

# Charlton Kings Community Players Newsletter

## December 2013

### Report from the Chair

The year 2013 has been a very busy one for all concerned with the Community Players and we began the year with Let Us Be Merry in January. This always proves to be a popular event as it gives us the chance to offer a whole range of entertainment from musical items, readings and sketches, so hopefully catering for all tastes. As usual we attracted a really good audience who came out to support us on one of the bitterly cold nights of last winter.

Running parallel with putting together the LUBM programme were rehearsals for Peter Grainger's 'A Man for this Season'. This play had been something Peter had wanted to have performed for many years and to have it coming to fruition after many ups and downs was extremely rewarding for all those involved. The performances were held at the end of March, including a matinee, which proved to be very popular, and the audiences they all attracted were fabulous.

Our next event was a social one, a Players Quiz & Music Night that we held in May. Ten teams came along and took part in a really great evening, all put together by the expert quiz master himself – Tim Masling, with musical entertainment provided during the interval by other talented Players: Andy Laver, Luke Drinkwater and Chantal Dent.

By the end of spring, plans for our next major production of the year, The Rivals, was already under-way, following reads through, auditions & final casting, rehearsals started in earnest, culminating in a highly successful production at the end of October. There will be a more detailed article written by the Director of the show in this edition of the newsletter.

Sandwiched between the two planned major shows of the year, a group of Players found time to put together an evening of one-act plays, giving one of them the opportunity to direct a final show before leaving for university. It was decided to set one as a radio play in the style of the old BBC radio plays,

making things slightly easier for the cast as they only had to learn lines for 50% of the programme!

The 39 Steps was chosen as the radio play and turned out to be a great success and really good fun to do.

The Ghost Train provided the other half of the double-bill and this allowed our 'techie' crew, ably led by Peter Ryan, the chance to use gadgets such as smoke machines to their hearts content to give the play lots of atmosphere.

Both shows also gave one person the chance to take to the stage for the first time & this is exactly what we want; to welcome & encourage new Players in whatever capacity they'd like to be a part of, whether it's performing on stage or sharing a particular talent off it.

An important aspect of the Players is our willingness to contribute to events within the community, particularly by providing technical services to other groups throughout the year, at local fetes, concerts etc., so on behalf of the committee and I'm sure lots of other groups in Charlton Kings (and beyond) I'd like to say a massive "thank you" to everyone involved.

As I'm typing this we've just started putting together the final touches to the programme for our second Let Us Be Merry of 2013 which will take place on December 4<sup>th</sup> – we're lucky to have lots of different items due to be performed this year so for all of you who've taken part in whatever capacity to those of you who've come along as a member of the audience to support us; a massive thank you in advance.

Wishing everyone reading this a very Happy & Prosperous New Year with hopes of a productive and successful 2014 for CKCP

**Debbie Masling**

**Chair - CKCP**

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### 'Let Us Be Merry', January 2013

Many thanks to all those who bought raffle tickets at the LUBM 'Winter Gifts' Performance at Sacred Hearts on 30th January. With you buying tickets, local shop traders and members of the performance who kindly donated the prizes, we were able to raise £108. The Community Players then, very kindly, contributed a further £100 from the performance.

The money has been sent to The McCabe Education Trust based in London. They will send all the money to the Al Shurooq School for visually impaired children in Bethlehem. Some of the children come from broken homes, others badly treated, some were on the streets, and some have additional disabilities. It is a residential school. I and other members of St Mary's Church have been to the school in Bethlehem and seen for ourselves how worthy they are of our support. Every penny that is raised goes to one of the schools that are sponsored. I have been raising funds for Al Shurooq School since 2009.

A big thank you from the children and staff, to you, through me.

Joyce Parsons

### Thoughts of Passion – 'A Man For This Season', March 2013



When Andy first asked me to write down my thoughts about 'A Man For This Season' after nine months I thought 'How long have I got?'

It's now four years since it all started and it's turned out to have been a strange sequence of peaks and troughs of emotion, from the impact of 'Josh on Trial' to Pete's (Don's) burst appendix two weeks before the opening night!

And yet, looking back now, each crisis created a completely new and exciting development. From a Catholic's concern that we should not be recognising the 'Resurrection' in Holy Week came Bishop Stephen's beautiful script, Gilbert's sublime composition and playing, and Helen's solo evocation of Mary Magdalene's grief. We thought we had 'no youngsters' but by the end the *majority* of the 'Followers' were actually under 21 – if we include the Crowd Girl's 'conversion' at the end!

But the key memory that stayed with me from the beginning was the ease with which the play materialised, both in terms of the script, the contemporary parallels and the staging in the hall. As a result it seemed that the whole project was 'meant' to happen; surely nothing would stand in its way! When we finally found a way of creating a contemporary 'Crucifixion', thanks to Martin and David's amazing creativity, we had a complete contemporary version...



