



Battle Light Opera Group - Affiliated to NODA

The Newsletter for Blog Members - Newsletter Edition 1 - Autumn 2018

Hello all our lovely members and welcome to the first issue of the BLOG newsletter.

The aim of the newsletter is to keep our members informed of the status of BLOG, with updates on the current show rehearsals, help that is needed, props required, information about the next shows planned, social activities and ticket sales updates. In this edition of the newsletter, we cover the following:-

- * **Chairman's Notes** - An introduction from the Chairman.
- * **Member's News** - A catch up of what our members have been up to, any achievements they are proud.
- * **Social Events** - Find out what BLOG have in mind for more social events so that you can plan your diaries!
- * **The Merry Widow** - A little about our Director and Musical Director, a synopsis of the Operetta.
- * **Behind the Scenes** - The work that happens behind the scenes.
- * **Review of Made in Dagenham** - A bit of information regarding the fun show put on at the Stables
- * **Your Committee Members** - Get to know us, we don't bite (well, not too much, maybe just a nibble)
- * **Charities** - Get up to speed on the charities we have supported.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE - By Bob Murray

A Note From Your Chairman

When I took over as Chairman of the society in February, my first challenge to the new committee was to identify the key areas where we felt we should focus our efforts to ensure BLOG continued to be an enjoyable and inclusive society.

The first point was to improve communication to our members and friends, and this newsletter is an important step in keeping you up to date with the goings-on of the society and in helping to share the thoughts of the committee. With this more open approach we hope you will feel able to talk to any of us about your ideas, concerns and general opinion of how the society is run.

The second point that came up was to value and respect our members (old and new) and ensure we give due consideration to their needs when we select and rehearse shows. As a seasoned Director of at least 15 musicals, I know that it can be exhausting working with a chorus and it is all too easy to tell them just to stand in a corner and look pretty (which they usually don't) and sing nicely (which they usually do). But I also know that if you get a chorus energized and enthusiastic about a show then that energy will be the difference between a good show and a great show – audiences will come away knowing that they had a good time, but not really being able to put their finger on why.

In order to support both of these requirements I have been quite open over the past few months about which shows we are considering and why, and I am delighted to announce (to anyone that didn't already know) that we have secured the rights for *The Producers* in May 2019 and *Fiddler on the Roof* in November 2019.

Admittedly, the limitation of *The Producers* is that it only has 1 named female part (Ulla Inga Hansen Benson Yonsen Tallen-Hallen Svaden Svanson) but there is plenty for the chorus to do and some wonderful cameos for dancing girls and little old ladies, and indeed dancing little old ladies (Zimmer frames and all!)

Interestingly, although some people claim the subject matter of *Fiddler* is somewhat depressing (the persecution of the Jews in pre-revolutionary Russia), I have to say it is probably one of the best shows for cast camaraderie that I have ever been involved in (I have done it 3 times and it has yet to disappoint).

Looking even further afield, we are thinking that May 2020 will be a more modern musical which will likely appeal to our younger members and then November 2020 will be something musically challenging (either an Operetta, G&S or possibly a Sondheim). Any recommendations that fit this brief would be greatly appreciated.

So in summary, please be assured that as a committee we are working hard to give our members the best opportunities that we can. I know we can't please everyone all of the time but I hope you can see that we are trying to consider the needs of everyone in our decision making – if we are getting that wrong, then please, please shout!

MEMBER'S NEWS - By Carolyn Murray

What a mixture of happy and sad memories that have been made this year.

We have such a rich collection of members, all of whom seem to keep busy in their lives and have their own goals to achieve. Here are a few highlights that have happened this year, for future newsletters, please feel free to email:- mousiemurray@aol.com with any articles etc. that you wish to inform our members of so that we can include it in the next newsletter.



Molly Armstrong has become a Life Member of BLOG. She has shown her great commitment over the years and deserves the Life Member award. She is currently working away in the Merry Widow rehearsals and keeping us all in check!

Along with Molly becoming a Life Member of BLOG, Terry Carter also became a Life Member. Blog sent him a birthday card "You go Tuppence"!



