

# REPERTORY

## 900-seater planned for Birmingham

**PLANS** for Birmingham's new Repertory theatre took a step forward on Tuesday when Birmingham Council's General Purposes Committee submitted a report recommending that the theatre shall be included within a Civic Centre.

Subject to Council approval the architect will be Graham Winteringham, who designed the new Crescent theatre in Birmingham, working in collaboration with the city's architect, A. G. Sheppard Fidler.

The General Purposes Committee estimate that the operating cost of the theatre, including loan charges, ground rent and rates, will be about £58,000. Against this may be set an Arts Council grant of £14,000 and a City Council grant of £5,000, thus leaving the Corporation a deficiency of some £40,000 to meet annually. The estimated income, based upon a theatre seating 900 and prices ranging from 3/- to 10/6d, would be £75,000. The annual expenditure is put in the region of £92,000. Work on the construction of the theatre at a cost of £500,000 is expected to commence in 1965.

### Director III

**ROBERT DIGBY**, managing director of Colchester Repertory, is suffering from a severe leg complaint, but rather than give up altogether he has moved into a local hotel and is continuing to direct operations from his bedside.

**AT THE TRAVERSE** Theatre Club, Edinburgh, "Two For the Seesaw" by William Gibson is to be presented from January 23 to February 10.

### ON NEXT WEEK

**Barnes**—"Angels in Love."  
**Belfast** (Arts)—Victorian Theatre and Music Hall.  
**Bexhill**—"Guilty Party" (Thursday).  
**Birmingham** (Rep.)—"Alice in Wonderland."  
**Bristol** (Little)—"Simple Symphonies."  
**Bristol** (Old Vic.)—"Joey."  
**Bromley**—"Cinderella."  
**Bournemouth**—"Lovers' Leap."  
**Canterbury**—"Alibi" (Wednesday).  
**Cheltenham**—"Hooray for Daisy."  
**Colchester**—"Salad Days" (Tuesday).  
**Coventry** (Belgrade)—"Believe It Or Not."  
**Derby**—"Sinbad."  
**Dundee**—"Dick Whittington."  
**Eastbourne**—"Affairs of State" (Tuesday).  
**Edinburgh** (Gateway)—"The Little Minister."  
**Farnham**—"Castle in the Air" (first week).  
**Glasgow** (Citizens)—"Sam Macnalla."  
**Guildford**—"Spider's Web."  
**Harrgate**—"Aladdin."  
**Horsham**—"Cinderella."  
**Horsham** (Capitol)—"The Pleasure of His Company."  
**Isleworth**—"Company Revue."

**Leatherhead**—"Puss in Boots."  
**Liverpool** (Playhouse)—"Squaring the Circle."  
**Manchester** (Library)—"The Princess and the Swineherd."  
**Margate**—"Great Expectations."  
**Newcastle** (Flora Robson Playhouse)—"The Pleasure of His Company."  
**Northampton**—"Babes in the Wood."  
**Nottingham**—"Photo Finish."  
**Oldham**—"Henry V."  
**Oxford** (Playhouse)—"Divorce à la Carte."  
**Palmer Green** (Intimate)—"Murder by All Means."  
**Perth**—"The Queen and the Welshman."  
**Richmond**—"Dick Whittington."  
**St. Andrews** (Byre)—Closed until April.  
**Salisbury**—"Robin Hood and Babes in the Wood."  
**Sheffield**—"Island of the Winds."  
**Southport**—"Dead On Nine."  
**Stoke-on-Trent** (Victoria)—"Christmas v. Mastermind."  
**Torquay**—"The Marriage Go Round."  
**Watford**—"Cinderella."  
**Wimbledon**—"Cinderella."  
**Windsor**—"Mother Goose."  
**Worthing**—"Rock-a-Bye Sailor."  
**York**—"Bullet Rambi."

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## THE BYRE CLOSES

**THE** TWENTY-NINTH annual season of the Byre, St. Andrews, ended last Saturday night with the final performance of the Victorian melodrama, "Lady Audley's Secret".

