

THE RAILWAY CHILDREN



Wednesday 8 –
Sunday 12 &
Wednesday 15 –
Sunday 19 April

altrincham
garrick
playhouse

Still to come in 2026 – a fantastic line up of productions for everyone. **Book NOW!**

An uproarious classic Northern comedy

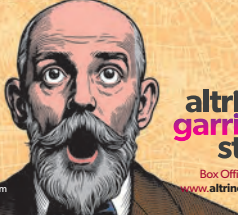
hobson's choice

Directed by Ros Greenwood by Harold Brighouse

altrincham garrick studio

Box Office: 0161-928 1677
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Tuesday 28 April – Sunday 3 May 2026
Evenings at 7:30 pm

Vengeance is walking Salem...

The Crucible

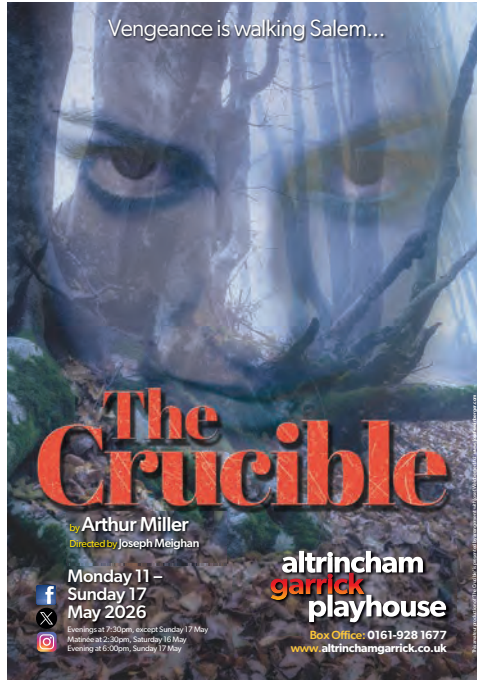
by Arthur Miller
Directed by Joseph Meighan

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Monday 11 – Sunday 17 May 2026

Evenings at 7:30pm, except Sunday 17 May
Matinee at 2:30pm, Saturday 16 May
Evening at 6:00pm, Sunday 17 May



"Intelligent, articulated and f*****d"

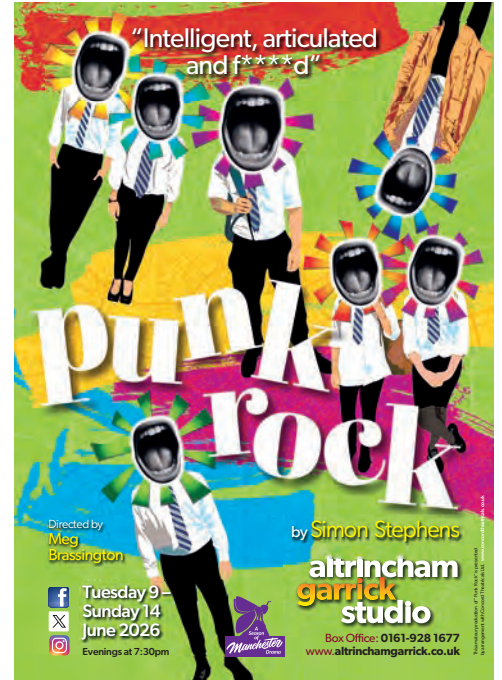
punk rock

Directed by Meg Brassington by Simon Stephens

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Tuesday 9 – Sunday 14 June 2026
Evenings at 7:30pm



A wonderfully entertaining adaptation of the TV classic

The Good Life

Adapted for the stage by Jeremy Sams
Based upon the classic BBC TV Comedy series, and dramatised by John Esmonde and Bob Larbey
Directed by Dan Ellis

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Monday 1 – Sunday 7 June 2026

Evenings at 7:30pm, except Sunday 7 June
Matinee at 2:30pm, Saturday 6 June
Evening at 6:00pm, Sunday 7 June



A smashing, positively dashing, simply lovely musical

My Fair Lady

Adapted from George Bernard Shaw's play and Gabriel Pascal's motion picture "Pygmalion"

Book and Lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner Music by Frederick Loewe
Original production directed and staged by Moss Hart

Director: Joseph Meighan
Musical Direction: Mark Groggins
Choreography: Louise Pettitt

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Monday 22 – Sunday 28 June 2026

Evenings at 7:30pm, except Sunday 28 June
Matinee at 2:30pm, Saturday 27 June
Matinee at 4:00pm, Sunday 28 June



When the world stopped, their stories moved us all

COME FROM AWAY

Book, Music and Lyrics by Irene Sankoff and David Hein

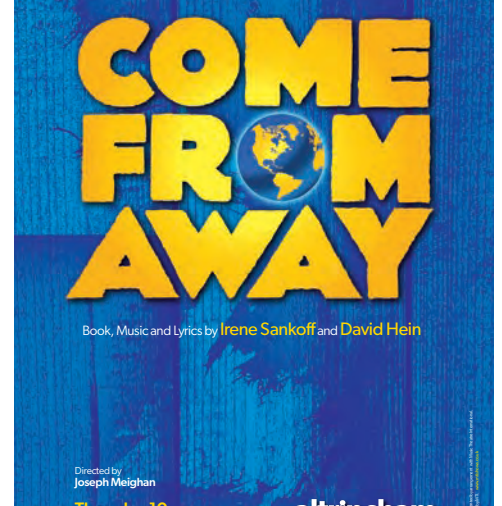
Directed by Joseph Meighan

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Box Office: 0161-928 1677
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Thursday 10 – Saturday 19 September 2026

Evenings at 8:00pm, except Sun 13 September
Matinee at 3:00pm, Sat 12 & Sun 13 September
Matinee at 4:00pm, Sun 13 September



The classic love story of manners, morality and marriage

Pride and Prejudice

by Andrew Davies
Based on the novel by Jane Austen

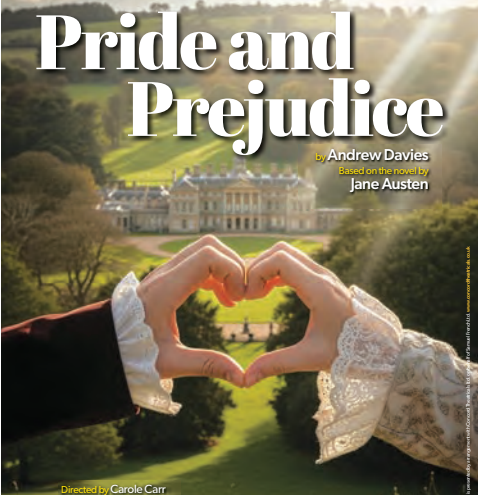
Directed by Carole Carr

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Box Office: 0161-928 1677
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Monday 28 September – Sunday 4 October 2026

Evenings at 7:30pm, except Sunday 4 October
Matinee at 2:30pm, Saturday 3 October
Evening at 6:00pm, Sunday 4 October



An amateur production presented by arrangement with The Really Useful Group Ltd.

