

www.questors.org.uk

Find out all about our forthcoming productions – along with a lot of other useful information about The Questors – on our web site.

Stay in touch

Just send us your details, and we'll keep you informed about our forthcoming productions at The Questors.

Pick up a form from the Box Office foyer, or write, phone or email us with your details.

Join us

If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and become a member of The Questors?

If you enjoy a regular night out at the theatre with friends, why not become a member of The Questors? As a Playgoer member, you'll receive a 20 per cent discount on your ticket to most Questors productions, free tickets for your children to most Questors productions, regular information about our productions, and membership of the Grapevine Bar. Or you could join as a Company member and receive a 50 per cent discount on your ticket, the monthly Club Magazine and opportunities to get involved in our productions, in addition to all the benefits for Playgoer members. And the basic Friend membership gives you membership of the Grapevine plus regular information.

You can get all of this for just £26.00 for Playgoer membership, £52.50 (£34.00 concessions) for Company membership, and £12.00 for Friends, with discounts for payment by Direct Debit. You can find Membership Application forms in the Box Office foyer, or just phone the Theatre Office.

THE QUESTORS THEATRE
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Box Office 020 8567 5184
Theatre Office 020 8567 0011
Email enquiries@questors.org.uk

Registered Charity no 207516



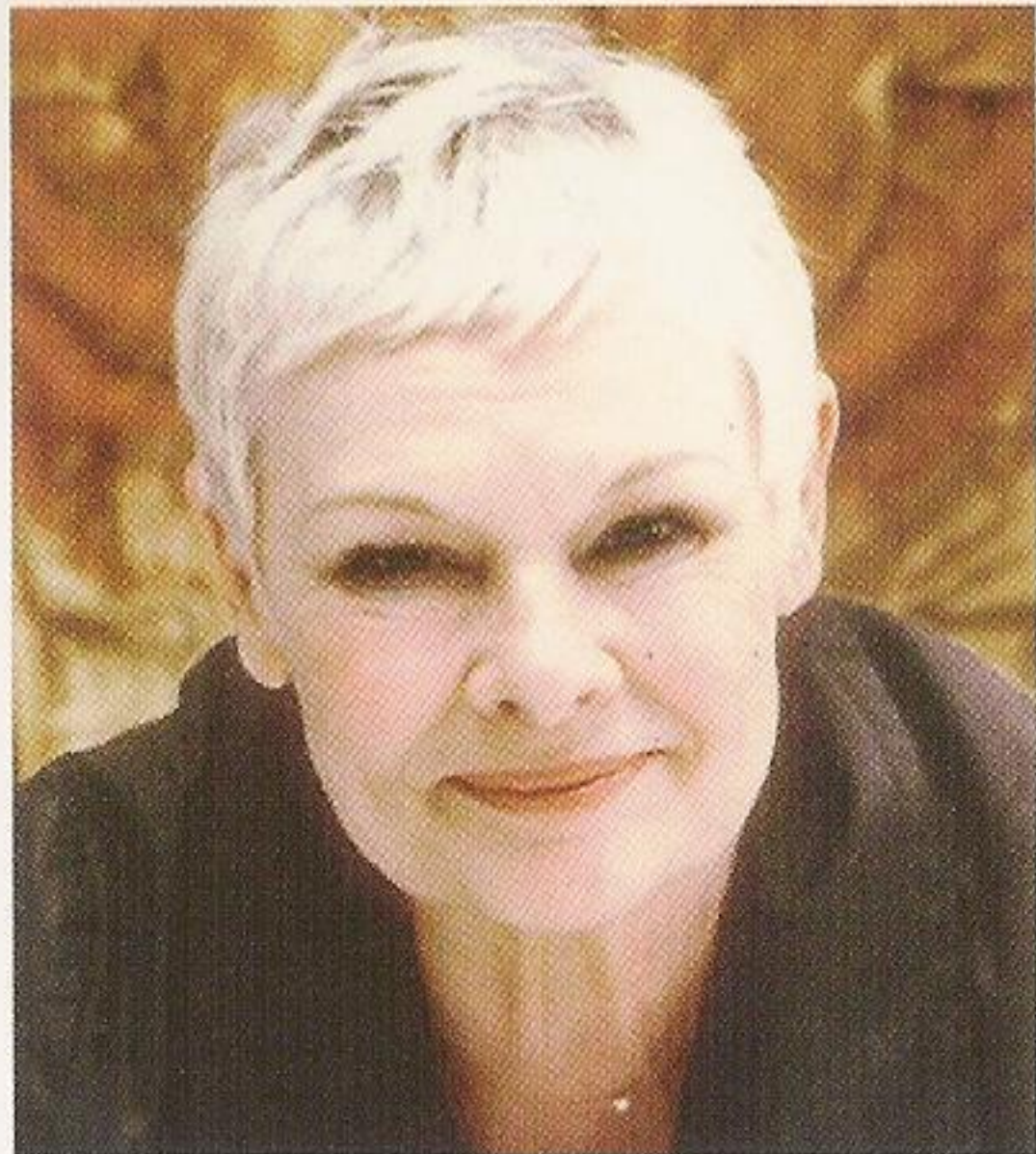
THE QUESTORS THEATRE, EALING



There'll Always Be a Brentford



THE QUESTORS THEATRE, EALING



Welcome to The Questors Theatre, one of London's best kept secrets – except to its 2,000 members.



How do I know about The Questors? I am proud to have been its President for over 20 years. Founded in 1929, it has since grown into the largest community theatre in Europe with a reputation for the highest standards, not only in acting but in direction and design as well. Luckily, with so many members, we have a wealth of talent to call on for all aspects of production, and members are encouraged to be as actively

involved as they would like. Alternatively they simply enjoy the social side of the club, including the friendly Grapevine Bar (one of the perks of membership) and the many and varied shows in our 370-seat Playhouse theatre and our more intimate Studio theatre.

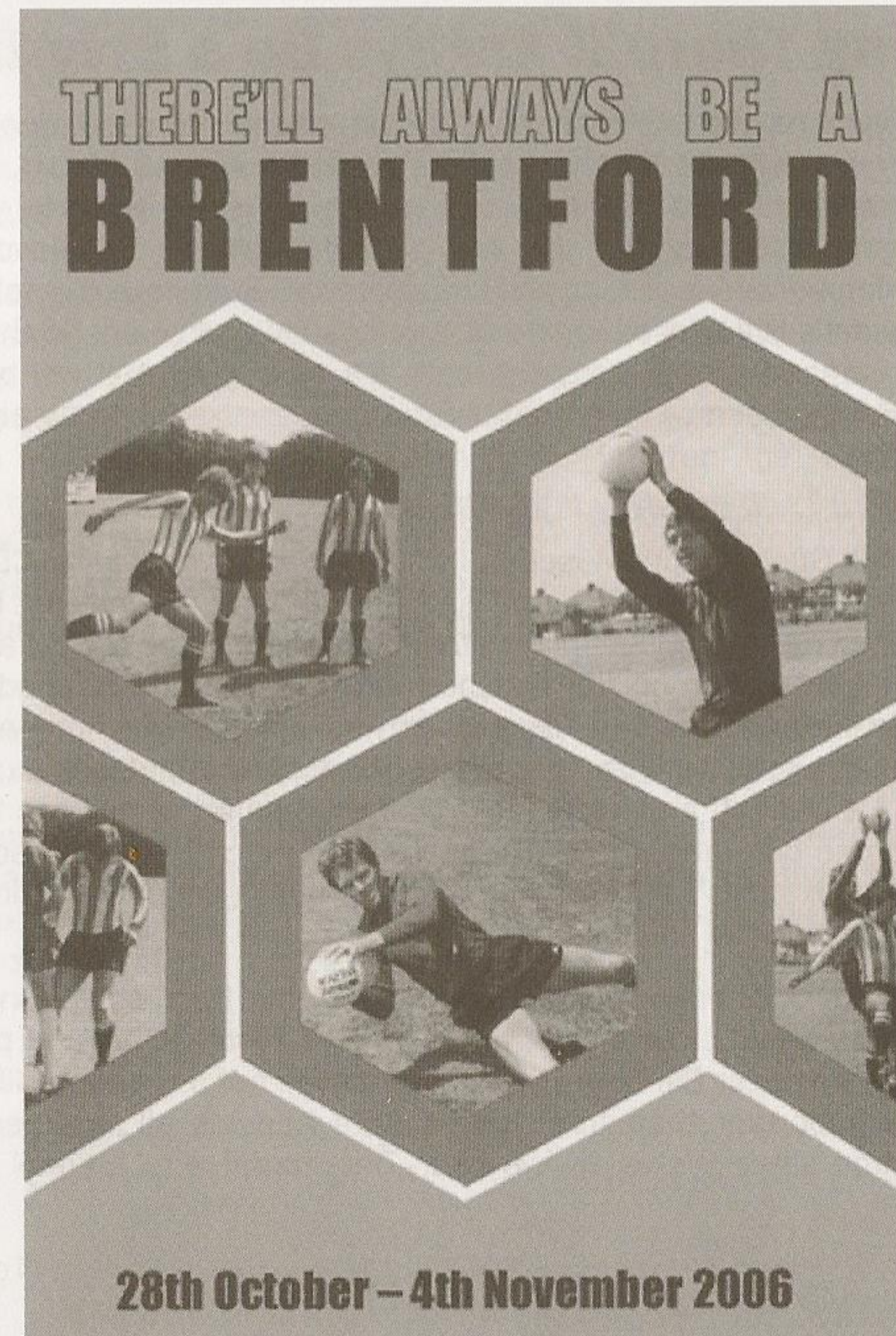
The Questors runs a professionally recognised two-year acting course in conjunction with Kingston College. There are also acting courses for beginners, free backstage training courses, visiting companies from home and abroad, regular art exhibitions and workshops, and The Questors Youth Theatre. In short, theatre is something for everyone, and with annual membership from £12.00 to £52.50 depending on your chosen level of commitment, it's great value for money as well.