In a curtain speech, the director of the theatre, A. B. Paterson, thanked the company, under the leadership of Jean-Pierre Vooz, for the hard work they had put in over the nine months' season in presenting fourteen full-length plays.

He added that all fourteen plays had been put on by a company of nine, who had built all the scenery and staffed the theatre, which seats only 74. It was a tribute to the high standard that they had maintained that worked out at 79 per cent. of capacity.

The thirtieth season is to begin in April with David Gale as producer and deputy director.

### NEW JOBS

**TWO** ACTORS who have just completed a season at the Byre, St. Andrews, are remaining in repertory in Scotland. Jon Croft is going to the Glasgow Citizens' and Peter Gale to Dundee. Jean-Pierre Vooz, the producer, has joined the Hampstead Theatre Club in an administrative capacity.

### SCOT FOR PERTH

**ALASTAIR SPEED** has joined the Perth Repertory to play one of the leads in their forthcoming production of "The Gardens of Adonis". He has been in repertory at Wolverhampton, Minehead, Leatherhead and Colwyn Bay. The only towns he has played in Scotland are his native Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, when he was touring in "The Devil's Disciple" with Tyrone Power.

### New Manager

**DAVID SALTON**, a Fifer from Methilhill, takes over the manager's desk at Dundee Repertory on January 21 after the closure of Her Majesty's, Carlisle, where he has been general manager since May last. Prior to Carlisle, he was at Cheltenham, Hornchurch and Perth.

**PENNY REED**, who has recently joined the York Repertory Company, has been touring with Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge in "Spider's Web".

### TYNESIDE TERROR



Griffith Jones as Long John Silver in "Treasure Island," now running at the Flora Robson Playhouse at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

## AT THE BELGRADE



Patrick Carter, Keith Marsh, Hilary Newcombe and Venetia Maxwell in "Believe It Or Not?", the Christmas show specially written for the Belgrade, Coventry, by David Turner and Edward J. Mason. Others in the cast are Sheila Keith, Richard Simpson, Peter Bourne, Peter French, Michael Rothwell, Bernard Brown, Jean Rogers, Anthony Boden and George Layton. James Grout directed.

### CASTING PROBLEMS

**CASTING** difficulties have caused the Living Theatre Company of Leicester to cancel their proposed production of Anouilh's "Romeo and Jeannette" at their Great Central Street premises.

The management hopes it may be possible to continue production at Great Central Street, depending upon further extensions and the progress made with the new prefabricated theatre which is scheduled for completion in March.

According to present plans, production is to be suspended after Saturday next, when "Billy Liar" finishes.

### GENET REVIVAL

**MEADOW PLAYERS LTD.** are to present "The Maids" by Jean Genet at Oxford Playhouse on January 21, directed by Mimos Volanakis and designed by Pauline Whitehouse.

### Weather Beaten

**THE** London Repertory Players were victims of the weather when the arctic conditions obliged them to postpone the opening of their repertory season at the Capitol, Horsham, on Monday. The company will now open on January 14 with "The Pleasure of His Company".

## THE MAULES HONoured

**DONOVAN MAULE**, actor-manager, and co-founder with his wife of the Donovan Maule Theatre in Nairobi, was awarded an O.B.E. in the New Year Honours.

The official citation stated that Mr. and Mrs. Donovan Maule's Theatre Club has provided for people of all races, a cultural and recreational centre which has become an integral part of Kenya society and has done much to lift morale during a most difficult time in Kenya's history.

The Maules went to Kenya in 1947 to establish a professional theatre in East Africa, which is now in its 15th year of continuous operation.

The present Donovan Maule Theatre, which opened in June, 1958, cost some £103,000 to build and equip. A public company was created to raise the capital; the shareholders, nearly all club members, have already received one dividend of 5 per cent, and this year it is hoped to be able to pay shareholders 12½ per cent.

The theatre club's present membership comprises approximately 6,300 Europeans, 450 Asians and 14 Africans. The current production is "Beyond the Fringe".

