

Arts Review

# God's good Englishman

THE high point of the Dr. Johnson birthday weekend celebrations next month will undoubtedly be the production, at Lichfield Civic Hall, of a new play about our most famous son.

The play, "God's Good Englishman" was written by Robert Fraser to mark the Bi-

centenary year and has already been performed in Oxford, and at the Kings Lynn and Harrogate Festivals.

It stars Timothy West as Sam Johnson and co-stars Maureen O'Brien, David Ashton and Okon Jones.

"Dr. Johnson said..." so runs the introduction to many a homely, rock-solid aphorism, drawn from the most part from nineteenth

century abridgments of Boswell's great 'Life', intended in their time to flatter the complacent wisdom of the Victorian middle-classes.

But how much was Johnson, and how much Boswell? Twentieth century scholarship, drawing on Mrs. Thrale's journals and on Johnson's own annals and letters, has revealed to us a Johnson more distraught and

torn, a being whom Boswell, for his own reasons, had concealed from view.

At the same time the vast increase in our knowledge of Boswell's papers since 1950 has disclosed the personal tensions which induced this thrusting, frustrated Scottish advocate to preserve so one-sided a picture of his mentor, a picture which can now be seen as an attempt to enshrine a point of stability in

Boswell's own seaisick, itchy world.

Is the revised view of Johnson made available any truer than the versions which preceded it or merely a reflection of the different tastes of our own century?

Is the heroic private struggle against insanity and depression which can now be seen as Johnson's principal virtue any more admirable than the sound sense the

Victorians so prized?

What, in our post-Christian age, can be meant by that unfashionable word "goodness"? It is just such challenges to our contemporary attitudes that the play seeks to explore.

The play is directed by Ian Watt-Smith and designed by Fay Conway.

Bob Bustance, Civic Hall Manager, said: "We are

proud and privileged to be able to bring such talented performers to the Lichfield stage in a production which in this bi-centenary year, lies at the very heart of this great history of Lichfield".

"God's Good Englishman" will be presented on Sunday, September 23 at 8pm. Tickets are £4 for adults and £3.00 for students and pensioners.

## Return in royal style

ARTIST Trevor Boulton returns to the Lichfield area this weekend with a fresh collection of paintings and prints capturing the flavour of canals, wildlife and landscapes.

It is now two years since Trevor, who comes from Balsall Common, near Coventry, was in the area, and his last exhibition attracted around 4,500 people.

Tomorrow he launches his second major exhibition at Tamhorn Park Farm, in Fisherswick, which will offer visitors chance to see some of his latest work, and give them the opportunity to spend several hours strolling round the lovely setting and have a bite to eat.

In the past two years, Trevor has given up his full time teaching post to concentrate on his art work, and the decision seems to be paying off in many ways.

Major art publishers are expressing interest in his work, and he has even produced a limited edition print of an owl painting that proved so popular at his last exhibition.

Although he has more time to paint, Trevor's output has not risen dramatically, since he now spends longer on individual works.

This means that there will be more major works to see at the Fisherswick exhibition, which runs from 10.30 am to 9 pm, each day until next Tuesday, when it will close at 6 pm.

Another interesting facet to his exhibition will be the inclusion of working drawings Trevor used for a private commission from the Queen.



Trevor Boulton with two of his new paintings.

He created a large pen and ink composite drawing of the Queen's Sandringham estate, complete with its wildlife, buildings, farming and some of her favourite animals. Trevor was delighted to undertake the project, and the Queen equally delighted with the finished result.

Also on display will be over 100 new landscape, canal and wildlife originals, and the extensive range of new prints.

Many of the pictures are in watercolours, others involve the use of millions of tiny pen and ink dots to create his desired effect.

Trevor also uses an airbrush technique, building up fine layers of paint to get a very subtle gradation of tones and colours.

## Life story in song

FORMER opera star Hella Toros returns to Lichfield next month to present a musical biography of Sigmund Romberg, the popular composer.

The production which will feature "The Desert Song", "The New Moon", and other popular works will offer superb singing by a small but highly skilled group of performers.

The erstwhile Italian-born opera star who delighted millions the world over, has gathered about her a very carefully selected company of fellow singers.

Her company is called Hella Toros Productions Ltd. The transition from being principal soprano at Covent Garden and Glyndebourne and a leading singer with Sir John Barbirolli, to the owner of a musical production and recording company was traumatic indeed.

A serious illness forced her to abandon a glittering singing career. She has now turned her abundant energies to creating six complete musical evenings covering the Life and Music of Ivor Novello, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Sigmund Romberg, Franz Lehár, Jerome Kern and Johann Strauss.

The Life and Music of Sigmund Romberg will be presented at the Civic Hall on Sunday, September 16 at 8pm. Tickets are £3.25.

## Puppets bring holiday bonus

LICHFIELD youngsters have the opportunity to end their summer holiday with a special treat — a trip down the Yellow Brick Road.

On Sunday, September 2, Roadworks Puppet Company will return to the Civic Hall with an exciting production of Lyman Frank Baum's classic "The Wizard of Oz".

It is a colourful adaptation of the well-known story and uses cuddly "muppet-like" characters — half life-sized — which have been designed and made by members of the company.

This production marks a departure from the previous classical booth and glove-puppet style operated by "Roadworks".

The show is suitable for children of six years and over and lasts one hour and twenty minutes.

The company made its first visit to Lichfield last year, enthralling hundreds of youngsters with its production of "The Gypsy And The Princess".

The show starts at 3pm. Tickets are £1.25 for adults and 75p for children.

## LICHFIELD MOTORS LTD.

MAIN  DEALER

BIRMINGHAM ROAD, LICHFIELD

Telephone: 53566

## CHECK FORD FIRST

AT LICHFIELD MOTORS PARTS CENTRE  
OPEN FIVE DAYS A WEEK PLUS SATURDAY MORNINGS

**MOTORCRAFT CONTACT SETS**  
EDP1



**59p**

**MOTORCRAFT OIL FILTERS**  
EFL90 Cortina



**£1.35**

**MOTORCRAFT ANTIFREEZE**  
2 Ltr.



**£1.39**

**PLUGS FROM**



**£2.16**

**MOTORCRAFT FAN BELTS**  
Cortina



**£1.39**

**MOTORCRAFT WIPER BLADES**  
Cortina Mk.3



**£1.99**

**MOTORCRAFT BULBS**  
(Halogen H4)



**£3.21**

**FORD SUPER MOTOR OIL 5 Ltr.**



**£4.32**

**FORD LOCKABLE AERIALS**



**£3.30**

**FORD DISC PAD KITS**  
Escort Mk.2, Cortina.



**£4.99**

**MOTORCRAFT SUPER START BATTERIES**



**£23.99**

\*CHECK OUR PRICES! Give your Ford the only parts it deserves. Approved Ford parts. And if you need advice, our Ford-trained staff are here to give it. If the part you want isn't on this list, ring us for a quote. Or call in. We're easy to find, and we're open when you need us. Plenty of parking spaces.

**Lichfield Motors Limited**



BIRMINGHAM ROAD, LICHFIELD. 53566. Ford gives you more

OPEN MON/FRI 8.30am to 5.15pm SAT 8.30am to 12.30pm

