

MARCH 2018

Diary of Events for March - April

Sat 3rd March	The Zookeeper's Wife (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm
Weds 7th March	Members' Evening featuring entries for the Hereford One Act Festival 7.30pm
Fri 9th - Sun 11th March	Phoenix Youth Theatre Showcase
Sat 17th - Sat 24th March	Gaslight by Patrick Hamilton (Phoenix Theatre Company) 7.30pm
Sun 25th March	Hampstead (Screen at the Phoenix) 7pm
Sat 14th April	Keith Thompson - Acoustic Roots/Blues 7.30pm
Sun 15th April	Keith James - The Songs of Nick Drake 7.30pm
Weds 18th April	Rossiter Books - Ruth Goodman 7pm

(Members' calendars for March and April are at the back of this Newsletter.)

Herefordshire County One Act Drama Festival

The first week in March is going to be manic with three shows entered into the festival. There will be a full dress rehearsal on Wednesday 7th March as part of a Members' Evening. The following day all the actors and set will move to The Market Theatre Ledbury for their evening performances on the 8th. Please support these performances as a serious amount of work has gone into their preparation. Tickets for the Thursday evening in Ledbury can be purchased by following the link below:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/themarkettheatre>

GDPR

New EU regulations concerning data protection (General Data Protection Regulations) come into force on 25th May 2018. The committee will be looking to make sure we fully comply with this legislation.

Graham Russell
(Newsletter Editor)

Production Co-ordinator's Column

Gaslight

'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, directed by Brian Jackson, will run from **17th to 24th March**. Amanda Smith, Gareth Wigg, Ray Smith, Jacky Bedford, Michelle Cooper, Tim Betts and new members Alan Chacon & Nathan Cole are taking the roles. Get your tickets early to avoid disappointment!

Hope Charity Concert

The Concert in aid of the Hope charity on Saturday 27th January, entitled 'Strings and Songs for Hope', was a sell out and raised a great amount for this worthwhile cause. George Tait will be arranging more concerts in aid of Hope in January 2019.

Abigail's Party

Renée Field will direct 'Abigail's Party' by Mike Leigh from **Saturday 2nd to Saturday 9th June**. The cast comprises Sandy McNeill, Michelle Cooper, Lucy Davies, Tom Lee-Hynes and Phil Field. Renee would like to invite any members wishing to learn directing skills to be her assistant director for this production. Please contact either Renée on 01600 750488 or myself at suzannefredericks@hotmail.com if you are interested.

County Drama Festival

The Phoenix Theatre are entering the Herefordshire County Drama Festival in **March** with three entries. "Coffee Break" by David Tristram, directed by Renée Field; "All through the Night" by Frank Vickery, directed by David Pollard and Tim Betts, and a Youth Theatre entry entitled "Who's Playing Juliet?", written and directed by Zoe Hutton. Our plays will all be performed on **Thursday 8th March** at The Market Theatre, Ledbury.

Members' Evening

We are holding a Member's Evening on **Wednesday 7th March** at 7.30pm, when the three plays will hold their dress rehearsals prior to the festival which runs from 8th to 10th March, at The Market Theatre, Ledbury. Do come along to this enjoyable evening and bring your families and friends to support our teams. Please let me know if you plan to attend.

PYT Showcase

The Phoenix Youth Theatre will hold their Showcase from **9th to 11th March**. This is for the families and friends of our young actors to see what they have achieved in the last few months. Our Youth Theatre leader, Sarah O'Neill, is to be congratulated on the high standards she exacts from our young talent.

Keith Thompson & Keith James

In April we have Keith Thompson - UK Singer/Songwriter – Acoustic Roots/Blues for one night on **Saturday 14th April** and Keith James returning on **Sunday 15th April** with 'The Songs of Nick Drake'.

Rossiter Books - Ruth Goodman

On **Wednesday 18th April at 7pm** there will be a Rossiter Book event featuring Ruth Goodman.

