



ABSENT FRIENDS

Messages received from those unable to attend the Reunion

Stuart & Eileen Allen (MD and cast member)

Dear Roger

I am very sorry to miss the event as there are many people I would love to see again.

I did three shows at IC and three at Budleigh, plus a lunchtime Trial by Jury. The first was Patience, where I fell for a lovesick maiden. We were married on 2 September 1972 (hence the clash of dates). Eileen was already an OPSOC veteran and took part in the first tour to Budleigh Salterton (and Salisbury) in 1969.

My first rehearsal was memorable! We were just getting started when the lights went out as part of the miners' strike part 1 and we all felt the need for a drink by candlelight in the Union Bar.

The first concert in the church at Budleigh filled the place and was very successful. Here I must mention that without the help of Margaret Nuttall (Johnson) , who patiently and expertly rehearsed the chorus, it probably would not have happened. It was one of those times when I just could not be in two places at the same time. The concert was my idea and I was able to borrow the music from the BBC via Gordon Clarke, who sometimes took rehearsals when I was away working.

I was appointed Principal Clarinet of the London Festival Ballet -now English National Ballet - in September 1972 and that was the end of three happy years at OPSOC, with memorable performances at times and high musical standards at all times.

We now live in Faversham and would welcome news and visits from anyone who would like to see us.

Thanks to you all, Best wishes

Stuart & Eileen





Alan Wilkinson (Star trumpeter)

A big hello to everyone who made it back to Budleigh for an unbelievable 50th anniversary!

I only go back as far as 1979 and the college production of Grand Duchess but have many fond memories of summers in Budleigh with the Opsoc crowd.

The attached photos show me as I was back in 1984, receiving my 100 performances presentation tankard from Brendan, and as I am today, with shorter, whiter hair.

I took 26 years off from trumpet playing due to work and its associated time constraints but have started practicing again after retiring from the chemical industry 3 years ago.

I'll be with you in spirit on the reunion weekend and will be remembering many happy helpings of Budleigh fish and chips, Devon cream teas and the odd beer or 3 at The Feathers.

Best wishes for a fantastic reunion,

Alan (aka Rupert P Matley)





Mark Lee (Cast Member)

Dear All,

Unfortunately I will not, after all, be able to join you in Budleigh. I hope everyone has a great time, and I will be with you in spirit.

Best regards, Mark

(Mark – as Major General - can be seen to the left of Brendan in Alan's presentation photo above)

Tony Moorby (Cast member)

Dear all,

Sorry I can't be with you all in Budleigh on 3 September. Alas we have a wedding in Wales on the Saturday and we are then travelling straight from there to France for a family reunion/holiday with the Australian contingent of the family. Instead of sending you a photo just of me as was suggested (which would be boring) I've attached a photo of my family toasting your good health and wishing you a happy weekend of reminiscences. Alas I'm not the good-looking young guy, I'm the serious senior citizen at the back.

I recently came across a photo of Ellis and me in Budleigh doing some sort of routine dressed in green lolanthe fairy tutus, which brought back a few memories and will no doubt be one of the many on display in Budleigh. I no longer remember how on earth I was persuaded to do so but I'm happy to say that that is the first and last time I have ever worn a fairy costume. I haven't set foot on stage since my last outing with Imperial Opera but I do still sing in a couple of choirs and have fond memories both of Opsoc tours and Imperial Opera. With respect to both, and particularly the former, I'm always reminded of Leonard Bernstein's saying, "To achieve great things, two things are needed; a plan, and not quite enough time!" Best wishes to you all





Peter & Janice Mills (Director and cast members)

Sorry to say that Jan and I have to be in the 'can't join after all' category. We do hope all goes well and a good time is had by all . . . certainly sounds well on the cards. Very many thanks for taking on this 'herding cats' experience, and for including us in the loop.



**Don't go near
him!**

He is swearing!

