

Charlton Kings Community Players Newsletter

February 2021



The Players' 20th Christmas Show, *'Let Us Be Merry'*, was a virtual production, and was made available world-wide through its YouTube channel. Audiences were treated to a variety of traditional carols and songs, sketches and readings from a variety of locations. These included a Gloucestershire medieval church, a summer garden, a festive fireplace, and cosy living room scenes. Pieces included lovely images of flowers and insects and past snow scenes of St. Mary's church. At one point a peal of St. Mary's bells could be heard. The video will remain available through the Players' web site as part of its portfolio of productions. Its detailed programme, with full acknowledgements, is available also from the site.



Have you discovered how easy it is to revisit particular items by the helpful menu available under the YouTube screen (when not in full screen) which provides time links?
It's so easy to listen to a particular reading or song again.

Please stay safe and well and keep an eye on the Players web site for future events.

CKCP in Lockdown

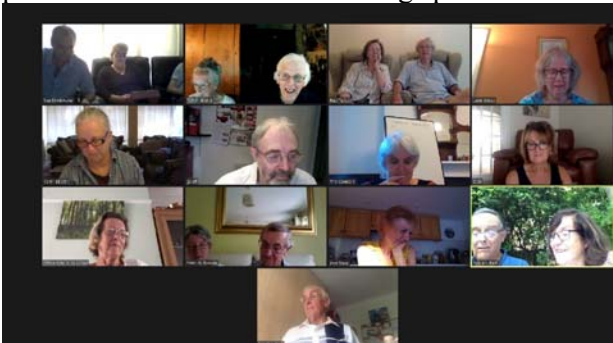
Unlike many other amateur dramatic groups, the majority of which have ceased their activities during the extended lockdowns of 2020 and now 2021, the Charlton Kings Community Players have remained active, producing our usual Christmas show *'Let Us Be Merry'*, and maintaining play readings throughout this period.

The play readings have been held via the Zoom platform every three to four weeks since April 2020. They have been attended by 16 – 22 people and the main challenge has been finding plays with enough parts to accommodate all the participants! We have read everything from Shakespeare to modern comedies, a pantomime, melodramas (including a play about Dracula arriving in Yorkshire accompanied by his brides – to the consternation of all) and, more recently, adaptations of *'A Christmas Carol'* and *'The Pilgrim's Progress'*.



A Midsummer Night's Dream May 2020

My personal favourite has been the adaptation of *'Pride and Prejudice'* by Stella MacKaye published in 1906. The author included all the lines we know so well from Jane Austen's novel – though not necessarily in the right order! It was a really fun read, though, and very entertaining. I am sure the participants of the readings will all have their own favourites. My thanks go to Sue Drinkwater for her assistance with the Zoom platform which makes the readings possible.



Aladdin Seventies Style June 2020

Producing LUBM 2020 – our 20th Anniversary show- as a video was a real challenge which the Players rose to with enthusiasm, determination, and dedication. The Technical team of Peter Ryan, Luke Drinkwater, Chris Blackwell and Musical Director, Keith Mead, turned the recordings done in our houses and gardens into a professional and brilliant production. As Chair of CKCP, I am so proud of the result which has raised (at the time of writing) in the region of £700 for our charities: *Cheltenham Open Door* and the *Cheltenham and Gloucester Hospitals Charity*. Recording poems and carols for the production was a real challenge and I would like to thank all the performers who took the time to do this. I hadn't realized how hard it is until it took about 8 goes to do my recording in the garden - planes going over, next door's washing machine, my cat meowing – all resulted in repeated takes until it was right!

DVDs of LUBM 2020 were also delivered to care homes in the village where we might have expected to sing carols in the run up to Christmas. All this goes to show that the Charlton Kings Community Players are alive and well in the village despite this challenging pandemic.

We look forward to seeing you at a live performance as soon as we are able to but, in the meantime, if you fancy joining a play reading, look out for the notices which will drop into your inbox in the coming weeks. We would love to see you there.

Jane Jones
Chair, CKCP

Jill Muir – A Tribute



Faith, fun and fellowship, the founding aims of the Players, were given perfect expression in Jill's enthusiasm, engagement with others and firm underlying convictions. Her lovely smile carried us with her, sure that every challenge was within reach. The work she did with the Players is well remembered, often many years after the performances.

Thankfully, her archiving ability has meant that records have been kept of most of the early productions, stretching back to her own Charlton Kings debut in *'From Pharaoh to Freedom'* in 1986, 6 years before The Players was formed. After Jo & Tom were born, Jill returned to the stage in 1994 as the gentle Susanna in *'The Vigil'*

surprising everyone with the occasional feisty moment. Then, the suspicious Baroness in *'The Sound of Music'*, who was so memorably relieved on hearing that Maria wanted to become a nun!

Contrasting characterisations were her specialty, from the bossy young Margaret in *'Edward'*, to the warm and comforting Mrs Bedwin in *'Oliver'*. The family element of the Players was also well represented when she appeared with a sparring Jo & Tom in *'Whose Birthday'*. But the character (a very small part) most firmly etched in many minds was the blousy usherette in *'Oh What a Lovely War'* – *'Chocolates, vanilla ices, bonbons!'*

We all have our own special memories. Her off-stage skills were also well used, from writing to directing and as part of the make-up team for the larger productions. When she spotted a need, she was always there. It was lovely that she found renewed happiness with Peter; their move to Tredington took her away from Charlton Kings, but she kept in touch and was still very much part of the Players. More recently, she spoke of her own beliefs when talking of her two college subjects, drama & divinity. She said, *'When I put them together, I rise up on wings like eagles.'* Indeed she did, and for what feels like all too brief a period, she took us with her.

