

The Chorus Line

The Newsletter of The Company of Four

July 2022

Welcome from the Chairperson:

Welcome to July's newsletter and boy have I got a lot to talk about! Firstly, it was great to be back on stage with *Thank You Very Much*, such fun was had by all. I want to express my complete gratitude for all that were involved in getting the show up and running, everyone's contributions are so appreciated. My thanks also to those of you who supported us as audience members, without you there would be no show. We have many exciting celebrations coming up through July so I can't wait to see you all on those occasions. The auditions for the next show are also just around the corner, spread the word and come along.

Enjoy the summer people and I'll see you when I see you.

Lily

Welcome from the Editor:

Hi everyone. Only a little note from me this time, as I waffle on a little further in the Newsletter! We have some exciting things coming up this month, with the BBQ, Camping Trip, and auditions for our next production *Goodnight Mister Tom*, all the details are below. Please remember, if you wish to be involved with the NL in anyway, please do get in touch, with that said, enjoy the July's offerings!

Oliver

I used to be a personal trainer. Then I gave my too weak notice.

Friends of The Company of Four:

Congratulations everyone for excellent performances of 'Thank You Very Much' just a few days ago. Although there were quite a number of seats unsold, the audiences that were in the theatre were immediately captivated with the story, the acting, the dancing, the singing, etc., and were eager to acknowledge and applaud the entertainment and enthusiasm from all the cast. At Front of House, many customers were keen to express their pleasure to be at the Riverside theatre again at a Company of Four show and there were numerous enquiries regarding booking seats for the autumn show *Goodnight Mister Tom*, so have a rest period and get back to rehearsals because your public awaits you.

As happens at every performance of Cof4 shows, Penny organizes fund raising raffles and this time, she amassed an incredible profit of £512.00. This amount was made possible because virtually all prizes were donated. (Thank you Penny & Vernon for all you help with the Front of House 😊-Ed)

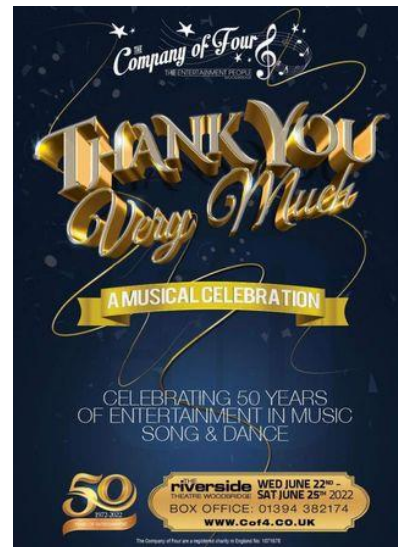
For any friends or relations interested in joining 'The Friends'; please contact us by phoning 01394 384806 or 07881790004 - Vernon and Penny.

Vernon

Thank You Very Much:

Well, what can I say? What a fantastic performance by everyone. I really cannot thank everyone enough for putting all your effort into making this the show the success it deserved to be. I believe I said it on the Sunday rehearsal, that it is such a thrill for me to see a creation I started 18 months ago really come to life, and the end result with the performances were truly the icing on the 50th anniversary cake! The gifts that I received from the cast, Thank You, they are beautiful and remind me what a wonderful show we put on. I would like to mention a special Thanks to *David Wright* for Directing and his creative genius, *Penny Davies* for just being so wonderful at everything she does, *Jon Gibbs* and his wonderful Orchestra, *Adam Thorpe* and his amazing team on the *Stage Crew*. The *Choreographers* dazzled with some fantastic dances, all of which couldn't be seen or heard without the brilliance from the balcony care of *Mike & Mark (Simon & Dan also!)* on lighting and *Jon* on sound, I truly am thankful to **EVERYONE** who helped in any way shape or form in making this a production possible and one to remember. I'm sure Don would have been very proud of you all.

Oliver



Tina Retires:

It is with much sadness, Theatre Manager, and long-term member of the Company, Tina Wiseman had decided to hang up her set of theatre keys on Saturday 18th June, and enjoy a well-earned rest. The Company presented her with a bouquet of flowers, and we received this lovely email from her a couple of days later:

Dear Company of Four,

Thank you so much for the lovely flowers and card you gave me on my leaving day (can't bring myself to say the R word just yet!). It was such a surprise to see Oli, Vic, Adam & Natalie turning up at The Riverside. I thought it was just Oli arriving to talk about the show but knew there was trouble ahead when the other three got out of the car. The best part for me though was when they all turned up again after the film finished to start the Get In. I was the last one on that evening & had been preparing myself for turning all the lights off & walking out of the theatre on my own. I wasn't looking forward to it at all, but it was buzzing when I left. The lights were on. The screen tab was coming down. Stuff was being carried in - I almost expected Don to walk across the stage with an electric screwdriver!! What a perfect way to go home. It doesn't feel like an end now. It just feels right.

