

# Pomegranate Theatre Chesterfield

## Milestones

**1879** Stephenson Memorial Hall opened as a tribute to George Stephenson.

**1889** The Hall purchased by Chesterfield Corporation

**December 31 1946** Expiry of lease of Hall to Cinema Company

**June 01 1947** Public Appeal of Guarantee fund of £5,000 organised by local amateur societies.

**February 19 1949** Opening ceremony performed by Miss. Kathleen Harrison.

**February 21 1949** First performance of first presentation, "See How They Run" by Philip King .

**September 17 1951** The 100th presentation by the Resident Repertory Company, "Queen Elizabeth Slept Here". The Company then included Margaret Tyzack and John Arnatt.

**February 08 1954** The 200th presentation, "Hobson's Choice" was directed by Gerald Glaister with the Company including Nigel Davenport and David McCallum.

**March 31 1958** As a young Assistant Stage Manager, Diana Rigg made her stage debut in "The Passing of the Third Floor Back".

**September 21 1959** "Tunnel of Love" opened a new Repertory Season with the Company's Stage Manager/ Associate Producer - Colin McIntyre.

**August 16 1965** After 16 years of 'Weekly Rep', "Lady Windermere's Fan" began a new policy of each production playing for at least two weeks 1974 The death was announced of J. H. Hodkin who had reigned as Chairman of the Board since 1948.

**March 28 1981** "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" played to the theatre's record attendance - three weeks at an average of 98% capacity.

**March 31 1981** With the Borough Council's withdrawal of the lease from Chesterfield Civic Theatre Ltd, Repertory Seasons came to an end.

**December 16 1981** Chesterfield Borough Council, as sole producers, opened its one and only production, the Christmas Show "Rock Star".

**February 06 1982** Chesterfield Theatre Limited came into being with its policy of housing incoming touring companies instead of a Repertory Company mounting its own productions.

**June 10 1982** The Civic Theatre became the Pomegranate Theatre

**February 22 1988** To open the 40th year of operation, the theatre repeated the first ever play "See How They Run".

**February 20 1989** 40 years completed with the theatre's most successful play, Agatha Christie's "Verdict".

**May 27 1989** Theatre closed for its first-ever major structural repairs.

**August 1993** Ramps constructed at theatre entrance and in foyer to improve access facilities. Adapted toilets to the rear of the auditorium to be shared with Chesterfield's new museum situated in the other half of the Stephenson Memorial Hall. Wheelchair lift installed to allow access to the Box Office and bar area.

**January 1994** Theatre re-seated over a three-week period after pantomime.

**September 1994** Derek Coleman retired after 31 years as Manager

**January 1995** Bar Area redecorated to provide exhibition space for local artists

**April 1997** Administration of Theatre and Museum joined as part of the new Arts Section headed by the Borough Arts Manager

**February 1999** Gala presentation of "Thanks for the Memory", produced by former Artistic Director Colin McIntyre, opened the Season celebrating 50 years of civic theatre in Chesterfield

**July 2000** The manual Box Office procedures were replaced by Databox, a computerised ticketing system, finally making obsolete the complex use of paper plans and coloured pencils.

**August 2001** Ticket selling operations reverted temporarily to their former home, under the stairs, during the re-construction of the Box Office to reflect the change of operation.

**March 2002** The first Pomegranate New Playwright's Festival takes place, performing 14 new works in 5 days.

**August 2003** Bar adapted to provide a performance space for the growing "Arts in the Bar" strand.

**May 2004** "Angels Never Leave Heaven" becomes the first in-house production at the theatre since 1981.

**September 2004** "Chesterfield Tales", the theatre's contribution to the Chesterfield Market Festival, a new piece written by members of the New Playwright's group, celebrates 900 years of the town's history.

**May 2005** The Box Office is re-sited in the foyer giving better access to wheelchair users and providing more space for cashiers.

**July 2006** A production of "Taming of the Shrew" by Oddsocks Theatre Company marks the start of Pomegranate in the Park, a joint venture with the newly refurbished Queen's Park.

**December 2006** A fully integrated production of Alan Bennett's "Talking Heads" using one hearing and one deaf actress opens live theatre up to a new audience

**June 2007** Theatre celebrates 25 years as The Pomegranate

**September 2007** Peter Sallis returns to the theatre for the first time since he was a member of the inaugural repertory company in 1949