But don't just take my word for it. The next time you're in Ealing, call into the Grapevine bar on any Wednesday evening at 8pm for a free tour of the theatre and a drink on us!

Worth looking into?

Definitely!

Dame Judi Dench
President of The Questors Theatre



There'll Always Be a Brentford

by Tony Chapman and Duncan Alldridge



Writing *There'll Always Be a Brentford*

Football and drama have a lot in common. In both, people pay good money to watch a performance by well-rehearsed players (prima donnas some would say), over a period of an hour-and-a-half plus an interval – two hours tops (in the immortal words of Tom Stoppard, if it goes on beyond half past ten, it's self-indulgent). Both involve conflict – 11 versus 11, heroes versus villains and circumstance. Both have a resolution, even if it's a draw; catharsis is achieved, promotion, relegation and so on. So this play – with a foot in both camps – has a lot going for it. It's nice to think it will be enjoyed by football fans who didn't know they liked theatre and theatre fans who always thought they hated football.

It arose from dozens of interviews with Brentford fans aged between 10 and 101, carried out by the Gunnersbury Museum. I was handed seventy or so CDs and asked by the Questors PlayBack team to go off and write them a play on that basis. (I'd co-written one on cycling before.) So I played them to myself, in the car, on a Walkman as I walked, on the tube and on holiday beaches, until the best bits dropped out. All I had to do then was find a structure. Chronology was obvious but not enough. It was Duncan's idea to come up with the framework of the dying minutes in a crucial end-of-season match. He went off and wrote those scenes, then we came back together to stitch it all into one dramatic whole. Music provided much of the thread. In the best traditions of football songs I put new words to old tunes (just as well, since I do lyrics but not tunes). Oh, and the bad language is all his.

Duncan and I have both been football fans most of our lives, so we understand the pain of defeat, the dread of take-over, the pride and joy of victory and promotion. As the old Liverpool manager Bill Shankly said, football is not a matter of life and death, it's a lot more important than that. It's all here and it's all summed up by one Brentford fan who says, 'We've always been Brentford; we're a small club and we dream.'

Tony Chapman

Working on *There'll Always Be a Brentford*

Artistic Director Sarah Galton approached me back in March. 'I think I might have a project for you,' she said. Tony Chapman and I met for a beer. He was anxious to get a director on board and someone to work with on his text. There was a lot of material, and initially I was concerned about butting into the heart of Tony's writing and whether he'd be precious about allowing me in on it. I was tempted by the idea of creating a piece of theatre about Brentford; they were the first team I'd watched play football and I remember like any youngster the unique atmosphere of a large body of people gathered together in common cause. Tony and I worked quite quickly, throwing out lots of material and refining what we had, losing whole scenes and redrafting others. Working with another writer is a privilege and I found the collaboration very motivating. I wrote quite a bit, and credit goes to Tony who without any previous

evidence let me substantially restructure the play. We worked back and forth, often writing into each other's scenes. I never imagined this would work so smoothly.

