

January 2024



## **THE CORN EXCHANGE TIMES**

*Newsletter of the Sinodun Players*



### **Musings from the Chair - January 2024**

Happy New Year! I hope you all had good Christmas and New Year celebrations.

Not much to report this month as it's all hands on deck for the final week of panto rehearsals. Ticket sales are excellent and there are only a few left so if you haven't yet bought yours, get in quick to avoid disappointment. As always, there are so many people working hard to get this production on stage and I would like to thank all of the construction team, the wardrobe team, the painters, lighting and sound crews, Rob and the band who have been busy rehearsing off site, Emma Trotman and her crew who are preparing and organising the backstage support and of course the wonderful cast.

Our annual Punchbowl in December was a great success and it was lovely to see so many of you attending. As you know the evening was dedicated to our late president Dennis Wood and both Mark and Simon Wood were deeply moved by the tributes and love that were expressed for both Dennis and Jose. It was a very special evening so thank you to all who were involved.

In this month's CX Times you will see a plea for volunteers to come forward to help crew Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, our Crescendo/SP early spring collaborative production. This a challenging and complex show and we would be delighted to hear from anyone who would be interested in getting involved. You don't have to commit to the whole run and you don't have to have backstage experience as training will be given. Any amount of time that you would be able to commit would be very much appreciated. Please contact either Bruce Williams or me for further details.

Also after pantomime, the first read through for the late Spring Production, The Invisible Man is Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February at 7.30pm in the Dennis Wood Studio. This is Mark Wilkin's first directorial role for the SP's so do come along and support him. Again, read on for more information.

Lastly, there are still quite a lot of Christmas Cards up in the Curtis Room, left over from our Christmas Card social evening. Please do pop in and see if any belong to you, otherwise they may well get binned!

Until the next time.

**Caroline Malnick**

Chair



## BOARD BANTER – January 2024

Happy New Year to all our wonderful members and volunteers.

Not much to report as there is no Board Meeting in January due to so many being involved one way or another with the pantomime.



Maybe it's taking all of you a bit of time to get back in the swing of things (I know I'm still not quite sure what day of the week it is and there is still a box of Quality Street that hasn't been eaten!) but now that the Christmas decorations have come down, could I ask you all to check your diaries and double check whether you can help out front of house this month. With so many of our House Managers, box office, bar and coffee folk involved on or backstage for "Sinbad" it's proving quite difficult to fill all the slots. Add to the usual rotas the need to find people to staff the Curtis Room selling sweets and merchandise, and drinks and ice cream, and you can imagine what a challenge this time of year always is. We need a minimum of 10 front of house people for every performance.

So do please check your diaries and offer to help wherever you can. If it's some time since you've done a duty then you will be put with an experienced person who can bring you up to speed.

And finally, two important reminders:

To save money, we are trying to limit heating to the actual hours when the Corn Exchange is in use. If you are planning to use any part of the building and need the heating on, please don't try and do anything yourself – it is now all controlled on-line. Please contact the Building Services Director, John Wright via [buildingservicesdirector@cornexchange.org.uk](mailto:buildingservicesdirector@cornexchange.org.uk) or 07940 895571. He has had to spend too many hours in the building recently due to people deciding to reset thermostats. Please phone, don't fiddle!

If you are locking up the building, please ensure that all the fire doors have been properly and firmly closed. We have had another incident where the alarms have been triggered and people have been called out to go to the theatre unexpectedly. And, of course, please *turn out all the lights if you're the one locking up*.

It only remains to say "break a leg" to everyone involved in Sinbad and – if you haven't yet got your tickets – then don't forget to book online or at the box office. It's going to be a great way to beat the January blues.

**Gloria Wright**

Chair, Corn Exchange Wallingford Ltd

January 2024



Less than a week to go and final preparations are well underway ...



