

No wobbles with 'Jelly'

The longstanding and laudable tradition of the Riverside Children's Play was continued in January with Brian Patten's 'Gargling With Jelly'. Based on his book of poems published in the mid-1980s, the play was first performed at the Everyman Theatre in 1990. It was nice to see that efforts had gone into updating the play for a modern audience.

Doctor Sensible works for the Prime Minister and aims to put an end to all things jolly by administering her sensible medicine. Our heroine Jenny stands in her way because she refuses to become as grey and miserable as Mum, Dad and everyone else. The doctor has five days to make Jenny change her daydreaming, poetic and colourful clothed ways. It's a good job she has on her side the barmy Mrs Scattybags who holds the secret



Caitlin Hare as Jenny with Mum & Dad - Martin Riley and Ann Lloyd



Caroline Kay in some of her many guises as the evil Dr Sensible

to defeating her evil twin sister in her shopping trolley.

From the minute we were welcomed to Heswall Hall and invited to play our part in the production, every member of the audience was gripped. It was fast-paced, lively and drew children and adults into rooting for Jenny to defeat the evil doctor. Given there were only six members of the cast, they worked extremely hard as an ensemble, playing numerous parts and joining in dances. It must have been fast and furious backstage making sure everyone was where they should be with the necessary props and costume.

Caitlin Hare excelled as Jenny – her presence on stage kept the young members of the audience on her side at all times. Caroline Kay was a most menacing Doctor Sensible and Charles Riley again demonstrated his versatility as the hare-brained Mrs Scattybags. Martin Riley and Ann Lloyd were very busy as Mum and Dad showing the glum life under the influence of Doctor Sensible's medi-

cine to great effect and also taking various other parts throughout. Who knew Martin was such a dancer...? Also on stage was James Kay standing in for Steve Morse who was sadly taken ill - it must be very disappointing when a cast member cannot take part in the final show, but James stepped up and provided admirable support in the roles he played.

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Charles Riley was Mrs Scattybags

Dates For Your Diary

Social Events

Quiz Night
Sat 19th March 7.30
pm
Richmond Hall



Light Supper included.
Contact Katie Welshman
07591759610

Plays

Mill on the Floss
23rd -26th March
Gladstone Theatre
Curtain Up: 7.30pm



Plays for Next Season

This season we have deliberately gone for a popular and possibly lightweight season with the hope of getting our audiences back and to give our actor's plenty of choice with established authors and offering 'meaty' roles. We hope that there will be something here to whet your appetite, whether you are on stage or backstage. We need you and we need more of you, so please volunteer.

October 9th - 16th 2011 'LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN' by Oscar Wilde - Gladstone Theatre

Directed by Ann Warr at Gladstone Theatre. Cast 7 men & 9 women. Apart from the main roles there are some lovely cameos for both men and women in this sparkling costume drama of "*Epigrammatic brilliance & shrewd social observation*".

November 20th - 27th 2011 'THE DEEP BLUE SEA' by Terence Rattigan - Heswall Hall

Directed by John Welshman. Cast 5 men & 3 women. We have decided to perform this play to celebrate Rattigans centenary and salute a great British playwright. Two wonderful lead roles - Hester the tormented Judge's wife, suffering a hopeless passion for feckless, drunken ex fighter pilot Freddie. The part of Hester was played successively by Peggy Ashcoft, Celia Johnson and Googie Withers. A drama of the highest calibre. Previous Rattigan plays presented include 'Bequest to a Nation' 'Cause Celebre' and 'Separate Tables' all received with great acclaim.

January 2012 The Children's Play. Heswall Hall

Yet to be decided. After this year's rousing success with 'Gargling With Jelly', which all the children loved, we are looking for a follow up of similar ilk. Please be patient

March 25th - 31st 2012 'ONE FOR THE ROAD' by Willie Russell - Heswall Hall

Directed by John Welshman. Cast 2men & 2 women. This is a classic Willie Russell comedy set in his beloved Liverpool and a definite must for all his fans. It is one of his earlier plays but has lost none of the 'Scouse' humour in the passing years. Again four excellent roles up for grabs.

May 27th - 2nd June 'ONE O'CLOCK FROM THE HOUSE' by Frank Vickery - Heswall Hall

Directed by Wendy Lee-Forrester. Cast 4 men & 8 women and a boy (or possibly a girl). We have never done a play by this prolific Welshman although it was planned several years ago but never staged because of the sad death of Bill Myers, who was going to direct it. So now another attempt is being made to stage it. A very funny comedy about the funeral of an elderly father (not usually an occasion for hilarity), but when the family concerned numbers among its members a Wellington -clad cook who bakes almondless almond cakes, another who is convinced his shopping trolley is a dog and a sister who is a happy inmate of a psychiatric home, the proceedings are bound to be lively.

All the dates given are Sunday to Sunday, no getting out of Setting up and Striking - no Prima Donna's accepted. We hope that you find these plays to your liking and that there will be something there for everybody - including our all important audiences. Come, audition, and enjoy.

Happy season and auditioning. Wendy Lee-Forrester.

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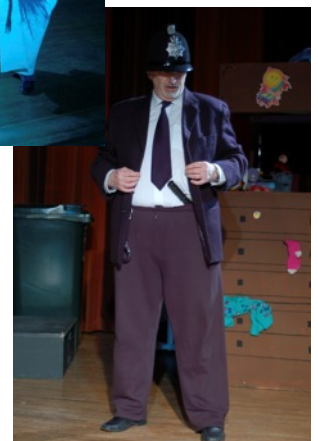
(continued from page 1)

The whole play is interspersed with Brian Patten's brilliantly silly poems and they were well-delivered by all cast members. The use of sound to accompany the poems making them into raps also helped greatly. In fact, the all the sound was fantastic- well done to Simon Garland. It really helped to give shape and pace to the performance. Lighting is never easy in the round in Heswall Hall, but it was pleasing to see that some nice effects were created and the best was made of the poor facilities available. Set, props and costume were all well-chosen or made – how lovely to have props for the audience to use in the finale too!

