



Stage Whispers



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DEC 2020

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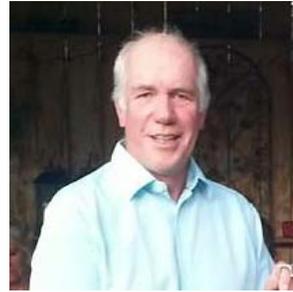


Happy Christmas , New year & Covid free to all you Whips!

Message from WHIPS Chairman

Subject: WHIPS AGM to be held by Zoom Tuesday 15th December 2020 at 7.30 pm

Further to earlier announcements I can now confirm that the WHIPS AGM (delayed from May 2020) will be held by Zoom on Tuesday 15th December at 7.30 pm. The agenda is attached along with other reports for the meeting. A financial summary will be sent out before the meeting.



Given the limited time available when using the Zoom medium I do not intend to read the reports at the meeting but we can take your questions either in advance by email or at the meeting itself.

If you would like to attend the meeting or send apologies please communicate with me by email at collinbailey@hotmail.co.uk All those wishing to attend the meeting will be notified of the Zoom login details shortly before the scheduled date.

Regards.....Colin BaileyWHIPS Chairman

THE WHIPS NOTICE OF 72nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Covers period from May 2019 to December 2020 Tuesday 15th December at 7.30 pm by Zoom videoconference AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the 71st Annual General Meeting held on 30th May 2019
- 3 Matters arising
- 4 Chairman's report
- 5 Treasurer's report including Membership report
- 6 WHIPS Youth report
- 7 Election of Officers and Committee Members for 2019/20



The 2019/20 Committee is as follows: Colin Bailey (Chairman), Frances King (Hon Treasurer), Jan Hudson, Iain Macfarlane, Julia McClung (WHIPS Youth), Chris Cathles, Hannah Jordan, Stuart Tomkins and Neil Fuller.

There are two Committee Member positions vacant for Vice Chairman and Secretary; nominations for these positions will be gratefully received.

Given the current situation Committee Members and Officers are willing to serve until the next scheduled AGM in May 2021.

- 8 Any other business

Notes

1. Reports will be distributed ahead of the meeting and it is not intended to read through them all. Questions can be raised in advance or at the meeting.

2. Given the lack of performances over the past 18 months there will be no presentation of Awards.



Chairman's Report to the WHIPS AGM of 15th December 2020

Welcome and Thanks

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen and thank you all for joining this evening. Given the special and unusual circumstances and with limited time I will keep my report and remarks brief.

Firstly, as ever, my thanks are due to all members of our hard-working Committee for their efforts and of course not forgetting Jack Griffith for his work in the Coach House, producing Stage Whispers, organising the play readings and the Christmas bash. Thanks also to the many members who have contributed both on-stage and behind the scenes. Sadly we also said goodbye to some WHIPS members with the passing in June 2019 of long time stalwart Brian Aitcheson and more recently in October 2020, Peter Ellisson. Margaret Brazier also stepped down from the Committee after many years of service to the WHIPS, our grateful thanks to Margaret and also to Jan Hudson for taking on the vital role of Child Protection Officer. Soo and Kevin Tomkins will also be leaving the area and we wish them well in their new life. You will not need reminding that this has been an unprecedented year for all the wrong reasons. The pandemic has had a major impact on all the WHIPS activities and whilst we realise our travails are insignificant compared to what many people have faced around the world we have experienced much disappointment and frustration although WHIPS Youth Theatre provided us with some highlights.

☑ In June 2019 the WHIPS Youth Theatre (WYT) presented their second Evening of Music and Drama with a Bring Your Own supper night and a one act play (*Horsley Hustle*) and musical entertainment.

☑ Our Autumn 2019 production was planned to be *Mind Over Matter* by Stuart Tomkins. Despite much hard work by cast and director we all felt that that the performance had not reached the desired level and with ticket sales very low, the show had unfortunately to be cancelled.

☑ In September 2019 we joined the West Horsley Village Fete at West Horsley Place. On a baking hot day (remember those?) our tombola drew much interest and raised funds for the Society.