The wonderfully entertaining smash-hit family musical

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT

Lyrics by Tim Rice Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber

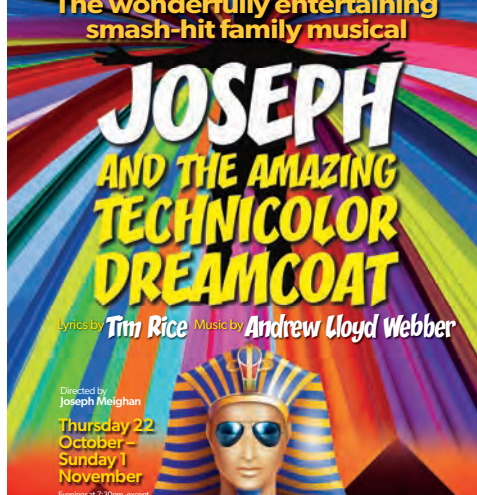
Directed by Joseph Meighan

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Box Office: 0161-928 1677
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Thursday 22 October – Sunday 1 November

Evenings at 7:30pm, except Sunday 29 Oct & Nov
Matinee at 2:30pm, Sunday 29 Oct
Evenings at 7:30pm, except Sunday 29 Nov
Matinee at 2:30pm, Saturday 28 Nov
Matinee at 4:00pm, Sunday 29 Nov



BLACKADDER GOES FORTH

A stage adaptation based on the original BBC Television series created by Richard Curtis, Rowan Atkinson, Ben Elton and John Lloyd

Directed by Charlie Tomlinson

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Box Office: 0161-928 1677
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Monday 16 – Sunday 22 November 2026

Evenings at 7:30pm, except Sunday 22 Nov
Matinee at 2:30pm, Saturday 21 November
Evening at 6:00pm, Sunday 22 November



ALL ABOARD

Welcome to Altrincham Garrick Playhouse, and our Easter 2026 production for all the family.

Mike Kenny's adaptation of *The Railway Children*, based on Edith Nesbit's beloved novel, invites us into a world where memory, imagination, and storytelling are as vital as any physical set or spectacle. In this production, we have chosen not to place a train on the stage. While there is plenty of billowing steam, and brilliant sound and lighting effects of powerful engines pulling clattering carriages, we do not actually have an iron track stretching into the distance. And yet, the train is everywhere.

This choice is not a limitation, but an invitation.

The story of Roberta, Peter, and Phyllis unfolds in the Yorkshire Dales – a landscape of rolling hills, wide skies, and quiet railway cuttings. It is a place of discovery, of resilience, and of small, profound acts of kindness. But the Dales are not simply a backdrop; they are a feeling, a shared act of imagining. In utilising a set of limited, representational scenery we ask you, the audience, to meet us halfway, to bring your own memories, sensations, and images into the theatre. Together, we will build the world of the play.

Theatre, at its heart, is an act of collective imagination. A gesture becomes a journey. A line of dialogue becomes a horizon. A simple prop transforms into something far greater. In this production, when the children run down the embankment, we ask you to see the long grass bending beneath their feet. When they wave to the passing train, we ask you to hear its distant rumble, to feel the wind of its passing, to sense the anticipation that defines their days. The train itself – so central to their lives – exists not as an object, but as a shared understanding between performers and audience.

This approach returns us, in many ways, to the spirit of Edith

Nesbit's original story. Her writing is rich with warmth, humour, and emotional truth, but it is also rooted in the imaginative lives of children. *The Railway Children*

is a story about how young people make sense of a world that has suddenly changed around them. They transform hardship into adventure, uncertainty into curiosity. They imagine boldly – and in doing so, they endure.

Mike Kenny's adaptation captures this beautifully. It distils the essence of the novel into a theatrical experience that foregrounds storytelling itself. The actors become not only characters, but narrators, guides, and co-creators of the world you are about to enter. Without the distraction of elaborate mechanics, the focus shifts to the human connections at the centre of the play: the bond between siblings, the quiet strength of their mother, and the unexpected friendships they form along the railway line.

As you watch, we encourage you to lean into this shared act of creation. Allow yourself to picture the Dales, to feel the changing seasons, to imagine the stations, tunnels, and cottages that shape the children's lives. Let the simplicity of the staging open up something richer and more personal in your own mind. For those of us involved in the production, the most powerful prop we have is the imagination of you, the audience, and the most effective tool is the skill of the actors. People can see things which aren't actually there.

Because in the end, this is not a story about a train. It is a story about movement – emotional, imaginative, and human. And that journey belongs as much to you as it does to those on stage.



Joe

Joseph Meighan

Artistic Director, Altrincham Garrick Playhouse.

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garrick
playhouse**

Barrington Rd, Altrincham WA14 1HZ

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EDITH NESBIT

Edith Nesbit is considered the inventor of the children's adventure story and her brilliant children's books influenced bestselling authors including C.S. Lewis, P. L. Travers, J.K. Rowling, and Jacqueline Wilson, to name but a few. But who was the person behind the best loved classics *The Railway Children* and *Five Children and It*?

Edith Nesbit was born in London in 1858. When Edith was four years old, she lost her father, John Nesbit, to tuberculosis. Her mother, Sarah, twice widowed by her mid-forties, tried valiantly to run the progressive agricultural college in Kennington, London where her husband had been Principal. Overwhelmed and desperately concerned by the appearance of symptoms of tuberculosis in her second daughter, Mary, Sarah sold the college and, with it, Edith's idyllic childhood home.

During the decade that followed, Edith, Mary, her half sister, Saretta, and their mother, travelled through Britain and France in an effort to find a climate that would allow Mary to recover. Edith's brothers, Alfred and Harry, were sent to boarding schools in England. This transient lifestyle disrupted her education woefully, although she learned to speak French proficiently and she never lost her passion for reading.

Bittersweet contentment was found after Mary died, aged just twenty, and Sarah took her remaining children to live in the tranquil Kent village of Halstead. Edith was fourteen by then and had ambitions to be a poet. She celebrated the lush beauty of the Kent countryside in the hundreds of poems, stories and novels she wrote during her lifetime.

In her late teens, Edith moved to London with her mother but she returned to the countryside, which she missed desperately, as often as she could. Aged twenty-one and seven months pregnant, Edith married the flamboyant but serially unfaithful Hubert Bland. Both took lovers throughout their marriage and Edith, a vibrant, beautiful woman, had romantic liaisons with several younger men. Poverty provoked resourcefulness and she kept her little household afloat by designing greeting cards and writing stories for children. It was this experience of hardship and a strong belief in social justice that drove Edith and Hubert to help found the Fabian Society, a reforming socialist organisation (and forerunner to The Labour Party) that exists to this day.

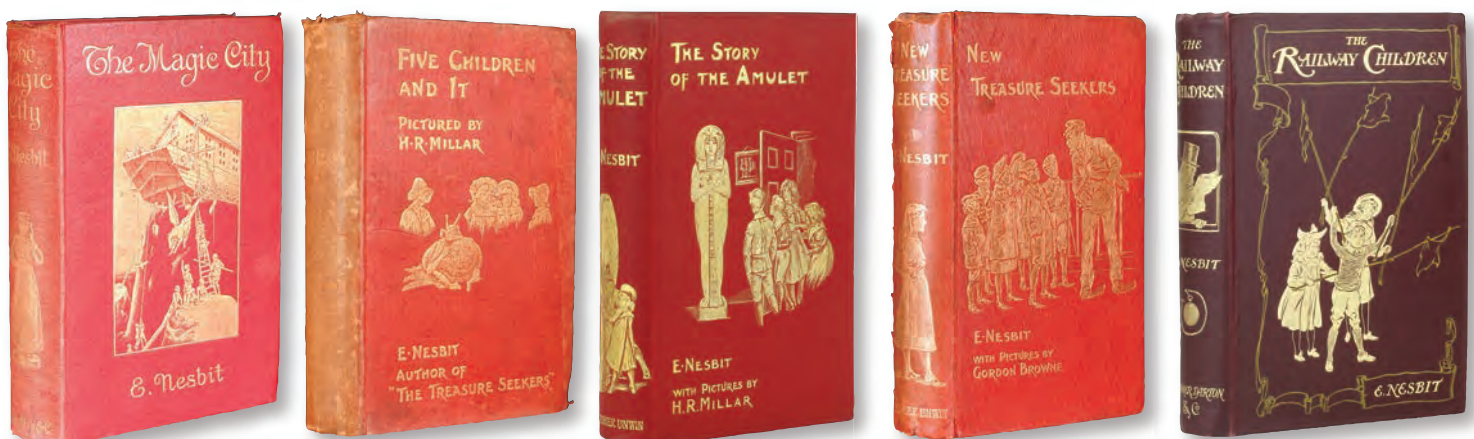
Edith's talent and determination brought well-deserved rewards and she moved her growing family into increasingly larger rented homes in the south east of London. By the time she could afford to rent a

beautiful, rambling house in Well Hall, Eltham, she was rearing three children of her own alongside two more born to her best friend, Alice Hoatson, who Edith had moved into her own home as the housekeeper, and who was having an affair with Hubert. It was in Well Hall, where she spent 22 years surrounded by orchards, farmland, and beautiful gardens that Edith began to write the wonderful stories for children that became her literary legacy. Drawing on incidents from her own childhood and the lives of her children she wrote *The Story of The Treasure Seekers*, *The Wouldbegoods*, *Five Children and It* and many others, including her beloved classic *The Railway Children*. She also wrote poetry, novels for adults and chilling horror stories.

