

## Redgrave Theatre - time capsule 40th anniversary on 9 September



Foundation day 9 September 1972. Sir Michael Redgrave places the time capsule in the foundations of The Redgrave Theatre.

In discussion with Waverley Borough Council about its importance, Anne Cooper has received assurances

that if the capsule is unearthed then it becomes the property of FTA as part of the town's theatre archive. We understand that the capsule contained a scroll of the founders names, but approached the *Farnham Diary* to appeal for further information. In response, June Hodgson of Wells, Somerset, supplied the following information in a letter in the August edition.

"As the assistant appeal organiser for the building of the Redgrave Theatre (Actor, Michael Griffiths, was the organiser), I hope I can answer, satisfactorily, the question posed in last month's *Farnham Diary*, concerning the remaining items which were put into the time capsule which was buried in the foundations of the theatre.

My late husband, Stuart, sealed the capsule before it was buried and inside were a Castle Theatre programme, a copy of the theatre trust's minutes, photographs, one of each of the (then) items of currency and some pages from the *Farnham Herald*.

Naturally, I was at the burial of the capsule, by Michael Redgrave, and I could just see my eldest daughter, Linzi-Jane, in the photograph which you published."

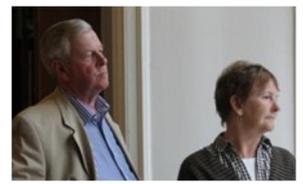
**Perhaps you were there too?  
Please drop us a line if you were –  
and tell us what would you like to  
see in a new time capsule when we  
get our new theatre.**

Because FTA is now a fully paid up Group Member within Performers Together CIC we are happy to share information with all our supporters.



**New company aims for quality performing arts venue.**

*Here are some of those who came along to the launch event at Farnham Castle on June 26.*





**Performers Together encouraged all to hear what has been happening, to meet the directors and other key players, find out how the company intends to operate, what plans there are to build their profile, to engage more supporters and build funds for the future.**

Visitors were told about the grades of membership - from Group to Member to Friend, so that supporters can decide how best to become involved.

They reminded the audience that the business case for a community theatre in the town would be modelled on other successful venues of this kind but would be custom-built to suit our local circumstances. It would not rely on local authority or Arts Council funding, and follows the example of Shakespeare's Globe, where volunteers support the running of the venue. Early work on preparing a business plan is now in train.

**One member of the company said, "We're expressing what masses of people in Farnham have felt for a long time. We want theatre - a real, proper theatre, and if it combines with a concert hall so much the better".**

**And two members who live twenty minutes outside Farnham combined to say, "We think Farnham is such a splendid town, this will return to it the wonderful legacy it has for theatre and make a marvellous cultural centre".**

And now Performers Together invite all FTA members to a very special event on Sunday October 21, 7pm.

## Help bring a theatre to Farnham!

Performers Together is here to support and help all performing arts groups in the wider Farnham area and now they invite all FTA members to a very special and enjoyable evening to support that cause.

**Please join us on Sunday October 21, 7pm. at Frensham Pond Hotel.**

This will be an evening of fine dining followed by entertainments presented by a selection of member groups within the company. Guests will savour a delicious carved buffet then enjoy short sets from some of its Performing Arts member groups.

Farnham Rep is already booked in, also *Something for the Weekend*, a male voice a cappella quartet; other groups are being approached right now. Intended to showcase the diversity of talents within Performers Together, it promises to be a great opening event and a prelude to other celebrations and entertainments planned over the coming year.

## Your ticket to a fun and diverse evening

To include a welcome glass of wine or fruit punch, the delicious buffet is just £35 per person. Tables are arranged to seat 8 so why not get your friends and family together? It promises to be a sociable evening!

See the mouth-watering Menu and booking form on FTA's website [www.farnhamtheatre.co.uk](http://www.farnhamtheatre.co.uk)

or email: [mike.silver@farnhamtheatre.co.uk](mailto:mike.silver@farnhamtheatre.co.uk) - to receive your copy.

