

# CODSWALLOP!

CELEBRATING CODS' 100TH YEAR!

JULY 2020

ARABIAN  
NIGHTS

PRISCILLA,  
QUEEN OF THE  
DESERT

SURVEY

PENNY ON  
LOCKDOWN

CODS  
FINANCES

BACK  
PAGE

CODS

Cianbrook Operatic  
& Dramatic Society  
1920 – 2020



# CONTENTS

<u>CHAIRMAN'S NOTES</u>	3
<u>PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT</u>	4 - 6
<u>CODS 2020 SURVEY</u>	7
<u>SURVEY ACTIONS</u>	8
<u>ARABIAN NIGHTS PUPPET PREVIEW</u>	9
<u>A NOTE FROM HATCH</u>	10
<u>COVID-19 IMPACT ON CODS FINANCES</u>	11
<u>PENNY ON LOCKDOWN!</u>	12 - 13
<u>NOTICES</u>	14
<u>OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY</u>	15
<u>THE BACK PAGE</u>	



## CODS FACEBOOK GROUP

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## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Hello Luvvies and Techies,

I hope you are all managing to be positive about our current situation and that we can all get back to our beloved theatre soon.

In the meantime, your CODS newsletter arrives as always, with information and details of the society for your perusal. I am sure that you will already be aware of the exciting plans afoot for the beginning of our second century but I will sum them up here!



Firstly, after a revamp of meetings and my plea in the last newsletter for members to join the committee, I am delighted to announce that we have four new faces helping to run the society. I would like to welcome four new committee members: Andy Clarke, Charlotte Fillmore, Louisa Nelson-Chambers and Sharon Pickles.

As far as life after lockdown is concerned, our current plans are as follows:

**Sing 100** (perhaps it should now be *Sing 101*) will take place as soon as possible. Alison is monitoring the situation and will resurrect the show however and wherever it is safe to do so.

**Arabian Nights** will simply be postponed until we are able to rehearse and perform. We are aiming for the early Summer but again we will keep you in the loop about any proposed changes.

The exciting news in this newsletter is about the 2021 musical slot. We obviously had to cancel Kipps for this October, but having tried, unsuccessfully recently to secure the rights for several modern, exciting and popular shows, I have recently been granted **Priscilla, Queen of the Desert** with all the accompanying fabulous costumes and popular songs. The rest of the committee, including our new members have selected this as our 2021 musical and, although there is a year to go before we even audition, excitement is building! Louisa has agreed to be Assistant Director, Sharon has started dreaming up costumes and we have enthusiastic make-up artists practising their Ru Paul designs already. Please see information later in Codswallop and get in touch if you'd like to be involved in preparations or if you need any further information.

Please keep your eyes on our website and our Facebook page and look out for new methods of keeping in touch in these strange times.

I look forward to seeing you all as soon as possible and I wish you all the very best .

With love,

Annie x

# PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT - THE MUSICAL

**Queen's Hall Theatre, Cranbrook – October half-term 2021  
(dates tbc)**

**Here's all you need to know about our 2021 musical -  
Auditions next Spring**



# PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT - THE MUSICAL

## **SYNOPSIS**

Based on the smash-hit movie, PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT is the heart-warming, uplifting adventure of three friends, Tick, Bernadette and Adam, a glamorous Sydney-based performing trio who agree to take their show to the middle of the Australian outback. They hop aboard a battered old bus (nicknamed Priscilla) searching for love and friendship and end up finding more than they ever imagined. With a dazzling array of outrageous costumes and a hit parade of dance floor favourites including "It's Raining Men," "I Will Survive," "Hot Stuff," "Boogie Wonderland," "Go West," "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun," and "I Love The Nightlife," this wildly fresh, colourful and funny musical is a journey to the heart of FABULOUS!

## **CAST**

**7 female, 9 male, and 1 boy featured roles**

**Opportunities for featured casting in the ensemble.**

Adam (Felicia)	Lead – young man - drag artiste
Bob	Lead - Older male
Bernadette	Lead – Older male – transexual
Tick (Mitzi)	Lead – approx. 40s – drag artiste
Jimmy	Local (originally Aboriginal character) any age
3 Divas	Female singers, good voices, able to hold a line
Miss Understanding	Compere in nightclub – drag artiste, any age
Cynthia	Bob's Thai wife – sings and does a 'turn' with ping-pong balls!
Frank	Prejudiced thug, any age
Marion	Tick's wife 35/40 ish
Farrah	Drag artiste – any age
Young Bernadette	Dream sequence - sings
Shirley	Bar owner – any age - sings
Benji	Young boy – son of Tick – under 12 years
Ensemble	Male and female - these appear in many of the songs, lots to do!