By the time Edith Nesbit wrote *The Railway Children* in 1905-6, she had become a successful author, as well as a legendary society hostess. Edith loved entertaining, and her dinner parties were a magnet for all the left-wing glitterati of the day. There was a piano in their living room, and a guitar propped up against it (Edith played both), and, to self-accompaniment, the hostess regaled her guests with songs which she had written. Her guests included H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw (one of several lovers), Charlotte Perkins Gilman and other literary luminaries, as well as Eleanor Marx, Olive Schreiner and Sydney and Beatrice Webb, co-founders of the Fabian Society.

Edith was also an outspoken Marxist and a prolific activist and writer on socialism. Nesbit railed against inequity, social injustice and state-sponsored oppression and incorporated her avant-garde ideas into her writing, influencing a generation of children. She would organise parties and performances for the poor schoolchildren of Deptford, providing them with desperately needed toys, food and clothing.

She was enormously successful for a time but wartime and the death of her husband, Hubert, coincided with a falling away of her popularity. Managing her vast house became increasingly difficult so she sold flowers, eggs and vegetables, and took in paying guests to make ends meet. In 1917, she married for a second time. Shortly afterwards, she and her new husband, a marine engineer named Tommy Tucker, moved to two refurbished army huts at St Mary's Bay in Dymchurch in Kent. She died there in May 1924, her second husband and her children by her side.



THE BOOK

Edith Nesbit had a remarkable talent for capturing children's personalities and presenting youngsters in a natural and realistic way. To readers brought up on sickly sweet Victorian fiction, this was a new and unique style of writing for children which would set the standard for the genre ever after.

Before Edith came along, very few writers addressed children as their target readers. Those that did concentrated on fantasy, like Hans Christian Andersen and Lewis Carroll, or on cosy and comforting adventure stories, like Anna Sewell and Johanna Spyri. No matter how far-fetched her plots, Edith presented the children in her tales with real and recognisable problems and situations. In her later work, she also casually introduced her socialist politics.

'The Railway Children' encapsulates all of this, but it is something else as well: of all her published fiction, it is the most autobiographical. This may not be immediately obvious - like many great writers, Edith was subversive, so that what she was writing about did not always appear to be what she was writing about. In fact, the parallels in the story and Edith's own life are many and striking.

The first of these is the sudden and unforeseen removal of a family's security blanket, and the effects of the resulting poverty. Money, or the mismanagement of it, was eternally an issue in the Bland household. Even at the height of her success (*The Wouldbegoods* alone earned her £1,100 in 1902 - a huge sum then) Edith never seemed to have enough. Whenever she did have any cash to spare, she lavished it on her parties and her friends.

Then there is the plight of the single mother, or at least of a mother forced by circumstance to support her family single-handedly at a time when the prospect was daunting. There was no welfare state then, no benefits system, so if the mother failed to provide for her children, they would simply starve. Edith knew the problem well: her own mother had found herself in this unenviable situation and, after the collapse of Hubert's business interests, so did Edith herself. Fortunately, both Edith and her mother were strong and pragmatic enough to cope.

The Mother in *The Railway Children*, and young Bobbie, share characteristics with Edith, and it is tempting to think of both of them as projections of her. We can see Bobbie, who has 'unfeminine' ambitions, developing into the young Edith who rejected the constraints placed on Victorian women, who cut her hair short, refused to wear corsets, invented her own, distinctive style of dressing and chain-smoked furiously. Mother has been invested with Edith's renowned generosity and compassion, she does not hesitate to take in any waif or stray who needs her help, which Edith did too.

And then there is Father, and the sense of his absence which pervades the story. The railway is a potent symbol of this, since the children fantasise that the passing London-bound trains are conveying their feelings to him. The death of Edith's own father just before her fourth birthday marred her childhood, and when she wrote about her early years in '*My School-Days*' (which was serialised in the '*Girls' Own Paper*' between October 1896 and September 1897, then published posthumously in 1966 under the title '*When I Was Very Young*'), her unhappiness is all too evident. She had nightmares about her dead father, and often felt bullied and frightened during her family's travels on the continent. It was only after the Nesbits returned to Britain, and

settled in Halstead Hall in Kent, that young Edith began to throw off the shackles of the early tragedy, although the pain of losing her father would persist throughout her life.

The novel presents an idealised view of childhood. Despite the shadow of their missing father visible on their horizons, the children are unencumbered with school and other responsibilities. They are free to explore the countryside and the workings of the little railway station. It is an idyllic existence that, through the skill of the author, we are able to share with them.

The Railway Children was originally serialised in *The London Magazine* in 1905 and published in book form in 1906, and has never been out of print since. The setting is thought to be inspired by the author's walks to Chelsfield Railway Station in the London Borough of Bromley, Kent, near her home and observing the construction of a cutting and tunnel close to the station.



The story has such energy, strong emotion and incident that it has proved very popular for dramatised adaptations. The 1968 BBC production in seven episodes was such a success that the actor/director Lionel Jeffries bought the film rights and wrote the script for the big-screen version, which was released in 1970. This much-loved movie featured a young **Jenny Agutter** as *Bobbie*. In fact, it was the part she had played in the 1968 BBC series. **Bernard Cribbins** very memorably essayed the role of *Perks* and **Dinah Sheridan** was the *Mother*. The movie was shot in Yorkshire using the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway and Oakworth Station for the location filming.



Interestingly, Jenny Agutter's connection with *The Railway Children* did not stop there. In 1999, ITV presented a new adaptation as a TV movie and this time she played the role of the *Mother*, with **Jemima Roper** as *Bobbie*. In 2022, Agutter played a much older *Bobbie* in *The Railway Children Return*, which revisited the original filming locations from the classic 1970 film.

INSPIRATIONS

As well as taking inspiration from her own life and family for characters in *The Railway Children*, Edith Nesbit also drew upon various real-life stories of other people for the plot of her novel, in particular for the stories of "*Father*" and "*Mr Szezpcansky*".



Captain Alfred Dreyfus

Father's fate was no doubt suggested by the notorious French scandal known as 'the Dreyfus Affair'. In September 1894, a cleaning woman at the German Embassy in Paris found a note in a waste basket which suggested that a Frenchman was willing to sell military secrets to the Germans. Suspicion lighted on a young Jewish artillery officer in the French army called **Captain Alfred Dreyfus**. Two months later, after a secret court martial, and despite his protestations of innocence, Dreyfus was convicted of treason. The 'evidence' against him was non-existent, or clearly forged, and was presented by witnesses who were openly anti-Semitic. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, in solitary confinement, on the infamous prison at Devil's Island in French Guiana.

Doubts about Dreyfus' guilt began to surface the moment he was sentenced, but intensified when it became clear that the spying he had been accused of was still going on after his incarceration. In 1906, the year of publication of *'The Railway Children'*, Dreyfus was totally exonerated and reinstated in the French Army. Incredibly, despite his physical and mental health being all but broken by his experiences, he continued his military career throughout World War I, reaching the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

As to *Mr. Szezpcansky*, he seems to be an amalgamation of two people Edith knew well, both refugees from Russia, both of whom had written at least one "*beautiful book. About poor people. And how to help*

them." Tsarist Russia was no place to be poor, or to be a political dissident. The regime behaved with appalling brutality towards any and all who supported the fast-growing revolutionary movement in a country which was still feudal, and where serfs were owned by their masters.



