

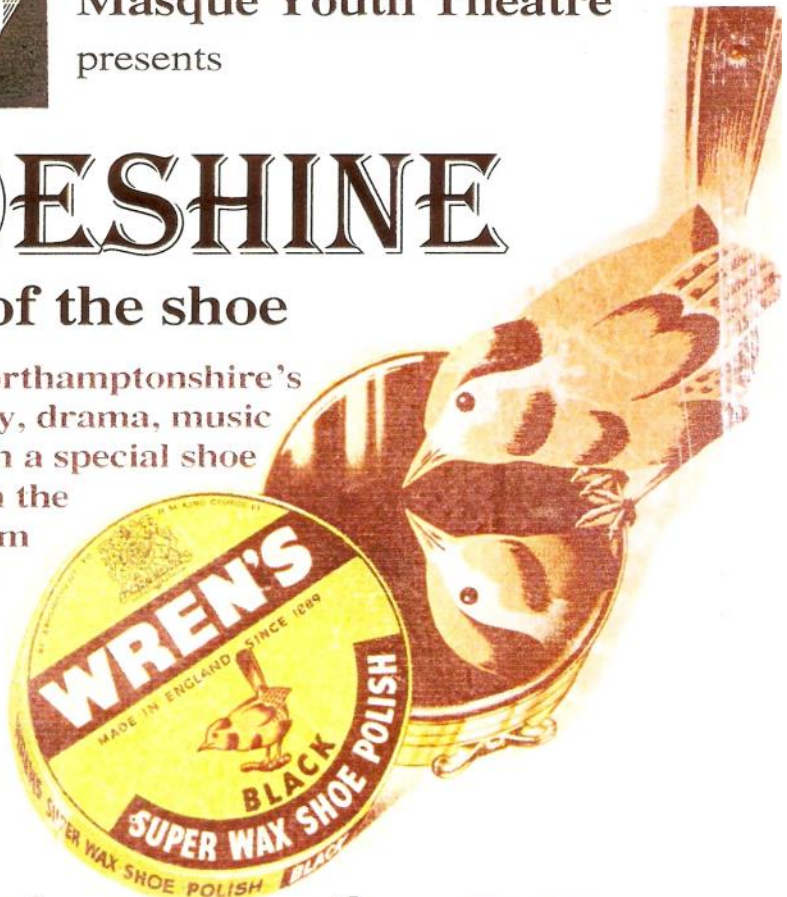


Masque Youth Theatre
presents

SHOESHINE

A revue of the shoe

Celebrating Northamptonshire's shoes in comedy, drama, music and dance (with a special shoe exhibition from the Central Museum & Art Gallery)



April 3rd – April 6th at 7.30 pm

(Also Saturday April 6th at 2.30 pm)

St. George's Campus, Barrack Road,
Northampton



SHOESHINE

a revue of the shoe

Everything you ever wanted to know about shoes but were afraid to ask! The legend of Saints Crispin and Crispianus, and how they got out of the cauldron. The secret (and nasty) shoes stored in the basement of the museum. Who was the historical Shoemaker in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and who is Cicely Bumtrinket? What were conditions like in the Victorian master-closers' garret factories? Who was James Gribble and why did he organise the Raunds March? How do you do an African gum-boot dance? What exactly is the Footsie Index, and are you on it? What are the thoughts and memories of shoe-workers yesterday and today?

All these and many more are to be found in Masque Youth Theatre's fifth annual production. Directed by Ursula Wright, and with choreography by Rosalind Conlon, the cast of forty have devised an entertainment which draws on historical research, existing texts, folk songs, archive material and specially-commissioned revue sketches to celebrate Northampton's unique history and heritage as a centre of 'the Gentle Craft'.

Masque Youth Theatre currently has an active membership of over 60 young people, aged between 10 and 19, drawn from 25 local schools and colleges. It meets weekly throughout the year on Tuesday evenings (Juniors aged 10-12 from 5.30—6.30 pm, and Youth Theatre aged 13—19 from 7—9 pm). In 2000 the group was invited to devise and perform the drama element of Northamptonshire's *Our Town Story*, which was performed in the Dome. It also commissioned a play to celebrate the Millennium, *Zero Zero*, which attracted a Lottery grant and was performed at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Further details about Masque Youth Theatre can be obtained from Ursula Wright on 01604 719365

Ye Gentle Craft

*Of Crispin's trade in modern times and old
And all the varied costume of the feet
And fashion's change, our history shall treat
Of footgear worn by ancient warriors bold,
Of pointed toes looped up with cords of gold,
Of tasselled high-heel'd shoon for ancles neat
To tread the carpet floor or trip the street;
Of date and form and fashion manifold.
Oh, mickle is the mystery and art
And great the skill to form the goodly shoe
Unto the perfect line of beauty true;
Fair and symmetrical in every part.
How Crispin's sons have triumphed and how well
Deserved our meed of praise, be ours to tell.*

