

Welcome to the Winter 2022 edition of the WAOS Newsletter.

In this edition we look forward to *Young Frankenstein* in April.

We remember a past member of WAOS, who sadly passed away in November. A look back at the success of *The Flames of Injustice*, with a huge thank you to Angela Kilmartin and other BDC councillors for their donation to WAOS enabling us to produce that show. Plus the usual reminders on dates and WAOS committee details.

Anyone interested in costumes?

Anne Howe, our Wardrobe Manager for many years, is taking a well-deserved break. This means that we do not have a co-ordinator for the costumes of *Young Frankenstein*. This is NOT a sewing job but rather one of logistics, requiring someone to ensure that cast measurements are taken (we have volunteers skilled in taking such measurements), they are communicated to the costume hire company, hire fees and delivery/pick up dates agreed, you are available to take delivery of costumes at Witham Public Hall and arrange them in sets for trying on by cast members (usually the Friday before the Dress Rehearsal), can suggest appropriate accessories, collect and repack costumes at the end of the show, ensure pick up by costume hire company. We have volunteers for some of these jobs but no-one to take overall charge. To find out more, without obligation, email trevordrury@waos.org

Young Frankenstein is now fully cast and rehearsals are well underway.

Congratulations to all the successful auditionees of *Young Frankenstein*. As one of the readers for the auditions I was privileged to be able to watch and participate in them. The quality of auditions was very high and I was so impressed with how many people had learned their song(s) and dialogue. Not having seen the show I was quite surprised at just how funny (and raunchy!) the show is. Members will be pleased to know that I overcame my natural diffidence and shyness in order to provide Amy Pryce with an audition partner during the rather sexy hayride scene. It may or may not be a coincidence that the committee has agreed that the posters will display a PG warning that the show contains adult themes.

Anne Wilson Leaves the Stage

I am sad to report that Anne Wilson, a member of WAOS since 1996, passed away in November "quietly and painlessly with Jim and the girls beside her". This was the message that Jim passed on to me. Anne had been a member since 1996 when she joined for *Anything Goes*. She didn't do every show but still managed to perform in 16 WAOS shows including her last one, *Pirates of Penzance* in 2016. Anne was enthusiastic, uninhibited, had a zest for life and always fun. When she couldn't be in a show she would always try and support it in whatever way she could. She did get some lead roles, doing a fine job as Aunt Eller in *Oklahoma* in 2013 and Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance* in 2016. I last spoke to Anne at the WAOScars which may have been the last time that many members saw her. Although she seemed tired, she was still making jokes and being, just Anne. She will be sorely missed.



Anne Wilson as Ruth, *The Pirates of Penzance* 2016

The Flames of Injustice - It's a Wrap!

October 2022 saw the triumphant culmination of 4 years of preparation for our very own musical *The Flames of Injustice*. Reviews were universally positive and the audiences were impressed. Given that this was a completely unknown show with no frame of reference for anyone (I suggest that even the cast had no idea how successful *Flames* would be) all cast, crew, creatives and production team members can take pride in a job well done. We were fortunate that Sarah Osborne, the playwright, Franky Garland, the composer and Phil Toms, the orchestrator, were all present on the last night and could see for themselves how their show had been performed. They were not disappointed and neither were the four members of NODA that had accompanied them. They all encouraged WAOS to offer the show to other societies, given how powerful was the story and how beautiful was the music. To that end your committee has undertaken to create a dedicated website with video clips, music and photos, together with selected comments from reviewers and audience members alike in order to showcase *The Flames of Injustice* for other musical theatre groups looking to perform something new. It's easy to forget that the James Cooke story was repeated all around the south and east of England during the Swing Riots, as a consequence of which over 200 men were condemned to be hanged and 500 transported to Australia. The story of men and women protesting against their poor wages, the high price of bread and the threat to their work from industrial threshing machines was a harsh reality. If other groups did take up the rights to *Flames* we would charge royalties and generate an additional income stream. A video of the dress rehearsal and a documentary about the making of the show should be available by the Spring of 2023. Let me know if you would like a copy. There will be a charge for this (TBC) to cover the USB stick and production costs. Contact stewartadkins@waos.org

Huge thanks to Angela Kilmartin, former Mayor of Witham, and her fellow councillors of BDC for their generous donation of £1500 towards The Flames of Injustice.

This donation gave WAOS the financial wherewithal to invest in strong production values at a time when we were hugely concerned about costs. We hope that the show met the councillors' expectations and helped raise the profile of James Cooke's story and the part he played in one of Witham's most dramatic events.

Season's Greetings from the Chairman

Everybody associated with the society, be they members, friends, performers or volunteers should reflect on the valued contribution that they have made to what has been a momentous year. The determination and effort of all of you is the root of our continuing success. Three critically acclaimed shows, *Guys & Dolls* (WOW), *Betty Blue Eyes* and our very own product of perseverance, *The Flames Of Injustice*, delivered to very impressed audiences. We really couldn't have celebrated our centenary in a better way. The warmth and bonhomie which exists in our society is a wonderful thing. Rehearsals so far suggest that *Young Frankenstein* is going to be a lot of fun to do, and another success. As the festive season descends upon us, I wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and thank you all for the support that you willingly give.

Members bring Christmas cheer to residents of Podsbrook House

14 members answered the call from Podsbrook House warden, Diana Hogg, and sang Christmas carols on Thursday, Dec 15th. This has become something of a tradition with one resident, formerly the warden, insisting that WAOS had been singing carols and even providing other singing entertainment at Podsbrook for over 40 years. We were greeted warmly, offered mince pies and mulled wine and enjoyed 45-60 minutes of Podsbrook hospitality. Many thanks to all participants. We made a good sound overall, despite the absence of piano accompaniment, and the residents joined in. When asked if we could come again next year we were told " You can come again next week if you like, we've enjoyed it so much."



WAOS Committee

President	Stewart Adkins
Chairman	Trevor Drury
Treasurer	Anita Goold
Secretary	Matt Waldie
Business Manager	Trevor Drury
Production Manager	Paul Goddard
Social Secretary	Emma Loring
Membership Secretary	Liz Chapman
Stage Manager	Ben Sawyer
Committee Member	Annette Maguire

General Enquires – secretary@WAOS.org
WAOS Web site - WWW.WAOS.ORG

Dates for your diary

Shows

Young Frankenstein	April 24 - 29, 2023
Crazy for You	October 23 - 28, 2023
Calendar Girls	April 22 -2, 2024

For information about our shows, go to
<http://www.waos.org/news/forthcoming-shows/>

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the WAOS Committee.