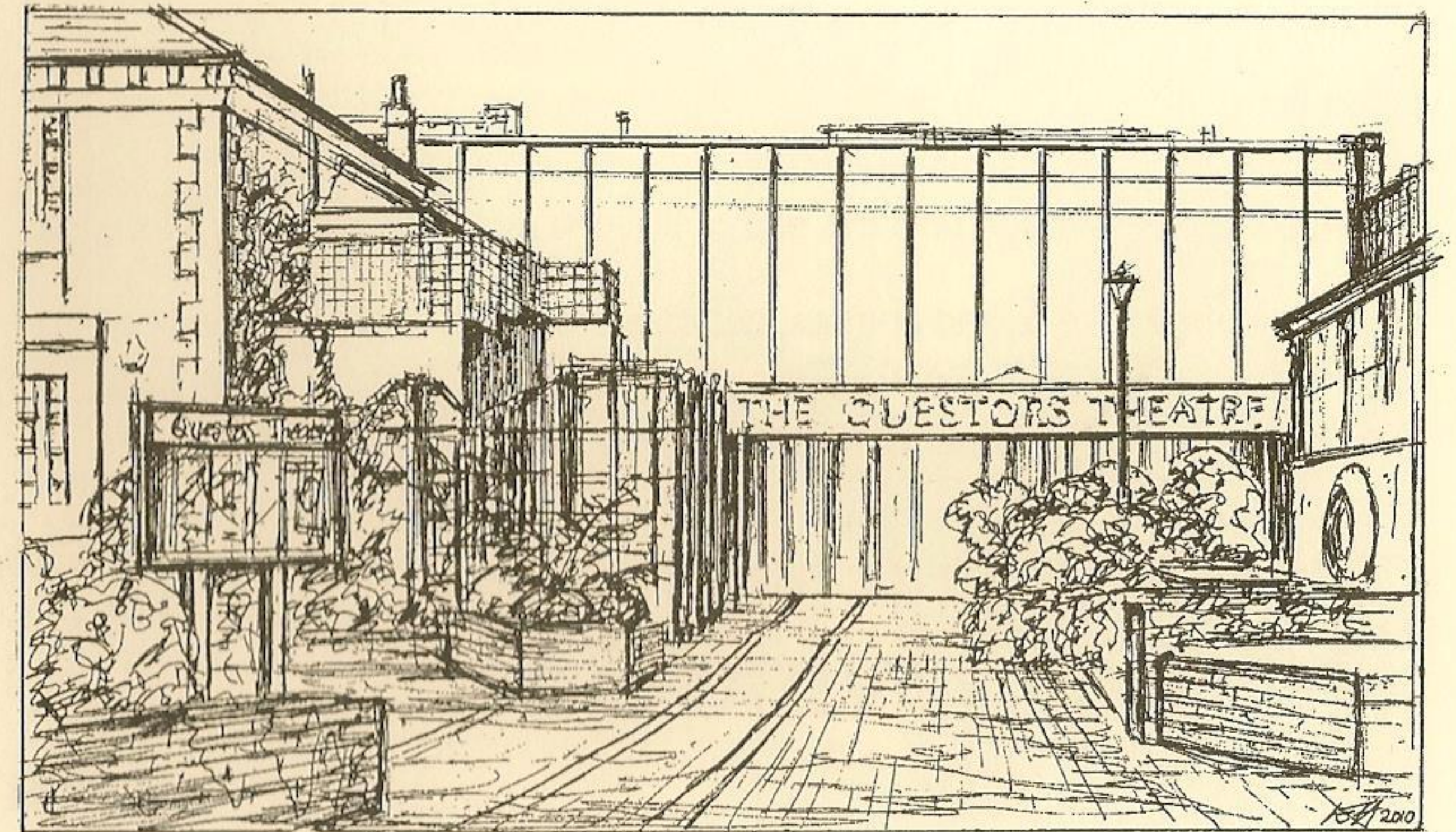




QUESTORS, EALING'S THEATRE



THE ACCRINGTON PALS
by Peter Whelan

The Studio
20 - 27 March 2010

Qafé

Have you tried the new Questors café experience yet?

