

No. 465 - January 2009

Emeritus Life President:
Dr Wendy Toye CBE, Hon.D.Litt.

Vice President:
Mr Nickolas Grace FCSSD, CLIPA

Editorial

We started this year with a very successful Twelfth Night party when the traditional cake was cut by David Suchet, currently appearing in *Complicit* at The Old Vic, and look forward to full year of activities.

At the AGM we elected Dr Wendy Toye to the honorary position of 'Emeritus President for Life', whilst thanking her very much for all her help over the years. This means we now wish to elect a new President for the Association and I should be very interested to hear whom you would like to see in this position. We are still looking for a new honorary Editor for the Broadsheet so if you would like to take on or suggest someone for this Committee role please let me know. In the absence of an Editor, I have put this issue together with the invaluable help of our Treasurer, Neville Taylor. Finally may I wish you a very Happy New Year with lots of Ballet and Theatre going.

James Ranger

New Year Honours 2009

Among the honours in the entertainment world are OBE's awarded to singer, John Martyn, to conductor, Norman Shelley and to Tom Thomson, Chair of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra; actors, Earl Cameron and Michael Sheen both received CBEs; opera singer, Michael Chance also received a CBE; theatre director, Katie Mitchell was awarded an OBE and veteran actress, Liz Smith, an MBE. Fergus Early, who founded the Green Candle Dance Company, was given an OBE for services to dance.

Founded in 1923 by
LILIAN BAYLIS CH., M.A. (Oxon) Hon., LL.D. (Birm) Hon.
Incorporating The Old Vic Association,
The Old Vic Circle, The Old Vic Club,
Sadler's Wells Society, Sadler's Wells Circle

Bristol Old Vic

The latest development, regarding the Bristol Old Vic, is that it will close for extensive redevelopment of the Theatre Royal complex early next year but the theatre will continue to present productions at an alternative venue in the city.

The search for Artistic and Executive Directors to run the reestablished theatre has led to a large number of applicants: 61 for the Artistic Director and 31 for the Executive Director positions. The successful candidates will be responsible for leading the Company into the next phase of its development.

The Executive Chairman of the Bristol Old Vic, Dick Perry, said that the response has been overwhelming and a testament to the attraction of Bristol and to the track record of Bristol Old Vic. Interviews are taking place this month and an announcement will be made as soon as possible.

Meanwhile the Theatre Club continues to go from strength to strength, under the Chairmanship of our friend, Ray Price. I will keep you apprised of events as they take place.

Mary-Jane Burcher



The copy deadline for the next issue of
The Broadsheet is **Saturday, 21st March 2009**.
Please send items for publication or letters through
the contacts listed on the back page.

The Vic-Wells Association
The OLD VIC, Waterloo Road, London SE1 8NB
SADLER'S WELLS, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1R 4TN
(also at the PEACOCK THEATRE, Portugal Street,
Kingsway, London WC2A 2HT)

The Vic-Wells Association Annual Report 2007/2008

This report covers the period 1st July 2007 to 30th June 2008. I am sure you would wish to join me in sending our best wishes to our President, Wendy Toye who has not been very well this year but keeps a close eye on our activities. She is still residing at the theatrical home, Denville Hall in Middlesex but no longer goes out. It will be proposed at this year's AGM that she be appointed 'Emeritus President for Life'. Our AGM was held on November 12th and after the business we greatly enjoyed a talk from Miss Doreen Wells, Marchioness of Londonderry, who talked about her wonderful dance career in a most amusing way. We were greatly honoured as apparently this was the first time she has spoken in public.

Our traditional Twelfth Night Party and Shakespeare's Birthday Party were both held in the very pleasant surroundings of the second floor bar of the Old Vic. The Twelfth Night cake was cut by Sandi Toksvig who was performing in the pantomime Cinderella at the Old Vic. After her short speech she made a point of talking to all the young people present. The guest of honour at Shakespeare's Birthday Party was Eileen Page who proposed the toast. She had helped us earlier by introducing the artists who appeared at the Celebration in memory of James Penstone and was one of three RADA graduates present, all representing a different decade of graduates. Our thanks go to the many helpers who provided such an excellent buffet for both occasions, ably coordinated by Ruth Jeayes and our thanks also go to the Old Vic for allowing us to host these enjoyable parties there.

Members had the pleasure of going on several visits during the year organised by Committee members. These included a Lilian Baylis evening in the Clore studio presented by Sarah Lenton and our Hon Registrar, Liz Schafer, the annual visit to the pantomime at the Theatre Royal Bath and a visit to the Mansion House.

