



Newsletter – August 2012

Hello. You can all breathe a sigh of relief as it's me Hargreaves. Ah, this is the life. Sitting in the sun while sipping a tequila sunrise. Not a cloud in the sky, not a murmur in the air and more importantly no flouncing, cricket-obsessed editors boring us all senseless with tales about the world's dullest sport. Only the English would invent a game that lasts for five interminable days and still ends in a draw. Well, rest assured, with Wignall missing presumed incompetent and your beloved Hargreaves at the helm this month's newsletter promises to be actually readable. But what's this I spy on the horizon? Oh no! It's a regular feature...

*Cricket Statistics So Delicious They Could Have Inspired  
The Bard Himself To Write A Play About Them*

*Number 3: The Juxtaposition of Graeme Hick's Test  
Match and First-Class Batting Averages*

	<u>Test Match</u>	<u>First-class</u>
<i>Matches:</i>	65	526
<i>Innings:</i>	114	871
<i>Runs:</i>	3383	41112
<i>Average:</i>	31.32	52.23

**HARGREAVES!!!! YOU VILE, TREACHEROUS, BACK-STABBING, UNFEELING, INCESTUOUS, HEINOUS, CONTEMPTABLE, FLEA-RIDDEN, INQUITOUS, COLD-HEARTED, SUPERCILIOUS, MENDACIOUS, DISGUSTING, DISPICABLE, NAUSEATING, EGREGIOUS, HIDEOUS, EVIL, CALLOUS, ARROGANT, REPULSIVE, MALEVOLENT, ODIOUS, MALICIOUS, DIABOLICAL, VILLAINOUS, MONSTROUS, DEPRAVED, FOUL, DEMONIC REPTILE!!!!**

Hargreaves: *"Hello"*

**Don't 'hello' me you cur! This is England. Not a Lionel Ritchie video. Headingly and I have just spent two hellish months marooned on an atoll of Hebridean aspect! Why didn't you send out a rescue team you viper?!**

Hargreaves: *"Why didn't you pack some distress flares?"*

**Distress Flares?! Don't be ridiculous Hargreaves! This is England. Not the 1970s.**

Hargreaves: *"How did you get off the island then?"*

**Never mind that Hargreaves. Yours is not to reason how. Yours is to fix me an unfeasibly large gin and tonic. So get out of my chair and do so you oaf. And make Headingly one as well. The poor chap looks like I feel.**

Hargreaves: *"You feel like an ostrich?"*

Only when I'm sober. Now get to work. I'm expecting the director of the YSP's forthcoming *Othello* to arrive any moment now. And do take off that ridiculous Hawaiian shirt Hargreaves. This is England. Not Margate. Oh. Hello dear reader. I didn't see you there. I do apologise for that little...er...domestic. Welcome to another intoxicating edition of the YSP newsletter. Let the delights ensue...

*Dialogue So Delicious It Could Have Been Written By  
The Bard Himself*

*Number 9: Stan Laurel in 'Brats'*

*"You can lead a horse to water but a pencil must be lead"*

**November Fundraiser**

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> November will see St Crux host a positively delicious YSP fundraiser and we're subsequently on the look-out for cakes, books and bric-a-brac. If you can contribute anything and/or would like to get involved please contact our illustrious Chair Janet Looker here... [janet25.looker@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:janet25.looker@hotmail.co.uk)

Hargreaves: *"Mark France"*



**Welcome to the YSP newsletter my dear France! Please take a seat. Prepare the Pimm's Hargreaves. Now, I believe you've directed for the YSP before. Tell us a little about your previous YSP productions.**

I directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2006 in Rowntree Park, which was a brilliant experience all round, then the *Henry VI* plays in York Guildhall in 2007. The latter particularly I am incredibly proud of – a cast of 30 performed the three plays condensed into two performances in rep. It was a mammoth undertaking but I reckon we pulled it off pretty spectacularly.

