

Tales from the Theatre

One of our Directors, Abigail McKern, had a very productive meeting recently with the actor David Suchet.



David Suchet

She had been to see a remarkable new play called **Giving** at the Hampstead Theatre by her friend Hannah Patterson and on the same night,



Hannah Patterson, writer

performing in the larger of the two spaces, another friend Geraldine James was performing in a play about Lawrence Of Arabia.

By good fortune Mr Suchet, who had come to see Geraldine's performance, was introduced to Abigail after the show. David immediately asked how the Redgrave Theatre Campaign was progressing and seemed very interested. Abigail was able to update him on our long struggle to save the Redgrave or alternatively establish a new *professional space* for the people of Farnham and theatre lovers across the wider geographic area.

Without hesitation, David Suchet offered to add his name to the prestigious and very long list of celebrity supporters, which already includes such luminaries as Dame Judi Dench, Simon Russell-Beale, Simon Callow, Sir Anthony Sher, James Bolam, Sir Nicholas Hytner, Lenny Henry and Graham Norton.

Abigail will soon be seen in a production of **A Room With A View** at the Guildford Yvonne Arnaud Theatre starring Felicity Kendal and she will be eager to add Felicity's name to the supporters list.



Geraldine James



FTA Director, Abigail McKern

The Farnham Theatre Association will be offering free tickets to see **A ROOM WITH A VIEW** for two lucky winners so **watch this space!**

From JOHN LEVITT

Anne Cooper has received a phone message and an email from our old friend John Levitt, the former chairman of the Save London's Theatres Campaign who says:

"The FTA and your indefatigable and long standing efforts and sheer hard work with that of your close colleagues and supporters, is not

forgotten by me. And remains close to my heart. I read the impressive FTA Newsletter avidly each time. I am heartened by the ever widening support of the FTA. Personally, If I lived locally, I would almost certainly still wish to be directly involved".

Our grateful thanks to John for his enthusiasm and valued support.

What's new in the Judicial Review?

FIGHT FOR FARNHAM JUDICIAL REVIEW 2016

A judge has granted permission for the Farnham Interest Group's (FIG) claim for judicial review of Waverley Borough Council's handling of the Crest Nicholson development in East Street to proceed. Reportedly, this may incur an initial one day hearing at the High Court potentially leading to further days in October*. This is Waverley and Crest Nicholson challenging the status of the claimants and this causes costs to rise. However, the FIG is extremely grateful for the money raised so far and feel confident that the total sum will be raised, provided the public understand that the strength of their case has already been recognised by the judiciary, in allowing it to go forward.

*At the time of going to press

If you would like to support this cause by making a contribution, please do so as follows:

I donate £.....to the campaign. All information will be held in confidence and all donations gratefully acknowledged. Should the case not proceed or the claim be withdrawn all donations will be returned pro rata.

Please provide your details on a covering note:

Name (s)

Address

Phone

Email

Please **EITHER** send your note with a cheque, made payable to The Farnham Society, to the following address:

FIG, c/o 13 Lickfolds Road, Rowledge, GU10 4AF Please write the reference FIGjr on the back of your cheque.

OR donate by BACS transfer to The Farnham Society at Sort Code 30-93-20 account number 00119575. Please give the reference FIGjr when transferring by BACS and also email sfbrads@btinternet.com giving your name, address and amount donated to confirm that the transfer has been made.

Any queries? Please call 01252 722193

... WOODPECKER REPORT September 2016

Well, the town is really humming just now with all manner of news to upset the applecart at Waverley. To list just a few: High Court Judges deliberate on decisions taken at Godalming to let the diggers into Brightwells; Farnham Residents' champion activist elected to the Borough Council's hallowed chamber, together with a turncoat mayor and with a cohort of support in the Town Council too. What a summer of surprises! The birds around Brightwells Gardens, such as they are in its depleted state, feel quite elated. Could there be a stay of execution after all? Might we be spared the terrible diggings and the site converted to a war zone? Might we have the trees kept and the peace return? Oh, for a change of heart at Waverley to see that theatre back and running!

Elsewhere in the Borough – and in the town, there is still much agitation over green fields and woodland under threat from developers and many of us birds do not know where we will go for safety. Little point in taking refuge in SANGS - although those green areas are supposed to compensate for the loss of natural habitats – as they will be full of dog walkers!

Must get on nowtap...tap..tap...tap



Cavalcade - a Backstage Story

35 years On

30 October at Farnham Maltings, 3.00pm.

Farnham Rep presents a commemorative showing of the original BBC film.

You may already know that *Cavalcade*, one of David Horlock's most imaginative productions at the Redgrave Theatre broke theatrical records in many ways and was the subject of a BBC documentary showing the incredible community activity generated by that production and its eminently successful outcome.

However, very few photos remain as they were all taken by the people who made the film for the BBC.

As well as showing the whole documentary, it would be wonderful if an exhibition of photos and supporting anecdotes could be mounted.

IF YOU HAVE PHOTOS OR CAN PROVIDE ANECDOTES PLEASE LET US KNOW.

And, see the attached piece by Brenda Longman of Farnham Rep giving a wonderful insight into the truly fascinating development of this great production.

The Draft Farnham Neighbourhood Plan Consultation 2016

You can obtain a hard copy of the Neighbourhood Plan from the Town Council Offices, South Street or you can download the document from the FTC website.

The link is: <http://www.farnham.gov.uk/services/shapefarnham> Just scroll down to see the pdf.

FTA Members and Colleagues are very much encouraged to contribute to this key document; for suggestions see below. The closing date for the consultation is 3rd October. Please make sure you add your thoughts to the process.