Best wishes - Tina

All the best Tina, we shall all miss you and Thank You for everything you have done for the Company in your tenure as Theatre Manager.



My wife said I should do lunges to stay in shape. That would be a big step forward.

Goodnight Mister Tom:

by David Wood, based on a novel by Michelle Magorian

Less than a week after our summer production, we are now having to look forward to our next, this being *Goodnight Mister Tom*. I have had several enquiries of interest from cast members, both current and prospective new members, as well as hearing from several audience members asking when tickets go on sale! The audition dates will be **Sunday 24th July from 10:00 at the FRC, Tuesday 26th July 7:30 at the FRC**, with final casting (Hopefully!) on **Friday 29th July 7:30 at the FRC**, First read through will be on **Tuesday 2nd August at the FRC**. (Please note, I have dropped the Friday 22nd audition as advertised last month). Sunday 24th will run from 10am - 1pm (possibly finishing earlier) and I intend to audition as many parts over the morning as possible. Tuesday 26th and Friday 29th will be for those who can't make the Sunday but is open to those who wish to come and audition again if you wish too.

This production requires several children speaking roles, as well as adult roles throughout. Some parts may be doubled up, as they may only have a few lines etc. A full list of characters is below, a full character profile was included in last month's NL, so won't repeat it here:

William Beech - Aged around 10

Carrie}

Ginnie} Redheaded twins, 11, Carrie is academic, Ginnie is practical

George Fletcher - 10, youngest child of Mrs Fletcher

Zach - 11, Jewish evacuee. **Billeting Officer** - Efficient, No-nonsense female,

Tom Oakley - Mid - Late 60s, A Loner, **Sammy** - A Black & White Collie Dog (Puppet)

Charlie Ruddles - ARP Warden, **Mrs Fletcher** - Housewife & Mother

Doctor Little - The local Doctor (*can be Male or Female*)

Mrs Annie Hartridge - The local School Teacher

Mr David Hartridge - her husband, A trainee RAF Pilot

Miss Thorne - local librarian & amateur dramatics producer

Mr Miller - Proprietor of the post office/store (*can be Mrs Miller*)

Miss Miller - who helps her Father in the store, Late teens early 20s (*can be Mr Miller, Husband of Mrs Miller*)

Vicar - Young and Enthusiastic,

Mrs Beech - William's Mother, strict, prim, mentally disturbed

Ticket-Collector (London), **ARP Warden** (London), **Glad** - Warm hearted Londoner

Policeman - solid & strong, **Nurse** - young & sympathetic, **Sister** - stands no nonsense

Mr Stelton - a psychiatrist, **Evacuees, Villagers, Londoners, Medical Staff**

Puppeteers (Sammy, Squirrel, Hedge-Sparrow)

Oliver

The Treasurer Writes:

With the summer show over, there are still lots of thing to be sorted, especially with the Finances. Ticket sales for TYVM rose significantly during the week of the show and although we didn't sell as many in total as we hoped for, a third of ticket sales were made after 19th June.

My attention now is to get all this finance sorted along with the other Company activities, as our financial year end is 30th June and the accounts for the last year have to be prepared to be examined.

As soon as the finance position is known for TYVM and the whole year, it will be communicated to the members.

Neville

Pantomime 2023-Snow White:

The Company is proud to announce that our Pantomime for 2023 will be the rescheduled production of Snow White & The Seven Dwarfs. To be performed at the Riverside during February half term week 2023. There are still lots of things to sort out at the moment, but we are delighted to say that the production team will be Penny Davies as Producer, Mary Leech as Director & Paul Leech as Assistant Director. Final details for auditions are to be sorted, however we can say that they shall be taking place around the week of 18th September. Please keep an eye on the next few NLs for further details.

50th Anniversary BBQ Birthday Bash:

Not long now until the Company's BBQ Birthday Bash at Bredfield Village Hall on

Sunday 10th July from 3pm - 9pm. This will be open to all current and previous members, as well as the Friends of the Company, so please do spread the word. Food will be provided (*However, donation buckets will be out during the day if you wish to contribute towards the food costs for non members*), but please do bring you own drink and a camping chair. Fun & games will be taking place and some entertainment is being organised. We would love to see as many people as possible to celebrate the 50th year of the Company and reminisce about the good old days. If you are intending to come along, please can you use this link (<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/woodbridge/bredfield-village-hall/the-company-of-four-bbq/2022-07-10/15:00/t-eakvvvn>) to book a free virtual ticket, preferably before **Wednesday 6th July**, so we have a rough idea on numbers to cater for. We also need to know of any dietary requirements.



