

Chester Gateway Theatre (0244) 40393

Youth Birthday Production
ON APPROVAL
 A youth 1920's comedy by Frederic Lonsdale
 Youth Birthday Gala Performance Friday, 24th November, 8.00
 Performances Tuesday-Thursday, 7.30, Friday and Saturday, 8.00
 Matinee Saturday, 2nd December, 4.00

THEY'LL NEVER BELIEVE ME
 Cheats at sea: home and abroad, 1914-1918
 On tour:
 Friday, 24th Nov. 7.45 — Victoria War Memorial Hall
 Saturday, 25th Nov. 7.45 — Victoria Hall, Holmes Chapel
 Monday, 27th Nov. 7.30 — Plumley Village Hall
 Thursday, 30th Nov. 7.30 — Mayfield Centre, Macclesfield
 Friday, 1st Dec. 8.00 — Malpas High School
 Saturday, 2nd Dec. 8.00 — Chester Arts Centre

ST. JOAN PLAYERS
 Contact Theatre Company present a workshop version of Shaw's play especially designed for O Level Students
 Monday, 27th and Thursday, 30th November, 2.00 pm
 Tuesday, 28th and Wednesday, 29th November, 10.30 am and 2.00 pm

THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD
 Intrigue and adventure in Sherwood Forest for all the family
 Opens 21st December. Now bookings!!

Gateway Coffee Shop open 10.30 am - 9 pm, Monday - Saturday.
 Lunches and light refreshments served daily. Licensed bar 12.30 - 2.30 pm.

OOO CHESTER 22931
WEDNESDAY, 29th NOVEMBER, 8.45 pm
PETERS AND LEE
 CLIVE WEBB BRYN PHILLIPS
 THE ANDERSON SISTERS

Tickets £3.50, £2.50, £1.50 Tel. Chester 22931

Patrons please note — one house only at 8.45 pm. Holders of tickets for first house can change to second house seats or be re-imbursed.

Every Sat. Doors open 10 am Children's Films. ABC Minors. Admission 15p

Programme may be subject to late change

WRESTLING
 Friday, 1st December
 Commencement 7.45 pm

★ Spectacular ★ Best of today's top TV stars ★ Tremendous double bout of the bill attraction

TONY ST. CLAIR

BULLDOG JOYNSON
 ★ Special challenge Stevenson
 Denison v Black Jack Muffigan
 ★ Old Scores to Settle Jim Breaks
 ★ Bobby Ryan v Plus v Dallas
 ★ Singh v New Sensation: The Mask ★ etc. ★ Terrific Night Out
 ★ Fantastic ★

Prices £1.00, £1.10, £1.25
 advance at Arena or at door on night of promotion.
 Bring the family — everybody welcome

OOO CHESTER 22931
 Continuous from Sunday, 26th November for 9 days
 excluding Wednesday, 29th November

JOHN TRAVOLTA OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN

GREASE
 Sun 5.00, 7.45 Wednesdays 7.45, 5.30, 8.20

HOT WHEELS
 Sun 4.15, 7.00 Wednesdays 7.00, 4.40, 7.30

Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult after 7 pm

Wednesday, 29th November, at 8.45 pm
On stage — PETERS AND LEE
 Programme may be subject to late change

OOO CHESTER 22931
LIVE ON STAGE
 Saturday, 9th December, at 7.30 pm.

JASPER CARROT in Concert

Staff/Circle £3.50, £3.00, £2.50, £1.50.

Booking Office open Mon.-Sat., 2 pm - 8 pm.

Children's Film Show every Saturday, 10 am
 Programme may be subject to late change

THEATRE CLWYD
 Mold 55114
 Bar Restaurant

Regular from Sun. 1 to Sat. 7.30
 Youth Centre present

ARDEN OF FEVERHAM
 who was first produced by the means of his dramatic and scenic skills

Sun. 26th November, 8 pm
 Drama Youth Centre present
ROMAN DRIFTERS MALL CHOIR

Mon. 27th November, 8 pm
 2nd December, 8 pm
 Also Fri. and Sat., 9 pm
 2001

A SPACE OVERTURE 8 pm
 Cy Grant

Sun. 3rd December, 8 pm
 Cy Grant

RETURNS TO MY NATIVE LAND
 by Aram Chapiro

SEN BRUCE and LOS WILLIAMS
 Details from Booking Office

ODEON FILM CENTRE
 CHESTER

1 **ENDS SATURDAY**
 MIDNIGHT EXPRESS 00
 2.40, 4.30, 6.00, 7.30

2 **DEATH DEALERS 00**
 2.00, 8.30, 8.40
CONFESSIONS OF A MALE ESCORT 00
 3.40, 7.40

3 **THE WILD GESE (AA)**
 1.40, 4.40, 7.40, 10.30

1 **SUNDAY - 7 DAYS**
ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
 00 1.40, 4.40, 7.40, 10.30
DEATH DEALERS 00
 3.20 (in Sun.) 6.50

