

..... Stop Press ~ Time To Act ~ Sat 15th May @ 7:30pm ~ Madcap

Good Quality Theatre for All

A Message from our new Chair:

The phrase “new beginning” can be over used, and so I am not going to use it here! Instead I will say that I think that the group is in something of a unique position currently. In a nutshell, we start the next phase of our group’s existence with a blank sheet, remembering that we have a fantastic past with some wonderful achievements behind us.

The new committee have met for the first time, and consists of the following members (although more may join):

Mike Thomas	Chair
Sheila White	Treasurer
Hannah Kitchen	Secretary
Alison Wale	
Nicola Adshead	
Ken Heanes	
Sue Whyte	
Clare Lewis	

We are all very enthusiastic about the future, and hope that you will join us along the way.

Some of the things that we have started to discuss already are:

- How we can all be more involved.
- How to make us all feel more like members of the group.
- Productions for later this year.
- Social and workshop evenings.

It might take a short while for us to get things organised, but we are working on it.

Of course we would like to hear from you about ideas that you might have. And please do think about trying another aspect of theatre from that which you have been involved with before. As an example of this, Alison in a previous issue of PROMPT laid down the challenge that she would direct for the first time if someone came forward to stage manage. Well that got a response, and so that production will happen later this year.

Soon, we hope to be able to announce details of our first evening event. **STOP PRESS: See details in this edition of PROMPT - 15th MAY.** I really hope that when we do, as many of you as possible will be able to come along - a chance to re meet and be entertained.

We will let you know how plans are coming along presently.

SCTC has been part of many people’s lives over the years. I myself have been associated with the group for 19 years, and I know many others have much longer associations. Hopefully we can draw on the experience and expertise we have within the group, while all gaining further experiences and skills.

In doing this, of course we want to encourage new people to become involved and enjoy SCTC.

I know that primarily I want to indulge my interest in theatre, be involved in productions and have fun whilst doing it. Part of the enjoyment of course comes from ensuring that we all give of our best to any production that we are involved in, and continue to set ourselves high standards.

So in conclusion to all of this, we look forward to new ventures within SCTC and sincerely hope that all of you that are interested can participate in some way. We of the committee look forward to seeing you soon.

Mike

p.s. Our new web site launching soon www.sctcweb.org.uk

SCTC - Time To Act ~ Time To Be There!

Yes, it is time to act – all of us who consider ourselves to be connected to SCTC and who wish to see it continue.

On **Saturday 15th May**, at Madcap, we are holding a social evening that we hope will be of interest to anyone who cares about SCTC. The new committee will introduce themselves, there will be entertainment, a run-down on what we plan to achieve this year, information on some new strategies and a chance to meet up with old friends and new people. There will also be drinks and food, as well as an excellent RAFFLE, so bring along some money.

Put this date in your diary NOW and commit yourself to supporting SCTC.

**Saturday 15th May at 7.30
Madcap.**

Your Theatre Company needs You!

PATRON SCHEME - BE A FRIEND OF SCTC

Stantonbury Campus Theatre Company has been creating good quality theatre within Milton Keynes for many years, now its your chance to be our special friend.

Would you like to benefit from preferential booking for events? Or a free ticket of your choice to any SCTC show? If the answer is yes then become a **Friend of SCTC** by joining our patron scheme.

For just £20 a year you will receive:

- Free ticket to a SCTC show of your choice
- Preferential booking for events run by SCTC
- Your name in every show programme as a patron
- PROMPT ~ A guaranteed copy of our regular newsletter

These benefits could cover your annual membership fee alone! But not only that, more importantly you will be helping SCTC to continue producing good quality theatre **that really is for all** ~ audiences, performers and those behind the scenes. A real benefit for everybody.

If you are interested and you want to invest in the future of SCTC then contact Clare Lewis on clare.e.lewis@btinternet.com We look forward to hearing and working with you as a friend of SCTC.

Good Quality Theatre for All

You will notice our new slogan appearing for the first time on this edition of PROMPT. This slogan has been devised to encapsulate everything that SCTC stands for. We are a theatrical company, which will always set high standards in all that we do. Aiming to promote and encourage good quality in all aspects of theatre ~ performing and behind the scenes. This good quality allows us to entertain our audience, while continually improving and growing in our own interests. And of course enjoying ourselves.

We will be using our slogan in all future publications, correspondence and SCTC publicity.

We really would like to send Prompt by e-mail as much as possible to keep costs down. If you are able to receive Prompt electronically, please e-mail Alison.wale@dsl.pipex.com and I'll arrange for your address to be added to the list. This would help keep costs down enormously. Thank you!

New production: “Duet For One” by Tom Kempinski

You may remember my rash suggestion that I would direct a play if someone stepped forward to assist me – Someone did and so I am now committed to directing a play. I have chosen “Duet for One” by Tom Kempinski. I am looking to put this on sometime in September (final dates not yet decided) and am now looking for two accomplished actors.

This compelling story is inspired by the life of world-famous cellist Jacqueline du Pre. Described by The Financial Times as “a wonderfully sensitive play, positive and optimistic,” the play tells of a genius musician stricken by an incapacitating disease and the psychiatrist who fights to prevent her from suicide. How can a phenomenal musician, whose sole constant had been her belief in her talent and on which now she can no longer depend, begin to express her aggravation and remorse and fear in m e r e w o r d s ? Playwright Tom Kempinski remarks, “This play is about something that happens to all people, even people like you. It’s about loss and the pain of loss and the struggle to deal with it. And if it hasn’t happened to you yet, it probably will, and if it doesn’t happen to you, you’re scared it will. It’s also very funny.”

