ALTRINCHAM LITTLE THEATRE

SEASON 2016—2017 FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

As I write this the wind is howling round the house and the news is saying don't go out unless it is necessary. It is often necessary to go out to the theatre to meet people and arrange for jobs to be done. I won't bore you with the sorry saga of the gas meter replacement. Suffice to say after two half days totalling 15 hours waiting we have still not had the meter changed. John Grieve, who is a new member of the committee, has volunteered to take over some of waiting –in for the gas man. Work on the building is always ongoing, especially when the theatre is hired out.

There are still a few unclaimed 300 club prizes. Please check if your name is on the list we have posted on the notice board at the top of the stairwell. There is at least one £100 prize not collected. Is it yours?

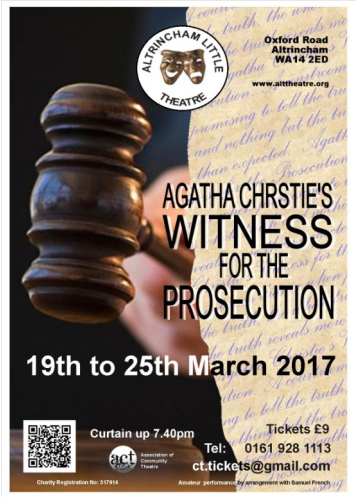
During the last play we lost 5 blue coffee tokens and, as we don't have any spares, we are having to replace them all with new ones. Coupled with the cost of replacing Officials' name badges it is a significant cost.

The next production is a well-known Agatha Christie play. It was shown over Christmas on TV but we are doing it differently from that – we are using the original script. It is a gripping play that, like "The Mousetrap", can be seen more than once.

Finally, please book early and please put an alternative day on your booking form. There were a few late bookings for the last play and we were not able to fit them in on their chosen night. As most had not put an alternative date, we had to contact them to find out what they wanted. Please check your booking form. Ian Bowden, Chairman

PLAY NO. 4 WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION

BY AGATHA CHRISTIE



I have just realised that we are over half way through the season already, with only one more play after this one before the summer break. We know you always like an Agatha Christie play, and this one is particularly intriguing. We also know you like a courtroom drama and this is an exceptionally good one. We needed to borrow 7 barristers' wigs for the courtroom scenes here—not an easy task! At least one of the cast is wearing his own. Let's hope he remembers to take it home every night as he will need it the following morning for work. We are delighted to welcome back Director John Chidgey and a cast you will recognise from recent productions. When you have seen the play, treat itt like The Mouse Trap and promise not to tell anyone else 'who-done-it'. See if audiences later in the week can work it out for themselves.

300 CLUB WINNERS

These winners were drawn during the third play of the season. To collect your prize, please have a word with Ian Bowden who can be found serving behind the bar during the interval. There are still some shares in the 300 Club available. Please have a word with Ian if you would like to take part.

£100	**R M Smith**
£50	**Mrs J Atkinson**
£30	**Norman Kelly**
	Cynthia Weaving
£15	**Mr & Mrs R Ballantyne**
	Mr D R Copley
	Mrs Granger-Brown
	John Hanson
	Mrs M Smith
	John Wooler

ORDERING TICKETS

Don't forget—the easiest way to do this is to ring us (0161 928 1113) on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday evening between 7.30pm and about 9.45pm and talk to a human being about the tickets you would like. This service starts from Wednesday March 1st.

Please try not to ring on other nights or during the day. Often there won't be anyone at the theatre then or they are there but are too busy to answer the phone, and the answer-phone rapidly fills with messages.

Key fobs, lost badges and coffee tokens

We seem to have had a spate of unreturned key fobs, official badges and coloured coffee tokens recently. This not only causes us problems but also costs us money to replace them. Could you have a hunt at home and see if you have any there. We have a list of those who have been loaned a key fob and we shall be chasing them for their return. Please hunt down the back of the sofa or in pockets, purses or handbags to see if any of these items is lurking there. We should like them back.

