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THE GRIFFIN
PLAYERS
PROUDLY
PRESENT



LIVE!

GRIFFINS THROUGH THE AGES



A Celebration Concert

Taking you on a Theatrical journey
through The Griffin Players
90 year history In Luton!

10th to 11th May 2024
at Luton Library Theatre

Book your tickets online @ thegriffinplayers.co.uk

FROM OUR DIRECTOR...

Welcome to Live! Griffins Through the Ages

I have been a part of The Griffin Players family for nearly 18 years now, having helped backstage during the Christmas panto, Cinderella, alongside people I now consider my closest friends.

My first introduction to the society was watching a family friend perform in the 2005 production of 'A Slice of Saturday Night'. If you had told me back then that I would not only be the Chairman of the society, but also directing the 90th Anniversary Concert, I wouldn't have believed you.

But here I am. Sharing the stage with the most amazingly talented group of people and celebrating everything that the society has achieved over the course of its 90 year history, from its humble beginnings as The Vauxhall Motor Group Theatrical Section all the way to the present day and looking towards the future.

I would like to thank the cast for working so incredibly hard during the rehearsal process to deliver a fantastic display of Musical Theatre history. I would also like to thank my Choreographer, Kyra Spratley and my Musical Director, Cheryl Desborough for delivering everything and more to this show. It has been hard work, but we got there!

I would also like to show my appreciation to John O'Leary-Fawcett. He has taken my idea of creating videos showcasing the history of the society and has produced some incredible material. On top of this, he has also been helping to deliver a professional looking publicity campaign for this concert. This was all achieved while rehearsing for this concert, directing another show and helping another society with their publicity! A huge shoutout must be made to The Luton Creative Community, a volunteer group that have formed to reopen The Library Theatre, which has been the home of The Griffin Players since 1982.

Finally, I would like to thank our audiences. Without you The Griffin Players simply would not be here. You are the driving force behind why The Griffin Players have been successful for the past 90 years, and are the reason we keep striving to bring quality live entertainment to the stage.

Here is to another 90 years!

Joshua Thompson



CAST ADULT PERFORMERS

Katie Allen—Michelle Arnold—Nico Bamford—Ailish Brennan

Vikki Burch—Debbie Cavanagh—Debbie Cheshire—Alex Currie

Cheryl Desborough—Katy Elliott—Katie Evans—Elly Farrar—Karen Franks

Michelle Garufi—Kate Johnson—Grace Johnston—Charlotte Lovelock

Luke Murphy—John O’Leary-Fawcett—Alex Parsons—Ellie Pitt—Carla Pointing

Mel Ramsey—Allanah Rogers—Jenna Ryder-Oliver—Kyra Spratley—Rosie Till

Joshua Thompson—Izzy Wheeler

CHILDREN PERFORMERS

Olivia Barber—Olivia Burch—Callie Desborough—Effie Desborough

Alexander Kehayov—Victoria Kehayova—Ayanna Stratford

Livia Stratford—Eddie Tebbutt

IN REHEARSALS



ACT ONE

1. Get Me to the Church On Time

Nico Bamford & Full Cast

My Fair Lady (1993)

2. On the Street Where You Live

Alex Currie

My Fair Lady (1993)

3. Make Him Mine

Cheryl Desborough, Melanie Ramsey & Carla Pointing

The Witches of Eastwick (2007)

4. Pulled

Kyra Spratley

The Addams Family (2023)

5. You're the Top

Ellie Pitt & John O'Leary-Fawcett

Anything Goes (1999)

6. Go Now

Michelle Arnold

Return to the Forbidden Planet (2003)

7. NW5

Rosie Till

Our House (2010)

(Backing by Allannah Rogers, Katie Evans & Katie Allen)

8. Well, Did You Evah?

Debbie Cavanagh & Katy Elliott

High Society (1995)

9. A Little Priest

Jenna Ryder-Oliver & Joshua Thompson

Sweeney Todd (1998 & 2011)