Prince Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin

Prince Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin was born in 1842 into a wealthy, aristocratic family. By the age of 12, young Pyotr (who would be known in England as 'Peter') had already begun to sympathise with the plight of the peasantry on his father's many estates, and he publicly renounced his royal title. His political activism led to his arrest and imprisonment in 1873. Three years later, Peter not only succeeded in escaping from prison, he also defected from Russia, and began his international travels, spreading his political message, and publishing pamphlets in support of it, as he went. He returned to his native land after the February Revolution in 1917 and was offered a post in the ministry of education in the provisional government, but turned it down. He died four years later.

'**Sergius Stepniak**' was born **Sergius Michaelovitch Kravchinski** in 1851 in what is now Ukraine. Like Kropotkin, he attended a quasi-military school, and went on to join the army, although he didn't stay in it for long. He resigned his commission when he was 20 years old.

He joined the rising against the Turks in Bosnia in 1876 and used the experience to



Sergius Stepniak

write a manual on how to conduct guerrilla warfare. The following year he fought in another rebellion, in Italy.

Back in Russia in 1878, he assassinated General Nikolai Mezentsev, the chief of police, in St. Petersburg. Although he managed to escape arrest, he was forced to flee the country and, like Kropotkin, became an itinerant citizen of wherever in the world would have him, including the United States and Switzerland.

Eventually he settled in London in 1885, where he had been celebrated in socialist circles since the publication of his 1882 book '*Underground Russia*'. Working as a journalist, he established the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, and co-edited the '*Free Russia Press*' with author Lily Voynich, whose novel '*The Gadfly*' drew on his life. A habitue of the Fabian Society, Stepniak numbered William Morris, Walter Sickert and George Bernard Shaw among his friends – he advised Shaw on details of Balkan uniforms for his '*Arms and the Man*' – and was extremely popular: one friend described him as '*one of the gentlest of men, a man of a sweet and lovable nature*'.

But it was the manner of Sergius' untimely death which may have resonated with Edith Nesbit when she came to write '*The Railway Children*'. Two days before Christmas in 1895, he was walking in Bedford Park, near his home in Chiswick, London. As he negotiated a level crossing on his local railway line, he was hit by a train and killed outright. He was 44 years old.

MIKE KENNY

How do you adapt stories to become inventive scripts for theatre?

"Oh, crikey. I learned my craft working in Leeds Playhouse Theatre in Education, in the days when we had a government and local education authorities who thought it was important that ordinary children, whatever their background, had access to plays, books and art. We created theatre pieces that we took into Leeds schools. Playwrighting is a craft. It takes a long time to get good at it, and I learned it by acting in plays in chilly school halls between assembly and dinner. If the children were bored, they let us know, and if they were moved they did too, and if they were stimulated they talked to us afterwards."

How did you approach writing this adaptation of "The Railway Children"?

"The Railway Children, the novel, is quite episodic. This is a challenge for a playwright. A play needs to follow a single line through, quite obsessively. The other challenge is that it is the story of a family where something dreadful happens and the mother declares that no one must talk about it. Given that talking is one of the things you need in a play it can become a bit of a problem. In the end this 'problem' became the subject of my play. 'What is the effect of not communicating on the children of the family?' To do this some episodes in the novel had to go. There is a section that I particularly love about a family who live on a barge, but it didn't serve the central theme, so it went. The only liberty I took with the book was to make it a memory play. The children are looking back on the events from adulthood. This means they can speculate over things which happened that they didn't understand at the time."

There's an ongoing debate about adaptations for children's books overshadowing new writing in theatre for young audiences – how do you respond to that?

"I have mixed feelings about this. I enjoy adapting good stories. And, of course, Shakespeare didn't actually make up his own stories, so who am I to complain? But I do worry that we are the Cinderella profession. I think we need to be allowed to tell new stories. My feeling is that there is a bit of a safety first mentality around at the moment. Parents like to know what they're getting for their children. I can understand that but personally I feel it's essential to go off piste occasionally. When I was browsing the shelves of a library when I was a child nobody was censoring me. If I have an ambition as a playwright, it's to be able to say, come and see a play by me, not because you already know the title, but because you trust me to tell a good tale."

Why is theatre for children and young people so important?

"I think there is nothing quite like live entertainment. Especially in an age when so many people spend so much time with their noses stuck in their own separate screens, to gather together in a theatre space reminds us we're human. And theatre combines all of the arts. It has story, spectacle, imagination, design, colour, sound, light, dance and music and it has it all at the same time. And at any moment, anything can go wrong – because it's live!"

What can a theatrical presentation of The Railway Children bring to the story that perhaps the film didn't quite achieve?

"The original film was made in the 1960s when it was a very hopeful and optimistic time. This feeling runs through the film and is delightful. The sun always shines and we love it. We are now telling this story in more difficult times, maybe closer to the time in which the book was written. Political corruption, poverty, refugees, lone parents are things modern children know more about. I think it now seems less of a lost idyll and surprisingly modern."



Mike Kenny is one of England's leading writers, specialising in theatre for young people and families. He is the recipient of numerous awards and was included in The Independent on Sunday's list of Top Ten Living UK Playwrights. In 2000, he was Arts Council England's first recipient of The Children's Award for Playwriting for Children and Young People.

He is married to actress Barbara Marten, they have three sons, Theo, Josh and Billy. She met him in the 1980s, while acting in a student pantomime in Birmingham, when they were studying to become teachers.

In July 2013, Mike was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Letters by the University of Nottingham for his work in theatre for young people.

Recent productions include original plays **Bin Men** (AJTC); **A Murder of Crows**, **The Ice Child** (Barnstorm, Ireland); **The Wind in the Willows**, **King Arthur** (York Theatre Royal); **Jack and the Beanstalk**, **Sleeping Beauty**, (West Yorkshire Playhouse); **The York Mysteries** (York Theatre Royal); **Blood and Chocolate** (Pilot/Slung Low) and **Rapunzel** (Tutti Frutti - World Congress of Children's Theatre, Warsaw).

Other credits include: **Wild Dreams** (Theatre du Rond-Point, Paris); **Twin Stars** (Unicorn Theatre); **La Nuit Electrique** (**Electric Darkness** for La Comedie de Valence); **Who Cares?** (Region Theatre, Vaxjo, Sweden); **Whiter Than Snow**, **Fittings: The Last Freak Show** (Graeae); **The Snow Queen** - a new version for European Capital of Culture, Cork City (Graffiti, Ireland); **The Little Mermaid** (York Theatre Royal and Polka Theatre); **Swan Songs** (Sherman Theatre Wales); **Boy With a Suitcase** (SNAP); **The Gardener** (AJTC and Nottingham Playhouse); **Of Mice and Men**, **Treasure Island** (Mind the Gap); **Three Wise Monkeys** (Hiccup Theatre); **The Boy Who Cried Wolf**, **The Princess and the Pea** (Tutti Frutti) and **Red Riding Hood** (Engine House).

His adaptation of **The Railway Children** won the 2011 Olivier Award for Best Entertainment.



THE CAST

The Waterbury Family:

Roberta ("Bobbie")

Peter

Phyllis

Mother

Father

Ruth the Cook

The Butler

The Between-Maid

1st Visiting Gentleman

2nd Visiting Gentleman

Albert Perks

Mrs Viney

Doctor Forrest M.D.

