



# TRIVIAL PURSUITS

by Frank Vickery



**Tues 13 ~ Sat 17 June 2023**  
**[StokeRepPlayers.co.uk](http://StokeRepPlayers.co.uk)**

Welcome to our theatre — here is some information that may be of interest to you...

The Stoke Repertory Theatre is supported and run by volunteers who regularly donate their valuable time — and without whom we could not deliver the standard of production and customer service our patrons have come to rightfully expect. Some of these people you will meet on your visit today, others fulfil less visible, but no less vital, rôles behind the scenes. We are deeply indebted to our exceptional backstage crews, glorious front-of-house helpers, bar and coffee staff and to all wonderful members and friends who help run the theatre.

- The bar is open from 6-45pm until shortly after the end of the performance. Drinking up time is 20 minutes.
- Coffee, tea and confectionery are available from the coffee bar from 6-45pm.
- Interval refreshments may be ordered before the performance to avoid queuing later.
- The car park is open from 6-30pm until 11pm on performance evenings. Over-spill parking is available in Staffordshire University's car park further along Leek Road — this is free Monday to Friday and £1 Saturday matinée and evening. Neither The Repertory Theatre nor the University can accept any responsibility for damage to, or loss of, vehicles from their car parks.
- The videotaping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings or streams of this production is strictly prohibited, a violation of United Kingdom Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and an actionable offense.

**Please refrain from smoking or vaping in any part of the theatre.  
Please ensure your phones are turned off. Thank you.**





# TRIVIAL PURSUITS

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## *The Players*

In order of appearance

<b>Teddy</b>	Geoff Legan
<b>Joyce</b>	Rachel Millar
<b>Mona</b>	Chris Locket
<b>Pearl</b>	Deborah Key
<b>Roz</b>	Jane Procter
<b>Jessica</b>	Emily Tunnicliffe
<b>Derek</b>	Philip Jackson
<b>Nick</b>	Richard Morrey
<b>Dierdre</b>	Sharon Lawton
<b>Eddie</b>	John Stone

Our action takes place on the patio and in the garden of Nick and Roz's suburban home in the 1980s.

Act I            7:30 pm Saturday evening in August

**Interval of twenty minutes**

Act II            Scene 1 Later that evening  
                    Scene 2 Ten minutes later

# *from The Director*

*Trivial Pursuits* is a bit of a busman's holiday for those of us involved in this production as it is set in the world of am-drams.

The action centres on Roz and Nick's barbecue party at which Nick, the director of a local amateur operatic group, is to announce the next production. The guests at the party all have their own individual ideas about what should be staged next and use a variety of 'persuasive' techniques to bring Nick round to their point of view with hilarious results.

Having said that it's a busman's holiday for us, we sincerely hope that, here at The Rep, we avoid all the petty rivalries, jealousy and back-biting stereotypically associated with the am-dram world and which provide so much of the humour in this play!

The play was written by actor Frank Vickery and was first staged in 1987 in his native Wales before, briefly, transferring to the West End. Vickery appeared in pantos, playing the Dame, and he used these skills in his plays, often writing a highly camp and theatrical rôle for himself — such as Teddy in this play. He would also have had a great insight into the amateur theatre world, as his theatrical career began with him writing productions for amateur groups, while working as a bus conductor. Once he became more established, he was able to become a full-time writer in 1989.

This play is a good, old-fashioned comedy with lots of nods to farce and 'Carry On' style double-entendres and innuendo. We hope that, with its summer party setting, and upbeat, feel-good humour that it brings an appropriate and joyful end to our current season!

*Jane Procter*



This amateur production of 'Trivial Pursuits' is presented by arrangement with ConcordTheatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.

