

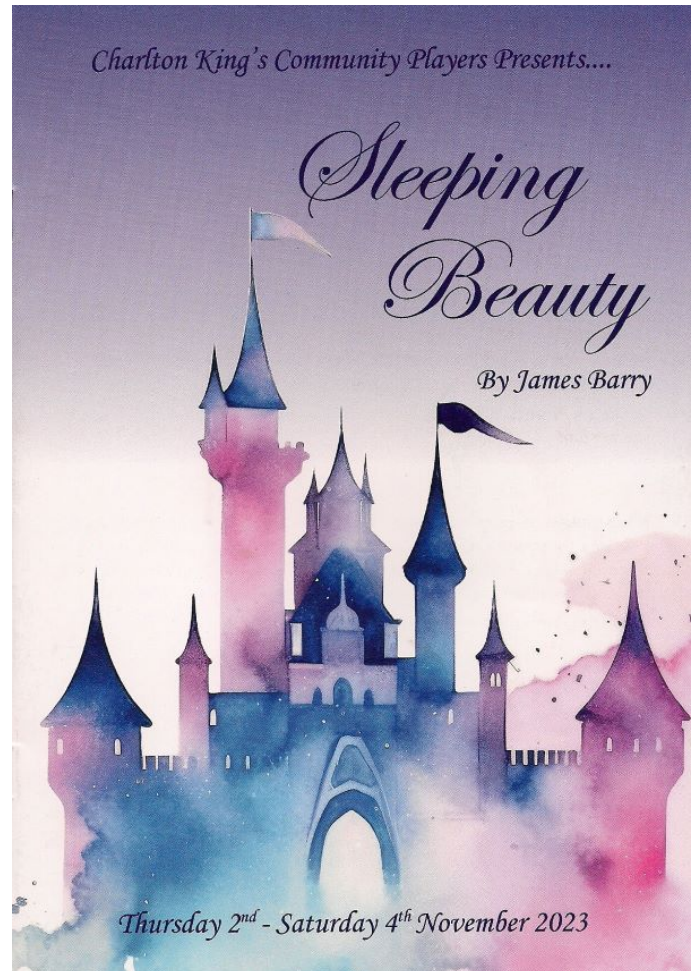
What makes a good pantomime?

Answer: lots of rapport with the audience, the traditional characters, all the favourite routines and jokes, and lots and lots of colour and brightly patterned costumes. Most important, of course, are an enthusiastic cast, crew and audiences.

The presentation, by the Players, of the fairytale classic of 'Sleeping Beauty' fulfilled all these aims and much more, providing a fun event within the community.

The Players extend their warmest thanks to all those who came to this production and sent us their appreciation.

Will it be repeated with yet another of the classic fairytales this year? Come to the 2024 AGM and express your views.



The essential characters – the Good Fairy and the Wicked Witch and the Princess and Prince



The comics who establish a special rapport with the audience – always a ‘dame’ played by a man, and a mercurial character who tells jokes.

A donation to the Foodbank in Cheltenham was made from the ticket sales.

A full length traditional pantomime is a first for the Players, though excerpts from a selection of traditional pantomimes were performed in the 1980s.

The Players were not formally constituted until the early 1990s as an unincorporated group with a Constitution.

Small cameo pantomimes have also been done as part of Christmas entertainments, usually written by members of the Players themselves.

In 2019 a production was put on which claimed to be *‘almost a pantomime’* and was a version of *‘Treasure Island’*. This was a *‘sell-out’* production, as not only does this story feature strongly in the childhood memories of generations of people, but it also included many of the traditional sea shanties also well-known.

The story of *‘Sleeping Beauty’*, as a *child’s fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm and others*, has been adapted, retold and presented across a variety of different forms of media.

Yes, a wicked fairy tells parents that their daughter will prick her finger on a spindle, and fall into a deep sleep for a hundred years to be awakened by a wandering prince, who releases her slumbers with a kiss. Everyone else in the household will also fall asleep too. *Well, that’s just a simple outline! There are all kinds of fairy rôles.*

So there is lots of scope for interesting interludes.

The Players’ Production

It was very well received by those attending and supportive feedback continued to come in for weeks after the event.

Some quite amazing props had been created and assembled, and the team showed their creativity in the stage design and the costumes.

Everything ‘worked’ in true pantomime fashion when unexpected entrances happened, wands were waved, sound effects occurred to signal particular entrances, the music matched the action perfectly, and lighting was used to great effect.