Going into production I wanted the theatrical experience to be rich with atmosphere. The environment created at a football stadium is complex and compelling, with the tension of a game being played against the clock. Will we hold on? Will we equalise? Will we get a winner against the odds? And, within this precise time-frame, the drama mounts as the seconds tick away to a final outcome. Paul Wilson and I went to four or five home games to record sound; and each game had its own special quality, depending on the circumstances and stakes on the day. In our fictional game The Bees need to hold a 1-0 lead to achieve an automatic promotion place rather than be consigned to the dreaded play-offs (which partially mirrors the fortunes of the club over the last two or three seasons). They need the three points. 'No more last minute goals,' says Kev in the Brook Road terrace near the end of the play, as last-minute goals conceded can be more than just rough justice on the day; it can relegate or promote a club, having a huge impact on its future and the future of the community it serves.

Spencer Butler and I also visited the ground to make sketches, I took many photographs, and a picture of what the production might become gradually emerged.

I hope you enjoy what has, for us, been a unique and highly rewarding experience to work on. It has been a challenging text to realise, and my personal thanks go to the actors for their energy, and to the production team and Brentford FC for making this experience possible.

Duncan Alldridge



There'll Always Be a Brentford

by Tony Chapman and Duncan Alldridge

World premiere 28 October 2006

Cast

Granddad George	Kevin Madley
Grandma Mary	Maria Brusa
Dave	James Goodden
Jo	Jane Backlog
Kevin	Steve Tillett
Leanne	Lucy O'Connor
Uncle Peter	Roy Studds
Nora (George's Mum)	Liz O'Keeffe
Young George	Tom Clabburn
Young Mary	Lauren McMahon
Sandra	Lauren Wigmore
Diane	Charley Harding

The action takes place during the last 15 minutes of a crucial end-of-season home game.

The play lasts about 90 minutes, with a half-time of 15 minutes.

**With thanks to Gunnersbury Park Museum
for the use of material from its oral history collection.**

There'll Always Be a Brentford (finale)

There'll always be a Brentford
And Brentford will be free
If Brentford means as much to you
As Brentford means to me.

There'll always be a Brentford
And Brentford is our own,
We own the club, we own our fate
And Griffin Park's our home.

We are the Bees,
And though we aim to please -
Sometimes we win,
Often we lose,
We cannot choose.
Always the Bees,
Though on our hands and knees -
We'll struggle on
When hope is gone,
We'll never lose.

There'll always be a Brentford
Despite our ups and downs,
We've played in all divisions
In both small and massive grounds.

There'll always be a Brentford
And Brentford will be free
If Brentford means as much to you
As Brentford means to me.

Production Team

Director	Duncan Alldridge
Designer	Spencer Butler
Lighting Design	Andy Torble
Sound Design	Paul Wilson
Image Design	Duncan Alldridge
Stage Manager	Andrew Davies
Deputy Stage Manager	Jennifer Reid
Construction	Mike Hagan
Wardrobe	Anne Gilmour
Technical Operator	Dan Webb
Projection	Nigel Worsley
Musical Advisor	Paul Ayres
Pianist	John Davies
Choreographer	Becky Dalby
Make-up & Hair	Olivia Jones Nia Lloyd-Roberts
Assistant Stage Managers	Pip Egan Alec Atchison James Blomfield Jack Richardson
Production Photographer	David Mosby
Location Sound	Paul Wilson
Location Photographer	Duncan Alldridge
Brentford FC Liaison	Steve Cowan

Thanks to Gunnersbury Park Museum for the original reminiscences, and The Questors PlayBack team for then inspiring the seeds of this project.

Thanks also to:

David Alldridge, Kay Alldridge, Nigel Bamford, Brentford FC, Steve Cowan, Amy Crook, Jane Dewey, Tim Edwards, Mark Fuller, Francois Langton, David Laphan, Tim Hayward, Christine Garland, Peter Gilham, Tina Harris, Graham Haynes, Carol Hunter, Kingston College, Dave Lane, Steve Marchant, Ellis Pritchard, Claire Prosser, Matt Scarff at Red Bee Media, Alan Smith, Martin Stoner, Clare Watson, Jon Webster, John Wibberley, Richard Williams.

St George cares about your community...