10. Little Shop of Horrors

Allannah Rogers, Grace Johnston & Kyra Spratley

Little Shop of Horrors (1990 & 2009)

11. Mama Says

Luke Murphy & Male Cast

Footloose the Musical (2012)

12. Giant Problem (by Paul Ramsey)

Full Cast

Jack and the Beanstalk (2009)

13. Adelaide's Lament

Katy Elliott

Guys & Dolls (1991 & 2014)

14. Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat

Alex Parsons & Adult Cast

Guys & Dolls (1991 & 2014)

ACT TWO

1. Seasons of Love

Full Cast

Rent (2018)

2. I'll Cover You (Reprise)

John O'Leary-Fawcett & Ensemble

Rent (2018)

3. Somewhere Over the Rainbow

Elly Farrar, Katie Evans, Katie Allen & Grace Johnston

The Wizard of Oz (1984, 1997 & 2015)

4. What Do I Do Now?

Allanah Rogers & Joshua Thompson

A Slice of Saturday Night (2005)

5. Please Don't Tell Me

Adult Cast

A Slice of Saturday Night (2005)

6. I Know Him So Well

Melanie Ramsey & Cheryl Desborough

Chess (1994)

7. Something

Charlotte Lovelock & Alex Currie

The Witches of Eastwick (2007)

8. You Could Drive a Person Crazy

Debbie Cavanagh , Michelle Arnold

Company (2001)

& Jenna Ryder-Oliver

9. Heaven/More Than Words

Carla Pointing, Allanah Rogers, Nico Bamford

Rock of Ages (2017)

& Adult Cast

10. Being Alive

Melanie Ramsey

Company (2001)

11. All For the Best

Luke Murphy, Alex Parsons & Ensemble

Godspell (1997)

12. A Song From Next Years Musical

Joshua Thompson & Cheryl Desborough

(2025)

13. Whistle Down the Wind Medley

Childrens Cast

Whistle Down the Wind (2013)

14. Aquarius/Let the Sun Shine

Full Cast

Hair (1986)

15. Don't Stop Believing

Full Cast

Rock of Ages (2017)

A BRIEF GRIFFIN HISTORY

The Griffin Players began life in 1934, as the Theatrical Section of Vauxhall Motor Group. Not much is known about the early productions, other than information found on a single page of a programme from a 1936 Variety Show.

Only five years into the running of the group, the world was at war and the first of many challenges to face the society began. Vauxhall Motor Group began manufacturing tanks, armoured vehicles and the first 12 jet engines to be manufactured in the UK.

To keep up morale, the Theatrical section partnered with the Male Voice and Girls Choirs and the Concert section to form 'The Wyverns', an entertainment society that performed throughout the local area, as well as performing at Service Camps and Hospitals to over 3000 service men and women.

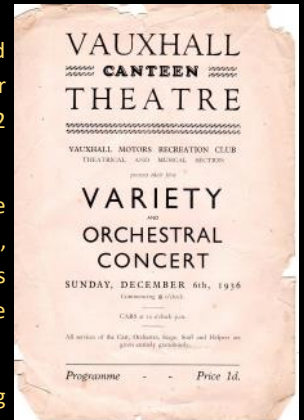
After the War, the society went from strength to strength, earning accolades and awards, with many of their productions being highly popular with critics. In 1971, the society was running out of personnel and ideas, and in 1972 decided to take an extended hiatus.

It was to be 4 years before the Theatrical Section was to be reborn. In 1976, after gaining traction from the Vauxhall Mirror, Tom Redfearn, Steve Morris and Bryan Millin reignited the Theatrical section, and in 1977 produced William Douglas Home's "Lloyd George knew my Father". After a few more productions and once again gaining more loyal members, it was decided a rebranding was required. In 1979, The Griffin Players performed their first production under this new name. Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None".

In 1980, Vauxhall Motors announced that they were unable to fund a trip to a local pantomime for the employees and families to enjoy, so The Griffins took on the challenge, first producing Alice in Winter Wonderland, a mini panto, before producing their first traditional pantomime, Cinderella, in 1981. This is a tradition that The Griffins still have to this day!