[www.concordtheatricals.co.uk](http://www.concordtheatricals.co.uk)

# *Credits*

Director	Jane Procter
Assistant Director	Alan Clarke
Stage Director	Terry Wright
Stage Manager	Ray Vernon
Set Construction	Tony Rogerson, Andy Baddeley, Terry Wright, Ray Vernon, Stuart Campbell, Bob Flower, Alan Hulme, Simon Bland, Members and Friends of Rep Players
Set Design	RP Design
Lighting Design	Stuart Campbell
Lighting Operation	Janet Clarke
Sound Design	Tina Campbell
Sound Operation	Debbie Morrey
Props	Ray Vernon and Rep Members
Set Décor	Dawn Birks and Team
Set Dressing	Dawn Birks and Margo Bloor
Specialist Props	Tony Rogerson and Ray Vernon
Costumes	Rep Players, Jane Cronin, North Staffs Operatic Society
Wardrobe Co-Ordinator	Sylvia Wright
Front-of-House Manager	Nick Bailey
Social Media	John Stone
Programme	Jayne Blake
Company Photographer	Peter Croft

With thanks to North Staffs Operatic Society



We are indebted to the St John Ambulance Brigade  
whose members attend all of our performances.

# The Players

The Players give us a little peep into their theatrical history, their favourite musical, the best musical they have been in, their go-to BBQ food and their favourite line from the play. All for your entertainment...

## Geoff Legan

Next year I will be celebrating 30 years, on and off, as a member of The Rep. I started with my moody stranger rôles: George Deeever in *All My Sons* and Dr Miller in *The Deep Blue Sea*.

Plays performed and directed since include: *Corpse*, *The Cemetery Club*, *The Elephant Man*, *Stepping Out*, *The Crucible* and *The Lady In The Van*.

My favourite musical of all time is a choice between two: *The Mystery Of Edwin Drood* and *Poppy* (take a listen, they're both fabulous, fabulous...) As for Teddy it's probably (as my friend Davron always says): *The Desert Song*.

My favourite musical that I have performed is again a choice of two: *Scrooge* and *La Cage Aux Folles* (fabulous, fabulous...)

As for my favourite BBQ food... you can't beat a barbecued banana...

My favourite quote from the play (guess what... there are two): "She had hair in a pony-tail, way down her back, which wasn't difficult as she was only four foot three..." and "I haven't been right for lots of parts, but I've still done 'em..."

Fabulous, Fabulous.



## Rachel Millar

Character description — 'A once talented actress' — well that's something Joyce and I have in common. Starting out as a Jam Tart with a dance school to playing a drunk at The Rep. The years in between have been eventful and certainly 'dramatic'. Dozens of rôles, directing and writing credits and I've still not played Laurie! Maybe by the end of this week someone will recognise my potential and you'll find me singing 'Many A New Day' before the year is out. Although, to be fair, you're more likely to find me in a rocking chair behind a dolly-peg as Aunt Ella.

My favourite show has to be *Miss Saigon* as it was the first show I became obsessed with.

Favourite show I've been in would be *Guys & Dolls*, playing Adelaide, as that is where I met my wife!

Favourite BBQ food? Who doesn't love a sausage.

Favourite line from the play, "Gone. His huff arrived and he departed in it."





## Deborah Key

I'm Deb, playing the rather earnest and perpetually worried Pearl, treasurer of the Maybury and District Operatic Society.

My all-time favourite musical is *Cabaret*, though I could never play Sally Bowles! I need to save in order to go see the current KitKat Club production in London.

The musical that I most enjoyed being a part of was *Oliver!* here at The Rep, for NSOS... a drunken tart in the Three Cripples during OomPahPah — great fun!

At Nick and Roz's barbecue I'd love a piece of rump steak, rare, or, failing that, sausages from Bar Hill Farm!

I cannot commit to my favourite line from the play as there are many and I don't want to spoil the surprise!



## Emily Tunncliffe

I'm Emily and I play the character Jessica, who is most certainly 'vibrant' and 'rather challenging'. This is my first production with The Rep and it has been fab!

It's been lovely getting to know the team that makes this all happen and I have really enjoyed rehearsing and performing *Trivial Pursuits* with all my fellow cast. There's been a lot of laughs along the way and I hope you will share in those with us. Enjoy the show!

Favourite musical: *South Pacific*.

Favourite musical I have been in: *Miss Saigon*.

Favourite BBQ food: classic burger with ketchup.

Favourite line from this play: "This is getting to be a nightmare."