The audience was hugely responsive to the show – at times it felt like their enthusiasm was such that the cast struggled to keep the performance in their control! It was tremendous though to see a strong, well-received Children's Play – a reminder to us all how important a fixture in the Riverside calendar this is. Very well done to all involved- a most enjoyable evening's entertainment for adults and children.



Dancing ghosts



James Kay as Policeman 'Pie' !

Chairman's Chat

"That Was A Show That Was' is the best way to sum up 'Gargling with Jelly' Everybody who was involved in whatever capacity must be congratulated on a marvellous production. The smiling faces and complimentary comments bore testament to the excellence of the enterprise. It would be invidious to single out individuals in what was an obvious group effort, but particular thanks must go to James for his tireless effort and enthusiasm ---- thank you. Those members who were unable to support missed a treat.

Rehearsals are already underway for the March production of 'Mill on The Floss' and Katie would welcome any volunteers to help with



rehearsal refreshments --- even if only on one occasion during the rehearsal schedule --- she can be contacted on 0151 632 4923. Finally the Christmas Party was a great success and enjoyed by all, thanks to all involved in the entertainment and to Lesley and her team of caterers.

John

Obituary - Joyce Blacow



We are sad to report Joyce's death just before Christmas. She was an active member during the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Her 'piece de resistance' was the performance of 'Tarantara! Tarantara!' in 1980 when her skirt became caught on a rough corner of scenery, and was totally removed at the next twirl of the chorus line. Joyce finished the number without turning a hair!

Charles and Joyce retired to their roots in Morecambe and had many years to enjoy the views, from their home, of the Lake District across Morecambe Bay.

Our sympathy goes to Charles and their family.

New Curtain Up Time

Since time immemorial (or at least since John Welshman can remember) the traditional time for curtain up for Riverside productions has been 8.00 pm. While many of you may be used to this time the committee has been persuaded that starting half an hour earlier will accrue the benefits of an earlier finish and bring us into line with other theatres in the region.



Therefore from next season onwards all plays staged at Heswall Hall will commence at 7.30 pm. unless otherwise advertised. So remember:

*"Arrive for the play at seven thirty front of house will not be shirty
Get to the Hall at nearly eight - The play's gone up - you're far too late"*

Quiz Night Social Evening

Yes! It's that time of year again when wits and pencils are sharpened and the (usually) harmonious atmosphere between Riversiders is replaced by a deadly rivalry as Brian (The Riddler) Jones devises yet another of his fiendish quizzes.

The date for this event is in the Dates for Your Diary on page 1 but for those who have already used page 1 as a firelighter the date will be :

Saturday 19th March 2011

7.30 pm, Richmond Hall

Light refreshments will be available. Please book with Katie Welshman on 07591759610

In the meantime: here is your starter for 10 -

"What is the difference between a buffalo and a bison"?

The answer?

"You can't wash your hands in a buffalo!



Your quizmaster - Brian (The Riddler) Jones



Riverside Players Christmas Charity

The generosity of those of you who gave to the Riverside Christmas Charity resulted in the sum of £237 being handed to Jessie Cussons who is a BHF fund raiser.

Congratulations and thanks to all concerned!

A White Wedding!



Mr & Mrs Stenhouse - Danny and Ruth just after they had both committed matrimony

Not even the recent atrocious winter weather could thwart the wedding of those two stalwarts of Riverside Players, Ruth Griffith and Danny Stenhouse, which took place in the snowy, picturesque Thornton Hall Hotel just prior to Christmas.

The snow and ice provided a complementary backdrop for the wonderful dress and fur stole which Ruth wore and she was accompanied by bridesmaids in stunning burgundy, a very seasonal colour. Not to be outdone, Danny's sharp suit and his very upright yet relaxed demeanour as he welcomed guests in the evening made him every inch the splendid groom. In fact all in all they made a most striking couple.

Although sadly, some family members from weather-hit West Wales were prevented from attending, friends including those from Riverside Players attended the soiree after the wedding. The wine flowed and the youngsters present (and some of the older guests too if truth be known) were impressed by the plates of sweets and chocolates liberally on offer. Clearly a good time was had by one and all.

This newshound is not yet privy to the future plans for the happy couple save that they were intending to stay at home for Christmas. Whatever their future holds for them I trust I am merely echoing the good thoughts and best wishes of all their friends and acting colleagues in Riverside Players when I wish them both every happiness for the future. Mind you! I still think it is something in the water at Richmond Hall. Who will be next?



The cutting of the wedding cake

Errata - mea maxima culpa



Well! It only takes a moments lapse in concentration and lo! this beagle manages to put the last Newsletter into a spin by misspelling the names of Caroline and James Kay with an 'e'. My apologies to James and Caroline - I've only done three plays with you in the last 6 months. I blame it on the absinthe (I know there is an e in that!).

The observant amongst you will notice some minor changes to the Newsletter. This is forced upon you by the introduction of new software which will hopefully change CentreStage from ancient biplane to modern jet liner. These changes will be gradual and I hope painless. Please feel free to send in your comments (ideally about the newsletter rather than it's pilot) and any suggestions to improve its readability.

In the meantime let me wish you all a happy New Year and good reading.

Ann Warr

In the light of her recent flood Ann asks that anyone wishing to contact her should do so only via her mobile phone: **07788596435**



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Centre Stage

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Deadline for the next Edition:

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