

MARCH 2016

Diary of Events for March & April

Sat 5th March	“ Suffragette ” (Screen at the Phoenix) 7.00pm
Tues 8th March	Preview of PYT Hereford One Act Drama Festival entry 7.30pm
Thurs 10th March	PYT Hereford One Act Drama Festival entry at The Courtyard 7.00pm
Sat 19th March	“ The Lady in the Van ” (Screen at the Phoenix) 7.00pm
Sun 20th March	PYT Showcase Event 1.30pm & 5.30pm
Weds 23rd March	Drama Club 7.30pm
Sat 2nd - 9th April	“ Anastasia ” production 7.30pm
Mon 25th April	Rossiter Books - Chris Cleave book signing 7.00pm

(please see the Members calendars for March and April at the end of this Newsletter)

Rubbish Disposal

Not a very exciting topic I know, but rubbish that can be recycled is now being collected by Quick Skip of Hereford after Envirobility ended their contract with us. We now have a large red bin in the side passage that is emptied fortnightly on a Tuesday. Items for recycling include bottles, cans, paper, flattened cardboard and plastic containers. Rubbish that is not recyclable is to be put in the blue plastic sacks. Bins labelled accordingly will be set up in the bar, green room and tech gallery. Paper only bins are provided in the foyer and loos.

New Stage Lighting

Following a recommendation by the committee, a number of LED (light emitting diodes) stage lights have been purchased. These will ultimately replace the conventional filament lamps that we now use. The advantages of LED lights are that they have low power consumption, are lightweight and their colour can be easily adjusted. The lights are controlled from a computer rather than using our lighting desk. The beam direction of some of the LED lights can be adjusted remotely opening up the prospect for some exciting lighting plans. If you want to find out more about these new lights, please contact our technical guru Trevor Jones.

Graham Russell (Newsletter editor)

Production Co-ordinator's Column

The Phoenix Youth Theatre are once again entering the **Herefordshire One Act Drama Festival** which runs from **10th to 12th March**. Our entry will be **“The Monkey’s Paw”** by **Brian Jackson** and will compete on the evening of **Thursday 10th March at The Courtyard Theatre, Hereford**. We are holding a members evening on **Tuesday 8th March at 7.30 pm** for the young actors to perform in front of an audience before the competition. **Please let me know if you will be coming to the members evening, so that we have some idea of numbers.**

“Anastasia” by Marcelle Maurette, which is being directed by Brian Jackson, is in rehearsal and will be our Spring production, running from **Saturday 2nd to Saturday 9th April**. The cast comprises Gareth Wigg, Les Davis, Robin Haig, David Pollard, Michelle Cooper, Amanda Smith, Ray Smith, Gordon Brigg, Tim Betts, Renee Field, Suzanne Hill, Penny Field and Sam Callen. **Tickets are on sale now. Book early to avoid disappointment.**

“The Summer of the 17th Doll” by Ray Lawler will be our **May production**, and will be directed by **David Pollard**. The cast includes Lucy Davies, Penny Field, Jane Bovell, Gareth Wigg, Phil Field and Tom Lee-Hynes. The young girl, Bubba, has yet to be cast. **The production dates are Saturday 28th May to Saturday 4th June**. For sixteen years Roo (Ruben) and his mate Barney who are sugar cane cutters in Queensland have spent the Summer layoff in Melbourne with Olive and her friend Nancy. In this - the seventeenth year - things begin to change. Nancy has got married to a steady guy. Pearl who has been brought along as a replacement companion for Barney isn't that much fun - in fact she's a bit of a wowsa! Even Bubba - the kid next door - is turning into a young woman. As the action develops more evidence of unsettling and unwelcome changes emerge...

Rossiter Books are holding a book signing event on **Monday 25th April at 7 pm** featuring **Chris Cleave**. Tickets are available from **Rossiter Books. Tel 01989 564464**.

The Drama Club, which commenced in February with a reading of “The Entertainer” by John Osborne, will hold its next meeting on **Wednesday 23rd March at 7.30 pm**. Following the reading, Gordon Brigg has decided not to direct this play in our November slot. There will be another Drama Club meeting in **April**. Do come along ! More details to follow.