Opening times Monday – Saturday:

Term time 9:00 am – 7:30 pm

Outside term time 11:30 am – 7:30 pm

On show nights, through until the end of the first interval

Serving specialist teas and coffees, hot chocolate and soft drinks, with a selection of sandwiches cut to order.

Pre-theatre hot meal menu available on show nights up to 7:00 pm.

The Grapevine Bar

The Grapevine is our friendly club bar open to Members of The Questors Theatre and their guests, as well as serving audience members on show nights.

The club is open seven nights a week and Sunday lunchtimes and is managed and staffed entirely by volunteers.

We are the proud holders of a Cask Marque award for the quality of our real ales, we appear in the 2010 edition of The Good Beer Guide and we are 2009 CAMRA West Middlesex Club of the Year. A choice of at least three real ales is usually available, including Fuller's London Pride. We also provide a range of draught lagers and ciders, as well as wines and spirits – all at very reasonable prices.

Opening Hours:

7:00 pm – 11:00 pm (10:30 pm close on Sundays)

Sunday lunchtime midday – 2:30 pm



THE ACCRINGTON PALS

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The Accrington Pals

Director Mark Fitzgerald reminds me that it's thirty years since I wrote this play ... but then I've been a Questor for fifty years. All time is relative. I suppose the main difference between 1980 when I wrote it and now is that World War One was then, by my definition, part of my contemporary life. I mean there were still plenty of people around who had fought in, or lived through that blood-steeped conflict. Today, with the last battlefield survivors gone, it has quietly slipped into history ... but it remains a very potent history for all of us. In a sense, for me, it's where we all came from.

Yet, in truth, I never really set out to write about the war. My real urge was to explore that long ago country of my parent's generation before I was born. But, of course, in imagining the time of their youth I couldn't escape finding myself in the war that engulfed them. Ironically, it was the time when they seemed most alive ... certainly most free. Many of their stories and jokes came from that era. My mother had done her bit as a female lumberjack and sometimes acted out the motions of it in the kitchen. My father still used a Western Front entrenching tool for digging the garden. His old uniform hung from a rusty nail on the door of the garden shed and swayed slightly as you went in or out.

Dad had been wounded in 1917 and at the end of the thirties he still had specks of German shrapnel embedded in his back. Every now and then one glittering speck would work to the surface and be squeezed out. It was then placed on cotton wool and put in a matchbox for me to take to school and show around. I was king of the playground for a day and never forgot it.

But it was not only war but the struggles of everyday life that I was so concerned to weave into the story. I was fascinated by the way my family were strong on "getting on". Four uncles and aunts kept small shops in Salford (Sweets, Newspapers, Drapery and Pianos) but their entrepreneurialism was often countered by utopian socialism, like my father's. The clash of opposing credos was very real and not without pain and loss.

Then suddenly all these things came together. I read Martin Middlebrook's tremendous account of *The First Day On The Somme*. Somewhere in a corner of it he describes what happened to the Accrington Pals battalion of local men in that pulverising battle ... and how the people of Accrington, driven mad by rumours of disaster, marched on the town hall to find out the truth. All in a rush, my parents' world and the streets of Accrington merged and I could begin to feel my way through.

Thirty years ago I finished the play only to find Margaret Thatcher had come to power. Here I'd centred my story on a woman, a strong-minded greengrocer ... and now the grocer's daughter was ushering in the era of "greed is good". Today that lies in splinters at our feet. The left/right struggle has been replaced by the bankers versus the rest.

What hasn't changed is the way we find new ways into war. The no-man's land the Pals had to cross is with us still.