Mrs Nell Perks

The Old Gentleman

Mr Szezcpansky

The District Superintendent

1st Railway Worker

2nd Railway Worker

Jim

Ensemble

Ensemble

Georgia Maddock

Jamie King

Portia Dodds

Jane Holdship

Jonathan Black

Beverley Stuart-Cole

Martin Deighton-Brown

Lindsey Barker

Nick Sample

John Dudley

John Dudley

Beverley Stuart-Cole

Jonathan Black

Lindsey Barker

Nick Sample

Martin Deighton-Brown

Martin Deighton-Brown

Jonathan Black

Ash Patel

Alexander Day

Samantha Wood

Ash Patel

SETTING

Scene 1:

All other scenes:

The Waterbury Family Home, London

In and around Oakworth, Yorkshire

*including The Railway Station, "The Three Chimneys",
and the rolling countryside overlooking the railway line.*



CREATIVE TEAM

Director	Jonathan Barker
Set Design	The Garrick Team
	from an original concept by Ian Scullion
Original Music Composition	Mark Goggins
Heads of Stage	Mark McEwan Paul Simpson
Stage Manager	Mark McEwan
Assistant Stage Managers	Helen Sallabank
	Sandra Ash Dave Jones
	Danielle Garcia
Lighting & Sound	James Merrington
Properties	Christine Chrystal
	Claire Eddleston-Rose
Rehearsal Prompt	Anne O'Reilly
Costume Coordinator	Mike Shaw
Costumes	Charades Costumes, St. Helens
Production Carpenter	Steve Cox
Assisted by	Trevor McKie
Scenic Artist	Mandy Cooke
Assisted by	Barry Purves Rob Robinson
	Faith Edwards Charlotte Leigh
	Jane Milner Ruth Hetherington
	Holly Cooper
Set Construction	Paul Simpson Trevor McKie
	Barry Borgen Alan Jones
	Nick McKie Mark McEwan
	John Murphy Andy McHugh
	Dave Bailey Cliff Mills
	Steve Cox Bob Green
	Alistair Duffy Drew Lightfoot
Rehearsal & Show Photography	Martin Ogden
Publicity & Programme Design	Nick Sample

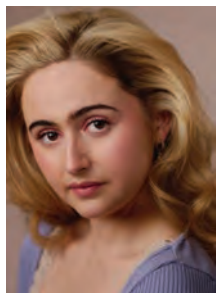
The details above were believed to be correct at the time of going to print, but could have been subject to change...

Without our incredibly dedicated, enthusiastic team of **Volunteers and Staff**, whose sheer hard work often goes unnoticed, Altrincham Garrick Playhouse would simply be unable to continue providing such a range of top-quality productions for everyone enjoy.

With their continuous commitment to excellence, we owe them all a huge debt of gratitude. Thank You!

Thank You!

THE COMPANY

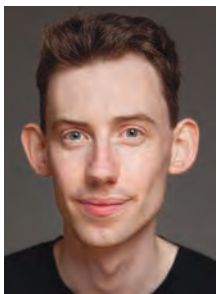


Georgia Maddock

Roberta ("Bobbie")

Georgia is delighted to be making her debut at the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse as **Roberta (Bobbie)** in **The Railway Children**. She holds a First Class degree in Acting and Performance from Sheffield Hallam University and has performed in a range of stage productions including **Pericles** at the Crucible Theatre and the Prague Fringe Festival, **Arcadia**, and **Hamlet**. She has trained

with The National Youth Theatre, Identity School of Acting and is currently training at The Work with David Witts – continuing to develop her practice through regular casting workshops and collaborative performance.



Jamie King

Peter

Jamie has previously appeared at the Garrick Playhouse in **Queers**, **Dick Whittington**, **Shakespeare in Love**, **Our Town**, **A Christmas Carol**, **Sleeping Beauty**, **Let the Right One In**, **Jane Eyre**, **Jack and the Beanstalk**, **Waiting for Godot**, **A Taste of Honey**, **Voices of Manchester** and **Goldilocks and the Three Bears** and **Quiz**.

They studied Creative Writing at the University of Bangor, where they appeared in **Romeo and Juliet**,

Macbeth, **The Crucible**, **The Importance of Being Earnest**, **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (excerpt), **The Tempest** (excerpt), **A Doll's House**, **This is a Play** and **Blackadder the Third**. Other theatre includes: **Suddenly Last Summer**, **High School Musical** (Pontio Arts), **Hindle Wakes**, **The Two Gentlemen of Verona**, **Dancing at Lughnasa** (Wilmslow Green Room Theatre), **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (Anti-matter Productions), **Amalgamations Vol. 6: Bloom** (Niamos), **QI: Queer Improv** (Hoopla Impro Theatre), and workshops of **Clothes Swap** (Green Carnation Company) and **Sunny Girl** (HER Productions/New Adelphi Theatre).

They have co-directed **Talking Heads** (Bangor University), wrote and co-directed **The Peace Talks** (short film), co-wrote **12 Scenes of Christmas** (Liberty Rep), and wrote **The Resignation Speech** (Questors Theatre and Etcetera Theatre).

Having loved Edith Nesbit's books (and trains!) as a child, Jamie is honoured to be stepping into the very special world of **The Railway Children** with this wonderful cast and crew.



Portia Dodds

Phyllis

Portia has been an active Garrick member for many years, having been a GAPA girl from its inception in 2003! Her first main stage production at the Garrick was **Babes in the Wood** in 2004 as **Rosie**, and she was later cast in **The Wind in the Willows** as a **Rabbit** and a **Mouse**. In 2019, Portia was cast in the Main Stage production of **Bronte** (Anne Bronte, March) and then in the Garrick Studio production of **Swallow** (Anna, September).

In 2023 she played **Dean** in **'Pronoun'** in the Studio. Portia has also been active with sound and lighting for **Fatal Attraction** (January 2020) as well as being 'in the box' for various film productions.

Elsewhere Portia has been in productions at the Altrincham Little Theatre: **Hysteria** (Jessica, March 2022), **Funny About Love** (Lara, September 2022) and **A Month of Sundays** (Nurse Wilson, February 2023). She has also performed with Sale and Altrincham Musical Theatre in **'Allo 'Allo (Mimi la Bonq**, March 2026).

Outside of the theatre, Portia is an active British wildlife photographer, and she has also written 5 novels and 3 plays. She enjoys walking along canals and reading, sometimes simultaneously!



Jane Holdship

Mother

Jane is delighted to be appearing in **The Railway Children** in her first production at the Garrick. She has worked in education for over 20 years, specialising in Performing Arts and supporting young people in developing their theatrical and storytelling skills.

Although her career has focused on teaching, Jane's love of theatre has always been central to her work, and she is thrilled to be returning to the stage with such a talented company.

She would like to thank the cast and creative team for their warmth and support – and her family for always encouraging her to say yes to new adventures.



Jonathan Black

Father / Doctor Forrest M.D. / 1st Railway Worker

Jonathan started his Garrick journey back in 1981 appearing in **Privates On Parade**. Through the years other appearances have included **Juno and The Paycock**, **A View from The Bridge**, **Whipping It Up**, **Out of Order**, **Shady Business**, **Anne of A Thousand Days**, **Pack of Lies**, **Run For Your Wife**, **And Then There Were None**, **Noises Off**, **Two into**

One, **Gaslight**, **It Runs in the Family**, **Wolf Hall**, **Business Affairs**, **The Lady In The Van**, **House of Ghosts**, **A Christmas Carol – A Ghost Story** and **The Audience**. Most recently, Jonathan made his Garrick Studio debut last year as **Captain Lancey** in **Translations**, and he has just finished a run as **Chief Inspector Craddock** in Mike Shaw's production of **The Mirror Crack'd**. Following **The Railway Children**, Jonathan is set to achieve a lifetime's ambition, having just been cast as **Professor Henry Higgins** in the Garrick's June staging of the classic musical **My Fair Lady**. Don't Miss It!

Jonathan has also been lucky enough to experience working in TV productions such as the **The Falklands Play**, **Brookside**, **Emmerdale**, **Hollyoaks**, **Coronation Street**, **Cold Feet**, **Clocking Off** and **A Touch of Frost**. Jonathan lives in Hale with his wife and children, who are regular supporters and sometimes performers at The Garrick Playhouse.



