



# THE VILLAGE VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF ONSLOW VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION — ISSUE NINETEEN DECEMBER 2009

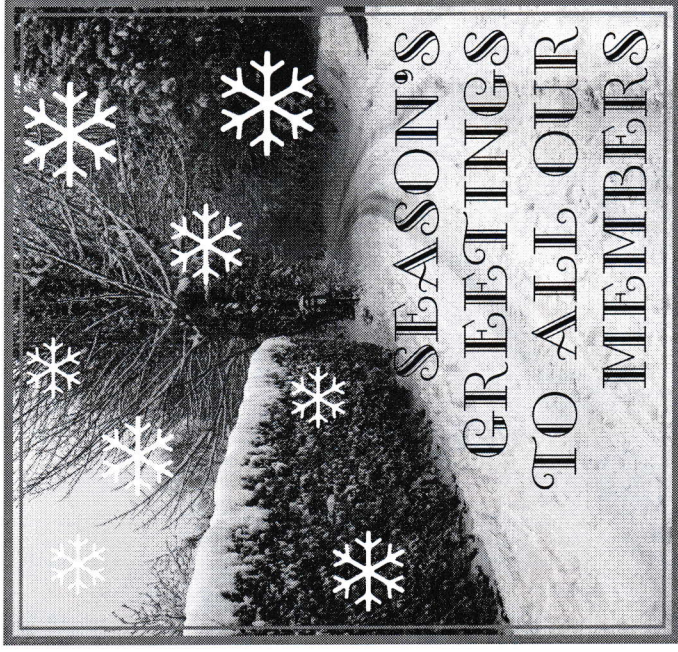
## Behind the Scenes with The Curtain Raisers – Act 1



Ali Baba & The Forty Thieves – 1996

Newcomers to the Village may not know it, but for more than 40 years there's been an active theatre club in our midst. It's called The Curtain Raisers and it's fantastic.

and many friendships flourished. Of course it wasn't always easy going. During the "Winter of Discontent", the orchestra, all local people, had to perform with hot-water bottles stuffed up their jumpers.



The OVRA committee would like to thank everyone who has supported us in 2009 by attending talks and social events. Special thanks to the volunteers who help us to deliver The Village Voice; with membership around 430 households, we are really grateful for your assistance.

We wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

### One door closes ...

On 14th November, Sparrow and Son, the butcher's shop, closed its doors for the very last time after 47 years in The Square. Colin Sparrow was the last of the family to run the business, but when he retired in 2008, it carried on under the same name when Polly Dougill took it over as a going concern. Unfortunately, circumstances were not in its favour and reluctantly Polly took the decision to close the shop and

of Alex Kerr, a then resident of Abbot's Close, way back in the swinging 60s.

A former member of the Cambridge Footlights and an ex Japanese POW, Alex was a person who loved theatre and, more importantly, had the capacity to inspire others, young and old, to share his vision.

Alex kicked things off by persuading a number of friends to become involved in the first production "Head over Heels", staged in Queen Eleanor's School in 1968. Its purpose was to raise funds to purchase curtains for the school stage – hence the name. It was written by a Cambridge friend of Alex's, as was "Pinch of Salt" which followed in 1969 and they were the start of a stream of plays, musicals, reviews and pantomimes – more than 90 in number – which have been entertaining local audiences ever since.

Alex Kerr had a simple motto: "People can always do more than they think they can." Inspired by his passion, many Village families – fathers, mothers and children – became hooked. Some



Oklahoma – 1988

(much to their surprise) found themselves on stage for the very first time; others became vitally involved backstage and Front of House. Children in particular, were given every encouragement to step out and display their talent. For some it started a lifelong interest in things theatrical and, in some families, three generations have been involved to date. A young Ben Elton made his stage debut with The Curtain Raisers in "A Dead Secret" in 1971. (He blossomed so well, he was almost pulled from the stage in the 1972 "Music Hall" for overstaying his time in the spotlight!) The rest, as they say, is history.