The Phoenix Theatre Singers will be performing a concert for charity at **Christ Church in Edde Cross Street in Ross- on-Wye on Saturday 19th March at 7.30 pm** in aid of Ross Lions and Oxfam. Tickets on the door at £7.

There will be another **Phoenix Theatre Singers** charity concert on **Saturday 30th April at 7 for 7.30 pm at St Bridget’s Church, Bridstow** in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care, Riding for the Disabled and Bridstow Church Fabric Fund. Tickets £10 incl. wine and nibbles, under 16s free, on the door or from Ruth on 01989 563448.

Suzanne Hill

Anastasia

In a fortuitous piece of planning the Phoenix Theatre Company is currently rehearsing a production of the drama “Anastasia” by Marcelle Maurette due to be performed next month. Fortuitous because while preparations were being made for its production, unknown to them the BBC were also scheduling two major series on Imperial Russia: “War and Peace” (Tolstoy’s Napoleonic epic) and the fascinating 3-part documentary on the Romanov Tsars of Russia culminating in the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in 1917 and the murder of his family. “Anastasia” tells the end of that tragic story.

The project began a year ago when I discovered “Anastasia” in a mixed set of plays. I was immediately fascinated by it. It has all the elements of first class drama; mystery, ambition, ruthless characters and the prospect of love coming to the rescue.

The play is well grounded in fact. During the 1920s newspapers carried stories of a mysterious woman claiming to be Anastasia, a daughter of the Tsar who had somehow survived the massacre. Although unproven the rumours persisted and this play is a result.



It is a great challenge for the cast who are called on to recreate a criminal conspiracy to foist an imposter on the surviving members of Russian aristocracy. Do they succeed? The end may surprise theatregoers but the cast are relishing their roles, with Michelle Cooper in the role of “Anna”, the sometime Anastasia; Suzanne Hill, the Dowager Empress; Gareth Wigg as “Prince Bounine”, a survivor of the Revolution; Robin Haig as the unstable Petrovsky, and Les Davis as Chernov, a disgraced banker; while Sam Callen plays the impoverished Prince Paul endeavouring to persuade himself (and others) that she really is who she claims to be. As the plot ebbs and flows the audience is left to decide the answer to the final tantalising question. The cast photo shows Amanda Smith and Ray Smith with Suzanne, Gareth, Michelle and Sam.

Brian Jackson

Phoenix Youth Theatre

" Monkey's Paw" preview showing at The Phoenix Theatre

Tuesday 8th March 7.30pm - theatre members welcome. Please reserve your seats with Brian Jackson or Suzanne Hill. The Phoenix Youth Theatre One Act Play entry will preview here with us at The Phoenix. Please give them your support and even better - buy a ticket to see them at The Courtyard on **Thursday 10th March at 7pm** in the One Act Play Festival. Brian is the director for the show. The centrepiece of the set, created by Catriona Pearson, Trevor Jones and Graham Russell, is a Yorkshire Range complete with fire effect. Not to be missed! Tickets available online from The Courtyard.



Kieran Haines

Hannah Callen

Adam Warner

Joe Lowen Gray

Zoe Doughty

The Phoenix Youth team open the doors of The Phoenix to the Ross Community

The PYT team have been very busy lately, accommodating several different groups within the community and welcoming various groups through the doors of our wonderful theatre. Ross Explorers were recent visitors to the theatre and they had a guided tour of the theatre and all of its facilities. The group then had a drama workshop with some of the PYT team, which they thoroughly enjoyed.

More recently, the theatre hosted Gorsley Goffs School Shakespeare festival and the PYT Team were on hand to host the school and its pupils over this two day event. The school put on two mini versions of a Shakespeare play and we were able to offer tech staff support and a complete set for the school to use, as well as a back stage team. The school played to a packed house and it was a hugely successful event for The Phoenix and Gorsley Goffs.

