

# THESE ARE THE TIMES

---



*London Gangshow Fellowship*  
*Founder: Ralph Reader CBE*  
*Autumn 2015*

## **CHAIRMANS MESSAGE**

We were all very saddened to hear that our good friend Roger Rees had lost his brave fight with cancer. We have our own personal memories of Roger, if not from his time in the show then from the many memorable things he has said at our reunions. He held Ralph in high regard and his love for Ralph was evident in every speech that we had the pleasure of hearing him deliver. I recall Ralph saying that if any of his gang had their name in lights outside a theatre then he would like to think that he had helped put in some of the lamps. Roger appreciated the guidance and help that he received from Ralph.

The lamps on Broadway theatres were dimmed in Rogers's memory and, for the first time ever, theatres with the latest LED technology showed Rogers face with a brief memorial message. Tributes have been paid to Roger on both sides of the Atlantic with many of his friends in the business attending his funeral in New York. A great loss not only to all his friends and those who loved him but to the theatrical world.

We also said goodbye to another dear friend who did so much for Gang Show and helped, supported and advised very many of us. Ron Meyer was a strong influence for good for so many of us. The huge attendance at the service held in his memory was testament to the great affection the scout and Gang show communities had for him. The poem with which his sister Maureen concluded her circular letter regarding Ron sums up our feelings very well and I am sure that she will not mind my using it here:

A beautiful memory left behind.  
Of someone who was good and kind.  
A life made good by kindly deeds.  
And generous thoughts for others needs.

In 1907 BP, as we all know, held an experimental camp which led to the founding of the Scout Association. Several years later PB, following a conversation with our dear friend Steve Thornton, held an experimental camp which led to the great family camp that we now enjoy every summer. Thanks again to Peter for organising such a good weekend and to Brenda for her invaluable contribution. Read the report in this issue and book next year's date, the last FULL weekend in June.

Our next event is the AGM on Sunday 25 October, book the date now, details in this issue. Business dealt with promptly with plenty of time for catching up with friends.

David Clay

## **Ron Meyer, BEM MBE – 1924-2015..... GONE HOME**



As many of you will be aware we have lost several members of the gang since the Spring edition they will be remembered in the usual way at the AGM in October.

However I think it would be hard to find a member of the gang who does not remember Ron Meyer. His cremation was very well attended in May and below I include Bob Reader's eulogy. On behalf of Maureen, Ron's sister, grateful thanks to Bob for notifying people about arrangements and for his help generally. There was also a eulogy made by Barry Palmer, a member of the gang but more significantly on this day one of Ron's cubs, many of his pack was there to support alongside members of the many local Gang Shows Ron produced and directed and it was moving to see original flags from the 19<sup>th</sup> Bermondsey carried by past and present day scouts.

### **Ron Meyer MBE, BEM**

Ron saw service in the Army during the Second World War as a Warrant Officer Class 1 and P.A. to one of the Allied Commanders, General Morgan. For his wartime service he was awarded the British Empire Medal. At the end of the World War II, General Morgan asked if Ron would continue as his P.A. on his forthcoming posting to America. Ron did not want to become a full time 'professional soldier' and sought his demob. That was the General's loss, it was our gain.

Ron joined the staff at 25 Buckingham Palace Road, Imperial Headquarters of the Scout Association, as it known in those days. In 1951 he became a member of the cast in the first post-war production of the London Gang Show at the Kings Theatre Hammersmith. Ron not being a singer or dancer was cast in comic sketches playing character parts of all sorts both male and female. One of his favourites in 1962 was playing in the comic sketch "The Producer" where everything kept going wrong. Ron was cast as the Producer, an apt piece of casting you may say. The last London Show Ron appeared in as a performer was in 1965. Ron wrote and devised a musical pageant for Wolf Cubs entitled "Adventure Unknown." This he produced on behalf of the Scout Association in 1966 at no less a venue than the Royal Albert Hall. No mean feat for his first solo big production, but again like everything Ron undertook it was successful due to his dedication and enthusiasm.

It was also in 1966 that Ron was asked to become a member of the organising committee of the London Gang Show. He was also asked by the Producer, Ralph Reader, if he would become his Assistant to which Ron jumped at the idea. Ralph always had great faith in Ron and valued greatly his judgement, integrity, loyalty and his friendship. In 1967 Ralph asked Ron if he would be his Assistant on the production of a new musical play, "You Can't Go Wrong if You're Right." It was to be staged at the Golders Green Hippodrome in 1967 and the Wimbledon Theatre in 1968 to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Scouting.

In 1969 Ralph was asked by John Thurman, the then 'Camp Chief' if he would put on a production of John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" at Golders Green to raise funds for Gilwell Park. John, had seen Ralph's original production with an all star cast at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. It was agreed to

present it using Gang Show members, Guides and others. One day when Ralph was looking at ideas I had for the scenic designs for the production he said to me, "Who do you think I could ask to play the part of 'Christian'?" After some thought I suggested Ron, to which Ralph immediately agreed. Ron loved the part and gave a tremendous performance, acclaimed by all. He said playing 'Christian' was the most satisfying and electrifying experience he had ever encountered. On learning from Ralph that I had suggested him for the part, Ron thanked me profusely. He was always generous with his thanks which I hope we were of ours to him.