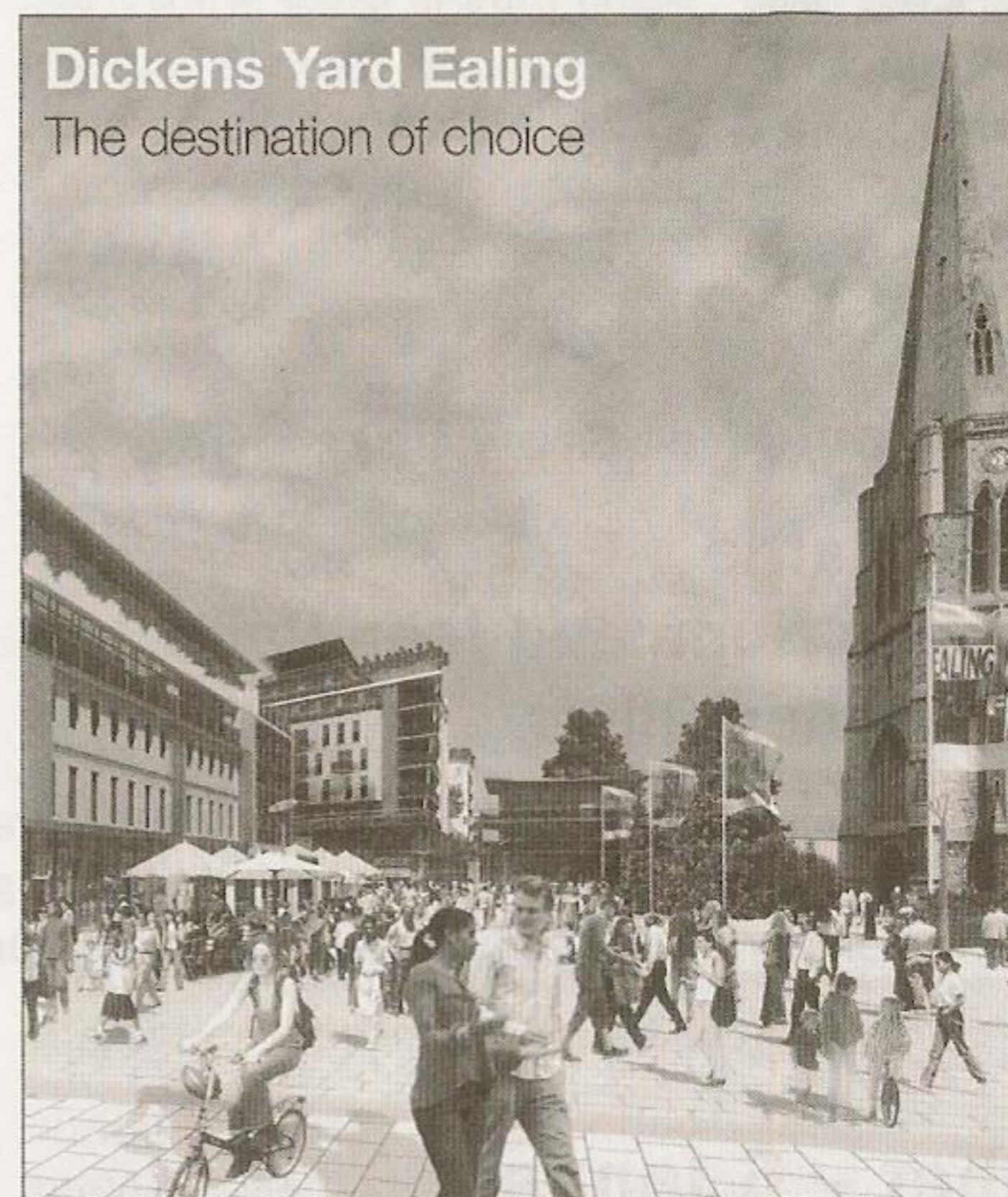
Brentford FC

St George are proud to announce a four-year sponsorship deal with Brentford FC and the Community Sports Trust

“We have thoroughly enjoyed our time as shirt sponsors of Brentford FC and felt it is now time to provide a long term commitment to the club. We are delighted to be able to support the Trust in a variety of exciting and innovative community based projects across the Boroughs of Ealing, Hounslow and Richmond.”

Ian Dobie, Managing Director of St George West London

..and cares about your future.



Dickens Yard Ealing
The destination of choice

St George, as preferred developer for Dickens Yard, share the Council's and community's vision of Ealing Town Centre as being:

“Renowned within London as a distinctive town centre, an attractive location for investment and a desirable place to live, work, shop and relax.”

