



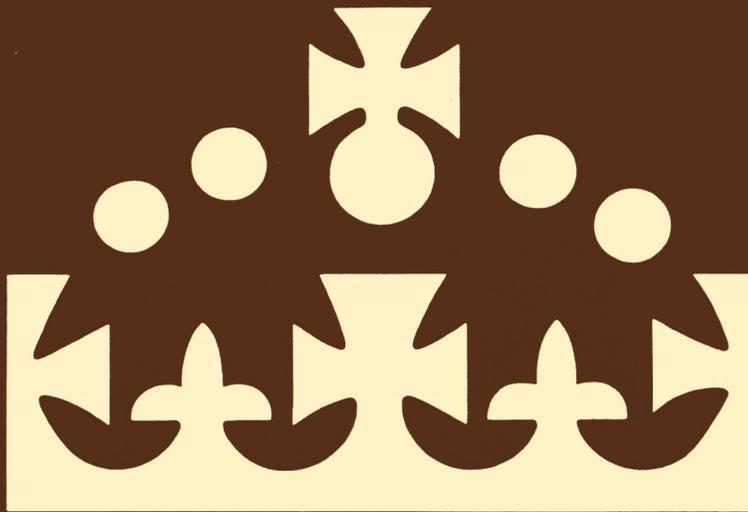
Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Theatre
College Road, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent
Telephone: Stoke-on-Trent 44784

Penny for a Song

by John Whiting

**Tuesday, 15th to Saturday, 19th and
Tuesday, 22nd to Saturday, 26th
May, 1984**

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'A PENNY FOR A SONG'

In John Witing, who died of cancer at the age of 45, the British theatre lost a prodigious talent, whose reputation rests on four plays: the dazzling but difficult satire, *Saint's Day*; the serious political *Marching Song*; the brilliant and dramatic *The Devils* (later made into a controversial film); and the gentle, sophisticated comedy, *A Penny for a Song*.

This last play meanders through sardonic comedy, plunges into philosophical discussions on radicalism, conservatism, the scepticism of middle age, and war, and occasionally bursts into outrageous passages of pure farce. Dominated by eccentrics, the action follows the passions of Sir Timothy and Lamprett Bellboys with gentle irony, as Humpage sits disinterestedly in his tree and Hester prepares to join the Amazon Corps in East Anglia.

Surrounded by such wild behaviour, on a summer's day in 1804, a young girl suddenly grows up. Her meeting with a young, sensible mercenary, who comes armed with his own ideals and a copy of Tom Paine's 'The Rights of Man', and with Hallam Matthews, a middle-aged, sensible and cultured traditionalist, awakens her heart and her mind, but leaves her uncertain of the future.

We see the young, eager and passionate, prepared to leap into the darkness and die for their causes; and Hallam, older and more worldly wise, prepared to compromise in order to escape the discomforts of reality. The play echoes the poet, W. B. Yeats' words:

'When I was young,
I had not given a penny for a song
Did not the poet sing it with such airs
That one believed he had a sword upstairs;
Yet would be now, could I but have my wish:
Colder and dumber and deafer than a fish.

KEN LOWE

ENGLAND IN 1804

A Penny for a Song is set in 1804, when England was in the grip of invasion fever. The true situation was grave enough, with 150,000 Napoleonic troops encamped at Boulogne, ready to cross the Channel in 2,000 boats of various shapes and sizes. It was made worse by the absurd rumours and bizarre conjectures that swept the country and filled the newspapers.

The creared Bonaparte, having been elevated in the popular imagination to the rank of superman, would be crossing the Channel by means (simultaneously, in some stories) of air balloons, massive floating forts and tunnels beneath the sea.

On the English coast, Martello towers, signalling devices and volunteer troops were prepared but, fortunately, their inadequacy was never tested. Admiral Lord Nelson's defeat of the combined French and Spanish fleets off Cape Trafalgar in 1805 gave Great Britain absolute command of the sea, including the English Channel, and the threat of invasion was no more.

PETER LEGGE

Penny for a Song

THE CAST

Sir Timothy Bellboys	PETER LEGGE
Hallam Matthews	LOUIS SASSI
Edward Sterne	KELVIN HALL
A Small Boy	NICKY ALLEN
Lamprett Bellboys	ALAN HULME
Dorcas Bellboys	DEBBIE MOUAT
George Selincourt	DEREK LANGSTON
William Humpage	JOHN WALLEY
Samuel Breeze	TREVOR BARLOW
Joseph Brotherhood	JOHN WOOD
James Giddy	NICK BLOOR
s Piggott	PETER CROFT
ester Bellboys	JUDITH FRANKLIN
Pippin, A Maidservant	NORMA ROGERS

Directed by: KEN LOWE

The scene is the garden before Sir Timothy Bellboy's house in Dorset on a summer's day in 1804.

