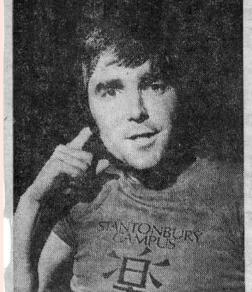


Roy Nevitt and Milton Keynes Theatre

WHAT'S ON · LEISURE · WHAT'S OI

ANOTHER WINNER FROM THE



Roy Nevitt

DRAMA DUO? ROGER Kitchen and Roy Nevitt, the prolific duo who pack out theatres with

their drama documentaries depicting life in our community from days gone by, have come up with another. Sheltered Lives concerns life in Wolverton and New Bradwell during the

Second World War, and once again will be very much a community event. The information comes from the community by way of interviews and research from local newspapers, will be performed by local people of all ages and experience, and will attract an audience that includes many who would never describe themselves as theatra-goes

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The first meeting for anyone wishing to be involved in this, the sixth such play put on by Stantonbury Campus Community Theatre, is Wednesday, September 7.

"We have the proud boast that anyone who wants to be in it, can be," said Roger.

That philosophy led to having 78 people—aged from seven to 70—on stage for their recent production, The Jovial Priest, with a further 25 or so working behind the scenes.

Sheltered Lives, so help back-stage is needed once again.

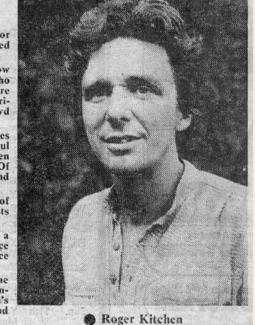
Roger admitted the cast tends to grow as rehearsals progress, because people who protested they had no acting ability are emboldened when they see other inexperi-enced members taking on roles in crowd scenes, and non-speaking parts.

The music and song that accompanies this story is in the capable hands of Paul Clark, a Doctor of Physics at the Open University (who wrote songs for Days Of Pride and Dear Loving Brother Albert) and John Close, who also works at the OU. "We are aiming to recreate the sound of

a band that existed then — and still exists now," said Roger. Music teacher Dave Johnson is getting a group together to imitate the ten-piece Rhythm Aces, which exists as a four-piece

Another authentic touch will be the refreshments when the coffee bar at Stanton-

band today (see story page 15).



Press release in the MK Gazette in Autumn 1983 for the Community Musical Documentary Drama Sheltered Lives

'No one was more surprised than me by the success of my one-act play Too Much Punch For Judy. In its 11-year history, it has been performed nearly 4000 times ... It grew from an idea from Roy Nevitt, Director of Drama at Stantonbury Campus, an innovative secondary school in Milton Keynes. Roy's philosophy to put 'bums on seats' was to serve up plays telling stories from the local community ... 'Dig where you stand' was his motto. Milton Keynes, in the late '70s/early '80s, was a particularly interesting city to test this out. Few of us had lived there for longer than a few months. Roy developed productions which helped the infant city gain a sense of 'self' - and which were incredibly successful at drawing interest from the local community and beyond."

Mark Wheeller, author of 20 plays and musicals, Executive Director of the Arts of Oasis Lord's Hill Academy



'Milton Keynes Theatre is probably the most enjoyable modern theatre I have performed in, encapsulating a modern air as well as masses of character.'

Linda Nolan, star of 'Blood Brothers' at Milton Keynes Theatre

Roy Nevitt...

- Champion of Theatre in Education
- Chairman of Drama Projects Committee of the Arts Council of Great Britain; Chairman of East Midlands Arts Drama Panel, initiator of Buckinghamshire Arts Association; Member of South Arts Drama Panel.
- Director of Drama at Stantonbury Campus, now the largest arts college in Europe.
- Co-founder, with Roger Kitchen, of the Living Archive, Milton Keynes
- Pioneer of Documentary Drama
- Producer of six large-scale community musical documentary plays at Stantonbury Theatre based on local stories from Wolverton and New Bradwell: All Change, Your Loving Brother Albert, Days of Pride, Sheltered Lives, Nellie, The Jovial **Priest**
- Chairman of Milton Keynes Theatre and Gallery Company
- Awarded an Honorary Degree of Master of the Open University

Milton Keynes Theatre...

- opened on 4 October 1999, after 25 years of campaigning
- designed by architects Blonski-Heard
- kicked-started with £20 million National Lottery award with further capital from English Partnerships
- has movable auditorium ceiling, lowered or raised depending on the scale of the production
- accommodates audiences of up to 1400 people.
- has highly advanced technical equipment including induction loops for the hard-of-hearing
- is the most successful theatre outside London
- operated by Ambassador Theatre Group with many varied national productions
- The first drama on the new theatre's stage was a revival of Roy Nevitt's All Change bringing together nearly 1,000 local people, actors, dancers, musicians and backstage staff.