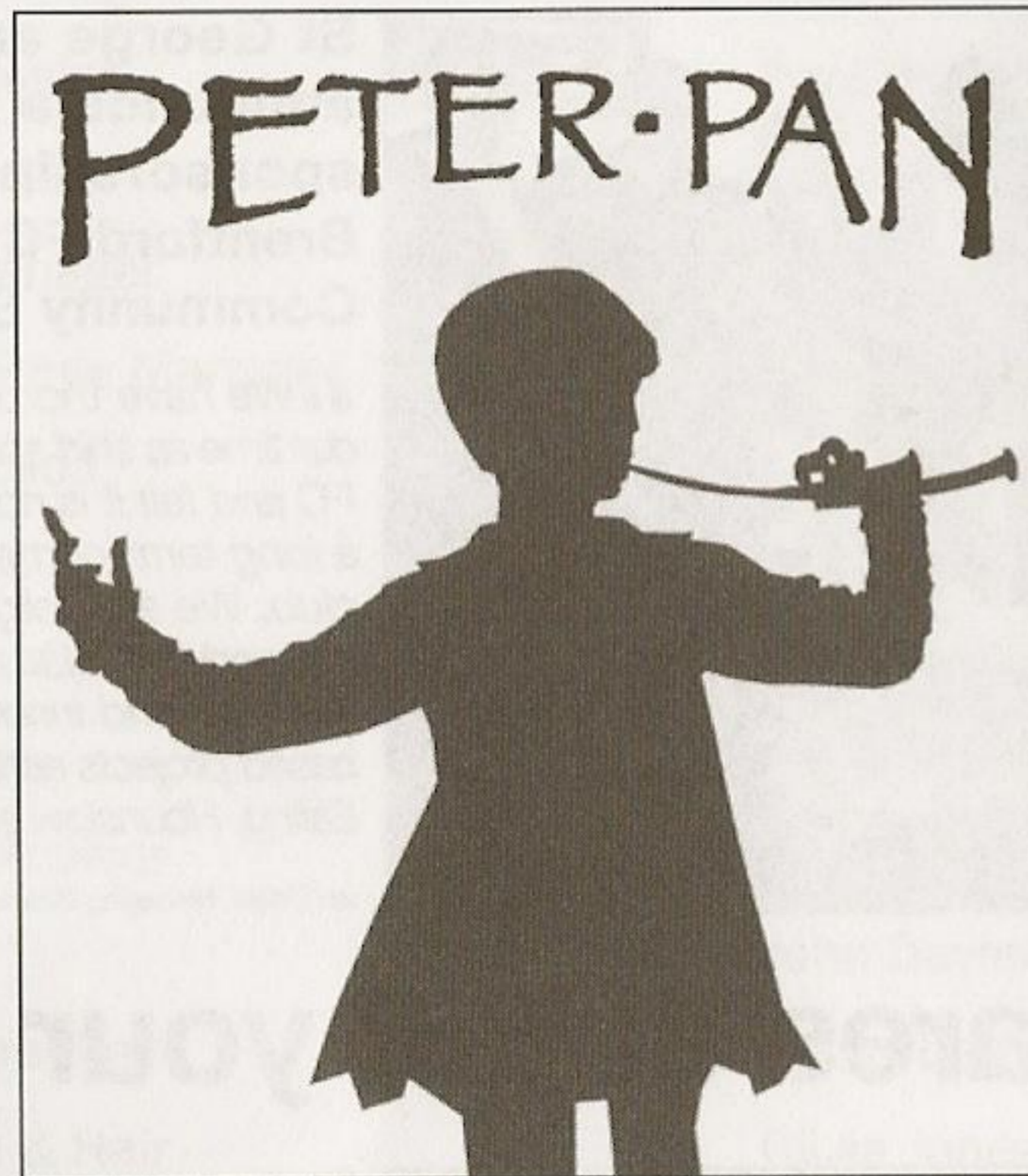


ST·GEORGE

www.stgeorgeplc.com

St George would like to wish you a most enjoyable evening

The Questors Christmas Production



Peter Pan

(or, The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up)

by J M Barrie

in a new version by Trevor Nunn and John Caird

music by Stephen Oliver

Fly with Peter and Wendy, join the Lost Boys in the Never Land, do battle with the evil Captain Hook and his villainous pirate crew, and have an 'awfully big adventure' with mermaids, fairies, Red Indians and a crocodile. Suitable for children from six to ninety-six.

14 December – 6 January

BOOK NOW!

Brentford Football Club

In October 1889 members of the Brentford Rowing Club met near Kew Bridge to establish a football club so they could play over winter months. For the first fifteen years – using Association not Rugby rules – they played at five locations including Benn's field behind 'The Plough' in Northfields Avenue, and at Cross Field by the junction of Ealing Road and Little Ealing Lane. The club turned professional in 1900.

