



The official Kelvin Players newsletter

Dominick tries out his latest badger joke on Lisa—and it goes down as well as expected...



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If you would like to send in an article or idea to the Jester, then please email Mat Rees at: jester@kelvinplayers.co.uk or call: 07957 593155.

A view from the chair

Dear Members,

Being Chairman of Kelvin is nothing if not varied. There is the mundane, such as accepting the fact that Henry the vacuum has finally 'given up the ghost' and needs replacing. There is the more challenging, such as negotiating with a neighbour and the local councillor and agreeing that 'no you can't get two 4x4s into the parking area safely'. Then there are the exciting bits like watching the Black Box production, and new directors 'cutting their teeth'. There is also the satisfaction of watching a club member gain in confidence as they prove they not only 'can do' but can really excel.

The commitment of Kelvin members never ceases to amaze. The ability of individuals to rise to seemingly almost any challenge, and for members to work together towards ever higher goals is nothing short of remarkable.

What you might ask, is the old fool going on about! Well, sometimes something remarkable happens and it helps to put things into perspective. This morning I stood in the garden wearing a welder's helmet, (yes, alright don't go there), and I literally watched the Sun 'smile'. As the moon passed in front of the sun there was a giant golden smile in the sky. It was awesome, and on such a scale that it puts what seems to be insurmountable problems back into a manageable size.

Life in Kelvin can sometimes throw the odd curved ball; just as it does in that parallel place called 'real life'. It's then you realize that the total of the sum is greater than the parts. It is then that you realize what can be achieved when like minded people work together towards a common goal.

On the face of it the idea of a group of part time volunteers taking on an activity normally reserved for highly trained professionals doesn't seem an entirely good idea. But then that sort of challenge is just what makes Kelvin exceptional.

Tartuffe at the Tobacco Factory! As a member of the club you may not be directly involved in the production but your help is still needed. We need to put as many 'bums on seats' as possible. We cannot leave it to the Tobacco Factory to sell our show for us. If every member of the club sold just five tickets the result would be fantastic. If one of those tickets is for you that means you only need to find four family or friends to come along!

To close I would like, on behalf of the Club, to give a huge vote of thanks to Mat Rees, for having edited 50 editions of the Jester. This is a great achievement. Well done Mat. I am sure that you will all agree that he never fails to produce a dynamic, informative and interesting newsletter and will be a very 'hard act to follow'.

Robin Turner

Chair

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Latest news from the construction team

Hi All

Works in the bar are coming on. There was a brief hiatus whilst the wiring and plastering was done and now work has started re-building a bar in the existing shell!

Sadly, I am involved with Tartuffe so am no longer able to be there to get in the way, so work is being tackled (no doubt to a much higher standard than my own efforts) by Derek and Andy, Susan and Dominick – for which, much thanks.



Susan has camouflaged the old door into what was the kitchen ... you'd never know it was ever there – apart from the fact that we've specifically left the existing door frame as it a) describes the history of the changes and b) it would be a hassle to replace it if we ever want to reverse the changes.

Those who have visited the studio recently will notice that our rather aged and decrepit buzzer entry system has now been replaced with a super-whizzy, blue-glowing, 3-space unit so there are now remote-entry activators in the Morris Room (replacing the old knackered phone), the main hall (with a switch to turn it off during performances) and in the new bar.

If you're interested in helping with set construction (or indeed major building works) let me know and I let you know if/when we can use you. Construction Team generally meets on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:30 until 10:00ish.

Jonny Wilkinson

Company Stage Manager

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Passing the time

“Why can’t you write the way people want?” wrote Frank Beckett to his brother Samuel. Well, Sam isn’t everyone’s cup of tea, and it’s fair to say that Beckett might always be a controversial choice of playwright for any company. But in February, I achieved a very long-standing ambition: to bring Samuel Beckett to the Kelvin stage and I thank the APC for giving me the chance.

I began with a very distinct vision of how I wanted the plays to look and sound, and a fabulous cast and crew delivered magnificently what I had hoped for. It was a pleasure to work with a fine cast of six, including three brand new members of Kelvin (two of whom had worked with Beckett plays before). The plays I chose were complex and daunting – especially the longer ones – but I felt a very strong willingness and trust during rehearsals, which paid off with a very strong set of plays. So thanks, Jon Bard, Mike Jessup, Meg Pickup, Roger Shutt, Tegan Westall and Anna Wills.

The final product wouldn’t have had its very strong visual and aural impact had it not been for a very effective technical team.

