

Kenton Friends' Newsletter

Spring 2010



KENTON for KEEPS NEWS

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees I am delighted to announce the Trustees have entered into an Option to Purchase Agreement to buy the freehold of the theatre. I can now officially inform you the purpose of our **KENTON for KEEPS** campaign is to raise £350,000 in order to make the purchase in this one off opportunity. We have only until 27 July 2010 to do so. Buying the Kenton will secure it's long term future and ensure it remains a theatre for you in perpetuity.

We have to move fast and are asking for support from all corners of the community. One thing is for sure, we all want to keep the Kenton and I ask you to join us in playing your part to help. We have set up the Kenton Keepers Club enabling everyone to contribute what they can. All Keeper levels are cherished but the Ambassadors are very special people.

Please take the opportunity to complete the Keepers Club form enclosed. It is easy to donate, by cheque, by credit card or on-line through www.justgiving.com Further information and forms can be collected from the theatre or via our website www.kentontheatre.co.uk

Shortly, we will be announcing a range of fundraising events for you to enjoy and support. We need leaders, team members and helpers to share the fun (and workload!) arranging these events, can you help? Please do let wendybowsher@kentontheatre.co.uk know.

Our summer programme is about access for the whole community, welcome to our new hirers who are bringing different shows and welcome back to our regular hirers. We are proud to be a part of four of Henley's festivals. In our patron's survey you asked for more plays so we bring you two new plays one written by Philip Ayckbourn, son of Alan Ayckbourn and Into My Own which supports Learning Disability Week.

This newsletter is packed with lots to see and do, please reach for your diary and cheque book to plan a summer filled with fun and a theatre to enjoy!

With my very best wishes,
Alan Pontin - Chairman

Kenton Strictly Dance-athon

An enormous vote of thanks to Emma Jane Taylor and Ann Burley of StageWorks for organising the Kenton Strictly Dance-athon which raised over £1,000.

Dancing shoes and fun were the order of the day with the occasional moment to snatch a well-earned coffee and delicious home-made cakes! Thanks also to Becky Cooper of Thames Valley Ceroc and Maggie and Ken Beedell for showing the style and elegance of ballroom.

Vince Hill - 'With A Song In My Heart'

A full-house and a standing ovation made this rare opportunity to spend an evening with Vince even more special. The audience shared the melodies and sang along bubbling as profusely as the champagne! The evening raised over £2,000 and our most grateful thanks to Vince for donating his time.

Pam Ayres

Two full houses enjoyed an evening with Pam as she celebrated 35 years as a professional entertainer trying out her new poems on the audience along with old favourites and requests. The laughs and smiles said it all, we raised over £2,500 towards KENTON for KEEPS. This was also a very special weekend and we extend our thanks to Pam for her support in promoting our KENTON for KEEPS campaign on local & regional television.



KENTON KEEPERS CLUB LAUNCH PARTY

Celebrities, Friends, Members, Supporters and Volunteers gathered at The Kenton to raise a glass of champagne to toast the exciting news of the freehold option to purchase. The Theatre Auditorium (with the kind permission of hiring company Henley Players) was turned into a fun carnival setting with screened footage of past shows, specially written poetry read by John and Judy Yeates and Wendy Huntley. Guests visited each of the Keepers stalls, Life, Head, Gate, Safe and Ambassador where donations were made, gifts pledged, support rallied and ideas for fundraising events made. The Kenton Keepers packages have been set up to suit all pockets, likewise with the events to be announced shortly throughout the coming year. Our grateful thanks to all those who contributed and helped towards this special morning.

The **KENTON KEEPERS CLUB** has been set up specifically to raise funds to purchase the Kenton Theatre freehold.

You are invited to play your part in this one off opportunity to make history.

- Life Keeper - Donations above £5,000
- Head Keeper - Donations above £2,500
- Gate Keeper - Donations above £1,000
- Safe Keeper - Donations above £500
- Ambassador - Donation of your choice

BENEFITS	L	H	G	S	A
Kenton Theatre Life Patron	✓				
Exclusive Use of Facilities	✓				
Two Celebrity Gala Events	✓				
Limited Edition Brooch, Cufflinks	✓	✓			
Chairman's Luncheon	✓	✓			
VIP Seats for K for K Events	✓	✓	✓		
Pavement Plaque (if permitted)	✓				
Choice of Theatre Plaque, Seat Plaque, Signature on Safety Curtain	✓	✓	✓		
Name on Seat Plaque				✓	
Kenton Keepers Social Events	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Kenton 'Well Trod Stage' History	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Priority Booking for all shows	✓	✓			
Priority Booking K for K Shows			✓	✓	
Discount on selected shows	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ticket / Credit Card fees waived	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Refreshments Voucher, Newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Eight Comp. 'Bring A Friend' Tickets		✓			
Four Comp. 'Bring A Friend' Tickets			✓		
Two Comp. 'Bring A Friend' Tickets				✓	
E-Flyers and regular updates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ambassador Badge					✓
Raise £500 become a Safe Keeper					✓

AMBASSADORS

Do you like networking, have contacts and ideas for Events to help with raising funds to buy the Kenton freehold? You do?