The Workshop 'Boys' pause for well-earned tea-break



Captain Kippa learns his lines



Creative team + assistants



The Peri appears - late as usual



Elizabeth, Alexa, Ellie & Joseph work on a number



Cloths are hung and flats are set



The Old Man of the Sea moves on Sinbad



Sinbad meets Bulbous Nosa

***On Stage Tuesday 12th January - to Saturday 27th January***

***Tickets are selling fast, have you got yours?***



January 2024

# OPEN MORNING

Saturday 17 February 2024

10.00am - 1.00pm

Corn Exchange, Wallingford

Come and explore your local theatre and cinema.

Find out what goes on behind the scenes to project films  
and bring our live productions to life on stage.

Explore how you can get involved.

Free tea, coffee and cake.  
We look forward to meeting you!



**Please let anyone you know who is interested in joining us at the  
SP's & CX to come along to this Open Morning**

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**FLYING INTO  
THE CORN EXCHANGE  
IN FEBRUARY & MARCH**



*Would you like to be part of this fabulous family West End style show?*

*The SPs are seeking volunteers for this high-octane show to work behind the scenes.*

*Stage crew for shifting scenery & props*

*Flying crew for multiple flying of cloths and scenery*

*Dates and times we'll need people are subject to confirmation, but we are seeking your support for the show during the evenings and some daytime slots in February & March.*

*Can you offer help on any of the following?:*

***Get in and Fit up:***

*Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February - Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March*

***Technical Rehearsals:***

*Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March - Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March*

***Dress Rehearsals:***

*Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March - Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March*

***Performances:***

*Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March - Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March*

*Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March - Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March*

***Get out:***

*Sunday 24 March – Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March*

*Please email Bruce Williams, Production Manager, at [bruce.williams007@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.williams007@gmail.com) or phone him on 077649 45197 to have a chat about how you can help with this Fantasmagorical show.*

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**PERFORMANCES:**

**Wednesday 13 to Friday 15 March at 7.30pm**

**Saturday 16 March at 2.30pm & 7.30pm**

**Sunday 17 March at 2.30pm**

**Wednesday 20 to Friday 22 March at 7.30pm**

**Saturday 23 March at 2.30pm & 7.30pm**

**Tickets:**

**Adults £25 Under 18's £19**

Crescendo Music is once again partnering with The Sinodun Players to produce the hit musical *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. This *fantasmagorical* stage version features all the classic scenes and songs from the 1968 movie, including *Toot Sweets*, *Me Ol' Bamboo*, *Hushabye Mountain* and, yes, an actual flying car!

Previous collaborations between Crescendo and The Sinodun Players have produced top-class sell-out shows, most recently *Chess*. This one-off production is sponsored by *Chitty Hire* - the official Chitty supplier to theatres across the UK – so audiences are in for a spectacular visual and musical treat!

Book early for this classic, much-loved story featuring a stellar cast & crew of local talent, working in conjunction with a professional production company with West End values and know-how.

Music and Lyrics by Richard M Sherman and Robert B Sherman

Music by Special Arrangement with Sony/ATV Publishing

Adapted for the stage by Jeremy Sans

Based on the MGM Motion Picture

Licensed script adapted by Ray Roderick

Based on the children's novel by Ian Fleming

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International

All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI



January 2024

# THE INVISIBLE MAN



BY H.G. WELLS  
ADAPTED BY DEREK WEBB

## PREVIEW AND AUDITIONS

in the Dennis Wood Studio , Corn Exchange Wallingford

### Preview and read-through

Thursday, 1st February @ 7.30pm

### Auditions

Thursday, 8th February @ 7.30pm

Sunday, 11th February @ 2.30pm

### Performance dates

21st-25th May 2024

More information from Mark Wilkin  
[markrwilkin@gmail.com](mailto:markrwilkin@gmail.com)



January 2024



## **The Invisible Man Preview**

Want to find out about our May production? Mark Wilkin, who is directing The Invisible Man is hosting a preview and read-through in the Studio on Thursday, 1st February at 7.30pm. Although aimed primarily at those thinking of auditioning, it is open to all.

