



WORCESTER OPERATIC & DRAMATIC SOCIETY

*Behind
the
Scenes*

Summer 2021

NEWS AND OTHER GOSSIP

A Message from the President - Ann Hasnip



Dear members,

It is a while since our last newsletter and I do hope that you all have kept safe and well during these unusual times. Despite the on/off lockdowns over the last 16+ months, the committee has continued to work on your behalf and attempt to manage the impact of Covid-19 on WODS/WODYS, and indeed both the WODS committee and the WODYS sub-committee have continued to meet virtually throughout.

We have collectively been working hard to minimise the financial implications, linking closely with the Swan Theatre, performing licence holders, and our suppliers of sets/costumes/props that we hire from.

Discussions have continued about when we can confidently resume activities and plans for our future events, and it's with pleasure that we can update you further within this newsletter as to the forward plans for our various productions. I'm also delighted to report that, following Mike Elden's retirement as one of our long-standing rehearsal pianists, we have recently auditioned and appointed a new pianist - Peter Morris - to step in and tinkle on the ivories principally on Wednesday evening rehearsals once we resume our rehearsals. I'm sure everyone will give Peter a warm welcome when we meet again.

I'd like to thank all those on both WODS and WODYS committees who continue to do so much for our Society, and indeed the numerous others who continue to be involved in many ways behind the scenes. Thanks also to you as members of our Society for your continued patience and support as we navigate these challenging times.

Following the AGM in April 2021 we do however currently have two vacancies on the main Committee and we are urgently looking for enthusiastic members to put themselves forward to help ensure WODS can sustain itself. If you think you can contribute a little in this way and give something back to our Society then please contact myself or Chris Holloway if you would like to volunteer. Of course any members who feel they may be able to contribute a little time off the committee would also be welcome, but we do need to fill the committee vacancies or else we will simply not be able to sustain everything as we have done previously.

As ever, the Committee extends its warmest wishes for your continued good health, and we look forward to meeting all our WODS friends soon when we hope to be back to normal in a matter of months if possible.

Best Wishes
Ann Hasnip (WODS President)

POST - COVID SHOW UPDATES

130th Anniversary Celebration



February 2022 marks WODS' 130th Anniversary, and to give all members the chance to help celebrate we hope to commence rehearsals for a joint WODS/WODYS Celebratory Concert from late September, to be staged at Nunnery Wood High School Theatre from 24th to 26th February 2022. More details later in this newsletter!

We're excited to announce that after an 18 month hiatus, **"Kipps – The New Half A Sixpence Musical"** will re-start rehearsals on Wednesday 6th October 2021 for the usual rehearsal period. The show will be staged at the Swan Theatre from 26th – 30th April 2022.



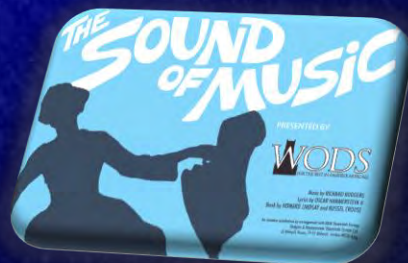
Chris Hooper (Director) will be in contact with all previous cast members to re-confirm their intention to remain in the cast, and we will then hold an audition process to fill any spaces throughout the company.



WODYS have managed to defer their production of **"Shrek : The Musical"** and now intend to stage the production from 2nd to 6th August 2022.



After careful consideration, and following changes in performance dates and performing licences, WODS Committee have decided to swap our other forthcoming productions around. **"Our House"** will now be staged from 18th - 22nd October 2022, and **"The Sound of Music"** will be staged from 18th - 23rd April 2023.



The
Swan
Theatre
Worcester

WODS
FOR THE BEST IN AMATEUR MUSICALS
PRESENTS

KIDDS

THE NEW
HALF A SIXPENCE
MUSICAL

26th - 30th
April 2022

WODS Ticket Manager

tickets@wods.co.uk

noda
Be inspired by amateur theatre

Follow us on Facebook @wods1892
and Instagram @wodsworcester



Box Office 01905 611427

Based on the H.G. Wells novel "KIPPS: The Story of a Simple Soul" and the original musical by Beverley Cross and David Heneker
Original Songs by David Heneker • Book by Julian Fellowes • New Music and Lyrics by George Stiles and Anthony Drewe
Orchestrations by William David Brohn • Co-Created by Cameron Mackintosh
This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International (Europe)
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI Europe www.mtishows.co.uk

WODS 130th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

How many of you have realised that next year will mark WODS' 130th Anniversary? ... that's right, in February 2022 we celebrate 130 years since WODS was formed in 1892! So in an effort to mark this special anniversary WODS and WODYS will collaborate to stage a special concert.

