

TIMBER WOOD – GUILD of PLAYERS

Johnny Hutchings spoke of Timber's connections with the **Guild of Players**, or All Saints Birchington Guild of Players, as it was, when he joined in 1946.

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GUILD OF PLAYERS

Timber was a member of the Guild for over 50 years, and Chairman for 32. He appeared in many plays and pantomimes and in 1958, produced 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. This was the first of many pantomimes he produced at the old Church House (in Kent Gardens), the Winter Gardens Margate and the Birchington Village Centre. He also produced many successful one and three act plays, which were entered for the Kent Drama Festivals. He was the organiser behind the successful 'Holiday Capers', which were put on in conjunction with the Margate and Cliftonville Hotel and Boarding House Association, for the elderly people who came down on holiday in May and September.

During his Chairmanship, the Guild presented plays at the Fairfield Hall in Croydon, the Hazlett Theatre in Maidstone and the Gulbenkian in Canterbury. The Guild was also invited to perform at the Ellen Terry Theatre at Small Hythe. We were the first amateur society to do so – quite an honour.

Another success story that Timber helped initiate were the open-air productions, which started in the grounds of Quex Park. Wonderful productions of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Toad of Toad Hall' and 'Peter Pan', complete with flying effects, which was quite a feat in the open air. Latterly, our open-air productions have been in the grounds of Salmestone Grange at Margate.

I think Timber's biggest asset was his ability to organise. If you were involved in any of his productions, you knew everything would be in place on the night, because he always knew the right people in the right places. Anything that was wanted, he knew who to contact – be it props or to get publicity in the local press.

It was this ability that led him to organise the Thanet Arts Festival, Margate's 'Twinning Ceremonies' at the Winter Gardens, the 'Gang Show' at the Lido and the Granville Theatre, and, of course, the mammoth 'Quexpo' event.

It was my privilege to be Stage Manager for most of Tim's productions. I will miss our Sunday morning chats, discussing productions – or the latest Arsenal result! We were both supporters and in the early days, used to travel up to Highbury together on the 'workman's train' for 5/- return (25p) on a Saturday.

In closing, I would just like to say that Frankie and I will remember Jo and Timber for their friendship and the many holidays and happy times we spent together.