



Audition notice

The Accrington Pals

Wigan Little Theatre is proud to present The Accrington Pals. We would like to invite you to audition for an acting role or contact us if you would like to be part of the production in another area. For a description of each non-acting role, please see the later pages.

Playwright: Peter Whelan
Director: Chris Boyle
Audition: Sunday 13th July at 1 pm at Wigan little Theatre Main Bar
Production dates: 15th October to Sat 25th October 2025

Synopsis of play

This lyrical, absorbing play, premiered by the RSC, is set in Accrington during 1914-16. The "Pals" are the men from the local volunteer battalion who march high-spiritedly off to the Great War with their experiences in the trenches contrasted with those of the women left behind. At times funny, at times sad, it paints a moving and powerful picture of the changes in civilian life during wartime.

Director's Note

The play is a moving drama but also contains moments of comedy, and I am looking for a cast that can equally balance both. The acting will be naturalistic but I'm also aiming for a Brechtian style so, even though the play is set in the town of Accrington, I am not overly concerned that every character must have a northern accent, therefore please don't let that put you off from auditioning if you're not originally from the north!

The ages of the characters below are taken directly from the text, but again I want to use this more of a guideline, and just because you don't fall within the age ranges does not mean that you should not audition.

Finally, for the role of Reggie I would encourage any actor of any gender to audition for the role. The character will not be gender-swapped but could be played by a young actor of any gender.

Rehearsals

Tue & Thu evenings 7:30pm – 9:30pm and Sundays (time to be agreed with cast)

Characters

May – a stallholder, late 20s or older

Tom – an apprentice, 19

Ralph – a clerk, 19 or so

Eva – a millgirl, same age as Ralph – Eva also sings a short song

Sarah – a married mill worker, mid-20s

Bertha – a millgirl, 18

Annie – a housewife, late 30s

Arthur – Annie's husband, similar age

Reggie – Annie's son, 14/15

C.S.M. Rivers – a regular soldier, 30s/40s

Audition pieces

May and Tom - Page 2, May: You'll injure your brains; to Page 4, Tom: I'll have to sign the pledge again.

Ralph, Tom and Eva – Page 50, Ralph: Swim for it! Swin for the shore ...; to Page 51, Eva: May! Don't come in ...

Sarah, Eva and Bertha – Page 45, Sarah: Have you seen this Eva? Have you seen ...; to Page 47: Sarah: Well I never knew I was well off!

Annie, Ralph, Reggie, Arthur, Sarah, Tom, Bertha, Eva and May – Page 22, Annie: Run you daft thing ...; to Page 24, Ralph: Go on. I've shut my eyes.

C.S.M. Rivers and May – Page 15, Rivers: Yes ma'am?; to Page 17, Rivers: Then I advise you ... dependent on you but him?

May, Bertha, Annie, Sarah, Eva and Reggie – Page 89, May: Sarah ... get a chair for her; to Page 90, Eva: Let me borrow your little shovel ..."

May, Reggie, Bertha and Reggie – Page 98, May: Now I told you not to come; to Page 98, Reggie: Thank you, miss.

Ralph, Tom, Arthur and Rivers – Page 76, Ralph: Not in daylight ...; to Page 78, Arthur: Oh God ...to see your handiwork?

To request a script, contact the director, Chris Boyle by email chrisjboyle@hotmail.co.uk or on 07866 423216

Advice can also be sought from any member of the Play Selection and Casting Committee:

Nicola Reynolds, Joey Wiswell, Maggie Hall, Niall Wilkinson and Erinna Delaney

THE COMPANY

Actors

WLT aims for a very high standard of production and maximum commitment is required to achieve this. Rehearsals can take place for 8-12 weeks prior to the performance dates, typically 3 or 4 times a week in the evenings or on Sundays. In the event of not being able to attend the audition date, you should contact the director or a member of our Play Selection and Casting Committee (PSCC). Please be aware that only one alternative audition will be held, and times will be limited due to everyone's availability. If you are interested in auditioning for a part, please contact the Director or any member of PSCC.