## **The Invisible Man Auditions**

**7.30pm Thursday, 8th February and 2.30pm Sunday 11th February**

**Corn Exchange Studio**

Derek Webb has taken H.G. Wells' classic science fiction morality story and, without losing the essence of the story, turned it into a fast-moving and funny stage play with a bit of magic rolled in!

In our version, 3-5 actors will be playing 15 characters including, a vicar, PCs, a pub landlady, a tramp, and, of course, Griffin - the Invisible Man himself. The auditions are open to all. If you are up for a challenge and plenty of hard work with a bit of fun thrown in, I would love to see you at the auditions!

My email address for more information, scripts, etc., is [markwilkin@gmail.com](mailto:markwilkin@gmail.com). Please also contact me if you would like to audition but cannot make the above dates.

**Mark Wilkin**

Director



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## Punchbowl 2023

An Evening of Festive Treats Dedicated to  
Dennis Wood,  
President of the Sinodun Players 1999 - 2022



Congratulations to all our members and friends who joined us for this special event in December. Amongst the programme were A Christmas Carol, re-imagined courtesy of Marilyn Johnstone (above left) and the Outliers who gave us a great music set (above right)



Mark and Simon Wood, sons of Dennis and Jose Wood, were guests of honour with friends and family and were bowled over by the tributes to their late and esteemed father. They were both involved in the creation of the theatre as it is today, Dennis had them fetching and carrying and fixing from their early teens. Mark recalled the great affection which both Dennis and Jose had for the SPs and the Corn Exchange, remembering countless shows and pantos over the years. Indeed, Mark has painted sets for us in the past, the latest being his beautiful Jack and the Beanstalk set, designed and painted by him. Simon was delighted to go backstage after the show and search out his own brick which he signed during the re-ordering back in the 70s.



**Crisis Update**



£3,120, that's the amount of money I know has come through me or my fundraising page for Crisis so far. This includes the Punchbowl raffle but not yet the approx. £1,500 from ticket sales. Thank you ever so much to all who donated.

I spent my shifts this year as an Assistant Team Leader at 2 of our 3 hotels. The first was open for four weeks and aimed at the hardest to reach homeless guests. Because of this we were only at half capacity by Christmas Eve, whilst the other hotels were full. The shifts were vey quiet, which is what we really want as this means the guests are settled.

My second hotel was open for two weeks and there was a little more friction. The advice teams worked hard to engage with the guests and help them with housing or benefits needs. The most vulnerable guests later moved into the spare capacity at my first hotel allowing the advice teams to continue working with them.

And just to let you all know, as Pantomime Producer, that there's now less than 200 tickets left for the run, so do buy yours online if you haven't already.

**Nick Morley**

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**Health & Safety**



Welcome to 2024 everyone. The monthly walk rounds in the second half of 2023 picked up far fewer H&S non compliances than in previous years so well done everyone. The only real issue was equipment left blocking fire exits after rehearsals. Please remember to keep all exit routes clear.

For information, the emergency lights are undergoing a drain down test on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, the Fire Alarm is being serviced in the morning of 9<sup>th</sup> February and a date for your new diaries, First Aid Training on 24<sup>th</sup> February. More details to follow.

**Julie G**

January 2024

## Save the Date!

Keep **Thu 15 Feb 7.30 pm** FREE for

### "PRESIDENT'S SP& CX Archives on the BIG SCREEN"

A **FREE EVENING OF FILM** to celebrate JW's 83rd Birthday [4 Feb 24]..

*Book On Line, by 'phone or in person at the Box Office.*

8 mm film from 1975 & TV Screenings for 1990 & 2000.

See SPs past & present !!



## Congratulations

to Marie Watt, SP friend and frequent visitor from North of the Border, on winning the Christmas Jumper competition on the Annual SP Card Night held just before Christmas.

Marie is a huge fan of the theatre and attends numerous concerts, shows and theatrical performances all over the country. Lovely to welcome you again Marie.

If only you were more local.....