Become a Kenton Ambassador, if you raise over £500 you automatically become a Safe Keeper. It will be fun!

This is an historic opportunity, please do play your part in making history.



Thank you to all those who support our beautiful local theatre. Your donation is making a difference.

TAKE THE LIMELIGHT - Have you ever wanted to take centre stage? Well now you can.

For a donation of £10 you can get two square feet (one for each foot!) or £5 for one. You can choose your favourite spot whether on stage or in the wings. In true show business style we already have friends entering into the spirit and upstaging each other!



By selling all the squares we will raise over £5,000. So if you would like to join in the fun please contact Nansi Diamond 01491 575410 nansic.diamond@btinternet.com.

Supporting KENTON for KEEPS

We are delighted to announce celebrities are supporting our fundraising campaign.

30 May - **Joe Brown** will make a special appearance with his band in support of The Kenton. A fantastic opportunity for those who miss out on tickets for his December concerts or a special treat to see him again. **Tickets going fast - have you booked?**

5 June - **C'Mon Everybody** make a welcome return to the Kenton in aid of **Henley Midnight Matinee** who have chosen to support KENTON for KEEPS as their charity this year. So get your 50's and 60's dress out and get ready to party!

23-24 June - **Rodney Bewes** steps back onto the Kenton stage in his one-man show **Three Men in a Boat - The Final Tour** to support KENTON for KEEPS

Tickets for all shows are available from The Kenton Theatre Box Office 01491 575698

Thank you to everyone who is contributing towards our KENTON for KEEPS campaign.

NEWS ON THE MOVE - KEEP IN TOUCH

Life is getting faster these days, including planning your social life. If you would like to be kept up to date quickly, you can join: -

Our **E-shot mailing list**, receive bulletins and newsletters reminding you about forthcoming shows. Just visit Register Online on www.kentontheatre.co.uk



If you fancy a chat you can find us on **facebook**.



Or do you prefer to **Twitter**? We are there too.

FESTIVAL DIARY DATES - Henley is famous for its cultural festivals and this season The Kenton is a home to four of them. Block out your diary now!

Kenton Drama Festival 4 - 8 May

Festival of one act plays including original works and performances from Henley Players, HAODS, North Oxford Youth Theatre, The Young Theatre (at Beaconsfield) and Acorn Musical Theatre Company.

The Henley International Film Festival 25 - 29 May

Film festival showcasing the best in international feature and short documentary filmmaking to celebrate films that provoke debate, evoke emotions and inspire audiences.

Henley Fringe Trust 19 - 25 July

Fast becoming recognised as a preview to the Edinburgh Fringe with drama, comedy, stand-up, musicals and writing, this year's festival also features a new, interactive, musical theatre adaptation of the children's classic, *Wind in the Willows*.

Henley Literary Festival 29 September - 3 October

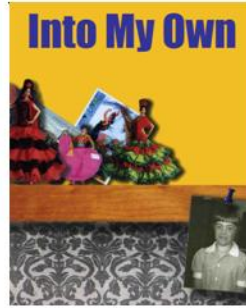
Now in its fourth year and going from strength to strength, this year's festival is extended to five days.

TWO NEW PLAYS FOR JUNE - Two original plays - each on their debut UK tour - stop off at The Kenton in June. Each is inspired by the complexities of human nature and the challenges and thrills they evoke.

Guaranteed to raise some smiles on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9 June is **The Essence of Love**, a new comedy by Philip Ayckbourn, son of Sir Alan Ayckbourn. Set in Marrakech, a mother and her daughter and a father and his son find themselves on adjacent hotel terraces. There is anything but love in the air for these four British holidaymakers until the gift of a magical elixir gets into the water and unlikely passions take root.

Described by Ayckbourn as observing "The farcical nature of infatuation and how a balance can be struck between extremes in love," it's a colourful, heart-warming comedy that one critic said had him, "Laughing all the way."

If you book for Tuesday evening, you'll also have the chance to speak to the cast and playwright/director Philip Ayckbourn at a post-show get together in our foyer. (And we've a limited availability special offer of three seats for £20 if you book by 15 May).



Later in the month, on Friday 25 June, during Learning Disability Week, is **Into My Own**, from leading Welsh company, Hijinx Theatre. Each year they create a play for adults with learning disabilities and their community, working on the premise that people with learning disabilities experience the same emotional needs as everyone else, but encounter more obstacles. *Into My Own* is about stepping into the unknown, finding a new life and celebrating the joy and discovery that independence brings.

Due to illness Anne's mother is no longer able to care for her and responsibility falls to Ken, Anne's brother. But his own family commitments prevent him from supporting her and Anne must face independence for the first time. Playing Anne is the very talented Sara (I've got Down's - so what?) Pickard in a performance that will inspire but may also bring a tear to your eye and a lump to your throat. While the story focuses on issues about someone with a learning disability, it has appeal for a far wider community, bringing gentle humour to this universal theme.

THREE TRUE GENTS - The familiar faces of three true gents each take to our stage this summer to entertain us in their own inimitable ways.