Clearly my chief memories focus on the performers, and I think I can only highlight them as a sort of kaleidoscope of achievement and thanks. First must be Kieron as 'Josh', not only all those lines (by an amateur writer) to learn, but total dedication and such a moving and convincing performance which held everything together. The patience of all the 'Followers' with an unknown and unstable script, the enthusiasm (and bravery?) of the young people, the resilience and warmth of Don and Helen – wonderful! Then there were the

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team of 'nasties' and the crowd who kept the play so alive later on, that lovely reading and all that technical talent, projecting upstage at ridiculous angles. And then there was Tony, who asked me that first 'commissioning' question and stuck with it all until finally persuaded to perform – memorably! I could of course go on but the main thing is to say 'thank you' to you all for all your commitment and talent.

The results of all those efforts were almost overwhelming, not only from the audience's reaction over the three performances, but from the kind and moving comments you all made in the card you gave me. It is because of all these reactions that my one regret is the lack of coverage in the local Press and the omission of our video from the Cathedral Service last month. But at least we are on the Gloucester Diocesan website... It would be wonderful if all your efforts could bring about a follow-up production next Easter in a community not too far away!

**Peter Grainger**

### 'The Rivals', September 2013



When Tony and I first discussed the production of this play a few years ago little did I wonder just how superb it would be. That it was so is largely due to a number of factors:

- Firstly Tony's unbounded enthusiasm and encouragement for the whole procedure; I certainly could never have managed without him

- Secondly the marvellous support we both had from the team
- The cast, all were magnificent in learning their lines, their portrayal of their characters; their interpretation of their roles and for attending at all the rehearsals; it made my role as director so much easier. They really are to be complemented on what they achieved.



- Thank you Andy Culley and Debbie Masling who managed the Players' costume store so effectively and Sandra Jeans who worked so tirelessly on preparing, making, researching and buying of costumes and accessories from EBay. I am so pleased that a professional commented how good the whole costume design was – richly deserved Sandra.
- Sound and Lighting – Peter was excellent in the calm and efficient way in which he managed the whole part of this area of the production – mostly by himself with support from Tony Jeans, David Brawn, Martin Grinter, Ray Talbot and other friends. Not forgetting the wonderful music played and recorded for us by Carol and Gwilym Davies and Geoff Ramshaw. Peter also augmented and ran the visuals we were so fortunate to have permission to use from local artist and writer, Aylwin Sampson.
- Production Team of Derek Palmer and Sue Vickers ably assisted by Ray Talbot who ensured that the sets, the screens behind which the Actors hid, and the movement of furniture and props for each scene were so well set up and smoothly managed.
- Our Prompter – how June managed to keep her calm I really don't know particularly as Sir A missed out half a page one night – dress rehearsal I think – Thank you June we



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were all very happy that you were there it gave us confidence to carry on.

- The Publicity and Marketing of Joyce Parsons and Lynne Glover together with Photographs by Peter Grainger and Barry Curl.
- Lastly to the whole of the rest of the team, front of house, car parking of Chris Flippance, Nigel Jones and Team; first aid, production team of Fiona Connor and Jane Jones (in addition to her Mrs Malaprop) and to all the Committee so ably led by Debbie Masling who supported Tony and me throughout the whole production. I feel very privileged to have worked with such a wonderful team and I am glad it was so successful.



**Thank you to you all**  
**Martyn Fry**

### Thoughts from a performer

Performing in 'The Rivals', with Charlton Kings Community Players, was a real community affair. The team spirit of the Players is second to none, with young and not quite so young working together in harmony to pull off what proved to be a very challenging play. I really enjoyed working with such talented individuals, both on stage and behind the scenes and the audiences definitely appreciated the final result. In fact, I was stopped by an audience member in the street several days afterwards whom I didn't know, but who wanted to praise the production and tell me what a professional show it had been! Well done everyone and I hope to 'tread the boards' with you again soon!

**Helen Roberts – Faulkland in The Rivals.**

### Drama in the Community – recording history

Members of the Charlton Kings Community Players have been researching and writing up their history of some 20 years from the early roots to their fund raising efforts in the community in 2013. Sandra and Tony Jeans have been co-ordinating and documenting information from the Minutes, Newsletters, Programmes and other papers.

Much of the information has been located in the personal collections of founder members of The Players. It has not been possible to locate some detail, and Sandra and Tony are hoping that, with Issue 1 published, people in the community may be able to fill in the gaps.

The Performance Record is available on CD (estimated cost 50p + postage if a 'by hand' arrangement cannot be made).

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**AGM**  
**Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2014**  
**Baptist Church Lounge**  
**7.30**  
**Come and join us for**  
**refreshments and to share your**  
**ideas**

Website

[www.charltonkingscommunityplayers.com](http://www.charltonkingscommunityplayers.com)