**And what of your directorial career outside the YSP?**

I've been directing for around 20 years now, but started getting professional work regularly after I finished my Masters degree in 2003. I've worked at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, Theatre in the Mill in Bradford and Harrogate Theatre amongst others, as well as repeatedly with the Leeds-based company Icabod. Latterly I set up Mooted Theatre Company with a couple of York-based actors. I've been directing a bit less in the last couple of years whilst I work on my PhD.

**I believe your PhD is so delicious it has something to do with the Bard himself. Pray elucidate.**

It's essentially a case study of the director Gregory Doran and his work at the Royal Shakespeare Company over the last fifteen years. My wider interest is in how directors and actors work together in the rehearsal room when staging Shakespeare, how certain methods have evolved, what traditions they draw on and what they achieve in performance. I'm also fascinated by the cultural climate that Shakespeare is produced in in the UK and the expectations that surround it, and how a company like the RSC has to engage with those expectations. Doran seemed like an ideal subject through which to examine these concerns.

**What attracted you to *Othello*?**

I've wanted to direct this play for a long time, and it was on my mind already when YSP approached me and asked if I would be interested in discussing it with them, so there was already serendipity about the project. The fact that it was to be in the studio at York Theatre Royal made it all the more attractive – I thought the claustrophobic tension of the play would be palpable in such an intimate space.

## **And what is your vision for the play?**

Hopefully it'll feel very hard, fast-paced and intense. The staging is really pared down, and should feel both very modern and very theatrical. We've opted against rooting it too specifically in a certain time and place, but it should feel very contemporary and stylish. I really wanted to put the focus on the actors and the text and get in the way of that as little as possible. There is an unstoppable momentum about the play which as a director you have to honour.

**Geoffrey Sax's 2001 production of *Othello* saw Christopher Eccleston in the Iago role. Eccleston would go on to play everyone's favourite Time Lord, the Doctor, a role Patrick Troughton played so wonderfully back in the 1960s. As everyone knows Troughton's grandson Jim Troughton plays cricket for Warwickshire and in 2003 he played six One Day Internationals for his country. With England's middle-order still lacking equilibrium do you think Troughton is due a recall?**

Unfortunately I know about as much about cricket as Othello does about trust...

**Never mind my dear France. You're more than welcome to take a few Wisdens away with you. Tickets for *Othello* have already started selling and are available from [www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk](http://www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk) or on 01904 623568. Book now to avoid disappointment. Ah the Pimm's. Thank you Hargreaves.**

Hargreaves: "*So am I forgiven?*"

**Hargreaves! Are you suggesting that my forgiveness can be bought with a mere pitcher of Pimm's?!**

Hargreaves: "*Yes*"

**Well argued Hargreaves. You are of course quite right. And while we're on the subject of absolution those of you at home may be interested to learn that I've also forgiven Mozley and Gilesy for their execrable actions last month. The former will continue to be our Master Baker while the latter has been reinstated as the newsletter's very own resident poet...**

## **Poets' Pavilion**

### **With Ian Giles**

*Here's one I wrote for Emily Pithon, who played Anne of Bohemia in 'Two Planks...' last summer. In fact, I wrote a short poem for each of the professional actors in that cast as a sort of thank you.*

#### **Palimpsest**

Like all the best actors  
she plays her so that you can see  
both designs at once;  
like an optical illusion,  
now one thing  
now the other.

Anne of Bohemia,  
haughty, playful, loving, liberal,  
perfectly accented  
with a severe beauty  
at once delightful and  
fatally undermined.

Emily,  
playful, professional,  
kind and generous.

I am glad I know both of them.

*Ian Giles*

## **King's Square**

King's Square has been the regular pitch in York for street performers for 35 years. A new attraction, **Chocolate** York's Sweet Story opened here 3 months ago and want to put tables and chairs on the square potentially ruining street performing here. Please show your support for the performers, local traders and the heritage of York by signing this petition and helping us to keep this wonderful tradition alive in York.