The concert will be staged at Nunnery Wood High School Theatre from 24th to 26th February 2022. It is hoped to start rehearsals from early October 2021 on Friday evenings between 7.30pm – 9.30pm at St. Mary's Hall.

Chris Holloway has been appointed to Produce the concert, and with Ed Malpass as Musical Director.

The emphasis will be on 'group' singing rather than solos and duets, and there will be no auditions ... so any Full Member or Vice President that wants to take part can do so.

Whilst WODYS will rehearse it's own section of the concert, it is hoped that WODS and WODYS will all sing a couple of songs together as the finale to each half. Any WODYS members aged 16 years or over may also take part in the WODS sections and join rehearsals on a Friday evening if they wish.

BE PART OF IT

If you want to take part in the concert then please email Chris at membership@wods.co.uk to confirm your interest.



CELEBRATION AND SOCIAL

It's been so long since WODS members have been able to gather together that we've literally got a queue of things we need to celebrate, award and honour to a host of different people, as well as spend some much needed time having a bit of fun together too!

So ... we're organising a 'Celebration and Social' event (a better catchy title still being debated!), planned for November 2021, where we hope to bring all members together and have the chance to dress up in our party clothes. Here's just some of the things we're hoping to include:

- ★ Celebrate WODS NODA Award for 'Oklahoma!' – Best Musical in our region in 2019/20 – we've not yet received our award as it was announced in April 2020!
- ★ Celebrate some significant NODA long-service awards for our members – do you think you qualify for one too, then see the notes on the next page of this newsletter to apply!
- ★ Mark the retirement of David Humphries as WODYS Chairman at the 2021 AGM.
- ★ Mark the retirement of Mike Elden as one of our long-standing rehearsal pianists.
- ★ Just some long-awaited social time with our WODS family and friends!

We hope to hold the event at the White House Hotel in Worcester, and it will be FREE for WODS Members and £5 for any partners (subject to demand – preference will be given to WODS members first and foremost).

The event will be a pay-your-own-way bar and no sit down meal ... nice and simple!

Full details to be sent to WODS Members in September, but if you think you qualify for a NODA Long-Service Award then make sure you apply ASAP so that it can be ordered and presented at the event in November!



NODA LONG SERVICE AWARDS

The National Operatic & Dramatic Association (NODA) offers a number of long-service awards for Societies and their members ... and we think there are a lot of WODS members who qualify and are pending various awards!



Awards can vary from 10 to 50 year badges, through to silver and gold bars and even medals for longer service. See www.noda.org.uk/awards for full information on what is available.

We would like to present as many of these special awards for member's long-service at our Celebration & Social event at the White House Hotel in November 2021 to make the presentation as special as possible. Awards of 25 years or longer are usually paid for by WODS.

If you think you might qualify for a NODA long-service award, then please complete an application form and submit it to **Ann Hasnip** (Address: 21 Ombersley Road, Worcester, WR3 7BW or Email: annhasnip@yahoo.co.uk or Mob: 07812 720 001) so that we can verify your length of service and then get the award ordered.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST "OUR HOUSE"

Would you like to be considered for the Production Team?

"Our House" will be staged from 18th - 22nd October 2022, and WODS Committee are seeking any expressions of interest from prospective Directors, Musical Directors and Choreographers who would like to put themselves forward for consideration.

The Committee usually appoints a show Director first (usually at least 12 months prior to when rehearsals are due to commence to allow for preparations), then followed by the Musical Director and Choreographer thereafter.



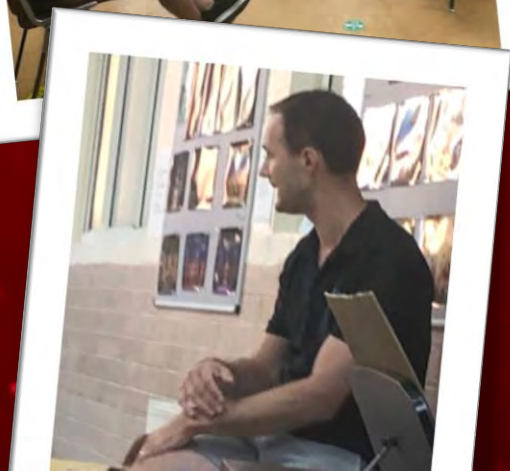
WODS NEW MEMBERS INTRODUCTION NIGHT

In July 2021 we welcomed some guests – 12 prospective new members – to St. Mary's Hall for the first time in 16 months since the numerous COVID restrictions began.