Many of the drag queen vocals can be lip synced, some can be sung, depending on casting.

## **MUSICAL NUMBERS**

Most numbers are group songs - if the drag queens are singing, they are usually accompanied by the 3 divas who are major players.

There is lots more work for the ensemble in the stage show than in the film and this is the main draw for the cast.

You'll see from the list below that it's all rather stylised and the company turn up in most musical numbers.

# PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT - THE MUSICAL

Here is a list of who sings what:

It's Raining Men	Company
What's Love Got to Do With It	Miss Understanding and divas
Don't Leave Me This Way	Company
Venus	Company Felicia (Adam)
Go West	Company
I Say a Little Prayer	Tick and Divas
I Love the Nightlife	Company
True Colours	3 Queens
Sempre Libera	Adam (Felicia)
Color My World	Company
I Will Survive	Company
Thank God I'm a Country Boy	Company
A Fine Romance	Young Bernadette
Shake Your Groove Thing	3 Queens and divas
Pop Muzik	Company
Girls Just Want to Have Fun	Felicia (Adam) /divas
Hot Stuff	Queens and divas, then Company
MacArthur Park	Queens and Divas
Boogie Wonderland	Company
Always On My Mind	Tick and Benji then Company
We Belong	Company
Finale	Company

**Dancing requirements and difficulty** - this will be adjusted according to the abilities of those cast. Dancing can be as simple or as complicated as necessary.

**Possible Crew** – Would you like to be involved?

I will need a stage manager, a production secretary, a MD, a choreographer as well as crew for set building, sound, lighting, wardrobe, wigs, make up and props – though I've already had lots of enthusiastic volunteers for some of these roles. Please get in touch if you'd like to help -

[annie.hatch33@gmail.com](mailto:annie.hatch33@gmail.com)

Sooooooooo exciting!

Annie x

## CODS 2020 SURVEY

Thanks to everyone who responded to our recent survey. We very much appreciate the time, thought and effort you have taken into helping the Committee move the Society forward and to secure its' future for the next 100 years!

The good news is that there is a lot that you currently love about the Society:

Ease of making new friends, the camaraderie, excellent facilities at Queens Hall, the many talented members, seeing the younger ones doing their stuff, the social aspects and the professional productions that we all put on.

One of the emerging themes from the survey was the type and variety of shows the Society puts on – many members may not be aware but Directors need to pitch for shows and there is also a controlled limited availability of shows and unfortunately not all of those you would like to do are available – but the selection Committee is listening and always open to chat about potential shows and to pitches.

The Committee has been reviewing pitches for next year as we speak - watch this space!

You felt that the Society needs to promote itself and the shows to a wider audience for example on Facebook, Instagram and other channels. We are delighted that Sharon Pickles has agreed to help us with this and has started doing just that already!

The absolutely vital off-stage tasks and activities was another area of concern. It was felt that many more members and cast need to get actively involved and take responsibility, These areas are just as important as the on-stage activities, and increased appreciation and respect should be given to those who carry out these tasks to allow others to shine on stage. It is something that the Committee will continue to focus on with directors and cast members.

Jane Hurt - Board & Social Secretary

***Thank you once again - we really do value your input***

## CODS 2020 SURVEY - ACTIONS

The survey has helped the committee focus on some of the things that are important to us all, committee and membership alike here are some of the suggestions already acted upon;

### **More interesting, more modern shows please!**

Amateur groups can only put on shows where the rights are available, so it's sometimes tricky to match what we'd like to do with what is possible. When we realised that most of our 2020 shows would be postponed or cancelled we took the opportunity to re-look at the October musical and asked for new pitches.

As a result we will now be staging 'Priscilla, Queen of the Desert the Musical' in October 2021.

### **Committee Meetings take too long!**

YES! Some months are better than others and everything we talk about we (mostly) do need to discuss but the length of meetings is a sticking point for those of us who are on the committee and also for some who were on the committee previously. So, Annie has suggested and we have all agreed a much slimmed down meeting, reports ahead of time with matters arising ONLY to be discussed. A set finishing time with any matters not discussed to either be carried over to the next meeting or otherwise sorted out separately.