<http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/save-kings-square/>

## Request for help with *Othello* Set Construction

Please!

Our designer Simon Jarvis says:

"The set is going to be constructed in 5 pieces -

Four 8' x 4' lights boxes that make up a big light box on the back wall,  
and a raised dais. The raised dais is the only thing that is weight bearing.

We need someone with wood construction skills  
and some ability to work with concrete (for decorative purposes, not structural).

I'll be doing all the 'finishing touches' when I get there,  
and the acrylic plastic sheets will be put up on set  
(the less we handle them the better - they can scratch easily).

Some electrical skills would be a big plus."

Any offers of help to [maurice.crichton@ntlworld.com](mailto:maurice.crichton@ntlworld.com)

And while we're on the subject here's a stunning painting that Simon has done of his set design...



## **OFFDRAM DAMNS PROJECT.**

### **By our Special Reporter.**

‘Serious irregularities of a financial nature’ within the heart of The YSP have been revealed in a report by OffDram (The Office for Drama Societies) seen by *The Newsletter* from sources close to The Executive.

With the advent of the Coalition and Mr Cameron’s launch of The Big Society certain sharper members of The Committee were quick to ditch their New Labour allegiance and, in a way that would make The Vicar of Bray blush, espoused the communitarian, local initiative and freedom from regulation values of the Prime Minister’s pet initiative. The third point, the Newsletter can now reveal, was especially attractive to some of the more fly committee members who are voted in each year by The Membership to safeguard the Project in its middle phase.

Believed to be a spiteful response to *The Newsletter’s* highlighting of the C&CsC trenchant condemnation of The Chancellor’s pasty tax, the Treasury instructed Offdram to send in the auditors - a clear sign that the honeymoon is over. Their findings will make even the most cynical of our readership gasp at the ‘creative audacity’ of the expense claims all made to further Big Society objectives:

In the biscuit tin that passes for the YSP’s financial accounting system the auditors found a receipt (clearly knocked up on a home computer by someone with ‘semi computer - literacy skills’) for attendance at ‘The International Society of Membership Secretaries’ annual conference in the Cayman Islands- two (!) first class tickets were amongst the items claimed for. A Google search for such a society revealed nothing and ‘a conference programme’ in support of the claim, similarly amateurishly made up, listed presentations by what has turned out to be an untraceable Henry Jackson, Professor of Subs Collecting at The University of the Western Pacific, and such like.

Equally shocking was the claim from The Locations Sub Committee - nominally charged with finding venues for productions in and around York—for a trip to central Italy ‘researching’ cities like Verona, Padua, Mantua. While a thin connection can be made to the

bard, auditors noted invoices from *La Societa Internazionale della Liasiones Corporales* from an address in the Florentine red light district -all too genuine this time, if the cheap scent is anything to go by.

However Offdram did like the Project's provision of homemade cakes during rehearsals and performances and such gestures merit a tick on the Big Society compliance monitoring form. *The Newsletter* can confirm that homemade cakes were also provided at Mystery Play rehearsals (albeit for a modest charge 'for fund raising') so clearly 'pro social modelling' – another BC aspiration – has been evidenced to the Inspectors' satisfaction.

Seeking a comment on the Offdram report your reporter was told by an aide that The Chair was on a committee-sponsored research visit to Demark for one of the YSP's 2013 productions.

#### **LATE EXTRA**

Since the above story appeared in earlier editions of *The Newsletter* blogospheric speculation on the source of the leaking of the Offdram report lead to a posting on the Cake sub Committee website denying any link between itself and the Inspector's only positive findings.

No doubt all will be revealed in the subsequent litigation as the Editor is already in receipt of several solicitors' letters.

