

THE PLACE TELFORD - NEWSLETTER



Winter 2019

Hello and welcome...

to the first quarterly newsletter from **The Place Telford**.

In this issue sit down for a five minute coffee and a chat with star of stage and screen Oliver Mellor, as he gets ready to visit Telford as the baddie in this year's panto, Jack and The Beanstalk.

We take a look back at the life of theatre, from Town Hall to Telford's best entertainment venue with a very special appearance from Julian Clary.

And we give you the low-down on just a few of the incredible acts coming to The Place Telford next year.

Enjoy!



5 minutes with... Oliver Mellor

Everyone loves a panto...oh no we don't...oh yes we do!

As The Place Telford prepares to open with Jack and The Beanstalk we spent a few minutes catching up with former Eastenders, Doctors and Corrie star Oliver Mellor.

Oliver, despite his matinee idol looks, likes the darker side of panto, which might come in handy as he's playing super-villain Fleshcreep in this year's show!



Q: You grew up in Windsor. Was Panto part of your childhood Christmas?

Yes my parents started taking me to the theatre from the age of six. I loved Panto as a child and I loved musicals. They'd take my sister and I to the West End every Xmas to watch a show.

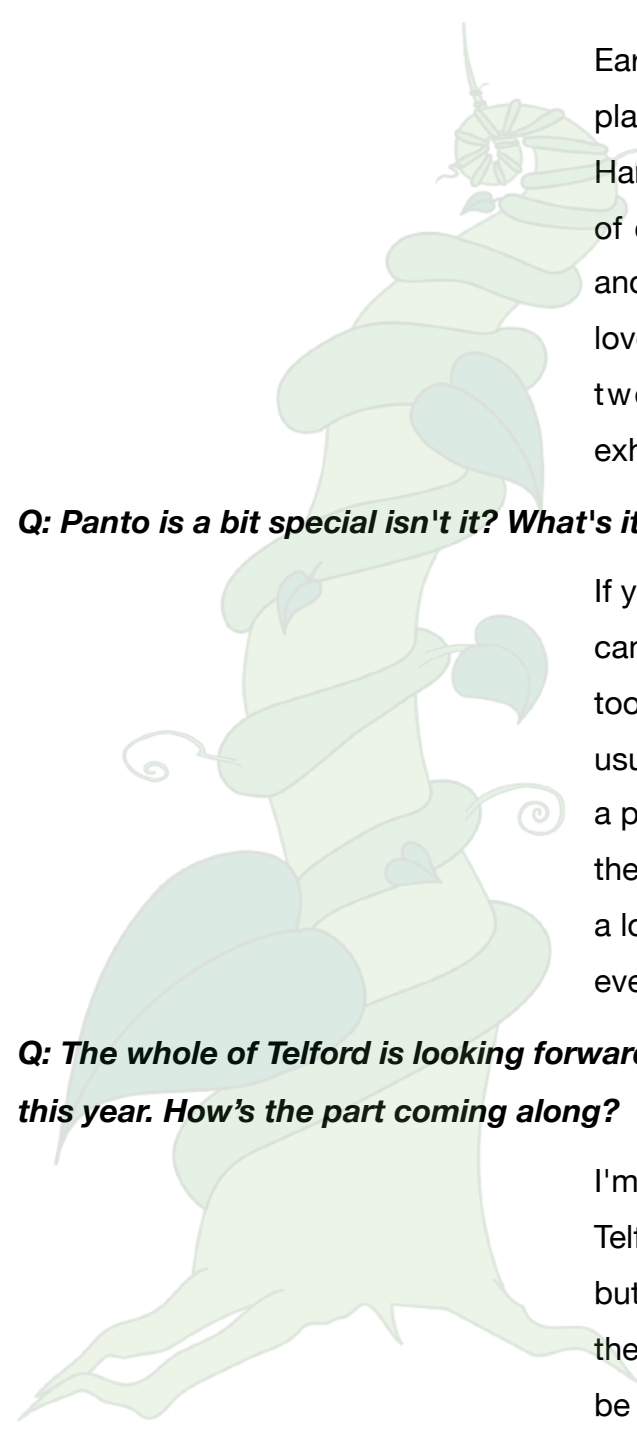
Q: As a child did you shout louder for the hero or boo more for the baddie?