Beckett so often works with variations of black, white and grey, so it was a pleasure to begin with *Come and Go*, with its three colourful coats. Thanks to Mary McCallum for research and procurement of the fabric for these, as well as getting the wigs and the men’s coats. And thanks to Pia Pispa for the design and manufacture of the women’s coats. Thanks also to Tracy Reid for keeping the wigs in good working order. Thanks too, to Jonny and Susan for a bench and table, and to our producer, Richard Newman, for a lighting plot that added impact to the overall appearance of the set.

‘*That Time* is a complex play involving three voices or, to be precise, recordings of three versions of the same voice, played back in 36 in short paragraphs. Thanks to Peter Spence for managing the recording process and for curating the entr’acte music for the whole set.

My biggest fear was – to paraphrase Frank Beckett – that I might have been putting on a show that people didn’t want. So I’d like to give a special mention to members of the audience who commented positively on the production after the show. It’s always good to get feedback. Quite a few owned up that they didn’t like Beckett when they arrived, and still didn’t like him when they left; but they still had compliments for the design and execution of the show. Others were moved (to tears in at least one case) by the plays and performances. You can’t put on a production to suit all tastes.

A wry comment from *Waiting for Godot*:

VLADIMIR: That passed the time.

ESTRAGON: It would have passed in any case.

It passed very well for me.

Paul Garner
Director



Above: Things hot up as Ghosts begin to emerge



Above: Those visually stunning costumes in *Come and Go*



Above: Becky, Rob (back), Caroline and Tracey (front) take a break after dealing with the *Ghosts of Bedlam*.

Below: Dominick and Rick (back), unhappy that Lisa (front), finally made herself comfortable.



Left: Mike Jessup, Roger Shutt, Paul Garner, Jon Bard (back), Meg Pickup, Anna Wills and Tegan Westall (front), manage to raise a smile after tackling the Becketts.

Made themselves very comfortable

I often feel guilty asking a club the size and quality of Kelvin to put on something I've written. Of all the plays in the world, it seems greedy of me to want them to do one of mine. Still, I've not yet been turned down and my discomfort was reduced by the turnout at the auditions and the number of auditionees. I could have cast my play five times over! Ok, there were only three characters, but it was still pleasing to have so many to choose from.

As it was, I opted for three people I knew really well: Rick Procter, Lisa Hamilton-James and Dominick Fanning. Fortunately, I chose well. We had a great time and each of them, in their own special way, was fantastic to work with, contributing a huge amount to the outcome. Even fitting all our rehearsal time into four, six-hour long Sunday sessions didn't quell their enthusiasm. If anything it only encouraged them.

It was an opportunity to learn a great deal more about three fantastic actors, and by the end of it felt much closer to them.

As always we were ably supported by the crew, albeit a small one for our play. Pete Spence's support and advice about sound and music, Paul Richards excellent work on the balcony, Susan Howe's generally superb backstage support, and of course Richard Newman's calm, controlled and disciplined production—as fair and supportive as always. He enjoyed it so much, he even brought his girlfriend along...

On top of that there were the casts of the other two shows. By the end, we all felt like we were part of a large extended family and the debut Black Box production was an enjoyable experience to be involved in. My congratulations for Josh for bringing together this one, which I'm sure will be the first of many.

But for me, the most enjoyable part of it was spending that time with four talented actors and lovely people. *Make Yourself Comfortable* was a success because of their hard work, commitment and talent. They were a joy to work with.

Mat Rees

Director

Right: My wonderful cast, Lisa Hamilton-James, Dominick Fanning and Rick Procter make themselves very comfortable



Orgon hots up

Things are hotting up chez Orgon! The cast have been working hard getting to grips with the characters and working in the round – a new experience for many!

Claire Moulds ran an introduction to Intentions for the actors where she opened up the opportunities of playing the same small scenes with one character changing their intentions and the others having to react. An interesting and enjoyable evening.



Bob Havard also got into the act the following week with an exercise and discussion on character using what the other characters say about you to build a deeper and more complex picture of each individual. There were some surprises and revelations which we will find useful as rehearsal continues. The first half has been blocked and run through two or three times. Ready now to move to the second half!

On the technical side of life Robin is 'building' the mock-Gothic elements to 'set' the piece. He is being helped by new member Heather and Susan Howe. Richard Newman is sorting out the lighting and has had a visit to the Tobacco Factory to talk Techie stuff with their resident technician, Mat. Chrissy Fryers has made some stunning costumes so far with more to follow when she returns from her skiing holiday. Kate Buchan is accumulating props at a prodigious rate, and Tracy Reid is set to finalise her plans for hair and make up.

Bob Havard is pulling his team together, with Anne Wills taking on the DSM role and Rosie Collins, another new member filling the role as ASM and deputising for Bob in the event he has to go on stage script in hand.

