



Friends of Shanklin Theatre

Newsletter March 2010

Dear Member,

I apologise for the fact that some of the following may seem familiar, I was in the process of drafting this newsletter when I was asked to submit a short article for the County Press. Being always reluctant to re-invent the wheel, I used what I had written as the basis for the article, albeit quite heavily edited.

On Thursday the 11th March Shanklin Town Council made, for us at least, one of their most important decisions. To quote the e-mail I received from Chris Quirk, Town Councillor and Chairman of the Steering Group negotiating with the IWC.

“At the Shanklin Town Council Meeting last night Councillors voted to agree in principle to acquire the Freehold of Shanklin Theatre, and to authorise Chris Quirk, Richard Priest and John Fleming, Town Councillors, to negotiate terms of transfer with the IWC, subject to approval of the final proposals by the Town Council.

It was also voted to authorise the Mayor to sign a "Licence to Occupy" for Shanklin Theatre with the IWC, to run from 14th April 2010 to 8th October 2010. This will enable the Theatre to be operated until the negotiations with the IWC are finalised. A process which is likely to take some months.”

One other item of good news is the fact that, on the recommendation of English Heritage, the Department for Culture Media & Sport listed the Theatre Grade II on the 3rd February. This has considerable financial implications as English Heritage have strict guidelines for any work being done on listed buildings. Shanklin Theatre needs, from the Council's estimate, about £1.5 million to fully restore it. This figure can probably be reduced to about £850,000, by using local contractors rather than those used by the IWC.

On Monday the 15th March Chris Quirk, Tony Wood, Steph Welch and Barrie James met with RJR Solicitors, Ryde to begin the process of setting-up the Shanklin Theatre Community Trust (Limited) which it is anticipated will take on the lease of the Theatre. The setting-up of the company which will run the theatre was also discussed. It is expected that this process will be completed by the end of March. This means that the entities needed to run the Theatre will be in place before the Licence to Occupy is granted on 14th April. Any Fees involved in the setting-up will be met from Friends funds. The Trust, will apply for charitable status to enable it to apply for funding from outside bodies, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund, to provide assistance with the improvement and restoration of the Theatre, which is seen very much as a long-term project.

It is thanks to you, the members, that we have been able to progress as far as we have. Without your membership fees, and the patronage monies we wouldn't have been able to print all the publicity posters, and membership forms, provide the banners or pay for the Setting-up Fees for the Companies. Thank you for your continued support.

The following evening the Friends Committee met to discuss the implications of the decision. As there will not be the same number of staff which are currently employed by the Council, there will need to be enough volunteers to make-up the complement. Volunteers are unlikely, at this stage, to be asked to become involved in the technical aspects of the Theatre, unless they already have experience. We are mainly looking at Front of House, Ushers, Ice Cream Sellers, Ticket Office Staff etc. For security reasons the IWC will be removing the computer system from the Theatre, therefore we will, of necessity, have to run a manual ticketing system to start with. We are looking for volunteers to man the telephone, make the bookings and sell tickets to callers at the Theatre. It is hoped that we will be able to retain the current telephone number as people are familiar with it.

There will be 'Training Days' in the Theatre for the Volunteers on Saturday 17 and 24th April. This is necessary to familiarise them with the layout of the building, Fire Exits and Fire Drill, First Aid Points etc. If any prospective volunteers hold First Aid Certificates it would be helpful to know this.

We also finalised the date of this year's AGM, it was to have been held at 7pm on Monday 19th April. This has been brought forward to Friday 16th April at 7:00pm in the Theatre. We expect to have access to the Theatre on the 14th April.

You will find a formal notification for the AGM attached with this Newsletter

One of the items on the Agenda will be 'Election of Committee'.

I will be standing down as Chairman. I am also a Churchwarden at St Blasius Old Parish Church Shanklin, the Vicar retired a few weeks ago, which means many of his responsibilities pass to the Churchwardens. I therefore won't be able to devote the time to FOST that it needs at present. If you would like to take on this rewarding and interesting position and would like more information, please give me a call on 861230.

Gwyn Dawson, the Minutes Secretary has said that she will also be standing down at the AGM. This post will then become the Honorary Secretary. Again, if you would be interested please give me a call on 861230.

There will be two more posts on the Committee:

Volunteers Co-ordinator. It is considered that there will need to be a Volunteers sub-committee, run by the volunteers for the volunteers, and the Chairman of this sub-committee should be a member of the main Committee. There will be an amendment to the Constitution to reflect this, to be voted on at the AGM. If you would be interested in standing for this position please give me a call on 861230

Publicity Co-ordinator. Again it is considered that there should be a Publicity sub-committee, and the Chairman of this should also be on the main committee. There is currently a volunteer for this post. Again there will be an amendment to the Constitution tabled at the AGM.

A gentle reminder, there are still a few members who have yet to renew their membership for 2010 - 2011, if you are among them, would you please send your renewal to Mike Crowe as soon as possible. Please make cheques payable to "Friends of Shanklin Theatre". You will need to have current membership to vote at the AGM. Membership runs from 1st April to 31st March the following year.

LATEST NEWS

The Steering Group met on Tuesday 16th and voted to set-up Shanklin Theatre Ltd, the company which will run the Theatre, and it is planned that it will in, due course, become wholly owned by Shanklin Theatre Community Trust (Limited) which it is anticipated will lease the Theatre from Shanklin Town Council. On Friday 19th the Application Forms were sent to Companies House. As things are becoming time critical we have opted for the quick turn-round and the Shanklin Theatre Ltd will be registered by 28th March. This company, with Town Council representation on the Board of Directors, will be operating the Theatre on behalf of the Town Council during the period of the Licence to Occupy, and on behalf of the holding company thereafter. Once we have the registration confirmed we can then apply to set-up the Trust, this is not so time critical, but it is best to do it as soon as possible.

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Shanklin Theatre Limited is now a Company Registered in England & Wales No. 07198169

NEXT OUTING

On Sunday 18th April FOST together with the Shanklin Hoteliers Association, represented by Karena Barton, will be mounting a stand at BUSTIVAL, the Southern Vectis Bus Festival at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway at Havenstreet. This runs from 10:00 to 17:00. The Membership Secretary will be there, as will your current Chairman, in Costume, and a couple of others. If you can spare the time to come and assist, in costume if you would like to, please let Mike Crowe or Barrie James know. We will need about six persons to erect the Gazebo / Marquee which will shelter us from the Sun, so they'll need to be there by about 8:30 at the latest. If you will be coming to man the pitch or just to erect/dismantle the gazebo, please let Barrie or Mike know. We will have a table to display Membership Application Forms and there will be Display Boards for useful information and photographs. It should be a good day with lots of interest for all the family. Hopefully it will significantly swell our membership numbers.

SPECIAL EVENT

*** * * * A GALA EVENING FOR SHANKLIN THEATRE * * * ***

**Saturday 26th June Special Variety Show run by the Friends, all profit in aid
of the Theatre**

Tickets £10

Friends £8.00

**Come and join us at the Theatre for this very special occasion, hopefully the
start of an Annual Event**

Full details to follow

A FINAL PLEA

**PLEASE, PLEASE VOLUNTEER, YOUR THEATRE NEEDS YOU NOW
AS NEVER BEFORE.**

There is a Volunteer Application Form on the website

With very best wishes,

Barrie James, Chairman
15, Collingwood Road, Shanklin, PO37 7LN
861230

Mike Crowe, Membership Secretary
7, Heath Road, Lake, Sandown. PO36 8PG
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