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QM FORMER STAFF ASSOCIATION

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Dear Member

What would we find to talk about if we didn't have our weather?! We can only hope that brighter, drier days are coming. I do hope that none of you suffered from flood damage.

Earlier this month, Cedric, Dave (Lawrence), Gwyneth and myself attended the College Pre-retirement course. Twelve staff attended, although they will not be retiring imminently. Cedric gave a very good talk, assisted by a "PowerPoint" presentation and people did ask questions. We handed out application forms and posters to be displayed on departmental notice boards. We must have been there over an hour – actually we were let in early because the previous speaker hadn't materialised! So, let's hope that word gets round about the Association.

As requested in previous newsletters, please do send us news of what you have been doing. As less and less people are able to come on outings, this is our only means of keeping in touch. Again, let us know if you hear of any member who is unwell. There is no system in place in College to inform us if any member of staff dies – we have to rely on relatives or friends to inform us. Rose Finson, who was a telephonist, died recently at the age of 96. Her niece informed us and at her request a donation was sent to St Joseph's Hospice – this was duly acknowledged by her niece.

BERYL PAINE WRITES: It was really encouraging that so many of you came to the get-together for Christmas lunch in December and I do hope the enthusiasm will carry on for future events.

Opinions about "The Bodyguard", which we saw in January, were mixed. I, personally, found the strong flashing lights and the very loud noise spoiled the show for me. For our next theatre visit I had hoped to book for "Strangers on a Train" but the cheapest price I could get was £49.50. Then I tried for "Twelve Angry Men", starring Martin Shaw, but at the moment bookings can only be made up to 4th March.

However, on 19th March a new show is opening at the Harold Pinter Theatre, Paxton Street (off Haymarket) called "Relative Values". This is a comedy by Noel Coward, starring Patricia Hodge, Caroline Quentin and Rory Bremner. I have made a provisional booking for the matinée at 2.30 pm on Thursday 27th March, price £29.50 each (normal price £55). Please complete the attached reply slip and return, together with remittance and self-addressed envelope (stamp not necessary) to reach me no later than 12th March.

Beryl

BERYL RYAN WRITES: **Christmas lunch at the Kingsway Hall Hotel on Wednesday 11th December 2013:** This was a great start to the Christmas festivities as the Kingsway Hall Hotel proved to be an

excellent venue and it was very easy for those attending to get to, being very close to Holborn Station. There were 33 present, including guests of members, all enjoying this yearly opportunity to meet up with friends, to exchange Christmas greetings and to savour the excellent festive atmosphere of the hotel, the very good service and Christmas menu. Nothing was too much trouble for the staff, who made sure that we had everything we needed and I feel sure all those who came enjoyed themselves.

Thank you to Beryl for arranging this very successful annual event.

Visit to the Adelphi theatre on Wednesday 29th January 2014 to see "The Bodyguard" – a musical based on the film: There were two very differing views on this musical. Some enjoyed it, some did not. For those who did see the film version starring Whitney Houston and Kevin Kostner the only real difference was the inclusion of quite a lot more songs but then one would expect that to be the norm for a musical adaptation. Nevertheless the story remained the same. A tale of a famous singing star being stalked and an ex secret service agent being appointed to guard her. At the beginning she does not like him but in the end true love emerges.

The special effects, costumes etc. were stunning as seems to be the case in most musicals nowadays and I suspect that is why ticket prices are so high. Luckily, being a senior citizen does have its compensations, along with being a member of a group and this does help to shoulder the cost as the concessions are really quite generous.

The only disappointment for me personally was the fact that the star of the show, Beverley Knight, was understudied, but actually the actress who did the understudying was excellent so I do not think it really mattered.

Beryl

As this is our first newsletter for 2014 – and I understand that the latest date you should wish anybody a Happy New Year is 15th January – I can only wish all of you all the best for 2014.

Yours sincerely



Sheila Fenn
Hon Secretary