

Coming productions

In the Playhouse

FOND AND FAMILIAR

An evening with Dame Judi Dench, Michael Williams and John Moffatt.

18 May at 7.45pm

In the Playhouse

NEW PLAYS FESTIVAL

DOUBLE BILL

Requiem for Swallows by Henry Mason

This, the winner of the 1995/96 Questors National Student Playwriting competition is a beautifully written piece in free verse. Marcus, the son of Misha and Maggie, is the only real character in the play. He tries to reconcile himself to his dead parents, the four incarnations of whom act out attitudes and memories.

preceded by

3 Masks of O by Dannie Abse

The plot is based on a disastrous fire at an amateur theatre venue in South Wales and the subsequent cancellation of the Crwys Players' production of *The Three Masks of Orpheus*.

20 - 24 May at 7.45pm

In the Studio

Privates on Parade by Peter Nichols

It's Singapore in 1948, and Pte. Flowers is recruited into S.A.D.U.S.E.A. (Song and Dance Unit South East Asia). Can he survive life with the outrageously camp Terri Dennis, the aggressive Sgt. Major Drummond and the well-meaning but obsessive Major Giles Flack? And then there's Sylvia: will Steven remain faithful to his girlfriend in England? This is a beautiful acidic comedy, interspersed with a collection of wonderful songs by Dennis King.

The play contains strong language and may not be suitable for young children.

24, 27 - 31 May, 3 - 7 June at 7.45pm

25 May & 1 June at 2.30pm

In the Playhouse

GODSPELL by John Tevelak and Stephen Schwartz

14 - 21 June at 7.45pm

From Cradle to Grave

A celebration of the Co-operative Movement

by

Phillip Sheahan



Play Back

PlayBack was set up in 1989 and is The Questors' reminiscence theatre group. PlayBack members, who are drawn from Questors members, gather the oral memories and the experiences of people in and around the Borough of Ealing. From this material the group produces a play which is performed at The Questors and is then toured to community venues around the borough.

PlayBack thus takes the play back not only to those who have shared their memories with us, but to those who have shared similar experiences and times. Several performances over a two to three week period are held in old people's homes and clubs, sheltered housing, community centres and hospitals. After each show the actors and crew meet the audience to discuss the play, sharing more stories and reminiscences over a cup of tea.

PlayBack is also involved in workshops for schoolchildren which are organised with Gunnersbury Park Museum. PlayBack members use transcript material and play extracts to illustrate aspects of local history.

PlayBack's Productions

Soapud Island. This highly entertaining and extremely successful production was about the Acton Laundries. From about 1870, for nearly 100 years, this part of West London had a thriving laundry industry providing many local people, particularly women, with a livelihood.

Ealing Borough recognised the importance of the memories and, based on the material gathered by PlayBack, has produced a teaching pack which supports the teaching of local history at key stage two in the national curriculum.

The Cuckoo School. This production was based on the memories of those who were raised in Hanwell's Poor Law School which closed in 1933. Performing in the main hall of the "Cuckoo School", which is now used as Hanwell Community Centre, proved evocative for both cast and crew.

Kind Hearts and Comedies. As might be guessed from the title this play was about the memories of those who worked at the main Ealing Film Studios which are located about 500 yards from the theatre. This was not an easy topic for PlayBack; although located in the heart of Ealing, the Studios did not impinge greatly on the life of the local people. Nevertheless we had unflinching support from those whom we did interview and from the new owners of the studio and some big names in the cinema world – including a tape from Hollywood!

Rhythm of the Road. Performed and toured in 1995 we found we had an-

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The Co-operative Movement

The Co-operative movement has its roots in the Lancashire textile town of Rochdale where, in 1844, harsh living conditions and poor consumer protection inspired 28 working men to develop a new approach to the supply of food and other goods, as well as the provision of social and educational facilities for ordinary working people. To do this they set up a Retail Co-operative Society – The Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society, by scraping together £28 and opening a shop in Toad Lane.