John Askham

The Legend of Crispin and Crispianus

The two martyr brothers were born in Rome in the reign of Emperor Diocletian, when early Christians were being savagely persecuted. They fled to Gaul and settled in Soissons, on the river Aisne, where they learnt the craft of shoemaking, and won the confidence of the local people, whom they converted to Christianity. Maximinus, Governor of Gaul, came to hear about the pious brothers, and sent his cruel consul Rictus Varus to arrest them. Crispin and Crispianus were brought before Maximinus, who ordered them to deny their God and return to the gods of Rome. They refused and were handed over to Rictus to be tortured and killed. But when they were thrown into the river with millstones round their necks, they miraculously swam to the other side; when they were placed in a cauldron of boiling lead, they emerged unscathed; when this was replaced by boiling pitch, fat and oil, their guardian angel drew them out unharmed and Rictus, in despair at his inability to kill them, threw himself into the cauldron and perished. When Maximinus heard of this, he ordered that Crispin and Crispianus should be beheaded. This time martyrdom was granted to them, and their bodies were returned to Soissons, where a Christian church was built around their tombs. (There is an English version of the legend, which locates the saints in Faversham, in Kent, but we preferred the French story for our piece of theatre.)

"Snobopolis": Northampton in 1869
(from "The Northampton Shoemaker" by Richard Rowe
published by the Central Museum and Art Gallery)

The middleman's factory is a three-floored brick building, window-lighted on both sides. On the ground floor the paste-boys work, earning from 3s to 4s a week. The two upper floors are given up to the girls. In each room there is a row of about a dozen "machinists" - young women from seventeen to twenty, some of them with chignons like small pumpkins - working "uppers" on Howe and Singer sewing-machines, and earning from 9s to 18s a week. The little girls who sit on the floor in the middle of the room, with baskets beside them, are "knot-tiers". They earn from 1s 6d to 3s by picking out and knotting the ends of the machinists' threads. At a long dresser-like counter on the other side of the room stand a row of "fitters", girls of an age intermediate between the machinists and the knot-tiers and earning the intermediate wages of from 7s to 12s a week. The ceaseless ticking of the sewing-machines, the pummelling the fitters give the uppers they are fitting to the lasts and what I must be ungentlemanly enough to call the "clatter" which is an almost necessary consequence of feminine foregathering, combine to make those upper rooms remind one of the parrot-house in Regent's Park. The working hours are from seven to twelve a.m. and from one to six p.m. Such of the children as come under the Factory Act are sent to school in batches. Here, as well as I believe at the larger factories, work ceases at two on Saturday afternoons - a boon which the Northampton operatives highly and jealously prize, and the holidays given amount to about four clear days in the year.

The Raunds March

The Raunds March is little known outside Raunds, but in 1905 when 115 shoe-workers marched all the way from Raunds to London, it was front page news. The War Office, in seeking the cheapest boots for the military, were causing factory owners to undercut each other at the expense of the workers. At first the union backed the striking workers, but then gave in and it was left to the men themselves, led by a remarkable man, Councillor James Gribble from Northampton, to take matters into their own hands.

from The Misery of Boots by H.G. Wells

"It does not do," said a friend of mine, "to think about boots." For my own part, I have always been particularly inclined to look at boots, and think about them. I have an odd idea that most general questions can be expressed in terms of foot-wear - which is perhaps why cobblers are often such philosophical men.

Programme

Part One

1. **Start Rite** Susie Attwood, Miranda Hicks
 Maria McColgan, Adam Waldie

2. **Shoeshine Rag** The company
 (Scott Joplin)

3. **Birth of the Shoes** Rupert Ackroyd, Katharine Dowsett

4. **The Saints** Alicia Brown, Rosemary Chapman, Georgia Coleman,
 San-D Godoy, Robert Morgan, Claire Prempeh, Alex Rex,
 Melanie Revell, Joe Richardson, Gina Round, Ashli
 Sterling, Edward Toone, Dee Townsend.