Members had the opportunity to attend several rehearsals at Sadler's Wells during the year and I should like to thank Nadine Owen and Charlotte Geeves of Sadler's Wells for persuading so many visiting companies to let us see their rehearsals. These included

Birmingham Royal Ballet, Rambert Dance Company, La La Human Steps, Phoenix Dance, Michael Clark Company and several others.

Your Committee met five times during the year to run the affairs of the Association and plan future activities and I am sure you will join me in thanking them for their support and good work. We were fortunate to appoint two new key officers, Kate Smith as Social Secretary and Denise Toovey as Development Officer, both of whom have been very valuable additions to our team.

I am very pleased to report that our excellent web site, www.vic-wells.co.uk is up and running and is full of useful information. Having existed since 1923 to be the link between the audiences and the Old Vic, Sadler's Wells and their associate theatres, we are looking forward to a more active future with ever closer links to the Old Vic. The membership drive has brought in many new members but we are always looking for new Members including young Members to join the Association.

James Ranger - Chairman

Annual Accounts 2007/2008

The Annual Accounts of the Vic-Wells Association were presented to and accepted by the recent Annual General Meeting. Included in this issue of the *Broadsheet* is a copy of the Income and Expenditure Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ended 30th June 2008. An examination of the accounts required by the Charities Commission was carried out by our former Treasurer, Stanley R. Underhill FCCA.

Neville C Taylor - Hon. Treasurer



Ballet Nacional de España
Flamenco Festival London '09

photo: Josep Aznar
14-29 Mar

Vic-Wells Association

BALANCE SHEET as at 30th June 2008

FUNDS	2008	2007
	£	£
General Fund (Unrestricted)	19,821	
less Deficit for the year	1,418	
	<u>18,403</u>	19,821
Life Membership fund (Unrestricted)	2,496	
add Subscriptions during year	145	2,496
H H Davies Fund (Restricted)	13,120	
add Surplus for the year	34	13,120
Lilian Baylis Trust Fund (Registered Charity)	63,016	
plus Rise in value of 5½% Treasury Stock 2008-2012	8	
less Fall in value of Barclays plc Ordinary Shares	34,780	
add surplus for year	954	63,016
Ninette de Valois Trust Fund (Registered Charity)	2,426	
add Surplus for the year	107	2,426
	<u>65,929</u>	100,879
TOTAL FUNDS - INVESTED IN THE FOLLOWING ASSETS	65,929	100,879

ASSETS	2008	2007
	£	£
Debtors & prepayments on General Fund	0	0
NatWest Bank Current Account	2,121	1,845
NatWest Bank Capital Reserve Account	1,376	1,375
NS&I Investment Account - General Fund	17,046	18,596
NS&I Investment Account - H H Davies Fund	13,154	13,120
NS&I Invest. Acc. - Lilian Baylis Trust Fund	7,158	6,204
NS&I Invest. Acc. - N. de Valois Trust Fund	2,533	2,426
	<u>43,388</u>	43,566
less Creditors etc falling due within 1 year	0	0
TOTAL OF CURRENT ASSETS	43,388	43,566
FIXED ASSETS		
Films, paintings, playbills etc at cost	501	501
£500 of 5½% Treasury Stock 2008-2012 (for Baylis/de Valois Trust)	500	492
8092 Barclays plc Ordinary Shares	21,540	56,320
300 Old Vic productions plc Shares	0	0
	<u>22,541</u>	57,313
TOTAL OF FIXED ASSETS	22,541	57,313
TOTAL OF CURRENT and FIXED ASSETS	65,929	100,879

STATEMENTS for the year ended 30th June 2008

(a) Income and Expenditure Account for the General Fund (Unrestricted)

	2008	2007
INCOME		
Subscriptions	£ 625	£ 918
Donations & Legacies	£ 67	£ 649
Rehearsals	£ 775	£ 605
Outings	£ 90	£ 850
Social Events	£ 311	£ 430
Interest from Investments	£ 741	£ 553
Dividend from Barclays plc Shares	£ 1,848	£ 1,659
Transferred from Trust account re previous Barclays dividend	£ 938	£ 0
TOTAL INCOME	£ 5,395	£ 5,663
EXPENDITURE		
Cost of <i>Broadsheet</i>	£ 3,355	£ 1,289
Administrative Expenses	£ 319	£ 588
Website	£ 253	£ 142
Advertising	£ 706	£ 260
Social Events	£ 70	£ 1,578
Outings	£ 0	£ 825
Photography	£ 421	£ 577
Donations to other bodies **	£ 1,000	£ 0
50% of rehearsals income to Lilian Bayliss Fund (for 2 years)	£ 690	£ 0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 6,814	£ 5,259
(Deficit)/Surplus of Income over Expenditure Transferred to General Fund	(£1,418)	£ 404