Of course, it wasn't the welcome we would normally be able to provide, as everyone remained socially distanced and wore their face masks whilst in the building, but it was wonderful to see the enthusiasm and excitement in the room ... a small taste of what is to come when we can finally re-start our rehearsals in the coming months.

During the evening Chris Holloway (our Membership Secretary) introduced our guests to everything they needed to know about WODS, as well as a number of other members who had come along to share some insight, including Ann Hasnip (WODS President), Chris Hooper (Kipps Director), John Caldwell and Megan Crosby (who both shared some of their experiences of recent shows), Christina Humphries (our Wardrobe Mistress) and Mike Astles (our Hall Manager). Thanks to all above for giving up their time to come along.

We also gave everyone a guided tour of St. Mary's Hall. We hope to hold another New Members Introduction Evening on Wednesday 15th September 2021.



WODYS News

WODYS are back - with a super summer concert

We are excited to announce that 'WODYS at the WOOD' – a singing and dancing feel-good concert – will be held at Nunnery Wood High School, Worcester, on **Saturday 7th August 2021**.



WODYS
at the Wood
WE ARE BACK!
SATURDAY 7th AUGUST
Matinee 2:30pm - Evening 7:00pm
Songs from your Favourite Musicals
a SUMMER Outdoor
Concert & Picnic
at Nunnery Wood High School
For Tickets please contact
07850 558770 or **wodystreasurer@outlook.com**
We look forward to seeing
you all again very soon
SATURDAY MATINEE and
EVENING PERFORMANCES
Please remember to bring
your own food and drinks
ENTRY BY TICKET ONLY

WODYS News

WODYS will be singing and dancing a variety of numbers from shows including Shrek, Annie, Footloose, Whistle Down The Wind, and many more, as well as putting on a fantastic finale!

For the first time since March, 2020, members have been meeting in different groups on a Saturday morning back at St Mary's Hall.

With producer and director, Dave Humphries, choreographers Rachel Price and Katie McNamee, musical director Hattie Amos, pianist Brian Giles and Laura Fullelove they have been preparing for 'WODYS at the WOOD'.

There will only be two (socially distanced) performances, a matinee starting at 2.30pm and an evening performance starting at 7pm, so book quickly so as not to miss out!

WODYS at the WOOD will be performed in the open air and the audience is invited to bring a picnic, taking chairs or blankets and perhaps a table. We have ordered warm weather, but a waterproof is always handy.

The money raised at the raffle will go to WODYS chosen charity for this year – Bonterre, a care farm for children in Holt Heath. The classroom is based within the grounds of Top Barn Farm and helps youngsters who are struggling to stay at school for a variety of reasons including autism, ADHD or because of complex backgrounds.

Tickets include entrance into raffle:

Adults: £7
Children (under 16): £5
Senior citizens: £5
Under 2's: Free

Email: wodystreasurer@outlook.com
Or call 07850 558770.

WODYS News

Musical Chair-men

It's all change on WODYS committee as David Humphries steps down after almost 40 years as chairman – but do not fear, he will still be at rehearsals almost every Saturday morning, as he is going to continue producing and directing future shows.

There's no getting away from the irreplaceable, talented, David, who has been at the helm of our youth group since co-founding back in 1982 - and we wouldn't let him escape! David built WODYS from a handful of youngsters staging small productions in St. Mary's Hall to a group with an average membership of 70, putting on major annual musical productions at the Swan Theatre. Over the years these shows have also helped to raise about £26,000 for local charities supporting less fortunate children.

During this time WODYS has won five NODA awards for the Best Youth Production in our region. In 2012 the young members showed just how much they respected David and his exemplary leadership by successfully nominating him to carry the Olympic Torch as part of the London Olympic Games torch relay. In 2019 he won an award from BBC Hereford and Worcester, for giving unstinting, inspirational, enthusiastic and selfless voluntary service to the youth of Worcester and the surrounding area.

It's a hard act to follow, but committee member Jeremy Field is taking on the job. Jeremy's first involvement with WODYS was helping complete a programme design for Guys and Dolls in 2006. Since then, he has been producing posters and programmes for every annual show – winning two awards from NODA. He will also be well known by members as organiser of the chaperones team.

Previously Jeremy was with Claines Amateur Theatrical Society (CATS) for more than 23 years, being chairman for many of those. Wife, Debbie, and daughter Poppy, are always on hand at WODYS and WODYS shows as part of the wardrobe team, while younger daughter, Ruby, once a member of WODYS and then WODYS for over 6 years, is now working with her partner Reinhard on super yachts across the world.