## *Dialogue So Delicious It Could Have Been Written By The Bard Himself*

### *Number 10: Oliver Hardy in 'Way Out West'*

*"A lot of weather we've been having lately"*

## **More Drama School Success!**

Well, we certainly have some deliciously talented people at the YSP. Following Mr Gordon's success at the LAMDA auditions I'm delighted to announce that Virginia Hartmann and Jon Adams have also won places at drama school. Miss Hartmann not only got into two drama schools but is also on the waiting list for RADA while Mr Adams also received two offers and will be going to Mountview next year. A veritable cornucopia of congratulations to you both!

## **Legends of the YSP**

### **Number Two: Virginia Hartmann**



Born in Berlin during the late 1980s but inexplicably brought up in a Parisian jazz club in the late 1940s Virginia Vanessa Hartmann spent her formative years singing Édith Piaf numbers to absinth-drenched audiences. Fluent in seventeen different languages (including Geordie) the talented Miss Hartmann moved to York where she soon made a name for herself playing Irina in *Three Sisters*. After appearing in *The Little Mermaid* at the Edinburgh Fringe in the summer of 2011

Virginia made her single YSP performance playing the eponymous heroine in *Troilus and Cressida*. Rave reviews ensued and, after clocking up more air miles than a swallow consumed by wanderlust, Miss Hartmann now finds herself preparing for drama school. A mesmerising stage presence and with a voice so mellifluous it can melt a black forest gateau from thirty yards, Virginia Hartmann is a true legend of the YSP.

## Legends of the YSP

### Number Three: Jon Adams



After graduating from Lancaster University with a double first in Meat and Metallica Jonathan Paul Adams made his YSP debut in 2005's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Further appearances would have soon ensued but unfortunately, during the after-show party, Jon was rushed to hospital to have his Pantera t-shirt removed. Thankfully the operation was a success and after several years playing the drums, watching cricket (the boy has taste) and perfecting his impressions of characters from *The Simpsons* and the *Indiana Jones* films he re-emerged in the epic *Henry IV Parts One and Two* playing the unshakeable Westmoreland. The majestic Mr Adams would go to demonstrate his versatility by playing Ebenezer Scrooge's best mate in *The York Christmas Carol 2010*,

a nefarious duke in *As You Like It* and a Dutch football club in the YSP production of *Troilus and Cressida*. Drama school auditions ensued where he went, saw, conquered and then listened to some more Metallica. With a film quote for every occasion and strong all around the wicket, Jon Adams is a true legend of the YSP.

Legends indeed. Well with England's Test Series against South Africa dominating the news many of you may be unaware that this summer saw London host the 2012 Olympic Games. Fortunately our resident sports correspondent Toby Gordon has been covering the female beach-volleyball tournament and we turn to him now for a comprehensive and in-depth report on the action...

# Gordon Reports



The French and Italian teams were particularly fine but the Australians also deserve a mention for some knockout blondes. Excuse me mate, have you got a light?

Er...thank you for that Mr Gordon. Sounds like it was quite a tournament. Ah, here's Headingley. Back to work already old friend? What have you got for us eh? An epistle from my neighbour and colossal landowner Brian Brocklebank no less! What an honour! Perhaps he wants me to marry one of his sumptuous daughters and become lord of the estate! Good times here we come...

*Wignall you contemptible ponce!*

*Why are you such an idiot? Not content with banging cricket balls over the wall and onto my land day and night you've now allowed that Freddi creature to escape and subsequently roam free for two sodding months! It's destroyed half my bloody livestock you cretin! Either get off your backside and do something about it or I will come round and remove something delicate from your anatomy with a blunt instrument.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Brian*

Oh dear. Not the news I wanted. Hargreaves, get my blunderbuss. We're going on safari...

*“If all the year were playing holidays,  
To sport would be as tedious as to work”*

*Henry IV Part One, Act I Scene 2*

Feedback, questions, propositions and general abuse to [mwignall79@hotmail.com](mailto:mwignall79@hotmail.com)