☑ In December 2019 the WHIPS Youth Theatre and the Whippets came again to cheer us up with a Night of Christmas Music and Comedy including a one act play (*Final Dress Rehearsal*) and many popular Christmas songs with a New York theme.

☑ Our final live event before lock down was our ever popular Quiz Night in January 2020 with questions set this time by Stuart Tomkins.

☑ Meanwhile the Whippets had been busy since September 2019 rehearsing their production of *Little Mermaid Jr* which was all ready to show in March 2020 and they had even performed a fantastic Dress rehearsal when the Government ordered full lock down and the show had to be cancelled. This was a huge disappointment and thanks are due to all involved especially to Nicola, Julia and their team.

☑ Lockdown also led to the cancellation of our Spring Production *Close to the Wind* directed by Jack Griffith. This was also in rehearsal for an April 2021 date and looked to be a fun production with a strong cast.

☑ Plans for WYT to perform a triple bill of short plays *The Rule of Three* by Agatha Christie in July 2020 were also put on hold.

Since March 2019 all our face to face activities have come to a halt although we have been running regular Zoom play-readings with thanks to Chris Cathles for an excellent selection of short plays for us to read.

Looking forward it seems unlikely that we will be able to stage any live entertainment before Summer 2021. There will be no pantomime in January 2021 and whilst the Whippets have carefully stored their set, props and costumes for *Little Mermaid Jr* it is not clear if this production could be restarted. For a Spring Production to take place in 2021 rehearsals of *Close to the Wind* would need to be resumed in February. Hopefully these activities will be possible but until we see how much progress the vaccines bring us it is difficult to say what will be possible. Financially we have sufficient funds to cover this period of waiting and hopefully there will be better news for all next year.

Longer term, aside from our Youth groups, our structural challenges of a static and ageing membership remain. It is clear that these issues will need to be addressed with urgency if the Society is to survive. For the moment the Committee and I will continue to serve at least until our next scheduled AGM in May 2021 when I hope we will be able to meet face to face and share the traditional end of meeting refreshments. As ever new volunteers to serve on the Committee or work with the Society in any capacity are always welcome.

Colin Bailey ...WHIPS Chairman ...December 2020



Whips Youth & Whippets Report, by Julia McClung

At the time of the last AGM (30 May 2019) Whips Youth Theatre was going from strength to strength and Whippets was enjoying a well-earned break after its superb production of *Annie Jr.* Olivia Fawcett had just been awarded The Whips Walster Cup Award for her wonderful performance as Beauty in *Beauty and the Beast*; and Bella Grieve had won The Whips Marion Pertwee Award for her impressive portrayal of Miss Hannigan in *Annie Jr.*



Summer 2019

On June 9th 2019 Whips Youth presented an *Evening of Music and Drama*. This sold out supper night began with a programme of music, selected and performed by the company and directed by Julia McClung. It was followed by an original piece of comedy drama, *The Horsley Hustle*, written and directed by Nathan Rhys Farrell. The evening was a huge success with every member of the cast demonstrating huge improvements in their performing skills and more importantly, their confidence.



Autumn 2019

Whippets began rehearsals for Disney's *The Little Mermaid Jr.* with the Nicola Mace/Katie McClung/Julia McClung trio returning as director/choreographer/producer. We were blessed this year to welcome Evelyn Butcher to the creative team overseeing scenery and costumes (see below to be amazed by some of her creations).

After *Annie Jr* (Mar 2019) we had a hard act to follow with *Little Mermaid*

After *Annie Jr* (Mar 2019) we had a hard act to follow with *Little Mermaid*. But with such a talented cast, the most incredible costumes, scenery, props, lighting, SFX, and not forgetting the unforgettable soundtrack of the show, we were on to a winner! And then.....

Our show was due to open on 19th March but on Monday 16th, just as the children were arriving at the Village Hall, costumes in hand, for their dress rehearsal, Boris announced lockdown #1 to the nation and the show was cancelled. A snap decision was made, frantic phone calls followed, and with the support of our fantastic backstage crew, the cast stayed late and managed to give two back-to-back performances of the show for their families. It was a bitter sweet evening, the children were incredible despite their disappointment, but the show was at least seen by the people that mattered most.