Peter Whelan

Peter Whelan's Stage Plays

- ❑ (With Don Kincaid) *Lakota*, London, 1970;
- ❑ (With Les Darbon) *Double Edge*, London, 1975;
- ❑ *Captain Swing*, Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-on-Avon, 1978;
- ❑ *The Accrington Pals*, Royal Shakespeare Company, London, 1981, then Hudson Guild Theatre, New York City, 1984, and The Questors Theatre 1983, 2004, 2010;
- ❑ *Clay*, Royal Shakespeare Company, London, 1982, and The Questors Theatre 1989;
- ❑ (With Les Darbon) *A Cold Wind Blowing Up*, Cologne, Germany, 1983;
- ❑ *World's Apart*, adapted from a work by Jose Triana, Royal Shakespeare Company, Stratford-on-Avon, 1986, then London, 1987;
- ❑ *The Bright and Bold Design*, Royal Shakespeare Company, London, 1991, then The Studio Theatre, Washington, DC, 1992, and The Questors Theatre, 1998;
- ❑ *The School of Night*, Royal Shakespeare Company, The Other Place, Stratford-on-Avon, 1992;
- ❑ *The Night Before the Morning After Show*, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1992;
- ❑ *Shakespeare Country*, produced for the Little Theatre Guild, including The Questors Theatre, 1993;
- ❑ *The Tinder Box*, adapted from Hans Anderson, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1994;
- ❑ *Divine Right*, Birmingham, 1996;
- ❑ *The Herbal Bed*, Royal Shakespeare Company, The Other Place, Stratford-on-Avon, then Barbican Theatre, London, both 1996, then Duchess Theatre, London, 1997, then Eugene O'Neill Theatre, New York City, 1998, and The Questors Theatre 2000;
- ❑ *Overture*, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1997;
- ❑ *Nativity*, Birmingham, 1999;
- ❑ *A Russian in the Woods*, Royal Shakespeare Company, The Other Place, Stratford-on-Avon, 2001, and The Questors Theatre 2003;
- ❑ *The Earthly Paradise*, Almeida Theatre, London, 2004.

The Questors Student Group 63 presents

THE ACCRINGTON PALS

by Peter Whelan

First performance of this production at The Questors Theatre: 20 March 2010.

CAST

May	Sherralyn Lee
Tom	Jed Chambers
Ralph	Joel Dyer
Eva	Clara Latham
Sarah	Katy Bond
Bertha	Ellie Jeffreys
Arthur	Ellis McNorthey-Gibbs
Annie	Jude Claybourne
Reggie	Ellis McNorthey-Gibbs
CSM Rivers	Tom Lincoln

The band recording used in this production is the
9th Ealing Boys' Brigade recorded by Alan N Smith in 1983.

The performance lasts approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes
including one interval of 15 minutes.

**Please turn off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms. The use of cameras, video cameras and recording equipment is strictly prohibited.
Thank you.**

PRODUCTION

Director & Designer	Mark Fitzgerald
Lighting Designer	Richard Mead
Sound Designer	Paul Robinson
<i>The sound design was taken from an original design by Alan N Smith</i>	
Costume Designer	Sarah Andrews
Stage Management	Liz Cooper, Andrew Davis, Arthur England, Amelia Glasgow, Patrick Grafton-Green, Julie Hadwin, Jean Masters, Liz Prior, Sylvia Wall, Clare Watson
Costume Assistants	Mary Davies, Helen Karasiewicz
Constructors	Mark Fitzgerald, Clive Whitcroft
Set Dressers	Bron Blake, Jenny Richardson
Scenic Painters	Bron Blake, Elaine Hagan, Jenny Richardson
Prompter	Pam Smith
Dialect Coach	Richard Gallagher
Make Up	Celine Boulhaya
Photographer	Richard Mead
Military Props & Uniforms	Khaki Devil, Ipswich
Thanks to	Julie Cruttenden of Greasepaint, John Feather, Mike Hagan, Tina Harris, Colin Horne, Geoffrey Morgan, Harriet Parsonage, Kate Townsend, Accrington Community History

Special thanks go to **Peter Whelan** for his generosity and help with this production.