** £500 each to Bristol Old Vic Trust & Bristol Old Vic Seat Sponsorship

(b) Statement of Life Membership Funds (Unrestricted)

Life membership subscription received during the year - Transferred to Life Membership Fund	£ 145	£ 225
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(c) Income and Expenditure Account for the H H Davies Fund (Restricted)

Income from Investments	£ 534	£ 452
less Grant to Actors Workshop	£ 500	£ 0
Surplus transferred to the H H Davis Fund	£ 34	£ 452

(d) Income and Expenditure Account for the Lilian Bayliss Trust Fund

Income from Investments	£ 1,202	£ 1,847
add 50% of rehearsals income (from General Fund)	£ 690	£ 0
less Transfer to General Fund re Barclays dividends	£ 938	£ 0
Surplus transferred to the Lilian Bayliss Trust Fund	£ 954	£ 1,847

(e) Income and Expenditure Account for the Ninette de Valois Trust Fund (Registered Charity)

Income from investments	£ 107	£ 66
Donations	£ 0	£ 250
Surplus transferred to the Ninette de Valois Trust Fund	£ 107	£ 316

FIXED ASSETS

Films, Paintings, Playbills etc. at cost	£ 501	£ 501
£500 5½% Treasury Stock 2008-12 (for Lilian Bayliss/Ninette de Valois Trust Trust Fund)	£ 500	£ 492
8092 Barclays plc Ordinary Shares †	£ 21,540	£ 56,320
300 Old Vic Productions plc Shares	£ 0	£ 0
TOTAL VALUE of FIXED ASSETS at 30th June	£ 22,541	£ 57,313

† The shares in Barclays plc were part of the bequest of the late James Penstone with the intention that the income from them be used to develop and improve the *Broadsheet*. Whilst the value of the shares appears under the Lilian Bayliss Trust Account, the dividend income from them is part of General Funds. The Will does not permit us to dispose of the shares other than as specified in the Will.

A Visit to Guildhall Art Gallery

Last year, on a late English summer day (humid, overcast, promise of rain), a group of members gathered at the Guildhall Art Gallery for what was to prove a very thorough and informative tour. The new gallery opened in November 1998 approximately 12 years late due to the discovery of the original Roman Amphitheatre, part of which is on display in the basement since June 2002. The Amphitheatre could seat some 5,000, people clearly a popular venue for the 30,000 inhabitants of Londinium.

Our very informative guide gave us dates, facts and figures about the gallery in a clear, concise and very amusing manner. The collection really started when Alderman John Boydell, Lord Mayor in 1790, gave 30 paintings to the Corporation. The collection has grown considerably from many subsequent bequests of both painting and sculpture. There is an impressive sculpture in marble of a seated Henry Irving in the role of Hamlet as well as the standing sculpture of Margaret Thatcher that once suffered decapitation but is now happily restored.

The gallery has a large collection of Pre-Raphaelites including William Shakespeare Burton's, the *Wounded Cavalier* and paintings by Lord Leighton and Alma Tadema. There are also paintings by Constable, Tissot, Reynolds and Turner. The gallery was bequeathed a large collection of the highly colourful works of Sir Matthew Smith who never sold a painting. The largest painting, filling the whole side of the large hall, *Defeat of the floating batteries at Gibraltar*, was painted by John Singleton Copley between 1783 and 1791 for which he was given 1000 guineas. The gallery also has a large collection of paintings of London and especially of the Thames. We were particularly interested in the painting showing the burning of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in 1809 as seen from the Thames in moonlight.

Our guide, who seemed to know as much about the models used in the paintings as about their historical context and the painters, explained that the collection is so large the works on display are constantly changing so she is not always sure where to find her favourites. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and strongly recommend a visit if you have time.

Tim Rooke

REVIEW

An Ayckbourn Triptich

The Old Vic has been converted to 'theatre in the round' for the revival of Alan Ayckbourn's trilogy of plays, *The Norman Conquests*. This is to replicate the premier of the plays in Scarborough, though a subsequent presentation was on the thrust stage of the Greenwich Theatre and later on a conventional proscenium stage in the West End. I recall the Greenwich performances, which had a stellar cast including Felicity Kendal, Penelope Keith, Tom Courtenay, and Michael Gambon, all less famous then than they are now. On the thrust stage at Greenwich, the plays worked very well, and I think the use of the 'in the round' configuration at the Old Vic shows both the advantages and limitations of this format. 'In the round' gives great intimacy between actor and audience, and maximises the number of people within reasonable distance of the players. However, the actors cannot focus their performance in the direction of an audience which surrounds them, the audience cannot always see the actors' faces, and the scenic elements are limited to the very simple. Perhaps the thrust stage gives the best compromise.