FTA Advice:

If you are concerned about housing development in your area, you will have already heard of the consultation for the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan (FNP) which gives you a chance to influence decisions about where development should be and what it should look like. But you may not have realised that it also gives you a say in what and where cultural and community facilities should be in the town. We urge you to make comments based on your own opinions and on the guidance given by FTA regarding the provision of theatre and performance facilities.

A few facts from the FNP:

Farnham will see an increase of at least 2,300 new homes in the next few years (Section 2 Farnham Now: Housing p12).

“Buildings which provide cultural attractions or facilities including community halls will be retained and where appropriate, enhanced.” (Policy FNP29 p80)

“Land at East Street, South Street and Dogflud Way (as defined on Map M) is allocated for mixed use development and should include.....a cinema and multi-use performance space and day care facilities or equivalent community facilities.” (Policy FNP21 p.65)

What the FNP does NOT say:

What new provision for cultural and community facilities will be in Farnham now and in the future, especially if the current East Street/Brightwell development is built.

The present plan for East Street/Brightwells requires the demolition of the Redgrave Theatre and the removal of the Gostrey Community Day Centre to the Memorial Hall.

There is already pressure for performance space in Farnham.

There will be a huge increase in population surrounding Farnham in Surrey and NE Hants.

FTA is pressing for the following words in blue to be included in: FNP Policy 29 Protection of Cultural Facilities and Community Buildings p80 (in line with FNP Policy 68 for Indoor Sports Facilities p79)

Buildings which provide cultural attractions or facilities including community halls will be retained and where appropriate, enhanced **to a high technical standard. New development should contribute to increased provision of cultural facilities and community buildings. Schools are encouraged to allow community access to supplement existing facilities.**”

The FNP must comply with the **Waverley Local Plan 2016** which is also open for public consultation until 3 October 2016 available at http://www.waverley.gov.uk/downloads/download/2118/local_plan_2016 or hard copy at Farnham Council Offices, South Street.

Farnham's Heritage Open Days

Full details of the Farnham Society Brochure "Farnham's Heritage Open Days 2016" are available at www.farnhamsociety.org.uk or in hard copy from the town council offices in South Street.

Recrafting Farnham

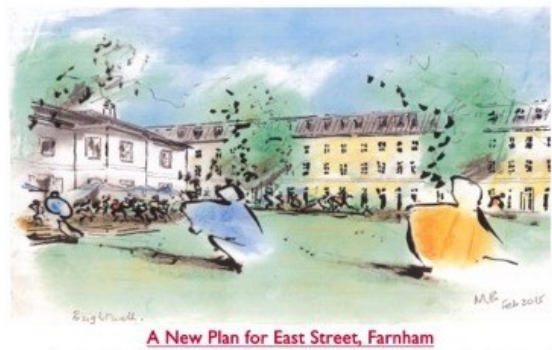
Cultivating Considered Placemaking Exhibition, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 9-11 September 11.0am-3.0pm at The Hive, Woolmead, East Street.

Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by FTA supporter, Michael Blower FRIBA, AA dip FRSA, Saturday 10 – Sunday 17 September Long Kiln Gallery, Farnham Maltings.

2 performances A pot of paint in the public's face by Farnham Rep in the Culver Room at Farnham Library, Saturday 10 September 2.00pm and 3.30pm.

"Wouldn't it be great to have Farnham's heritage of theatre included in these annual events – the CASTLE and REDGRAVE Open Days!" - Anne Cooper

Brightwells Restored



This from Michael Blower and Michael Holden is the new plan for Farnham which includes the possibility of the Redgrave running in conjunction with Curzon Cinemas.

This smaller, low-impact scheme has the approval of The Farnham Society and has awoken the interest of Farnham Town Council.

Reminiscing on the Redgrave

by Jessica Turner



Back in 1993, I was rehearsing a production of *My Cousin Rachel* for the Redgrave in the lovely rehearsal rooms above the costume store by the river. I was commuting to Farnham daily as I had children at home in Hitchin also claiming my attention.

Rehearsals were going well, I was enjoying the role of Rachel, the enigmatic and seductive Italian widow, and the cast was beginning to gel.

At the end of the first week we had an extended Easter break and I was able to spend time at home with the family - and with the lines! But disaster struck. My five-year old daughter had brought home from school a solid and amorphous lump of clay which she assured me was a diplodocus. She presented it to me with great pride but, in struggling with the weight of it, she dropped it on my foot!

Two hours later I was in A&E having a plaster-cast fitted from knee to toe and being told I would have to wait at least 4 weeks before it could be removed! I hobbled home in despair on a pair of ungainly crutches.

I rang my director, Kim Grant, assuming he would have to re-cast, (me, that is, not the leg!) but to my surprise and joy he said - '4 weeks – well that's when we open, if you can walk by the opening night, it's no problem'

Leaving my husband to look after the children, I decamped to Farnham and limped a leafy walk to and from rehearsals every day. I actually rather enjoyed the crutches in rehearsal, they became quite an expressive extension of my arm!

Miraculously the plaster-cast came off for the final dress-rehearsal and I was crutch-free for the opening night!

The show went down very well and the theatre was buzzing every night..

Sadly and inexplicably the Redgrave was already struggling at that time and the Artistic Director asked if I would give a speech each night after the curtain-call, asking for continued support and for spare change to be dropped into collection boxes in the foyer. I remember finding it a difficult thing to ask, since people had already demonstrated their commitment to the theatre by paying to come and see the show. I was so very saddened when the theatre finally closed a few years later.

Thanks so much, Jessica.

We all miss the Redgrave and dearly wish that the people of Farnham and beyond could once again enjoy the very many benefits of live theatre in our midst,



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