The Questors Student Group Tutors:

Director of Studies & First Year Tutor	David Emmet
Second Year Tutor	Mark Fitzgerald
Voice Teacher	Marianne Milcalif
Movement Teacher	Nicholas Jonne Wilson

Biographies

Katy Bond – Sarah

Katy has enjoyed performing from a young age and took part in numerous school productions. In 2007 she completed a BA in Theatre Studies, Education and English in New Zealand where for four years she worked on a different show each month. Since joining The Questors Student Group in 2008, Katy has enjoyed working on a number of roles and was an ASM on *Madame Bovary*.

Jed Chambers – Tom

Having started to act at Questors on an acting course at age 14, Jed then went to Hammersmith West London College to do a two-year BTEC in Performing Arts. He also did a two-week course with The National Youth Theatre after which he joined The Questors Student Group. He is hoping to go to drama school and has re-calls for both LAMDA and The Guildhall Drama School.

Jude Claybourne – Annie

Jude is an ex-Questors Student Group member who has been in a number of productions including *The Shape of Things*, *The Weir* and *The Country*. She also does improv., mask and stand-up, and runs *Juiced*, a monthly comedy night.

Sherralyn Lee – May

Sherralyn started acting at five years old as Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer, since when she has studied drama at college and university. She performed with Frantic Assembly in *The Service Charge* at The Lyric, Hammersmith. She also performed at The Union Theatre in *Vinegar Tom*. She is auditioning for a BA Acting course in the hope of furthering her acting career.

Joel Dyer – Ralph

Joel has acted at The Questors for eight years appearing in *Guards! Guards!*, *Peter Pan* and *Ernie's Incredible Illuminations*, amongst others. He had a piece of his own staged entitled *Blood and Presidency* as part of the *Unseens* project. Outside of The Questors, Joel has played the title roles in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth* and *Oliver*.

Ellie Jeffreys – Bertha

Ellie's first performance was playing Sibyl in *Private Lives* at The Wanstead House Theatre in 2007. Since then she has acted in independent films and for local theatre companies. She has found studying and performing at The Questors both a privilege and a valuable experience as an actress.

Clara Latham – Eva

Clara studied Drama and the Arts at school and took part in *Macbeth*, *Guys and Dolls* and *Translations*. Since leaving school she has performed in a Shakespeare Medley production with Dame Judi Dench and Patrick Stewart. Having joined The Questors Student Group, she has worked on a number of plays including *Kvetch*, *The Man of Mode*, *Betrayal* as well as ASMing on *Henry VI* and *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

Tom Lincoln – CSM Rivers

The Accrington Pals marks Tom's return to the stage after an absence of seven years. A keen performer throughout his school days, studying drama to A-Level standard, Tom is happy to be back, The Questors having offered the ideal reintroduction to the theatre.

Ellis McNorthey-Gibbs – Arthur & Reggie

Ellis joined The Questors in 2007. As an acting ASM, his credits include *Macbeth* and *Henry VI*. He is a teaching assistant for The Questors Youth Theatre and a member of the Lyric Theatre Young Company with whom he recently acted in *Loldon* and *365*.

Mark Fitzgerald – Director & Designer

Mark is Joint Artistic Director of The Questors Theatre. Directing credits include: *A Christmas Carol*; *Far From the Madding Crowd*; *Henry VI*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*; *Richard III*; *Separate Tables*; *The Visit*; *Henry V*; *Saturday, Sunday, Monday*; *This Happy Breed* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. Mark also works as an acting coach for television and radio. Films include the award-winning *Seven Sins of England* for Channel Four.

Richard Mead – Lighting Designer

Recently Richard has done the lighting designs for *A Christmas Carol*, *Far from the Madding Crowd* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as projection design for *Broken Glass*. Previous lighting designs at The Questors include *King Lear*, *The Glass Menagerie* and *The Snow Queen*.

Paul Robinson – Sound Designer

Having joined Questors a year ago, Paul has packed in a lot of experience as Sound Operator, Lighting Operator and now Sound Designer. The shows he has worked on are *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Misery*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *Kvetch*.

