

MARCH 2014

Diary of Events for Feb/March

- Friday 28th Feb &
Sat 1st March **“Captain Phillips”** (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm
- Sat 8th March **Festival Entry Preview** (Youth Group) 7.30pm
- Sat 15th March **“Le Weekend”** (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm
- Sat 22nd March -
Sat 29th March **“Quartet”** (Phoenix Theatre Company) 7.30pm

Diary of Events for April/early May

- Friday 4th April &
Sat 5th April **“Philomena”** (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm
- Monday 14th April **An Evening with James Hunt** (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm
- Sun 27th April &
Mon 28th April **“Project Wild Thing”** (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm & 1pm
- Sat 10th May **“Blue Jasmine”** (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm

Theatre Redecoration

The theatre has been redecorated internally including the foyer, corridors, green room, stairs, landing and rehearsal room. Thanks to Catriona, our building manager, for organising.

Tickets

The **Youth Group** entry to the Hereford One Act Drama Festival will take place on **Friday 14th March** and tickets can be booked direct. Tickets for **Quartet** are now on sale. This is our first drama production for 2014 so please book early to avoid disappointment.

Committee

Annette O’Hara has decided to resign from the committee with immediate effect.

Graham Russell (editor) 01981 540749

Racing Minds at The Phoenix

On Friday 17th January, Racing Minds came to the Phoenix Theatre. An improvisation group of four actors plus a keyboard player, who had performed at The Edinburgh Fringe to rave reviews.



What fun we had! Ushered to our seats by the friendly actors, we were plied with sweets, before being asked for suggestions of names, places and dark secrets, with which to weave their own original mystery story.



Provided with totally random snippets of information from some members of the audience (our Chairman's contribution was a man with one leg longer than the other!), Racing Minds embarked on an hilarious hour of spontaneous improvisation. Ingeniously clever and witty, weird and wonderful characters metamorphosed in the twinkling of an eye. A member of the royal family became an Eastern European hit man by acquiring a sinister hat and a thick Slavonic accent. We were treated to lots of laugh out loud moments, the pace never slackened, and the first half of the show ended with a brilliant, unexpected denouement.



Chris Turner (left) bounced onto the stage to take over the second half of the evening. A member of Racing Minds, Chris is also a stand-up comedian. He introduced us to the delights of hip-hop rap (a surprisingly enjoyable experience!) mixed with never-ending puns. His rhyming verses inspired by items produced from the pockets and handbags of volunteers in the audience. A revelation in itself, who would have thought that person kept a dinner fork in her handbag!

A night to remember. Great entertainment, talented actors, and hysterical humour.

Hope Racing Minds will come back to the Phoenix for another evening of sublime silliness.

Rachel Divine

Production co-ordinator's column

“Quartet” by Ronald Harwood and directed by David Pollard, runs from **Sat. 22nd to Sat. 29th March**. You may have recently seen the film starring Maggie Smith and Billy Connolly. It is the story of 4 retired singers in a retirement home for musicians and singers. The film was set in a country house with a huge cast, but the play has just the four main actors, 2 men and 2 women, all in their later years. They changed the script for the film and I personally think that the play is constructed in a far better way, with the reasons for what occurs being far more poignant and believable. The cast comprises Jane Bovell, Gordon Brigg, Suzanne Hill and Brian Jackson.

We are entering **The Herefordshire Drama Festival** at the Courtyard Theatre. Brian Jackson is to direct three of our senior Youth Group: Billy Jones, Marina Weaver and Zoe Hutton, in a play entitled “The Coat” which he has written. The festival takes place on Thurs 13th to Sat 15th March. Our slot is on **Friday 14th March** at 7pm. Tickets can be obtained directly from the Courtyard.

The young actors would like to perform their play at the Phoenix prior to the competition, in order to give them the experience of performing before an audience. So, we shall be holding a preview of the play on **Sat 8th March** at 7.30 pm for members and friends. If you wish to attend please contact me so we have an idea of numbers. It would be great if you are able to attend both events to support our young actors.

Annette O'Hara is to direct **“Anybody for Murder”** by Brian Clemens and Dennis Spooner from **Sat 17th to Sat. 24th May**. Max is planning to murder his wife Janet, collect her life insurance, and enjoy life with his girlfriend, when Mary and George arrive on their Greek island with the news that Mary and Janet are beneficiaries of a huge fortune. Plans and plots hatch, and soon everyone is bent on murder. All that stands in their way is the presence of a neighbour, crime writer Edgar Chambers. The cast comprises Michelle Cooper, Lucy Davies, Joanna Hicks, Daniel Lander, Howard Owen and Roger Spragg.

The Phoenix Theatre Singers are rehearsing for their summer show which is entitled, **“It's All in a Name!”** to run from **Wed 25th to Sat 28th June**. The Singers will also be performing a charity concert on Sat 1st March at Milestones School in Gloucester.

Rene Field, the mother of Phil and Penny who you may have seen performing at the Phoenix, is to direct **“Pack of Lies”** by Hugh Whitmore from **Sat 6th to Sat. 13th Sept**. It is based on the true story of an American couple, Peter and Helen Kruger, who lived in Slough in the 1960s and were convicted of spying for the Russians. The play tells of their relationship with the Jackson family who lived opposite and how they came to be caught. An MI5 agent coerces the Jacksons into allowing their house to be used as a surveillance post. In the nightmare months that follow, the Jackson's decent happy life is shattered as the truth about their much loved friends is gradually revealed to them, helpless in an alien sordid world of deception and treachery

The cast comprises: 1 teenage girl, her parents in their 40s/50s; the Krugers in their 40s/50s; 2 policewomen 20s/30s and an MI5 agent in his 50s/60s. There is to be a **PLAY READING** on **Tues 8th April** and **AUDITIONS** on **Tues 29th April**. Do come along to read this exciting drama and see if you would like a part.

Suzanne Hill 01989 770428

The Launch of our new PYT Project!

The cast and crew of 2013/14 Phoenix Youth Group

35 of us in total (adults and children) are raring to go and eager to begin our rehearsals of our latest production of "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe". We will perform the show in October of this year and we have just finished the final casting and are about to begin rehearsals. Our cast range from 8 to 18 years and we make a great team - dedicated to what we do and having fun, as well as learning new skills along the way. We meet every Sunday for rehearsals and as we get nearer the production, the amount of time we spend on the show will increase. This is all part of the magic of our work and we love being at the theatre and are very lucky to have this as our rehearsal space.



Production dates 2014 - The Phoenix Youth Group

Sunday 19th - Wednesday 22nd October - matinee performance on the Sunday and evening performances the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Summer Workshops

Under the new arrangements with the committee, I shall be hiring the theatre as "The Drama Company" to run my Summer Workshops. The dates and times are:

Weds 27th, Thurs 28th and Friday 29th August

Juniors 9.30 - 12.30 (5 - 10 years); Seniors 1.30 - 4.30 (10 - 18 years)

The charge per session is £11 (£30 for all 3 days). Pre booking is essential.

Open Auditions - 2014/5 season

The Youth Group is currently full and members get a chance to audition once a year to be a part of the group for the following year. During this time they will attend the group on a weekly basis and take part in a full scale production once a year.

There are already lots of young people on the waiting list but please feel free to be added to it if you wish to receive details about our forthcoming auditions in October 2014 (for the 2014/15 season).

To find out more about the workshops and/or receive booking details, please see the website or contact me:

e-mail: sarahoneill362@btinternet.com

tel: 07814 624417 or 01989 720627

Sarah O'Neill (Youth Group Leader)