Here they sold wholesome, unadulterated food at reasonable prices. Any profit was returned to the purchasers in proportion to the amount that they spent – the "divi" as it became known.

From these early beginnings the principles of Co-operation were formulated and included:

- * voluntary and open membership
- * democratic control – one member one vote
- * payment of limited interest on capital
- * surplus allocated in proportion to members' purchases (the dividend)
- * the provision of educational facilities for members and workers

The Rochdale Pioneers Society experienced difficulty in their early days in obtaining goods of the standard they required from private wholesalers. This led to the formation in 1863 of the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS). The CWS began manufacturing in 1873 with the production of biscuits and shoes, and over the years moved into numerous other industries. Today the CWS has the most modern tea and coffee blending and packing plant in the world, it has creameries across the UK producing fresh and dried milk, cheese and butter. Biscuits, jams, margarine, canned fruit and processed meat are also produced. It also has its own winery and is engaged in soft drink manufacture.

Co-operative Movement in Ealing

The Vicar of St Mary's, Dr Oliver, proposed in March 1891 an ambitious scheme for workers' co-operation which would:

- * provide an unemployment fund
- * provide workmen's cottages
- * provide pensions to keep people out of the workhouses

In 1893 a shareholder category of membership had been fixed with a minimum fee of £1.00, giving voting rights and higher dividends than non-member

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From Cradle to Grave

A celebration of the Co-operative Movement

by

Phillip Sheahan

World Première performance Saturday 10th May 1997

Cast

Mr Joshua Tweedale (circa 1850)	KEN RATCLIFFE
Mr Albert Fynn (circa 1900/1910)	BYRON TODD
Mr John Brown (circa 1920/30)	MARK REDRUP
Mrs Lilly Woods (circa 1930/40)	LISA DAY
Miss Pearl Scott (circa 1940/50)	JANET EGAN
Mrs Harriet Drummond (circa 1950/60)	SIBEAL McGUINNE
Mrs Dotty Harris (circa 1950/60)	GRACE CRADDOCK
Mrs Anne Layton (circa 1980/90)	NATHALIE FISK

The action of the play takes place somewhere
beyond the here and now.

Production

Director	KEVIN MADLEY
Designer	CHRISTINE BENNETT
Stage Managers	ADRIENNE TALBOT JENNIFER REID
Assistant Stage Managers	LISA CASTLE KEVIN McLEAN
Lighting Designer	TIM HAYWARD
Lighting Operator	KRIS COLLIER
Sound Designer	COLIN HORNE
Sound Operator	NEIL PAMMENT
Wardrobe	CHRISTINE BENNETT ANNE GILMOUR
Original music composed by	MICHEL DUVOISIN

Thanks to: VALENTINE ABBATT, MARTIN CHAPPLE,
GRACE & JIM CRADDOCK, MARK ISLES, DAVE JOHNSON,
MELITA MILETICH, TERRY MUMMERY, DIANA NESBITT, VIC STYLES

From Cradle to Grave is an original play researched and written by PlayBack members from the oral memories of Ealing residents and others. PlayBack wishes to thank all those who contributed their memories.



THE PLAYHOUSE IS EQUIPPED WITH AN INFRARED SOUND TRANSMISSION SYSTEM FOR USE BY PEOPLE WITH HEARING DIFFICULTIES. IT IS NOW POSSIBLE TO USE THIS SYSTEM WITH PERSONAL HEARING AIDS SWITCHED TO THE **V** POSITION. To obtain the appropriate receiver please contact the Duty House Manager.
THE PLAYHOUSE IS EQUIPPED WITH A LIFT WITH ACCESS TO THE BAR AND UPPER FOYER LEVELS FOR THOSE WITH MOBILITY PROBLEMS.