Later this month, we will be hosting Ashfield Park once again as they bring their year three classes for visit and tour of our theatre. Many of our Committee members and the PYT team help to make this event a huge success for the 50 pupils that eagerly arrive to see what treats our theatre has to offer. It is wonderful to be able to share this great secret with so many community members and it makes us appreciate what we have all the more.

The Phoenix Youth Showcase Event - Sunday 20th March at 1.30 pm and 5.30pm

The youth group will be performing a showcase of four plays on 20th March to parents and we would very much like to welcome theatre members along too. If you would like to come and see us perform, then please reserve a seat via Sarah O'Neill (sarahoneill362@btinternet.com). Seats cost £2 per person, payable on the day but you must reserve a seat beforehand. This is a chance for us to showcase the talents of the group before we begin rehearsals for our main show in October this year. We have two of our PYT members

making their first debut as directors (Billy Jones and Sam Callen). Chantal Poole and Sarah O'Neill are also directing showcase pieces once again this year. There is a real varied mix of performances, with ages ranging from 8 to 20 years. You will be in for a treat.

Drama Workshops Opportunities for the youth in the Community

If you have a child aged 5 - 18+ and they love drama, then this could be the group for you. The Drama Company holds weekly classes here at The Phoenix Theatre and they are also running holiday workshops this Easter holiday and Summer holidays. If you are interested in finding out more, then please contact sarahoneill362@btinternet.com or check out their website on www.dramacompany.co.uk

Sarah O'Neill

Members Calendars for March & April

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
29	1	2	3	4	5	6
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm The Summer of the 17th Doll rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm	Rossiter Books event - Carol Drinkwater book signing 7:00 pm	Herefordshire Carers in foyer 10:30 am – 12:30 pm Rossiter Books event with Patrick Barkham 7:00 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Singers rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm	Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	Screen at the Phoenix - Suffragette 7:00 pm	Phoenix Youth Group 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm The Summer of the 17th Doll rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm	Members evening and dress rehearsal of 2016 Hereford Drama Festival entry 7:30 pm		The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Singers rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm	Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	Phoenix Youth Group 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Phoenix Youth Group 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm PYT rehearsals for 'After Midnight Before Dawn' in auditorium 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Summer of 17th Doll - Tech. meeting in foyer 7:30 pm	Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm		The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Singers rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm	Visit from William Gilbert, Melville Theatre, Abergavenny 10:30 am Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	Phoenix Youth Theatre Showcase Review, dress run 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm Screen at the Phoenix - The Lady in the Van 7:00 pm	Phoenix Youth Theatre Showcase Review 12:00 pm – 8:00 pm
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Ashfield Park School visit 12:30 pm – 3:00 pm The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm PYT rehearsals for 'After Midnight Before Dawn' in auditorium 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Committee Meeting in foyer 7:00 pm	Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	Drama Club in auditorium & foyer 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Singers rehearsal in foyer 7:30 pm	Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm		
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	The Drama Company Easter Workshops - preparation 10:00 am Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	The Drama Company Easter Workshops N/A Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	The Drama Company Easter Workshops N/A Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm Singers rehearsal - out of theatre 7:30 pm	Rehearsal for 'Anastasia' in auditorium 7:30 pm – 9:30 pm	Performance night, Anastasia by Marcelle Maurette 7:30 pm	

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Performance night, Anastasia by Marcelle Maurette 7:30 pm	Performance night, Anastasia by Marcelle Maurette 7:30 pm	Herefordshire Carers in foyer 10:30 am – 12:30 pm Performance night, Anastasia by Marcelle Maurette 7:30 pm	Performance night, Anastasia by Marcelle Maurette 7:30 pm Singers rehearsal - out of theatre 7:30 pm	Performance night, Anastasia by Marcelle Maurette 7:30 pm	Performance night, Anastasia by Marcelle Maurette 7:30 pm	PYT Full Day workshop 10:00 am – 4:00 pm Screen at the Phoenix regular film night 7:00 pm
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm PYT rehearsals for 'After Midnight Before Dawn' in auditorium 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	The Summer of the 17th Doll rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm	The Summer of the 17th Doll rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Singers rehearsal in auditorium 7:30 pm			Phoenix Youth Group 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm
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25	26	27	28	29	30	1
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