Teri Mohiuddin is now back from holiday, thank goodness, and is pulling the production side of the show together and Craig Malpass is making sure that our potential audience gets to hear about the show. He has worked up a press release in conjunction with the Tobacco factory as well as preparing our brochure entry for the Tobacco Factory's next season.

It has been all go and we are on track and schedule. You cannot ask more than that. Next task for us and all Kelvin Members is to ensure as big an audience as we can for the production.

Ralf Togneri

Director

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Dazed, but not confused



***Glory Dazed* by Cat Jones**

Tuesday 14 to Saturday 18 July 2015

Directed by Alex Needham

A thought-provoking, laugh-out-loud funny and heartbreaking portrayal of how difficult it can be for ex-servicemen to adjust to civilian life. The play was written by Cat Jones in response to workshops and discussion groups attended by ex-servicemen who are serving prison sentences at HMP and YOI Doncaster.

The central character is Ray, a young ex-serviceman who, since being back from Afghanistan, has lost his wife, his children and his home and spends his time drinking and getting into fights.

After a particularly gruesome incident Ray realises that he has gone too far and must leave Doncaster and so tries to convince his ex-wife to bring the kids and join him in Brighton. The play focuses on his last night in Doncaster, after hours in a pub, with his ex-wife Carla, former best friend Simon and new barmaid Leanne.

This is a brave piece of new writing that neither idolizes nor vilifies ex-servicemen. Instead it acknowledges that those returning from the front lines are, first and foremost, people and can have serious problems readjusting to what we all consider "normal life", whether because of physical scars or mental ones.

Dazed, but not confused

Cast List:

Ray: 20-30, ex-husband of Carla

Carla: 20-30, ex-wife of Ray

Simon: 20-50, old friend of Ray, landlord of the pub

Leanne: Late teens-early 20's, new barmaid at the pub

(Please note all ages are approximate.)

Important dates for your diary:

Sunday 12 April, 7pm: Read through in the Morris Room.

Tuesday 14 April, 7.30pm: Auditions in the Morris Room

Friday 17 April, 7.30pm: Auditions in the Morris Room

Sunday 19 April, 7pm: Call backs (if required) in the Morris Room

I am very lucky in that I have already found my assistant director, Kath Farnaby, and production manager, Anna Wills, who are already proving to be awesome! The other technical roles have yet to be filled so please get in touch if you are interested, regardless of your experience (or lack thereof!).

I can't tell you how much I am looking forward to making a start on this great play and am looking forward to seeing lots of you at the read through.

Alex Needham

Director

alex.needham@hotmail.co.uk

Proposals for the 2016 Season

This week I chaired the first meeting of the “new look” APC and several interesting plans were discussed – watch this space for future artistic Kelvin developments including the possibility of themed seasons and possibly even devised plays!

In the meantime, we need to keep our bread and butter going, if you can call anything as wonderful as the regular Kelvin season mere bread and butter. As you may already be aware the deadline for proposals for the 2016 season has been brought forward a month this year and whilst we have had a small number of proposals so far we really need several more in the next month to get our teeth into and make it a more varied choice.

Of course there is still the possibilities of submitting One Act Plays for the Black Box production for new directors (or established ones) or the Bristol One Act Festival as well as full plays for the regular season slots.

If you're struggling for ideas below is the APC's current Approved Plays list which contains plays we would like to see the club put on, and which we would be pleased to see proposals for (with no guarantee of success of course).

Of course, whilst we at the APC love to create an interesting and varied season we can only choose from what is proposed and we'd always rather have numerous proposals to choose from so that the best quality and balanced season can be found.

So if you're a director, new or old, go to the APC section of the Kelvin Members webpages at: www.kelvinmembers.co.uk/APC/apc.html where there is plenty of information, and get proposing.

Please get in touch with me or any member of the APC if you need any advice or guidance.

Final reminder: The deadline for proposals is **1 May 2015**.

Joshua Cooper

Artistic Director

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The APC are: Anna Barry, Josh Cooper, Jacqs Graham, Fran Lewis, Sam Skelton, Peter Spence and Robin Turner.

Kelvin APC Approved List (March 2015)

It should be stressed that being on the Approved List by no means implies a proposal will automatically be selected. We must be convinced that the whole package, director's visions, the slot required etc are right. Indeed, as with all plays, no proposal can be taken in isolation and we have to ensure that a season balances genre, setting requirements, budgets etc and that even if a play is approved it still must be considered with all this in mind.