NEW VOLUNTEERS

Our appeal for help with front of house duties was very successful and we were delighted to welcome 6 new volunteers for the last show, (plus the husband of one who is likely to be helping with lighting in future).

In the light of that success, here goes with a new appeal. Is there anyone reading this who would like to learn how to help with ticket orders? Requests are either sent by post or taken as phone-in orders. These then need translating into seat allocations, tickets printed and then placed in envelopes ready for collection on the night. Plenty of support and explanation will be given to anyone offering to assist, and we would be grateful for just one night's help, though to be honest, the more times you do it the easier it becomes.

There is also a vacancy for someone to assist Susan who takes phone orders for tickets. The phone is manned on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening from 7.30pm to about 9.45pm for the two and a half weeks before the play starts. Shifts can be arranged with Susan to suit you both and I would suggest shadowing her for an evening to find out what information is needed.

If you are interested n either of these volunteering opportunities, please ring me on 0161 881 8416 to find out more about it.

It is with sadness that we have to report the sad deaths of two actors who played at the theatre some decades ago.

The first one is Philip Ford, who acted here with his friend Tony Cope under the direction of Vicki Lane in the early 50s. Philip was an employee of the bank of England and returned to London, but kept in touch with the theatre, attending plays whenever he returned to Manchester for a visit. He was in his 90th year when he sadly died recently.

The second death to report is that of Michael Waterhouse (1930—2017). Mike was a member from the late 60s to the 80s and appeared in many plays here during that time, including The Irregular Verb to Love, Rashomon and Spring and Port Wine. He also wrote and played in short films for a group called the Cheadle and Gatley Film Makers. Our own Christine Heath appeared in one of these films several years ago and was intrigued to hear that it had been shown as far away as Burnley, and she had been recognised by one of the audience who saw it there. Your fame is widespread, Christine.

Next show here at Altrincham Little Theatre

SAMT present

The Vicar of Dibley

by Curtis and Archer

Tuesday 4th to Saturday 8th April 2017

For ticket details, see flyers in the bar

Next Season

We are in the final stages of deciding next season's programme—we still have one title and one Director to sort out and we will then be in a position to announce the five plays we have chosen and the audition dates to sort out the casts. No, I'm not giving any hints yet—watch this space, but we hope very much you will enjoy what we have selected for you and we look forward to seeing you back here for another season of theatre-going.

What they said about the third show of the season:

The Messenger Reporter gave this production 4 stars and picked out for special mention two very different scenes; one a hilarious scene in which Amy shares a comforting whisky with her friend Hilda and the other, a most dramatic scene when the love triangle of husband, wife and mistress meet up for a 'sensible' discussion. "All Amy's preparations have gone wrong and there are never to be forgotten explosive moments from all three".

The **Cheshire Theatre Guild** Adjudicator commented that "*what was highly admirable was the detail and accuracy of the props, and it was subtle touches which made the setting so authentic and realistic. Here was clear evidence of detailed research. For example the Kellogg's cereal box, the gramophone, pound notes and the vintage milk bottle. The various items of clothing in the ironing pile were also in keeping with the era*". She concluded by saying "*This was a confident performance from a cast which worked well as an ensemble. The balance of sympathy between Jim, Amy and Georgie was achieved. Some key moments had a strong dramatic impact on the audience".*

The **Association of Community Theatre** Show Reviewer wrote ***"I** didn't feel I was watching actors at work. I felt that the director, Mike Russell, had created a real-life story here and so feelingly, movingly and realistically did his cast share their problems with us, that we somehow had been allowed to share in this intense human dilemma ourselves".*

Let us know if you would prefer to receive a larger print version of this newsletter.

CONTACT DETAILS

Should you need to get in touch with us at any time, these are the relevant contact details;

By phone — 0161 928 1113

By email — alt.theatre@msn.com

Ticket sales — ct.tickets@gmail.com

Costume Hire Service —0161 928 1113

Our website — www.alttheatre.org

Charity Registration Number: 517914