Of course, converting a traditional proscenium theatre to an 'in the round' arrangement is not easy, and in this instance is not entirely successful, though the adaptation has been very cleverly done. The front stalls provide the area for the circular stage, with the rear stalls realigned with a rather useful new bar beneath. The dress and upper circles remain, and the 'slips' of the horseshoe shaped auditorium come into their own as an elevated view of the acting area. A new set of 'stalls' and 'dress circle' seats are constructed on the original stage, and a couple of the stage boxes revamped to give more elevated seats. The product of these architectural modifications is rather more 'theatre in the egg-shape' than 'theatre in the round', as most of the seats remain in the traditional areas of the theatre. I saw the three plays from three different vantage points. Best was the front row at the side of the acting area, within touching distance of any actor unwise enough to get too near. Towards the rear of the old dress circle was reasonably satisfactory, though an appropriate reduction should have been made in the price of the ticket to allow for

the obstruction of view provided by a pillar. Least satisfactory was the front row of the upper circle: fine view, but hot and cramped. Roll-on efficient air-conditioning!

What about the plays? It should be explained that this trilogy was the first of Ayckbourn's departures from a conventional format. The three plays cover the events of a family country week-end, but in parallel rather than in series chronologically. Each play relates to what occurred in the living room (*Living Together*), the dining room (*Table Manners*) and the garden (*Round and Round the Garden*). Indeed, some scenes recount events which take place simultaneously in different places. This all sounds rather confusing, but cunning Alan Ayckbourn has ensured that each play is entirely comprehensible on its own, though extra understanding (and fun) is generated by prior knowledge of another of the plays seen earlier.

The trilogy gets a very good production, and all six actors (Amelia Bullmore, Jessica Hynes, Stephen Mangan, Ben Miles, Paul Ritter, and Amanda Root) give excellent performances. One would go a long way before encountering such a fine display of ensemble comedy acting. All the characters are credible, the humour is soundly based on the characters and their relationships, and the comic business is expertly handled, particularly in the 'family dinner from hell' scene in *Table Manners*. *Green Wing's* Stephen Mangan is an inspired casting as the catalyst of events, Norman, assistant librarian and incompetent would-be seducer. "I only wanted to make everyone happy!" wails Norman at the end of *Round and Round the Garden*, when his attempt to arrange a dirty week-end in East Grinstead with Annie, his wife's unmarried sister, is as unsuccessful as his marriage and his interest in his brother-in-law's wife. A word of praise for Ben Miles, who has perhaps the most difficult part to play, that of Tom, the local vet who hangs around unable to articulate his interest in Annie. He gives a detailed and subtly nuanced performance. Tom is like Harry Enfield's character, Tim Nice-but-dim. This is Tom Nice-but-dumb, heaven knows how he managed to pass his veterinary examinations; probably a scrape pass at the third attempt!

So this revival of the first of Ayckbourn's forays into expanding the structure of the comedy of

modern manners is a great success. More experiments were to follow. The three-act *Sisterly Feelings* had alternative middle acts. The twin plays *House* and *Garden*, each of identical length, were performed simultaneously at the National Theatre. But those theatre-goers aiming for the Ayckbourn Completists Gold Star will need to provide proof of attendance at the variants of *Intimate Exchanges*, all sixteen of them!

Richard Reavill

NEWS from The Old Vic

After unveiling our new reconfigured auditorium for *The Norman Conquests* to plaudits all round, we are thrilled to be presenting our next two productions in the same Theatre-in-the-round CQS Space.

Richard Dreyfuss, Elizabeth McGovern and David Suchet star in the world premiere of Joe Sutton's new play *Complicit*. Directed by The Old Vic's Artistic Director, **Kevin Spacey** *Complicit* is a powerful American play that explores our current political climate. "I write these kind of plays" Joe Sutton says "because I believe it's essential for theatre to provide a forum; a place for a community to come together and debate its most difficult problems." *Complicit* is currently running at The Old Vic Theatre until 21 Feb.