Act I Morning

Act II Later in the day

*The Rep gratefully acknowledges assistance from the following:
Cavendish Woodhouse; University of Keele Drama Society;
Evening Sentinel; BBC Radio Stoke-on-Trent.*

*Costumes by the Costume Studio, Shrewsbury;
Guns by Bapty & Co. Ltd, of London; Wigs by Wiglets, of Worsley.*

PRODUCTION TEAM

Assistant to the Director	Gordon Broomfield
Stage Manager	Bill Hancock
General Stage Manager	Richard Masters
Assistant Stage Managers	George Goodall, Graham Mouat, Tina Richardson, Margo Perkins, Peter Franklin, Nick Bloor, Pauline Turner, Madeleine Pottinger.
Set Designed by	Gordon Broomfield
Set Artist	Colin Chesterton
Lighting	Tina Richardson
Sound	Ted Dutton and Gill Chesworth
Properties	Sue Thompson and Alison Townsend
Photographs	Peter Croft
Publicity	Brian Rawlins
Programme Design	Ann Tunnicliffe
Master Carpenter	John Shenton

Car Park

The part of Beresford Street between St. Jude's Church and the schools may be used for parking, but please ensure that cars do not obstruct the entrance to the Vicarage. No responsibility is accepted by the Repertory Theatre. No charge is made for parking.

Refreshments

Confectionery is always on sale and coffee will be served during the interval. Coffee tickets available from the attendants.

Smoking is permitted during the intervals only.

Smokers Please Note:

Please use the ashtrays provided. Smokers on the front row should ask an attendant for an ashtray.

Our Chairman Writes

As our regular patrons will know only too well, this has been an exceptional season for the Theatre. Five ambitious and demanding plays have been staged at a time when the building has been undergoing major alterations and refurbishing.

I should like to thank our audiences for their good-natured acceptance of the less-than-ideal circumstances in which they have watched our productions. Your loyal support has helped and inspired the members of the Rep who have been responsible for providing the season's programme. They, in turn, have overcome the difficult circumstances in which they have had to work.

We all hope that, by the time the new season opens, we shall have the pleasure of welcoming you to our vastly improved home, which will incorporate a new entrance, new box office, bar, cloakroom and social area.

Because we regard the completion of the work as our chief priority, we will not be presenting a Summer Show this year.

Plans are well in hand for next season and the plays which have been chosen will be announced in the local press shortly.

We all look forward to seeing you and hope that you will share our ambitions for the future and our enjoyment of the work which we do.

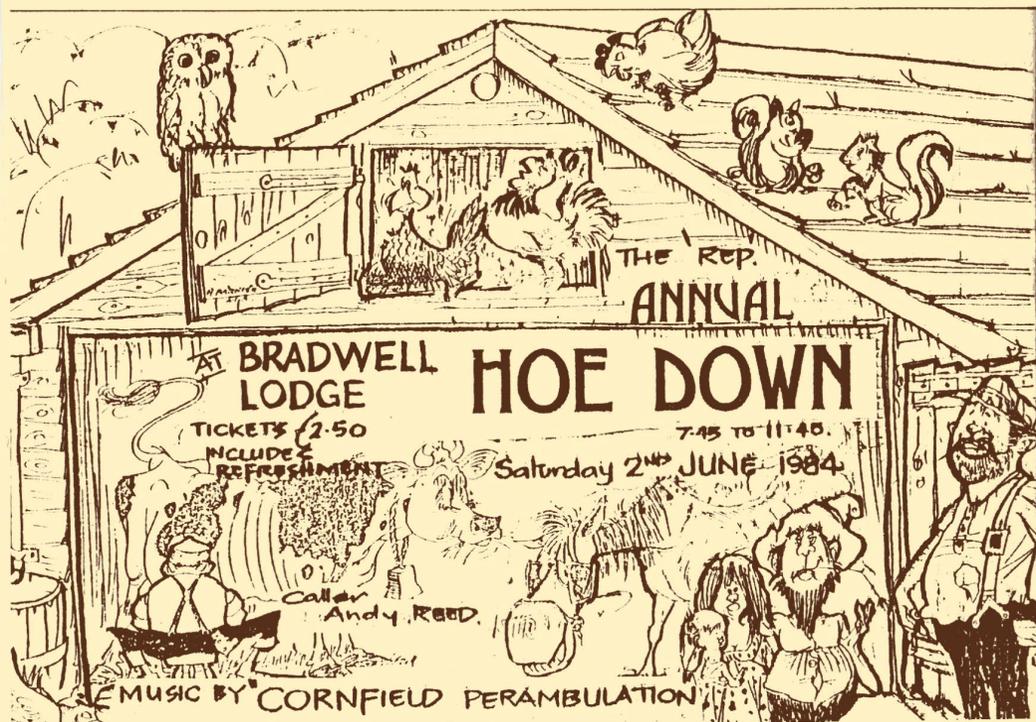
Our sincere thanks.

Peter Dutton (Chairman)



Mr. Toad and his friends are seen serving tea to the winners of our recent colouring competition at a special prizegiving party held in the theatre. The winners were: (5 to 8 year olds) Sarah Cooper, Ruth Bevington, Paul and Matthew Galley; (8 to 10 year olds) Ruth Smith, Kyla Read, Fiona Reid; (11 to 15 year olds) Ian Deaville, Clair Hancock, Amanda Cooper.

Winner of a dinner for two at the Old Vicarage Hotel at Hanford, in our **Last of the Red-Hot Lovers** Evening Sentinel caption competition, was Mr. William Beech, of Bradeley. Runners-up were Mr. K. Powell, of Endon, and Mrs. J. Howarth, of Newcastle.



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