

Friends of Stag

Newsletter

Spring 2013



Supporting Stag Community Arts Centre

DIARY DATES

26 JULY - ANNUAL MEETING, STAG BAR,
7.30PM

3 TO 4 AUG - SPONSORED 24-HOUR
READATHON, PLAZA SUITE,
STARTS 6PM

15 SEP - BOOT FAIR/BAZAAR PLAZA
SUITE START TIME TBC

24 NOV - 30 YEARS ON CELEBRATION



COME and help us celebrate 30 years of The Stag. FoS are planning an evening of entertainment in the Plaza Suite on **Sunday 24 November** to mark this historic birthday,

which actually falls on 18 December.

It was that date in 1983 that saw the grand opening of The Stag, originally built in 1937 as the Majestic Cinema – a first generation Odeon.

YOUR COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!!!



The **ANNUAL MEETING** will be held on **26 July at 7:30pm** in the **Stag Bar**. We have made a change to the day and time in the hope that we can entice more of you to attend. We will ensure that the bar is open and will provide 'nibbles' to add to the overall enjoyment. More details will be sent to all members nearer the time, but please put the date in your diary now.

We would also be extremely pleased to hear from anyone who is prepared to join the committee – in particular we are looking for somebody to take on the duties of secretary. We are a friendly bunch (honest!), we meet 6 times a year plus anything needed to organise fund raising events.

Please write c/o Stag, or send an email to chairman@friendsofstag.org.uk

WIN CASH PRIZES

BEGINNING in May there are two new competitions exclusively for **FoS Members!** We hope that you will be able to support one or both of them.

The first is the Friends of Stag **Prize Draw**.

By attending some of the many performances at the Stag Theatre or Plaza Suite, you could win a cash prize of **£100!** The performances that are included in the draw are listed below – but they are subject to change so please check the FoS web site, notice board (upper foyer at the Stag) or with the Stag box office.

Entry is made by a valid Stag ticket placed in FoS draw collection boxes located in the Plaza foyer and upper foyer outside the Theatre. Closing date for draw entries is Saturday 7 September.



The performances that are currently included in the draw are:

- 4 May (Bad Influence, Plaza Suite);
- 22 June (Stag Theatre Company, Plaza Suite);
- 6 July (Just So, 2pm and 6pm performances, Theatre);
- 3 August (Disney's Mulan, 2pm and 6pm performances, Theatre);
- 9 & 10 August (Grease the Musical, two performances each day, Theatre);
- 10 August (Buick 6, Plaza Suite).

The second is a **NEW CLUB** – the **50/50 Club**

FoS members can now join our new 50/50 Club where for just £12 you can enter a monthly draw - for 12 consecutive months (£1 goes into each draw).

One winner will win half the amount of money that has been entered into the draw, and the other half will go to FoS funds. You can enter as many times as you wish – and at any time in the year.

To join the 50/50 Club, just send a cheque for £12 for each entry, payable to "Friends of Stag" with your FoS Membership number on the reverse, to Friends of Stag 50/50 Club, c/o Stag, Sevenoaks TN13 1ZZ. Alternatively you can transfer £12 for each entry to our bank account (sort code 30-97-49, account 01497949), with a reference of '50/50 Club' followed by your FoS membership number.

In order to ensure that the draw will start with a reasonable prize, we will not make the first draw until we have received at least ten entries.

****Only members 16 and over can become a 50/50 club member****

For both of these two new competitions, please see the full rules on our website or on our notice board in the upper foyer at the Stag. They are also enclosed with this newsletter and are available by writing to Friends of Stag, c/o Stag, Sevenoaks TN13 1ZZ.

Karen Nott, a Stag admin manager, reflects on her early days at the theatre

FoS ticket discounted shows

4 May 2013 - Bad Influence (Plaza Suite, 8pm)	15 June 2013 - Skinny Molly (Plaza Suite, 8pm)
8 May 2013 - The Mystery of Edwin Drood (Theatre, 7:45pm) Presented by Petts Wood Operatic Society	20 July 2013 - Nicky Moore and The Blues Corporation (Plaza Suite, 8pm)
18 May 2013 - Kast Off Kinks (Plaza Suite, 8pm)	26 July 2013 - Hells Bells (Plaza Suite, 8pm)
19 May 2013 - The Princeford Pals (Plaza Suite, various) A new musical	27 July 2013 - Coco Xpress (Plaza Suite, 7:30pm)
24 May 2013 - Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash (Plaza Suite, 8pm)	10 August 2013 - Buick 6 (Plaza Suite, 8pm)
28 May 2013 - The Zombies (Theatre, 8pm)	17 August 2013 - Charity Gala Evening (Theatre, 7:30pm) Sevenoaks Entertainers event to raise money for the Stag to celebrate 30 years

For more information about these events and details of other show discounts log on to www.friendsofstag.org.uk

ADOPT A SEAT

The plan to replace the theatre seats is underway. Some funding has been obtained but more is needed. You can help by adopting a seat for as little as £25. Contact the Stag for more information.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

IN FEBRUARY we sent a short questionnaire to FoS members who are on email. We are grateful for the responses as these help the committee (among other things) to plan fund raising events that you, our members, would like to attend. The results of the questionnaire are below.