The origins of Pantomime

This is very much a UK form of entertainment, with its origins in mime and Mystery Plays. In its current accepted form, it is designed as family entertainment with dancing, songs, jokes, and slapstick. It has gender-crossing characters and is usually based on a well-known fairy tale or legend of some kind. The audience is always strongly encouraged to sing along and shout out particular phrases to the performers

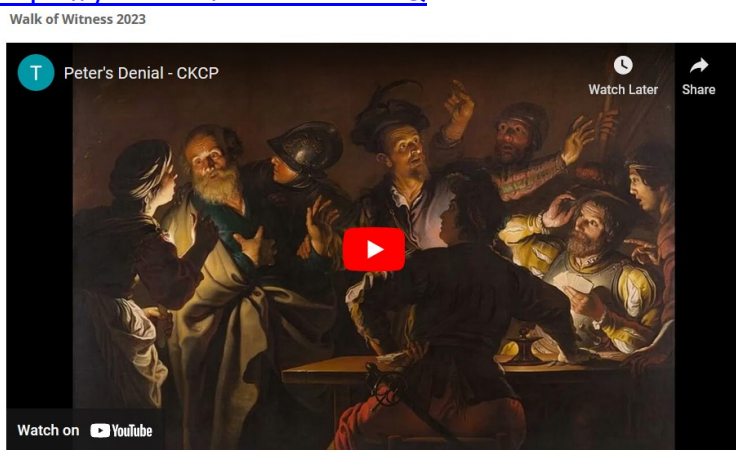
There is a Photo storybook available of a full selection of photographs of this production as a download from the Players’ website.

Two new videos added to the library in 2023

Walk of Witness Good Friday

Charlton Kings Community Players have been taking part in the Charlton Kings Churches Together 'Walk of Witness' most Good Fridays since 1992. They have performed a piece of street theatre in the Church Piece Precinct, which is one of the stations of the walk. This is the offering for 2023, a sketch called 'Peter's Denial' written by Peter Grainger, and originally performed as street theatre outside the library in Charlton Kings in 1992.

<https://youtu.be/7kZHMvehtzQ>



Peter's Denial of Jesus

Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said:
*"Before the cock crows,
you will deny me three times."*

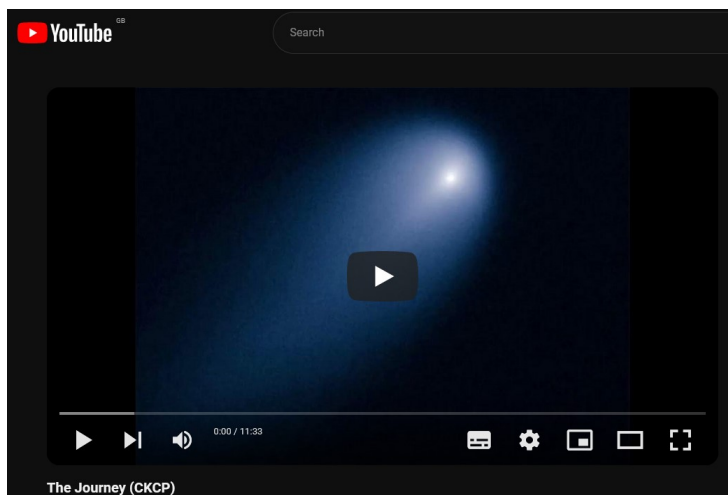
And he went out and wept bitterly.

Matthew 26 v 69 to 75, NRSV

Christmas

Members of St. Andrew's and the Charlton Kings Community Players have produced a Christmas video, which is available at <https://youtu.be/-uqu19tR8PA>

This Christmas story was written by Keith Norcott, originally for a production of 'Let Us Be Merry' by the Charlton Kings Community Players. The Music 'Hodie, Christus Natus Est' was written by Peter Meason as part of a suite of music commissioned by the Charlton Kings Community Players for a production of 'Murder in the Cathedral' in 2004.



Bob Alger is the storyteller as Joseph and describes their experiences of the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Bob is a member of the Charlton Kings Junior School 'Open the Book' team.

Carol singing at Charlton Kings Residential Homes.

A group of Players' members visited Nazareth House to support their Carol service, and really enjoyed being involved. Their attendance was greatly appreciated by the staff and residents of the care home.

The Players gave seasonal readings and sang carols at Charlton Kings Care Home, on the afternoon of Wednesday 20th December. The residents enjoyed the event, some of them joining in! This has become a regular in the Christmas calendar. It was a very happy time for residents and Players' members.

Providing seasonal entertainment has been one of the community activities provided by the Players over three decades. Whilst the focus, usually, is on the Christmas period, it has also featured poetry readings in outside venues with 'Strawberry teas' and support for church 'Harvest Suppers'.

Christmas Singalong



The CKCP Christmas Singalong was held in Charlton Kings Parish Centre on Saturday 9th December 2023 at 7.00 p.m. The Compère: was Mark Knight and music was provided by Keith Mead and Jenny Elliot.

It was a public advertised event with a ticket charge at the door, and organised by the Players' committee. This was an enjoyable evening to celebrate the start of the Christmas Season, and provided a good 'follow-on' from the Players' pantomime month earlier.

A copy of the programme of seasonal readings and songs is available from the CKCP website.

CKCP AGM 2024

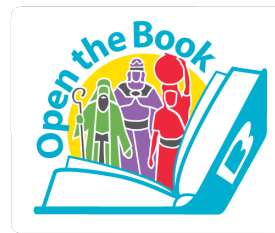
The AGM will be held in the Baptist Church at 7.00 pm on Wednesday, 17 April. The meeting will be followed by light refreshments and, for those interested, a Play Reading.