### **CODS Needs a Change of Leadership!**

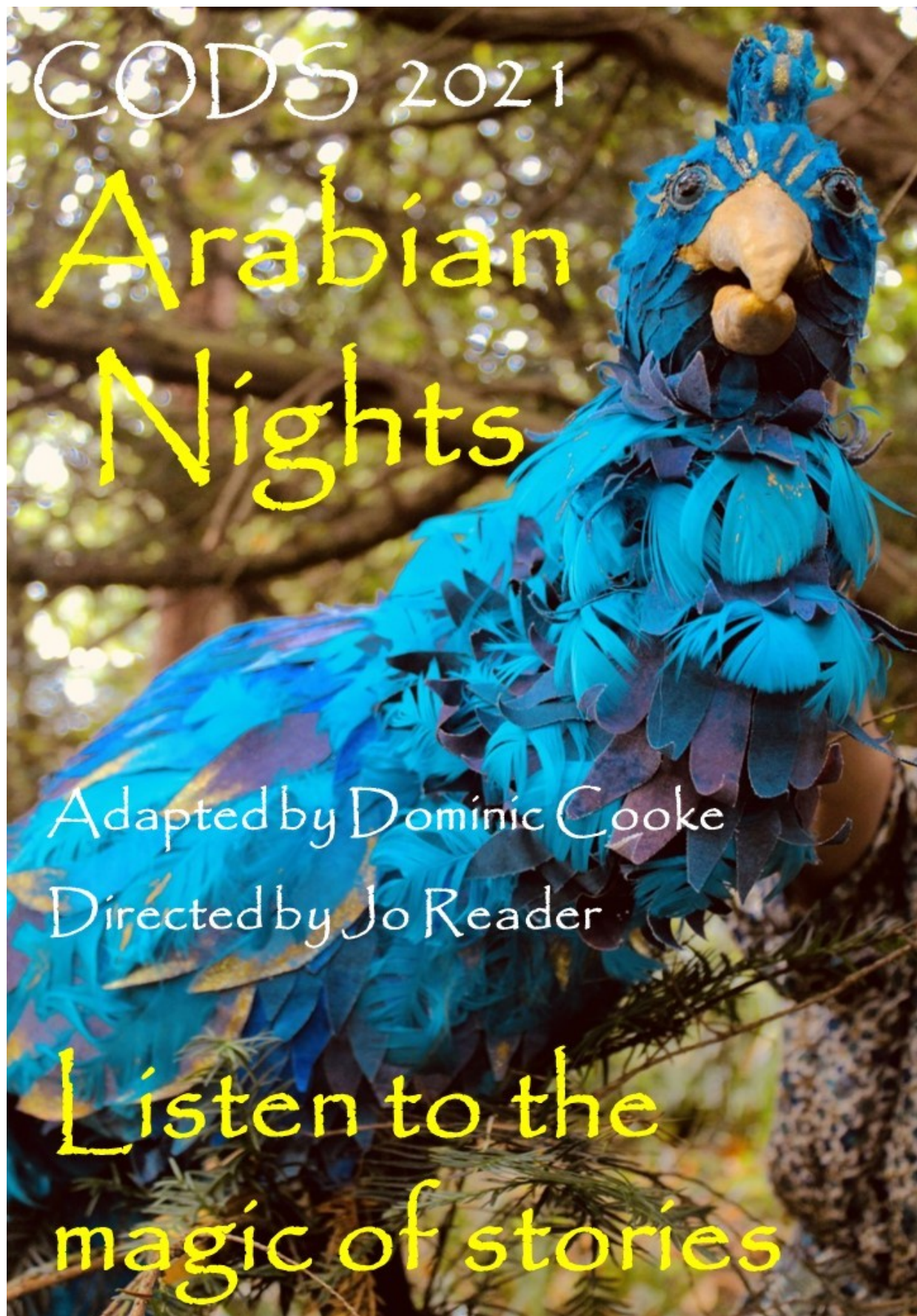
This happens gradually anyway, with committee members stepping down sometimes or changing roles. We always try our best and sometimes can't please everyone!

That being said there are changes afoot! Hatch will be stepping down by the time of the next AGM. We have also approached several committed members to co-opt them into vacancies on the current committee.

A huge welcome to; **Louisa Nelson-Chambers, Sharon Pickles, Andy Clarke and Charlotte Fillmore.**

We are all a part of CODS because we love what we do for the society, to help our friends and to enjoy it! If there is ever anything that you think needs to be different please get in touch with a committee member.

