

CROAK NEWS



Welcome to Jake Wilkins, who will be working with Al Dunn. A short Croak this month and possibly the last until February. Hope to see you all at the Little Theatre soon, meanwhile, stay safe and well.

Wishing You all a very Merry Christmas

and a Happy New Year.

Bea Hutchings (editor) marketing@toads.co.uk



A different Christmas

Twenty twenty and Covid oh what a year
 We never expected to face such a fear
 With lockdown for all and staying indoors
 In a couple of weeks we'd done all our chores
 We could go out for walks just to break free
 And we felt so lucky to live by the sea
 Three weeks they told us but that was untrue
 As time went on and the figures just grew
 Then by July rules were lifted for some
 But the Little Theatre just stayed locked and glum
 Our NHS workers and key workers too
 Got the applause like we used to do
 Could things become normal the way they'd once
 been
 If we were careful it would wait to be seen
 We could go out and dine restricted we knew
 Hands face and space were what we must do
 But it didn't work out because many broke rules
 And we went back to lockdown oh what fools
 Another month no pubs gyms or bowling
 Just back to restrictions and daily strolling
 Yet soon we'll have Christmas Boris did say
 So preparations can get under way
 I'll get out my cards and then start to write
 Reg's puzzles will need to get out of sight
 The table is mine now just for a while
 He can soon have it back to give him his smile
 Oh no there's a problem with TOAD's friends
 greetings
 There are no Socials or Christmas meetings
 Addresses are missing the quandary is real
 I've got it now it's so ideal
 It's got to be CROAK I'll contact Bea
 I'm sure she'll help me with my plea
 So this is what I want to say "Have a super
 Christmas Day
 However you spend it your own way
 Sending love and lots of cheer
 For a Healthy Covid free New Year"

Julia and Reg Bale

Jake Wilkins

So most people who get into theatre will either have been studying theatre since they were a child, or they will remember a performance that sat with them all through their life. However for me it was a bit different, I do not remember the first show I went to see, however there are a few moments that stick out on my road to theatre.

I remember going to Bournemouth to see my cousin perform in the pantomime "Snow white and the Seven Dwarfs" where she was a dancer. I must have been around 10 and we waited outside when it finished and I even still have the programme that she signed. It was some time later that theatre jumped back into my life.

It was 2014 when I got a message from my friend asking if I was available to help out at the local theatre in Minehead for the night. It was a local band that I liked and I spent the show backstage, keeping an eye on the performers and telling my friend, the sound operator, what they wanted when they needed it.

Cut to 2016, I had designed and lit several amateur productions, was the sound operator for a couple of touring acts and had worked many many more shows as a general dogsbody. I decided that I wanted to make this where I wanted to go in life and my love of theatre has just blossomed since then!

From 2016 and moving down here to Torquay, I have done almost all aspects of backstage work for the Princess Theatre, including working as part of the Princess crew for the TOADS performances, I was also the sound operator for the Plymouth Military Wives Choir for two of their performances.

But the love of theatre still runs deep in me and to be offered such an amazing opportunity to be a part of a community like TOADS means the world to me. Its difficult times right now but my want to be back in theatre is one of the things that keeps me fighting through. I cannot wait to meet each and everyone of you, you may have to wear a name badge though as I am terrible with names so I apologise in advance!

Jake

FROM THE CHAIR

December is here and we optimistically await a vaccine roll-out!

Not much to report this month and, unless there is an influx of material for January, the next Croak may not appear until February.

I recently sent out an email asking for video submissions for TOADS Theatre Online. I've received a few suggestions and one completed video – get a move on!! Hopefully, we can continue to publish these via YouTube and ensure our patrons are aware that we still exist. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like we'll be able to film on stage at the moment – Tier 2 restrictions appear to forbid such social interaction.

All that remains is to wish all of you, on behalf of TOADS committee, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year – although this year our celebrations may be rather muted.

As always, keep safe and well.
Jon Manley (chair bloke)

The Wednesday Club. December, 2020.

“Once more into the breeches, dear friends, once more”.... as the troupe of circus clowns always say as they prepare for the next performance.... and so it goes on. The Wednesday Club continues to meet via Nigel's Zoom device, with Sherry and Ian regular contributors, even though Ian is locked down in France! There's lots of jolly chat, centred mainly on telling the muted members which button to press. It's good to see the old faces getting older, and provide mutual support.

There has been some activity on the local am dram scene, with the 'Bijou' production of 'Ghost Train' now re-scheduled for Spring. Freda Welton is organising 'TADDFest 2021' and would welcome entrants from local societies.

Maureen and staff at 'The Palace' have organised some spectacular Christmas lighting, thanks to Louis Sullivan, for outside the theatre. From what I've seen on Facebook, it's brightened up the top end of Palace Avenue considerably. Work on the Ice Factory Studio Theatre is going well. The roof is due to be sealed this week. Margaret Long is working her way through the Teignmouth Players' archive, finding many interesting relics of bygone productions. Like Toads, TP has its fair share of Bygone Relics..... Peter Whittle (Wednesday Club member) has produced another 'Cabaret Sauvignon' which is available on Youtube at <https://youtu.be/7FE80DiEMxs> I particularly liked the 'Compose Yourself' monologue.

I've just been listening to Radio Four's lunchtime chat show, which obscurely still calls itself by its Scots founder, Ewan Yors, but I've stopped listening to that rather confrontational series about the elderly. Does anyone still tune in to 'Cross Incontinents'?

This has been a month for memories, as Suzy and I work our way through our archives. Trying to remember where stuff came from gets more difficult... The times we've said "Who is that baby in the photo?" or "Did your Dad's cousin live in Northleach during the last war?" (actually, she did.....). Well, on with the sorting and sifting. The Charity Shops will be inundated with donations once this has all passed; meanwhile many of our neighbours are having a similar clean-out, with many 'Take it Away' junk stalls in the drives. I changed the sign on ours to 'Free to a bad home'... and everything went! I hope you've managed to get that Spokeshaver's Cuffufler to work, Mr Manley.

John Miles.

Listed here are some essential contact details:

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if you'd like to get involved in front-of-house duties

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if you'd like to help behind the bar
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If you'd like to help in the coffee shop

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if you'd like to submit an article for Croak

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for Wednesday Club

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If you'd like to help with set-building
Al Dunn 07880 734880

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If you'd like to get involved with techy stuff

If you want to act, or get involved backstage in any production, or as props or prompt, contact the director in each case, whose number will always be listed in The Croak with the audition information. If you're still not sure who to call, any member of the committee will always help to point you to the right person. As well as those names marked with an asterisk above, the committee members are:

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