

# Auditions & Future Productions

## Writer's Cramp by John Byrne

Famous for Tutti Frutti and The Slab Boys Trilogy, John Byrne is one of Scotland's greatest contemporary playwrights. I was lucky enough to find and read a copy of his early work and "Writer's Cramp" stuck me as a funny and poignant and provocative and challenging play to consider. To that end I offered it as a potential production at the October Planning Meeting and it has been given a place in the programme this year. Rehearsing from June to early August with Whoops in the middle a production is born.

Based around Byrne's hapless but hopeful author, Francis Seneca McDade. Brief scenes track McDade's progress from boarding school (where he publishes his first poem, about a philosopher's incontinence) through Oxford, World War II and various publishing misadventures, up to his death in penury. The humour can be comic book in style and characters appear in several ludicrous scenes throughout. The cast will consist of three males and one female all doubling minor parts. Actors need to play the age range from high school to old age in what I think will be a very physical production. Challenges await and I am willing to be awed at open auditions which will take place in *The Mill Theatre on Sunday 7th June at 2pm*. There are sadly no parts in this production for Junior members. **John Glen**

## Shakers by John Godber

Four waitress work at the fanciest cocktail club in town. They work great as a team, their personalities compliment each other. But they are all they're own unique and special character all of which flourish throughout this play. The play requires four actresses between the age of 16 and 26, there will be an audition on *Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm*, although there is not set date for the actual performances this will be fixed depending on cast availability, if you are interested please contact Andrew on 01847 894006 or attend the Auditions. **Andrew Crawford**

Thurso Players Diary 		
Date	Event	Contact
18 <sup>th</sup> March 8pm	Mighty Quinn	894698 for tickets
25 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> March 7.30pm	As You Like It	894698 for tickets
5 <sup>th</sup> April 7pm	Shakers Audition	894006 Andrew Crawford
28 <sup>th</sup> April 8pm	After Mary Rose	894698 for tickets
27 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup> May 7.30pm	Century (+ Bit) Music	894698 for tickets
June	Club Night Karaoke	891429 Leslie Jackson
June	Club Night Quiz	851490 John Glen
6 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> July	Whoops 13	
August	Writers Cramp	851490 John Glen
September	Improbable Fiction	892019 Betty Bradstreet
9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Red Riding Hood Panto	894663 Angus McBay

# Thurso Players News

March 2009



## Hansel & Gretel ~ Another Pantomime Success

The panto this year appears to have been a roaring success. The comments from audience members and players members were positive and happy. Thurso Players reputation for working at the front edge of challenging our technical and performance levels continues to grow. From a Director's point of view it was fun, but, only because of the superb team who made my ideas come alive. The Cast and Crew, the Players Committee and Front of House team all gave support to make sure this was, as always, a superb production.

There has been a lot of learning involved in getting to this point and I am glad that we have established a pattern of early planning and discussion joined to full and open auditions. The talent that appears each year is astounding. Filling the roles is harder and harder each time because of the choice of energetic and enthusiastic players members all looking to be part of pantomime. Looking forward to next year I can only wish Director Angus McBay all of the luck and support I have had with his production and hope that we all make it to the auditions whenever they are.

**John Glen**



## Shakespeare's 'As you like it'



Thurso Players are busy gearing up for their latest production and, with an onstage cast of 21 along with an offstage support team of 20, it is proving to be a quite a considerable undertaking.

Directed by Denise Imrie, 'As You Like It', is a pastoral comedy by William Shakespeare written between 1598 and 1600 and first published in the folio of 1623. The work was based upon the novel 'Rosalynde' by Thomas Lodge.

While the play features one of Shakespeare's most famous and oft-quoted soliloquies, "All the world's a stage", it did not receive the critical acclaim of his better known works and it has been said that Shakespeare wrote the play as a mere crowd-pleaser, signalling his own middling opinion of the work by calling it As You Like It — as if he did not agree.