When local brewers Fuller, Smith and Turner ceased making cider, they sold an orchard off the Ealing Road to the club. Summer 1904 saw dozens of volunteer supporters transforming it into a fully laid-out football ground: Griffin Park, the home of the club ever since.

The early twentieth century saw Brentford establish a strong following with crowds over 10,000, and in 1905 winning a 1-0 cup victory over top-flight Middlesbrough.

In 1913 financial difficulties almost destroyed the club after relegation from the Southern League Division 1, but the proximity of army camps meant Brentford could field the best team in London and they ran away with the wartime London-Combination League. Brentford was re-elected to the Southern League and in 1920 to Football League Division 3.

Brentford struggled until 1927 when Manager Harry Curtis guided the Bees to a shock victory over West Ham in front of 25,000. In 1929-30, Curtis's team won all 21 home league games – a record still standing in British football.

The 1930s were golden years. 1932 saw Middlesbrough players Holliday, Scott and Watson signed. Promotion to Division 2 was secured with a team including internationals Idris (Dai) Hopkins and Duncan McKenzie. Griffin Park's freehold was purchased. Brentford reached Division 1, and triumphed in a wartime London Cup victory at Wembley against Portsmouth in front of 72,000 spectators.

However by 1955 the club had sunk to Division 3, and by 1963 Division 4. In 1966 dwindling crowds and rising costs brought near-collapse. Chairman Jack Dunnett proposed a merger with rivals Queens Park Rangers. To supporters this meant liquidation of their club. So to prevent the takeover they raised money to buy out Dunnett's shares and secure the bank overdraft. An improvement began. In 1977 charismatic chairman Dan Tana achieved promotion to Division 3.

Brentford secured a place at Wembley in the 1985 Freight-Rover Trophy against Wigan. In 1986-87 Steve Perryman and assistant Phil Holder rekindled ambition in the club. Exciting cup runs included an FA Cup sixth-round match against Liverpool at Anfield in 1989, and promotion to Division 2 in 1992. However, following the manager's sudden departure, the club was relegated after just one season. Talented apprentice players were sold on.

During the '90s changes of ownership ended with Ron Noades. He appointed himself manager and proposed moving the club to Woking. Memories of 1967 spurred supporters into acquiring shares in the club and halting planning permission to demolish the stadium. The borough council elections of 2002 saw fans standing for

election as 'ABeeC' ('A future for Brentford in the Community'). Luke Kirton was dramatically elected in the Brentford ward, and the council placed restrictive planning conditions upon Griffin Park. The supporters trust ('Bees United') raised funds to invest in the club, increasing the collective shareholding of supporters and securing places on the board.

In 2005 history was made when control and ownership of the club passed from Ron Noades into the hands of the supporters.

Pip Egan and Steve Cowan

Gunnersbury Park Museum

Gunnersbury Park Museum is the local history museum for the London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow. We are based in the Large Mansion in Gunnersbury Park. Since we opened as a museum in 1929, we have collected about 40,000 objects relating to the area, including items of archaeology, paintings, photographs, costume, transport, toys and recorded interviews with local people. These are all available to the public by appointment, and many are put on show through a programme of regularly changing exhibitions. The museum also provides a range of schools' workshops, tours, talks and special events for children and adults.

There'll Always Be a Brentford is based on transcripts of interviews with Brentford supporters. These were carried out by the museum in 2004 for a special exhibition to celebrate the centenary of Brentford Football Club at Griffin Park. We are delighted that they are being used again for a play at The Questors.

The Questors, PlayBack and Reminiscence

The hugely successful TV series *Who Do You Think You Are?* builds on current interest in family history by revealing how this research can extend into discovering the wider context of social, political, industrial or military history. In a similar and equally successful way, Simon Garfield's recent *Mass Observation* books document day-to-day witness of national events via the minutiae of everyday life. The first volume *Our Hidden Lives* deals with the darkly austere days of the immediate post-war period. These two media projects give us 'history from the bottom up': the perspective (and importantly, perspectives) of 'real people'.

The Questors has contributed too. In 1989 the PlayBack initiative was set up to create pieces of theatre based on the memories of local people. Six such plays were researched, devised, presented in the Studio, and then taken on a tour of local community venues. Each takes up to 18 months to create, research, record and transcribe (oh, the endless transcribing!) before handing to the writer for turning into a play.