Ali Adams performed in a huge national Burlesque event and came 3rd! So well done Ali, go shake those feathers! Ali has been responsible for creating amazing choreography for some of our past shows and is definitely a talented young lady. We are looking forward to her dance moves when she choreographs the Producers.



On a very sad note, most of you will know that the society lost Hossein Rafati to cancer this year. His funeral was well attended by members of BLOG and a lot of reflection was made about how much fun and joy he contributed to our society.

We all miss him and will always have fond memories of him and his time spent at rehearsals and on stage.

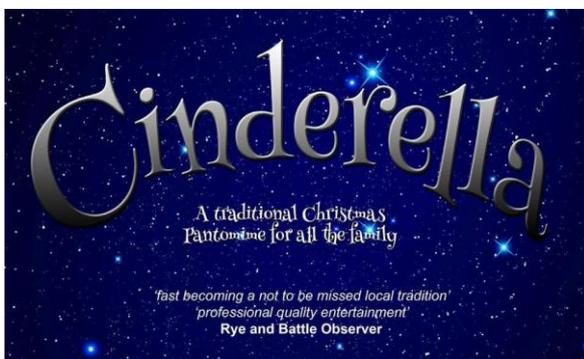


Other shows, other groups: -

"Danny Champion of the World" - Stables Theatre 19th - 29th December, featuring BLOG members Lee Lyons, Jo Flay and Alfie Saunters



"Cinderella" - Battle Memorial Hall 22nd & 23rd December 2pm and 6pm, featuring BLOG member Rob Dyer as an ugly sister (lots of make-up obviously!).



Apologies if any events are missed, but as this is our first newsletter, please contact the Committee for details that can be entered into the next issue of the BLOG Newsletter.

SOCIAL EVENTS - By Adrian Collins

We are holding a DVD night on 20th November (Tuesday). The venue is to be confirmed, so keep your eyes out on facebook for an update. It is a fun night to catch up with those in the cast and backstage, front of house etc. as well as watching the Merry Widow together.

The BLOG social Christmas Drinks will be held at the Chequers in Battle on the 20th December from 7.30pm. This should be a great way to celebrate another year with your fellow thespians!

Through next year we will be planning more social events. Please feel free to contact a member of the Committee to submit any suggestions so that it can be put forward for discussion. We already have a wealth of ideas, but the more the merrier!

THE MERRY WIDOW - By Carolyn Murray

As most of the members are aware, the current show in full rehearsals, is the Operetta, The Merry Widow. The Merry Widow is an operetta by the Austro-Hungarian composer, Franz Lehár.

But what is an operetta? - Operas, musicals, operettas — these musical forms all sit somewhere on the same spectrum of entertainment. They are stories, set to music, performed on stage. You can think of 'operetta', as the name implies, like a 'little opera'. Operettas are often short, with frivolous stories and light music. Operettas don't pretend at real life, they don't present tragedies. They are created for diversion and to amuse and entertain.

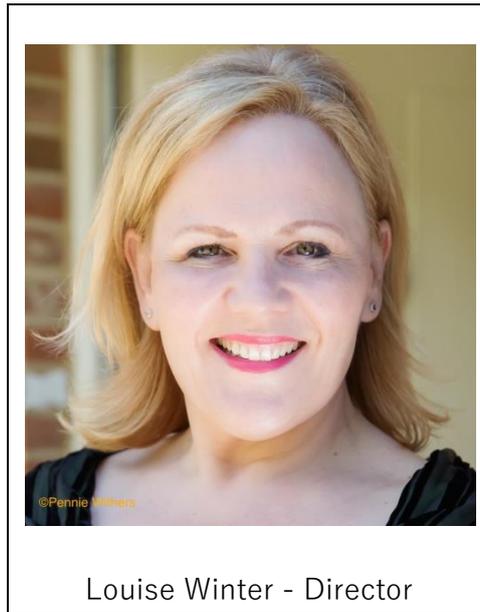


Franz Lehár (30/04/1870 – 24/10/1948)

Franz Lehár is mainly known for his operettas, of which the most successful and best known is The Merry Widow. The Merry Widow is based on the story concerning a rich widow, and her countrymen's attempt to keep her money in the principality by finding her the right husband.