## ARABIAN NIGHTS - PUPPET PREVIEW



## A MESSAGE FROM HATCH....

Prompted by lockdown and by some of the responses to our survey I have been considering how best I can continue helping CODS and still enjoy that part of my life!

I have discussed this with the rest of the committee and have decided that I will be stepping down from the committee and stepping back from my other roles within the society. Right at the moment there is probably no urgency to do this for me. I will definitely leave the committee at the next AGM but could leave earlier if someone comes forward to take over as the Honorary Secretary.

So would you like to take on any of the following roles?

**Honorary Secretary** - you would need to be part of the executive committee. The role includes; Support the committee in all its deliberations, assist other committee officers, promote the society, secretarial support, maintain membership list. Issue guidelines and duties to show directors, send out newsletter to members, invite VIPs to productions. Co-administrator of ticketsource website.

**Props Master.** Responsible for our props store at Flishinghurst. To either help a shows props person, or be the shows props person. This person to get a props list from a shows director, discuss this list with the director go through the store to source props along with borrowing, purchasing or having made any other props, discussing any costs. Also to be available at least for show week to (possibly also earlier rehearsals) to organise props for each rehearsal and show, handing them to cast members or placing them on set.

**Programme Editor.** In discussion with director and others, organise content of the programme (via MS Publisher or similar). Forward to director and committee for ongoing error checking, agree number to be printed and forward MS Publisher and all other files to printer to arrange printing and delivery.

**Newsletter Editor.** Agree deadlines and release dates with committee (mainly chair) request content (committee and members) and organise via MS Publisher or similar. PDF version to committee for error checking/approval. Once approved PDF to Hon Sec (if different person) to email to membership. Hon Sec or Editor to print and post newsletter to snail mail members.

Lee Hatcher - Honorary Secretary

## COVID-19 IMPACT ON CODS FINANCES

Having just received the 2019 accounts back from McCabe Ford Williams – who I must thank again for their commitment during this difficult time – I felt it might be a good idea to update you all on our finances.

Like almost every other part of society, CODS has been impacted by the coronavirus situation. Fortunately, we were in a reasonably healthy position financially beforehand, particularly following the Centenary Meal and because we had not already paid for rehearsal space and other items that we aren't able to use. Any commitments to this year's shows – for example the rights and puppets for Arabian Nights – can be carried over and re-used when we are able to restart performances.

So we are left with needing to cover the usual fixed costs of rental for Flishinghurst and possibly the Gray Room, as well as insurance and things like the website that we can't avoid. These will be between £2000-3000 – which will leave a significant hole in our balance if we have no income to cover it -we would normally rely on membership fees and the pantomime to do this.

Thank you to all of those members who have continued to pay their subscriptions in these difficult times and if anyone else who has not renewed their membership wishes to do so the details of the bank account are below. As a reminder, following this year's virtual AGM, we are no longer accepting any new monthly payments, so the full subscription is due.

As always, happy to answer any questions

Stay safe and patient

Glyn Roberts

Cranbrook Operatic and Dramatic Society

NatWest Bank,

High Street, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 3EJ.

Account No :30096669 Sort Code: 60-06-18

# PENNY ON LOCKDOWN!

While we can't, for now, get back to the Queens Hall for rehearsals and our shows there is still lots that we can do to get our AmDram fix! I hope it might be useful to share with you what I have been doing online theatre wise during the lockdown.

All of these courses have been with Professional theatre actors / practitioners / Speech and vocal coaches / Props and prosthetic designers and constructors.

**Vocal techniques** - lots of exercises and guidance as to how to use the voice

**Play writing** - a short script, and how to know your characters

**Acting for the Screen** - how it is different from acting for the stage

**How to spot a fake American accent**

**Stage Management** and the role of the DSM and ASM (have done lots on this over the years)

**Mask making**

**Puppetry** (I did a week's long course on this a while ago)

**Production guidelines**

**Society organisation and legal aspects thereof**

**Dance**

**Costume design and recycling**

Every day since March 18th I have also been involved in activities that have been of a creative nature, with the Director of NODA Summer school and some professional theatre practitioners.

A picture is posted and we imagine we are one of the characters in it. We write a short piece of dialogue.

We change the outcomes of well known stories by altering an action that would do this e.g. "No Romeo, I am not going to meet with you tonight. There is a law in this country that forbids it and I am busy with my mates and washing my hair."

We describe an item as if it were a person.