This play demands much of its actors – there are only two, Stephanie, the musician, and her (probably – but not definitely!) male psychiatrist, Dr Feldmann – and while I have not yet decided on an audition date, I would like anyone who is interested to contact me, either by e-mail (Alison.wale@dsl.pipex.com) or by phone (01908 201864) This is so that I can gauge interest and plan ahead. I will contact anybody who is interested at a later date when audition dates have been decided. Please **DO CONTACT ME** if you are interested in auditioning, as there will not be another Prompt in which to publish audition dates.

I also need a lighting director and set designer. Don’t worry if you’ve never done anything like this before – we will have expert advice to hand – I am seeing this as an opportunity for people to try something new and different. We have a first-time director and a first-time stage manager, so why not join our ranks? Again, please contact me if you are interested, or just want to talk through possibilities without committing yourself to anything.

I look forward to hearing from you:

Alison Wale (director)

CHANGING STAGES

For the past eight weeks or so, twelve of us have been meeting to read, and discuss various plays of the late twentieth century, ably led by Rosemary Hill, from “A Taste of Honey” by Shelagh Delaney, through Tom Stoppard’s “Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead” to Bryony Lavery’s “Frozen”. We have been challenged as we read unfamiliar plays, and work on theatrical devices such as status and monologues. And now we are nearing the end of the course, which brings us to a further challenge: after a short rehearsal period the group will be presenting our workshop performance, which will be on **Thursday 20th May 7.30pm** at Madcap. Entrance is free and we aim to make this something of a social evening, which we very much hope members of SCTC and their friends will wish to attend. This workshop performance will be made up of a mix of excerpts from the plays studied.

Everyone on the course appreciates the support of the Milton Keynes Community Foundation who has funded this series of evenings, and which has meant that we have been able to enjoy and study a vast range of literature, which I know for sure I certainly would not have encountered without this. For over ten years, MK Community Foundation have supported practically every project (if not every project!) that Stantonbury Campus Theatre Company has been involved with. Once more, we thank them – and Rosemary - for making Changing Stages a possibility.

And now, for those of you who missed it (and in slightly edited form) here is the retiring Chair's report from the AGM

The main event for Stantonbury Campus Theatre Company in the past year has been the wonderful Shakespeare Rocks Festival, staged at The Stables in June 2003. This was so ably directed by Rosemary Hill, and directed musically by Andrew Hall and Shiny Hussein Hall. I think that I can speak for everybody who took part in the production of All the World's A Stage and the Garden event when I say that it was a privilege to take part and to work with such talented people. I know there were many people working behind the scenes as well - too many to mention here - all of whom added to such a splendid production of which everyone can be rightly proud.

While acknowledging the huge contribution that so many people made to Shakespeare Rocks, I'm sure that they would not mind me singling out and thanking Rosemary, Andrew and Shiny for the enormous amount of time, energy, effort and personal resources that they put into the production. I think it very fair to say that without them, the show would not have gone ahead so successfully.

A little later on in the year, we were able to enjoy a reprise and revisit to The Stables as we took part in the Community Foundation Gala Evening and shared the stage with many groups who had received funding through MK Community Foundation. It was a really good opportunity to enjoy the songs again and to show appreciation for all that the Community Foundation has given to SCTC in its long history. Many thanks go to Andrew and Shiny for rehearsing us for this, as Rosemary was unable to be involved at the time.

These two events really sum up most of the output of SCTC over the past year. And this is where I want to start to put before you, the membership of SCTC, a couple of proposals regarding the future of the group.

As I have said earlier, I don't believe that Shakespeare Rocks, or Milton Keynes the Musical, or possibly All Change before that would have been the successes they were without the enthusiasm and vigour of Rosemary, and the vibrant talented teams that she worked alongside. We have all got used to sitting back and waiting for the next big production to be laid before us as a proposal, relying on somebody else to put in the very hard work that this entails. SCTC has become known for its big productions.

But big productions cost a lot, both in money and in energy. Rosemary has made it clear that, at the moment, she wants to step back and take her ease. And so, the buck stops with us, the membership. Not the Committee, as we are only representatives of the group, but with all of us who are members of SCTC. We perhaps need to begin looking at smaller productions, which is what SCTC used to be very good at - and can be good at again. There are plans afoot for a novice director and stage manager to work together on a two-hander, we have had another offer from a cast member of All The World... to develop her costume skills, we need more people to be willing to try something new. We have so much talent within our group, but we do need to begin to rely on ourselves and to take part ourselves in making plays come alive. We need to be fully involved and committed to SCTC.

There was a point, not so long ago, when the remaining members of the committee were feeling somewhat despondent, and wondering whether we ought to propose the closure of SCTC as a group. We felt that there was a lack of commitment, and a disparate membership who did not feel themselves to be fully involved in all that SCTC stood for. Thankfully, there have been signs of hope, one or two people willing to step into shoes they've never worn before and have a go at directing or stage managing. We think that there is a reason now to look to the future of SCTC and to think about how the group might re-invent itself. One way, as I have said, is to go back to the smaller pieces, with smaller casts, less ambitious sets, and I hope this will develop successfully.

The other suggestion was to make this a group with a defined membership. SCTC has never asked for a membership fee, believing that the arts should be open to all. However, we, as a committee are starting to feel that it may be the time now to begin to ask for subs - nothing too expensive, and on a sliding scale for those less able to pay than others. But by doing this, we hope to encourage more of a sense of community and of belonging. For your subs, there would be offers of social evenings and possibly trips to MK Theatre, as well as other events. It would also help to have a slightly healthier bank balance, which could then support the productions that were put on.

Thank you to everyone who has made the effort to attend tonight, and to everyone who has so generously given their time, and talents, to SCTC. You are all valued members of the group, and we appreciate your support.
(Ed: AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON SATURDAY 15th MAY at MADCAP)