1983 saw the societies first foray into Musical Theatre with the hit show, Grease. This began a long standing love of musical theatre, which we are celebrating in this concert.

In 2017, The Griffins departed from Vauxhall Motors and became a completely separate entity. This meant losing our fabulous workshop area, affectionately known as 'The Shed of Dreams'. Many of our incredibly high quality sets were built and painted by Gary Nash in that workshop. The society briefly moved to a new home at Heathfields School in Caddington, where again The Griffins had a wonderful workshop area as well as rehearsal venue. However after a few years, the society were to rehome once again, losing the workshop spaces completely and having to store all set within a Garage area.



During the COVID pandemic, due to theatres not being open and the society needing to reduce outgoings, a more economical storage unit was discovered and The Griffins once again moved to their current storage area during the summer of 2020 (socially distanced of course)!

The rehearsal home of The Griffins became Bushmead Community Hub, who have been amazing to work with. They always ensure a clean suitable work space for rehearsals, and The Griffins are incredibly grateful for the support that Bushmead Community Hub have provided over the years.

The Griffins always aim to be a society for the community and are honoured to work alongside Active Luton and Epic Luton to provide theatre for families that would not usually be able to attend, as well as providing a relaxed performance for their family panto.

PRODUCTION TEAM

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Director | Joshua Thompson |
| Musical Director | Cheryl Desborough |
| Choreographer | Kyra Spratley |
| Production Manager | Katy Elliott |
| Video Creation | John O'Leary-Fawcett |
| Stage Manager | Lynda Fagan |
| Lighting | Aidan Brown, Liam Whiteside and Ken Brown Lighting equipment provided by EventTech Production Services Ltd. |
| Sound | Liam Whiteside, Aidan Brown and Ken Brown Sound equipment provided by EventTech Production Services Ltd. |
| Chaperones | Nichola Johnston & Abbie Walsh |
| Front of House | Vikki Burch, Ian Garrett, Mark Burch, Darina McMorrow |
| Publicity | John O'Leary-Fawcett, Joshua Thompson, Luke Walsh, Mel Ramsey & Darina McMorrow |
| Programme | Joshua Thompson |
| Griffins Archives | Chris Baldock |

We extend our thanks to the team at Bushmead Community Hub and the Luton Creative Community for their support, without whom, this production would not have been possible.

cherished Memories

"Having been reassured by Sam Baldock I didn't need to drink to go on stage, swapping out the contents of the tonic bottle for gin and the gin bottle for tonic on the bar on the set! Every time she, as my secretary, poured me a "drink " it was happy hour all over again! I never told her! Till NOW" - Eileen Kirby

"Favourite is meeting my husband during Cinderella in 2000! I loved playing Geraldine in the Vicar of Dibley. Funniest moment (for me, not for anyone else in the show...) was realising I'd skipped a whole scene in Aladdin and Luke had to work out what to do about it as he was on next." - Dee Lovelock

"As the baddie in Sinbad! "I'm Sinistro the sorcerer, I'm wicked and I'm vile, and when I do my wickedness, I do the thing with style". Having 600+ kids stamp their feet and shout "Kill him, kill him" for 5 minutes. (so many due to an overbooking of the Vauxhall Staff canteen)." - Chris

"In City of Angels—"You'll have to shoot me first" as Elliott handed over his gun to Sue, as she realised her 'hidden' one wasn't on set. " - Anna Carter Brown

"I have made so many lifelong friends over my (nearly) 20 years with The Griffin Players and have so many funny memories, I don't think I could choose one! My favourite though would have to be sharing the stage with my son for the first time when he joined the Family Panto fun in 2022" - Kate Johnson

"Having my first stage kiss with the wonderful Paul Rogers during Rock of Ages. We would constantly annoy his daughters by doing it whenever we could!" - Joshua Thompson