Sally & Fred Shaub (Horn Player - alongside Ralph Roney)

Thanks for your email. I think we are going to have to pull out of this trip and we were both looking forward to it. Over the last few months my heart has decided to play silly games. I was admitted to hospital at the beginning of March when they tried to calm it down.....quite successfully but not perfectly. I'm still not allowed to drive.

When I saw a rather lovely cardiac specialist last week she said she thought that some exciting electronic treatment may help shock it back to normality.....Sorry too much unnecessary information.

The bottom line is that I don't know what will be happening over the next few months so regret we will have to pull out but please keep us posted.

All the best,



Jonathan Salzedo (FOH and Harpsichord Player)

Thanks, Tim, Cecily and Roger, and whoever else is masterminding this venture.

I can't get to it after all – too many things going on, mostly related to my daughter being pregnant (yea – I get to be a grandad!) I'll have to catch up with everyone on another visit.

Good luck with everything. In the course of events, please let me know if you come across photos of me eating a massive piece of frozen custard, or a bunch of us wandering naked into the sea under moonlight (there was actually a reason for that, though long forgotten).

All the best,

Jonathan.



Jonathan with Linda (who was at the Reunion!) with Pinafore Specials

Dick Stockton (Cast member / MD)

I'm going to be abroad over that weekend so will not be able to attend.
I have to admit I am very disappointed that I couldn't arrange my availability but I'm afraid it's a "no go".
Perhaps there'll be another reunion some time and I still have to get to IMVC the following weekend. (he did, Ed.)
Hope you all have a lovely time and wish I could be there.
And thank you to you all for all your hard work!
All the very best and love to you all
Keep in touch
Dick



**Dick and
Pete at
the scene
of their
former
triumphs.**

Pete & Sue Totterdell (Cast member & Trumpetess)

Great to hear from you again. It looks as though the reunion will be a wonderful event. Unfortunately Sue and I will have to give it a miss, as our daughter Rebecca is expecting our second granddaughter in mid-late August, and we will be the doting grandparents and (free) babysitters for some time after that.
Please pass on our best wishes to all from our time in OPSOC. I hope everyone has a great time.
Cheers
Pete & Sue

Colin Davis (Cast member)

Alas I am now unavailable on
the reunion date - big family
do I have to attend!!
Hope all goes well on the day

With best wishes

Colin



Tony Pearce (Cast member and coloratura soprano)

I regret to say that I'm not going to be able to make it down for 3rd September, as I can't make it work around the commitments I have at home here in Scotland. I hope that it the weekend is a big success, and you all have a great time catching up.
Best wishes,
Tony



**Tony (left) with Sian, Jenny,
Nick and retractable
spaghetti.**

Gondoliers 1983

Julian Neaum (Trumpeter – with brother Geoff on Trombone)

I am sorry to say that I shall not be able to come to the reunion. Yes I remember Gary Koop. Chris Evans Tpt 2, I think, came with me from Derby where we played together in the Derby Concert Orchestra. And brother Geoff was Trb 1 - he met Cynthia Wilkinson on tour and they married 1975. There was quite a bit of match-making from the tours - I recall Stuart Allen met Eileen Curzon (I played at their wedding in Suffolk); Colin Davies met Heather Brown; I met Helen Almey (although sadly that came to an end in 1982); and no doubt, many more. The tours were very special in many ways apart from the joy of the performances - from Don Munro (fabulous clarinettist 1971) diving into the sea and disappearing to the horizon, worrying everyone to bits to wonderful almost impromptu concerts St Peter's Church and general music-making - I remember playing (messing with would be a better word!) the last section of The Shepherd on the Rock - I forget who the clarinettist and pianist were but I hammed my way through the soprano part - simple irreverent fun.

I haven't played for many years now - my lip gave out - and I stopped singing March 2020 - my hearing gave out and I've never got the hang of being sure I've got the right notes ever since.

