

Great Expectations

Rehearsals are now entering the final straight and the important thing now is to get our publicity material distributed please circulate our flyers to all potential audience. Flyers and A4 posters can be picked up at rehearsals (see Linda Marseglia) or ring John on 01733 566468 and he will arrange a supply.

Please come and give our cast an audience for their Sunday rehearsal in The Studio at Lady Lodge on 16th March

Scenery Store Destroyed



A disastrous fire on the evening of Sunday 24th February completely destroyed Mask Theatre's Store in the Dutch Barn at Lady Lodge Arts Centre. When the Fire Brigade arrived the building was ablaze from end-to-end; the firemen were able to prevent the fire spreading to the adjoining buildings and there was no damage to the Studio.

Peterborough Opera and the Key Theatre also lost scenery stored in the Barn.

Mask were fortunate to have removed from the store the costumes required for *Great Expectations* as well as two chairs, and the welsh dresser. However other chairs, platforms and steps that were required did not escape the flames so the back stage crew have had to set to and build new steps, etc.

Longterm, we will have to replace our stock of costumes, particularly long dresses, and we will need folding tables and costume rails before we perform in the park.

A Midsummer Nights Dream Cast!

Well almost! Rich Unwin held very successful auditions last month and has cast all parts with the exception of Snout/Wall. A full list of the players and back stage line up is given inside.

Rich would like to thank all those who auditioned and the other members who have offered to help behind the bushes.

Peterborough
MASK
 Theatre

60th
 ANNIVERSARY
 PRODUCTION

Charles Dickens' **GREAT EXPECTATIONS**

KEY THEATRE, Peterborough
 Wednesday 26 – Saturday 29 March 2008

Box Office: open 10.00 am – 8.00 pm. Tel: 01733 552439
 Tickets: Wednesday - Friday & Sat Matinee £10; Sat Evg £12
 Concessions available.

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Nick Hern Books

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Cast

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Theseus | Jonni Hilton |
| Hippolyta | Val Carradice |
| Lysander | Julian Ransom |
| Hermia | Diana Mortimer |
| Demetrius | David Slinger |
| Helena | Tracey Sortwell |
| Oberon | Mark Hickey |
| Titania | Catherine Myland |
| Puck | Mark Wilson |
| Quince/Prologue | Peter Crerar |
| Bottom/Pyramus | Terry Toyne |
| Flute/Thisbe | James Wickes |
| Snout/Wall | TBC |
| Starveling/Moonshine and Philostrate | Roger Marsh |
| Snug/Lion and Egeus | Richard Baker |
| Peasblossom | Samantha Baker |
| Cobweb | Jan Wright |
| Moth | Linda Marseglia |
| Mustardseed | Emma Goldberg |

Director

Rich Unwin

Crew

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Director's Assistant | Catherine Myland |
| Production Secretary | Peter Crerar |
| Logistics Manager | John Crisp |
| Costume | Jill Ward |
| Sound | Fred Garrett |
| Dance | Chris Kempton |
| Song | Mark Wilson |
| Help with props/costume | Kate Stansfield Eunice Crisp |

A get together of cast and crew takes place at The Lindens on Thursday 3rd April and rehearsals, every Tuesday and Thursday, start the following week.

Performance dates 1st to 5th July at 7.30 pm with dress rehearsals on Sunday 29th June at The Lindens and in Central Park on 30th June.

Negotiations are in progress for the use of The King's School Hall in the event of heavy rain being forecast.

Shakespeare Workshop



Around twenty Mask members enjoyed a fabulous workshop with Kate Hall on February 9th. The workshop drew on Kate's experiences as a director and workshop leader with the Royal Shakespeare Company, English Touring Theatre and Manchester Royal Exchange to cover a range of techniques used by professional directors and actors to explore Shakespeare.

We learnt how to work with the text, how to find the rhythm of a scansion, taking breaks with a caesura, and using our imaginations with visual and aural images. We discovered how to move with the text using beanbags to punctuate our lines, and how single words can be used in many ways to elicit different responses. Great hilarity was had trying to act out the whole of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with small phrases from the text and a group of people, preferably with as many or few points of contact with the floor.

Everyone agreed it was a wonderful day, and I can't wait to use these new skills in this year's MSND.

Diana

Awards

Recipients of the Mask Awards were

John Gardner Trophy; Catherine Myland for "her outstanding contribution as an actor and latterly as directors assistant and helping in all areas for many years."

The Guild Award; Dave Slinger for "most promising newcomer"

The Broadway Bowl; Peter Lee for "many years of service, often unrecognised, in all aspects of the Mask's activities, and being available when help is most needed."

