

John Stevens

1933 - 2013

Bob Bennett writes...

I have known John for over thirty five years.

He first came on the scene as an actor who was willing to bring his great talent on the amateur drama stage to appearances in several films. These were made by a group within the club called Kennel Films.

He was then spotted by others and became the mainstay of club productions for many years.

Not only would he play whatever he was asked to, he would also be very willing to speak to his many fellow actor friends to persuade them to act for us.

John was always meticulous in learning his lines and being where he was asked to be on time and ready to work. He was instrumental in demonstrating the differences between stage and film acting to fellow actors and the amateur film maker.

It is rather ironic that John's death should have occurred at the start of the Edinburgh Fringe. He loved this event and for years, until failing health prevented it, he would plan in minute detail a two week stay in Edinburgh to pack in attending as many performances of all kinds as possible.

Outside of club activities there was nothing John liked more than a trip out to a country pub for a bite to eat and a few pints of liquid refreshment.

The greatest tribute I can pay to John is to say that every time I worked with him he was the consummate professional.

I shall miss those am dram tales over a pint or two of Bass.

RIP John, take your final curtain call in that spotlight.

Declan Smith writes...

Very sad news indeed regarding John. I had the pleasure of working with him at the club a few years ago when we did those short comedy sketches. He was one of those people who lit up a room and simple enthused the people around him. Please pass my condolences to his family.

Peter Heaven writes...

We will be left with very fond memories of John. He always gave his best and joined in with our work on productions, whether they were amusing or serious. Well known in amateur drama circles, he had many friends and will surely be missed, but his work lives on in the films we made with him, now secured for the future in the vaults of the Bristol Record Office, where they may be viewed.

Ken Rees writes...

I was shocked and saddened to hear that John Stevens has died. John was a gentleman.

It was a pleasure to have known and worked with him. John had a certain quality and dedication which we all took for granted over the many years of film production. I will miss him.

Graham Egarr writes...

My own memory of John is not only as a very fine film actor but also a great recruiter of cast for our films. This included over the years, stars of The Big Bang, Cabot. These contacts have provided great strength to the Society as they have given us a network in the acting community that has served us well and which continues to bear fruit. One of John's early introductions was our current Chairman

John also initiated our longstanding informal link with the SPP Theatre Group (formerly St Paul's Players), a link that has not only provided us with cast but also access to skills such as costumes and set construction.

Spotting which actor was right for a part was a particular skill of John's and he was always right. Perhaps the most interesting story about John in this respect concerns the last film he worked on in a behind the scenes role. It was 'Uncertain Proof' made by a number of BFVS members.

Being familiar with the script and knowing that casting auditions would shortly have to start John was on the lookout for suitable cast. He decided that he had found the leading man when he was served by him in an Indian restaurant. John was so confident that he had found our man that he approached the waiter and asked him if he was interested in being in a film. It turned out that the waiter had a degree in drama in his native country. After audition he was selected for the part. As his English pronunciation needed attention John spent many hours with the actor polishing his performance.

It is a tribute to John's casting skill that from such a brief meeting he could spot talent.