The operetta has enjoyed extraordinary international success since its 1905 premiere in Vienna and continues to be frequently revived and recorded. Film and other adaptations have also been made. Well-known music from the score includes the "Vilja Song", "Da geh' ich zu Maxim" ("You'll Find Me at Maxim's"), and the "Merry Widow Waltz".

Find out more about our fantastic Director - Louise Winter



Louise Winter studied at the Royal Northern College of Music. She made her début in 1982 with Glyndebourne Touring Opera as Dorabella *Così fan tutte* and subsequently sang Tisbe *La Cenerentola*, Zerlina *Don Giovanni*, and Rosina *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for the company. Roles for Glyndebourne Festival Opera have included Sesto *La clemenza di Tito*, Edwige *Rodelinda*, Varvara *Katya Kabanova*, Pauline *Queen of Spades* and Olga *Eugene Onegin*, which she sang with the Royal Opera House and Canadian Opera Company.

Her roles for English National Opera include the title role *Carmen* and Marguerite *La Damnation de Faust*. For Frankfurt Opera she has sung Brangäne *Tristan und Isolde*, Venus *Tannhäuser*, Preziosilla *La Forza del Destino* and Lady Macbeth in Ernst Bloch's *Macbeth* for Frankfurt Opera. She has performed with many of the world's leading orchestras and conductors, including the CBSO with Sir Simon Rattle, the BBC Symphony Orchestra with Sir Andrew Davis, the Hallé Orchestra with Mark Elder, and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Sir Charles Mackerras.

Her most recent roles include Gerturde in Brett Dean's *Hamlet* (Glyndebourne on Tour), Marcellina (Royal Opera House), Madame Larina *Eugene Onegin* (Garsington Opera), and Anaide in Leoncavallo's *Zazà* (Opera Holland Park). 2018 Louise sang in the world premiere of David Sawer's *The Skating Rink* (Garsington) and future projects include the Governess *Queen of Spades* (Royal Opera House), Maya in a new opera *Agreed* for Glyndebourne and Marcellina for the Grange Festival.

Other productions have been co directing Britten's *Noyes Fludd* in Hastings, *Oliver* for Crowhurst drama group and opera scenes at the Royal Northern College of Music.

Find out more about our very talented Musical Director - Andrew J Daniels



Andrew is a graduate of the London College of Music where he studied piano with Timothy Barrett and singing with Janice Chapman. His first role in the area was as Lun Tha in *The King and I* with BLODS in Bexhill many years ago, before appearing in numerous Gilbert and Sullivan, opera and music theatre productions around the region. After a number of years playing the piano for Phoenix Theatre he moved onstage in a number of lead roles, culminating in the Emcee in *Cabaret*. On the death of Phoenix Theatre's wonderful music director Joyce Marks he took up her baton in shows such as *Sweeney Todd*, *Frankenstein*, *The Butcher's Wife*, *Chess* and the off-Broadway premiere of *Jekyll and Hyde*. For BLOG Andrew has previously music directed *Patience* and *The Mikado*.

As a member of the world-renowned Bach Choir Andrew has a busy concert schedule in the UK and abroad. Previous appearances have included the Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance, the Queen's Diamond Anniversary Concert from Buckingham Palace, The BBC Proms, concerts in China, Hong Kong France and the Netherlands and numerous recordings. He is a frequent visitor to Abbey Road Studios where he has recorded backing vocals for films such as *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, *Jack the Giant Killer*, *Prometheus*, the 2016 John Lewis advert and the upcoming Cricket World Cup song with Freddie Flintoff. Upcoming engagements include a concert tour of the USA.

The Merry Widow will be Andrew's final local appearance as after thirty years living in Hastings he will be moving away soon. He is proud that his swan-song will be as part of a wonderful production in the company of such incredible friends and colleagues.

Find out more about our dynamic Choreographer - Anna Hale



Anna recently graduated from the University of York, where she simultaneously studied Linguistics and partook in a wide range of theatrical activities.

It was during her time at University where Anna found her love for stage choreography, and has since choreographed productions of shows such as Anything Goes, Chicago, Grease, Footloose, Little Shop of Horrors, The Addams Family and Company.

Joining BLOG for their production of The Merry Widow has been a joy so far, and Anna is very excited for Battle to witness the moves being performed by the fantastic cast!