Period (Prior to 20th Century)

1. Jane Ayre – Charlotte Bronte (Numerous adaptations available)
2. Hamlet – William Shakespeare
3. Faustus – Christopher Marlow
4. Duchess Of Malfi – John Webster
5. One of the Greek Tragedies
6. The Spanish Tragedy – Thomas Kydd
7. Therese Raquin – Emile Zola

Modern (20th Century)

1. Man And Superman – George Bernard Shaw
2. The 39 Steps – Adaptation Based On The Hitchcock Film And Novel By John Buchan
3. The Deep Blue Sea – Terrence Rattigan
4. Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf – Edward Albee
5. Waiting For Godot – Samuel Beckett
6. The Birthday Party – Harold Pinter
7. Absurd Person Singular – Alan Ayckbourn
8. Noises Off – Michael Frayn
9. Six Characters In Search Of An Author – Luigi Pirandello (Modern one: Rupert Gould)
10. Marat/Sade – Peter Weiss
11. Any play by Dario Fo
12. Mother Courage And Her Children – Berthold Brecht
13. Oh! What A Lovely War – Theatre Workshop
14. Streetcar Named Desire – Tennessee Williams
15. A View From The Bridge – Arthur Miller
16. Playhouse Creatures – April De Angelis
17. East – Steven Berkoff

New Writing (From 1990s onward)

1. The Weir – Conor Mcpherson
2. Popcorn – Ben Elton
3. Speaking in Tongues – Andrew Bovell
4. Love and Information – Caryl Churchill
5. Faustus – Rupert Gould (Adaptation Of The Original)
6. Quills – Doug Wright (the original play that the film is based on)
7. The Wonderful World of Dissocia – Anthony Neilson
8. Attempts on Her Life – Martin Crimp
9. Birdsong – Rachel Wagstaff adaptation of Sebastian Faulkes novel
10. Columbinus – Stephen Karam and PJ Paparelli
11. Happy Now – Lucinda Coxon

Taking over

Kelvin Grapevine

Digestible?

Some of you have mentioned that you're not receiving the Digest.

The Digest is sent out weekly or fortnightly or whenever stuff happens by email only.

If you're not receiving it, firstly please check your junk mail folder and mark it as 'Not Junk'.

If you still can't find it, please email: web@kelvinplayers.co.uk

We can then check that we have your correct email address.

Jonny Wilkinson

Hello to my fellow Kelvinites! The Jester's editor has given me a few lines to introduce myself to you before the 'torch' gets passed to me.

I will be known quite well by a lot of the membership already but, I'd like to give a quick back history for those who may not.

I joined the club in 2005, and, with huge thanks to Sue Stobbs, I started in the well-loved production of 'Allo 'Allo as one of the airman in Rene's café.

Since then, I have played many parts in a number of productions, from a Georgian-era soldier to Shakespearian Scottish prince, a newly-wed to a King.

In 2007, my good friend, Josh Cooper, and I adapted and ran the Rehearsed Readings, which we continued to do until I left Kelvin Players in 2012 following my job starting in Cardiff.

As you can gather, I couldn't stay away!

I re-joined in 2015 with the plan to perform in Rehearsed Readings and help Craig Malpass by joining his new Marketing team. And now, I have the honour of taking over from Mat in running our long-running and popular newsletter.

I look forward to keeping you all well informed about everything going on in and around the Kelvin Players. See you all in the next issue!

Andy Cotton

Jester Editor

jester@kelvinplayers.co.uk



Above: Your baby-faced new Jester Editor, Andy Cotton, circa 2005

The Kelvin History, Volume II: The Next Generation 2005-2014

The next instalment of the Kelvin history book following on from Volume I (covering the years 1929-2004) will be launched at the Kelvin Studios on:

Sunday 26 April at 2.30pm

Afternoon tea will be available free of charge to those attending!

Copies of the book will be available to buy (cash only) for £7.50 and as a special deal (if you don't already have a copy of Volume I) the two can be purchased for £10.

Ten years in the writing examining every set of Management Committee minutes and every other available scrap of original source material has gone into creating this latest one hundred and thirty five page volume of the Kelvin history.

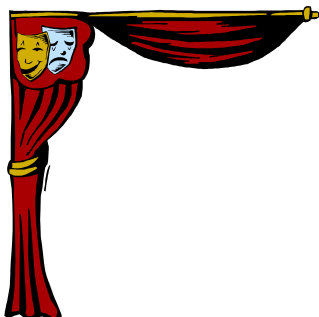
The author, Richard Jones, has not sought to censor or sanitise life within Kelvin over this ten year period only to tell it as it happened to enable existing members, and those who are yet to come, to have a better understanding of how Kelvin has developed over its 85 years, and in particular the last ten years, to get to the stage where it is today.

Richard Jones

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What's going on...



Stuff is going on in Bristol over the next couple of months. What a vast number of venues we now have in Bristol.