Beverley Stuart-Cole

Ruth the Cook / Mrs. Viney

Beverley has been a member of the Garrick for 38 years, and has enjoyed a wide variety of roles in that time. Favourites include **Dotty Otley** in **Noises Off**, **Elsie Tanner** and **Bet Lynch** in **Corrie!**, **Alice** in **Closer**, **The Girl** in **Veronica's Room**, **Mrs Birling** in **An Inspector Calls**, **Lily St Regis** in **Annie**, **Mrs Robinson** in **The Graduate**, **Viola** in **Twelfth Night**, **Helena** in **A Midsummer Nights' Dream**, **Viv** in **Jumpers for**

Goalposts, **The Stage Manager** in **Our Town**, **Anne** in **The Father**, **Mrs Fairfax** in **Jane Eyre** and the **Fairy** in several of our fabulous pantomimes. Studio credits include **Deborah** in **A kind of Alaska**, **The Blonde** in **Hitchcock Blonde**, **Sylvia** in **The Thrill of Love**, **Truvy** in **Steel Magnolias** and **Bette Davis** in **Bette and Joan**.

She has also appeared in many of our fabulous pantomimes as the fairy. She is thrilled to be performing in this wonderful adaptation of **The Railway Children** with such a lovely cast!



Martin Deighton-Brown

*The Butler / Mr Szezcpansky /
The District Superintendent*

Martin has been involved in theatre for many years and has played many roles varying from the serious to the downright bizarre. At Altrincham Garrick he got his first roles as *The Emperor of China* in *Aladdin* followed by some rather strange roles in *Peter Pan!* (*A shadow and a mermaid*, to name a couple).

Also at Altrincham Garrick he played *Baldeo*, a mean character in the original version of *The Jungle Book*, and *Heywood* in *The Shawshank Redemption*. Following that he joined an ensemble cast of 12 (playing 70 characters) in *A Christmas Carol* where he played (amongst other roles) the flamboyant and loud *Ghost of Christmas Present*. Martin was very excited to be playing a particularly nasty pirate called *Billy Bones* and also *Killigrew the Kind* (don't let the name fool ye!) in *Treasure Island* – which in one performance included a dramatic (and unscripted) exit from the stage when his character was killed off..! His last appearance at the Garrick was as *The Boss* in last year's *Of Mice And Men*.

Martin dedicates a lot of his spare time running a section of the Timperley Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme where he is also training manager. When he's not escaping to the stage he's spends a lot of time "herding cats"!!! While his ducks and chickens may now be quacking and clucking elsewhere, he has a wife, four kids, a dog (who also ignores him!) and an obnoxious cat! (Oh and a therapist!!!)



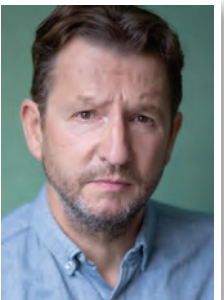
Lindsey Barker

*The Between Maid /
Mrs Nell Perks*

Lindsey joined the Garrick in 2018 as *Caroline Crake* in Agatha Christie's *Go Back For Murder*. Previous acting credits at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse also include appearances in *Jerusalem*, *Playhouse Creatures* (Studio), *People*, *Business Affairs*, *Towards Zero*, *When We Are Married*, *The Lady in the Van*, *Present Laughter*, *Calendar*

Girls – The Musical, *The Sound of Music*, *Witness for the Prosecution*, *Bombshells* (Studio), *The Father*, *The Audience*, and as *Mrs Dorothy Lintott* in the Garrick's most recent staging of Alan Bennett's *The History Boys*. Lindsey's most recent appearance on the main stage was as *Miss Hard-broom* in Easter 2025's production of *The Worst Witch*. Lindsey has also worked in a number of roles behind the scenes on many productions.

Away from the Garrick, Lindsey is a Supporting Artist for television, with appearances in *Happy Valley*, *The Full Monty*, *The Tower*, *Maternal*, *COBRA*, *Brassic*, *Passenger*, *The Stolen Child*, *Dead Hot* and *Lazarus*. Having recently signed with *Nemesis Casting Agency*, Lindsey has since featured in *Coronation Street*, *Run Away*, *After The Flood*, *Hollyoaks* (three times), and she's just finished filming a stint on the next series of *Sherwood*, which will hit the screens in the Autumn...



John Dudley

*Albert Perks /
2nd Visiting Gentleman*

John is making his debut at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse as *Albert Perks*, the *Station Master* in *The Railway Children*, and is absolutely delighted to have been cast in such a fabulous show. John has really enjoyed working with such a welcoming, talented company in this production, even if it has meant riding through some pretty foul winter

weather on his much-loved motorbike to get to rehearsals...

A native of Bolton, John only started his onstage career at the age of 42, but since then he's been making up for lost time, having appeared in a range of plays, thrillers, comedies and musicals at various venues around Bolton, and for the last few years at Wigan Little Theatre. Favourite roles to date have included *Lloyd Boateng* in *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *Roat* in *Wait Until Dark*, *Dad* in the Madness musical *Our House*, and *Mal Beineke* in *The Addams Family*.



Nick Sample

*The Old Gentleman /
1st Visiting Gentleman*

Nick's roles at the Garrick have included *Hector* in our 2009 production of *The History Boys*, *Inspector Goole* in *An Inspector Calls*, *Alfieri* in *A View From The Bridge*, *Cardinal Wolsey* in *Anne of the Thousand Days*, *King George III* in Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III* (NODA 'Best Actor'), *The Mysterious Man* in Sondheim's *Into The Woods*,

André in Charlie Tomlinson's compelling staging of Florian Zeller's *The Father*, and *Sir Winston Churchill* in Mike Shaw's unforgettable production of *The Audience*. His most recent appearance at the Garrick was as *Hugh O'Donnell* in *Translations* in the Studio last June.

Nick's Garrick directing credits include *Bette and Joan*, *The History Boys* (2016), *Wolf Hall* (2017), and in 2023 he both updated and directed *The Importance of Being Earnest*. He's looking forward to returning to the Director's chair next year, for the deliciously funny murder-mystery *Cluedo*.

Elsewhere, Nick has appeared in numerous dramas and comedies (favourite roles have included *King Henry VIII* in *Katherine Howard*, *Alan Turing* in *Breaking The Code* and *Stanley Gardner* in *Caught In The Net*), while he has also directed large-scale Open-Air Shakespeare productions (*Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*) amongst many other shows and plays, including *Up 'n' Under*, *Amadeus*, *Racing Demon*, *Twelfth Night*, *My Mother Said I Never Should*, *The Accrington Pals*, *Oh What A Lovely War* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

In his day job as a graphic designer, Nick has created the publicity and programmes for over 300 different productions... including this one. www.nicksample.co.uk



Ash Patel

2nd Railway Worker / Ensemble

Born in London and raised in Manchester, Ash trained with Manchester Act Up North, and is currently represented by Red Door Management. He has appeared in the hit US sitcoms *Scrubs* and *How I Met Your Mother*, while on the small screen he also played *Kashif Mallik* in *Hollyoaks* and *Colin Campbell* in the BBCs *The Odd Squad*. Ash has also been seen in *Coronation Street*, *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, *Light*, *Snatch*, *Our Girl*, *The A Word*, *No Offence*, and the *McDonalds 'Wedding' advert*... well, you've got to keep earning!

Recent films include Idris Elba's motion picture *Luther: The Fallen Sun*, the short film *The Birthday Girl*, and *Johnny Be Good*, for which he won *Best Supporting Actor* at the *Eastern Film Festival*. Stage credits have included *Leclerc* in *'Allo 'Allo*, *Benedict Hough* in *A Small Family Business*, *Dr Gibbs* in *Our Town*, *Paddy Spooner* in *Quiz*, *Walter Pearce* in *Murder By Design* and a whole host of *Pantos* at The Edge Theatre, Chorlton. Perhaps his greatest achievement, though, is winning *The Weakest Link*!