Camping Trip:

Thank you to all those who have booked to go on our camping trip to Orchard Campsite in Wickham Market. We still have a couple of pitches available if anyone is interested in joining us for the weekend of Friday 15th and Saturday 16th July. Pitches are £30 per night or £34 with electric hook up. Tents, motor homes, caravans and camper vans are all welcome. Families, children, and dogs welcome too.

The site has toilet and shower facilities as well as a fully stocked camp shop and off licence selling over 200 varieties of beer and wine. If you are interested or would like more details, drop me an email me. For those who have booked, please can payment be forwarded to Neville as soon as possible, so the bill can be paid.



Vicky

How do you make a tissue dance? You put a little boogie in it.



Star Profile

Welcome to Star Profile time again! This time round we swing the follow spot of enlightenment onto a Mother & Daughter pair (oooo!), one who started in the Company as a Canary and one has just completed her first production. We have pleasure to introduce to you.....**Kayleigh & Bella Richardson**.....

Name Kayleigh Richardson

Age 32

Occupation/School? Hair Stylist

Do you have any Pets? A small crazy dog called Pixie

First Cof4 show you were involved with?

Been thinking a lot about this... I'm not 100% sure but dad seems to think when I was the canary in the cage?! I would have been around 4. (Possibly the 1945 Show? -Ed)

Favourite Song (And who by?)? It changes but at the moment it's Let the Bad Times Roll by The Offspring (apt for the recent times)

First Music Album you brought? I think it was the Spice Girls 1st album ... Girl Power

Favourite Food? I love the bold Asian flavours! But I'm not fussy.

Tea/Coffee (If neither, then what?)?

Definitely Tea

Who's your Hero? Walt Disney! Without him there would be no Disney world and that would be very sad!

Favourite Book? I'm not sure, I read a lot, but I have probably read this one the most, Dan Brown 'The Lost Symbol'

Do you have a Nickname? Klee

Favourite Film? These questions are hard... I have a real soft spot for Buggy Malone and Matilda.

Your Favourite Saying/Quote? Marilyn Monroe 'it's all make believe, isn't it?' Reminding myself that things aren't as they seem and to not take it too seriously.

Do you Collect Anything? No... I hate hoarding, my kids have enough stuff for all of us!

Favourite Tv Show? Has to be Friends.

What would you do with a Million Pounds? Buy a boat, travel the world, and make amazing memories!

Name Bella Richardson

Age 8

Occupation/School? Charsfield school

Do you have any Pets? Pixie the dog

First Cof4 show you were involved with? Thank You Very Much

Favourite Song (And who by?)?

Million Miles Away by The Offspring. Me and Daddy turn it up really loudly in the van and rock out!

First Music Album you brought?

Disneys greatest hits!

Favourite Food? Nachos

Tea/Coffee (If neither, then what?)?

Neither

Who's your Hero? Mummy and daddy

Favourite Book? All the Books! I'm a book worm but especially David Walliams books.

Do you have a Nickname? Bella Boo

Favourite Film? Disneys Onward

Your Favourite Saying/Quote?

I'll do it in a minute.

Do you Collect Anything?

Confetti from every performance last week!!

Favourite Tv Show? The Loud Family

What would you do with a Million

pounds? Buy sweets, toys and help people.

What do you call two monkeys that share an Amazon account? Prime mates.

Thank You Very Much Reviews:

I thought it would be nice to add in the NL the reviews and kind words the Company received after the summer show...

Ipswich 24

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of local am-dram/musical theatre group The Company of Four, well-known for their annual pantos and summer shows at The Riverside in Woodbridge, to celebrate their special year they are this week presenting "Thank You Very Much" featuring, as you would expect, lots of musical and dance numbers.

The question is how do you feature pieces from 50 years that include numbers such as Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Fame, Cabaret as well as bits of panto?

Writer Oliver Fosker has achieved this by weaving a tale of a fictitious am-dram group, the Spotlighters as they perform various shows and productions (the Spotlighters story bares more than a passing resemblance to that of the Company of Four). The story of a group of four friends who decide to start their own theatre group is interspersed with lots of musical numbers and therefore it doesn't seem disjointed following Musical Hall numbers with Pantomime, West End and Broadway hits.

There's lots of costume changes, lots of toe-tapping numbers and a guarantee that there will be something that everyone will find themselves singing along with at some point. Essentially it's a showcase of what the company do best, and that's to present entertaining musical productions. There are some talented members of the Company including the four principals who are all great, but if you're cast in a principal role you'd be expected to turn in a good performance. However, we must mention the future, and the company are looking to this with some very talented youngsters who already show promise, both in the Junior Chorus and Dance sections.

