

JULY 2022

# newsletter

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**sewellbarn**  
THEATRE

Constitution Hill  
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Box Office: 01603 626414

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

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## Our next production: Under Milk Wood

by Dylan Thomas | directed by Cassie Tillett

**14-16, 20-23 July at 7:30pm, matinee 23 July at 2:30pm**

*"Time passes. Listen. Time passes."*

*Under Milk Wood* traces the ordinary and extraordinary lives of the inhabitants of Llareggub, a small Welsh coastal town, in their dreams and through one spring day. We are challenged to consider what is 'normal', what is 'different', and the fine line between sanity and madness. Do the characters mean what they say, or say what they mean?

Dylan Thomas created *Under Milk Wood* across many years. Although he first discussed the idea with a friend in 1931, when he was 17, the first performance of his 'play for voices' was not until 1953 in New York. That event provides the only sound recording we have of Thomas, playing the First Voice and the Reverend Eli Jenkins. Thomas died just a few months later, aged just 39.



*Photography: Andrew Evans*

Director Cassie Tillett commented: "The poetry is beautiful, the observation of characters is not only hilarious and joyful, but sometimes dark and painful. Our staging of the play gives a unique set of challenges to the cast: everyone shares the words of the narration, playing several different characters. Nobody is off-stage for more than a few minutes, and all contribute equally to the wide range of humanity that we meet. The cast of twelve actors are among the finest in Norwich. Together with original music, sound effects and light, they create a magical atmosphere. The intimacy of the Barn will give our audience the sense of eavesdropping on private conversations, being privy to what goes on behind closed doors."

The cast members, and just some of the many roles they play, are as follows: Jenny Belsey (Myfanwy Price, Mrs Benyon), Judi Daykin (Mrs Pugh, Mrs Willy Nilly), Poppy Hiscox (Rosie Probert, Mrs Cherry Owen), Mandy Kiley (Mrs Ogmores-Pritchard, Mrs Dai Bread 1), Emma Kirkham (Polly Garter, Gossamer Beynon), Carole Lovett (Mary Ann Sailors, Mrs Dai Bread 2), Thomas Monument (Cherry Owen, Willy Nilly), Kevin Oelrichs (Mr Pugh, Mr Pritchard), Jonathan Redding (Mog Edwards, Sinbad Sailors), Selwyn Tillett (Rev Eli Jenkins, Mr Ogmores), Jamie Willimott (Mr Waldo, Butcher Beynon) and David White (as blind Captain Cat, who sees the whole story in his mind).

This production is dedicated to the memory of Anne Giles, a multi-talented stalwart of the Sewell Barn Theatre for many years, who died on 19 June 2022. Anne co-directed the Barn's previous production of *Under Milk Wood*, in 1996. Tributes, and information about a memorial gathering for Anne, can be found later in this newsletter.

*Tickets are limited to 80 per performance for your continuing safety and comfort. Available at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/sewellbarn](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/sewellbarn) or on 0333 666 3366. Ticket sales are going very well at the time of writing, and advance booking is highly recommended.*

## Our previous production: Orca

by Matt Grinter | directed by Sabrina Poole

2-4, 8-11 June at 7:30pm / matinee Saturday 11 June at 2:30pm



*Photography: Sean Owen of Reflective Arts*

Midsummer. The village must choose a new Daughter to sail with the fishing boats and bless the waters, keeping them safe from the roaming orcas for another year. Fan hopes with all her heart to be the one they choose. But her older sister Maggie says she must never, never, go with the boats. Because something happened to Maggie out there. And no one will admit it.

"My first visit to the Sewell Barn Theatre tonight was excellent. Thank you to the whole cast for a really **well-paced, thoughtful, emotional and powerful performance**. It was a delight to be in a new theatre, watching excellent performances in a play I had never seen. Thank you. I look forward to more. All the best for your upcoming performances." *Marston*

"I saw an excellent performance last night of this sensitive, at times very dark, play ... It has it all - **a stellar cast, superb set design, hauntingly beautiful original score, intelligent and intuitive direction**. Well done and congratulations for this truly admirable team effort." *Karen*

Visit our blog for more reviews of this and previous shows at <http://sewellbarntheatre.blogspot.com/>.

## Coming soon: The Welkin

by Lucy Kirkwood | directed by Jez Pike

**13-15, 19-22 October**

*One life in the hands of twelve women*



Our 2022/23 season opens with a powerful and unusual play. We are thrilled to welcome Jez Pike (well-known in Norwich theatre circles in recent years, and especially at the Maddermarket) as director.

It's 1759. England looks to the skies for the arrival of Halley's Comet and a new era of reason. But in a courtroom in East Anglia, men have evoked an ancient ritual that will decide the fate of a woman. Sally Poppy has been sentenced for murder, but claims to be pregnant. The Justice summons a 'jury of matrons' – twelve women who must determine the truth. Locked in, without food or water, they are all prisoners of a sort, and they soon discover that the truth comes in many guises.

Sharp-witted and compelling, *The Welkin* is both a courtroom thriller and a timeless testament to women's resilience.

Director Jez Pike has assembled a superb cast. The full list and characters will be published soon, but in the meantime, performers include Emma Smith, Jo Parker Sessions, Diane Webb, Marie Cooper, Ginny Porteous, Jan Farrar, Holly Harrington-Ball, Sarah Jenkins, Katie Smith, Alison Utting, Karen Bates, Helen Wells, Bradley Clarke and David Newham.

*Contains strong language and adult themes.*

## Audition: Betrayal

by Harold Pinter | directed by Clare Howard

Contact details: [clare@ragbagprojects.co.uk](mailto:clare@ragbagprojects.co.uk)

Performances: 24-26 November, 30 November-3 December (plus matinee on 3 Dec) 2022

Auditions: Sunday 17 July

Rehearsals: commencing week of 26 September



We are delighted to welcome back Clare Howard (Artistic Director of the Sewell Barn 2005-2011, as well as long-standing acting and directing member) to direct this classic piece.

