



Volunteer update

Summer 2019

Welcome

This is just a little attempt to keep all of our fantastic volunteers up to date with the fast moving changes and improvements to the Seagull. We know that it can be really hard to keep everyone up to speed and we really appreciate the time and effort everyone gives to keep the place running – so this update is a small step towards more communication.

The Big Project!

On **Monday 23rd September at 7.30pm** we are having our second Volunteer meeting of the year.

This meeting will be used to launch our next major building project. Having replaced the windows and generally refurbished the current building we have exciting plans for the five years ahead.

If you want to know what they are, then you need to come along to the meeting.....

Building Updates

As you may have noticed we have continued to refurbish and upgrade the building through spring and summer.

Here are the highlights :

Auditorium

There are new rear doors on the auditorium which can now be open properly from the outside when necessary. The piece of rope has gone! There is also now a doorway into the tech box from inside the auditorium so that our tech volunteers no longer have to go outside in all weathers.

If you have been in the theatre during the hot weather, you will already have noticed that the air conditioning has also now been installed! We love it!

Studio 1

Studio One has been completely repainted thanks to the massive efforts of Malcolm Swann and a group of other volunteers. Special mention goes to Malcolm though, for the countless hours he has given to paint both studio one and the annex. This whole area looks a million times better now.

Improvements at the Hut

Our wonderful friends at the Menshed have completed the redevelopment of the upstairs space and our awesome costume team are settling into the new workspace.

Bits and Bobs

- The fire door backstage has been replaced with one that actually fits!
- The talk back system which allows the backstage to talk to the tech box through headphones has been reinstated
- A new “profile” light has been bought to update our tech abilities
- A range of new cables have been bought to replace old stock
- A new miniature sound control board has been bought to make it easier to run sound in the foyer.
- A new sign has been erected showing customers the location of the nearest free car park when ours is full.

Upcoming Works

In the next few weeks / months we have the following works planned

- Repair and relining of the car park
- New blinds in the bar area
- New lighting in the back of the stage to provide better and safer vision when crossing the back of the stage.
- Refurbishment of Studio 2

Seagull Rep

As mentioned previously the rebirth of the Seagull Rep continues apace. The Rep is now a fully separate entity from the Seagull and is its own registered charity (number 1184563)

More excitingly our first fully professional tour starts this autumn. We will be touring our production of “Hound of the Baskervilles” in a rural tour around local towns including

- Diss
- Sheringham
- Southwold
- Haverhill
- Norwich
- Stowmarket
- Wells
- Felixstowe

The tour starts and finishes here in the Seagull so there is plenty of opportunity for you to see the show.

If you saw last year’s research and development sharing, you will know that this is a fantastic innovative piece of theatre and sure to be really popular. So book your tickets in Advance!

Projects.....

With continued success getting funding from organisations, we now have several projects up and running...

Dementia Projects

We have a range of different activities running for Families Living with Dementia. These include:

- Memories Café which runs fortnightly
- Sunday Classics Film Club – a monthly classic film with sing along.
- Music Appreciation group – an activity for families with dementia to listen to music and maybe join in.
- Carers Wellbeing group – a professional led supportive group for carers

There is a whole extra brochure full of details of these activities which you can pick up in the foyer. If you know anyone who might benefit from taking part, please pass on a brochure.

Summer Holiday Drama School

This year, we were part of the town’s activities to support families on low income. We held two summer schools for children who would normally receive free school meals. Obviously when school closes, these young people

no longer get their meals – so we were one of a number of organisations who were able to offer a free drama school with lunch included. We partnered with MarkG from the Tramways to make this project truly local, and the children enjoyed a beautiful buffet prepared each day by Mark's team.

Play Writing

Some of you came along in July and supported our New Writing Night, which was a culmination of a course we were able to run in partnership with the Suffolk Community Foundation. This created a short course on writing for the stage which supported a group of 12 new writers to develop their own short pieces. I am pleased to say that many of that group continue to meet at the Seagull and are continuing to work on new pieces of writing.

Schools Work

July was a busy month as we also had the school project. This is where Year 6 students from 6 different schools come in and perform their own piece of original theatre which they have devised with our help and support.

This year was another massive success with lots of new children and families being introduced to the Seagull for the first time.

