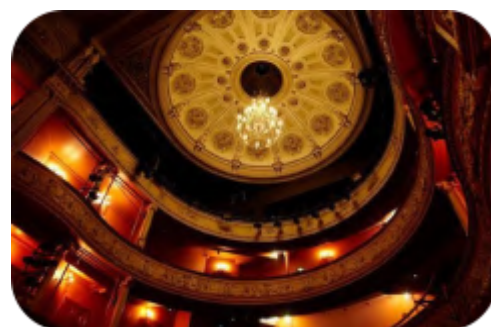




Will it ever stop raining? I don't know about you, but I am desperate for some Spring sunshine!

To escape the interminable gloom, Robert and I decided to head into London for a bit of culture and nostalgia! We started off at The Duke of York's Theatre to see a matinee performance of the play – A Woman in Mind, with Sheridan Smith and Romesh Ranganathan. This is an Alan Ayckbourn play and so we expected something a little different and this certainly lived up to expectations! When Susan sustains a bump to the head, her world splits in two – one mundane, one imagined – and the lines begin to blur. I won't spoil it by telling you the story but, in true Alan Ayckbourn style, it was bonkers, but thoroughly enjoyable!



This was followed by an evening trip to The National Theatre where we went to the Olivier Theatre to see a stage adaptation of the wonderful Noel Streatfield book, Ballet Shoes. In a crumbling house full of dinosaur bones and fossils, three adopted sisters – Pauline, Petrova and Posy – are learning who they are and what they want to be. Under the watchful eyes and guidance of their guardian Sylvia, Nana, and some unlikely lodgers, they fight to pursue their individual passions. But in a world that wasn't built for women with big ambitions, can they forge a future and manage to keep their family together? I remember

the book so vividly from my childhood and was eager to see if the integrity of the story had been preserved. I wasn't disappointed, the play was enchanting and awash with wit and charm.



However, with both performances, I couldn't help but miss a final chorus. I like to leave a theatre with a song in my head! It made me think about the power of music and especially singing. There is no doubt singing with a group of other people gives an essential boost to our health and well-being.

8 Reasons Singing is good for you:

- Singing makes you feel better
- Singing helps you beat stress and relax
- Singing helps improve memory
- Singing builds a sense of community
- Singing lets you express yourself
- Singing can help when things are tough
- Singing boosts your confidence
- Singing enhances lung function

This has been brought home to me with a choir that I run for people who live in a McCarthy Stone complex in Baldock. We meet weekly for an hour, and I get them all singing and they love it! Some even say it is their favourite hour of the week! And I can see some, who come in looking tired and drawn, leave with a smile on their face and more of a spring in their step.

The power of singing is palpable, you can feel it doing you good!

And hopefully those of you who sing with us or come to the shows and leave with a song in your head also feel the benefits of singing. The Wizard of Oz is a perfect show for that. How can you not leave with 'Something Over the Rainbow' going round in your head? And listening to music at rehearsals so far – it's going to be a great show!

I hope to see you there...

- *Mary Driver*

Your committee

President: Margaret Dinmore

Chair : Mary Driver

Vice-chair : David Walker

Membership Secretary : Janet Milton

Production Secretary : Rachel Bloomfield

General Secretary : Gilly Mackilligan

Publicity and Marketing : Sophie Walker

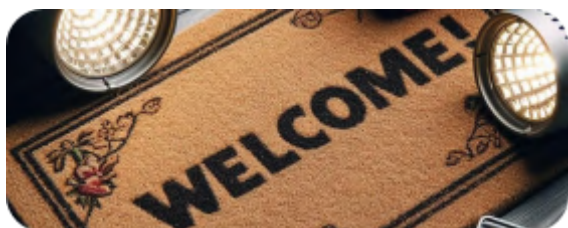
Treasurer : Samantha Brown

General committee:

Ben Austin

Simon Latter

Harry Pearce



We are pleased to welcome the following new and returning members:

Chloe Roberts, Juliette Albone, Victoria Leitner and Hannah Juggins

Quiz Night

The first social event of the year is planned. Open to members, patrons, friends and family. Gather your teams in advance or come solo and join a team on the night!