The Phoenix Theatre Singers and the Roaring Megs

The Phoenix Theatre Singers and the Roaring Megs, a group of singers from Goodrich, performed a concert in St Mary's Church, Ross-on-Wye on Saturday 24th February entitled 'Memorable Melodies' in aid of The Friends of Ross Hospital. It is thought that the event raised approximately £1000. The evening was described as 'A real community event!' Congratulations to all concerned.

Suzanne Hill

Preview of Gaslight (A Victorian thriller by Patrick Hamilton)

The play is set in the first-floor drawing room of the Manninghams' 4-storey house in Victorian England. Welcome to a world of swirling fog, shadows and gloomy gas-lit interiors, the troubled world of Bella Manningham. For Bella is a woman beset by fears; afraid of the dark she is terrified by mysterious sounds in empty rooms at night; afraid to assert herself over the servants (particularly the precocious scullery-maid Nancy). Most of all she fears she is descending into madness like her mother who died insane. Grateful for the little kindnesses bestowed by her husband she endeavours to please him but unexplained incidents only serve to come between them and undermine her self esteem as Manningham threatens to call in doctors to have her put away. And then a stranger appears; he seems to know a lot about her... is he friend or foe? What does he want? As the plot unfolds secrets start to reveal that Bella is in extreme danger...



The cast includes (left to right) new member Alan Chacon as a policeman, Jacky Bedford as the housekeeper, Ray Smith as the Stranger, Gareth Wigg as 'Manningham', Amanda Smith as 'Bella', Tim Betts & new member Nathan Cole as policemen. Michelle Cooper (not shown) plays 'Nancy'.

As you can see, Lynn Tait has done a great job on costumes and the set construction team of Graham Russell, Trevor Jones, Catriona Pearson & Alan Smith have finished construction of the set in record time.

'Gaslight' opens on **Saturday 17th March** and runs until the following **Saturday March 24th**.

Brian Jackson

Phoenix Youth Group

Showcase

We are due to perform our showcase pieces to parents very soon and are busy preparing our performances at the moment. We have worked very hard on our pieces and for some of us, it is the first time we will have performed at The Phoenix Theatre, so this is a very exciting experience for us. We look forward to sharing some photos of our event in the next issue.

One Act Play festival at Ledbury Theatre

With the clock ticking ever closer to the all important performance night at Ledbury Market Theatre for our Phoenix Youth Theatre entry of 'Who's Playing Juliet?' into this years Herefordshire County Drama Festival, we are apprehensive yet excited in equal measures! Rehearsals are continuing to be super productive with our costumes and set looking absolutely fantastic too thanks to our brilliant team, including Julie Church, my backstage Queen and of course Trevor Jones using his impeccable know how in the tech box too. This year the festival is being entered by a fantastic and truly talented cast of 6 comprising of the girls: Maggie Hearne, Lucy Roberts and Lily Hampson, and the boys: Owen Needham - Church, Charlie Bosticco and Ollie O'Neill. Our play is a contemporary comedy piece set in a present day theatre dressing room just 30 minutes until director Mr Boones all singing, all dancing 'Romeo and Juliet The Musical' is due to go live. Only it seems the focus is far removed with just one question on everyones lips: Who's playing Juliet?

Please do come and support us as well as the two other wonderful festival entries directed by duo David Pollard and Tim Betts and the fabulous Renee Field at either (or both!) our preview evening at **The Phoenix** on **March 7th** and for the big day at **Ledbury Market Theatre on the 8th**. With amateur theatre companies from across Herefordshire competing over the course of the weekend, it promises to be an action packed festival displaying a total of 13 one act plays all performed by local people. We hope to see you there!

Ross Brownies Take a Tour



We were recently visited by the Ross brownies group who came for a tour and a drama workshop at the theatre. This is part of our community events at the theatre and we aim to help other voluntary groups in the community. The brownies are currently working for their entertainer badge and had a very fun filled evening with us at the theatre. The youth group voluntary staff team, Sarah, Zoe (left) and Julie, lead the session and Trevor also gave the brownies a valuable insight into how the tech box works too! A great time was had by all.