## Philip Jackson

I've been acting for around 18 years now, and this is my fifth play at The Stoke Rep. The highlight rôle for me at The Rep was undoubtedly being given the opportunity to play Macbeth (I don't think it's bad luck to say it in a programme...) Other memorable plays include *See How They Run*, *The Ghost Train*, *Molly Sweeney* and *The Crucible*. I've also directed two shows, including *As You Like It* which was performed at Little Moreton Hall.

My favourite musical is anything by Stephen Sondheim — the man was a genius. If I was pushed to one of his musicals, I think I'd go with *Sunday In The Park With George*. I've never been in a musical — *See How They Run* has a snatch of Noel Coward in it, so I'm going to claim that instead!

I'm not hugely into barbecues — I'll opt for the fruit salad later.

My favourite line from *Trivial Pursuits* is — "She'd gone for a week before I knew she was missing — if I hadn't run out of shirts, I never would have found out."



## Richard Morrey

My first play was *Journey's End*. It was the last play performed at the old Rep in Beresford Street. I was directed in this by Ken Lowe. Somebody I learned much from — he had a lot of time for people — but he didn't suffer fools gladly.

It was here where I met Debbie who was part of the backstage crew and we're still together now.

My favourite musical is *Les Misérables*.

Favourite musical I've been in is *Titanic*.

My favourite BBQ food is BBQ spare ribs with a side order of coleslaw.

Favourite line from this play — "Who the hell has heard of the musical Calamity Jan!"







## Sharon Lawton

I have been hooked on theatre since the age of five, when my Grandparents took me to The Queens Theatre in Burslem to see The North Staffs Operatic Society's production of *Hello Dolly*. I have been a Member of NSOS for 42 years now and have been involved in over 70 musical productions both on stage and behind the scenes.

I have so many favourite musicals, but one I do love is *Man Of La Mancha* and also, in 1994, when I played the rôle of Maggie Jones in *42nd Street*.

My favourite BBQ food is chicken.

Favourite line from the play is, "You didn't honestly think I was doing anything with Teddy? ... Not that it has anything to do with you if I was."



## John Stone

I have been passionate about performing since the age of seven. Over the years, I have had the opportunity to perform in various plays and musicals, including *South Pacific*, *Camelot*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Oliver*, *Titanic*, *Priscilla Queen Of The Desert*, *The Hunchback Of Notre Dame*, *'Allo 'Allo!*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Cash On Delivery* and *Black Adder Goes Forth*.

My favourite musical is *Les Misérables*, and my favourite rôle to date has been in *Titanic*.

When I'm not on stage, I enjoy indulging in my favourite BBQ food, tuna steak, and reciting my favourite line from the play, "I don't suppose you have a Pimms do you?"



# The Director



## Jane Proctor

I have acted and directed for Stoke Rep for more years than I care to remember! Favourite rôles have been Chris in *Calendar Girls*, Paulina in *Death & The Maiden* and Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie*. I enjoy directing comedies and particular favourites are *Rumours* by Neil Simon and *Abigail's Party* by Mike Leigh. I have also worked with Stage Productions, as Ruth in *Calendar Girls*, and have acted and directed for Alsager Community Theatre in a number of productions including playing Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* and directing *Improbable Fiction* by Alan Ayckbourn.

Favourite musical — the current immersive theatre production of *Cabaret* in the West End. The theatre has been turned into the KitKat Club. It's truly an amazing experience! Favourite musical rôle — probably in *Oliver!* when I was a child. It definitely played a part in igniting my love of acting and theatre. Favourite BBQ food — would have to be a chicken kebab, with a buttery jacket potato and lots of homemade coleslaw.

Favourite moment from this play — is Teddy and Joyce singing 'Wanting You' when he sings the high notes and she the lower!

# The Assistant



## Alan Clarke

A member of The Rep for around 30 years. I've made a number of appearances, the first was 1994 in *A Man For All Seasons* — and most recently *Hangmen*. I've been privileged to have directed many plays for The Rep Players including *Betrayal*, *Days Of Wine & Roses*, *Death & The Maiden*, *Beauty Queen Of Leenane*, *See How They Run*, *Rules For Living* and *Fur Coat & No Knickers*.