The Merry Widow:- synopsis



ACT I -

In Paris, Baron Mirko Zeta, is giving a ball at the embassy.

His home country is nearly bankrupt and he hopes that their Parisian guests will help them raise the money they need. He's pleased when he sees his young wife, Valencienne, flirting with Camille de Rosillon, a young Frenchman, assuming she's trying to win French support for Pontevedro. In fact, Camille has declared his love for Valencienne and writes "I love you" on her fan.

Zeta eagerly awaits the arrival of the guest of honor, Hanna Glawari, a wealthy Pontevedrian widow. He plans to get Danilo Danilovitch, a womanizing aristocrat and the embassy secretary, to marry her so that her millions will stay in Pontevedro. Hanna arrives and is showered with compliments by the Parisian men. Valencienne realizes she has lost her fan with Camille's incriminating message and rushes out to look for it. Finally Danilo arrives, fresh from a night of partying at Maxim's. He and Hanna talk, revealing that they were once in love, but that Hanna was considered too far beneath Danilo's status for him to marry her. He tells her he's not interested in marriage and will never say "I love you."

Meanwhile, Zeta's chief of staff, Kromow, finds Valencienne's fan and thinks it belongs to his wife, Olga. Zeta, wanting to spare Olga the scandal, convinces him it is Valencienne's. He then meets with Danilo and orders him to marry Hanna for the good of Pontevedro. Danilo tells him he will keep all the Parisian men away from her, but will not marry her. When the ladies choice dance is announced, Hanna selects Danilo, and after some flirtatious bantering the two finally dance.



ACT II

The following day, Hanna hosts a party at her villa. Danilo arrives late, and Zeta commands him to return to his mission of keeping the Parisian men from Hanna—particularly Camille. Danilo's assistant, Njegus, reveals that Camille is already in love with a mystery woman. Zeta wants to know who she is in order to marry her off to Camille, leaving Hanna free for a Pontevedrian suitor. He believes the fan is the key to her identity and asks Danilo to find its owner. When Hanna comes across the fan and sees its inscription, she assumes it is a gift to her from Danilo, but he still won't say "I love you" and she will not accept him until he does. Their dance is interrupted by Zeta, who is still trying to learn the identity of Camille's secret lover. The men agree to meet in the pavilion to discuss the matter. Camille and

Valencienne finally find the missing fan, and this time Valencienne writes “I am a respectable wife” on it. Observed by Njegus, they disappear into the pavilion.

When Zeta arrives to meet Danilo, Njegus prevents him from entering the pavilion to protect Valencienne’s secret and instead sneaks Hanna in to take her place. Hanna emerges with Camille, announcing their engagement. A furious Danilo departs for Maxim’s, which Hanna takes as proof of his love.



ACT III

Arriving at Maxim’s in search of Danilo, Camille and Valencienne sneak off to one of the private rooms. Zeta and the other Pontevedrians appear, and the grisettes—among them a dressed-up Valencienne—entertain the crowd.

Eventually both Danilo and Hanna arrive. He forbids her to marry Camille. When she explains that she was merely safeguarding another woman’s reputation, he is delighted but still won’t declare his love. As the guests reassemble, Danilo announces that Hanna will not marry Camille, but he will not reveal the identity of Camille’s secret lover.

Njegus produces the missing fan, which he found in the pavilion. Zeta finally recognizes it as his wife’s, declares himself divorced, and proposes to Hanna—who informs him that, according to her late husband’s will, she will lose her fortune if she remarries.

At this, the other men lose interest in Hanna, except Danilo, who finally declares his love and asks Hanna to marry him. She accepts and amends her account of the will: upon remarrying her fortune will pass to her new husband. Valencienne returns and asks Zeta to read the other side of her fan—she is a respectable wife. With the couples united, the men are left to wonder about the mystery of women.

BEHIND THE SCENES - By Brian Grainger

So it is goodbye to 1968 Dagenham and hello to 19th century Paris.



No sooner have we dismantled the set of “Made in Dagenham” and either returned props to their owners, or filled our workshop and barn with materials, than we are starting to design and prepare our version of a Parisian Embassy Salon.