Let's get quizzing...

Venue: Baldock Community Centre

Date: Saturday 9th May 2026 at 7.30 p.m.

Cost: £15 per person – includes food (vegetarian/meat chilli)

Bring your own drinks

✨ WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD! ✨

🎉 Our Spring 2026 production will be THE WIZARD OF OZ! 🎉

Grab your ruby slippers, click your heels, and get ready to follow us over the rainbow and down the Yellow Brick Road, as we bring this beloved classic to life. Join Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tinman and Cowardly Lion on their journey to meet the Wizard of Oz.

Complete with dazzling music, unforgettable characters, and a whole lot of Oz magic. ❤️

Whether you're dreaming of brains, heart, courage, or just a whirlwind adventure, THIS is the show you won't want to miss!

Step into Oz, feel the magic and discover there really is no place like home!

This year we are performing Thursday to Saturday evenings at 7.30pm with a matinees on Saturday and Sunday at 2.30pm.



Cast List

Dorothy - Sophie Walker	Hunk / Scarecrow - Karl Toombs
Hickory / Tinman - Keiran Raine	Zeke / Lion - Harry Pearce
The Wicked Witch of the West - Sera Dinmore	Glinda - Hannah Juggins
Emerald City Guard - Gilly Mackilligan	Miss Gulch - Mary Driver
Professor Marvel / The Wizard of Oz - Ben Austin	Aunt Em - Adele Walker
Uncle Henry - Robert Driver	Toto - Nellie
Crows - Mary Driver, Chloe Roberts and Adele Walker	
Trees - Juliette Albone, Margaret Dinmore, Gilly Mackilligan and Paula Shairp	

Tickets are on sale now! And there are three ways you can book...

Call the box office on 07511 519387

Log on to our website letchworth-arcadians.co.uk

Scan the QR code on the flyer

Ticket prices - Full Price £22, Concessions £20 and Junior tickets £15 for all performances.

Forthcoming Productions



Feelin' Good – A Night of Big Band & Swing

Step into the golden age of big band as Letchworth Arcadians present a glamorous big band concert, celebrating iconic songs and artists.

With a 10 piece onstage band this is going to be a very special evening!

St Francis' College Theatre, Letchworth. 22nd to 24th October 2026



Shrek The Musical - Based on the DreamWorks' Animation motion picture and book by William Steig.

Book and Lyrics by Music by David Lindsay-Abraire and Music by Jeanine Tesori

St Francis' College Theatre, Letchworth. 2nd to 5th June 2027

This award-winning musical brings to life the word of Shrek live on stage in an unforgettable production to melt hearts of all ages.

DreamWorks' spectacular musical is based on their much-loved Oscar winning animated film.

Join Shrek and Donkey on their quest to rescue the feisty Princess Fiona. meet a Dragon, a Gingerbread man with attitude, Pinocchio and a whole bunch of fairy tale misfits who'll leave you in stitches.

CALLING ALL YOUNG PERFORMERS!

Letchworth Arcadians Musical Society is delighted to be bringing The Wizard of Oz to the stage in Letchworth this May — and we're looking for children aged 9 years and over to join our Munchkin Chorus!

✨ Love to perform?

We're seeking enthusiastic young performers who can sing, dance and act.

🎤 There will also be opportunities for solo roles for the right performers.

🗓️ We will be holding an Open Audition Workshop on Tuesday 3rd March at 7pm for any interested children. (Please note that the children must be 9 years old by the time of the performance - 26th-31st May 2026.)

This fun workshop will be a chance for children to showcase their skills and experience what it's like to be part of a musical theatre production.

👉 For more details and audition forms please email:

productionsecretary@letchworth-arcadians.co.uk



Can you help The Wizard?