WODYS News

WODYS OFF TO STUDY!

We are sad to be losing some of our WODYS who are going off to universities and colleges and we wish them all luck in the future – and please visit us and let us know how you are getting on. We also want to say congratulations to those off to continue their musical theatre studies - and here are a few words from three of them.

BEN DARBY, aged 18

"I am so pleased to have successfully auditioned for places on the professional dance and musical theatre degree courses at both Urdang Academy and Bird College! The audition processes were very challenging but I had so much fun putting together ballet, jazz, acting and singing self-tapes to gain a place at my dream colleges.

After a lot of thought, I have decided to train at Bird College as I can see myself reaching my full potential with their training. I will be moving to London in September and hope to achieve my goal of professional musical theatre performing. I have been studying at Worcester Sixth Form where I have gained a lot of knowledge through my lessons in dance and performing arts.

I have to thank everyone at WODYS so much for giving me an amazing experience in performing, I look forward to what the company produces in the future! I am gutted that I won't be able to play the role of Donkey in Shrek The Musical, but I have loved working with the talented members of WODYS over the past three years."



GEORGIA SATCHWELL, aged 16

"I'm very excited that after finishing my GCSEs at Nunnery Wood High School in May of this year, I will be studying at BOA from September on their musical theatre pathway. This is a dream I've had for a number of years and I am absolutely thrilled to have been accepted for a place at the Academy, alongside a number of other very talented members of WODYS."



WODYS News



ELLA HOLLAND, aged 16

"Hey! I thought I'd fill you in on what I've been up to the last few months! I turned 16 years old in May, and since then I have finished all my exams and officially left high school! I was very excited about these milestones but at the same time a little sad that I will be saying goodbye to some lovely teachers (but I certainly won't miss the homework). However, I cannot wait to start my next adventure as I auditioned and was accepted into BOA (Birmingham Ormiston Academy) where I will be studying musical theatre for A level in the new academic year!

It's something I have dreamed of for a long time and now it's happening and I can't quite believe how lucky I am to be able to study something I love with like-minded people (along with some other WODYS members)! I can't wait to go to BOA and sing and dance to my heart's content all day, every day!

I have an extended summer break as I finished school on 21st May and don't start college until September, but I also wanted to get a part time summer job. My school Prom date was in June. I am hopeful that we will all be able to be back together very soon as I have missed WODYS massively this last year! I really can't wait to get back to seeing everyone and I was keeping my fingers crossed that we could do something over the summer! Missing you all!

MUSICAL THEATRE INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

Twenty-five of our WODYS enjoyed a summer Musical Theatre International Zoom workshop, which we treated them to - and here is what one of our WODYS – Grace Done – had to say about it:

"I really enjoyed the MTI festival, there was plenty to entertain everyone. I had great fun taking part in the Mary Poppins dance workshop run by the West End Disney professionals.

We got to hear from various actors in West End shows including; The Lion King, Hamilton, and Juliet. I found the actors stories about their experiences performing, auditioning and how they came to be part of the shows very interesting and inspirational.

The Shrek Zoomsical was very entertaining and amazing to watch. Overall, it was a brilliant experience and I had a wonderful time!"



WODYS News

A BIG Thank you to David Skelton!



WODYS' committee would like to say a big "thank you" to David Skelton for his many years of dedicated service to WODYS. All three of David's children attended WODYS and he said that serving and helping with the group was a way of giving something back.

David Humphries (ex-WODYS chairman) said that "David was his rock on committee, who always brought common sense and good reasoning to a discussion. I can't thank him enough for his help and judgment". David (S) served as WODYS' Business Manager for many years and when he retired from that position, became responsible for ticket sales. He left the committee in March of this year and is missed by his friends on the committee.



BOOK YOUR TICKETS NOW!!!

**Tickets include entrance into
raffle:**

**Adults: £7
Children (under 16): £5
Senior citizens: £5
Under 2's: Free**

**Email:
wodystreasurer@outlook.com
Or call 07850 558770.**

WORCESTER LOTTERY

Fund raising with Worcester Community Lottery – article by Martin Boniface

WODS is delighted to announce that we are now participating in the Worcester Community Lottery. This simple and fun way of supporting WODS, comes with the chance of winning one of a number of weekly prizes ranging from £25 to £25,000.

How does it work?

Worcester Community Lottery is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes in Worcester. All good causes supported by the lottery will benefit Worcester and its residents. Play the lottery, support Worcester - it's that simple!

