
1549

The Story of
Kett's
Rebellion



Production Information

PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY BEFORE DECIDING YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED



WHAT IS THE COMMON LOT?

The Common Lot is a collective of people dedicated to producing high quality, accessible theatre that can be enjoyed by all. We work with the talent and enthusiasm of local people to create the shows. Our productions are entirely original and based on local stories. They are for, with and about the people of Norfolk.

We strive towards professional standards in all things. However, everyone involved with the company does it for the love, not for any financial gain. By not paying any professional fees we are able to do much more with the money we raise.

Our last big show *Boudicca: The Pantomime* was a huge success - selling out 6 shows at the Norwich Arts Centre in 2014 and involving around 70 local people in its making. Since then we have been developing our skills in performance workshops and involved ourselves in smaller projects such as the City Halloween Parade and Lights Up! -a variety show with Sheringham Carnival. We are also working with the Royal Shakespeare Company as the Mechanicals in next year's tour of *Midsummer Nights Dream* [www.dream2016.org.uk/amateur-group/the-common-lot/]

Now it's time to expand the Common Lot and do another big show!

WHAT IS KETT'S REBELLION?

Kett's Rebellion is one of the most significant events in Norfolk's history.

For years ordinary working people have been increasingly exploited for the private gain of a privileged ruling class that pay little heed to their calls for equality and social justice.

Sound familiar? This is an important story...

In 1549 people found themselves struggling, starving and destitute as the land that they held in common and supported their livelihoods was being enclosed by rich landowners for profit.

Led by Wymondham man Robert Kett a huge number of men and women from across Norfolk marched on the Norwich to make their case. They set up camp on Mousehold heath, took control of the city and called for the king himself to hear their plight.

What happened to those men and women in those six summer weeks of 1549, from the establishment of their own system of fair representation and justice to their brutal repression by a hired army, is the subject of our play.

WHAT WILL THE SHOW BE LIKE?

Written by Simon Floyd [with Karl Minns of the Nimmo Twins] it will tell the human story of the rebellion in a style we have dubbed as 'panto-documentary' - a serious tale laced with lots of chorus work, comedy, song and audience participation.

Performances will be free to the public, attracting big crowds over the course of 10 performances in and around the city's outdoor spaces this summer. This includes shows outside the Forum, Cow Tower and Mousehold Heath.

It will also form an important part of the Lord Mayor's celebration weekend where at least some of the company will be joining the Lord Mayor's procession. At the penultimate show on 9th July we hope to

light the beacon on Kett's Heights in the name of the those who gave their lives in the cause of human freedom.

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Working with those we know and those yet to come the 50 + strong cast and supporting crew will be drawn entirely from the people of Norwich.

You do not have to have had any experience of theatre to be involved in the show, just energy, willingness to learn and dedication to its success.

We have a production team. We now want to find:

ON STAGE

Performers [25 to 40 people]

There are a number principal character parts in the play to fill, among them six key rebels, two heralds, two earls, one knight of the realm, a mayor and a deputy mayor: a wider company of performers will form a chorus that will collectively narrate the story, sing the songs, take other roles and work among the audience. The chorus is the beating heart of the show.

Many of the parts are able to be played by women or men and we are not looking for specific gender splits at this stage.

Musicians [4 to 8 people]

The show will be supported by an acoustic band - ideally with guitar, drums, accordion and brass or woodwind. However we are open to anyone who would like to offer their services, regardless of the instrument they play.

OFF STAGE

Builders and Crew [10 to 15 people]

Building and transporting the set and signs, readying the performance and audience areas, dressing the cast, taking the show down.

Costume and Prop Makers [8 to 12 people]

Everything from sewing on buttons to making weapons. We need willing hands.

Ushers/Stewards [a pool of at least 10 people]

To support the events by making the audience feel at home, ushering, handing out programmes and passing round the bucket

Publicity and Social Media [3 to 4 people]

Helping to promote the show, taking and telling stories of its making.