- **Romeo and Juliet** 19 Feb—4 Apr, Tobacco Factory Theatres
- **Mass** 30 Mar—2 Apr, Bristol Old Vic, Studio
- **Two, Four, Six, Eight!** 30 Mar—2 Apr, Tobacco Factory Theatres
- **Room on the Broom** 31 Mar—2 Apr, Bristol Old Vic, Theatre
- **Stories** 31 Mar—2 Apr, Redcliffe Secondary School
- **Standby for Tape Back-up** 3 Apr, The Cube Microplex
- **Mr Gotalot's Gotalot Shop: The Pants of Power** 4—5 Apr, Kelvin Players Studio Theatre
- **Score** 6—10 Apr, The Wardrobe Theatre
- **Penelope Retold** 09 Apr 11 Apr Venue: Tobacco Factory Theatres
- **The School for Scandal** 09 Apr 09 May Venue: Tobacco Factory Theatres
- **Under The Dark Moon** 10 Apr 18 Apr Venue: Bristol Old Vic, Theatre
- **The Amazing Bubble Man** 12 Apr Venue: Tobacco Factory Theatres
- **Lorraine and Alan** 13 Apr 18 Apr Venue: Tobacco Factory Theatres
- **First Aid Nursing Yeomanry** 14 Apr Venue: Bierkeller Theatre
- **Muscovado** 14 Apr 18 Apr Venue: Alma Tavern and Theatre
- **Aristophanes' Frogs** 16 Apr Venue: Arnos Vale Cemetery
- **Infectious** 20 Apr 24 Apr Venue: The Wardrobe Theatre
- **Instant Wit** 25 Apr Venue: Alma Tavern Theatre
- **House of Ghosts** 26 Apr Venue: Bierkeller Theatre
- **Casting the Runes: Two Ghost Stories** 26 Apr Venue: Tobacco Factory Theatres
- **Nothing Changes** 27 Apr 28 Apr Venue: Bierkeller Theatre
- **Birdsong** 27 Apr 09 May Venue: Bristol Old Vic, Theatre
- **Femme Fatigue** 15 May Venue: The Wardrobe Theatre
- **Alice In Wasteland** 20 May 24 May Venue: The Main Space, The Station
- **The Rise and Fall of a Northern Star** 25 May Venue: Bierkeller Theatre
- **Constellations** 27 May 30 May Venue: Bristol Old Vic, Theatre

What's going on...

Want something? Need anything? You're sure to find it in Mr Gotalot's Gotalot Shop, the most magical shop in the entire universe... and it's coming to the Kelvin Players studio theatre this Easter!

A superhero has broken his pants of power. He comes to the Gotalot Shop to find a brand new pair so that he can rescue a kitten in deadly peril – but can Mr Gotalot help him in time? Will Sidney the shop boy stop playing on his phone long enough to lend a hand? Or will Mrs Barnet, the cantankerous landlady, ruin everything?

With plenty of jokes, songs, pants, smelly cheese, action, dancing, pants, Googling, imperilled kittens, buffoonery and MORE pants, Monkey Trousers Theatre will deliver a lively and fun theatrical experience for children and adults alike!

Kelvin members Charlotte Whitten and Fran Lewis have devised a brand new show for children aged 3 and up, under the name of their theatre company Monkey Trousers Theatre. Written by Fran, and with puppetry specially created by Charlotte, the show also features a stunning guest star performance from award-winning Best Actor Dominick Fanning, original music by the superb soundsmith Peter Spence, extraordinary set construction by the indomitable Susan Howe, otherworldly hair and make-up design by the phenomenal Tracy Reid, and... yes, plenty of pants.

There are four performances altogether: Saturday 4th April at 11am and 3pm, and Sunday 5th April at 11am and 3pm. You can book tickets through the Tobacco Factory box office website www.tobaccofactorytheatres.com/book or by calling them on 0117 902 0344.

For more information about Monkey Trousers Theatre, please check out their website www.monkeytrouserstheatre.com, like their Facebook page www.facebook.com/monkeytrouserstheatre or follow them on Twitter [@monkey_trousers](https://twitter.com/monkey_trousers)

Please support your fellow Kelvinites in their new venture – book your tickets today! – and who knows, YOU could be the guest star in a forthcoming show...



John Higson

The news of the death of John Higson at the age of 87 (on 7 February) at the Whitchurch Christian Nursing Home robbed Kelvin of one of its longest serving members severing yet another link with the immediate post war years.

At the Committee meeting on 6 February 1952 John's membership application was considered and approved, fortunately, as he had already been cast as the vicar's son in Roberts's Wife. On one occasion, as did some other Kelvin Players of the time, he played for the Rapier Players professional theatre company at Bristol's Little Theatre. At first he did not tell his mother he was in a play and her consternation as a member of the audience seeing him on stage can only be imagined

A solicitor by profession John provided legal advice to Kelvin over a number of years, at no cost, and was particularly helpful in acting for Kelvin during the sale of the old Somerset Street Studios and the purchase of the current Gloucester Road premises.