A talented multi-linguist and musician who plays both piano and guitar, Ash also is a performer of close-up magic. He is delighted to be fulfilling a long-time ambition and appearing at the Altrincham Garrick for the first time, and has loved working with such talented and genuinely lovely people. Hopefully *The Railway Children* will be the first of many productions with us.



Samantha Wood

Ensemble

Samantha was a member of The North Cheshire Operatic Society, appearing in *Carousel*, *South Pacific* and *Half a Sixpence* at The Palace Theatre in Manchester. She recently returned to performing, joining The Altrincham Garrick Show Choir in 2022 as an inaugural member. Since then, she has taken part in *ITV Carols at Christmas*, the *Altrincham Christmas Lights Switch-On*, the *Altrincham Festival Parade*, *Manchester Christmas Markets*, and three incredible concerts at The Garrick. She also appeared in *A Christmas Carol - A Ghost Story* and most recently performed as part of the *Ensemble* in *It's a Wonderful Life*.



Alexander Day *Jim*

Since returning to the stage in 2023, Alexander has performed in a number of productions at Altrincham Garrick Playhouse. His credits include playing *Wally Webb* in *Our Town*, *Goran* in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *Torkel / Ensemble* in *Let The Right One In*.

As a child, Alexander was a member of GAPA and he enjoyed playing roles such as *Gollum* in *The Lauriston Studio Monologues*, *Nathan Detroit* in

Guys & Dolls and *The Sergeant of Police* in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Having performed in the *Children's Ensemble* in 2010's *Dick Whittington and his Wonderful Cat* and in 2024's *Jack and the Beanstalk* as *Jack Trott*, Alexander was thrilled to return to the traditional Garrick pantomime last year, and turning to the dark side as *Ringmaster Heinkel* and *Snot* in *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*.

A talented musician in his own right – he was guitarist in the band of the original production of *SIX!* – Alexander made his debut as part of the production team at the Garrick when he composed an original score for *The Mirror Crack'd*. Previous scores by Alexander include the detective web series *Wenlock & Jones* and the short films *Swan Song* and *Twenty Nothing*. Soundtrack albums for these are available on music streaming platforms.



Jonathan Barker

Director

Jonathan has been acting at the Altrincham Garrick Playhouse for four years and has appeared in *Inspector Morse: House of Ghosts*, *The Laramie Project* in the Lauriston Studio, *Witness for the Prosecution*, *The Girl On The Train*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* and *It's A Wonderful Life*. This is the first production he has directed here. However, during the last two decades

elsewhere he has directed the European première of Mark Twain's *Is He Dead?* as well as productions of *The Comedy of Errors*, *Coram Boy*, *A Few Good Men*, *Our Country's Good*, *The Laramie Project*, *Judgment Day*, *Arthur & George*, *Hot Mikado*, *The Front Page*, *Privates On Parade*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Biloxi Blues* and new plays *Parzival* and *Their Night With Pete*. Other co-directing, choreography and musical-directing work includes *Assassins*, *Follies*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Daisy Pulls It Off*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Oliver!*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor® Dreamcoat*, *Jason and the Argonauts* and *Oh What A Lovely War*.

Jonathan trained professionally as an actor, singer and dancer at Guildford School of Acting and at the London Studio Centre. He has performed at The Royal Festival Hall in London in a production of the musical *Nine* with Jonathan Pryce, and sings on the original London concert cast recording of the show. He also performed in a royal gala performance of *A Chorus Line* in London. As an actor he has appeared as *Theseus* and *Lysander* in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Guildford Castle as well as in productions of *A Doll's House*, *The Rimers Of Eldrich*, *La Ronde*, *When We Are Married*, *Last Tango In Whitby* and *Watch It, Sailor!* Other musicals around the UK include *Barnum*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Guys & Dolls* (all at Bristol Hippodrome), *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (Bristol Old Vic), *La Cage Aux Folles* (Wimbledon Theatre), *Chicago*, *The Good Companions*, *Oklahoma!*, *Brigadoon*, *Calamity Jane*, *The Boy Friend* and *The Gingerbread Man* as well as many musical theatre concerts and cabarets. Last year Jonathan appeared as *Peter* in *Company* at Altrincham Little Theatre with SAMT, for which he received a NODA award nomination. On TV he has appeared in the comedy thriller film *Dead Gorgeous* for Carlton TV and the independent film, *Exhilaration*.

BACKSTAGE

Just a few of the amazing people working tirelessly behind the scenes, and helping to keep *The Railway Children* on the right track and on time...



Anne O'Reilly *Rehearsal Prompt*

Anne has been involved with The Garrick for nearly twenty years. Lately she has gone 'on the book' prompting a vast variety of actors and supporting them in recalling the lines and saying everything in the right order. She has been involved in a wide range of performances most recently the memorable *The History Boys*, the powerful *Oppenheimer*, the hilarious *Bleak Expectations* and the emotional roller coaster

It's A Wonderful Life. Having recently worked on an all-time favourite Agatha Christie with all its twists, turns and red herrings, Anne is enjoying a complete contrast having prompted the joyous rehearsals of *The Railway Children*.



Dave Jones *A.S.M. / Ensemble*

Dave started theatre work as a backstage crew member of Musical Theatre Dunedin (New Zealand) where he became involved in multiple productions including *Me and My Girl*, *Anything Goes*, *Les Misérables*, *Rush!* (World Premiere), *West Side Story* and *42nd Street*, before emigrating to England in 2002.

He continued his backstage crew support with the Garrick in 2006. Around 2016 he moved from Front-of-House work to also supporting in the Bar, acting as Assistant Bar Manager for a number of years.

Since then, Dave has taken on the role of A.S.M., working behind the scenes (and occasionally in them) in many productions, both in the Studio and on the Main Stage.



Sandra Ash *A.S.M. / Ensemble*

Sandra first became involved at the Garrick as one of our front-of-house team, and made her behind-the-scenes debut when she was A.S.M. on our updated staging of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Since then she's also worked backstage on numerous productions including, most recently, *Voices of Manchester* and *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. She's also made it onto the stage on several occasions, especially when she was one of Queen Elizabeth II's dressers in *The Audience*!



Helen Sallabank *A.S.M. / Ensemble*

Helen has previously worked behind the scenes on *Business Affairs*, *My Mother Said I Never Should*, *The Lady in The Van*, *House of Ghosts*, *All My Sons* and *Dick Whittington*, and last year served behind-the-scenes in the Royal Courts of Justice on *Vardy vs Rooney: The Wagatha Christie Trial*. She's delighted to be involved again with such a great company.



Danielle Garcia *A.S.M. / Ensemble*

Danielle's theatre experience began at the Manchester Palace Theatre where she worked as a dresser on the *Miss Saigon* UK Tour, and on subsequent touring productions.

Danielle joined the Garrick Playhouse's Front of House volunteer team in 2022. This is her second role as an A.S.M. and she is delighted to be involved in such an amazing show with an incredibly talented team.

Sunday 5 July 11:00am – 4:00pm

OPEN DAY

So much to see, so much to do!
BE THERE!

*Final details of events and attractions to be confirmed.
Keep visiting our website for more updates.
All proceeds to our CHILL Campaign*

A fabulous, FREE fun-filled day where you can discover the magic of the Garrick by seeing behind the scenes at the theatre while also enjoying a huge variety of other attractions, including:

- ★ Behind-The-Scenes Tours & Displays
- ★ Kids "Get Creative" Stall
- ★ Tombola, Raffles & Prize Draws...
- ★ Main Stage Shows
Garrick Show Choir, GAPPA, Costumes Parade, Excerpts from shows...
- ★ Scripts, Costumes & Props Sales
- ★ Craft Stalls
- ★ Set Designs
- ★ Face Painting
- ★ Volunteering
- ★ Radio Alty
- ★ Refreshments

We need your help to get All Our Ducts In A Row!



Scan and Donate!

We welcome support from individuals, families, local and national businesses.