The quality and standard achieved even in the early days was quite remarkable. Rehearsals took place in people's living rooms; sets were stored, constructed and painted in people's garages; a chicken barn in Albury and an empty warehouse in Walnut Tree Close, albeit with holes in the floor, were commandeered and cleared for use. And some of the productions were startlingly ambitious. One show featured a two-tier set on a tiny stage. An early production of "Peter Pan" had children flying high on ropes pulled by sweating relatives (Health and Safety hadn't yet got in on the act.) Throughout, a wonderful team spirit was generated

by performers from outside the Village. Fine voices from Guildford Opera and other groups helped to make musical productions such as "The Sound of Music," "Oklahoma," "My Fair Lady," "Calamity Jane" and "Copacabana" shows to remember. But at the heart of many efforts were Village families who made costumes, were inducted into set design and the mysteries of lighting, learnt the art of make-up and even tap-dancing. And the activities of The Curtain Raisers didn't end there. A keen team of non-performers played an invaluable part off-stage. A forward-looking Social Committee organized many activities, with car treasure hunts, barbecues and play-readings in people's homes. The annual jumble sale became a key feature in fund raising.

One of the proudest moments in the club's history came when The Curtain Raisers were in the forefront of the successful campaign to prevent the Village Hall being sold for development. The acquisition of the Barn in Onslow Village was also instrumental in helping The Curtain Raisers to grow. Much hard work went in to making it habitable, but adjacency to the Village Hall proved a godsend.

As the Club grew, The Curtain Raisers were happy to look beyond themselves and the never-ending expense of staging amateur shows. Putting on reviews and cabarets and sometimes performing at villages such as Shackleford and Chilworth raised money for various charitable causes. A weekly entertainment at a Winged Fellowship home was provided four years running. In recent times, the Club has been active in the development of GATA, which promotes Amateur Theatre in Guildford. While not forgetting its Village roots, The Curtain Raisers were among the first to make use of the enhanced facilities offered by The Electric Theatre.

The 40th anniversary was celebrated with a cabaret in our own Village Hall. It is much to the credit of The Curtain Raisers that after all this time, they are still serving up top-class entertainments to Village audiences and encouraging the development of local talent. The young granddaughter of Andy Morgan – a founder member back in 1968 – recently made her directorial debut by staging a highly successful version of "An Inspector Calls". Keeping it in the family obviously pays off to this day – and long may it continue!

The Curtain Raisers' forthcoming production is "Treasure Island – The Panto". (Details overleaf). The show will feature talking parrots, swashbuckling sailors, distressed (and occasionally distressing) damsels, peg-legged pirates and cold fisherman's pie – not to mention the usual assortment of popular songs, audience participation and merciless punning. Please join us there! We are a friendly group that welcomes one and all, on-stage or off. Information can be found on our website: [www.curtainraisers.org.uk](http://www.curtainraisers.org.uk), or by calling Rita Rowland, our Group Secretary on 01483 232961. We are also now on Facebook!

## ... and another one opens

For a while, it looked as if the butcher's shop would be replaced by a complementary therapy centre, but on 14th December, The Village Deli opened, selling all sorts of cheeses, charcuterie, olives, antipasti and deli food from around the world. They also sell bread baked on the premises, sandwiches, cakes, teas and Italian coffees.

We'd like to welcome the owners of The Village Deli to Onslow Village and wish them every success for the future.

## Useful information

If the **salt bin** on your street needs topping up, contact Surrey County Council's Highways Department on 0300 200 1003 or report online at: [www.surreycc.gov.uk/](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/) and click on "Roads and transport" on the left of the screen.

As far as we know, you will be able to **recycle your Christmas tree** in the Village Hall car park again this year.



## OVRA SOCIAL CALENDAR

All events take place in the Village Hall: complimentary refreshments served from 7.15pm, talks begin at 7.45pm.

*Tuesday 12th January*

June Davey will give a talk about **Clandon Park and The Onslow Family**. Join us for mince pies beforehand!

*Saturday 6th February*

**IT'S ANNUAL PARTY TIME Music! Food! Licensed Bar!**

**Numbers are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment!** Return the form overleaf or ring 07726 952466.

*Tuesday 9th March*

**AGM.** After the main business, Mary Bentall will give a talk about **Beekeeping**.

*Information is correct at date of printing, but may be subject to change – please look out for future issues of the Village Voice, posters and flyers or ring 07726 952466 to check.*

# COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

If you would like to tell Onslow Village residents about your group's forthcoming events, or issues that might interest them, please email [ovra.news@ntlworld.com](mailto:ovra.news@ntlworld.com) or ring 07726 952466. Next copy date: 8th March.