5. **Scene from** *Roland Lacy* Daniel Blundell
 "The Shoemaker's *Simon Eyre* Edward Toone
 Holiday" *Firk* Robert Morgan
 (Thomas Dekker) *Hodge* Rupert Ackroyd
 Margery Eyre Grace Henwood
 Cicely Bumtrinket Dee Townsend

6. **Folk Song** Amy Toner

7. **The Secret** *Dr. Frankensnob* Alex Young
 Shoe Room *Igor* Thom Harvey
 Schoolgirls Lauren Bartlett, Terri
 Denham, Emily Downing,
 Hayley Garner, Felicity
 Linnell, Amy Toner
 Witch Hazel Leonard

8. **The Genteel Craft** Laura Hemming

9. **Factory Blues** The company

Interval

refreshments and exhibition

Part Two

1. Boomshoewaddy The company
2. Gribble *Will Pearson*
James Gribble
Raunds workers Jack McCutcheon
Alex Rex
Rupert Ackroyd, Rosenary Chapman,
Emily Downing, Katharine Dowsett,
San-D Godoy, Katie Greaves, Laura
Hemming, Heather Isaksen, Helen
Jenkinson, Hazel Leonard, Melanie
Revell, Stewart Revell, Joe Richardson
Ashli Sterling, Dee Townsend.
3. Scene from *Alice Hobson*
"Hobson's Choice" *Vicky Hobson*
(Harold Brighouse) *Maggie Hobson*
Albert Prosser
Henry Hobson
Mrs Hepworth
Willie Mossop Heather Isaksen
Eleanor Toone
Helen Jenkinson
Daniel Blundell
Stewart Revell
Laura Hemming
George McCutcheon
4. Shoeshine Boy Alex Young
(Cahn/Chaplin)
5. Brahn Boots Stewart Revell
(Weston & Lee)
6. Welly Hop Lauren Bartlett, Alicia Brown, Georgia Coleman,
(Hugh Masekela) Terri Denham, Hayley Garner, San-D Godoy, Helen
Jenkinson, Felicity Linnell, Claire Prempeh, Stewart
Revell, Gina Round, Ashli Sterling, Amy Toner,
Eleanor Toone, Dee Townsend.
7. The Footsie Index *Psychiatrist*
Patients Heather Isaksen
Katie Greaves, Katharine
Dowsett, Melanie Revell, Emily
Downing, Grace Henwood,
Georgia Coleman.
8. Sole Dance Susie Attwood, Miranda Hicks,
(Garbarek/
Williams/Parker) Maria McColligan, Adam Waldie.
9. Last Orders The company

WE WERE A SHOE TOWN

to the tune of "You Are My Sunshine"

*We were a Shoe Town, a famous Shoe Town
We kept the nation well-shod and dry
We won't forget our reputation
While feet have legs and weather has sky.*

Saint Crispin is our town patron saint still
And the old Cobblers our football team
But all the factories are loft apartments
Clubs and lager Northampton's new theme

We were a Shoe Town etc.

Now we're a new town, a much-to-do town
We've got some changes to carry through
But they will blame us in future ages
If we can't join the old to the new.

We were a Shoe Town etc.

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JUNE 4 - 8, 7.45 p.m. Performing Arts Studio, Northampton College, St. Gregory's Rd
MASQUE THEATRE presents TALKING HEADS by Alan Bennett. Tickets from
Masque Theatre Box Office 01604. 401193

SHOESHINE

devised by Masque Youth Theatre

(with additional material by Kit Maguire, Joan Walding and Ursula Wright)

Directed by	Ursula Wright
assisted by	Linda Downing, Carol Harrison, Joan Walding, Brian Wright
Choreography	Rosalind Conlon
Lighting	The Works
Lighting Desk	Thom Harvey, Lee Hedges
Wardrobe consultant	Alison Dunmore
Wardrobe mistress	Odette Townsend
Costumes	The Works
additional costumes made by	Christine Dowsett, Alison Dunmore, Carol Harrison, Pam Manning
Scenery	Derek Banyard
Stage Manager	Katy Nelson
A.S.M.	Jack McCutcheon
Front of House	Rob Kendall, Matthew Round
Box Office	Mary Greaves, Rosemary Revell
Photographs	John Hendy
Poster design	Tony Janney
Refreshments	Parents of Youth Theatre members

We gratefully acknowledge the help and support of the following:

Our generous sponsors: The Heritage Lottery Fund (Awards For All),
Crockett & Jones, Church & Co. and Barker Shoes

Volvina, for the gift of stage curtains

Northamptonshire County Council, for the subsidised use of premises

Rebecca Shawcross, Assistant Curator, Boot and Shoe Collection, for advice
and assistance with material for the production

Norma Pearson, for assistance in the preparation of the production

Gerry Arterton, Arts Liaison Officer, N.B.C. for publicity and transport

Clare Brittain, for help with costumes

Debbie Holmes, for singing coaching

Richard York, for assistance with sound recording

New Perspectives Theatre Company, for the loan of props

Divine of Earls Barton for the loan of shoes

Countryside Books, for permission to use extracts from Northamptonshire
Within Living Memory.

Raunds and District History Society, for permission to use published material

Rob Kendall, chair of Masque Theatre, for help and encouragement in all
Youth Theatre productions and activities

Bob Whiteman, site supervisor at St. George's Campus, for his unfailing
help and kindness

Parents of Youth Theatre members for help, support and transport