"There are so many. Loved all of the rehearsals. So much fun. Also loved the Griffins camping trips - 'And that's how we got the gazebo!' Miss you all so much!" - Jade Newshaw

"Far too many to choose from: Stapling my finger to a plastic urinal just before the opening performance of a Slice of Saturday night springs to mind. As does our cast dragging a fully-laden sledge through the town dressed in full polar exploration gear during an August heat-wave and not a single member of the public batted an eye-lid. Building the set for Sweeney Todd with Debbie Cheshire and Steve Wilson and making Audrey II puppets from scratch for the first Little Shop of Horrors were extremely challenging , rewarding and immense fun." -

Gary Pursey-Nash

PAST PRODUCTIONS

- 1934 Concert Party ~ Variety Shows
- 1935 Concert Party ~ Variety Shows
- 1936 Concert Party ~ Variety Shows
- 1937 Meet the Wife ~ Kick In ~ The Mystery at Greenfields
- 1938 The Distant Drum ~ Mr Pim Passes By
- 1939 Murder Party ~ A Knight Came Riding
- 1940 Autumn Now ~ Rope ~ Sweet Aloes
- 1941 Love From A Stranger
- 1942 The Dover Road ~ Gaslight ~ Rookery Nook ~ The Rest Cure
- 1943 Children To Bless You ~ The Two Mrs Carroll's ~
George And Margaret ~ The Letter
- 1944 Village Wooing ~ Man of Destiny ~ Thark ~ It's A Boy
- 1945 The Barrett's of Wimpole Street ~ Blithe Spirit -
Dangerous Corner ~ The Taming Of The Shrew
- 1946 I Killed the Count ~ Marry the Girl
- 1947 Saloon Bar ~ While the Sun Shines
- 1948 The Wind and the Rain ~ The Winslow Boy
- 1949 Grand National Night
- 1950 While parents Sleep ~ The Hasty Heart
- 1951 See How They Run ~ Storm In A Loving Cup ~ The Man Who Came To Dinner ~
The Happiest Days Of Your Life
- 1952 A Murder Has Been Arranged ~ Arsenic And Old Lace
- 1953 Little Lambs Eat Ivy ~ Worm's Eye View
- 1954 The Paragon ~ His Excellency
- 1955 The White Sheep Of The Family ~ The Reunion ~ As Long As They're Happy
- 1956 Seagulls Over Sorrento ~ The Gentle Rain ~ The Guinea Pig
- 1957 Miranda ~ My Three Angels ~ Dial M For Murder
- 1958 Hobson's Choice ~ All For Mary ~ Davy Jones Dinner ~ Murder Without Crime ~ Arms And The Man
- 1959 Doctor In The House ~ Dark Brown ~ Who Goes There? ~ Separate Tables
- 1960 To Dorothy A Son ~ All The Tea In China ~ The Long, The Short & The Tall
- 1961 The Magistrate ~ That One Talent ~ The Browning Version
- 1962 Mrs Gibbon's Boys ~ The Bet ~ Murder On The Nile ~ Saturday Night At The Crown
- 1963 Simon And Laura ~ The Valiant ~ Not In The Book ~ The Deep Blue Sea
- 1964 Tunnel Of Love ~ This Is The End ~ School For Scandal
- 1965 The Hollow ~ Bell, Book And Candle ~ The Gentle Rain ~ The Gazebo ~ Night Must Fall
- 1966 Mary, Mary ~ The Rats ~ See How They Run ~ A Doll's House
- 1967 Pool's Paradise ~ Hello Out There ~ The Bear ~ The Cure For Love ~ Scrooge The Miser
- 1968 Diplomatic Baggage ~ The Amorous Goldfish ~ Three's A Crowd
- 1969 Billy Liar ~ The Anniversary
- 1970 I'll Get My Man ~ Coffee Lace
- 1972 Rattle Of A Simple Man
- 1977 Lloyd George Knew My Father ~ Mr Foot ~ Dry Rot
- 1978 Sailor Beware ~ Brides Of March
- 1979 Wild Goose Chase ~ Ten Little Niggers (Now known as 'And Then There Were None')
- 1980 Surprise Package ~ Doctor In Love
- 1981 Alice In Winter Wonderland ~ Hotel Paradiso ~ Cinderella
- 1982 Confusions ~ Gosforth's Fete ~ Dick Whittington
- 1983 The Ugly Duckling ~ Grease ~ Aladdin
- 1984 Deathtrap ~ Bare Facts ~ The Wizard Of Oz ~ Variety Show ~ Robin Hood & Babes In The Wood