2 **MIDNIGHT EXPRESS 00**
 2.40 (in Sun.) 5.20, 8.00, 10.30

3 **THE WILD GESE (AA)**
 1.40 (in Sun.) 4.40, 7.30, 10.30

DINING OUT
 WONDERING WHERE TO GO OR LOOKING FOR SOMEWHERE NEW?

Some helpful suggestions in

DEESIDER
 From all Newsagents — 30p

1968 CONTROVERSY 1974 FARCE 1975 ABSURJITY 1977 DRAMA

Above, Likely Lad, James Bolam in "The Double Case History of Dr. Valmy" the first play to be staged at The Gateway ten years ago. Below right, scene from today's production for the birthday celebration, "On Approval".

"Plea in Her Ear"

"Habeus Corpus" with David Suchet.

"Equus"

Happy returns for the Gateway — ten years on!

November, 1968, was the era of mini skirts, flower power and Beatles records. It was also the time live professional theatre came to Chester.

A decade later, skirts are longer. Punks have replaced Hippies, and John Travolta tops the charts. Trends change but the theatre lives on.

Tonight the Chester Gateway Theatre celebrates its 10th birthday. It is a gala occasion, and after the performance guests will recall old times and toast the future.

For included in the audience will be people who were involved with the theatre at its birth, actors, stage hands, kitchen staff and, hopefully, the first theatre director, Julian Oldfield.

It was Julian Oldfield's controversial production of the unknown Spanish play "The Double Case History of Dr. Valmy", which marked the opening of the city's theatre. Financed by grants from the Chester City Council and the Arts Council, the theatre has established itself as an integral part of Chester life.

Its recognition as such has come after 10 years of hard work by all involved in making the Gateway a viable proposition.

Over 300 productions have been presented, covering the whole spectrum of theatre. There's been comedy, tragedy, farce, pantomime, experimental plays and "safe" ones.

Amateur groups regularly stage shows at the Gateway, and the theatre has also offered professional touring groups, including dance and opera companies.

But that's the past. What does the future hold for the theatre? Looking ahead to the next decade, artistic director Chris Honer, who took over from Julian Oldfield in 1976, says he would

like to present a more exciting and adventurous programme but his hands are tied by budget considerations.

"The world of theatre has not escaped the dreaded disease of the 70s — inflation. Cut-backs have

This Friday evening the Gateway Theatre celebrates the tenth anniversary of its opening on 22nd November, 1968. Val Surridge here looks at the first decade of Civic Theatre in Chester and talks to artistic director, Christopher Honer.

meant a reduction in grants. There is less money for expansion and the 17-strong acting team of 1968 is now reduced to a maximum of 12.

"The theatre remains open all year round, but the Studio productions have been 'indefinitely postponed' and the backstage crew must be doubly inventive with costumes and sets to make the finances stretch.

This year the Gateway has received a £50,000 grant from the Arts Council and £80,000 from the City Council. Theirs box office and catering returns on top but there's a lot of overheads, too.

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Gymerwch Chi Sigaret?

Theatre yr Ymlyon, the Welsh Actors' Company are to present the English Language version of Saunders Lewis's play "Would You Like a Cigarette?" at Theatre Clwyd on the 8th and 9th of December at 7.30 pm.

Saunders Lewis, born in Liverpool but of Welsh parentage, has probably had greater influence on Welsh Language Literature and Welsh politics than any other person during this century. A playwright, poet, critic and politician, Mr. Lewis is an scholar of renown and of widespread respect.

"Would You Like a Cigarette?" explores the moral and political pressures upon a young East European and his family when he is assigned to combat an assassination.

The real life incident that stimulated the writing of the play was the Kholkov affair of 1944.

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The Gateway is ten years on and its list of past performers and performances is a commendable one. Among those who graced the stage in its infancy are James Bolam and Rodney Bewes, a couple of "Likely Lads", Penelope Keith, who is known to all television viewers as Margo in "The Good Life", Lynette Davies, the woman tycoon in ITV's "The Foundations" and the Royal Shakespeare actor David Suchet.