## Membership Secretary Required

The post of Membership secretary has become vacant and the society is currently seeking someone to take-on this key role and to keep and manage the membership list and subscriptions and annual payments.

Could this be you?

For further information please contact Caroline Malnick at [chair@sinodunplayers.org](mailto:chair@sinodunplayers.org)



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## CORN EXCHANGE MANAGERS

Box Office	John Warburton	<a href="mailto:boxoffice@cornexchange.org.uk">boxoffice@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 823878
Box Office Rotas	Barbara Kershaw	<a href="mailto:cinemaboxofficerota@cornexchange.org.uk">cinemaboxofficerota@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 837363
Bar Manager	Pete Orton	<a href="mailto:barmanager@cornexchange.org.uk">barmanager@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 832028
Bar Rotas & Training	David Simmons	<a href="mailto:barrota@cornexchange.org.uk">barrota@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 839131
Designated Premises Supervisor	Nick Morley	<a href="mailto:nick.morley@sinodunplayers.org.uk">nick.morley@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07843 006704
Cinema Manager	John Warburton	<a href="mailto:cinemamanager@cornexchange.org.uk">cinemamanager@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 832878
Cinema Rotas	John Pinniger	<a href="mailto:cinemarotas@cornexchange.org.uk">cinemarotas@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07722 951670
Newsletter Editor	Jean Simmons	<a href="mailto:newsletter@sinodunplayers.org.uk">newsletter@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07787 132046
House Manager Rota	Ric Harley	<a href="mailto:erica.harley@sinodunplayers.org.uk">erica.harley@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07798 911734
Usher Rota	Lynn Burridge	<a href="mailto:ushersrota@cornexchange.org.uk">ushersrota@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 833009
Technical Manager	Mike Baker	<a href="mailto:technicalmanager@cornexchange.org.uk">technicalmanager@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07788 413694
Coffee Rota (Fri&Sat)	Julie Utley	<a href="mailto:julieutley53@gmail.com">julieutley53@gmail.com</a>	07818 112348
Coffee Rota (eves)	Anne Stammers	<a href="mailto:anne.stammers@sinodunplayers.org.uk">anne.stammers@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	01491 838012
Incoming Show SM		<a href="mailto:stagemanager@cornexchange.org.uk">stagemanager@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	
Room Bookings	Nick Morley	<a href="mailto:roombooker@cornexchange.org.uk">roombooker@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07843 006704
Housekeeping	Julie Grimshaw	<a href="mailto:housekeeper@cornexchange.org.uk">housekeeper@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07733 026008
Health & Safety	Mahmood Ebrahimjee	<a href="mailto:healthandsafety@cornexchange.org.uk">healthandsafety@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07852 207216

## THE BOARD OF CORN EXCHANGE WALLINGFORD LTD

<b>The Board</b>		<b><a href="mailto:board@cornexchange.org.uk">board@cornexchange.org.uk</a></b>	
Chairman	Gloria Wright	<a href="mailto:chair@cornexchange.org.uk">chair@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 824206
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Treasurer	Sue Lovegrove	<a href="mailto:treasurer@cornexchange.org.uk">treasurer@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	01491 200558
Human Resources	Julie Grimshaw	<a href="mailto:HRDirector@cornexchange.org.uk">HRDirector@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07733 026008
Finance	Stephen Williams	<a href="mailto:financedirector@cornexchange.org.uk">financedirector@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07375 09825
Marketing & Program	John Evans	<a href="mailto:MarketingDirector@cornexchange.org.uk">MarketingDirector@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07785 367512
SPC Representative	Caroline Malnick	<a href="mailto:Chairman@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk">Chairman@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07930 540111
Community Liaison	Elaine Hornsby	<a href="mailto:elaine.hornsby@cornexchange.org.uk">elaine.hornsby@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07736 555726
Front of House	Graham Gilgrass	<a href="mailto:graham.gilgrass@cornexchange.org.uk">graham.gilgrass@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07805 029697
Health & Safety & Company Secretary	Mahmood Ebrahimjee	<a href="mailto:Mahmood.ebrahimjee@cornexchange.org.uk">Mahmood.ebrahimjee@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07852 207216
Building Services	John Wright	<a href="mailto:buildingservicesdirector@cornexchange.org.uk">buildingservicesdirector@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07940 895571