I am not a fan of musicals however I do like some musical numbers particularly from *My Fair Lady*, *West Side Story* and *Les Misérables*. I actually fell asleep whilst watching a production of *Cats* in London... My one venture into musical theatre was many years ago when I was in *Camelot* at the Theatre Royal.

Similarly, I am not a fan of the barbecue, I like my food cooked properly, neither raw or burnt, and to know when I will be eating (see *Trivial Pursuits*). Yep, Mr Grumpy.

# "The Voice Of The Valleys"

Frank Vickery was born in Blaencwm, near Treorchy, in the Rhondda, South Wales in June 1951.

Vickery started writing while at Treorchy Comprehensive School which he left at fifteen without taking any exams. He wrote for amateur companies, while working as a bus conductor. He had his first success at 21 with the comedy *After I'm Gone*. In 1989 he took up writing full-time.

He wrote over thirty plays, for both stage and radio, including *Family Planning*, *All's Fair* and *Erogenous Zones*. He often wrote parts for himself in his plays and appeared in his own work, playing characters such as 'Teddy' in *Trivial Pursuits*; he also appeared in pantomime.

One of Vickery's best-known comedies was *One O'clock From The House*, in which the plot centred around preparations for a funeral. It was performed by many amateur groups. His one-person play, *Sleeping With Mickey*, was adapted for television in 1994, starring Brenda Blethyn.

In collaboration with Mal Pope, Vickery co-wrote the musical *Amazing Grace*, which was premièred in 2005 and dealt with the 1904-1905 Welsh Christian Revival.

Vickery wrote extensively for theatre, television and radio, building a reputation as a pioneering playwright.

He was praised for making "a huge contribution," to theatre in Wales by various groups.

Vickery was a big supporter of the Drama Association of Wales (DAW) and he was associated with Treorchy's Park & Dare Theatre and Cardiff's Sherman Theatre before setting up his own production company, Grassroots.

Frank Vickery died prematurely in June 2018 at 68 leaving a legacy of being one of Wales' most popular and prolific playwrights.



Frank Vickery



Chris Lockett



BBQ Sausage Supervisor





# The Birth Of The Rep

In this, the third instalment of our theatre's history, we go back to the beginning.

Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Theatre began its life in 1920 when the Stoke-on-Trent Dramatic Society was formed and their first play, *Caste*, was performed at the Empire Theatre, Longton. Over the next couple of years, they produced plays at both the Assembly Hall, Stoke and the Stoke Hippodrome; in 1923, the title of The Repertory Players was assumed with a double-bill production of *The Man Who Stayed At Home* and *The Man From Toronto*.

In 1924, as The Repertory Players, we took the adventurous decision to produce *Milestones* and *Jack Straw* at the Theatre Royal, Hanley, but whatever the artistic merit of this venture, it failed financially and only through frantic efforts to clear the debt, and careful management, were we able to survive.

By 1929, the need to acquire a room for

rehearsals and premises for productions became acute and we were fortunate to find The Studio, a room above Webberley's in Hanley, reached by five flights of steps! We had at last acquired our own premises, albeit with limited dressing rooms and storage space and with seating for only 100. The move was an immediate success leading to productions of works by Barrie and Galsworthy and our most ambitious venture to that point, *The Knight Of The Burning Pestle*. However, we were then faced with the refusal of a licence to perform further plays in The Studio and the search for a permanent home began again in earnest.

In 1933, The Players, as we had become known, acquired St. Jude's Parish Hall in College Road, Shelton, on a three-year, renewable lease opening a new era for us. Three months' hard work turned the interior into a theatre, though the exterior still retained its ecclesiastical appearance. With a seating capacity of 210, The Repertory Theatre was formally opened by Sir Percival Heywood and the first

**THEATRE ROYAL, HANLEY.**  
**The REPERTORY PLAYERS (Stoke-on-Trent)**  
(President: Sir Francis Joseph, C.B.E., J.P.)  
ONE WEEK, COMMENCING MARCH 3rd, for SIX NIGHTS and MATINEE: Saturday,  
Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings, at 7-30 ; Matinee (Saturday at 2-30)—  
**MILESTONES**  
Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings, at 7-30—  
**JACK STRAW**  
Proceeds allocated to the North Staffs. Infirmary and the Cripples' Aid Society.  
Box Office now open, from 11 to 6. Telephone 1610. Popular Prices. Book Early.



