

**Exclusive: A Day in the Orkneys
Mark Lambert in Disney's next
Blockbuster movie - page 2/3**



"I thoroughly enjoyed the whole evening"

It began with a smallish but very appreciative audience on opening night, their laughter in all the right places and just what our cast deserved after months of full on rehearsals through the coldest winter for thirty years.

If Friday evening's much larger audience had called "Author, author", they would have been rewarded. They didn't, but nevertheless got one just the same. On stage, at the end of the performance, walked none other than co-author, Rosemary Anne Sisson - all the way from Fulham, where her play was set, and whom David and Sylvia Smith had met on a cruise. "Very well cast," she said, "and I thoroughly enjoyed the whole evening." Can't say fairer than that, can you!

All in all, around half our membership were involved in the production, a very heartening demonstration of the vitality of our our society.

OUR NEXT SOCIAL EVENT



**'Bill
on
Will'**



Shakespeare left behind nearly a million words of text, but his life has long been a thicket of wild supposition arranged around scant facts.

At 7.30 pm on Friday 23rd April upstairs at The Mermaid (no relation to the inn of Elizabethan times) Maurice Freeland and Pat Harris, with Bill Bryson's 'Shakespeare' as their guide, discover where the facts end and the legends begin.

Our Annual Dinner

Our Annual Dinner will be held on Friday 7th May in The Mermaid, Bristol Road, Sherborne at 7 for 7.30 pm.



Our speaker will be Nicolas Chagrin. Nicolas has been involved in the theatre as actor, dancer and director since the age of 11 and will have many fascinating tales to tell us about his varied experiences. As a young man in 1960 he created at Covent Garden the part of Puck in Benjamin Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream*; he has appeared in numerous plays, films and TV dramas; and most recently has been working with Zoe Wanamaker at the National Theatre. His father Francis was born in Bucharest, studied music in Zurich and Paris, and after moving to London worked during the War for the BBC and founded the Committee for the Promotion of New Music. Nicolas's brother Julian is well-known as a comedian and mime artist.

This should be a most enjoyable and interesting evening and we are lucky to have Nicolas and his wife Teruko as our guests. Put it in your diaries now!

The ticket price for this year will be £18, and there are three choices of starter, main course and dessert. It also includes coffee.

A menu choices order form can be downloaded from the link on the Members Page on our website. Please forward your completed menu choices form, together with your cheque, payable to Amateur Players of Sherborne, to Gilly Savage, Myntern House, Longford Road, Thornford DT9 6QN. Tel: 01935 872098 or email her at gillysavage@hotmail.com Please send the form as soon as possible and not later than **Friday 23rd April**. Ample parking is available either on road or in The Mermaid car park.

Preferred dress is smart. Wine and other drinks to be purchased from the bar.

'HERE COMES THE TRAIN'

As you all know by now, on Saturday 8th May, dressed in Victorian costumes, we are performing a railway-themed



selection of prose and verse in Pageant Gardens for the 150th anniversary celebrations of the coming of the railway to the town. Mark Lambert will provide appropriate amplification and sound effects.

Bev Taylor-Wade and Caroline Hart will be there with the Junior Wriggle Valley Players who will perform scenes from 'The Railway Children'. To get involved contact Jim Reville on 01935 814626 or email him at jim.reville@btinternet.com



THE SHOW MUST GO ON.....

It's time for us to be getting our thinking caps on and coming up with great ideas for our next season's programme of social events and productions. What about a themed evening, play-readings, musical evenings, theatre trips, quizzes - or something completely different. "Good ideas are common - what's uncommon are people who'll work hard enough to bring them about."*

Now, don't leave it until the day of our AGM, get in touch with any member of your committee well beforehand.

*Ashley Brilliant,
author and cartoonist

STILL TO COME IN OUR EVENTS PROGRAMME

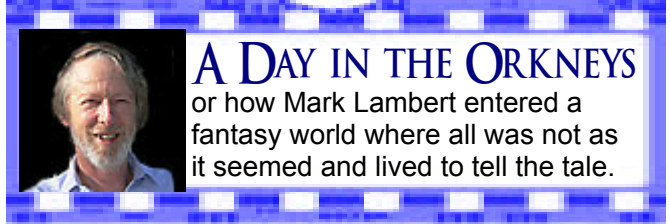
Friday 23 April: "Bill on Will" led by Maurice Freeland and Patricia Harris

Friday 7 May: Annual Dinner at The Mermaid

Wednesday 26 May: A play-reading led by Patricia Harris

Thursday 17 June: A play-reading led by Adrian Thorpe

Friday 23 July: AGM and Summer Party



Well, actually Winspit Quarry, Worth Matravers, near Swanage, which was 'standing in' for a coastal mine in the Orkneys for the forthcoming (2012) film *John Carter of Mars*. But by the time the film is finished no one will know the difference.

