



ECCO

SEPTEMBER 2008

English Comedy Club, Brussels

Chairman's Letter

Normally, the Chairman's letter is just an introduction to the ECCO newsletter summarising the various events that are on the horizon. However, this letter also regretfully includes the news that I will be leaving Belgium in the coming months and consequently unable to stand for Chairman at the forthcoming AGM. I'm very aware that the sole reason for holding the EGM in May was so that we could elect a new Chairman who could get their feet under the table, so to speak, prior to the busy Centenary year that is just about to start. At the time of the EGM, I was confident that I would be in Brussels for at least 2 more years and so felt confident that, by standing for Chair, I would be around throughout the Centenary year and into the second century of the ECC. Unfortunately, that has not proved to be the case, and, due to my job, I will be moving back to the UK – most probably in early December.

On a personal basis, it is not a good time for me to leave, as my son has just two years left at school. Therefore, Bridget and I have decided that his schooling is more important and so he will remain in Belgium with Bridget until he finishes school. Consequently, the good news is that I will have many reasons to visit Brussels in the future and to stay in close contact with the club. Not only that, but the very strong likelihood is that I will be moving back to Bedford, and so there will be further opportunities to keep in touch with what is happening and to further strengthen the already strong bond between English Comedy Club and Swan Theatre Company.

Enough about me. Let's move on to a quick summary of the various club events that are coming up in the next month or two.

At the time of writing, the Centenary Dinner at the Stanhope Hotel is just a few days away. Bookings for the event are now closed, but I'm delighted to report that there are about 100 people attending the event – not just from ECC but also from other parts of the Brussels theatre community. It's fantastic that the event has been so well supported and I'm sure that it will be a night to remember.

At the end of September, Diana will be taking her production of *Honour* to Bedford and cast and crew are looking forward to the 'tour' – this being the 5th year that ECC will have taken a production to be performed in Bedford. Hot on its heels, make sure you book your tickets for *Diana of Dobson's*, our opening production of the Centenary season, which is being held at the Studio from 7th to 11th October. Conrad has assembled a fine cast for this delightful play, which is also celebrating its own centenary, and tickets are going fast.

We've been busy raising the profile of the Centenary, so look out for a special feature in The Bulletin, plus coverage on TV Brussels. We will let people know the precise dates to look out for once we know them ourselves.

And, finally, don't forget that all important **AGM on Wednesday 15th October at 8pm**. Official notice for the AGM is included on the next page, plus the agenda for the evening, and we hope to see you there!

Paul Davis

SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS

DIANA OF DOBSON'S

7-11 October 2008, Warehouse Studio Theatre

Rue Waelhem 69a, 1030 Brussels (Trams 23, 33, 55, 92)

TICKETS €14 (€12 for ECC members or groups of ten or more Tuesday to Thursday) and can be booked online at <http://theatreinbrussels.com/ecc>.

To celebrate the ECC's 100th year, we are performing Cecily Hamilton's *Diana of Dobson's*, which is also celebrating its centenary. The play is a comedy exploring the role of women at the beginning of the last century. It centres around Diana (Hilary Barry - Max Dix [ITG]), a shop girl who inherits a small fortune and decides to live a little of the good life. Mistaken for a wealthy widow, she soon attracts the attention of an older businessman (Richard Foxon - *Journey's End*, *Animal Farm*) and a dashing but financially challenged captain (Henri Colens - *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *Café Theatre* [ATC]). The play has a talented and varied cast, mixing both new recruits to the Brussels stage and established actors, including Rose Blyth, Sara Hammerton, Alma Forsyth, Christianna Mason, Femke Beumer, Joanna Patrick, Bridget Peirson-Davis, Marion Tomkins, Guy Harrison & Attila Grózli-Nagy.

The play is directed by Conrad Toft, who also directed *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, the ECC's opening production of last season. Conrad says that this production "shows just how much and how little has changed in the last century; not only in attitudes to women but also in our ideas of society, wealth and, above all, comedy!".

