so much of the maintenance this year.

If you would like to join the team keeping our theatre in ship shape please email me at facilities@carvertheatre.co.uk

We still have some other jobs we need to work on (MOST URGENT IN RED) before the theatre re-opens for performances.

These are listed in a Facilities Maintenance task list on our carverhelpers.co.uk volunteer website. Please register your interest in helping and we will then contact you.

Tasks to complete (unless we have volunteers already)

1. Erect a cabinet in the Green Room to store PPE (1 person)
2. New external hoardings for our three poster sites (2 persons/ contractor)
3. ~~Resolve flooring issue in Ladies Foyer Toilet - RR~~
4. Paint Yard gate door (when weather better!) (1 person)

Ladies Changing Room:

1. ~~New Vanity Units (Contractor) W/c 17th May~~
2. ~~Re-fix wall lights (1 person)~~
3. ~~Re-fix mirrors - RR~~

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There are other Stage Team tasks we will need to complete. We will write directly to those registered with the Stage team. If you are interested in joining the stage team please contact Gerard on stage@carvertheatre.co.uk.

**Richard
Facilities**

Some Carver Theatre History

Over my seventy odd years, Marple has changed a great deal and not always for the better! Whilst researching the new theatre proposal I found many interesting photos which illustrated this in relation to our theatre and its surroundings. It was evident from the questions asked after the presentation that many members had no idea what the area surrounding our theatre was like in the 1970's. Which was, of course, before the "tin hut" was cladded and later in 1979 the raked seating installed.

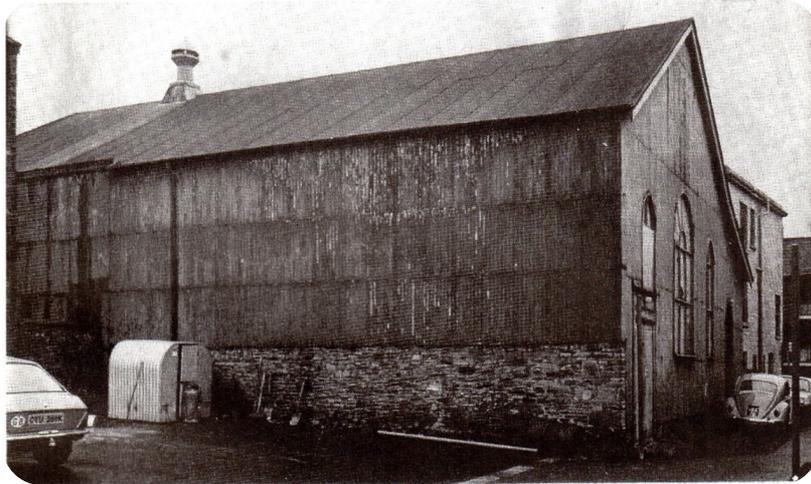


The photo above is very old (date unknown). It was still a private residence at the time before Church Lane was widened

We now jump forward to the early 1970's, it was during this period that a lot of new houses were built around the district. Many older terraced houses were demolished to create a new car park - the original plan by Marple Urban District Council included a new community centre and the demolition of our theatre! Self evidently this part of the plan did not happen. We were lucky, we could have had another Romiley Forum!!!



The above is Chadwick Street during 1970. The building in the foreground is All Saints Parish Hall, it and all the existing terraced houses on the right hand side were demolished together with the back to back terrace at the end of Chapel Fields.

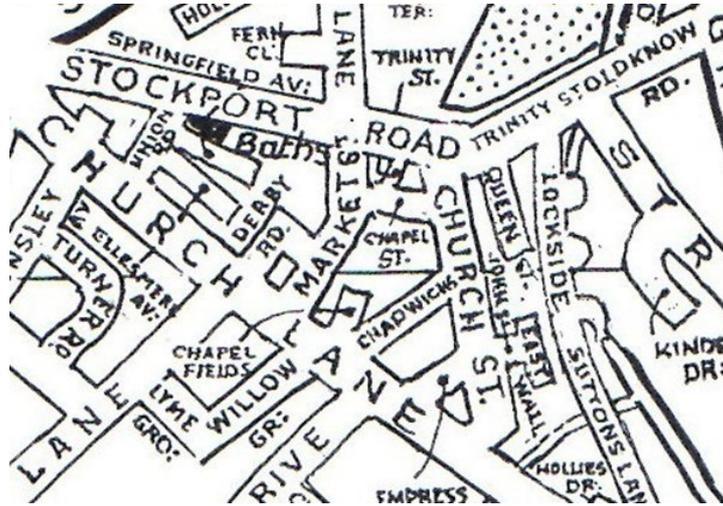


The photo above shows Chapel Fields (looking towards Church Lane) and the Carver at about this time. The windows still exist behind the cladding today ; the remains of one of them can still be seen in the control room.

The large metal vent on the roof was removed much later. But, it also has a story to tell. For many years the wooden part of the building was heated by a vintage coke boiler located in what is now known as the 'Engine Room'. It burnt tons of coke but was hopeless at heating the theatre!

The stage was usually freezing cold when the tabs were closed. When they were opened, most of the heat in the auditorium was drawn out of the building through the vent! Our members and audiences must have been more robust then! The warmest place in the theatre was actually the lighting bridge as the old dimmers acted like electric fires!

The old boiler was replaced by overhead infra-red heaters, this was not a great success as our patrons now had hot heads and cold feet! The present heating was installed in 1979 as part of the auditorium refurbishment.



Chapel Fields has never been a through road (as can be seen from the 1972 map) unless you count the muddy field path to Trinity Methodist Church (hence the name Chapel Fields). Trinity Street is shown on the map twice but it was actually between Stockport Rd and Chapel St, and was only extended to Church Lane when the car park was constructed. As mentioned earlier there was also a row of back to back terraced houses next to the theatre.



Above is a picture of Church Lane before Trinity Street was added.

Hope you enjoyed this little bit of theatre related history.

Credit for photos to:

<https://www.marplelocalhistorysociety.org.uk/>

<https://www.marple.website/local-history/memories-of-hannah-robinson.html>

<http://www.marplecivicsociety.org.uk/>

Andy
Trustee

Members' Contributions

We encourage members to have a go at anything from monologues to poetry and it is great to see a couple of our actors get in on the act. **Click on each image to play video.** Enjoy!

Peter has kindly sent us three monologues, two written by Peter and one by Marriott Edgar.



Written by Peter Gaskell



Written by Peter Gaskell



Written by Marriott Edgar

Julian has sent us a monologue reading too. [Gunner Joe by Marriott Edgar](#).



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