Famously, this is the play that looks at an illicit affair from its end to its beginning. Emma is married to Robert, but enters into a long-term relationship with his best friend, Jerry. As the plot works backwards, the trio's complicated secrets and lies emerge from the mists of time and memory.

Cast: Emma, Jerry, Robert, and an Italian waiter.

Please visit our website at [www.sewellbarn.org/betrayalcasting.html](http://www.sewellbarn.org/betrayalcasting.html) for full details, and contact Clare as shown above to register your interest.



## Anne Giles: 1941-2022

The Sewell Barn is very sad to have lost (just one month after the passing of Terry Dabbs) another loyal, hardworking and much-loved member of our theatre family.

Anne was well known across the Norwich theatre community, with her roots at the Barn, for acting, directing, stage managing, costume management, props management, front of house, committee service and much more, across the last four decades. Her last stage management role was for *Three Russian Encounters* in December 2021, and her last stage performance was as Cora in *Waiting in the Wings* in July 2019. She was also a popular and willing volunteer at Norwich Puppet Theatre, a Cast Roleplayer (where medical trainees hone their consultation skills), a historical performer at Gressenhall Workhouse Museum, an active member of Tiebreak Theatre Company (theatre in education), and dancer and treasurer of Norwich Historical Dance for many years.



Anne spent the majority of the last weeks of her life in the familiar surroundings of her own flat, with great support from carers and from her friend and fellow costume expert Ian Chipperfield, and visits from many of her theatre friends. She passed away peacefully at Priscilla Bacon Lodge, where she resided for less than two weeks, in the early hours of 19 June. A simple funeral took place at Earlham Crematorium, Norwich on Friday 1 July, and was attended by many – wearing, at Anne’s request, bright colours.

Donations in Anne’s memory can be made to Priscilla Bacon Lodge. A range of options including online, cheque, Gift Aid and text may be found at their site: <https://www.priscillabaconhospice.org.uk/donate/>.

A memorial will be held, at Anne’s request, at the Sewell Barn Theatre, on **Sunday 31 July**, 1:30 for 2:00 pm; the theatre and bar will then be open all afternoon. Please bring food to share – the quantity that you might eat, so we don’t end up with a huge amount left over! Anne was keen to make it a celebration of her life, so we hope to reflect, drink, eat and dance – and, most importantly, enjoy ourselves.

Since the announcement was made, we have received dozens of lovely tributes, both via social media and email. A selection of these can be found at the link below:

<http://sewellbarntheatre.blogspot.com/2022/06/anne-giles-rip.html>

Here are two tributes from close Barn colleagues.

“I have worked closely with Anne in the wardrobe department of the Barn for more years than I can number. She was such an informed and dependable presence in all situations. I greatly valued her practical experience in making historical costumes, and her detailed knowledge. She was committed to accuracy as far as possible, but pragmatic too. She was supportive and kind to the many hirers from other amateur companies. We worked together on her productions, and acted together in many plays, even as recently as 2019 [*Waiting in the Wings*].

But most of all I valued her friendship. She had a great sense of humour and some pithy witticisms. We had many laughs and I count myself lucky to have known and worked with her. She will be much missed.”

*June Gentle*

"I last saw Anne about 10 days before she died. She looked a little frail, but typically up-beat and sorting it all out. She was saddened to hear the news of the passing of Terry Dabbs. She also apologised that she had been unable to stage manage 'Edith' - the show I directed recently; she had set herself to work with me one more time. She also gave me a couple of boxes containing all her memories of her theatre life and some containing her private life.

Having now sorted through these boxes, it really hit home just how much she had given to us all. It was outstanding. I have been at the Barn from day one and have worked with many of the Barn's greats. Anne is certainly amongst them and has been ever present and dependable; she will leave a hole that will be difficult to fill. I once asked her a question to which she answered "If you put a lot in, you can get a lot out." We certainly got a lot out of Anne.

Our relationship was a slow burner. It certainly took a while for her and me to work each other out. Once that was realized we had a mutual respect for each other's love for the Barn. This was to turn into a great affection for each other. Anne was a true friend and I'm glad to have had her in my life. I'll miss her."

*Robert Little*

**In loving memory of a loyal, energetic, dedicated and wholly remarkable woman.**



*The above is a very small selection of Anne's stage performances at the Sewell Barn in more recent years. Clockwise from top left: Cora Waiting in the Wings (2019), Zillah Lark Rise to Candleford (2017), Mistress Brewer The Merry Wives of Windsor (2011), Lady Clem Lord Arthur Savile's Crime (2016), in rehearsal with Terry Dabbs for Lark Rise to Candleford (2017), Aunt Ada Doom Cold Comfort Farm (2009).*

## What's on in Norwich

**The Three Musketeers** by Daniel Winder

**The Norwich Players at the Maddermarket Theatre**

Tuesday 12 to Saturday 19 July: 6 performances (inc matinee)

<https://maddermarket.co.uk/event/the-three-musketeers/>



Director Claire Stretton\* leads a 16-strong cast in Daniel Winder's thrilling adaptation of Dumas' famous – The Three Musketeers. The young D'Artagnon heads to Paris, determined to become one of the King's elite musketeers, only to become embroiled in intrigue, duels, stolen diamonds and daring escapes. Moving effortlessly between slapstick and high drama, this fresh take on the timeless tale holds surprises and twists, and swashbuckles its way across the Maddermarket stage in a visceral, dynamic production.

*\*(Claire will also be directing The Cemetery Club at the Sewell Barn in July 2023)*