**BEDFORD SWAN THEATRE VISIT IN OCTOBER
CANCELLED**

As many of you know, Bedford Swan Theatre Company were due to visit at the end of October to perform *The Killing of Sister George*. This would have been their second visit to Brussels this year following the highly successful production of *Private Lives* that the group brought over in June.

Unfortunately, this visit has had to be cancelled, which is a tremendous shame as I'm sure the production would have been of the usual high standard that we have come to expect from the Swan Theatre Company. Any of you involved with past Bedford shows will know how pivotal Rae Levene is in every production that is brought over, and unfortunately Rae has not been in the best of health for the past couple of months – current Doctor's orders are that he is not allowed to travel. Indeed, at the time of writing, the poor chap is in hospital. Rae is the sort of guy to resolutely ignore medical advice but this time even he has seen sense and we have jointly reached the decision that it is best to make an early cancellation rather than to get too far down the line and be forced to cancel later on.

Naturally, everyone in ECC wishes Rae a speedy recovery, and doubtless he is already developing plans for the production that he will be bringing over in 2009!

SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS – SHOWS

AC PRODUCTIONS
Present**BRIAN FRIEL'S FAITH HEALER**

* Alex Cusack's professional group coming to Brussels from Dublin *

23-27 September 2008, 8pm**Warehouse Studio Theatre**

Rue Waelhem 69a, 1030 Brussels (Trams 23, 33, 55, 92)

TICKETS €15: To book, contact carolyn.cusack@skynet.be or 010/41 86 57

Frank Hardy, faith healer, returns to his native Ireland in the hope of restoring his ailing powers, accompanied by Grace, his mistress, and Teddy, a seedy showbiz agent devoted to both. Told in four monologues, this is a memory play about an artist's 'feud between himself and his talent'; a play about unconditional love, it is Brian Friel at his most brilliant.

'Director Peter Reid ably captures the unsettling nature of the piece and ensures each monologue each leaves a lasting, deeply poignant impression' *METRO*

AUDITIONS – AUDITIONS – AUDITIONS – AUDITIONS

THE COMPLETE WRKS OF WLLM SHKSPR (Abridged)

Auditions to be held on Sunday 21 September, 2pm until 4pm,

and 24-25 September 8.15pm until 10.15pm

at The Warehouse, Rue Waelhem 73, 1030 Schaerbeek.

Shakespeare written by Reader's Digest performed in the style of Monty Python at the speed of Happy Hardcore on Acid!! Come and be part of the complete works. Not happy with attacking and destroying Marlowe's Dr Faustus, Stephen Challens now turns his gaze to the Great Bard himself...all that can be said is even if you think you've seen it before you won't have seen any of it done like this before!! Contact: stephenchallens@gmail.com.

A CHRISTMAS CAROLAuditions to be held on Tuesday 23rdand Thursday 25th September from 8pm;call backs on Sunday 28th from 2pm

at The Warehouse, Rue Waelhem 73, 1030 Schaerbeek.

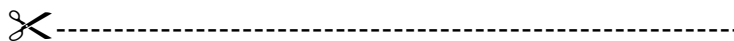
A good old Yuletide romp, this is guaranteed to be a cracker (groan) – get involved....



**Notice of Annual General Meeting Of
The English Comedy Club ASBL
to be held on Wednesday 15th October 2008 at 8.00 p.m.
Warehouse Studio, 69a Rue Waelhem, 1030 Brussels**

1. Adoption of the minutes of the 2007 AGM (October 07) & 2008 EGM (May 08)
2. Chairman's Report
3. Matters arising from the Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report for financial year 2007-2008
5. Reports on
 - Centenary Year Programme
 - FEATS
6. Election of new committee
 - Chairman
 - Hon. Secretary
 - Hon. Treasurer
 - other members of the committee (up to 7 more people)
7. Any Other Business

The meeting will then close, to be followed by drinks at the bar and an informal discussion