John was not always available to play for Kelvin due to work commitments and his involvement with the Old Bristolian's Society being cricket and hockey captain playing the latter for them until he was well into his seventies.. For Gloucestershire County Cricket Club he was on the committee, eventually taking on the role of Chairman for a period of six years. Nevertheless he did play a number of roles for Kelvin over the years.

In January 1977 John married Yvonne Bryant, a fellow Kelvin member, following a celebrated long engagement period. Yvonne died in 2003, a fine actress in her own right. The Evening Post newspaper, in a feature at the time of their wedding, commented that had she wished to become a professional actress she could easily have done so.

The couple had no children but John's younger brother David, who joined Kelvin in April 1952, survives him and like John always enthusiastically keeps in touch with all that is going on in the club.



In the Kelvin archives as part of the publicity for the 2009 eightieth anniversary production of The Merchant of Venice is a press video interview with the two brothers recalling their times at Kelvin, both ancient and modern, conducted by Amanda Parr, of the BBC, one time Kelvin member herself.

Richard Jones

Vice President

John Higson: A personal memory

I first met John in 1968 when we were cast in leading roles opposite each other in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* by Ray Lawler, a somewhat torrid play about tough Australian cane cutters who spent their winters cutting cane then came home to their wives and sweethearts for the summer. The play was directed by Sally Noble and was my first for Kelvin and, sadly, John's last. That, I hasten to add, was nothing to do with me but John's interests became more and more involved with sport, particularly cricket and hockey, and, although he never gave up his membership and support of Kelvin, he never found the time to tread the boards again.

I discovered much later that Sally had encountered some opposition to casting a complete newcomer in a leading role (something that has often influenced my choice of actors in my productions) but John and his then girlfriend Vonnice, who was also in the cast, were kind and welcoming and showed me the utmost friendship, an attitude I much appreciated as a rather awe struck newcomer to Bristol's most exclusive drama club.

During the rehearsal period John decided to take himself off to the West Indies, as they were called then, to watch England play cricket so we had to rehearse for a couple of weeks without a leading man. When he returned John presented me with a large stuffed kangaroo complete with a 'joey' in the pocket as a compensation. I still have it (below).

John and I always regarded each other with respect and affection even though we never acted together again and he was a great help and support with legal issues during my two periods as Chair, especially during the difficult process of buying our present premises and moving from our old Kingsdown Studio.

I did try to get John, by now an Honorary member, back onstage as one of the Cheerible Brothers in our 75th anniversary production of *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* in 2004 but, despite his initial enthusiasm, he finally decided he'd been away from the stage for too long and could not trust his memory enough to learn the lines. However John and David were regular supporters of Kelvin shows (until recent years when it became physically too difficult for them to manage) and were always to be found in the bar afterwards enthusing about the play and buying drinks, especially for the ladies, because both were that fast disappearing phenomenon, perfect gentlemen!

Speaking to Sally recently we observed that John and I were the last surviving members of the *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* cast. It's worth reflecting on the fact that all that we enjoy in Kelvin today is built on the hard work and foresight of those, like John, who went before us and have been proud to call themselves Kelvins.

Mary McCallum

Vice President



The Long Goodbye

So, fifty editions. And this is my last column—what should I write?

Well, initially, I thought I might write some kind of in-depth summary, analysing the high and lows of editing the Jester for the best part of a decade, and try to make sense of what it is that makes this publication so important to the group. And then I thought, bugger that. Who would want to read something dull like that? Nobody reads this bloody thing anyway, do they? Do they?! I only ever get to hear from people when they spot a mistake—or the annual congratulations I receive at each AGM from Steve Graham on just how much he enjoys reading the Jester. Thanks, Steve.

Then I realised that as this is the last time I'll ever have total control of the Jester and will be able to write whatever the hell I want in it, maybe I should go off on some kind of bizarre rant, settling old scores and telling people what I really think of them, etc. But then I thought, as he collects it, Richard Jones would probably vet it before it went out.

So then I thought I might give you an insight into the physical requirements of editing this publication—with the inclusion of a picture showing what I usually look like: sat in candlelight, in my pants, drinking copious amounts of cider. But that would probably just be weird.

Eventually I decided that I'd give you some stats, and I'd look back at every edition I've written and offer some basic information from which you could draw your own conclusions.