AGENDA

Welcome and Apologies
Minutes of the previous AGM and Matters Arising
Chair's Report
Treasurer's Report
Election of Officers
Election of Members
CKCP Website
Future Plans and Events
Any Other Business
Date of Next Meeting

We invite you to email any apologies, items for discussion under Any Other Business or nominations for Committee Positions by Friday, 15 March to the Secretary at fab_connor@yahoo.co.uk

All very welcome!



For more information see on the Players web site.

<http://www.charltonkingscommunityplayers.com/open-the-book-story-summaries/>

'New Slants On The Word'

This publication, by Tony Jeans, Lynne Glover, Peter Grainger and John Palmer, of readings and sketches has just been updated. Its content is for use in staged productions or in church worship. This new Edition 3 is available in electronic form and may be obtained from

jeanstda@jeanstda.plus.com

Parish Council

Health & Well-being directory

The Players are listed in the Community directory hosted by the Parish Council at

<https://www.charltonkingsparishcouncil.gov.uk/ck-health-and-well-being-directo.html>

You will find the detailed entry against Creative Arts and Activities which provides contact details.

The Players' history

The Players' web site has a comprehensive library of photo storybooks about previous productions which may be downloaded as pdf files.

In particular is a three-part set of the Players' Performance Record which not only provides detail of some thirty years of 'doing' in the community, but also scans of the programmes and a selection of photographs.

Are you aware of the Players' comprehensive web site?

The link is shown on the bottom of the pages of this newsletter. It's also the usual practice to provide links to it from our regular email communication service.

What has been done is shown through our 'Past Events' menu and there is also various information about the Players' history. Forthcoming events are notified and how to get in touch.

The Players have also moved into the world of video and there is a growing library of videos put together by various members.

Players' video Library

Walk of Witness & related:

'Josh on Trial' – Charlton Kings Churches Good Friday 'Walk of Witness' street theatre in Church Piece Precinct. Full video 4.28 mins
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kkj-VX6gk0&t=36s>

'Good Friday Conversation' - Charlton Kings Churches Good Friday 'Walk of Witness' virtual street theatre. Full video 13.45 mins
<https://youtu.be/h1DHVI5fpz8>

'Ruth's Story' - Charlton Kings Churches Good Friday 'Walk of Witness', virtual street theatre. Full video 16.30 mins

<https://youtu.be/Vd8yUEJq4YA>

'The Other Wise Man' - whose travels ended in Jerusalem on the day of the crucifixion of Jesus. Full video 13.59 mins
<https://youtu.be/rJBRCQBvu18>

'Peter's Denial' - Charlton Kings Churches Good Friday 'Walk of Witness', virtual street theatre. Full video 8 mins
<https://youtu.be/7kZHMvehtzQ>

Let Us Be Merry Christmas Show & related

'Let Us Be Merry 2020' – A Christmas Celebration virtual production Full video 57.06 mins
<https://youtu.be/TO2WNBtJoel>

'Let Us Be Merry 2021' – A Christmas Celebration virtual production Full video 58.54 mins
<https://youtu.be/tPIVcQqfzn4>

'Melissa's Dress' – a story of how three wise women were involved at the birth of Jesus Full video 8.21 mins
<https://youtu.be/Hj3dcfiOPyE>

'The Stable Door' – An incident in Bethlehem – an innkeeper and his wife tell their stories virtual production. Full video 7.36 mins
<https://youtu.be/HZaCbVPQgpU>

'Anna and Simeon' – A Nativity Encounter - Anna and Simeon were to be among the first to recognise the light of the world Full video 12.54 mins
<https://youtu.be/r3q78U9j9no>

'The Journey' - Joseph tells his experiences on the journey to Bethlehem for the census. Full video 11.33 mins
<https://youtu.be/-uqul9tR8PA>

Specials:

'Pride and Prejudice' - Audio recording Full video 2 hrs 35 mins
<https://youtu.be/WHsFNEoLw1k>

'Gwilym Davies' – The stick dance from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' 2008. Full video 1.13 mins
<https://youtu.be/bOQnC8UiqHE>

Gilbert Biberian - An Appreciation published in BBC Music Magazine (May 2023)

Local hero

Thank you for including an obituary in your 'Farewell to...' page for the guitarist Gilbert Biberian (April).

Gilbert made a notable contribution to the artistic life of the local community in Cheltenham, specifically by mounting recitals of guitar music by himself with his friends and colleagues. For several years at the beginning of the century, he ran a guitar festival and summer school in Charlton Kings, the community in Cheltenham, where he lived. He encouraged appreciation of the classical guitar in a variety of musical settings and the young people who attended the summer school benefited from contact with fine players of the instrument.

Gilbert also supported a local community theatre group by composing and playing a piece for a local production, reflecting a great generosity of spirit. We were privileged to have such a fine artist in our community. In later years a stroke prevented his playing and now he will be missed by all those who knew him.

Tony Jeans, Cheltenham



Gilbert with the cast and crew for 'A Man for this season' (2013)

For this production he wrote 'De Profundis Clamari'

There is an article in Wikipedia on Gilbert Biberian.

He is listed in the Wikipedia article on 'Charlton Kings' under the sub-heading 'Famous people with a connection to Charlton Kings'.