So there we are - I'm sure the reunion will be a wonderful occasion in September and I pass on best wishes to the entire cast and crew!
Julian



The brass team – Sorcerer 1972 – Julian nearest camera, Geoff opposite

Rosemary Tyldesley (Leader)

Hello Roger and organisers, I have just taken on a house/dog/horse/chicken sit in Whissendine from saturday 3rd september to the 14th. I can't afford to let that go. It would be lovely to see you again, but not possible. I'm really sorry. I hope you all have a good time. I still have a programme from Iolanthe, signed by everyone. I went to Holland shortly afterwards for 32 years. Greetings from Rosemary x



Lindsay Foster (Bott) (Cast Member)

It all sounds great and I am sorry to be missing it! Maybe next year I will get to the UK. All the very best to you all and I am sure it will be wonderful. Lindsay Foster.



Sue Stanford

Janice Mills

Lindsay Foster

**....looking aesthetic in
1976 Gledhill style**

**Lindsay now lives in
Perth, Australia**

Sally Donegani (Cast member and clarinet)

I have been remiss in not advising you that, alas, I am no longer able to join you in Budleigh in September - I have a three line whip for a Prom that weekend, so unfortunately not able to get to Budleigh.

I will have to make do with hearing all about it from those who are there!

Love to all, Sally



**Sally in The
Feathers.....**

**.....weighing up the cost
of the next round?**

Lucy Gates (McAllister) (Cast member)

Hi Guys

I'm so sorry and disappointed to have to tell you that due to work commitments out of the country I won't be able to attend after all – I was so looking forward to seeing everyone again and catching up after all these years . Hopefully Pat will take lots of pics and video!

Wishing you all a fantastic weekend.

Very best wishes

Lucy (Lucille McAllister) xx



**Who is the man in the
blue trunks, Lucy?**

Yeomen '77

Stephen Frost (Violin)

Dear Budleigh Reunion team,
Apologies for my tardiness, I've been trying to extricate myself from something that clashes, but sadly to no avail, so with much sadness and regret I won't be able to make the reunion. I hope it all goes well and you all have a lovely time. I will be thinking of you all and will raise a glass to you and to the many wonderful memories I have of Budleigh!

Very best wishes,

Stephen

PS If you ever do another one of these, please count me in



Charles Tyndale-Biscoe (ICOS Chair 1968 - a chance meeting with Roger Nicholls at a choir in Dulwich!)

Hi Roger

Thanks for the reminder that IC Operatic staged Pirates in 1968. What a summer that was, driving down to Salisbury and then Devon in our old cars. I remain in touch with Rollo Green chair of the Society before me and who organised the tour.



Andy Stevens (Stage Manager)

I regret to say that Andy and Valerie Stevens will not be able to go to Budleigh due to a clash of dates.
Hoping that the event is a success nonetheless.

V and A



.....or could this be Nigel?

Watching cricket on the Green 1972

Mike Town (Stage Crew)

Hi all,

Thanks for sending the details of the reunion and the spreadsheets with names. I am still in touch with a lot of my generation of stage crew (and one or two others) and have passed details on to them so they can contact you if interested.

I myself will be involved in managing (and playing in) a croquet tournament at my home club, Woking, that particular weekend in 2022, so won't be able to join you.

I have been able to see most of the tour shows for the last 20 years, as I have been managing the Budleigh Salterton August croquet tournament for all that time - and most years the dates have coincided. However, after 20 years, now is a good time to retire from the pressures of managing Budleigh's tournament and deal with managing the 2022 Golf Croquet World Championship at Southwick (Brighton) and the 2023 Association Croquet World Championship at Hurlingham (north of Putney Bridge).

A couple of corrections to the spreadsheet - I was also involved as stage crew in the Feb 79 and Feb 80 shows.

Regards,
Mike Town



Tom Carlstedt-Duke (Stage Manager)

Hi

"Unfortunately I have realised that the date of the reunion clashes with a clay pigeon shooting competition I am organising here on the Isle of Wight and so I will be unable to join you at Budleigh. So sorry not to be there.

Tom



Football, rugby,
cricket, tennis,
golf, swimming
athletics,.....

.....

.....

.. conkers,
tiddlywinks.....

.....

...even
croquet.....

.....

... where are
the clay pigeon
reports!?