

Dear Friends,

Welcome to autumn, we hope you have enjoyed the summer and have been able to attend performances and Friends' events. It's been good to see so many of you at our events, especially when we've been able to meet new members.



We must mention two very sad losses which have occurred recently. Firstly, the passing of former Artistic Director Michael Boyd in August. Michael was always very supportive of the Friends. He once told us that his favourite thing about the Friends was walking into the theatre foyer and seeing a smiling welcome from whoever was volunteering on the Information Desk that day – a simple observation, but one which meant a lot.

The second sad news we received was of the passing of one of our members, Jennie Dobson, after a long illness. Jennie was a stalwart at our events, always willing to help, and she could usually be found at the sink doing the washing up afterwards.



Our thoughts are with the families of Michael and Jennie.

Many of you will also be aware of the recent announcement that our Best Friend, Catherine Mallyon, will be leaving her role as Executive Director of the RSC at the end of the year. Catherine has been a strong supporter of the Friends during her 11 years with the company, which we have very much appreciated.

## Upcoming Friends events

### Celebration Lunch: 40 Years of the Friends

**PACCAR Room, Royal Shakespeare Theatre**  
**Sunday 26 November, 1pm**

The Friends were founded 40 years ago, and we feel this is something we should mark in a special way. We have arranged for a delicious buffet-style lunch to celebrate the occasion. It will be lovely to meet as many of you as possible to enjoy a meal together and reminisce about past productions and events.

As part of the celebration, everyone will have the opportunity to tour the backstage area of what promises to be a spectacular Christmas show, *The Box of Delights*, taking a close-up look at some of the behind-the-scenes magic.

Early booking for this event is advised. If you have any dietary requirements, please contact Penny Kirkwood and not the Box Office.

Don't forget to bring cash for the anniversary raffle – there will be prizes to be won!

**Booking opens on 16 October and closes on Thursday 16 November, after which no refunds or exchanges may be made**

**PLEASE NOTE: EARLY END TO BOOKING PERIOD**

**Tickets (to include wine/soft drinks) Friends/Patrons £25, Guests £28**



## In Conversation: Raymond Coulthard

**Stratford Methodist Church  
Friday 2 February, 4pm**

By the time you receive this newsletter, many of you will have seen the visiting production of *The Merchant of Venice 1936* which, following its sell-out run in the autumn, will be returning after Christmas, and this gives us the opportunity to welcome Raymond Coulthard to meet with the Friends.

Raymond is playing Antonio and Arragon in this production, but he will be familiar to many for his previous roles with the RSC in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Measure for Measure* and *Heresy of Love* as well as an extensive list of roles in television and on film.



Raymond Coulthard

**Booking opens on 16 October and closes on Wednesday 31 January**

**Tickets £6 for Friends/Patrons, £7 for Guests and £3 for under 25s**

**Tickets for the above can be booked online or by contacting the RSC Box Office on 01789 331111**



Photo by Sara Beaumont | c | RSC

## Coffee Afternoon

**Riverside Cafe, Royal Shakespeare Theatre  
Friday 15 December, 2:30-4pm**

Valerie and Penny will be at the Riverside Cafe to welcome anyone who fancies a break from their Christmas shopping and would like to join us for a chat. No need to book – just get yourself something from the cafe and come and meet with us.

**Penny Kirkwood**

**01242 581883**

[pj.kirkwood@btinternet.com](mailto:pj.kirkwood@btinternet.com)

**Valerie Thompson**

**01789 204381**

[valerie.thompson123@btinternet.com](mailto:valerie.thompson123@btinternet.com)

The work of the RSC is supported by the Culture Recovery Fund

The Headline sponsor of *The Box Of Delights* is Pragnell

The *Box Of Delights* is supported by Season Supporter Charles Holloway

The *Fair Maid of the West* is generously supported by the RSC Friends

The RSC Acting Companies are generously supported by The Gatsby Charitable Foundation



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**