

MAY 2016

# newsletter

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**sewellbarn**  
THEATRE

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[www.sewellbarn.org](http://www.sewellbarn.org)

## Our Next Production

### The Burial at Thebes

by Seamus Heaney | directed by David Green

12-14 & 18-21 May at 7.30 pm, matinée 21 May at 2.30 pm



“For a long time I have been struck by the enduring nature of this play. How does a two and a half thousand year old piece of drama continue to have a beating heart?

“The answer lies in the enormity and relevance of the questions that the play poses. They are questions that humanity continues to wrestle with today. Where does justice come from? Who wields it?

“**The Burial at Thebes** will be a familiar play to many, being Seamus Heaney's version of Sophocles' Antigone, though as with any new production of a classic work, the task is to see it with new eyes, and find a fresh way to present it to an audience. To those who come to see this production, enjoy the poetic, muscular language and the talented cast unfurling this intense plot. But above all, come to watch an age-old story with new eyes.”

*David Green (Director)*

## Booking

Tickets for all shows at the Sewell Barn Theatre can be booked at **Prelude Records** who are located on St Giles Street in the city centre. With this new service, you can continue to buy tickets in person and over the phone by calling **01603 628319**. We've also introduced online booking, available on our website and via Prelude Records (small booking fee if you use a credit card online).

**PRELUDE  
RECORDS**

## Our previous production

# The Beauty Queen of Leenane

**Martin McDonagh | Directed by Michelle Montague**

We were delighted to receive many wonderful accolades, via social media, on our foyer blackboard, and by email – as well as the local EDP newspaper. This message to the Director from member David White encapsulates these reactions.

"You clever, clever girl. It is a wonderful production, great set, wonderful cast, and seamless direction.

Gilly was exceptionally good. She has such a presence on stage. Conniving, fearful, malicious and totally believable. I loved her! Mandy gave such a heartfelt performance. I so wanted it to end happily for her, but knew in my heart that it wouldn't. Please congratulate her for me. Christopher Whitley, who is new to me, was lovely. I don't know if he is Irish, but he looked Irish. Soft, gentle and lovable. They would have been so happy! Matt was funny and real, playing out of his comfort zone. A fine performance, Matt.

So, another winner, Ms Montague, well done."

For more reviews of this and other productions, visit our blog at [sewellbarntheatre.blogspot.co.uk](http://sewellbarntheatre.blogspot.co.uk).

## Coming Soon

# Brimstone & Treacle

**by Dennis Potter | directed by Jen Dewsbury**

**9-11 & 15-18 June**

Dennis Potter's haunting, disturbing, controversial and theatrically stunning exploration of good and evil.

# The History Boys

**by Alan Bennett | directed by Michelle Montague**

**14-16 & 20-23 July**

Alan Bennett's masterpiece about a group of gifted, charming sixth-form schoolboys was recently voted 'the nation's favourite play'.

# Lark Rise to Candleford

As you might know these two productions had to be re-programmed and are now to be performed in September of this year. Rehearsals will happen across the summer. Unfortunately, some of the original cast are unable to be part of what will be an exciting production. My intention is to have another casting workshop, on **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 pm** at the Barn, to complete the team. I'm looking for both sexes and all age ranges, but would really especially like to hear from the men. If you would like to be considered please come along to the casting workshop or if you are unable to attend but would like to be considered, please let me know.

Robert Little [r.little@uea.ac.uk](mailto:r.little@uea.ac.uk) 07554 522428

## Two sad farewells

We are sorry to report two bereavements in the Barn family in recent weeks. Artistic Director **Robert Little** remembers them both below.

### David Shiret

“Dave sadly passed away at the end of April of this year, and our thoughts and best wishes go to his family and loved ones. Dave was best known for his work as a stage manager and props maker/finder, and he stage managed many a show for this company. He also built up a reputation as the “Muffin Man”, always baking for every show that he was involved in. His abilities were so revered that he had to publish his muffin recipe in a newsletter and on the back of a programme. He will be remembered for being a really lovely man who was always willing to help you out. We will miss him.”

### Rosemary Morgan

“With great sadness I have to pass on the news that Rosemary passed away after losing her battle with a recent illness, on 13 April 2016.

Rosemary first joined the company in 1988 to play the part of Mrs Nickleby in Dickens’ **Nicholas Nickleby** parts 1 & 2, considered by many as the company’s finest hour. She was really surprised that Henry Burke the founder of the company and director of the production had asked her to join and be part of the production. It was no surprise to me; I had seen Rosemary act at the Great Hall many times before and knew what a great talent she was. No challenge was too much for her. I remember in a rehearsal asking her to learn how to fire eat and Juggle, but this lady took to it like a duck to water.



For me her greatest asset was her beautiful voice, always clear as crystal. She could have read from the telephone directory and it would have been lovely to the ear. She went on to grace the stage at the Sewell Barn many times and become a real trooper. The wonderful thing about Rosemary was that she was just happy to be part of it all. I remember bumping into her unexpectedly and asking what she was doing. To which she replied “I’m helping out prompting, but you know me I just like being here, it’s home!” She was a wonderful actress, a really lovely person, and a great supporter of the company.

I will truly miss her positive and happy personality; it was always a pleasure to have Rosemary in any production. She will stay in the hearts of us here at the Barn: her Theatre, home and family. Our thoughts and best wishes go to Hugh and her family at this difficult time.”

## ... and one happy hello

**New addition to the Sewell Barn family:** Louise Brighton has given birth to a daughter, Ophelia. Having met her, I can confirm she is the most beautiful baby - big eyes, dark hair, long elegant fingers. Congratulations, Lulu, and a big welcome to Ophelia.