Fortunately Louise Winter, our director, has a clear idea of what she wants built. So it is now about finding what old set parts we can reuse, what new materials we will need and, most importantly, some volunteers who can saw in straight lines, and work an electric drill.



A piece of luck. Molly Armstrong has been contacted by a friend who has a garage in Bexhill full of old sets and materials. “ Would BLOG be interested?”. You bet!

This resulted in Steve (who has large black van) and I to bring back lots of useful articles for Merry Widow and for future shows. If you have spare 8 x 4 sheets of ply or hardboard, or useful materials spare please let us know.



Back to Merry Widow. Although we have about 6 weeks to prepare the set and props, we have very little time to build it before dress and technical rehearsal. The Battle Festival is using the Hall during much of October. We will pre build some scenery, but Sunday 4th November will be a busy day as we build the set, in time for a full rehearsal in the afternoon . If you are free that morning we would welcome any help we can get.

Finally, I would like to thank my set building colleagues David Horne and Steve Chilvers for all their help. If you would like to be part of the team either building sets or helping backstage during shows just contact a committee member or call me on 07557 384952.



More from backs stag next time but must dash, off to meet Louise and our expert set painter Hannah.



BEHIND THE WARDROBE - By Libby Montagu-Grainger

The Wardrobe Co-ordinator

Costumes from our last BLOG production have been collected, washed, ironed, and stored away. Hired costumes have been returned. Now Libby, our wardrobe Co-ordinator, is ready for the next show.



The Wardrobe Co-ordinator's work begins once the cast has been selected. Measurements are taken immediately and Libby begins her costume history research for our new production of 'The Merry Widow'. This involves visiting websites and museums, making sketches and noting fashionable and colours of the fabrics of the period.



BLOG has a variety of costumes in their wardrobe. Some old, some vintage and others donated or collected from charity shops. Where possible, we use these and alter them to make beautiful period dresses, outfits and costumes. This involves much work and time: adapting paper patterns, cutting, reshaping, sewing, adding or removing sleeves and lace and ribbon. Of course, many costumes can not be made, especially in Light Operas such as 'The Merry Widow'. Therefore, the Co-ordinator and her team, need to contact and visit Costumiers, searching for the exact uniform, hat, suit, or dance costume required and, obviously, hire them at a reasonable cost. Oh yes... we have a budget to stick to as well. Did we mention that?



Libby, as an active member of the committee and on stage, knows how important and essential it is for every cast member, whether principal or chorus, to feel comfortable and special in their costume.

If you feel you could help Libby in any small way -

Washing or ironing costumes.

Taking measurements.

Sewing, in any capacity.

Collecting and returning hired costumes.

Dressing actors during show week.

Please contact us.

Libby will be most appreciative and, with all members of BLOG, give you a most warm welcome to our society.

OUR LAST SHOW - BLOG ON TOUR - By Rob Dyer

Doing a production twice is always a risky undertaking for any society, but after checking cast availability BLOG decided to take the plunge after the offer of a slot in August at the Stables to perform *Made in Dagenham* again was too good an opportunity to miss. We knew it was going to be tricky to manage as the acoustics were entirely different, but after numerous meetings between artistic and technical teams from both societies – liaised by ex-Stables committee member Jo Flay - a plan was worked out to make it feasible without the need for the sound equipment necessary for Battle Memorial Hall. There had to be extra rehearsal time as new cast were selected to replace those that could not make the Stables run, and I'm sure they would all agree it was a close call to fit in enough time to get everyone ready. Special credit must go to Vanessa Trowell, who played the leading role of Rita in both productions - leading confidently throughout, knowing everyone's lines and cues and remaining at the heart of the production. Thanks also to the great effort of the production team – particularly Hollie who had to re-set the choreography to fit the new layout and cast - with just hours to spare; still on stage at 6pm on opening night to finalise some important moves.

BLOG's first outing from the Memorial Hall proved an outstanding success with every performance sold out; a rare occurrence for any touring production. We were very lucky to have such a dedicated and versatile cast to carry this production off, which was seen by a total of around 1000 people.