Bar

Members of this team should be over the age of 18. They are responsible for working behind the bar, which is open from 7.00 pm until 11.00 pm during each production. Members often do one or two nights during any production.

Box Office

We need friendly and helpful people who have good interpersonal skills both face to face and over the phone. Experience of working with IT would be an advantage but training will be given on the box office computer and administrative systems. Box Office opening hours are 7-9 pm.

Coffee

Coffee is sold during the interval. Most helpers arrive prior to the opening of the show on one or two separate occasions to make and serve the coffee, and once the washing up is done they are free to go!

Front of House

The Front of House (FOH) Team welcome the public to a show, hand them their tickets where appropriate, escort them to their seats if necessary and remain on hand until the end of the show when the FOH representative will wait until the last patron has left before locking the main doors. The usual commitment is for one or two nights during the run of a show from 7-10 pm approximately.

Lighting and sound

The Technical support group is responsible for the design and operation of the lighting and sound for each production. Setting up a new show normally takes place on two or three separate evenings before the Technical Rehearsal, and then two or three members are at the Theatre each night of the production to operate the lighting and sound desks and provide any additional services required by the show. Training will be given, and you won't be left to work alone until you feel completely confident.

Programme Sales

The job is as simple as it sounds! All you need is your smile and the ability to handle cash – then all you have to do is wait for patrons to come to buy a programme! Programme sellers normally arrive at around 6.45 pm and stay on duty until the start of the show at 7.30 pm.

Prompts

Members of the prompt team are never seen - and hopefully never heard – during the run of a production! Prompts work on a rota basis and attend rehearsals for approximately three weeks prior to the opening of a show and for one or two nights during a show, sitting in the wings with a copy of a script, ready to whisper a helpful reminder if required! If you are interested in prompting, please contact the director of the production.

Properties

Attention to detail when setting the scene can certainly bring life to a production. This is the aim of the props team. New members are welcome to join us with a view to becoming a props leader. To fulfil this, we are looking for volunteers who are organised, creative and who can deal with situations in a sensible and realistic manner. Commitment to shows and their rehearsal time is necessary. Working together we can create innovative and exciting productions.

Set Building

For this any DIY or trade experience would be useful, but definitely not necessary! A lot of the work involves carrying/moving theatre flats, steps, doors etc. And holding them while they are fixed in place. We have a workshop at the side of the stage with the materials and equipment that we need. There is always someone around, so you won't be asked to do any job or use any tools that you don't feel comfortable with. Generally, we build the sets on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 10 am until 2 pm and Thursday evenings from 7 until 9 pm. All times are approximate and, of course, you can come and go at whatever time suits you within those time periods. So, if you could spare any time at all (even just the odd hour) we would appreciate it.

Set Painting

Set painters bring the set to life with their paintbrushes, whether it's a Victorian Drawing room or a street of terraced houses! You don't have to be Monet – anybody who can use a paintbrush is welcome and the ability to climb a step ladder is also useful. Set painters work during the day, usually the week before a play opens, generally between 10 am and 3 pm. Guidance will be provided along with frequent coffees and a lunch break – and you can stay for as long or as short as you like.

Stage Management

The role of the Stage Manager is to ensure the smooth running of a performance. You will enjoy this role if you are interested in all things theatrical; tactful when dealing with directors, actors and other members of the theatre; able to remain calm under pressure; able to recognise a team; be a good communicator; are mature and sensible in attitude – ideally over 18 years of age.

Sweet Sales

Sweets are sold prior to the start of the show and the interval, along with ice creams, during each performance. Sweet sellers are expected to be on duty from around 6.45 until after the interval, the time for which obviously varies.

Wardrobe

The wardrobe department supplies and constructs suitable costumes for every production. In addition, the department is responsible for cleaning, repairing and maintaining the existing costumes. Some heavy lifting can be required; however, any help is a benefit to support the department. The ability to sew is a bonus.

If you are interested in joining any of the teams/departments please email secretary@wiganlittletheatre.co.uk

Please note that you will be required to become a member of Wigan Little Theatre to take part in any production, in any capacity.