Funnily enough I always loved the villain in the Panto. I loved superheroes like Batman & Spiderman so would often go dressed as one of them. Those characters often have a dark side so maybe that's why the villain was more appealing.

Q: When did you decide that acting is what you wanted to follow as a career?

I was lucky enough to have some brilliant drama teachers at school. They inspired me to want to perform from the age of about 10. It wasn't until my Drama degree in Liverpool when I realised I had some genuine potential. A few tutors recommended I go to Drama school in London. That's where I picked up an agent and my career began.

Q: You've had a varied career on stage and TV. What part was the most fun to play?



Earlier this year I did *The 39 Steps*. A brilliant play, full of physical comedy. I played Richard Hannay, the hero of the piece. The piece was full of comedy but it needed to be technically sharp and precise, a lot like Panto. The audiences loved it and the feeling of a standing ovation after two hours of hard work on stage was exhilarating.

Q: Panto is a bit special isn't it? What's it like to act in?

If you get it right it's extremely rewarding. If you can wow the children and get the adults laughing too then that's very satisfying. The schedules are usually quite gruelling but it's so much fun to be a part of and it flies by. Panto is unique because there's so much audience participation so there's a lot of opportunity to improvise. This makes every show different and exciting.

Q: The whole of Telford is looking forward to seeing you in *Jack and the Beanstalk* this year. How's the part coming along?

I'm very much looking forward to meeting the Telford audiences. I want him to be evil and nasty but with some humour thrown in too. If I can get the kids booing and the adults laughing then I'll be happy.

Jack and The Beanstalk opens 11 December 2019 and runs until 5 January 2020. Avoid disappointment! With over 22,000 sold for Cinderella last Christmas, tickets for this year are already moving fast. Book Now by clicking on the link below:

<https://theplacetelford.com/whats-on/all-shows/jack-and-the-beanstalk/>



From Town Hall to Telford's Theatre The secret history of The Place Telford

Whether you come to enjoy music, comedy or family shows at The Place Telford you'll instantly be aware of the great acts that can be staged here thanks to the size of the auditorium.

Well, you can thank the councillors and officials of Oakengates Town Council for this fantastic space, as the building was previously the seat of Oakengates Town Hall.

The Town Hall was opened with much ceremony in 1968 by the late race horse trainer Sir Gordon Richards, who was born in Donnington Wood and had become a legend with 26 British flat racing championships during his riding career. His total number of winners remains as a record to this day - 4870.

After a long and illustrious career serving the people of Oakengates the seat of local government moved in the town centre and the building was reshaped and repurposed to serve the whole of the Telford community as its theatre complex in 1989.

Following a total refurbishment in 2005 the theatre as we know and love it today was reopened with a flourish by comedian and TV personality Julian Clary.

Telford - The Place to be in 2020

3 Shows to watch out for in the New Year

Dance To The Music

Hosted by *X factor* star & *Dancing On Ice* winner Jake Quickenden and created, choreographed & performed by *Strictly Come Dancing* professional star Kristina Rihanoff. This spectacular show features South African Ballroom Champions & *Dancing With The Stars* professionals Marcella Solimeo and Dylan Daniels.



Count Arthur Strong

As well as being the all-round entertainer Count Arthur Strong is also a lifelong fan of astronomy, since having been given a microscope, or whatever it is they use, for Christmas when he was a baby. In fact, it's said the first word he spoke was 'Uranus'. In this, his brand-new show, he seamlessly combines the very best showbiz entertainment in the world, possibly as he wrestles with some of the big questions that other all-round entertainers shy away from.



Milkshake Live

Be part of this fantastic production as you learn the amazing songs and dances with your favourite Milkshake friends.

Starring Fireman Sam, Noddy, Shimmer & Shine, Digby Dragon, Wissper, Nella the Princess Knight and the Floggals, alongside two Milkshake presenters, this brand-new show has plenty of laughter, audience interaction and great fun to get everyone up on their feet! It's a family

