

A Brief History of Shaftesbury Arts Centre

27-Jul-1949	Shaftesbury and District Arts Club formed.
07-Jul-1950	Need for 'home' recorded in minutes
August 1952	Purchase of Upper Market Hall in Bell Street
09-Jan-1953	Building licence received, conversion work started
01-Nov-1957	Shaftesbury Arts Centre opened.
01-Nov-1957	The Sleeping Monk performed, see archives
24-Jun-1965	Building badly damaged by fire
03-Jun-1967	Centre reopened with improved facilities
1981	Fire precaution works completed Public entertainment licence obtained
1991	Major Front of House improvements completed
1995	Land acquired at rear of Arts Centre Plans drawn up for an extension but not implemented at that time because of lack of funds
December 2000	Work on lighting and sound equipment on stage completed
Aug- Nov 2001	Phoenix Room extension and refurbishment. New control room over auditorium
Summer 2004	Asbestos removal work completed New ceiling fitted under stage. Costumes moved to under stage. New floor laid in auditorium.
Autumn 2004	Seats refurbished in auditorium
31-Aug-2005	Conversion to Limited Company Status
December 2005	"People and Places" award for best individual contribution to the Arts by an organisation in North Dorset,
February 2007	Front half of no. 11 purchased, partially funded by bank loan
October 2008	Took over the rest of no. 11. Refurbishment include a lift, extended and refurbished Box Office, 3 new rooms and further toilet facilities.
Sept 2009	New rooms named the Rutter Room and Proctor Room
2011 - 2013	The shop was used as a Charity shop which raised £52,000
2011	Oscar, the new computerised ticket/membership system was installed in the Box Office.
2013	The shop was converted into the Art Gallery
2014	The old Gallery walls were removed to create a large, open Foyer with bar and the Theatre door moved to a central position. The theatre seats were replaced and rearranged.
2016	New plans drawn up for extension and workshop.
2017	Arts Council England grant applied for but sadly turned down. Planning permission applied for and received.
2018	Decision to break the project into bite sizes pieces. To start work raising the roof on the Proctor room to implement the planning permission and to fundraise for the stage and costume workshops.
July 2019	Work started on Dance studio
October 19	Dance studio completed.
Oct. 2019	First 'Live Streaming' performance. Dracula live from Leeds.
March 2020	Centre closed for Corona virus.