

Welcome to the Spring edition of WAOS newsletter and we hope you are keeping well under the lockdown. Well, what a few months it's been since our January newsletter. Like everyone else WAOS' world has changed dramatically; we've postponed **Annie Get Your Gun** to April 2021 and keep our fingers crossed we can perform the show then. All our rehearsals and bookings stopped just ahead of the official lockdown; we've refunded all the ticket sales; re-scheduled all our costumes, props, lighting, set and orchestra – and we've re-cycled all the flyers and posters that were just about to go out. However, we are still preparing and planning for a great series of shows for as soon as we start to get to the 'New Normal' – and we've had some good news as well, so read on.....

### **Annie Get Your Gun – now Apr 19-24 2021**

Well, we almost got there – the show was set, and we had arranged all the props, set, costumes, sound, lighting etc etc. We took the decision to postpone just ahead of the lockdown as we realised it wasn't going to be feasible to stage in April. However, the Director and MD have agreed to stay on for the April 2021 slot and we are asking all cast for their availability – assuming the Government guidelines nearer the time allow us to re-start rehearsals by January latest and stage the show at the end of April 2021. Keep an eye on the website for more information as it develops.

<http://www.waos.org/>

### **2021 shows**

We had planned to be putting on **“Made in Dagenham”** in October 2020 but this has been pushed back to October 2021. To follow that we have booked **“Betty Blue Eyes”** for April 2022. As soon as we can be definite, we'll let you know. For information about these shows, go to <http://www.waos.org/news/forthcoming-shows/>

### **AGM and Barn Dance**

Both events also fell foul of the lockdown but the AGM will now be held online on **Monday June 15** at 19.30. You can participate using the Zoom link below. You do not need a Zoom account - just internet access - and it is free for you to participate. AGM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85043458288>

### **Sister Act – Best show yet?**

In our last newsletter we reported that Sister Act had received the NODA nomination for Best Show. We are thrilled to report that we won both Best Show and Best Production! Not only that, WOW were also nominated in the junior category for Thoroughly Modern Millie – and also won Best Show! Congratulations to the Directors, Musical Directors, Cast, Crew and everyone involved. Let's hope we can stage some more award-winning shows soon!

For all the Sister Act reviews and show information, see the WAOS page at

<http://www.waos.org/past-shows/2019--sister-act/>

### **Staying in Touch**

We know that members of amdrams across the UK are frustrated by the lockdown and their inability to pursue their hobby each week. But apart from a musical version of Far from the Madding Crowd, or One Man and His Dog, it is difficult to envisage how we maintain social distancing and still rehearse safely and credibly. Until we are given the all-clear and our members feel safe to return to weekly rehearsals we just have to make do. WAOS is offering ad hoc quizzes, photo montages from past shows and suggested links to online professional drama and musical theatre events. We even attach a word search to this newsletter. If you have other suggestions (polite only, please!) to keep our members engaged and in touch please do send them to us. I have discovered a whole world of podcasts, online learning, a family book club and Spanish lessons but they are not to everyone's taste. What are you doing to keep busy?

## Witham Public Hall

### Keep our space alive

Witham Public Hall, our rehearsal space most Wednesdays and our performing space during show weeks, has lost approximately 80% of its monthly revenue (it still has the Citizens Advice Bureau as a tenant and the National Blood Transfusion Service as regular hirers) and faces a difficult future. As a theatre it has had to close its doors to all other hirers and is awaiting guidance on whether small gatherings, while maintaining social distancing, one way traffic and one-in-one-out use of the toilets, can be accommodated. In the meantime, some employees have been furloughed, monies for events in the next few months have been refunded and we do our best to manage costs. Thankfully, the trustees had insisted that reserves be backed up with cash in the bank. Additionally, the trust received a £25,000 grants that small businesses were eligible for. Between these two sums and the successful Crowdfunding appeal, which generated over £3000, the Trust has perhaps 12 months before things start to look grim. So when events do restart, please think about coming along and showing your support.

### Will WAOS survive?

WAOS is a charity run by volunteer trustees and as well as providing the management and oversight to put on shows, the Trustees are responsible for the diligent running of the society.

Given the production values we hold dear, on an average year we plan to ensure that the ticket sales, fees, fund-raising and advertising bring in sufficient income to ensure we break-even. We have a small bank reserve as provision against a poor selling show; to provide bursarys and provide for unforeseen circumstances; it wasn't so long ago that we had a very poor year when we lost several thousand pounds after 2 shows sold much less than anticipated; so we have been cautious and diligent about funding.

So we expect to be able to continue to put on shows as and when the lockdown allows – and we are hoping that should be April 2021. Having said that, we rely on key suppliers such as Sound, Lighting, Staging and Costumiers many of whom whose businesses have been severely affected – not least Witham Public Hall and Spring Lodge Community Centre. We aren't in a position to directly financially help, but we hope we can confirm bookings soon to enable them to begin generating income soon.

We'll be posting updates on the WAOS web-site at <http://www.waos.org/> and more details in the News and forthcoming shows section at <http://www.waos.org/news/>

#### WAOS Committee

President	Keith Radley
Chairman	Stewart Adkins
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](mailto:secretary@WAOS.org)

#### Dates for your diary

AGM (online via Zoom) June 15: 19:30.  
AGM link : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85043458288>

Guys & Dolls (WOW!)	February	2021
Annie Get Your Gun	April 19-24	2021
Made in Dagenham	October 25-30	2021

Betty Blue Eyes	April	2022
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Tech Workshop (WPH)	Date to be confirmed	
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***Stay alert; Control the Virus; Save Lives***

***Stay Safe and best wishes from The WAOS Committee.***