Now, apart from seeing some appalling design decisions and some dreadful spelling and grammar errors, there were some interesting things I noticed. I started, and where better to start for a community publication such as this, than to with a look at the “hatch 'em, match 'em and dispatch 'em” columns over the last decade. Remarkably, in the time since I took over there has been a total of 22 births, 13 marriages (and no divorces) and 22 deaths.

And these are just the ones that have been announced in these pages. I'm sure there have been many more that have missed along the way. In fact, there are another four Kelvin babies on their way. Hopefully the new Editor will be able to cover the births of the baby Barrelle, the kid Cooper, and the two mini Marshalls in future editions. Good luck to all of those!

Also in that time, there have been a total of 55 plays which have been put on as full productions or as part of the one act festival. In those plays there were a total of 486 roles, some of which were played by more than one actor, which is an awful lot of acting. God knows how many crew members there were—I had no way of keeping track of that.

I'm afraid I didn't have the time to go back and count the number of rehearsed readings and actors involved in those as well, but suffice to say it would have been a lot.

As well as that, we've seen massive change with the development of the management committee and associated roles becoming much more clearly defined, the Studio developing into a more modern theatrical space with a new kitchen upstairs, an enclosed box and better organised balcony, improved signage and website, a new black box, a bar area that is currently being built, and so on.

Flicking back through old editions I also looked at the Membership pages and noticed the number of people we've had come and go in that time. Names that I don't recognise, of faces that I never saw, and which appear fleetingly in the new members section before disappearing, never to be heard of again.

And then you spot the names of people who stay for a show or two, maybe longer, and memories come flooding back. They had their way with Kelvin, before moving on or away, to greater or more interesting things.

Occasionally you'll see the name of someone who goes on to become a solid, long-term Kelvin members. Dedicated to the club and whose stayed around for years and years...

Occasionally you see people come and go and come back again.

Looking back at the first edition I edited, for example, you see the names LINDA BLAMPIED, LAURA BRAKENBURY, ANDREA HERNANDEZ. I'm pretty sure that I never met any of these people. Over the years, there must have been hundreds of people who have come and gone over the years, and whose membership would have barely caused a ripple. Why is that? Where do they go? What should we do to make these people feel more included in the company? Each and every one was an equal member, paying the same fee as the rest of us, each with one vote.

So looking at these stats you get an idea of what has passed in the last eight and a half years and just how much the club is developing and moving with the times, making mistakes, something this publication is all too familiar with, and progress along the way.

Hopefully there will be fewer mistakes with the new guy.

So, to sum up...what was I saying? I'm not really sure this article had a point. It filled some space and gave you something to read for a while, and allowed me to reminisce for a few hours this week. Fifty editions. I didn't think I'd get that far. I planned to give up after three years. And then five. And then as it got closer to 50 editions, I considered staying on to reach 10 years. But I get the impression everyone's sick of me by now and desperate for a change so I'll stop warbling on and on and end this sentence here.

No-one ever reads this thing anyway...

Mat Rees

Jester Editor, retired

PS Many thanks to all those people who have helped me over the years. Thanks to all those who contributed articles. To all those editors who have proofed each edition for me and picked up countless errors. To Richard and Denise for picking up and dropping off each edition from the printers. To all those who have spent evenings with me stuffing paper copies of the Jester into envelopes (Anna Marshall, Rick Procter, Raychel Hills, Chris Warren, Andy Cotton, Rachel Cox, my parents...).

New members

Rosie Collins

Rosie studied Theatre Studies at A Level and then had a break from acting. She joined the Midland Players in Sheffield about 7 years ago and was involved in a number of plays. She has lots of experience with acting, prompting, lighting, props, set building, box office, and PR. Rosie came to see 'All my Sons' and was so impressed she decided to join us. She hopes to bring lots of enthusiasm and excitement to Kelvin.

Andy Cotton

Andy has rejoined the Club for 'the community atmosphere'. He recently appeared in the Rehearsed Reading Evening in 'Two' playing several different parts; one of which included some very interesting dance moves!! He wants to be involved both on and off stage and brings plenty of experience and enthusiasm with him.

Alex Knibb

Alex has been acting ever since playing Prince Charming at primary school, and shared a stage with Rick Procter and Fran Lewis, at Bristol Grammar School back in the 90s! He has been an active member of Winterbourne Players both acting and directing. He joined CADS last year for a really enjoyable stint in Duets at the Alma Tavern. He has always admired the depth of talent and ambition of the Kelvin Players, and the prospect of working in such a great space as the Tobacco Factory was the tipping point he needed to sign on the line! He would like to make it clear that Rick Procter's 15 year campaign of pestering was absolutely, categorically, unequivocally not responsible for his joining.