Sarah Andrews – Costume Designer

Joined Questors in 1977 as a member of Student Group 32 and since graduating has appeared in many plays at the Questors, most recently in *The Comedy of Errors*. Sarah is one of the triumvirate who run the Costume Department and has designed and dressed a countless number of shows, most recently *A Christmas Carol* and some input on the design side to *The Comedy of Errors*.

TALKBACK

Come meet the Author, Director and Cast for an informal discussion in The Studio as soon as possible after the performance on
Tuesday 23rd March.

Three Special Events for Your Diary

SONS AND MOTHERS with Roger Rees and Virginia McKenna

Monday 12 April, 7:45

A special Questors fund raiser exploring the mother-son relationship through literature and music, followed by a Q&A session.

This compilation, by Anne Harvey and with music arranged by Matthew Scott, has played to packed houses around the country.

Don't miss this fabulous opportunity to share an evening with two of this country's foremost stage actors.

RORY BREMNER'S **ELECTION** **BATTLEBUS TOUR**

Monday 19 April, 7:45

Top satirical impressionist Rory Bremner in his first stand-up tour for five years

In the run-up to polling day, a unique take on the characters and events dominating the news, with impressions ranging from Gordon Brown to Louis Walsh and back again.

The election run-up will give Rory the chance to involve surprise guests in a Q&A session in the second half of the show.

SHOWSTOPPER! with Jon Snow

Saturday 15 May, 7:45

The award-winning Edinburgh Festival sell-out improvised musical show in aid of St. Mark's Hospital.

A brand new musical created nightly based on ideas from the audience.

Utterly unpredictable, side-splittingly funny, packed with drama and featuring dazzling dance routines and catchy melodies, *Showstopper!* leaves delighted audiences singing all the way home.

See questors.org.uk for further details, updates and tickets

The Next Questors Productions

THE ROVER

by Aphra Behn

17 – 24 April 2010

The Playhouse

Restoration comedy of revenge and romantic surprises. Then, from the 6th September, at The Minack Theatre, Cornwall.

SWEENEY TODD

by Stephen Sondheim

1 – 15 May 2010

The Studio

Award-winning musical thriller of passion, love and revenge.

Join Us

If you enjoy theatre, why not join us and benefit from membership:

- ✓ Half price personal tickets for Questors productions*
- ✓ Discounted Guest tickets when you bring friends to Questors productions*
- ✓ Children's FREE tickets[†]
- ✓ Opportunities to be actively involved in our productions
- ✓ Allowed to audition to join our company of actors
- ✓ Exclusive or discounted training courses
- ✓ Colour magazine three times a year
- ✓ Regular Members' Newsletter
- ✓ Regular programme card
- ✓ Vote at general meetings
- ✓ Membership of The Grapevine Club

*Reduced prices exclude certain events. [†]Under 18 only, maximum four per event. Must be collected at the performance and accompanied by an adult member.

Introductory offer – as a welcome for first time members, either try us out for six months at half price, or get your first 15 months' membership for the price of 12.

Getting the most from your membership

We have a wide range of opportunities for you to become actively involved front-of-house or backstage. Volunteer help is always needed for selling programmes or stewarding, and training is provided if you'd like to work in Box Office with our computerized system. To meet members in a social setting, volunteer to help behind the Grapevine bar. Backstage staff including stage managers, prop makers, set builders, sound and light designers and operators, painters, wardrobe and costume and set designers are always welcomed; whatever your skills, we'll find a place for you. We also have courses for those wishing to direct.

The Questors has a high standard of acting and, to maintain this, everyone wanting to act must first take an audition. These are held every month – call the Theatre Office for details of forthcoming auditions.

Questors Youth Theatre – QYT

Our Youth Theatre, QYT, runs weekly drama classes for all ages from 6 to 16. Younger groups meet on Saturday mornings and older ages at weekday teatime. There's often a waiting list for membership, so put your name down now! Details are online at questors.org.uk/qyt.

The Questors Theatre
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