Candida

production on the new stage was *Lean Harvest* by Ronald Jeans. The title happily did not prove to be an ill-omen, as we established a high production standard with such plays as *The Nelson Touch*, *The Queen's Husband*, *Death Takes A Holiday*, *Candida*, *Rose Without A Thorn*, *The Late Christopher Bean* and *Tobias & The Angel* — which drew ever increasing and enthusiastic audiences.

Survival during the 1939-45 war years was due to the enthusiasm and tenacity of a few members determined to overcome many difficulties and the gaps left by those in the forces. In 1940 Priestley's comedy *When We Are Married* contributed to Red Cross and Prisoner Of War funds and was even performed at Tern Hill R.A.F. Station. 1941 was marked by a production of *Aladdin* and in April

1945 The Rep joined forces with local operatic societies in an ambitious staging of *The Beggar's Opera*.

Following the successes of the immediate post-war years, we passed through a critical period in the early 1950s when, at one point, The Rep's continued existence was in jeopardy. With a falling membership and a heavy burden of debt, a crisis was reached in the 1951-52 season, during which Shaw's *Arms & The Man* was the only production. After a major re-organisation and with an infusion of new blood, we announced an ambitious programme of four plays for 1952-53, beginning with *Mrs Moonlight* and *An Inspector Calls*.

Despite a disastrous fire only two weeks before the opening of the third play — *Young Wives Tale* — the season ended successfully with *Madam Tic-Tac*.

Confidence and enthusiasm proved infectious, with both audiences and membership increasing; succeeding



The Beggars Opera



Madame Tic-Tac

seasons saw us stage several notable productions including, *To Dorothy A Son* and *Point Of Departure* (1954), *The Rape Of The Belt* (including a midnight matinee for charity) (1960), *All In Good Time* (1966), *A Man For All Seasons* (1968) and *The Rehearsal* (1970).



A Man For All Seasons

Through all the changing years we have remained true to the original objectives of The Rep — to read and produce good drama and to do that to the best of our ability. In doing so we hope we have given pleasure to the thousands in our

audiences and perhaps even greater pleasure to the hundreds of our members who have taken part on the stage, behind the stage, and in front of the house.

“The play’s the thing” — so may it remain, with us, for the next 100 years. I make no apologies for omitting names and plays in this brief three-part history of The Rep — indeed it would hardly be possible to list even some of those who have contributed to over 100 years of drama at The Rep. Suffice to say that our policy has always been to welcome those who produce and take leading roles no more nor less than those who deal with costumes and props, build sets, sell programmes or perform the countless other duties necessary for the running of a theatre.

If you would like to see a complete listing of all our productions, along with many cast lists and photographs, please visit our website — [stokerepplayers.co.uk](http://stokerepplayers.co.uk)

Even better, if you would like to come and join us as we venture into our second hundred years, please contact our Membership Secretary, Ann Haycock at [membership@stokerepplayers.co.uk](mailto:membership@stokerepplayers.co.uk) or speak to any member, who will be happy to help.

**STOKE**  
Rep Players

Season Reveal  
2023/2024



PETER QUILTER'S

# GLORIOUS!

The true story of Florence Foster Jenkins, the worst singer in the world.

10 Oct ~ 14 Oct 2023

## But Once A Year

By Falkland L. Cary

*A Christmas Comedy*

5 Dec ~ 9 Dec 2023

## GOD of CARNAGE

A COMEDY OF MANNERS  
...WITHOUT THE MANNERS

BY YASMINA REZA

TRANSLATED BY CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON

6 Feb ~ 10 Feb 2024

ARTHUR MILLER'S

## ALL MY SONS

A touching snapshot of an American family recuperating  
from the tragedies of war, both abroad and at home.

16 Apr ~ 20 Apr 2024



## SAND CASTLES

A COMEDY  
BY BOB LARBHEY

11 Jun ~ 15 Jun 2024