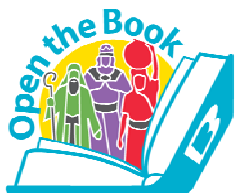
Rest in peace Jill, we shall miss you, but the memories you've left us feel like guiding stars.

Lynne Glover



Jill performs the popular monologue 'The Nativity Play' (Joyce Grenfell) at 'Let Us Be Merry 2007'.

'Open the Book' for schools



Open the Book (OtB) is a national project which offers primary school children the opportunity to hear key Bible stories. These

are presented during assemblies (Acts of Collective Worship) by a team made up of local

church members. Various members of The Players are involved in the programme in the local schools. Different teams visit each school and use the presentations provided by the national scheme.

In our last newsletter we reported on a publication produced in partnership with Charlton Kings Junior School to provide story summaries for use by the teachers. This is hosted on the Players' web site for download. During lockdown a group of Players has worked on a set of six videos for use by the school and these were requested by the national body for their training library which is made available to all OtB storytellers.

'The Forge' Christmas Window



Ila's and Kaushik's Christmas window at The Forge Charlton Kings 2020
Handel: Messiah, HWV 56, Part One
"For unto us a child is born"
 (Chorus)
Artists:
 Oscar Emma Kibbe,
 Emily Van Eyck, Margaret Cable,
 James Brennan, Joseph Corcoran,
 Taranus Players, Andrew Parrott,
 David Thomas, Taranus Chorus
Album:
 Handel: Messiah, HWV 56, Part One
"For unto us a child is born"
 (Chorus)
 Licensed to YouTube by
 NAXOS, The Orchard Music (on
 behalf of PLG Classics (VCI),
 Alliance Publishing), Public
 Domain Compositions, Sony ATV
 Publishing, BMG Rights
 Management (SI), LLC, and 10
 more: info@society

Players' supporters, Ila and Kaushik, decorated their shop window in December to provide an uplifting experience for those walking the Charlton Kings streets for their daily exercise. They have regularly sold tickets for Players' shows and have made their window available for publicity displays.

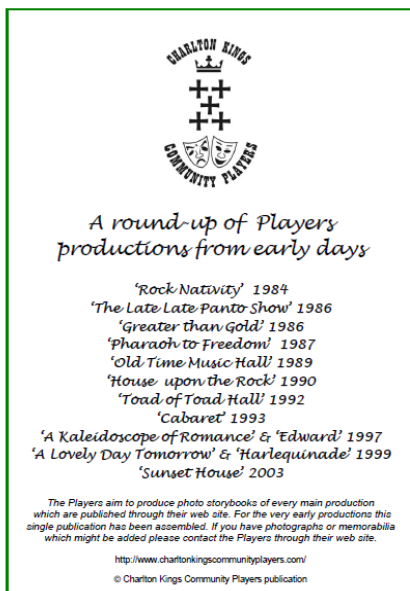
Ila also decorated their window at the time of Diwali – the Festival of Lights in November. Thanks go to the *'Friends of Charlton Kings'* team who publicised the two mini videos made by Players' members, which were made available for viewing on the YouTube platform.



Ila's and Kaushik's Diwali window at The Forge Charlton Kings 2020
'The Festival of Lights'
Flute instrumental music
 with kind permission of
Relax Music
 (See About on their channel description)

Music link and channel information: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt11TM-jBA&t=126s>

Discovering 'forgotten' Productions



A milestone was reached in 2020 as all main productions now have either an individual photo storybook or are part of a round-up of particular publications. *A surprise was two additions to the timeline.* Jill Muir identified a missing production for 1989 being an *'Old Time Music Hall'*, and several members of the Players questioned why an early production of *'Greater Than Gold'* in 1986 appeared missing from the collection. Both of these are significant contributions to the early roots, and people involved remain active today in the Players.



'Greater Than Gold' 1986



'Old Time Music Hall' 1989



'The Late Late Panto Show' 1986

The Players web site has the photo storybooks available for download. They are updated when fresh information is notified and I would be pleased to receive anything you have located.
Sandra Jeans

The Charlton Kings Community Players AGM

This will take place on Wednesday 24 February 2021 at 7.30 pm using the Zoom platform. If you would like to attend, please register your participation by emailing bjckcp@gmail.com and you will be sent the Agenda, previous minutes and zoom login details in the first week of February.

At the meeting, the committee will be elected. If you would like to stand for election, please let us know by emailing bjckcp@gmail.com. You can also notify us if you would like to raise any matters under AOB using the same email address. There will be an opportunity to do this after you receive the Agenda as well.

Please note that all members of the mailing list are welcome to attend the AGM but only those who have participated in a CKCP activity in the past two years are eligible to vote as members of CKCP. This AGM will cover 2019 and 2020 as last year's AGM did not take place due to the coronavirus pandemic.