The first project, *Soapsud Island*, the story of the Acton laundries, was a vivid portrayal of the rise and fall of a significant industry as well as a local perspective on the 'upstairs/downstairs' social inequality of pre-war Britain. *The Cuckoo School* showed the style of education in the first quarter of the twentieth century; and the 'cycling show', *The Rhythm of the Road* explored a major leisure activity which had social implications unfamiliar to us today.

The other three reminiscence shows were then *Kind Hearts and Comedies* (Ealing Studios), *From Cradle to Grave* (The Co-operative Movement) and *From First Pint to Last Post* (Ealing Green). As in *Who Do You Think You Are?* and *Our Hidden Lives* they all looked at the bigger picture of historical trends and events through the details of personal experiences.

In the almost-10-year gap between PlayBack plays 6 and 7, the initiative has not been idle. The Reminiscence Roadshow programme has taken platform performances compiled from the huge archive of memories, around and about the local area. Roadshows have been presented to the University of the Third Age, local history societies, schools, sheltered housing units, as well as groups such as The Alzheimer's Society and Age Concern. The performances always spark off further memories and sessions of vivid story telling. There is now a waiting list for these shows and a need for more actors to take part in daytime performances.

But in 2004 it was high time for a new theatre piece and a new creative team to take PlayBack's work into the twenty-first century. How splendid that Gunnersbury Park Museum would make available the recorded memories of Brentford FC fans, collected for a recent exhibition - the research process thereby halved. The opportunity was grasped with enthusiasm and *There'll Always Be A Brentford* is now the latest addition to a programme which has a proud reputation for innovative plays built on reminiscence.

Jane Dewey, for PlayBack

Questors E-News direct to your Inbox!

Get all the latest news and offers for our shows by joining our email lists.

- ★ You can choose to receive short snippets of information every week or so, or longer round-ups every month - or both if you wish!
- ★ We'll keep the emails as short and simple as possible - because we know you'd prefer it that way.
- ★ And we'll have an unsubscribe facility (which actually works) at the bottom of every message!

Just email us and tell us whether you'd prefer weekly snippets, monthly roundups or both, and whether we may share your email address with other organisations. (We completely understand if you say No, but it helps us to promote our events if we can exchange lists with other organisations - so you can support our activities even more by saying Yes.) Send your email to ian@questors.org.uk

Coming Soon in the Studio

The Dog in the Manger

by Lope de Vega
translated by David Johnston

Beautiful and headstrong Diana, Countess of Belflor, discovers her handsome secretary one night seducing her favourite lady-in-waiting. She is consumed with jealousy, and embarks on an intrigue of forbidden love, envy and passion in this sensual comedy from the Spanish Golden Age, 'the last great unopened treasure chest of world drama'.

The Dog in the Manger is a painful and hilarious comedy for anyone who has ever fallen in love with someone they shouldn't have fallen love with.

18-25 November

Comedians

by Trevor Griffiths

'Funny, piteous, and scary' New York Magazine

A fierce and funny drama about budding stand-up comics burning with ambition to escape the poverty of their Manchester lives. But before the night is over, there are bitter lessons for the students and their teacher.

Chosen by the National Theatre in 2000 as one of its 'Plays of the Century', *Comedians* confirmed Griffiths's status as one of this country's finest modern playwrights.

Contains strong language.

28 December - 6 January

Getting the most from your membership

Many members join just to see shows, but there is so much more on offer to Company Members. So why not get involved?

Front-of-House is a great place to start. No previous experience is needed for selling programmes, stewarding or serving in the Café; and training is provided for anyone who fancies working in Box Office. If you want to meet people and have a good time, then the best place to be is behind the Grapevine Bar - and you can volunteer for just one night or several.

Backstage staff - including stage managers, prop makers, set builders, painters and wardrobe staff - are always welcomed, and whatever your skills we'll find a place for you. If you have some experience then The Questors is a wonderful space to be a designer. But even without experience, you can help out on shows, and you're sure to get some hands-on experience. The same goes for lighting and sound - the Playhouse and Studio are both well-equipped and excellent places to learn.

You can direct if you have some experience or training, but if not then we offer various learning opportunities. The Questors have a high standard of acting, and to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month - so if you have some training or experience of acting, call the Theatre Office for details of the forthcoming auditions.

There are many other activities you can join in to help out. If you're free during daytimes, you can help with our monthly mailing or delivering leaflets, and if you're handy with maintenance then there are always little jobs to be done.

Only Company members can take part in our activities, so please contact the Theatre Office if you would like to get involved or receive further information about Company membership.