If you are not on email and would like to let us have your thoughts write a letter to Friends of Stag and drop it off at (or post it to) the Stag box office, or make an entry on the 'Blog' on the Stag web site.

The results of the questionnaire:

- 23 responses were received; 3 aged under 20, 3 aged between 21 and 50, 18 between 51 and 70 and 13 over 70
- 4 had hired facilities at the Stag in the past, 28 had not
- 14 had hired facilities elsewhere, 18 had not
- 23 were aware that it was possible to hire facilities at the Stag, 9 were not
- 7 said that they were prepared to help out at a FoS event (thank you!!), and 13 had attended one of our events in the past
- 10 said that they would be interested in attending a regular monthly social event (in the Stag bar) and 9 of these thought that some kind of entertainment would be welcome at such gatherings.

In addition many enjoyed the Race Night held last October and would like to have another one; and several also said that they would like a Quiz Night, or perhaps bingo or other games (we hope that you will enjoy our new Prize Draw and 5050 Club). Some also suggested musical, summer events, talks and bazaars – so plenty for us to get our teeth into.

Saturday girl...

MY ASSOCIATION with the Stag began in 1987 when I started work as a 'Saturday girl' in the box office, which back then was right where the kiosk is now. To start with, my shifts were alternate Saturdays, but soon these increased to include as many evening shifts as were available, as this was when the shows were on.

I eventually became the only 'Saturday girl'.

The job fitted in well around my training to be a teacher. I took the job originally to top up my grant, I had always wanted to teach.

Back then, although computers existed, they certainly hadn't found their way to The Stag, so the seating plans were on A3 pieces of paper and we had to mark each seat with an 'X' as it was sold. If someone wanted to reserve a seat, this required the highly technical manoeuvre of using a pencil instead of a pen. The tickets were all the same so we had to date stamp all the books of tickets for forthcoming shows.

We did take credit cards, but we still used the old manual imprinter machines where you had to slide over the card so that it could imprint the details on carbon paper. Phone transactions had to be in our neatest hand writing which meant many a telling off for me for not writing clearly on the slip.

With the current statutory working regulations just a twinkle in the eyes of our EU cousins, meant that because I was on my own in the building (before Stag ran the cinema) I wasn't even supposed to leave the box office for a pee! I did sometimes, but don't tell anyone. Leave the box office, that is...

During the period of time between August 1987 and December 1992 Stag took over running the cinema, and more than once it was joked that I slept in the box office as I was there so much. (Not much has changed some might say!) I would have stayed overnight, had I been allowed to have my feline friends with me (I have 6 cats). There was, however, one exception to the rule when StagTech - the company formed by the technicians at the Stag organised 28 hours of continuous entertainment and I was on duty for the whole 28, plus an hour and half before.

I got sponsored, too, to the tune of about £100 – you could buy a brand new car for that kind of money in those days - I did try to sleep, but the box office floor didn't make much of a bed!

January 1993 saw Stag close down for a year of work (this included the building of the Plaza Suite) and sadly my job was no more. By this time I was teaching full time, too, but Diane Richardson, who many will know from the Sevenoaks Players, approached me and asked me if I would be a 'prompt' for an up and coming show. Me? Prompt? I can't do that. Yes you can, you are a teacher, you can read, and have a loud voice. The rest as they say is history, well, the next stage in my history with the Stag.

I was Prompt for various shows before I was asked by Ray Russell to stage manage a pantomime for the Sevenoaks Entertainers. Stage manage? What did that mean? I went away and learnt. What I learned was the role of what I now know to be that of a Deputy Stage Manager (DSM). That meant that I was on the 'book', cueing the lighting and sound, plus making sure that the actors were where they should be. (This is a very short version of the role.) I thoroughly enjoyed it, and was pleased to be told that I was very good at the job!!

I carried on being a DSM right up till Stag closed down the second time in 2008 although I was also well into my full-time teaching career which limited my contribution.

See the next Newsletter for part II of Karen's story