

Our BLT

A Celebration

David Howkins



How long have you been involved with BLT?

Since 1992.

How did you find out about BLT in the first place?

Through my professional colleague and friend, Derek Melluish, whose wife, Pat, was directing a performance of *Equus* at BLT at the time

What do you remember about your first visit?

First play *Harvey*—November 1993. No particular memories of the performance but the environment of the bar and auditorium blew me away, particularly the stags head fixed to the roof structure in the bar. Never knew where it came from but felt I didn't need to ask. It just fitted...

Have you had any highlights during your time with BLT that you would like to share?

In the early and later years I was able to take minor parts on stage as well as set building (under strict supervision). My wife, Pam, also was involved in costuming one or two productions. In the last few years Pam has become wheelchair bound and really can't manage the lift and auditorium seating now I was happy to go on to the front of house team for a period but we now both have to accept Anno Domini restrictions. One caveat is that the theatre has over many years offered a charity preview production to my charity (Amnesty International). This has been a delight to organise and I believe has introduced quite a few of our supporters to the theatre for the first time. We have in fact been offered the July production this year but inevitably the dreaded virus

almost certainly has put paid to that.

What are you missing most about BLT at the moment – if anything?

The highlights are inevitably those productions which I have contributed to on stage, The very first one *School for Scandal* in March 1994 directed by Bill Morley introduced me to a group of people hugely committed to the theatre and whom I came to know as friends for a decade or more. Sadly I learned today that Bill has passed away after a very long illness. I have taken the liberty of attaching programme details which may strike a chord or two for the old staggers who are still around.

What are your hopes for BLT in the future?

Due to the enforced absence from North Street of Pam and myself we have had to come to terms with separation from the theatre.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

But when the development proposals are completed we shall move heaven and earth to return and reminisce. "Toilets for the actors ? -- whatever next ! "