

Brassed Off 2008

“Elephants, such big buggers.

They stare at you as if they know everything.

Like God.

Maybe they do.....”(1)

Do not worry dear readers, this is not a natural history lesson, the above is part of a soliloquy which is etched on the memory of this writer for all time!

Back to the start. In November 2007 The Band were approached by Lesley Bates, of Studio Theatre, to supply the Brass part of the stage version of the film *Brassed Off*. November soon became April and sixteen players were pressed into service to undertake the project. The actors who had to ‘play’ came to band practice to get a feel of what it was like to be in a Brass Band and readily joined in. Danny, AKA Dave, could not quite get the hang of conducting and early rehearsals, and more than one performance, were more than a bit scary when he decided to take the music at his tempo! Two weeks of intense rehearsals and we were ready to go. You players will know how it is to go on stage once for a concert but we had to go on stage some six times with maybe 5,10,15 or 20 minutes between each ‘performance’. It was the biggest production that Studio Theatre had undertaken and backstage was manic. Men and women changing all over the place, not seen so much flesh in all my life!

Six sell out performances and record bar takings (!) meant that this was one of the most successful productions that Studio Theatre had ever had.

As this, somehow, became my project, may I record a big ‘Thanks’ to the players who so ably joined in, Roland and Fred, guests Jo (Michelmersh), Di (Shrewton), Matt, Garry, Greg, Tony, Emma (what day is it?), Ant, Peter Tanner, Laura, Kevin, Stuart and Linda and Ann, who got dragged in as assistant stage manager to send us on stage at the right time. The good humour and patience of the cast and management must also be recognised. Thanks folks.

“.....But I’ve wanted to see elephants since I were a kid.

Not behind bars.

I just want to go to Africa before I die

and talk to an elephant.” (1)

The Really Old Codger

(1) Quotation from *Brassed Off* recognised as the work of The Authors.