Going into rehearsals at the end of January is Brian Friel's Olivier award-winning play *Dancing at Lughnasa* starring **Andrea Corr** and **Niamh Cusack** the cast also includes Michelle Fairley, Simone Kirby, Finbar Lynch, Susan Lynch, Peter McDonald and Jo Stone-Fewings and opens on 26 Feb and runs until 9 May.

First performed at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin in April 1990, Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa* premiered in the UK at the National Theatre in October 1990 before opening in the West End and on Broadway in 1991 and going on to win an Olivier Award for Best New Play, the Evening Standard Award for Best Play and on Broadway the production won a Tony Award in 1992.

Rebecca Pepper



Twelfth Night Party with David Suchet

50 Members and guests enjoyed this year's party held in the second circle bar at the Old Vic on the 10th January. Our Vice-President, Nicholas Grace persuaded David Suchet, OBE to leave a rehearsal for the new American play, *Complicit* to perform the ceremony of cutting the cake.



The cake is cut!

David explained how he loved the Old Vic having as a young man seen many great performances there including Sir Laurence Olivier as Othello. He has only worked at the Old Vic once before when he played the role of Salieri in *Amadeus*. His new role is as an American lawyer trying to save a journalist who does not want to reveal his source for his articles on American torture.

David is very well known for his portrayal of Hercule Poirot in 33 episodes over the last 20 years and is determined to complete the remaining 10. Many of us remember his excellent Shakesperian performances when he was in the RSC and in many other roles. He is married to Sheila Ferris and they have two



David Suchet with Nikolas Grace

children. Our thanks go to the Members who provided the food and wine and to Yvonne Hickman who made the cake and also to the Management of the Old Vic who let us use the premises for our party.



Members enjoying the party!

WHAT'S ON

Sadler's Wells

0870 737 7737

www.sadlerswells.com

- 5-7 Feb: Les ballets C. De la B. : *pitié*
 12- 14 Feb: Jérôme Bel
 17-21 Feb: Opera North
 26 Feb - 8 Mar: Sylvie Guillem / Robert Lepage /
 Russell Maliphant: *Eonnagata*
 12-13 Mar: Dance United: *Destino*
 14-29 Mar: Flamenco Festival London 09

Lilian Baylis Studio

0870 737 7737

- 6/7 Feb: Ivana Müller

Peacock Theatre

0870 737 0337

- 3 Feb - 14 Mar: *Traces*
 17 Mar - 11 Apr: *Tango Fire*
 30 Apr - 2 May: Jasmin Vardimon Company:
Justitia

Old Vic Theatre

0870 060 6628

www.oldvictheatre.com

- 7 Jan - 21 Feb: *Complicit*
 26 Feb - 9 May: *Dancing at Lughnasa*

REHEARSALS at SADLER'S WELLS

Listed below are the potential rehearsal opportunities for the next few months. We attend rehearsals by kind permission of Sadler's Wells and the Management of visiting companies and dancers may not always be in full costume and may walk through part of their roles. Not all of these will be open to Members so please check with Richard Reavill, tel: 0149187 2574 nearer the time, or e-mail nunsacre@tiscali.co.uk. If you are on his email list you will be informed automatically. Please arrive in the foyer 15 minutes before the rehearsal time and pay £5 to the Committee Member present.

Ballets C de la B: pitié 5th February



Opera North 17th-20th February

Dance United: Destino 12 March



Rambert 15th May



... and some later dates for your diary:

Northern Ballet Theatre 19 & 21 May
English National Ballet 16 June

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WHO'S WHO in the Vic-Wells Association

Chairman:

Mr. James Ranger
Cromer Cottage
Cromer, Stevenage
Herts SG2 7QA
0143 886 1318
jim_ranger@hotmail.com

Hon. Development Officer:

Denise Toovey
88 Grove Road
Bladon, Woodstock
Oxfordshire
OX20 1RA
01993 810466
denise@nosurprises.co.uk

Hon. Secretary:

Dr. Richard Reavill
7 Nuns Acre
Goring, Reading
Berkshire RG8 9BE
0149 187 2574
nunsacre@tiscali.co.uk

Hon. Registrar:

Professor Liz Schafer
372 Stroude Road
Virginia Water
Surrey GU25 4DB
0134 484 2836
e.schafer@rhul.ac.uk

Hon. Treasurer:

Mr. Neville C Taylor
Flat 1
128 Gloucester Terrace
London W2 6HP
0207 262 5898
neville.taylor@homecall.co.uk

Hon. Social Secretary:

Kate Smith
291A Alexandra Park Road
London N22 7BP
07876 307 623
trendydiva1@aol.com

Hon. Editor:

Position vacant