We are looking for people to help with Scenery and Prop making for the show.

Are you a dab hand with a paint brush or good with a hammer, nails and a saw?

If you can spare a few hours and don't mind a little bit of woodwork, painting, gluing etc we would love to hear from you.

If that's not you, then how about helping create the magic on stage and help us backstage during show week? We have a great backstage team and are always looking for people to help 'set the scene' behind the curtain! If you can't commit to every night but would like to be involved, what about helping with the 'get in' before the show or 'get out' after the show for just a few hours?

It would be great to hear from you.

David

🎉 Congratulations 🎉



BIG Birthday Congratulations to:

Dennis Rusted – 80 (22nd February)

Sam Brown – 60 (15th March)

Enjoy your celebrations!

Recipe Corner

Try this yummy tray bake, all ready for Easter.

Chocolate and Banana Snacking Cake

Ingredients:

Cake

120g butter/margarine

2/3 cup light brown sugar

2 teaspoons vanilla essence

2 large eggs

1/4 cup milk

2/3 very ripe bananas (mashed)

1 1/2 cups self-raising flour

2 tablespoons corn flour

Chocolate Cream Cheese Icing

60g butter (room temperature)

120 g cream cheese (room temperature)

150 g icing sugar

1/4 cocoa powder

1 teaspoon vanilla essence.

Topping

Crushed Maltesers or Easter eggs. Sprinkle with hundreds and thousands.

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 160 degrees, spray an 8 x 8 inch pan with cooking oil and line with baking paper. In a large bowl, beat together the eggs, butter, vanilla and light brown sugar until combined. Add the mashed bananas and milk to the bowl. Use a spatula to fold in the flour and corn flour until combined. Do not over mix. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes turning the pan halfway at 15 mins time. Remove from the oven and let it cool in the pan for 20 minutes.



Turn out the cake onto a cooking rack to cool completely. Ice with the Chocolate Cream Cheese frosting. Just before serving, sprinkle the cake with roughly chopped Maltesers or Easter eggs or hundreds and thousands. To serve, cut the cake into equal squares.

Chocolate Cream Cheese Icing:

Beat butter, vanilla and cream cheese on low until well combined.

Gradually, add in icing sugar followed by cocoa. Increase speed and beat for another 30 seconds until creamy and blended. Set aside ready to ice the cooled cake.

Enjoy!

- Jan Milton

President's Postscript

Awards season is upon us, with the Golden Globes and BAFTA film awards done and dusted and the Oscars, Oliviers and BAFTA television awards coming up in the next few months. It seemed to me that they had grown out of all proportion with a never-ending list of categories, so I was quite surprised to find that, although there were only 12 at the very first Oscars' ceremony, this has risen to just 24 for 2026. Perhaps it is the length of these occasions, with the clips and acceptance speeches that makes the whole process feel overwhelming. In 1927 that first Oscar evening lasted just 15 minutes – all the winners had been announced three months earlier – compared to the 3 hours and 50 minutes of 2025!

NODA is no stranger to an expanding awards event - sadly no nominations for Arcadians this year. If my memory serves me correctly, at the first presentation I attended there were only awards for the best production in each district. This has now been extended to one each for best musical, play, panto and youth production, plus awards for best posters, programmes, young performer and technical. Fortunately, we are spared acceptance speeches!

Don't misunderstand me, every aspect of a production should be celebrated. Every person involved contributes to the success or failure of a project and each one should be acknowledged. An item of trivia; the Guinness World Record for the film with the most credited individuals stands at 5109 for Avengers: Infinity War. Our own productions often list more people on the backstage list than appear on stage and we are grateful to each and every one of them.

Let's all pull together on our productions this year, whether on stage or behind the scenes, and just maybe we'll be back on the awards list next year.

- Margaret Dinmore

Editor's note

If you have anything you would like to share in a future newsletters please email me at keiranmraine@gmail.com.