The driving force behind this Stables Production was our ex-Chair Lee Lyons who put in many hours ensuring its success and overcoming many issues, thanks Lee! Thank you also to everyone who worked on *Made in Dagenham* from its inception in December last year until its fantastic conclusion in August. A lot of the Stables audiences were actually those that came back for second helpings after seeing it in Battle, although this wonderful musical has also now reached out to many potential new members and audiences that may have not been so aware of the great productions that BLOG do.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS - By Carolyn Murray

The Committee members thought you may like to know a little about us:

Debbie Scarboro - Membership Secretary

I had no previous drama experience (other than working in the film industry for 10 years) but always wanted to join a society. So, when I moved to Battle five years ago from South Africa, it seemed the time to finally get involved. I thoroughly enjoy all aspects of being a member of Blog, from running the bar to taking part in shows, to joining the committee and now, taking on the role of Secretary. My membership is a wonderful aside to a full on family life with two gorgeous daughters and a busy photographer husband. Shows include: Sweet Charity, Pirates of Penzance, Music Man and Made In Dagenham.

Sally Thorn - Treasurer

I decided to join BLOG after a chance meeting with Keren and Lee Lyons at their bookshop! I wanted to be involved in backstage help, leading to what I was formally known as - 'Backstage Sally'. Everyone kept on saying to me that it won't be too long till I'm treading the boards myself, and they were right. Seeing the fun all of you have up there I decided to give it a go! Having never done amateur theatre before I was terrified, and now 2 shows down (Pirates of Penzance and Made in Dagenham), it's clear that BLOG is such a unique group, you all being such a lovely bunch and welcoming, made it so much easier!!

Adrian Collins - Committee Member

I became a member of BLOG when encouraged to join the chorus of Oklahoma with the assurance that I could 'stand at the back'. Needless to say, once I had felt the warmth of the limelight and danced in a glitter-spangled cowboy hat, I was hooked. More than 20 shows later, I still look forward with excitement to the next production.

Brian Grainger - Committee Member

Before joining BLOG, I had misspent several years entertaining the people of Hurst Green as part of Comedy Capers. Their annual pantomime was the highlight of the village's social calendar. Among their more memorable shows were the world premieres of "Cinderella Rockafella" and "Panto at the OK Coral". Recordings still exist on YouTube but are best not viewed by the faint hearted. In fact, following my appearance as one of the Village people singing YMCA, I was told it was best he pursue my am-dram career back stage. So, when I joined BLOG in 2012 I had worked as Stage Manager or ASM, built sets and tried to make myself useful backstage for most of the subsequent shows. I am always looking for help to design, build, paint and maintain sets, and assist backstage during shows. All volunteers welcome.

Charlotte Collins - Committee Member

I am a local vet who lives, works & enjoys life in Battle. I've come to BLOG from a background of classical singing- at school , university chapel choirs, local groups. My first steps on a stage were with the ensemble for Die Fledermaus in the Memorial Hall about 10 years ago. From waltzes to Dagenham workshops, each show is very different- I guess that's why I still find it such fun.

Libby Montagu Grainger - Committee Member

I was introduced to amateur musical theatre during 1985 when I moved from Wales to Brighton and joined Lewes Operatic Society and Southwick Opera. I have played various roles including Hebe (HMS Pinafore), Victoria (Gondoliers) and Mad Margaret (Ruddigore).

I joined BLOG in 2012 for Half a Sixpence and later was delighted to play the part as Ruth in Pirates of Penzance. Being very impressed with the warmth and friendliness of BLOG Society, I have remained not only an active member but also Costume Designer and Wardrobe Co-ordinator. I am proud to be part of the enthusiastic and dedicated Committee.

Rob Dyer - Committee Member

I was involved in local theatre for many years before work travels required me to move away for a break of around 10 years. The first BLOG production I saw after moving to Battle was "Anything Goes" and my young children loved it so much we saw it THREE times! I finally had time to join BLOG in 2012 when I played "Man in Chair" in "Drowsy Chaperone" and loved it so much I decided to stay! Being on committee for me is good fun but generally involves having to put in a lot of work at often the most inconvenient times during the weeks leading up to the production. It's completely worth it afterwards though and my favourite time is watching everyone enjoying themselves during the Oscars and the new friendships made.

