

London Theatre Company Collection, Pt. 2

Inventory

1 box: 4 folders; .075 metres

“First typed draft, before any cuts or edits” of *A Thousand and One First Nights*, the story of the London Theatre Company, written by its founder Leslie Yeo, published by Mosaic Press, Oakville Ontario 1998. The final published work is in the Performing Arts Centre catalogued as 792.02309 Y25 Y25. Approximately 50 pages of material were cut from the published text.

File #1: Chapters 1-7

Chapter 1. Childhood memories of eccentric relatives and growing up in Swindon England; stage debut as a rabbit in The Arcadians and reference to his role in Harvey at the Vancouver Playhouse.

Chapter 2. More Yeo family history and misfortunes.

Chapter 3. First job, 1931 as office boy in London, and a start in advertising.

Chapter 4. Copywriter at Lord & Thomas Advertising; amateur acting and a start with the Arthur Lane Players at the Woolwich Empire.

Chapter 5. “Special weeks” and film extra work, Chatham Empire rep, Bath Theatre Royal with Mona Washbourne, and return to London and the blitz.

Chapter 6. Dundee with Max Helpmann and Richard Todd, waiting for conscription in Variety on tour with Phyllis Neilson-Terry. Stage managing at Theatre Royal Bath and touring with Henry Kendall; Royal Air Force.

Chapter 7. Wireless training as trainee, then trainer; entertaining the troupes.

File #2: Chapters 8-15

Chapter 8. With R.A.F. in India.

Chapter 9. Service in India; demobilization.

Chapter 10. Two years rep with Basil Thomas, Grand Theatre Wolverhampton et al. A typical week in weekly rep; the art of characterization.

Chapter 11. Rep at Wolverhampton with Gerald Cuff and Nipper Lane.

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Chapter 12. John Gabriel's Birmingham Alexandra Theatre and a tour to Newfoundland in 1947. A season in St. Johns.

Chapter 13. Planning the London Theatre Company while playing rep at the Penge Empire.

Chapter 14. Another season at the Penge Empire; *And the Whistle Blew* by Leslie Yeo. A turn at directing on tour starring Terence de Marny.

Chapter 15. Producer Harry Reynolds, director Oliver Gordon and Yeo finance start of the London Theatre Co.

File #3: Chapters 16-23

Chapter 16. Birth of the company Feb. 19, 1951; planning the season, transport to Newfoundland, the basics of box office, choosing the cast, British bureaucracy.

Chapter 17. Getting started in St. John's with designer George Paddon-Foster.

Chapter 18. Arrival of cast on the Nova Scotia; preparing for opening with *Rookery Nook*.

Chapter 19. Opening night; the routine of rep theatre; building an audience.

Chapter 20. The trials of the actor-manage; Christmas and *Charley's Aunt*; command performance in Argentina for U.S. Navy/ CJON Keep Talking; *Streetcar Named Desire* and the Archbishop of St. John's.

Chapter 21. The young Walter Learning; *Noises Off* at the Vancouver Playhouse; plan for the 2nd season; *The Taming of the Shrew*; grand finale revue *Screech*; Farewell Benefit.

Chapter 22. Negotiations in Halifax; planning the 2nd season; last acting role in UK, in *Present Laughter*; directing Chrysler Show in 1972 at Drury Lane; new seats; return to Newfoundland.

Chapter 23. Planning for season in St. John's and Halifax; operation Seat Salvage; the Halifax season at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre.

File #4: Chapters 24-30

Chapter 24. Cinderella, the Christmas pantomime for St. John's audience from U.S. Airforce base; *The Merchant of Venice*; *More Screech* and a successful year.

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Chapter 25. Planning a tour from Nova Scotia; scouting from Sydney to Ontario; a chance at a summer season at the Grand Theatre, London ON.

Chapter 26. Working vacation in Spain after coronation of Elizabeth II; Teatro Principe on the beach. Monica Wilkinson comes to administration; casting.

Chapter 27. Opening in Halifax with school for Scandal; invitation to Niagara Falls Summer Theatre. Mini-tour in New Brunswick; 3rd season in St. John's with 50th anniv.

Production celebration. Robinson Crusoe Christmas panto, *Camille*, and *Still More Screech*.

Chapter 28. Setting off on tour on Newfoundland Railway via Sydney; poor houses in Hamilton, London & St. Catherine's improvement in Kitchener; splitting the audience in Ottawa with Canadian Repertory Theatre. Playing the Grand Theatre, and summer theatre in Niagara.

Chapter 29. 1954-55 season in St. John's with the *Babes in the Wood* panto; scouting cornerbrook and the Bowaters fiefdon; *And Still More Screech* with the talent of Joseph Shaw ends successful season. Problems in Halifax, losses in London ON and Niagara Falls.

Chapter 30. 1955-1956 season; television version of *Keep Talking*; *Dick Whittington* for Christmas. Television vs. live theatre and loss of audience; freeze on rights for *Pygmalion*; the last season with *Aladdin*; *Screech, the Last Drop*, the final curtain.

Gift of Leslie Yeo, 1998
Inventory: A. Sutherland,
5 February 1999