## RECYCLING NEWS

### Recycling Works

The new scheme started with only a few hiccups. Williams Newsagents in The Square are stocking the starch bags for the food waste bins – they sell at £3.99 for 75 bags. If you do not have much food waste you can just wrap the food in newspaper.

Many residents have contacted me regarding their old dustbins, some with a view to collection. These are a few of the ways they can be used:

- Use upside down to shield rhubarb at the start of the growing season to force the shoots into tender pink stems.
  - Use to grow potatoes in container: you will need to create drainage holes and put some stones at the bottom (further information from me or go online to [Self-Sufficient.co.uk](http://Self-Sufficient.co.uk)).
  - Use as a water butt for those dry months.
  - Use a metal bin as an incinerator (draught holes will be required) to burn any pernicious weeds like dandelions, ivy and bindweed.
  - Use to store potting compost, bird food or even just a tidy place to keep your leaf-mould and empty compost bags.
  - Turn it into a wormery: [http://www.reduceuserecycle.co.uk/greenarticles/make\\_a\\_worm\\_bin.php](http://www.reduceuserecycle.co.uk/greenarticles/make_a_worm_bin.php)  
<http://www.greenfootsteps.com/worm-bin.html>
- Nine unwanted dustbins, a composter, a green cone and a water butt have been collected and are all happily in their new homes.

### What happens to our thrown away electrical equipment?

The EU Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) directive made it the responsibility of producers and retailers of such equipment to make sure their goods do not end up in landfill or incineration. The equipment contains high-value metals such as copper, aluminium, mercury, bronze and steel.

One recycling company – luckily the one Surrey sends its waste to – receives only of all it receives, with much

## DO YOU NEED TO MAKE CUTS?

Much of the charm of Onslow Village can be attributed to its many hedges, which were integral to the original design, but if neglected they can cause problems, especially if allowed to grow across footpaths. The following comes from a member who would like to make a plea for neater hedges.

*As a child-minding granny, I often feel like a member of an underclass but I don't really think I should be in the gutter. Please help!*

*I push a pushchair around the village – often a double one. Sometimes I have a toddler walking beside me. We practise walking on the pavements and not getting run over by the cars and looking before we step onto the road.*

*Yes – you know what's coming next. I squeeze the pushchair into the hedge and let go of the toddler's hand because she has to walk behind. There is no room on the pavement. I try to stop the baby in the pushchair from falling out as I balance the wheel on the edge of the curb. Then, either the pavement gets even narrower or there is a parked car and I give up and go onto the road. Sometimes this is quite safe because there are very few cars. Sometimes it isn't and I'm really*



*anxious, especially for the little one who is walking. "Get onto the pavement, Nanny. You mustn't walk on the road," says my well-educated granddaughter.*

*By this time I'm quite cross. Why are some Onslow Village pavements so narrow? Look where the path to the front door is, under the hedge. Here*

*you will see sometimes three foot of hedge covering three foot of pavement. I vow to bring my secateurs and cut off some of the offending hedge and stick it through the letter box but I never do. I suppose it's so wet that I couldn't even burn them down – and they do look rather nice, I wouldn't want to. However, thin ones look just as nice as wide ones.*

*If your hedge could do with cutting back, please have a look at this link: <http://apps.rhs.org.uk/advicesearch/Profile.aspx?pid=83#section2>*

*They say February is a good time.*

## Guildford Evening Decorative & Fine Arts Society at Onslow Village Hall

Our New Year season of lectures includes:

Wednesday 13 January **Charles Darwin and the Voyage of HMS Beagle** The speaker is James Taylor.

Wednesday 10 February **The Story of St Pancras Station from Gothic Revival to International Rail Terminus** The speaker is Launce Gribbin.

Saturday 27 February **Visit to St Paul's Cathedral** – please ring or email for full details (see below).

Wednesday 10 March **The Rivalry between Leonardo and Michelangelo** The speaker is James Lindow.

The Committee look forward to welcoming you to the Hall. Refreshments from 7.15 pm and talks start at 8 pm. New members and visitors welcome.