As a Registered Charity which doesn't receive any public funding from any official organisation, regional or local council, we are extremely grateful for donations of any size.



DAVHVAC

Our theatre is embarking on an ambitious and vital project: installing a modern

Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) System

to ensure every audience member can enjoy performances in all-year-round comfort, with controllable temperatures, improved air quality and better ventilation, while also being energy-efficient and significantly reducing our carbon footprint.

Help us create a theatre where the only thing that takes your breath away is what's happening on the stage!



CHILL
COOL/HEAT IT, LOVE IT

THE WALKS

If you're feeling energetic when the weather is warmer, here are two circular walks which visit various locations seen in the 1970's film of *The Railway Children*. You can even ride the route on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, and also take in some of the locations that inspired the Brontë sisters..!

Being a circular walk there are several places from where the walk can start and finish.

However, for the purpose of this guide the walk information starts at Haworth Railway Station. For the benefit of those who feel unable to walk the full six miles, a shorter walk option of 2.5 miles (4km) down to Oakworth Station also starts at Haworth Station.

The route has been devised to enable the walker to visit the various locations used in the 1970's film *The Railway Children*. Many of these locations are on private land, please help to respect this privacy by keeping to the public rights of way from where points of interest can be seen.

Due to the very nature of the countryside this walk is not suitable for the less mobile, wheelchairs and children in pushchairs.

Walk 1: 6 miles (10km)

- 1** From Haworth Station forecourt cross the main road via the crossing point and turn right to walk along Station Road, passing the engine sheds, fire station and war memorial on the right before turning left up Brow Road. After a short distance look out for the footpath sign on the right. Follow this well trodden footpath across the fields, through farmyards and passing Oxenhope water treatment works, following the Bridgehouse Beck and Worth Valley Railway almost to Oxenhope Station.
- 2** Nearing Oxenhope Station, at the end of a narrow walled path, the footpath divides, to the left, over the narrow metal footbridge, the path will take you to Oxenhope Station. Our route is to the right over the stile in the stone wall and across the railway line, bearing left uphill to a second stile in the stone wall.

Once over, a steep climb to the top of the field takes you to Bents House, better known as the Three Chimneys, the Yorkshire home of the railway children, which can be seen behind the trees and stone wall on your left. To continue, follow the wall round the side of the Three Chimneys through the stile at the side of a gate to the rear of the building, to find the stone gap stile which "Perks" had difficulty negotiating whilst delivering to the Three Chimneys.

- 3** Do not go through the stile but turn right up the track at the rear of Bents House onto a tarmac road, Marsh Lane, here turn left, cross over the road and turn right up Old Oxenhope Lane until you reach Old Oxenhope Farm on your right. At the rear of the farmhouse turn right into the farmyard then immediately left by the water trough and over the stile into the field. Continue uphill keeping the stone wall on the left. The footpath goes straight ahead through and over several stiles heading for the hamlet of Hole.

- 4** On reaching the hamlet of Hole bear left up the slight incline walking between the hedge and the drystone wall, passing the houses of the hamlet down below to your right. Where the path meets a surfaced access road, cross over diagonally to the right to go through the stile next to the street light in the wall on your left. Continue by walking straight ahead towards the large detached house which can be seen across the fields. On reaching the garden wall of the house turn right downhill through the stile walking between a doubled wall path,

follow this path, (grass at first then stone flagged) passing a car park on the right and through a metal kissing gate into Haworth churchyard. Here take a left turn up three steps, in front of you can now be seen Brontë Parsonage Museum, the Doctor's house in the film.

- 5** Turn right at the top of the steps to walk along the cobbled path through the churchyard to a second metal gate out onto Church Street. Turn right down the stone cobbled street where in front of you, the building at the top of the stone steps was the Post Office and General Store where the three children were given a pram amongst other gifts for "Mr Perks" birthday.

Continue down Church Street bearing left passed the Kings Arms Public House to emerge at the top of Haworth Main Street. Turn right to walk down Main Street looking at the many shops seen in the film when the children were collecting birthday gifts for Mr Perks. In particular, the Tourist Information Centre was transformed into the Butchers Shop and lower down Main Street on the right hand side can be found Lodge Street. The corner house, No.2, was the iron-





mongers / cobblers shop where the children were given a small hand shovel for "Mr Perks".

- 6** Continue down Main Street to the last shop on the left, here opposite The Fleece Public House turn left off Main Street down the lane, signposted to the Railway Station, and cross over the busy main road via the zebra crossing to walk down the cobbled lane (Butt Lane) between Haworth Central Park on the right, and the site of the former recently converted Haworth Infant and Junior Schools on the left. After approximately 183 metres (200 yards) down Butt Lane turn left along the unmade road opposite the side gate into Haworth Park, turning right where the unmade road overlooks the playing fields before bearing left down to a gateway.

Here is where Walk 2 joins the full walk to Oakworth Station.

- 7** Go through the gateway and follow the surfaced footpath diagonally across the field to the right. At the end of the path go through the stile and turn left along the short unmade road onto Mytholmes Lane. Turn right, downhill for approximately 1/4 of a

mile (0.4km) following the main road to where it levels out in the valley bottom and becomes Providence Lane. Continue on for a further 183 metres (200 yards), passing a row of cottages on your left and a garage on the right.

Opposite the end of these cottages the route rejoins the footpath by turning right and ascending several stone steps. Walk along for a short distance before stopping near the electricity pylon to look to your right to see the mouth of Mytholmes Railway tunnel where "Jim" the schoolboy injured his leg whilst running in a paper chase.

The embankment on the left hand side of the tunnel mouth is where the landslide was filmed. Below on the railway line in front, the children waved their red flannel petticoats to warn the driver of the 11.29 train of the danger.

Note: It is over fifty five years since the film was made and the trees have

matured so the best views from here are in winter when the trees have lost their foliage.

Continue along the footpath as it bears left uphill to a metal kissing gate; go through and across the field to a second kissing gate out onto Station Road. Turn right downhill for a short distance to Oakworth Station, the Railway Children Station.

- 8** Continue the walk by crossing over the level crossing, the first house on the left, Station Cottage, was Mr Perks' home. The stone built house next door is of recent origin and did not appear in the film. Follow the road bearing right before passing under the mill building, bearing left and taking care at the blind corner, continue along the road a further 136 metres (150 yards) before turning right off the surfaced road onto the unmade road in front of the Vale Fold cottages which were seen in the film during the paper chase.

Just past these cottages look out for a stile on

your left. Climb over the stile and following the path over a second stile walking next to Bridgehouse Beck, and parallel to the railway line. Continue along the path to look to the right after crossing the small footbridge to see the opposite end of Mytholmes Tunnel. Nearing the end of the path look over the stone wall on the right. The bridge in front of you is a recent replacement of the metal bridge seen at the end of the film under which, on the railway line and embankment, the cast were waving and Roberta writes "The End" on her chalk board.

- 9** At the end of the footpath go through the gap out onto the minor road (Ebor Lane), turn left to follow the road crossing the Ebor Mill Dam before bearing right uphill to join the main Haworth Road. Here turn right and walk down past the shops to Haworth Station from where you started your walk.

Walk 2: 2.5 miles (4km)

From Haworth Station forecourt, walk up the ramp at the side of the railway station buildings and over the footbridge. Immediately over the bridge turn right and walk to the top of the narrow road, bearing left at the top in front of the cottages, then immediately right down the side of the same cottages to a gateway. From here follow the same walk instructions as the full walk (from point 7) marked on both the map and instructions.

Your walk will finish back at Haworth Station.



Oakworth Station

The original walk was produced by The Keighley and Worth Valley Railway and is based on an original idea of Bradford Council's Countryside and Rights of Way Service. Telephone 01274 432666.

For more information, please contact **The Keighley and Worth Valley Railway** at The Railway Station, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ. Telephone: 01535 645214. 24 hour information: 01535 647777. www.kwvr.co.uk

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