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## SINODUN PLAYERS DRAMATIC SOCIETY

President	John Warburton	<a href="mailto:john.warburton@sinodunplayers.org.uk">john.warburton@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	01491 832878
Hon Vice President	Jan Castle		01491 839105
Hon Vice President	David Simmons	<a href="mailto:david.simmons@sinodunplayers.org.uk">david.simmons@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	01491 839131
Hon Vice President	Keith Yapp	<a href="mailto:keith.yapp@sinodunplayers.org.uk">keith.yapp@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
Membership Admin		<a href="mailto:membershipsecretary@sinodunplayers.org.uk">membershipsecretary@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
<b>TRUSTEES COMMITTEE</b>			
		<a href="mailto:committee@trustees.sinodunplayers.org.uk">committee@trustees.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
Chairman	Martin Parr	<a href="mailto:chair@trustees.sinodunplayers.org.uk">chair@trustees.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07789 371678
Financial Trustee	Ian Gillespie	<a href="mailto:finance@trustees.sinodunplayers.org.uk">finance@trustees.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
	Will Lidbetter	<a href="mailto:will.lidbetter@sinodunplayers.org.uk">will.lidbetter@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07990 796876
	Emma Trotman	<a href="mailto:emma.trotman@sinodunplayers.org.uk">emma.trotman@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07557 737002
	Nick Morley	<a href="mailto:nick.morley@sinodunplayers.org.uk">nick.morley@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07843 006704
	Minaz Beddall	<a href="mailto:minaz.beddall@sinodunplayers.org.uk">minaz.beddall@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
Secretary	Anna Garland	<a href="mailto:Anna.garland@sinodunplayers.org.uk">Anna.garland@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07988 700120
<b>SINODUN PLAYERS COMMITTEE</b>			
		<a href="mailto:committee@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk">committee@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
Chairman	Caroline Malnick	<a href="mailto:chairman@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk">chairman@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07930 540111
Vice Chairman & Youth Liaison	Rebecca Cleverley	<a href="mailto:rebecca.cleverley@sinodunplayers.org.uk">rebecca.cleverley@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	01491 825797
Treasurer	Anne Stammers	<a href="mailto:treasurer@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk">treasurer@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	01491 838012
Secretary	Marilyn Leadbetter	<a href="mailto:secretary@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk">secretary@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
Membership Liaison	Rebecca Cleverley	<a href="mailto:rebecca.cleverley@sinodunplayers.org.uk">rebecca.cleverley@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07734 006797
Artistic Programming	Sarah Enticknap	<a href="mailto:Sarah.enticknap@sinodunplayers.org.uk">Sarah.enticknap@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07532035939
	Sue Forward		
	Len Pannett	<a href="mailto:Len.pannett@sinodunplayers.org.uk">Len.pannett@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07968 197862
Membership Liaison	Dorothy Hirsch	<a href="mailto:Dorothy.hirsch@sinodunplayers.org.uk">Dorothy.hirsch@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	07548 303001
Marketing Head	Bruce Williams	<a href="mailto:Bruce.williams007@gmail.com">Bruce.williams007@gmail.com</a>	07764 945197
Social & Fundraising	Julie Utley		
Webmaster	Sarah Enticknap	<a href="mailto:webmaster@sinodunplayers.org.uk">webmaster@sinodunplayers.org.uk</a>	
Technical Manager	Mike Baker	<a href="mailto:Technicalmanager@cornexchange.org.uk">Technicalmanager@cornexchange.org.uk</a>	07788 413694

### **Copy date for the February issue...**

All entries for inclusion in the next edition of the Corn Exchange Times to newsletter@sinodunplayers.org.uk by **Noon Sunday 11th February 2024** (or preferably, earlier please).