Visitors' entrance fee: £5. Contact Membership Secretary Angela Logan on 01483 833485 or by email on [guildford.eveningdfas@ntlworld.com](mailto:guildford.eveningdfas@ntlworld.com)

## Vivace Chorus

Come and Sing **"African Sanctus"** by David Fanshawe and a couple of choral arrangements of spirituals by jazz composer, Christopher Norton.

**Saturday 30th January 2010, 10am–4.30pm.**

Registration 10–10.30am, singing starts at 10.30am  
Normandy Village Hall, Glaziers Lane,  
Normandy GU3 2DE (just off the A323)

The cost is £20.00 per singer which includes the hire of music, tea and coffee on tap all day and a slap-up lunch of homemade soup and a Ploughman's. Please include a stamped, addressed envelope with your application form and payment cheque.

Booking is through: Vivace 'Come and Sing'  
13 Vicarage Gate, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7QJ

Additional forms can be downloaded from our website [www.VivaceChorus.org](http://www.VivaceChorus.org), or phone 01483 566341.

If you require transport from Guildford Station, let us know.

CURTAIN

of the materials recovered going to re-manufacture within the UK.

This company is one of only 10 WEEE recyclers in the UK licensed to dispose of old fridges and freezers that contain CFCs as the refrigerant. Cathode Ray Tubes and monitors are checked on receipt and over 80% are found to be in working order. After some refurbishment and repair they can be resold (but not in this country as we will not buy second-hand goods).

Unfortunately this highlights the fact that we have become a throwaway and upgrade society, which is not good as the resources of the planet diminish. By recycling as much as we can, we can aim for a more sustainable future, but it is even more important to think before we buy and reuse as much as possible.

### Bring and Take

The next Bring and Take will be in the Village Hall on **Saturday, 24 April 2010** from 10.00am. Make a note in your diaries and start collecting those items you no longer want, that others may find a good home for.

For further information on any of the above please contact Lesley on 01483 533762

**Treasure Island**  
directed by Gemma Hoogson  
written by Richard Lloyd  
Tickets: £7.50  
Concessions available for Members

**THE PANTO**

**21st-23rd January 2010**  
**Onslow Village Hall**  
**7.45pm**  
plus Saturday Matinee 2.30pm

**Box Office: 01483 568023**  
[www.curtainraisers.org](http://www.curtainraisers.org)

by kind permission of Samuel French Ltd.

## OVRA on Facebook & Twitter

Don't forget you can follow us on Facebook and Twitter and receive updates about all our events and news affecting Onslow Village. Just search for "Onslow Village Residents' Association" on Facebook, and on Twitter, find us at [http://twitter.com/OVRA\\_](http://twitter.com/OVRA_) (Take care to include the underscore or you'll be following someone quite different!).

## Corrections

There were a couple of errors in the last issue that we'd like to correct: Joe Pais is not standing down as Acting Chairman, in fact at the last AGM Joe was elected to serve as Chairman for the next three years; and in the article about the Powell Close railings, the school was incorrectly called Onslow First School, whereas it is, of course, Onslow Infant School.

Apologies to Joe and to everyone at the school for these errors.

## VILLAGE VOICE 19 REPLY SLIP

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone No: .....

E-mail address: .....

*You can unsubscribe at any time and we will not pass your details to any third party.*

### Comments/views/suggestions:

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Please hand this form in at a social event, send it to OVRA Secretary, 68 High View Road, Guildford GU2 7RU or email your comments to [ovra.news@ntlworld.com](mailto:ovra.news@ntlworld.com).

## BOOKING FORM FOR ONSLOW VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL PARTY ON SATURDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 2010

I would like to book tickets for the following OVRA Members:

Name: ..... Address: .....

Name: ..... Address: .....

Name: ..... Address: .....

Name: ..... Address: .....

*(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)*

Number of tickets required for Members (list names above): ..... @ £10 each £.....

Number of tickets required for Non-members: ..... @ £15 each £.....

**Total payment enclosed:** £.....

Return the completed form and payment to Onslow Village Residents' Association, c/o 17 Friars Gate, Guildford GU2 7PQ by **31st January 2010 at the latest**.

**NB: Tickets will be delivered to the first person on the list.**

If you have not received your tickets by 1st February 2010, please ring Marian on 07726 952466.