Popular musical tale

Prokofiev's popular "Peter and the Wolf" was a delightful and welcome inclusion in the programme by the City of Chester Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Nicholas Smith, at Sunday's concert at the Gateway which attracted a full house.

The narration was graciously undertaken by Sally Buntingham, with consistently clear diction. Well known in music making in the North West she is manager of the Northern Chamber Orchestra and founder of a school of music.

The instrumental colouring was distinctive and explicit, the story unfolding naturally with comfortable liaison between reciter and orchestra.

FAVOURITE

Unusually, the concert opened with the symphony, Beethoven's No. 6 in F ("Pastoral"), another firm favourite with concertgoers. The opening two movements, Allegro ma non troppo and Andante molto mosso, Allegro, if perhaps lacking breadth, were nevertheless adequately interpreted.

The final Allegretto with its charming melodic line was played with greater security and had a sound rhythmic basis.

The Romance in C for Strings by Sibelius, possessed good balance of tone and there was a sincere attempt to capture the prevailing rather sombre mood of the work.

Leader of the orchestra was Gerhardt Drechsler, and the next concert will be on 17th December.

Players' spirited Pinter at Tarvin

Understandably the work of Harold Pinter finds little favour with amateur groups. His casts are invariably small and his plots often unattractive. It was refreshing, therefore, to see a spirited and knowledgeable attempt at "The Birthday Party" by Ashton Hayes Theatre Club at Tarvin Community Centre last week.

The play has a strange air of mystery, even threat, common to much of Pinter's work.

The action takes place in a run down seaside boarding house. Stanley (played by John Durrent) an apparently unemployed musician is the only resident constantly pampered with smothering affection by the motherly landlady, here sensitively portrayed by Dorothy Slacy.

Soon, two mysterious guests arrive, Goldberg, a sermonizing Jew and McCann, a burly, nervous Irishman. We do not know who they are or where they come from. The door simply opens and the mystery deepens.

Stanley's birthday party is a tragically funny episode. Only Meg (the landlady) seems to enjoy

the fun and games. We are constantly aware of the menacing presence of the two strangers.

It seems so uneventful on the surface but this play, like much of Pinter, comes to life when one accepts the uncertainty as one of its beauties.

With limited resources and plenty of enthusiasm the Ashton Hayes Club gave an insight into how theatrically satisfying a Pinter play can be. Stanley came across well as the pathetic victim of the two hoodlums. Tony Thorne's Goldberg was occasionally more ethereal than menacing, and John Edwards as McCann brought out the thugbery behind the nervousness of the character. It says much for the direction of Arnold Skelton that, until the very end, we were all kept guessing.

DISC SPOT

The Clash made the definitive statement of the original new wave. The unbridled aggression political seething that were distilled into that debut made it a far more incisive document than all the other LPs of the genre. The Pistols made the best singles. Joe Strummer's boys came up with the killer album.

A year and half on, the band have at last delivered chapter two. Why did it take so long? Many felt that the moguls of CBS were pressurising the group to compromise their style.

"Give 'em Enough Rope" (CBS) dispels the fears. The Clash retain integrity which many of their ilk have lost.

The opener, "Self European Home" is a stunner, perhaps the record's coup de grace. Strummer's vitriolic enthusiasm complements the searing guitar work of Mick Jones.

The single "Tommy Gun" has an equally powerful momentum, but Strummer's vocal is mixed somewhat higher.

"Give 'em Enough Rope" is still as popular as when it began its run of its run. The combination of big name stars, music and colour have made this film a hit.

Around the cinemas

ODEON 1: "Assault on Precinct 13" (X) is about an American police station which is attacked by a gang of terrorists. The film stars Austin Stoker.

"Midnight Express" (X) has been switched from Odeon 1. Directed by Oliver Stone, it has already been heralded in America as the most important film of the decade.

A man in his early twenties is thrown into prison for a drug offence, and the film deals with his mental and physical struggles.

ODEON 3: "The Wild Geese" (AA) is a star studded movie about mercenaries rescuing an African leader. The film successfully holds the tension and suspense throughout.

Richard Burton, Richard Harris, Roger Moore, R. Kruger and Stewart Granger make up just some of the great cast.

ABC: "Grease" (A) is still as popular as when it began its run of its run. The combination of big name stars, music and colour have made this film a hit.

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