Dominic Perry

Dominic has wanted to explore acting for a while but lacked self-confidence. He has been taking vocal lessons and has now plucked up the courage to perform on stage. He would like to combine acting with singing and get more experience. He has also had some experience with making costumes and is interested in pursuing this further with Kelvin.

Charlotte(Charlii) Swain

Charlii has acted in local pantomimes when she lived in Derbyshire. She is a keen singer and a member of North Avon Singers. She is currently learning to play the violin and saxophone. Charlii has already thrown herself into Kelvin by performing in the first Rehearsed Reading of the year. She is willing to give anything a go at least once (within reason!) and is looking forward to getting involved in all aspects of the Club.

Mandi Bailey-Turner

Membership Secretary



Above: Mandi Bailey-Turner (aloft)

Peter Spence

How long have you been a member? Since February 2012. I still remember the month off the top of my head, so it's not long ago at all. A densely Kelvin-packed three years.

What was the first production you were involved in? I played William Roper in *A Man For All Seasons*; my first ever audition, which I still remain grateful for. The one thing I realised from start to finish in that first production for Kelvin was "these guys ain't messin' around".

Which production would you most like us to do? For pure technical mastery and acting physicality, probably *Noises Off*. I remember seeing it as a teenager, and was blown away by the raw energy and speed of the whole thing. It even accomplished the near impossible feat of making me audibly laugh.

If you could play any character in any show, who would it be? As a villain, definitely Iago. I'm fascinated by his personal mastery of his external image to everyone he meets. Iago chooses what each person sees him as, not them. A sort of self-controlled personality disorder, it's so interesting. I think he really loves Othello, in many ways. I'd probably play him a little bit fruity at times, ha!

What is your favourite film? I should watch more films to be honest, but I will probably say my favourite is *The Third Man*, despite (or even because of) its overuse of Dutch angles!

What is your favourite song/singer? That question is nearly impossible! I think that music is one the most important concepts that mankind has ever created, no joke. I could probably write at least a page describing the minutia of why I love each album that I own, and a full essay on many dozens of them...

What do you have planned for the year ahead? I'm concentrating on rehearsals for a production of *Woyzeck* as part some acting courses I'm taking. We're performing that in June. I'm also hoping to visit my brother in Japan at some point.

What do you like most about Kelvin? I'll repeat what I said earlier. "These guys ain't messin' around." When I joined, I was astonished by the sheer skill of the people in Kelvin, off and on stage, that I felt obligated to really raise my game to be part of it. And I've met and befriended some people who have helped me through some truly mentally black times over these three years. They know who they are. Kelvin has probably saved my sanity.

AND FINALLY...

Ok, it looks like I've done it. Finally, after 50 editions, I've finally produced an edition free from spelling mistakes! Remarkable.

So, as you will have seen already, Andy Cotton is your new editor. Let's hope he does a better job than I've managed. As for deadlines, let's assume he'll be using the same deadlines. So can you send him copy for the next edition (**June/July 2015**) by **WEDNESDAY 20 MAY**. Start writing now! Send to: jester@kelvinplayers.co.uk.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Calendar

DATE	TIME	EVENT	VENUE	CONTACT
Sun 12 Apr	19:00	Glory Dazed— readthrough	Morris room	Director: Alex Needham
Tue 14 and Fri 17 Apr	19:30	Glory Dazed—auditions	Morris room	Director: Alex Needham
Sun 19 Apr	19:00	Glory Dazed—callbacks	Morris room	Director: Alex Needham
Sat 25 Apr	Doors open at 19:00 for 19:30 start	Rehearsed readings: <i>The Wedding Proposal</i> and <i>The Bear</i> directed by Jon Bard and <i>The Further Adventures of Dr. John Watson, Part 1: Betrayal</i> directed by Paul Dawson	Studio	Organisers: Rick Procter and Chris Warren
Sun 26 Apr	14:30	The History of Kelvin book launch and afternoon tea	TBC	Author: Richard Jones
Fri 1 May	-	Deadline for submissions to the APC for the 2015 season	-	Artistic Director: Josh Cooper
Sun 10 May	TBC	Get in—<i>Tartuffe</i>	Tobacco Factory	Producer: Teri Mohiuddin
Tue 12—Sat 16 May	19:30	<i>TARTUFFE</i>	Tobacco Factory	Director: Ralf Togneri
Sun 17 May	TBC	Get in—<i>Tartuffe</i>	Tobacco Factory	Producer: Teri Mohiuddin
Sat 6 Jun	Doors open at 19:00 for 19:30 start	Rehearsed readings: <i>Pale Primroses</i> directed by Phil Joyner	Studio	Organisers: Rick Procter and Chris Warren
Tue 14 to Sat 18 Jul	19:30	<i>GLORY DAZED</i>	Studio	Director: Alex Needham