

Market Harborough
Drama Society

Wanted : More Volunteers



MHDS cannot exist without volunteers, who give their time, energy and commitment to running Harborough Theatre - and we always need more! In addition to a number of volunteer roles within the “drama” side of things, there are three roles in the “business” area for which we are seeking new volunteers :-

- **Newsletter Editor**, **Graphic Artist**, and **Premises Assistant**.

The Drama Society owns Harborough Theatre, and runs it without any regular grants or support from the Arts Council, local government organisations, etc.. We bear all the costs of routine operation and maintenance of a building, and of improvements. We produce six plays each year (soon to be seven), we host a range of visiting productions, and we hire out the theatre lounge for local organisations to hold Coffee Mornings, meetings, exhibitions, etc.



Volunteers are recompensed for any expenses incurred, we expect volunteers to provide their time and expertise, but NOT to be out of pocket (a simple expenses claim form has to be submitted).

If you are interested in any of these roles, please call
Nick Lewis, Business Manager tel: mh 463656

Newsletter Editor

Background : The Drama Society produces “Backstage”, a newsletter for MHDS members. Ideally there is one edition each month, with news and announcements, but we often skip January (too much to do over the Christmas / New Year break, and August (theatre usually ‘dark’ at that time because of holidays). The frequency of issue has varied from time to time, for various reasons, and we can be flexible to a degree, and are happy to discuss. The Newsletter Editor reports to the MHDS Publicity Officer.

Key Tasks : The Editor undertakes the following tasks :-

- ◆ Chase contributors for stories (some are reliable, some are forgetful)
- ◆ Edit the stories to suit (correcting any errors!) and include any notices or announcements - especially auditions and similar “dates for your diary” information
- ◆ Find suitable pictures/graphics to illustrate some of the items
- ◆ Typeset the newsletter (using PageMaker, Quark Xpress, MS Publisher, or similar) to provide an interesting and attractive layout. There is no limit to the number of pages!
- ◆ Submit the print file to a local copyshop for printing/folding/stapling, and collect the finished product
- ◆ Distribution : i.e. send the printed newsletter to members (including the boring, but essential, task of applying labels and stamps to envelopes, stuff envelopes, and post them). Sometimes there are other things to be stuffed into the same envelopes, eg AGM announcement and papers.

What skills and resources are needed? : Ideally you will have experience of typesetting, a good eye for page layout, and a commitment to ‘getting it right’. You will need the use of a computer and typesetting (or similar) software, and, preferably, use of e-mail for receiving copy from contributors.

Graphic Artist

Background : The Drama Society produces seven plays each year, plus several other drama and social events. Our 'season' runs from September to July. For each play we need to produce a poster, to promote it, and a theatre programme, to explain the play and acknowledge the actors, stage crew and various helpers/advisors. We need an eye-catching and relevant illustration to be included on the poster and on the front cover of the programme. Ideally these illustrations need to be prepared together before the start of the season, so that the whole season publicity can include mini-posters. For the other events, we need promotional posters and notices, so illustrations are helpful.

The Graphic Artist does not need to undertake the typesetting of the posters and programmes - we have a volunteer who currently does that - but if the Graphic Artist enjoys that aspect and would like to do that too, we are happy to discuss options. The Graphic Artist reports to the Publicity Officer.

Key Tasks : The Graphic Artist undertakes the following tasks :-

- ◆ Consult with the Drama Officer and the play directors about the selected plays – the story, period, etc, so that the illustrations can be relevant in some way.
- ◆ Consult with the Publicity Officer and Business Manager about the publicity campaign, and recommend any themes or styling approaches which could be used.
- ◆ Create an illustration for each play, before the publicity for a season begins.
- ◆ Provide graphics files to poster/programme typesetter.

What skills and resources are needed? : Ideally you will have experience of producing artwork for posters and advertisements, and a commitment to 'getting it right'. You will need the use of a computer and relevant graphics software (e.g. Photoshop), and, preferably, use of e-mail.

Premises Assistant

Background : The Drama Society owns Harborough Theatre, and runs it without any regular grants. We bear the costs of operation and maintenance, and of improvements. We stage our own plays, host visiting productions and Octagon Films, and we hire out the theatre lounge for local organisations to hold Coffee Mornings, etc. The building is, therefore, well used. The Premises Assistant, who reports to the Business Manager, is rather like a caretaker, but with a need to understand, and support, the operation of a theatre.

Key Tasks : The Premises Assistant undertakes the following :-

- ◆ Coordinate the work of the Contract Cleaner – to ensure that routine cleaning of the lounge, corridors and toilets (the public areas) and the occasional cleaning of the theatre auditorium and associated rooms (e.g. dressing-room) are booked and undertaken.
- ◆ Check and replace if necessary any light-bulbs and fuses and similar "minor" repairs and maintenance.
- ◆ Check and report to the Business manager any need for more substantial repairs and maintenance, and liaise with the chosen contractor.
- ◆ Security :-
- ◆ Check that door and window locks and bolts are operational
- ◆ Unlock premises for admission of hirers, and lock up after they finish – checking that they have cleared up properly. We have usually found that one person cannot be available to lock/unlock for every hirer – it is not reasonable to expect that – so the Premises Assistant has to liaise with other volunteers who can take turns for these tasks.

What skills and resources are needed? : There are no specific skills or experience required – just an understanding of the things which are likely to need attention in a well-used building, a good eye for problems, an ability to undertake minor premises tasks, and an ability to liaise with others to get things done.