Next year we hope to expand the project so it includes Year 1 children as well as Year 6.

New Hirers

We will have some new hirers starting in the upstairs studio's this autumn.

Dots and Squiggles – Toddler piano lesson join us at the start of September. This is a hugely popular group which runs elsewhere and is expanding into the Seagull – please help us spread the word

Yoga – we have a new yoga group now running on Wednesdays – so if any of you want to get flexible, please come along. Full details on the website.

Clockwork Dance – not and new group – but a new proprietor. Larne Patrick takes over the reigns from September. Good Luck Larne!

Workshop Season

The autumn is our busiest time in the workshop and we will be opening every Sunday between now and Christmas to work on Sets.

We have two sets to build simultaneously this year as we are working on our own set for "ALICE IN WONDERLAND" our Christmas family extravaganza

(tickets on sale NOW), but also supporting the Red Herring Theatre Company with their production of Sweeney Todd.

We are always keen to welcome new volunteers to help in the workshop, so if you can wield a paint brush or do some basic construction – Please come along.

Any Sunday 10am till 1pm.

How can you help out.....

Many of you already do a fantastic amount to help out at the Seagull. But there are easy ways that you could help us out and enjoy yourself in the process.....

1) Come and see a show !!!!

This sounds obvious – but to be successful we need good audiences and the more shows you come and buy tickets for – the better it is for us. Karen has to persuade bands, actors and companies to come and put on shows at the Seagull, and that's not easy if they don't think anyone will come and see them ! So the more often we can have big audiences, the better it is for the Theatre and everyone involved. This is especially true of shows you haven't heard of ! We try hard to get new and interesting shows into the Theatre – so if you see something advertised and you don't have a clue what it is Come and give it a try !!

2) Book in Advance

Please Please Please – if you are going to come and see a show – please book your tickets in advance. A lot of theatre groups and bands ring us in the week or so before they are due to come, and ask about advance bookings. Sometimes if too few people have booked in advance they actually cancel the show because they don't think enough people will come. We know that a lot of you show up on the night and buy your tickets on the door, but convincing a band or theatre group of that can be hard. So please – BOOK IN ADVANCE !

3) Share, Post and Like on Social Media

If you are on Facebook – please like our Seagull Theatre page (facebook.com/seagulltheatre), share our posts and write comments. Facebook is one of the main ways we publicise events and we really need your help to make that successful. Every time you share our posts they get seen by a lot more people. If you write comments then again more people

see the posts. The more people who see it the more might come to see a show. So please don't just read it – SHARE IT, LIKE IT and COMMENT

4) Write a review

We are not just on Facebook ! We are also on Tripadvisor. Leaving us a review on TripAdvisor really helps people from outside of Lowestoft find us. It only take a minute or two but it really does make a difference !

5) Make a regular donation

If you are feeling particularly generous you can set up a regular donation to the Seagull. We have a number of regular givers who provide a monthly amount to support the Theatre. This money make a real difference to us and has contributed massively to being able to fix up the roof in particular. If you would like to set up a regular donation, let us know and we will give you the bank details you would require.

6) Offer some time

Most of our volunteers have started out working in the Box office or behind the bar, but inevitably life gets in the way and we're unable to offer any time for a while. Then sometimes you just drop out of the habit.

If that's you and you haven't done a shift for a while or no longer get the texts asking you to volunteer – why not get in touch and get back into it. Even if you only do one shift a month – it would really help.

7) Deliver some programmes

We invest heavily in a brochure three times a year. It has all the details of our shows and is a great resource – but its pretty useless if no one sees it. We try to get as many out as possible – but if you have an afternoon spare and would like to deliver some more for us – just let us know.

How to get in touch

There are lots of ways to get in touch – you could

- 1) Message us on Facebook – this is often the quickest way to get a response
- 2) Email us at info@theseagull.co.uk - we check these message most weekdays – but you might have to wait a day or so for a response
- 3) Phone and leave a message – 01502 589726 – again we will get back to you as soon as we can – but it may take a couple of days
- 4) Send us a letter – No one ever does this – but its possible.

Lastly.....

THANK YOU

We can never say a big enough thank you for all the time and effort which is put into the Theatre by all the fantastic volunteers.

Without you there would be no Seagull !!

Sammy the Seagull