Other support

If you want to be a part of 1549 but are not sure how, then just let us know. There are always things to do.

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WHAT DO I DO NEXT?

Before you even think about getting involved, make sure you can commit yourself to the process. We want everyone in The Common Lot to have a great time but we do expect people to see things through and to work hard putting the show together. Everyone has a day job, so to coin a phrase - 'we're all in this together'.

Performers and crew should have a good look at our full **rehearsal and production schedule** [below]. If you want to perform in the show you will need to come to our **Audition and Information Sunday** at Norwich Arts Centre on March 6th [see below].

If you prefer backstage work such as building sets, making costumes, doing make up, stewarding etc. then please come along to this Sunday or let us know by emailing us at **commonlotnorwich@gmail.com** or visiting the website which will be live in early February - **www.thecommonlot.org** and filling in your details

We will be taking these details off everybody so please do send the form in now if you are keen.

Involvement is open to anyone over the age of 14. However if you are under 18 you will need to show us that you have the full support of your parent or guardian.

WHAT WILL THE AUDITIONS BE LIKE?

Auditions will be held at **Norwich Arts Centre** from **1.30 pm to 5 pm on Sunday 6th March 2016**. We ask that you arrive on time and stay for the whole afternoon.

You do not need to prepare anything in advance. There will be some group exercises and singing together and after that we may call you for some individual work with the directors.

The auditions will be an enjoyable experience so please don't worry - we will not ask you to perform solo in front of others.

Please note we will need to take your picture so that we can remember who you are. We will not use this image for any other reason without your explicit consent. If you can send a picture with your form in advance then all the better. If there is a lot of interest we may run a second day of auditions on the following Wednesday. We'll let you know if this is happening.

We will let you know within 7 days where we would like you to contribute.

HOW IS THE PROJECT FUNDED?

Because no-one takes a fee we are able to do much more with the money we raise. This show will be financed from our current reserves, from a grant from Norwich City Council, and from crowd funding from those involved with the project and its supporters. We will also be asking for a one off subscription of no more than £20 from everyone to support the production. We will make a bucket collection at the end of each performance that will go towards our next venture - whatever that may be.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions please contact Simon Floyd, Director on 07896 781 574 or post a question at **commonlotnorwich@gmail.com**

Thanks for reading to the end. We look forward to seeing you on the 6th March!

1549 - REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Unless stated otherwise rehearsals will be 7 to 10 pm [prompt!] weekday evenings and 1 to 5 pm on Sundays, towards production times may change. Not all cast will be needed at all rehearsals until nearer production week.

PLEASE NOTE The on stage crew will follow the existing rehearsal schedule. The off stage teams will develop their own schedules to suit their purpose and time constraints

March

6th March 1 to 5 pm **AUDITION AND INFORMATION SUNDAY Norwich Arts Centre**

Wed 9th, 16th, Sun 20th, Wed 23rd, 30th

April

Wed 6th, Sun 10th, Wed 13th, Wed 20th, Weds 27th

May

Sun 1st Wed 4th, Sun 8th, Wed 11th, Thu 12th, Wed 18th, Thurs 19th, Sun 22nd, Wed 26th, Thu 27th

June

Wed 1st, Sun 5th, Wed 8th, Thu 9th, Wed 15th, Thur 16th, Sun 19th, Tues 21st

DRESS REHEARSAL Wed 22nd [venue tbc]

10 Public PERFORMANCES

Fri 24th 730 pm - Heigham Park

Sat 25th, 730 pm - Wensum Park

Sun 26th 230 pm - Cow Tower

Thu 30th 730 pm - The Forum [tbc]

July

Friday 1st 730 pm - Whiffler Theatre, Castle Gardens

Sat 2nd 1pm - Whiffler Theatre, Castle Gardens [evening - join the procession]

Sun 3rd - *No show*

Fri 8th 730 pm - Cathedral Close

Sat 9th, 230 and 730 pm - Kett's Heights [lighting the beacon]

Sun 10th 230 pm plus party - Mousehold Heath