Ashfield Park Visit



Once again, the theatre has been full of enthusiastic junior members... with more youngsters treading the boards of our wonderful theatre. This time we were visited by 55 Year Three children from local primary school Ashfield Park for a fun filled day of activities and theatre tour. The PYT youth team Julie, Zoe and Sarah, Mary Brigg and Trevor Jones hosted the event and spent the day ensuring the children were enthused and gained a real insight into how our theatre works. The children had



a music and drama workshop and a tour of the theatre and tech box. The children all had a wonderful day and thank you to the volunteer team who hosted the day on behalf of the theatre.

Sarah O'Neill and the PYT Team

The New Piano



The Phoenix Theatre Singers have a new piano. On Thursday 8th February, Howard Owen cut the ceremonial ribbon to mark the arrival of the new piano into the theatre. Resident pianist Richard Watson was on hand to test the piano for himself before Mary Brigg and the delighted Singers posed for a photo.



Music Weekend

Keith Thompson – UK Singer/Songwriter – Acoustic/Blues – Saturday 14th April at 7.30pm

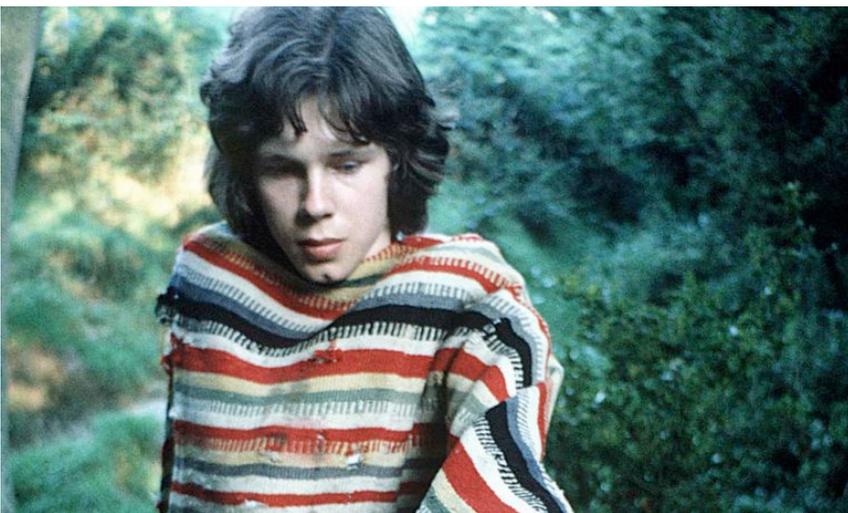


Having toured the length and breadth of the UK and Europe as a solo artist and with his band, a couple of years ago Keith released an acoustic album, “Steel Strings & Bruised Reed” to much critical acclaim. Now in 2018 Keith has followed that with a new acoustic based album called, “Two Minutes To Midnight”. Blues In Britain have already stated, “Here is a British blues artist who delivers one of surely the best acoustic based albums you’ll hear this year. The recording quality is excellent, and as said, he’s in great voice throughout and remains on very fine form as a musician but on top of that is a songwriter of the highest order. Very highly recommended”. Keith has been consistently performing in mainland Europe now for 20+ years, where he is well known to a large following as an exciting live

performer. Over the years he has released a lot of incidental music for television programs and soundtrack projects and he has sold over 100,000 albums. Keith also writes songs and music for other artists and musical projects. Recent credits include, “Road to Recovery” the AA’s theme tune. His song “Preaching The Blues” was voted into third place in the “People’s Voice” competition, being the only UK finalist in the International Song-writing Competition (Blues Category) out of over 16000 entries.

Keith Thompson’s website – <http://www.densitymusic.com/>

Keith James – The Songs of Nick Drake – Sunday 15th April at 7.30pm



A haunting and immaculately crafted concert. This concert begins with an introductory set of timeless songs by brilliant songwriters – all contemporary with Nick Drake.

Richard Thompson, Roy Harper, Sandy Denny, Al Stewart, Vashti Bunyan, John Martyn, Bridget St John and Bert Jansch.

Also featured are two poems by William Blake which Keith has set to guitar arrangements based on Nick’s unique style.