Each ticket for the lottery cost just £1 per week, that's just £4.34 per month for each £1 ticket purchased. Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance to win a prize each week, with a top prize of £25,000! That's a better chance of winning than the National Lottery or the Health Lottery!

Each ticket consists of 6 numbers and each number will be between 0 and 9. The draw takes place every Saturday night when a 6 digit winning combination will be picked. Prizes will be given to players with tickets that match the first or last 2-6 numbers from the winning combination. Match all 6 and you win the JACKPOT!

How does WODS benefit?

From each £1 ticket sold 60p will go to good causes in Worcester! When purchasing a ticket(s), nominate WODS as your local good cause. By doing this, 50p from each ticket is paid directly to WODS with the remaining 10p going into a general fund which supports good causes in Worcester.

To put this in perspective when you play the National Lottery 25% goes to good causes – the Worcester Lottery has more than DOUBLED the ticket percentage that goes to good causes. This really is a WIN-WIN.

If just 50 people each buy a £1 ticket and nominate WODS as their good cause, a whopping £1,300 is generated each year for WODS and a further £260 for other good causes in the area. Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize.



What next?

To find out more about the Worcester Lottery or to buy tickets then visit the website www.worcesterlottery.org

Please mention this to friends and family members and ask them to join in and nominate WODS as their chosen good cause. Thanks and good luck!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 7th August 2021 (2.30pm and 7pm)
WODYS present "WODYS at the Wood"
Nunnery Wood High School, Worcester

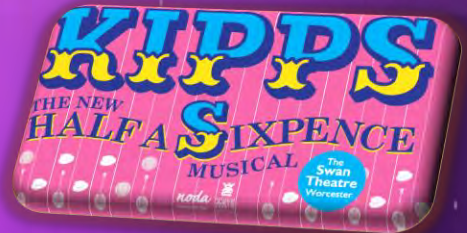


Wednesday 15th September 2021 (from 7.30pm)
WODS New Members Introduction Night



Wednesday 6th October 2021
First "Kipps" get-together / rehearsal

Date TBC – November 2021
WODS Celebration and Social
The White House Hotel, Worcester



24th to 26th February 2022
WODS and WODYS present
130th Anniversary Celebratory Concert
Nunnery Wood High School, Worcester



Date TBC – March/ April 2022
WODS Annual General Meeting

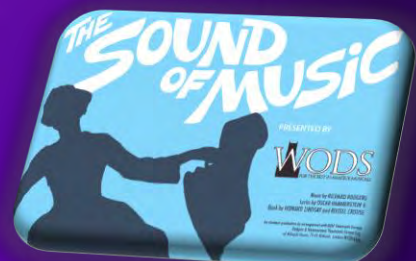
26th to 30th April 2022
WODS present
"Kipps : The New Half a Sixpence Musical"
Swan Theatre



2nd to 6th August 2022
WODYS present "Shrek the Musical"
Swan Theatre

18th - 22nd October 2022
WODS present "Our House"
Swan Theatre

18th - 23rd April 2023
WODS present "The Sound of Music"
Swan Theatre



OTHER INFORMATION

Wardrobe and Props Hire

Wednesday nights at St. Mary's Hall between
7pm - 8.30 pm or other times by special
arrangement.

Costumes Hire
Christina Humphries
07799 055 513
or Mary Beechey
07939 579 725

Props Hire
Ann Turner on 07900 911 295
or Mike Astles on 07980 056 615



Get in touch with the committee

Ann Hasnip (President)
07812 720 001
annhasnip@yahoo.co.uk

Membership Secretary
membership@wods.co.uk

Mike Astles
07980 056 615
mgastles@gmail.com

Martin Boniface
07702 207 300
martin.Boniface@outlook.co
m

Jeremy Field
078855 686 740
jeremy@the-
mediahouse.co.uk

Chris Holloway
07846 891 641
cjholloway11@gmail.com

Chris Hooper
07793 630 140
chrishooper@hotmail.com

Christina Humphries
07799 055 513
ceh0556@btinternet.com

Rachel Price
07963 466 077
rprice345@btinternet.com

Ann Turner
07900 911 295
annturneris@Hotmail.com

WODS Ticket Manager:

Mr Ian Crohill
Branbryn, Pencombe Lane, Bromyard
Herefordshire, HR7 4SS

tickets@wods.co.uk

WODYS Ticket Manager:

wodystickets@hotmail.co.uk



Don't forget to add membership@wods.co.uk to your
safe senders list in your email account, and check your
Junk email folder if you think you're missing emails
from WODS!

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