

minute to spare) we had no hiccups from a cast of 100.

Coming in on a wing and a prayer.

The geese were only one of the reasons why those of us with technical backgrounds thought that sound reinforcement would be essential. The Artistic Ones were correct in their phoo phooing, but only just. The structure of the stands and particularly the stage floor gave voices just that extra lift and the only inaudibility was during heavy rain.

You're never alone with a Strand

particularly if it was made pre 1964 because it always takes 2 to pull it up into the bowels of the scaffolding tower. The rig is itemised later and it represents a tussle between my conscience and my bank balance. Being in the happy dual position of lighting designer and supplier I was, of course, able to use my own stock where possible and this includes many substantial testimonies to the durability of lanterns built in the grand old days of The Strand Electric and Engineering Co. and The Major Equipment Co. The Pattern 93N made a good followspot for the individual figures (particularly Christ) and we evolved the layout of one 93N and one 2kW 293 or C.C.T. Silhouette 15° per tower, on the top level. Each followspot had its own dimmer, and cue sheets were duplicated for all. The operators were so adept at reading off the cue sheets that we were able to plot in Act 1 cues with no prior rehearsal, when it was found that the sun packed up earlier than we hoped. On a dull day the lights took effect from about 7.30, on a bright evening from about 8.15, so one

lesson must be to plot both acts from the start.

Raindrops kept falling on our heads.

Waterproofing has been mentioned before and I consider it to be an essential part of the proceedings that towers be covered rear, sides and top with firmly tied tarpaulins. The roof should slope to the rear and overhang the front by 2ft at least. The front should also have a let down/pull up covering which can be lashed off securely overnight. We had nothing but trouble from the plastic covered chicken wire provided and badly secured by the scaffolding contractors and one dimmer rack overheated through over-zealous but necessary polythene covering. Every joint in the installation should be covered with self-amalgamating tape or a plastic bag (hung entry down, or water collects inside and the connection is sitting in an arrangement suitable for conveying goldfish from fairgrounds). Cables should be as few and as long (i.e. with as few joints) as possible. Understatement of the year: You will be somewhat surprised at the amount of cable you get through.

Where their caravan has rested.

We thought we'd met our Portaloos when the hire firm told us that we needed a 60 amp supply to their de luxe model. In fact by pulling the water heater and frost stat fuses we made it a manageable 400 watts. The large marquee (100ft x 28ft) was lit with four 500 watt Major Patt 60 type pointing at the roof and reflecting down, plus a lavish 100 watts for special make up. The Pattern 137 in various quantities

sufficed for beer, refreshments, crafts, props and box office. Sunfloods were used for general site and car park. Most cables looped over head, borne on trees and scaffolding poles, but some had to be trenched. At one time, 4 electric boilers for tea making were threatened, with their attendant 60 amp load, but they proved unobtainable so gas was used, to our relief.

Hartily in agreement.

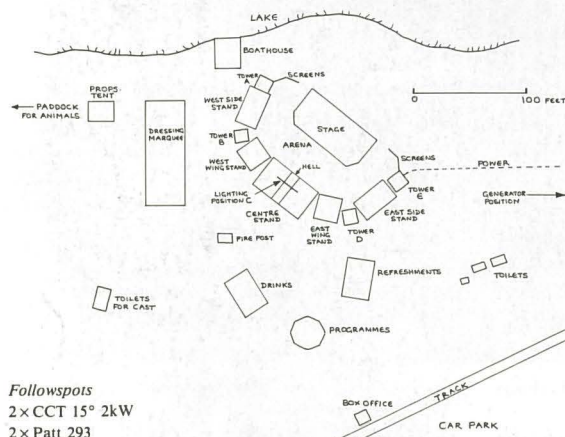
The licencing authority, Hart District Council, had little experience of outside public events except Fleet Carnival and they considered our emergency lighting of 2 exit signs powered by floating car battery and 4 floods run off a 1.8 K.V.A. generator entirely adequate. The requirements will vary with the district, so be sure that you know what the council specifies well before the event.