Nick Drake is the most revered and loved of all this country’s singer/songwriters. He recorded three cherished Albums between 1969 and 1972 but was almost entirely unknown in his day. After his tragic death in 1974, aged only 26, his music almost disappeared into obscurity. Now, thanks to a massive resurgence of interest and a worldwide re-evaluation of his genius, Nick Drake has become a National treasure. An

important book, Remembered for a while has been recently released, written by his elder Sister Gabrielle Drake. This volume throws light on almost everything attributed to Nick's brief career as a songwriter and recording artist as well as on many corners of mystery and supposition.

A number of years have now passed since singer/guitarist **Keith James** paralysed the whole country with his stunningly beautiful series of concerts entitled **The Songs of Nick Drake**. At the beginning of the project in 2001 he was the first artist ever to bring this fragile and intriguing music to theatres across the UK in its pure live concert form. The end result was over a decade of highly acclaimed concerts amounting to over 1500 shows in venues in the UK, Ireland, Holland, France, Italy and Spain including all of Nick's Schools and Colleges – even Glastonbury Festival.

'Some of the most atmospheric and emotive music you will ever hear' The Independent

'Keith James has become a pillar of trust. A sublimely intimate and engaging voice' Sunday Times

'a sensitive and pleasingly understated delivery, all the better that the songs might speak for themselves' Acoustic Magazine

Keith James' website: www.keith-james.com

Members' Calendar for March 2018

26	27	28	1	2	3	4
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm PYT rehearsal for HCDF 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm Rehearsal for HCDF adult entry 7:00 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Rehearsal for HCDF adult entry (Renée Field) in rehearsal room 7:30 pm 'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	PYT rehearsal for HCDF 6:30 pm	Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	Rehearsal for HCDF adult entry in rehearsal room 7:00 pm 'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 9:00 am – 2:00 pm PYT 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm Screen at the Phoenix film showing of 'The Zookeeper's Wife' 7:00 pm	PYT 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm PYT rehearsal for HCDF 6:30 pm
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm PYT rehearsal for HCDF 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm Rehearsal for HCDF adult entry 7:00 pm Rehearsal for HCDF adult entry (Renée Field) in rehearsal room 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm 'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	Members Evening HCDF Preview performances 7:30 pm	Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	PYT Showcase dress rehearsal 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm 'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 9:00 am – 2:00 pm PYT Showcase matinee performance 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm	PYT Showcase matinee performance 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm 'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm 'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	Phoenix Theatre Singers - out of theatre 7:30 pm 'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	'Gaslight' rehearsal. 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 9:00 am – 2:00 pm 'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, performance 7:30 pm	PYT launch of 2018 production 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm 'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, performance 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm 'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, performance 7:30 pm	'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, performance 7:30 pm	Phoenix Theatre Singers - out of theatre 7:30 pm 'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, performance 7:30 pm	'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, performance 7:30 pm	The Drama Company 9:00 am – 2:00 pm 'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, performance 7:30 pm	PYT launch of 2018 production 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm Screen at the Phoenix film showing of 'Hampstead' 7:00 pm
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm	The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Phoenix Theatre		Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	Private film viewing by Severn Films 7:00 pm	

Members' Calendar for April 2018

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
26 The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm	27 The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Phoenix Theatre Committee Meeting 7:00 pm Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	28	29 Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	30 Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	31 Private film viewing by Severn Films 7:00 pm	1
2	3 The Drama Company Easter Workshops , setting up 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	4 The Drama Company Easter Workshops 9:00 am – 5:00 pm	5 The Drama Company Easter Workshops 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	6 Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	7 Screen at the Phoenix film showing 7:00 pm	8
9	10 Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	11	12 Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	13 Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	14 An Evening with Keith Thompson 7:30 pm	15 Performance by Keith James 7:30 pm
16 The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm	17 The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	18 Rossiter Books Event - Ruth Goodman 7:00 pm	19 Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	20 Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	21 The Drama Company 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Screen at the Phoenix film showing 7:00 pm	22 PYT 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm
23 The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 5:45 pm	24 The Drama Company 4:00 pm – 7:15 pm Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	25	26 Phoenix Theatre Singers 7:30 pm	27 Rehearsal for 'Abigail's Party' 7:30 pm	28 The Drama Company 9:00 am – 2:00 pm	29 PYT 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm
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