Very often all the other people who make things happen are missed, there's a great orchestra under the direction of Jonathan Gibbs, the tech and stagehands, this really is a team effort and it is this that has meant that the Company of Four has and continues to be successful and long may they continue.

Happy 50th Company of Four and here's to the next 50!

NODA

Review - Catherine Dixey, NODA East District 12 Representative

2022 marks a big year for The Company of Four being their 50th Anniversary and what better way to celebrate this achievement than a full scale song and dance variety show. They started in 1972 with a Springtime Variety show and this year as they look back and perform excerpts from some of their favourite shows from the past 50 years. Oliver Fosker had written a script regarding the formation of a fictitious amateur group calling themselves the Spotlight Players. The storyline follows their path over the years and is based along the same lines charting the history of The Company of Four. It tells of a group of four friends who form their own amateur group as they discuss ways to produce musical variety shows, pantomimes and later full scale popular musicals. This forms the basis of their 50th musical celebration to introduce different sections of songs from Music Hall, 1940's Wartime songs, West End Musicals and Broadway shows.

There is a large cast of over 30, with the youngest being five-year-old Gracie who stole the show. We the audience were soon singing along and clapping our way through the numbers. There were some very talented principal performers and lots of younger members showing great potential to take the Society forward into the future. The whole cast certainly had plenty of energy and enthusiasm and should be congratulated on their achievements as they sang and danced their way through the evening under the direction of David Wright. As with any of these shows, a huge mention should go to all the production team, working tirelessly behind the scenes in supporting the cast. Jonathan Gibbs and his four-piece orchestra worked well accompanying the singers. Also, to the numerous choreographers working with their different groups of dancers and chorus. There were a great many costume changes for the whole cast all in matching colourful costumes. The sound system by Jon Spall was particularly effective with the levels just right so we could clearly hear even the youngest of the little singers who delighted us with their solos. Thanks must also go to the set designers, stage crew, lighting, publicity and front of house, the list goes on to all those involved for their contribution in putting together a successful show.

Finally I must mention the spectacular patriotic finale, with all the cast in red, white and blue costumes with some enormous flags all set in front of a giant 3 tiered celebration cake, and singing "There's no business like show business". A musical treat! Hopefully larger audiences will follow and continue to support you in the years to come.

Thank you to David Wright and all his cast and crew for a very entertaining musical evening and a fitting tribute for this their 50th Anniversary and to Vernon for looking after us so well.

One of the Friends of Cof4 sent Penny & Vernon email

"Wow - Please pass on to the cast of Thank you Very Much, our hearty congratulations on such an excellent performance, last night. Our friends and ourselves thoroughly enjoyed the whole performance - a real feel-good factor throughout. How the cast manage to cope with all the fantastic costume changes is amazing and the 'little people' are just so entertaining. Some lovely solo performances and beautiful voices. A really enjoyable production. We are all looking forward to the next show".

Kate Kingsford-Bere - Harry Reeve's Granddaughter

Thank YOU very much for a lovely evening. A great show - we thoroughly enjoyed it. Tonight, you had three generations of the Reeves family in the audience - how lovely you named Harry Reeve (my dad's father, my grandfather, and my children's great grandfather). Thanks to him, and the Company of Four, many more have a love of the theatre. His legacy, and that of the founding members, lives on and we the family Thank You. Great Show - Can't wait for more.

On behalf of Alan Reeve and the Reeve Family

Sarah Clarke - daughter of John Craggs (and former Cof4 member).

Hi, really enjoyed the show last night. You were all fab and I loved all the songs. And the mention of Mr Craggs doing the music was a lovely touch ♥

From Facebook

Annette Westwood - Absolutely Brilliant. Loved it

Ann Knights - Was a brilliant show, well done everyone xx

Sheena Charity - Well Done everyone, Fabulous show

Carolyn Buddle - We really enjoyed it! Was so nice reminiscing when we were up there doing the dances to those tunes! We still remember some of the steps plus the words to the songs! Good luck for the rest of the week xx

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES:

Sunday 10th July - Company's 50th Anniversary BBQ at Bredfield

Friday 15th - Sunday 17th July - Camping at Wickham Market

Sunday 24th - Friday 29th July - Auditions for Goodnight Mister Tom at FRC

Week of Sunday 18th September - Auditions for Snow White & The Seven Dwarfs

Thursday 20th - Saturday 22nd October - Goodnight Mister Tom at The Seckford.

Saturday 11th - Saturday 18th February 2023 - Snow White at The Riverside



There we are, another Newsletter completed. Please do feel free to send me anything you wish to include in a future Newsletter, this can be some good news you may want to share, a birthday shout out, a poem, a short story, or if you wish to be included in the Star Profile section, it really is as easy as emailing me on cof4secretary@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions for the August Newsletter is July 25th.

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