Successful 60th Anniversary

Members past and present converged on the Key Theatre on Sunday 10th February to celebrate our 60th Anniversary. The assembled company enjoyed a convivial lunch in Riva, the theatre restaurant, and afterwards adjourned to the upstairs foyer for the informal and formal proceedings.. The afternoon commenced not with a speech but with a song, the first sound of the first performance of the first play put on by the Mask Theatre was a rather tuneless rendering of 'Roll out the barrel..' by a very bored squaddy, Gunner Cohen, who is revealed when the curtains open on the Free Kirk manse setting of James Bridie's *Mister Brodie*.



And so one by one the plays presented over the years by the Mask were remembered.

Some were swiftly passed over others of which some members had happy recollections were recalled in more detail. And the various halls which the mask has played over the years; The Elwes Hall, our principal venue in the early years, then places like the Millfield Hall which was used for some memorable productions, then the King's School when we were banned from the Millfield Hall. Banned not for misbehaviour but for our choice of play. What would perhaps have been a show with few 'buns on seats' became a



sell out show. How true it is that there is no such thing as bad publicity. What was the play? *The Killing of Sister George*.

St Johns Hall, The Studio at Walton School, touring round villages, the Neil Wade School at March,, RAF Brampton (we had to take out additional Public Liability Insurance in case we caused any damage—then the RAF burned the place down!) And then the Key Theatre was opened and Mask presented Chekov's *Three Sisters*. That for me is one of the best productions Mask has put on. It was certainly a benchmark against which to measure all the plays subsequently put on by amateurs in the Key Theatre. There were many stories told, of triumphs and tragedies, striking technicians and many kindnesses received.

We got a glorious spring like day for our celebrations however that was a disadvantage as the carefully crafted visual display to go with our story was barely visible with the light streaming into the Key.

We all drank a toast to the next 60 years of the Mask, presented the awards, took a group photo and all went home well satisfied with a happy day spent with our friends.



N..O.D.A. Weekend

It's official! Mask has got the award for Best Drama of 2007 in Region 1 of the Eastern Region. The official presentation is at the NODA East Day at Norwich on Saturday April 19th

So Patricia McDonagh writes,

Does anyone fancy a dramatic day in Norwich on Saturday 19 April 2008?

That's when NODA will be running a vocal workshop and a drama masterclass followed by lunch, their AGM and tea & cakes.

All for just £38.

I'll be going and am happy to co-ordinate travel if anyone else wants to come too. We need to book fairly soon so either see me at Great Expectations rehearsals, email me on

patricia.mcdonagh@ntlworld.com or give me a call on 07971 780612.

Future Programme

Looking further ahead Severin Pinder hopes to direct *A Country Girl* with a view to taking it to Collegium Augustinianum at Goch. The play would first be put on at The John Clare Theatre (or possibly in the new Key Theatre Studio if it is ready) possibly in November and then go to Germany. On past occasions the company has left Peterborough on Friday and returned on Monday. Watch this space for further news.

In July after *A Midsummer Night's Dream* we shall hold our AGM

The committee are anxious to have a full programme for 2009 in place in the near future and invite offers and suggestions as to what plays members would like to see in our calendar; to this end a 'Future Programme Forum' will be held on Wednesday 23rd April.

Mask Diary 2008

| | | | |
|-------|------|-----------|---|
| March | 16th | Sunday | Rehearsal, The Studio Lady Lodge Arts Centre, 10 am to 4 pm . Back stage team to set up at 10 am, ALL cast to be ready for 10.30 am start . |
| | 24th | Monday | Get-in at Key Theatre 10 to 1pm |
| | 25th | Tuesday | Technical and Dress |
| | 26th | Wednesday | Performances at 7.30 p.m. of |
| | to | —Saturday | <i>Great Expectations</i> |
| | 29th | | at Key Theatre |
| | 29th | Saturday | Matinee Performance 2.30 pm |
| April | 3th | Thursday | Cast get-together <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> . 8.00 pm, The Lindens |
| | 8th | Tuesday | Rehearsals for <i>A Midsummer Niight's Dream</i> commence 7.30 pm at The Lindens, and continue every Tuesday and Thursday. |
| | 19th | Saturday | NODA East Day at Norwich |
| | 23rd | Wednesday | Future Programme Forum (at Lindens?) |

Useful contacts

Mask Web Site

www.masktheatre.co.uk

Mask Committee

Chairman, Diana Mortimer

0780 941 3757

Secretary, Jan Wright

01733 222433

Treasurer, John Crisp,

01733 566468

Committee Members

Peter Crerar

01733 756125

Emma Daynes

01733 326924

Patricia McDonagh

01733 759111

Jill Ward,

01733 565741

Glen Whitmore,

07876 702 527

Edited and produced by John Crisp, 90 Eye Road
Peterborough PE1 4SG Tel (01733) 566468
E-mail jandecrisp@aol.com