With music, song, dance and Shakespeare's rich language the play has many delightful twists and turns until the final scene. The performance runs at the Mill Theatre from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March at **7.30pm** each evening. Tickets, priced at £7.00 & £5.00 (concessions) can be booked by calling the Box Office on Thurso 894698. **Neil MacDonald**

# 2009 Professional Programme

An Evening of Comic Book History Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 8:00pm

Tim Quinn, former producer of the South Bank Show and editor of Marvel Comics (Superman, X-Men) takes you on a nostalgic trip down memory lane to meet some of the great and not so great comic characters of the last 150 years. Tim also takes you behind-the-scenes from his days working for The Beano, Sparky, Bunty, Playhour, Jack & Jill, Buster, The Topper, the Daily Mirror's Jane and Garth, and America's finest Marvel Comic, to running his own comic book company alongside the



elder daughter of Enid Blyton. He will guide you through the creation of a brand new comic book character and reveal to you his own secret identity as that Supreme Speedster, Jet Lagg. The audience is invited to attend wearing capes and masks.... Suitable for boys and girls from 9-150! (No nudity, swearing or violence, but please come anyway.)

**Magnetic North: After Mary Rose on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April at 8:00pm**

Harry, a shell-shocked soldier, is trying to piece his life back together with the help of a psychiatrist. Digging deeper, the psychiatrist uncovers a mysterious secret that takes Harry back to his childhood home for a journey into the past that leads to a surprising encounter in the present.

Based on a play by J M Barrie, After Mary Rose is a dark and atmospheric new play which marks the Scottish debut of award-winning playwright D Jones, whose previous work includes The Strange Desire of Ms Small (BBC Radio 4), The Incredible Mercy of Limpet & Leach (Brave New Roles Award) and Transfigured (Kings Cross New Writing award). Directed by Nicholas Bone and with a score by Edinburgh-based composer Dee Isaacs, After Mary Rose is the latest production from Magnetic North, following the critically acclaimed Walden and My Old Man. **Rob Roy**

## Booking & Publicity

Changes to the committee mean that some changes have to be made in procedure. From now onward the number for booking all shows, professional and amateur will be **01847 894698**.

Production managers and directors should note that all press advertising and publicity features should be submitted through Rob Roy. This is to avoid confusions over billing and content which we have had in the past. **Betty Bradstreet**

# A Century (and a bit) of Music

After Shakespeare's As You Like It there's music as you like it!

Instead of the off the wall musical of previous years we've been working since before the pantomime on putting together over a hundred years of music, song and dance and this will all come together on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Eleven decades of popular music have been sourced and put together (almost) in sequence to bring over 50 pieces from writers and composers including Lennon & McCartney, Gershwin, Lerner & Lowe, Noel Coward, Sondheim. The pieces will be presented in a variety of styles from solo's, romantic duets, Barber Shop Ballads and chorus music in addition to comedy routines, dancing and even a bit of Astaire and Rogers.

The programme is now complete and soloists, dancers etc have been selected. Soloists have copies of their music and chorus have all the words – on paper if not in their memories yet. Lesley 's finger tips are almost non existent after playing and Glyn's lost his voice singing through ALL the songs so that we could get the timing right.

Putting something on like this we've come to expect comments of "Why that piece?" "You didn't play that one!" and even "I wouldn't have done it like that" All I can say is neither the production team nor the performers care! We've enjoyed ourselves and we're confident that you and everyone else who comes along will see and hear something you like and leave the Mill humming or whistling a tune for the next few days. See you in the audience in May! **Mike Gordon**



## Keyholders at The Mill

All interior and exterior locks in The Mill have been changed and some members have done the key holder training to conform with the Theatres Act and Health and Safety at Work Act, compliance with which is necessary to retain our Theatre and Club Licence. At all times a key holder in the building must be responsible for the requirements. Training on the operation of the fire alarm system and duties of the key holder is available from the Mill Manager who has to note and record the holders of keys to The Mill. Members are reminded that all keys, passed on or borrowed temporarily must be recorded through John Firth so that the record can be kept straight.

The access and parking area round The Mill is about to have a face-lift by resurfacing in the near future.

Longer term plans for the new entrance are proving more troublesome. Plans have been drawn up and planning permission obtained, but funding is proving a problem.

**Betty Bradstreet**