We are still hopeful to bring part (or all) of *The Little Mermaid* back to the stage. Watch this space!



Christmas 2019

During the Autumn term we were delighted to bring Whippets and Whips Youth together to rehearse for an *Evening of Christmas Music and Drama* which was performed to a packed house on 8th December.

The evening began with Whips Youth presenting *Final Dress Rehearsal* by Jack Frakes, a one act comedy about an amateur theatrical group trying to get through its dress rehearsal of Cinderella. Think 'The Play That Goes Wrong' and you'll get the gist of the play! After the interval our audience was treated to a very festive and excellently presented hour of Christmas Music which involved all members of Whips Youth and Whippets. It was so wonderful to bring the groups together and is something we would very much like to repeat in a post-Covid future.



Spring 2020

In January 2020 Whips Youth started work on a triple bill of Agatha Christie mysteries, *Rule of Three*. The company was delighted to be working under the direction of Stuart Tompkins and rehearsals were progressing well. But as we all know, on March 20th all amateur theatre was, and remains cancelled..

Summer 2020

During lockdown #1 Whippets made a couple of music videos. All vocals recorded at home by the children, and the results are truly wonderful. Please do have a listen. You can find links on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/WhippetsHorsley/videos/

2021 - We Will Be Back!

COVID restrictions permitting, we are hoping to restart Whips Youth and Whippets after Easter. If this is not possible, given the large numbers of children we work with and the limited space at the Village Hall, we are confident that we will be back, all guns blazing, in September with a brand new show!



WHIPPETS &
WHIPS YOUTH
WISH EVERYONE A
HAPPY
CHRISTMAS
SEE YOU IN 2021!

PLAYREADINGS.... **zoom** online

Due to the wretched Covid 19 virus the regular monthly playreadings are currently halted, however A few of the regular Whips have been trying an online playreading via Zoom which have proven to be fairly popular. Chris Cathles, Colin & Jack have organised the last few sessions and if you are Interested in taking part we meet online at 8PM every other Thursdays and need your email details to invite you to be included.



Colin is organising the next session on Thurs 10th Dec at 8 prompt with an online script. Please contact Colin if you wish to be included in the next session

I have to say though, the old physical versions were much nicer as the wine & cakes tasted infinitely better! Requests to meet at the Billy had no responses from members or Mark the publican so we can either carry on with scripts that Chris can obtain off the web or get real performing arts library scripts pending government regulations .Please get in touch if you're interested.

CONTACTS

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The Whips Website		www.horsleyamdram.org



BILLY BASH

As feared the Whips 2020 Christmas 'Billy Bash' party has been cancelled due to Covid restrictions

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

TBA 'Little Mermaid' Whippets Production
AGM - TBA
27th Feb Whips Quiz night?
28 April – 1st May Autumn Production?



AND FINALLY

A Russian Jew, was finally allowed to emigrate to Israel.

At Moscow airport, customs found a Lenin statue in his baggage and asked, "What is this?"

The man replied, "What is this? Wrong question comrade. You should have asked: Who is this? This is Comrade Lenin. He laid the foundations of socialism and created the future and prosperity of the Russian people. I am taking it with me as a memory of our dear hero."

The Russian customs officer let him go without further inspection.

At Tel Aviv airport, the Israeli customs officer also asked our friend, "What is this?"

He replied, "What is this? Wrong question, Sir. You should be asking, 'Who is this?' This is Lenin, the bastard who caused me, a Jew, to leave Russia. I take this statue with me so I can curse him every day."

The Israeli customs officer said, "I apologize, Sir, you are cleared to go"

Settling into his new house, he put the statue on a table. To celebrate his immigration, he invited his friends and relatives to dinner.



One of his friends asked, "Who is this?"

He replied, "My dear friend, 'Who is this' is a wrong question. You should have asked, what is this?"

This is ten kilograms of solid gold that I managed to bring with me without paying any customs duty and tax."



This has been a 'get it out swiftly before the Zoom AGM starts production