We describe us as if we were an animal

## PENNY ON LOCKDOWN!

Someone starts a story and we continue it: The night was dark as he gazed into the distance, standing still at the top of the cliffs, and all that could be heard was the crashing of the waves. Lee turned round expecting to see ..... (Next person carries on etc)

A discussion about Proverbs

A picture of an object - what is it, what could it be?

Writing a short paragraph describing an object e.g. a pencil

Writing a brief passage inspired from a song by Abba, The Beatles

We have written short monologues, we have filmed ourselves using our eyes, we have done so much!

I am also taking part in courses in August doing Costume, Stage management, Sound, Design and Accents. I am going to be busy!

There are lots of courses online, including at NODA;

(<http://www.noda.org.uk/training>) - have a look around, share what you find and what you do on our Facebook group;

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/cranbrookods/>)

Have fun!

Penny

## NOTICES

### BARBARA GRINSTEAD

Longer standing members might be sad to hear the news that Barbara Grinstead has recently passed away. Barbara was the very supportive wife of Geoffrey Grinstead who was a stalwart member of CODS especially during the 1960's, 70's and 80's. Geoffrey appeared on stage and off stage for CODS, also directing many plays and musicals. Barbara was always there at his side.

### CODS STILL NEEDS AN ARCHIVIST

We would love someone to take over the organisation of CODS' archives. We have 100 years of information, most of which has already been filed in plastic boxes. Posters and photographs of shows from the past few years however are waiting to be added, and we need someone who can continue to keep our records up to date. If you are interested in helping with this please get in touch. It would be lovely to have a society member getting involved.

Contact: [cods.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:cods.secretary@gmail.com)

### FLUSHINGHURST HELP

CODS relies on 2 or 3 long standing members to build the scenery for all of our shows, at all times of year, in all kinds of weather. They work really hard and are all well past retirement age. They need much more help and we need other people to learn how to build sets for us. They currently work on Fridays but with enough help they could also work on other days. Can you help?

Without these chaps our scenery wouldn't exist, or it would be very expensive!

Let us know if you can help and when you can help. [CODS.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:CODS.secretary@gmail.com)

# OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

## President

Bernard Beardsmore

## Vice Presidents

Pam Baker, Jeremy Cartwright, Dinah Chamberlin,  
Peter Gray, Alan Hodge, George Hudson,  
Peggy Latter, Alan Pickett, Dennis Russell,  
John Tapper, Maurice Wilkins, Ian Wookey  
Marian Cumberland, Rita Wilkins

## Executive Committee

Chairman

Annie Hatcher

Business Manager

Guy Fillmore

Hon. Secretary

Lee Hatcher

Board Secretary

Jane Hurt

Treasurer

Glyn Roberts

Social Secretary

Jane Hurt

Committee Members

Bryan Hurt, Penny Tobin, Alison Withey-Harrison.  
Sharon Pickles, Andy Clarke,  
Louisa Nelson-Chambers, Charlotte Fillmore

Contact details for the committee are  
available via :

Website - [cranbrookods.org.uk/committee](http://cranbrookods.org.uk/committee)

Email - [CODS.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:CODS.secretary@gmail.com)

Telephone - 01580 388716

## Officials of the Society

Orchestral Secretary

Ruth Roberts

Wardrobe Mistress

Rita Wilkins

Properties Master

Lee Hatcher

Front of House Manager

John Tapper

Chaperone Co-ordinator

Jackie Barker

Newsletter and Programme Editor

Lee Hatcher

Independent Examiners

Messrs McCabe, Ford and Williams

# THE BACK PAGE

Any questions about what you have read?  
Please contact your CODSWALLOP Editor

Lee Hatcher:

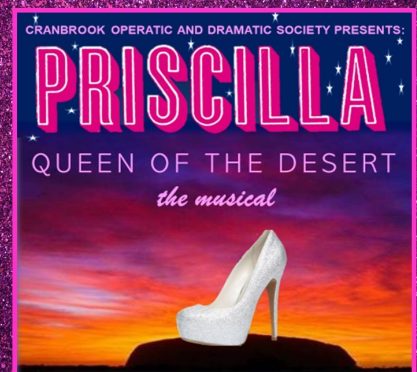
tel: 01580 388716

or email: [cods.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:cods.newsletter@gmail.com)

If you have any news, views, or ideas as to what YOU  
want to see in CODSWALLOP, let me know!



## WE REVEALED OUR OCTOBER 2021 MUSICAL TO MEMBERS AND AUDIENCES ONLINE....



## DEADLINE FOR COPY FOR NEXT EDITION: FRIDAY 24TH JULY 2020