PAST PRODUCTIONS

- 1985 Stiff Options ~ Dazzle ~ Variety Show ~ Sinbad!
1986 The Exorcism ~ Hair ~ Variety Show
1987 Sleeping Beauty ~ Fur Coat And No Knickers ~ Yakety Yak ~ Terra Nova
1988 Robinson Crusoe ~ The Best Little Whorehouse In Texas
1989 Cinderella ~ Animal Farm ~ Andy Capp
1990 Jack & The Beanstalk ~ Daisy Pulls It Off ~ Little Shop Of Horrors
1991 Aladdin ~ Loot ~ Guys & Dolls
1992 Goldilocks & The Three Bears ~ A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum ~
The Musical Comedy Murders Of 1940
1993 Dick Whittington ~ My Fair Lady ~ Extremities
1994 Pinocchio ~ Chess ~ Stags And Hens
1995 Cinderella ~ High Society ~ How The Other Half Loves
1996 Ali Baba & The Forty Thieves ~ City Of Angels ~ Nunsense
1997 Dick Whittington ~ Godspell ~ Abigail's Party ~ The Wizard Of Oz
1998 Sweeney Todd ~ Communicating Doors ~ Aladdin
1999 Anything Goes ~ Silly Cow
2000 Goldilocks & The Three Bears ~ Stepping Out ~ Cinderella
2001 'Allo 'Allo ~ Company ~ Jack And The Beanstalk
2002 Shirley Valentine ~ Outside Edge ~ Sleeping Beauty
2003 Noises Off! ~ Return To The Forbidden Planet ~ Snow White
2004 The Rise And Fall Of Little Voice ~ Hot Mikado ~
Robin Hood & The Babes In The Wood
2005 Girls' Night Out ~ A Slice of Saturday Night ~ Peter Pan
2006 The Rude Adventures of Dick Whittington and His Cat ~ The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas ~
Murdered To Death ~ Aladdin
2007 Aladdin & His Wild Adventures ~ The Witches of Eastwick ~ Bouncers & Shakers ~ Cinderella
2008 C(s)inderella ~ Tommy ~ Steel Magnolias ~ Beauty and the Beast
2009 Jack and his Big Stalk ~ Little Shop of Horrors ~ Shadow Lands ~ Jack and the Beanstalk Family Panto
2010 Scroode the Adult Panto ~ Our House ~ One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest ~ Snow White
2011 Alison Wonderbra ~ Sweeney Todd ~
Confusions (in collaboration with St Christopher's Players) ~ Dick Whittington Family Panto
2012 C(s)inderella 2 ~ Footloose ~ Calendar Girls ~ Aladdin
2013 Friends of Dorothy ~ Whistle Down the Wind ~ Vicar of Dibley ~ Cinderella
2014 Snow White and Even Dwarves ~ Guys and Dolls ~ The Ladykillers
2015 Sleeping Beauty ~ Robin Hood and His Babes ~ The Wizard of Oz ~ A Few Good Men
2016 Jack and the Beanstalk ~ Dick and his Pussy ~ Timeless ~ Stones in his Pockets
2017 Rapunzel A Tangled pantomime ~ Into the Bush ~ Rock of Ages ~ Vicar of Dibley
2018 Beauty and the Beast ~ Beauty's Beast Unleashed ~ Rent
2019 Alice in wonderland ~ Alice's Wonderbra ~ High School Musical ~ Stop the Play
2020 Aladdin Family Panto ~ Aladdin the Adult Panto
2021 You're No Vision (Online) ~ A Trial of Allegations (Online)
2022 Cinderella Family Panto ~ Narcoleptic Beauty Adult Panto ~ Live! Griffin's West End ~ Jack and the
Beanstalk Family Panto
2023 Cinder's Fella Adult Panto ~ You're No Vision ~ The Addams Family ~ Snow White and the Seven
Dwarfs Family Panto
2024 Jack and his Giant Stalk Adult Panto ~ Live! Griffins Through the Ages