Paint the stage with light

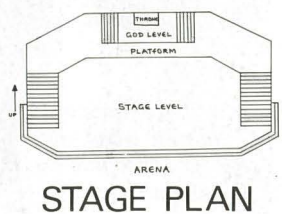
And the arena too, but use a 20ft brush. The acting areas measured about 20ft square and the average applied load was about 9 watts per square ft. In conventional theatre 50 watts per square ft. would not be unusual. With a relatively small supply for the show area to be lit, I started with a very detailed talk with the Director, Kay Northwood, to establish exactly what she expected, to offer her some ideas as they had occurred in reading the script, and to decide what corners I could usefully cut. There was the arena, for crowd scenes and processions, 100ft x 30ft, the stage 60ft x 25ft, the stairs 20ft x 8ft leading to the platform 60ft x 15ft where trial scenes took place and, on high, God and the Trinity throne area 12ft x 8ft. The arena, stage and platform were each divided into 3 areas and lit from each tower. The stairs had one special spot each and God had 4 specials, one from each tower. Hell's mouth had its own red lights, used only at the end of the last play.

From this it may seem that we had a very simple and boring plot, but the 8 followspots added such focus that some very dramatic moments were achieved. The switchboard used was a 48 way 3 preset 2 group type which was entirely adequate for the 85 cues. The main acting area light came from 12 x Patt 243 and the side light from Patt 143 and various members of the Pageant or Vignette family. Everything was at 1 kW except 6 x Patt 243, 4 x followspots at 2 kW and 2 x Cremer Fresnel and 2 x 23N at 500 watt. What seems an odd collection of lanterns worked together quite well, except that some more narrow angle profiles would have been useful on the platform level. However good the hardware was however, it would have been useless without the dedication of the large lighting team that turned up every night in all weathers to drive it. They made a great contribution to a very successful and happy community production.

James Laws and his wife Pat Cowan are proprietors of Ancient Lights Theatre and Drama Lighting Service of Atleborough, Norfolk. Photography by Mike Flanagan and David Lunn. Site Plan by Andi Stainsby.



ELVETHAM SITE PLAN



- Followspots**
 2 x CCT 15° 2kW
 2 x Patt 293
 4 x Patt 93N

- Fixed lighting for Stage & Arena**
 6 x Patt 243 2kW Stage
 8 x Patt 243 1kW Arena
 8 x Patt 223 Arena
 6 x Patt 143 Stage
 12 x Patt 58/N10 Pageants
Stage/Arena
 2 x Cremer 1/2kW Fresnels Arena
 6 x CCT 30° 1kW Platform
 4 x Patt 263 Mk1 Platform
 4 x Patt 93/93N Stairs/God
 2 x Patt 53 2kW Hell
 2 x Patt 23N God

- Site lighting**
 7 x 500W Sunflood
 18 x Patt 137
 4 x Major W5

	D	A	U	A	Stage	Scen	Platform	A	B	D	E			
CR	R	C	L	R	R	R	C	L	1	2	1	2	1	2
15	Judas & the Deaf								to	JUDAS	to	JUDAS		
16									WIDOWS	EATAN	WIDOWS	EATAN		
17									OFF		OFF			
18									REAR	CHRIST	REAR	CHRIST		
19	The Annals	+	+	+	+	+	+		to	SR	to	SR	OFF	OFF
20	East Angel								REAR	ANGEL	REAR	ANGEL		
21	East Angel								OFF				OFF	
22	NIGHT (SOREN)	+	+	+	+	+	+							
23	East Angel													
24	The Trial	+	+	+	+	+	+		REAR	CHRIST	REAR	CHRIST	REAR	CHRIST
25														
26									REAR	JUDAS	REAR	JUDAS		
27	East Angel										to	CHRIST	to	CHRIST
28	East Angel								OFF		to	CHRIST	to	CHRIST