Brilliant raconteur and comic legend **Denis Norden CBE** - the instantly recognisable face of TV's *It'll Be Alright on the Night* and *Laughter File* - recalls his life and times in conversation with Samantha Norman on Friday 4 June in **An Audience with Denis Norden**.



A master of sharp observations and dry witticisms, Denis' life has been anything but dull with a career stretching back more than half a century to the golden age of radio and the pioneering years of television comedy. He and the late Frank Muir forged a formidable partnership to create a stable of hits including the long-running *Take It From Here*; the hugely popular *Whack-O!* starring Jimmy Edwards; and the famous radio sketch *Balham, Gateway to the South* for Peter Sellers. Denis will share his showbiz memories and you'll have the chance to ask questions too at this not to be missed evening.

Rodney Bewes returns to us on Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 June for two very special performances of his one-man rendition of Jerome K Jerome's **Three**



Men in a Boat. Special because they're in support of KENTON for KEEPS, but even more special because this is *Three Men in a Boat - The Final Tour*. Rodney is hanging up his skiff and this is the last chance to see his award winning show that debuted at The Kenton and was inspired by Rodney's love of boating on the Thames at Henley.



Dust off your pots and book early for a visit Sunday 19 September by the **Antiques Roadshow's Eric Knowles**. Eric will take the wraps off the mysterious world of antiques in a show called **Antique Antics** - a mixture of fascinating, often irreverent, anecdotal reminiscences. Plus you can meet Eric before his show and have your treasured pot or ceramic valued.

MUSICAL MUST SEES

Glorious Broadway meets fabulous West End in **A Night at the Musicals**, from Thursday 29 April to Saturday 1 May, starring multi-award winning 'man of many voices' Darren Shaw and the outstanding Dynamics. This show presents the very best numbers from the very best musicals with favourites from Phantom of the Opera, Oklahoma, Mamma Mia, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, West Side Story, Cats, Sunset Boulevard, Grease and Evita plus many more. Let yourself be carried away in a celebration of the finest musical theatre hits.

On Thursday 13 May, 70 years to the day that Churchill made his 'Blood, toil, tears and sweat' speech - his first as Prime Minister - **We'll Meet Again** remembers the stars that kept spirits up during the dark war years. Surely Britain's best matinee show, this wartime cavalcade celebrates the talents of Vera Lynn, Bing Crosby, Gracie Fields, George Formby, Tessie O'Shea and Max Miller. For those who remember the 40s, We'll Meet Again brings back memories of the stars that kept Britain smiling and for those who don't, the show is an authentic introduction to the swinging music and good clean comedy of the period.

FUN & FUND RAISING

A special screening of Woody Allen's romantic comedy **Vicky Cristina Barcelona** Tuesday 27 April will support KENTON for KEEPS and the Reading branch of Samaritans. Winner of the 2009 Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture (Comedy or Musical), the film stars Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem, Rebecca Hall and Penélope Cruz who took home the 2009 Academy Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role and the 2009 BAFTA for Best Supporting Actress for her outstanding performance.

For Kenton Friends tickets are just £6 each (£5 for students and senior citizens). Please come and have a great evening and support us and our local Samaritans too.



WELCOME

To Yvonne Pett-Ridge who has become a Kenton Friend gold member, thank you for your support

Put Saturday 5 June in your diaries to be sure not to miss this year's **Henley Midnight Matinee** charity performance supporting KENTON for KEEPS. The greatest musical stars of the 50s & 60s are brought to life in **C'Mon Everybody** - a spectacular, non-stop show starring Chris 'Fender' Black and voted No.1 Rock 'n' Roll Show by UK Rock magazine. Tap your toes to the biggest hits of legends like Eddie Cochran, Buddy Holly, Brenda Lee, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, Duane Eddy and Bill Haley. You'll feel like dancing in our aisles!



If you fancy more than dancing, there will be a champagne reception with a three-course dinner served by Philippe Brillant of Le Parisien prior to the show. Let's Party!

ACTING LOCAL - We're proud to host many local performing arts groups and welcome many of these friends back to our stage this summer. We hope you'll come and say hello to them too.



Bringing a touch of the Riviera to Henley in April, 16 to 18 & 22 to 24, is HAODS with one of the most popular stage musicals, Sandy Wilson's **The Boyfriend**. Then there's mayhem promised in May 20 to 22, with Behind You Production's riotous **St Trinian's**.

June is packed with local talent starting 2 June with **Into the Musicals** performed by students of the Read Dance & Theatre Company, then StageWorks' prestigious **Junior Star for a Night** 6 June - each giving youngsters the chance to show off their skills. Woodley Light Operatic Society presents the fabulous **Guys and Dolls** - with hits like Luck be a Lady, 15 to 19 June, with Mo's Saturday Stage School rounding off the month with a double header of **The Wedding Singer** 26 June & **Dracula Spectacular** 27 June.



SUPPORT US

WITH YOUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS

www.justgiving.com

BECOME A KENTON FRIEND

Contact Sandra Moon 01491 573887
Or visit our website www.kentontheatre.co.uk