### ACCIDENTAL STABBING DURING 'HUIS CLOS'

**AFTER** the successful launching of Edinburgh's new Traverse Theatre Club on January 2, the second evening's performance on the very small stage was the scene of an unfortunate accident. In the last minute of Jean-Paul Sartre's "Huis Clos"—reviewed separately—when Estelle has to lunge at Inez with a paper knife, in the struggle Colette O'Neill, playing Inez, was stabbed in the abdomen. After receiving attention from two doctors in the audience, Miss O'Neill was removed to hospital where she is making satisfactory progress.

The following day after some hectic telephoning in search of a stand-in, the company's director, Terry Lane, succeeded in contacting Peggy Martin at the Flora Robson Playhouse, Newcastle. Miss Martin rushed to Edinburgh arriving at 6.30 p.m., and despite the fact that she had never played the part or even seen the play, went right on to give an excellent reading of the difficult part of Inez.

Miss O'Neill is expected to return to the cast in about ten days' time.

## TED WILLIS SUCCESS

**THE** STAGE VERSION of Ted Willis's prize-winning film and television play, "Woman in a Dressing Gown", which opened at the Comedy, Melbourne, during November, built up during its run to capacity business.

In December it transferred to Sydney, where the critics were unanimous in their praise, both of the play and of Google Withers's exciting performance in the lead. During the first week there was standing room only.

After Sydney the play is booked for three weeks both at Adelaide and Brisbane, followed by a return visit to Melbourne before going on a two-month tour of New Zealand.

It is then planned that Miss Withers will bring the play to London in the autumn for the West End opening, under the management of Henry Sherak.

By coincidence the play was produced in Hamburg on the same night as Sydney. It was given a warm and enthusiastic reception and seems set for a long run in Germany.

"Woman in a Dressing Gown" has already played for nearly a year in Buenos Aires, and in March a Swedish version will be seen in Gothenburg.

### Double-Bill

**ALAN PLATER**, a young Hull dramatist, is author of "The Matting Season" and "The Referees", which are to make a double bill to be presented by the Studio Theatre Company at the Victoria, Stoke-on-Trent, on January 21. "The Matting Season" set in a dance hall, is a boy-meets-girl story and "The Referees" has an anti-hero character, searching for references without which he cannot get a job. Both plays are being directed by Alan Ayckbourn and members of the company appearing in the presentation are Stanley Page, Peter King, Elizabeth Bell, Heather Stoney, Caroline Smith, David Halliwell, Arnold Beck and David Welner.

### Versatile Godmother

**JILL SIMCOX**, the Fairy Godmother of "Cinderella" at Watford Palace, had to step into the shoes of Prince Charming last week when the prince, Diana Dove, was stricken with laryngitis for a day or two. The premiere danseuse, Dorothy Anclay, spoke the Fairy Godmother's lines and, true to tradition, the show went on.

### Darlington Cast

**THE** CAST of "Jack and the Beanstalk" at Darlington Civic consists of Kay Butler as Jack, Elaine Grantham as Princess Bountiful, Tricia Jackson as Tom the Piper's son, Carol Turner as Fairy Sparklet, Jacqueline Trevor as the Wicked Witch, Ossie Rae as Mother Hubbard, Tom Bradley as Simple Simon, Ralph Wyndham as Squire Gimplett, Ray Victor as Jimmy Green and Alan Shaw as Miffy Milfin. Claud Morris, Seairi, Johnny St. George, Terry and Stern, Vic Raymont, the Jenner Girls and the Perfecta Girls complete the cast. Bernard Glover, the blind organist, accompanies the show, which is a Tom E. Bradley production.

### Safe Delivery

**MRS. CAPE**, of Cape of Chiswick, is particularly proud of the fact that they delivered sets on time, despite the arctic conditions of last week. For nearly thirty years they have been supplying sets to the France Belk School of Dancing at Newbury and this year they managed to get the "Beauty and the Beast" scenery through the snow drifts and along icy roads in time for the first rehearsal to start at the scheduled time.

"**MORE TROUBLE**", a new play for children, written by Lin Ford for the Toybee Players, is to be presented at Duthy Hall, S.E.1, on January 19.

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