1. The taking of food and drink into the auditorium is NOT permitted.
2. The use of cameras, video-cameras or tape equipment during the performance is also prohibited.
3. Patrons are requested to turn off portable telephones and beepers in the auditorium, since the activation of these during a performance is offensive to audience and actors alike.

The Co-operative Movement *continued from page 3*

purchasers. The Ealing Society followed the normal management structure of the several hundred societies throughout the country and had 65 members with a capital of £103. This however was not sufficient to set up a store.

The Co-operative Women's Guild

Women began attending the Co-operative Union Congress in the early 1880's – not as delegates but as appendages of their husbands – either wives or daughters taken along by the men who were the only people in the Co-operative Society then who had the right to be members, the right to be Co-operators. Naturally these women got together and talked and the idea began to take root of a women's organisation. And so in 1883, the Woman's League for the Spread of Co-operation began. It soon changed its name to the Women's Co-operative Guild and became a great campaigning organisation. Indeed, it was the first women's organisation to be formed as a democratic organisation and can justly and rightly claim to be the forerunner of all the Women's Lib. organisations functioning today.

Art exhibitions

Upper Foyer Gallery

24 April - 26 May

COLIN ALLBROOK

Exhibits regularly in London with societies such as the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour, The Royal Watercolour Society where he won the Daler-Rowney award for best painting, The Pastel Society, Equestrian Society and The Sunday Times/Singer Friedlander Watercolour competition. His work can be seen at the Waterside Gallery and the Elliot Gallery in Devon and in Hertfordshire at the Bow House Gallery.

In the Grapevine Gallery

24 April - 26 May

MARGARET EVANS

Margaret Evans began life in York, which perhaps accounts for her great interest in history and architecture. She has taken part in, and organised, group exhibitions, has had a solo exhibition at the Mermaid Theatre, and two years running had a D classification by the Royal Academy. A print of St Paul's was hung by the Bankside Gallery.

Questors Information

THE GRAPEVINE CLUB

The Questors has a fully licensed Bar which is now open to all members. The Bar is open every evening plus lunchtimes on Sundays. Questors members are requested to sign in their guests when entering the bar.

THE HOTPLATE

Delicious hot and cold food is available in the upper Foyer between 6.30pm and 8.00pm during the run of Playhouse productions, and coffee, tea and cakes are served during the interval. No hot food will be provided at the Sunday matinees.

NOTE

The Hotplate is not open for Studio productions, but when Studio performances coincide with those in the Playhouse, it will endeavour to serve those audiences whenever it is possible.

NEW MEMBERS EVENINGS

Why not attend one of our new, or prospective members evenings, and have a conducted tour of the Theatre complex. Tours start and finish at the Grapevine Bar, 8.00pm every Wednesday.

THE STUDENT GROUP

The Questors runs a two-year part-time student course in Acting; details can be obtained from the office.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUPS

There are a number of groups for younger members. These cater for all age groups, from 5-17. The classes are intended to create awareness of the theatre and provide a stimulating channel for imagination.

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PlayBack *continued from page 2*

other hit on our hands. Evoking the memories of cycling in the 30's and 40's Ealing residents had some lovely stories to tell us. The thrill of buying their first bike, the chance to get away from home, the huge distances ordinary people rode and the skill and competitiveness of the club cyclists were all captured in the play.

If you are interested in working on this type of theatre, please let us have your name and address. PlayBack would be happy to get in touch with you.

PlayBack members can be involved in the initial phase which includes interviewing, typing transcripts, collecting and collating information. We are always on the lookout for new writing talent if that is your interest. Or, once the script is ready, you can either audition for an acting part or help the backstage crew – sound, lights, stage management, wardrobe, construction, prompting, design etc. We also need people to help organise the Gala performance when we invite the contributors and VIPs to see the performance, and to help set up the exhibition when we show the archive material we have been loaned or given. We then need help with the tour arrangements and also people to help on the Workshops and perhaps to prepare material for wider publication.