

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2020s and a happy New Year to you all. 2019 has gone in a flash and it's been quite an eventful 12 months with progress made on our extension, festivals won, and critically-acclaimed shows, several of them completely sold out, under our artistic belt.

We ended last season with our youth theatre taking to the radio microphone for an evening of **Vintage Hitchcock**. There was barely a handful of seats left across the run for our October comedy **A Bunch of Amateurs**, which proved hugely popular with our audiences and left Paul Chalmers dangling from the gantry in a drunken stupor as a washed-up Hollywood movie star. Even more popular was **Goodnight Mister Tom**, where every ticket was snapped up three weeks in advance and a puppet dog, two twelve-year-olds and a battered trike threatened to upstage some of our most experienced thespians.

The Salisbury Journal finished its review of **Goodnight Mister Tom** with the sort of pull quote from reviewer Katy Griffin you want to write large in all your publicity material, so let this newsletter be the first.....

***"Studio Theatre is a gem in Salisbury's theatrical crown and for those who have never been to watch one of its productions, I would definitely recommend it."***

Auditions, rehearsals and preparations for the next six months and beyond are already underway, but more of that later.

## LANDSCAPING OUR EXTENSION

We've continued work on our extension, which many of you got to tour in June for our **This One's On Us** evenings. Internal electrics are almost complete and a small party of painting pixies have been coming in weekly, gradually coating the walls and ceilings with magnolia and white. Our main funding push for the foreseeable future will be aimed at securing enough money to landscape around the extension. Initially, we'll concentrate on fencing and hard core standing for parking with planting to follow later. Anyone who feels they can help, please get in touch. In the meantime, a mega thank you to the hugely generous Foyle Foundation for another £10,000 donation, secured by our out-going fund-raising and grants maestra Jackie Pilkington as her last hurrah before handing over the reins to another.



## STUDIO STANDS UP!

A new venture for Studio: comedy nights bringing some of the brightest and best of new comic talent to the Studio mic. Engineered by Salisbury funny man and Edinburgh Fringe veteran Andrew White, who has been successfully promoting comedy nights in the area and is no slouch in the stand up stakes himself, bi-monthly dates have been pencilled into the Studio diary, starting on February 5th. Kick-off is at 7.30pm, and tickets are on sale now at £10 from [ticketsource.co.uk/studiotheatresalisbury](http://ticketsource.co.uk/studiotheatresalisbury) or on the door. Let's make this a regular fixture in the Studio calendar. Age Guidance: 16+

## RAIL DISASTER 1906: YOU DECIDE

On January 24 and 25, **History At Large**, in collaboration with Studio Theatre, is staging a re-examination of the Salisbury Rail Disaster of 1906 in the form of the judicial enquiry into the causes of the crash between Salisbury station and Fisherton Bridge, which left 28 dead. **The Retrial**, which has proved a very popular format, will see familiar Studio faces act as judge, lawyers and witnesses to find out what happened and why, leaving the audience to make a final decision at the end of the evening. Tickets, at £10, are available from Salisbury Information Centre. The evening starts at 7.30pm.

## NEW DOP(S) AND SECRETARY /SAME OLD (but so glad he volunteered) CHAIRMAN

The AGM in October restored Colin Hayman to the chairman's chair and saw the Director of Productions role for the next season shared between Linda Hayman and Jackie Pilkington, both experienced DOPs of yore. We also gained a new Secretary in Jill Redston after Emma Young hung up her pencil and pad after many years of sterling service at the committee meeting coalface.

## HOOKING UP TO WIFI

Selling tickets online has been a major success - more than half of you now buy your tickets via our ticketing website. It's become very apparent that connecting the theatre to wifi is rapidly developing into a practical necessity in other ways - with demand for card payments for tickets and bar purchases on the increase. Broadband connections are currently being installed and we hope to announce acceptance of card payments shortly.

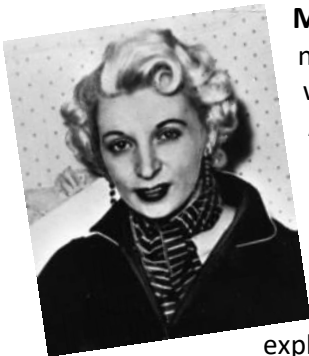
## CELEBRATING THE PAST

Sarum 800: On May 24th, artistic enterprises across the city are coming together to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of Salisbury Cathedral. Wiltshire Creative are in talks with Studio over some form of collaboration with details yet to be finalised. Watch this space.

Another anniversary and another opportunity to work with another of the of the city's great churches. As part of Quest 2020, which seeks to repair, renovate and renew the 800-year-old St Thomas's Church in Salisbury, Studio has been invited to produce T S Eliot's **Murder in the Cathedral**, to be staged in the church, in October.

## AND ON TO THE FUTURE:

**February 17-22: My Fair Lady.** Professor Higgins bets he can pass Covent Garden flower girl Eliza Doolittle off as a duchess in Lerner and Loewe's celebrated musical version of Pygmalion. Tickets are **ON SALE NOW**. Join Studio Youth Theatre for Cockney knees-ups, Ascot gavottes and Embassy balls as our youngsters bring Edwardian London to Studio's stage. **NB PERFORMANCES START AT 7PM**



**March 23-28: The Thrill of Love.** Ruth Ellis works hard and plays hard in Soho's nightclubs. She yearns for a movie-star lifestyle, but then she meets David, a wealthy, womanising racing driver and makes headline news in a way she never dreamed of. Amanda Whittington's tense thriller sheds light on the life of the last woman to be hanged in Britain. Tim Greathead directs.

**May 18-23: A Fine Bright Day Today.** Widowed Margaret Harvey has built up a protective barrier of routine and ritual over the years - until visiting artist Milton comes to lodge in her house armed with patience, humour and cheap wine. Studio's own George Goulding moves into the director's hot seat for this warm and funny exploration of love in later life, penned by his brother Philip.

**July 6-11: When We Are Married.** Three respectable Yorkshire couples are celebrating their silver wedding anniversaries. They've even invited the press to record the event, but it turns out they are not quite as married as they all thought and scandal threatens. Jill Redston brings J B Priestley's hugely popular comedy to the stage.

**July 29-August 1: Merely Players.** A cornucopia of words, music, songs and sonnets (including all the best bits) cherry-picked from Shakespeare and set before you on a summer's night at Studio.

**A message from our fund-raising committee chairman, Peter Mitchell:** Although we are putting the finishing touches to the planned building works of our lovely extension, there are lots of other things that we really need like fencing and improvements to our grounds including the car park, as well as air-conditioning in the auditorium. We will continue to seek your support of various fund-raising events and initiatives, which will be advertised on our website, in local media and elsewhere. **The first of these is our next regular coffee morning at the United Reformed Church on Saturday, 15th February between 10am and 12noon.** Delicious home-baked cakes will, as usual, be in plentiful supply.

Please also consider making a direct contribution, however small or large, in cash or in kind. For further information or with offers of help, please contact Peter Mitchell at [peter.mitchell203@ntlworld.com](mailto:peter.mitchell203@ntlworld.com) or on 01722 501399 or 07986 133776.

All performances take place at Studio Theatre in Ashley Road, Salisbury, unless otherwise stated. Our box office is Salisbury Information Centre in Fish Row. Seats can be booked on 01722 342860 or online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/studiotheatresalisbury](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/studiotheatresalisbury)