**FTA WAS TEMPORARILY MOVED OUT OF THE SURREY AND HANTS OFFICE IN THE LION AND LAMB YARD to make way for – CREST NICHOLSON'S EAST STREET PREVIEW EXHIBITION "COMING SOON!"**

**Thursday 6 September, and Friday 7, 10am to 4pm and 8<sup>th</sup> Saturday 10am to 1pm**

**Many supporters made their views known about the development, particularly about the demolition of the Redgrave and the lack of a theatre in the scheme.**

Members of The Farnham Society were at the Lion and Lamb Yard distributing leaflets stating what they believe to be wrong with the CN development. [www.farnhamsociety.org.uk](http://www.farnhamsociety.org.uk)

## FTA AND EAST STREET / REDGRAVE - Farnham Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan

### Farnham's Neighbourhood Plan

In response to FTC's consultation FTA submitted a request for a theatre to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Local theatre activist, David Wylde asked the Council at the 12 July meeting if a theatre would be included and was assured that it would be considered.

At the same meeting, Anne Cooper quoted new planning policies which fall in FTA's favour. The Town Clerk asked for a copy of her statement, which indicates interest in the issue.

### East Street Planning Applications.

Crest Nicholson (CN) had asked Waverley Borough Council (WBC) for an renewal of their planning consent but with a 5 year life. Councillors , gave permission but only for another 3 years. 2,335 objections to the application were ignored, including those from Farnham Town Council and the Theatres Trust.

### Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)

WBC has issued CPOs on land at East Street which is managed by Woolmead owners, F & C REIT and Marlborough Head Pub owners Greene King. Both object to the CPOs.

It has now been confirmed by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) that FTA's submission is listed as a Remaining Objection. An achievement! This means we can have representation alongside the landowners at the Public Inquiry which may be called early in January. At least we are being taken seriously.

### Locating supporting evidence

Anne has begun a public appeal via the Farnham Herald for people

to contact her who contributed to the building of the Redgrave. Such evidence could be useful in making a claim for compensation if the CPOs are allowed.

### Asset of Community Value

On advice from the Theatres Trust and others, we have asked Waverley to list Redgrave as an Asset of Community Value. However WBC's Chief Executive replied that there is no list yet as the Government has not yet published the regulations.

## FTA's POLICY STATEMENT

► The proposed development requires the demolition of the Redgrave Theatre without replacement and the change of use of Brightwell House from theatre to two restaurants.

► There is an established need for a community theatre which would benefit and give focus to the retail area of the new development in line with recommendations in the National Planning Policy Framework for town centres.

► There has been a well supported campaign to save the Redgrave or have it replaced since 1998 and the long standing need for a good performance venue in the town has been recently reaffirmed through a detailed survey.

This directly led to the formation of

### PERFORMERS TOGETHER.

Performers Together is a Community Interest Company formed this year by local community groups who seek good facilities for the performing arts. These groups are determined that Farnham will have a theatre building which can adequately provide for a range of choral and brass band music, opera, theatre and dance.

Among groups already involved are:

Farnham Youth Choirs	Opera South
The Rock Choirs	Waverley Singers
Farnham Rep	Alder Valley Brass Band
Farnham Shakespeare Company	Hart Male Voice Choir

### Performers Together Membership details:

#### Friend

Friends receive Performers Together newsletters and other information on events including the Events Diary. You are welcome at all social events and the AGM but have no voting rights.

**Friend £10 p.a. Students £2.50 p.a.**

#### Individual Member

Individual Members have all the benefits of Friends but do also have a voting right at the AGM and also at Members meetings (full details requested).

**Individual Member £15 p.a.**

#### Group Member

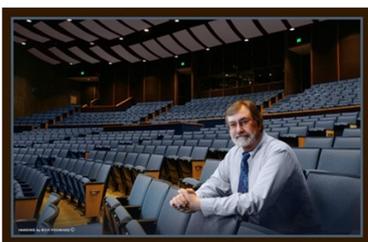
For an affiliated organisation or group. As with Friends and Members. Nominate a representative to attend members' meetings with a voting right. Receive minutes of Directors' meetings (full details requested).

**Group Member £50 p.a. Discounted sub £30 for groups with fewer than 40 members.**

*For a membership form just phone 01252 725263.*

## The Redgrave remembered across "The Pond"

### We're delighted to reprint here a letter from Ken Frazz



Mike

As you may remember, I was a student intern at The Redgrave from March through May of 1975, serving under James Laws, the lighting designer at the time. It was with the kind permission of Artistic Director Ian Mullins that I was allowed to serve as a university intern from the USA.

