

# LATE JOYS

THE PLAYERS' THEATRE - THE ARCHES, VILLIERS STREET, LONDON WC2 6NG.

MARCH 1994

## A Call To Members

To those members we have not seen since 1993, every good wish for a prosperous 1994, and a New Year resolution to visit the Club on a regular basis!

We have made much progress in the past twelve months, and a real effort has been made to both reduce the 'inherited' debt that accrued during the removal and stay at the Duchess, and the move back to the Arches, and to improve the ambience, service, facilities and programmes.

We believe we have begun to see some results for this concentrated effort on the part of all who work at The Players'. We have done this in the face of increased VAT, which we have absorbed, and we have also kept the annual subscriptions at the same level for the past four years - and actually REDUCED the price of guest tickets for the Late Joys.

There is no question that the Club offers exceptional value. But to recognise that begs the question - why do not the Members support us more by attending the performances? Having enjoyed packed houses for 'Aladdin', it is dispiriting and worrying to find only two or three rows booked on some evenings for the first Joys of the season. Even if we had a surplus of £200,000 pa (which we don't!) the Club could not survive playing to tiny houses - disillusioning for both cast and audience.

Music Hall demands a crowd, and the magic of a full house at The Players' cannot be matched anywhere. We do appeal to Members to make a real effort to come and see some of the first bills of the season - indeed, there are but four bills before 'The Boy Friend'.

We are a Club. No Members - no club.

## The Boy Friend

Interest is growing daily in this splendid new production which opens on 7 April. Having been featured in the Sunday Times Theatre Club we now have a welcome and substantial advance, approaching five figures as we write. Casting is now complete, and rehearsals begin at the beginning of March.

The intention is to recreate as exactly as possible the original magical piece that sparkled into life 40 years ago. The original script, plots and records have been scrutinised; Mr Geoffrey Webb has been called back from the USA to recreate the choreography and Miss Maria Charles (the first 'Maisie') is the producer, under the benign but eagle eye of the author, Mr Sandy Wilson. The musical direction is by

Mr Geoffrey Brawn with design by Mr Disley Jones.

Tickets: Members £5; Guests £12;  
Non-members £20.

The production will run for four weeks and on each Tuesday evening of the run we plan to hold a buffet supper in the restaurant after the show when members and their guests will be able to meet some of the cast. We will need a minimum of 20 people and a maximum of 50, so if you are coming to see 'The Boy Friend' on a Tuesday evening please make your bookings quickly.

Price: £7.50 per head to include a glass of wine.

## Wonderful Aladdin

The pantomime has given us probably our greatest success since we left Villiers Street for the Duchess. Golden opinions from the Members, good media coverage and, most telling of all, 'House Full' signs out for much of the run, including five out of the six last performances. The four matinees were all sold out, and we shall be presenting SIX matinees this year. The special teas were also a great success and Mrs Norah Ward very kindly provided all the cakes (single handed!) for one complete session.

Mr Richard Frost's direction, Mr Disley Jones' design, Miss Doreen Hemitage's choreography, Mr Geoffrey Brawn's musical score and Mr Mark Mason's accompaniment and a splendid cast made up a mixture rich in traditional Players' strengths.

The bill was enhanced throughout the run by Emerson and Jayne with their amazing Flying Carpet illusion which, with Professor Percy Press, made a special treat for the children at the matinee performances. The Players' were privileged to bid farewell to them on the last night, when this remarkable couple took their final bows, having earlier in the day announced their retirement during a radio interview. The Management presented them with a Chinese carpet as a permanent memento of their last season. Doubtless they will use it to fly up and see us on occasion from their Kent farmhouse!