# Launch of the 2016-17 Season

**Sunday 22 May - doors open at 6.00pm - meeting at 6.30 pm**

Come along and learn about the 2016/17 season from our new Artistic Directors, Clare Williamson and Cassie Tillet, who take over from Robert and Miche at the beginning of next season. The bar will be open and there will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions, socialise and discuss – and, of course, copies of the new brochure and casting notes to take away.

## Opportunities to help

The Sewell Barn is a charity, staffed entirely by volunteers. We pride ourselves on the quality of theatre that we produce in our unique venue. It's achieved by the unified efforts of many people, on committees, front of stage and back stage. We can't do it without you! The more volunteers that we have, the lighter the load on everyone concerned. Please consider carefully any ways in which you could help us to continue our exciting work. In all cases, **plenty of support will be offered** by the previous post-holders and other relevant people.

### Membership secretary

Cassie Tillet has been performing this role for the last year or so, but with her impending responsibilities as joint Artistic Director, she'd really like to hand it over to somebody else before the start of next season! It is *not* a large or time-consuming job; receiving applications from new members, sending out membership cards and information, passing on information to other members of the team, and dealing with renewals across the summer holiday. You need to be a confident computer user, but full training will be given.

### Technical manager

Our equipment is modern and our productions require varied and imaginative lighting and sound. The Technical Manager works closely with the Artistic Directors to ensure that the season's shows are rigged and staffed to the high standards that we are known for.

**Please note:** The above roles have the opportunity to be co-opted to the Committee (formal elections would take place at the next AGM in the autumn), and therefore to have vital input to the business of running our theatre, but that is *not* a prerequisite of taking on any of the roles.

**If you are interested in any of these exciting opportunities, please get in touch with Jill Fuller as soon as possible ([chair@sewellbarn.org](mailto:chair@sewellbarn.org)).**

### Front of House

As always, we can use as many people front of house as we can find. To operate, we must have three stewards and two people to serve behind the bar. Training will be given and you will always be on duty with an experienced helper to begin with. It is a great way to meet new people and to become familiar with the workings of the Barn. If you could spare an evening during the run of any production, please contact Jane Page on 01603 429360 or [bernardpage@ntlworld.com](mailto:bernardpage@ntlworld.com).

**Please note:** If you are already a helper, please make sure that you arrive in good time for the days you have signed up for and if you are unable to attend, PLEASE contact Jane at least 24 hours before so she can try to cover your absence. Recently we came close to having to cancel a performance as the stewards just did not turn up; fortunately there were two audience members who were experienced stewards.

## Our new Treasurer

We are pleased to welcome Alan Gidney as our new Treasurer. He has taken over from Ginny Porteous who has been Treasurer for many years. Alan is a retired accountant and has, until recently, been a Trustee of the Sewell Barn; we thank him for stepping into this important role.

## Director needed



The next Barn season is now fully staffed, but we've had a message from our friends at the **Great Hall**, who are looking to appoint a guest director for their next season.

"At present we are trying to balance our season using in-house and guest directors, and we have an opportunity for an additional guest director to cover a production in March 2017, which will be in the comedy genre.

We hope to interest directors who have a good CV, and who would welcome the challenge of working in the round at The Assembly House, where we have 6 productions per season, and are currently getting about 75% attendance. Last season 3300 patrons saw our productions and we think that this might be attractive to guest directors."

If you can help, please contact Malcolm Robinson on [malcy52@hotmail.com](mailto:malcy52@hotmail.com).

## Workshops

### What Happens Backstage?

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 pm – 9.30 pm**

Led by Adrian Wenn

This is an ideal opportunity to learn about the backstage workings of the Barn. Ideal if you fancy being a backstage helper but also good if you just want to know what goes on. Adrian is our most experienced Stage Manager and will have loads of 'secrets' to share! So come along and spend an enjoyable evening finding out.

### Important note: CANCELLATION of June & July workshops

**Wednesday June 22<sup>nd</sup> and Wednesday July 27<sup>th</sup>**

The final two workshops of the season were due to be a preparatory session and a performance of an evening of entertainment to celebrate the end of the current season, and the end of the tenure of the present Artistic Directors, Michelle Montague & Robert Little. However, as Robert's production of *Lark Rise to Candleford* was postponed due to the ill health of the director and will now take place in September, it is felt that the planned date for the performance (27 July) is no longer appropriate for a 'farewell social'. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

## A word about social media

We post details of all our auditions, workshops and shows, together with any other news, to our accounts on Twitter and Facebook. If you use either of these, you can help us to achieve wider coverage: social media works best when you engage with it.

- The more you like or comment on our posts, the more of our posts you will see.
- The more you share our posts onto your own account, the more your friends will see.

We have over 650 'likes' on our facebook page. Just 'liking' isn't necessarily enough, though: you need to do a little more to prevent our posts being drowned in a sea of political rants and cat videos.

Under the 'like' option you'll find the choice of 'see first' or 'default', and whether or not to receive notifications. You'll improve your chances of seeing our posts if you choose wisely here.

You can also help us to spread the word. A recent post with just one like and no shares or comments has just reached around 90 people; but another post with 13 likes and 4 comments has reached nearly 900 people. That's the difference you can make to us!

Come and join us – and help us to promote the theatre to the wider audience it so much deserves.

[www.facebook.com/sewellbarn](http://www.facebook.com/sewellbarn) [twitter.com/sewellbarn](https://twitter.com/sewellbarn)

## What else is on in the area?

### **Maddermarket Theatre**

*The Vortex* by Noel Coward

20-28 May at 7.30 pm , matinée 28 May at 2.30 pm



## Help keep our costs down!

If you are receiving this newsletter by post, would you consider trying the email version? Please email [newsletter@sewellbarn.org](mailto:newsletter@sewellbarn.org) and we'll make the necessary changes.