For his services to Scouting, Ron was appointed a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Ron continued to serve on the Gang Show committee and act as Assistant to Ralph up until the final London Gang Show in 1974 at the State Theatre Kilburn. After that final London Show and Ralph's passing in 1982, Ron became an Administrator, along with myself, of the "Ralph Reader Memorial Fund", a member of the "Red Scarf Masonic Lodge" and Vice President of the "London Gang Show Fellowship".

Ron played a large part in producing and helping various Gang Shows throughout the country of which you will hear more of later, he will be sadly missed. In over 60 years I never heard Ron, curse or swear and indeed I, and I am sure all those here today, never heard him say a bad word about anyone.

Ron Meyer, Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Holder of the British Empire Medal was a gentleman in every sense of the word and above all a loyal and trusty FRIEND to all, always with a smile on his face.

Today as we say goodbye to Ron, we will never forget the times we were fortunate to share with him, yes, 'Those were the Times, we remember them as the Good old Days'. Ron, I feel sure that on the journey you are about to make there will be many awaiting your arrival. I'm sure a great reunion will be had by all tonight.

Goodbye dear Friend.

12<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Bob Corp-Reader OBE.

## **CREWKERNE MUSEUM**

I am delighted to report that Phil Smith and I visited the museum in early June and met with the Curator. We took posters, photographs and copy with us and the museum showed us the artefacts held there. We discussed the layout of the new display, they confirmed they have a company willing to do the work required and they were very pleased with the money we have raised. We still have some funds remaining and they will ask if and when they need it. It is the intention that when the exhibit is complete, there will an official opening with local press coverage and they would like as many people as possible from the Gang to attend. I will let everyone know as soon as I have confirmation of the date.

## **FELLOWSHIP CAMP WEEKEND 2015**



Camp was again a great weekend, although many members now arrive earlier and enjoy 7 to 10 days at Hurley. The weather was good to the actual weekend apart from rain on Sunday which meant many people had to strike camp with damp tents and awnings, a shame but I hope we all feel the effort is worth it for happy times with friends.

We were all worried to hear that Mike Smith had been taken ill after his operation during that week, but delighted to hear that he was out of danger the week after camp and is now making a full recovery.

The coffee morning was held at 11.00am on Saturday morning and all members were able to attend; it seems that everyone is happy with this time. The raffle raised £170, so a big thankyou to all contributors and the willing helpers who sold the tickets.

For the first time in many camps a large group of campers got together after the bar-b-qs on Saturday evening and sang GS songs and exchanged memories. We had a few first time GS camp participants and they seemed to enjoy themselves, so hopefully they will return next year and spread the word to others.

---

### **FUTURE EVENTS.**

**AGM** Sunday 25th October 2015

**ANNUAL DINNER AND DANCE** Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016

**ANNUAL CAMP** Friday 24<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016, Hurley, Berkshire

---

### **Note from the Editor**

Contact with members of the gang continues to go well. This means that TATTS is being received both by e-mail and post by a growing number of the gang. However, if anyone hears of a member who is not receiving TATTS and information please give them Richard Micklefield's or my address and e-mail and we will ensure they are able to get back in contact.

Brenda Pow  
172 Gorse Lane  
Great Clacton  
CO15 4RJ

Richard Micklefield  
Remohca House  
Woodlands  
Wimborne  
Dorset  
BH21 8LW  
[richard@remohca.com](mailto:richard@remohca.com)

[lgsf-tatts74@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lgsf-tatts74@hotmail.co.uk)

Many thanks to all those people who keep me up to date with happy and sad events around the globe and for ideas to keep TATTS more interesting. It is difficult to include all the features as they come in as TATTS would be too long, but keep them coming please and I will include as many as possible.

Brenda

### **Remembering**

Sadly we were informed of **Janet Mann's** passing after her long battle with motor neuron disease on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

The memorial service for **Capt. Peter Ingram**. It is to be on Friday Sept 18th, 14:30 in the Norfolk Pavilion, South of England Showground, Ardingly, RH17 6TL. The location provides ample room for the numbers anticipated together with sufficient parking on site.

The programme for the day is to be a shortish service with some of Peters favourite Scout Hymns, a couple of readings and a reminiscence or two.

The service will be followed by a finger buffet and time to meet and greet each other and discuss our fond memories of Peter. Please could you let David Clay know if you are attending as he can notify the family of numbers.

Just a reminder that there is a great deal of information about **Roger Rees** on line, which may interest members.

**TATTS is sponsored by ATL**

## **LONDON GANG SHOW FELLOWSHIP**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the fortieth Annual General Meeting of the London Gang Show Fellowship will be held at the Anchor Hotel, Church Square, Shepperton, Middlesex on Sunday, 25th October 2015 commencing at 1.00pm.

The following business will be transacted: -

#### **Adoption of Annual Report and Accounts Election of President, Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer Election of six members to the Executive Committee**

Nominations for any of the above offices should reach the Secretary no later than 9 October 2015

Please join us at 12 noon for light refreshments. There will also be a cash bar available.

Guests are welcome at the meeting but shall not vote.

Members are also reminded that the annual subscription of £5 falls due on 1<sup>st</sup> October and should be sent to the Membership Secretary, Mr Richard Micklefield – address below.

Remohca House

Woodlands

Wimborne

Dorset

BH21 8LW

[richard@remohca.com](mailto:richard@remohca.com)

Committee nominations and apologies please to the Secretary : -

Brenda Pow  
172 Gorse Lane  
Great Clacton  
Essex  
CO15 4RJ

[lgsf-tatts74@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lgsf-tatts74@hotmail.co.uk)

**NB**

**It will greatly assist with catering if you will please confirm your attendance**