I still have 35mm color slides from that era. I hope one day to scan and post them for all to see. (*We hope to show these at the AGM, 7 October- Ed*). I hear once a year at Christmas from Jim and his wife (and props mistress) Pat Cowan.

I would love to donate a small sum, but have no idea how I would go about it with the money exchange, etc.

Nevertheless, please understand that I read every e-newsletter and I share with my technical theater students the wonderful experiences I had in Farnham. They were during my formative years as a university student and I cherish them deeply. To imagine The Redgrave Theatre sitting there unused is unfathomable to me. When I arrived, it was less than a year old and running at full steam ahead! The

measure of any great society is how it treats the arts.

I happened upon this high school that built a wonderful theater just as I was finishing my college degree. It was built with monies from a former local citizen, Frank McHale. Sadly, he passed away just six weeks after the ground breaking ceremony from an unexpected heart-attack, so I never met him.

Our theater opened in August 1976, just fifteen months after my internship with the Farnham Repertory Theatre Company. I wish them well.

Ken

Ken Frazz, Facility Manager

McHale Performing Arts Center, USA

## And another, from Colin Winslow

Hello Mike

I was interested to read Tony Banfield's letter reprinted in the last FTA Newsletter:

I was Head of Design at The Redgrave from 1991 to 1994, and heartily concur with his remark about its near perfect audience/stage relationship: there wasn't a bad seat in the House. In this respect, (as well as many others,) it was one of the best designed theatres I have ever worked in.

Right from the start, the Redgrave maintained very high production values, with sets and costumes all built in-house. It is often forgotten that a very large number of technical staff were involved in the productions, and work was created for many local people, as well as people such as

myself, who moved to Farnham for the job.

During my time there I was fortunate to work with some of the best carpenters, painters, lighting and sound technicians, stage managers and wardrobe people in the country. I well remember those busy workshops housed in an old mill, just a short, pleasant walk from the theatre along the river-bank.

I now live and work in Canada, but Farnham and its theatres have played a significant role in both my professional and personal lives: I too worked at the old Castle Theatre in the 1960s, and the two designers Tony mentioned, Suzanne Billings and Brian Currah, were both close friends of mine. Indeed, it was at the Castle Theatre that I first worked with Brian Currah, and we remained friends until he died about five years ago.

It is tragic and perverse that Farnham is now without its theatre: Both the cosy, improvised Castle Theatre, and the beautifully designed Redgrave Theatre, - an exemplar for many other provincial theatre buildings, arose because the people of Farnham decided that they wanted to have Theatre in their town, enthusiastically went about the business of creating it, and succeeded triumphantly. With the demise of the Redgrave an important theatre building has been lost, not only to Farnham, but to the nation.

Kindest regards

Colin Winslow

**If you were associated with the Castle Theatre or The Redgrave as an actor, director, producer, sound engineer, costumer or other work, let us know - we would love to hear from you.**

## Your subscription to FTA

Very many thanks to those who have already paid their membership charge for FTA and also those who gave donations; it's much appreciated.

**A reminder -** Membership charges are:

**Single person £10**

**Family £20**

**Group £20**

Please send cheques to:

Joe Michel, Treasurer

23 Frensham Vale

Lower Bourne

Farnham GU10 3HS



## AGM Sunday 7 October, 2.30pm AGM

**Your FTA's AGM will be on Sunday 7 October 2012, 2.30pm in the Garden Gallery at Farnham Museum.** As well as the AGM business don't miss 'Redgrave and Castle Theatres – Memories and Memorabilia'. Please see attached the AGM Agenda and Accounts.

**Can you supply any unwanted gifts looking for a good home, which would make good prizes for our Lucky Draw? If so, please contact Celia on 01252 726420 .**



## HOT NEWS... Waverley Borough Council supports a new theatre in Godalming!



Bob Cryer

More precisely, the WBC Arts Officer has given encouragement to Bob Cryer (son of writer and comedian Barry Cryer)'s project to restore the Rotunda building in Godalming as a small 200 seat theatre.

She is quoted on his website

saying "It has great potential.... Godalming comes off poorly in terms of arts spaces in comparison to other towns in Waverley" – all very true and we applaud Bob Cryer's initiative, but wait with interest to see what Waverley Council will make of this if it takes off.

If a town of 21,000 can support a theatre, there is no reason why one of 38,000 should not!

For more information see <http://rotundatheatre.wordpress.com>

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