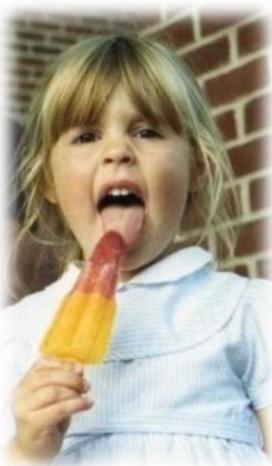
Carolyn Murray - Committee Member

I joined the local Drama Group in Edenbridge (Forge Singers) 15 years ago. Playing parts as Nancy in Oliver, Hava in Fiddler on the Roof, and bit parts, I realised how much I loved to perform. I joined the local Drama Group in Southborough (LAMPS), and went on to perform in shows such as Beauty & the Beast (Babbette), The Boyfriend (Hortense), Buggy Malone (Gangster), Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (Ruth), directed the Wizard of Oz, assistant directed Fiddler on the Roof & Music Man. Blog have been a very welcoming group and I do try to get involved in the background, i.e. props, the bar, etc. I live with husband Bob in Burwash Common and you can find me in the workshop, busy running my spoon jewellery business.

Can you match who is who?

Who is who:- Rob, Debbie, Libby, Carolyn, Brian, Charlotte, Adrian, Sally, Bob

(Answers will be given in the next newsletter)



CHARITIES - By Debbie Scarboro

Blog's Charitable Side!

Every show Blog stages, gives a perfect opportunity to raise well deserved funds for local charities. It has always been the intention to support a charity that someone in the cast has a connection with.

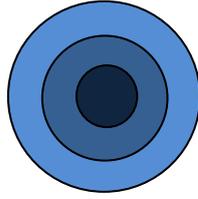
In recent years, we have raised money for St Michael's Hospice, at our summer concert, NDCS (National Deaf Children's Society) during South Pacific, The Motor Neurone Disease during The Mikado, SCOPE (Cerebral Palsy charity) during Sweet Charity, WaterWings (disabled children's swimming club) during Pirates of Penzance, and, most recently, with Made In Dagenham, we supported Get Set Hastings. They are a local arm of a charity called "Possibility People" based in Brighton, that help disabled people in to work.



Made in Dagenham - Charity Cheque handover earlier this year

For The Merry Widow, director Louise Winter would like to highlight a charity supporting people suffering with mental health issues. Our local charity in Battle is called "Out Of The Blue" so our cast will be shaking those buckets and asking our lovely audiences for donations to an incredibly worthwhile cause.

Out Of The Blue



Out Of The Blue is a fundraising body established in memory of Will Beckett who took his own life at Beachy Head in January 2013, at the age of 42. This tragedy came as an incredible shock to our family and friends – it came simply ‘Out Of The Blue’.

In the immediate aftermath of Will’s death, our family was supported, guided and inspired by three charities – Winston’s Wish, Dragonflies and The Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team. Out Of The Blue raises money to support these charities so they can help others like us.

Winston’s Wish provided invaluable advice in the first few days after Will’s death on how to explain the death to our young. Their specific knowledge of dealing with suicide and other violent deaths has been incredibly important for us.

Dragonflies, our local child bereavement charity, have shown great support to our family. Tom and Joe have attended support group sessions and an activity weekend alongside other bereaved children.

The third charity we support is the Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team. Not only did they support a group of us when our search for Will ended at Beachy Head on that January day, but the work they do is truly humbling when it comes to human duty. We have witnessed first hand the work they do to encourage desperate and broken individuals not to end their lives. The service is staffed by volunteers and relies on donations to help them provide the service they do. Helping to prevent further suicides at Beachy Head would be a hugely positive legacy of Will’s death.

We have recently added CALM - The Campaign Against Living Miserably, is a registered charity, which exists to prevent male suicide in the UK. In 2013, male suicide accounted for 78% of all suicides and it is the single biggest cause of death in men aged 20-45. CALM seek to prevent male suicide by offering support to men in the UK, of any age, who are down or in crisis via their helpline website.

In aid of



Charity No 1098885



Charity No 208446



Charity No 1061359



Charity No 1110621

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/OutOfTheBlue>



Outofthebluefundraising