THE GRIFFIN PLAYERS PROUDLY PRESENT
THE FANTASTIC FAMILY PANTOMIME

ROBIN HOOD

6th-8th & 13th-15th December 2024
Luton Library Theatre

UPCOMING GRIFFIN SHOWS



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OUR HILARIOUS ADULT PANTOMIME



SCROODE

*...the Naughty
Christmas Carol!*

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30TH JAN TO 1ST FEB 2025

THEGRIFFINPLAYERS.CO.UK



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inspired by arnold klopfer

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OF

A HILARIOUS COMEDY BY ALAN AYCKBOURN



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BETWEEN MOUTHFULS



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This amateur production of "Confusions" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd. on behalf of Samuel French Ltd. www.concordtheatricals.co.uk

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Dunstable Musical Theatre Company Presents
An Amateur production by arrangement with The Really Useful Group Ltd.



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Lyrics by Tim Rice,
Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber

Grove Theatre, 19th & 20th July 2024



Have you **enjoyed** the show today?
Looking for a **fun** way to get involved in your community
and meet some **great people** along the way?
Then why not consider joining...

THE GRIFFIN PLAYERS

The Griffin Players are run entirely by volunteers, and we have lots of opportunities for volunteers to help us out to play the big part in our community that we do.

Firstly, we are always interested in new people who would like to help out with one of productions; whether it's front of house, backstage, set design, lighting, costumes, sound, or another element of production, there is plenty of opportunity for you to get involved.

Secondly, if you want to get involved in the running of this group, then you could join our Committee members in helping behind the scenes to create the magic that is seen on-stage.

Finally, we are looking for new Directors, Musical directors and Choreographers for future shows. If you are interested in letting your creative side out, then get in contact with us.

Community theatre has an amazing place in giving opportunities to people of all ages, and as volunteers, any help given is greatly appreciated. Previous experience is not always necessary.

Why not speak to one of our team members today if you are interested, or visit us online via our Facebook page or at thegriffinplayers.co.uk.

From everyone at THE GRIFFIN PLAYERS, thank you for the continued support over the years!



Be inspired by amateur theatre

Did you know?

NODA was founded in 1899.

Membership of over 2000 amateur groups and 1000 individual members.

Members stage musicals, operas, plays, concerts and pantomimes.

Member venues range from professional theatres to village halls.

Supports the needs of youth and adult theatre, on and off stage.

NODA publishes three magazines a year **NODA Today**, read it for free on our website

Visit our website to join today

noda.org.uk



Luton Creative Community (LCC) warmly welcome the Griffin Players to the Luton Library Theatre, as the first society to perform at Luton's newly opened community run theatre. A community theatre for the community, run entirely by a small team of volunteers.

We would like to thank the Griffin Players for their continued support of the Library Theatre, and also thank their members, many of whom have played an invaluable role in LCC, as we battle to save the Library Theatre as a performance space, when there was a real danger it would close forever.

As we welcome you to our theatre, it may appear that everything is finished, but sadly that is not the case. The lights and sound you enjoy today during the production have been brought in temporarily by the Griffins. When they leave, LCC have the task of installing our own lighting and sound equipment, some of which still needs to be purchased.

Much has been donated for which we are hugely thankful, but we are still in desperate need of additional funds to help us complete the many outstanding tasks.

You can easily donate using any of the QR codes around the theatre, or by following this link, for which we would be immensely grateful.

Thank you for supporting the Griffin Players and LCC. We hope to see you back at the Library Theatre very soon.

LCC Executive