<i>Nomination form to be returned to The ECC Hon. Secretary</i> Sara Murray, 10 rue van Elewyck, B-1050 Brussels or by email sara_murray@hotmail.com	
I wish to nominate (please print name in capitals)	The nominee must be a paid-up member of the club whose consent has been given for this nomination.
Chairman Hon. Secretary Hon. Treasurer Committee member	Please tick or circle the position for which the nominee is being put forward
Proposed by <i>(please print name in capitals)</i> membership number	Seconded by <i>(please print name in capitals)</i> membership number
Signature	Signature
ALL NOMINATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY Friday 10 October at noon (each candidate should be submitted on a separate form)	



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Yes, it's that time of year again. Summer is over, the leaves are turning, and membership renewals are due. We very much hope that you will wish to continue supporting the ECC, as well as obtaining benefits such as reductions on ticket prices. Membership remains at the rate of €10 per year, and only €5 for students, stagiaires and under-18s, with the membership year running from 1 October to 30 September.

We would be very grateful if all new and continuing members could fill in a copy of the attached membership form, in order to ensure that our contact details remain current. Please be reminded that you will not be eligible to vote at the AGM on 15 October unless you have renewed your membership, though you will be able to do this at the AGM if you have not been able to do so previously. If you have any queries regarding membership, please do not hesitate to contact our membership secretary, Rachel Cuff, on rachel.cuff@bplaw.com or 0486 102632.

You can pay membership dues by bank transfer to our account: **310-0627727-29**. Don't forget to put your name in the communication. Then please take a moment to **update the form on the next page** and send it by:

- Post, to **English Comedy Club, rue Waelhemstraat 73, 1030 Brussels** or
- Or E-mail to Rachel.cuff@bplaw.com

For the sum of €10 a year (€5 for students, stagiaires and under 18s), you will be entitled to:

- Our regular newsletter, ECCO, with information on forthcoming auditions, shows and other club events
- Reductions on tickets for ECC productions
- Membership of CAST, giving access to the rehearsal rooms and workshop in the Warehouse complex for ECC, ATC and ITG events
- Participation in monthly play readings and other club events.



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Membership address and telephone number update

I am a new member	I am renewing my membership
Date:	

Name			
Address	(street & no.)		
	(commune)		
mobile phone			
Tel (daytime/office)			Tel (evenings)
e-mail			

I am interested in (PLEASE TICK):

ACTING		DIRECTING		PRODUCING	
RUNNING PLAYREADINGS		RUNNING BOX OFFICE		TAKING BOOKINGS	
ATTENDING PLAYREADINGS		COSTUMES		PROPERTIES	
STAGE MANAGEMENT		SET BUILDING		PAINTING	
LIGHTING		SOUND		PUBLICITY	
MAKEUP		HAIR		FRONT OF HOUSE	
OTHER					



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UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ECC

20 September 2008: Centenary Dinner

7–11 October 2008: Diana of Dobson's (Studio)

Don't miss this thought-provoking feminist play written exactly 100 years ago, which will open our Centenary season.

9–14 December 2008: A Christmas Carol (Scarabeus)

A Mainstage production of a classic Christmas tale to get you in the mood.

17 January 2009 (tbc): Centenary Year Launch reception at Town Hall

A club event to launch the start of the Centenary year itself in style – watch this space for more info.

3–14 March 2009: Absurd Person Singular (Studio)

A two-week Studio production of a modern classic.

29 May–1 June 2009: FEATS in Brussels (Woluwe CC)

FEATS is a 30+ year old European theatre festival, which takes place in a different city each year. Expect the legendary competition and fringe productions, as well as youth activities and workshops. A feast of theatre!



19–20 June 2009: Shakespeare Club Night ("Museum" Nightclub – tbc)

A new take on Shakespeare, updated and performed in a nightclub space at midsummer – truly unmissable.

27 June 2009 (tbc): The Adventures of Lady Ursula - & Garden Party at the British Ambassadors Residence

A garden party and play reading of one of the first plays ever performed by the ECC.

UPCOMING EVENTS: OTHER SOCIETIES

23–27 September 2008: Faith Healer (AC Productions – Alex Cusack) – Studio

28 October–1 November 2008: The Best Man (ATC) – Mainstage

11–15 November 2008: Will and the Ghosts (BSS) – Studio

20-23 November 2008: Fiddler on the Roof (BLOC) – Auderghem C.C.