So, how did this come about? Some of you may recall that an advert for extras appeared on our website in January and I was one of those who applied. To my surprise they phoned after a couple of weeks, asking me to go up to Chertsey the next day for a costume fitting. So, having quickly rescheduled a dental appointment, I duly drove up there and eventually found the studios, buried in a ramshackle building on an industrial estate that had clearly seen better years.

Several hours passed while about a dozen of us waited for our turn to be fitted out with costumes, visit the hair and make-up people and be

***'they were planning
to throw water at us'***

photographed holding a name and number. Having originally been given the impression that I would be an archaeologist excavating a site on Mars (well, this is a fantasy film), I discovered that we were actually going to be a bunch of labourers digging in a mine in the 'Orkneys'. Added to which they were planning to throw water at us from a rain machine, so we were issued with thermal underwear and waterproofs to wear under our 1860s labourers' clothing. Given we would be working outdoors in late February, these undergarments didn't seem such a bad plan.

Filming was due to take place on any day between Wed 24th and Sun 28th of February, quite probably for two, possibly even three days. In the event they phoned on the Wednesday asking us to be there at 5.15 am next morning. Now those of you who know me will be aware that I am not known for being an early riser. So you will understand that getting out of bed at 3.30 am was something of a shock to my system. Nevertheless I managed to arrive at Worth Matravers in good time.

Base camp was a marquee and countless caravans on the village green. The marquee was fine, but it was surrounded by a sea of mud churned up by vehicles and I needed a push just to get me into a slot in the car park. After we had breakfasted, donned our costumes and passed through various make-up and hair people, we were conveyed down to the quarry in a fleet of 4x4s - just as well really as the track is very long, very rough and very muddy, as was most of the set, particularly by the end of the day.

At what seemed like mid-morning (actually 7.00



'ALLO, ALLO' ITS THE CIVIC PLAYERS

The Civic Players present 'Allo, Allo', at the Swan Theatre Wed 28 to Fri 30 April at 7.45 pm and on Sat 1 May at 2.30 and 7.45 pm. For tickets call 01935 845946

DAVID COPPERFIELD TO PLAY SHERBORNE?

A misdirected phone call to your editor from Bristol Old Vic revealed their interest in hiring the Digby Hall on Tuesday 22 June for a one-night only performance of **David Copperfield**.



The Bristol Old Vic Theatre School will perform the play in the Redgrave Theatre, Bristol Wed 5 to Sat 8 May, Tacchi-Morris, Taunton Tues 18 May.

noda SOUTH WEST CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN TAUNTON

The South West region of NODA will hold its AGM and Award Ceremony on Sunday 18 July at the Holiday Inn, Taunton - just off junction 25, M5.

am) we started work. There were some 30 'labourers' and we were each allotted a task. Mine was to stand at a table sifting and examining bits of rock. The young American director then moved among us greeting us all and generally getting us on on his side - quite a rare phenomenon, I was told, as most directors treat extras as though they don't exist.



Winspit Quarry on a good day could be The Orkneys?

The first scene was, I think, an overview of the 'mine' and its workers, with the camera on a huge boom starting on the sea (I heard someone shout "We're waiting for a wave") and panning up over the ledge overlooking the sea to reveal us all beavering away. After several takes, they seemed satisfied and we moved on. At this point the director gathered us round and told us what was actually supposed to be happening. It seemed that John Carter had employed us for several months to look for something, but hadn't told us what -- "you'll know it when you see it". The next scene was one of the younger extras, chosen by the Director, running out the mine whooping and shouting "Found it!", meeting John Carter and handing over the unknown item, which was hidden in a piece of sacking. After Carter had had a quick look, he flipped a coin to the finder and went back to his tent.

'It didn't do to look closely at the cracks in the roof of that cave'

Most of the day was spent filming that scene from a myriad of different angles, which meant that we had to repeat what we had been doing many times. We broke for a mid-morning break, lunch (a choice of hot meals in catering packs, but pretty good) and an afternoon break, each time going back to film the same scene yet again. By mid-afternoon, I have to say I was getting cold, a bit wet (it was raining by now), tired and somewhat fed up. During the breaks we huddled by some gas heaters in a tent at the back of one of the caves. It didn't do to look closely at the cracks in the roof of that cave, about which the safety officer told me he had grave doubts. Finally there was a scene in the tent, from which some of us could be seen working in the background outside and then the

final scene in which John Carter gets into a horse-drawn cart and drives away, while his workers pack up and leave.

Now, you may recall that I mentioned a rain machine before, and we had thought that we were going to get wet long before this. By now it looked as though they had changed their minds, but no -- "In this scene, you are all going to get wet". So they fired up the machine -- three tall pipes spraying out water in our direction. We all stood back while they tested it, but it was soon clear that it wasn't going to reach all that far. They placed someone on the cliff above those of us at the 'back' of the set with a hose, but that couldn't reach us either. The net result was that John Carter and his driver got a soaking -- several times as there were a number of takes -- as did the extras who had to trudge up the road, but those of us who were in the background clearing up our tools and tables remained dry -- well as dry as the natural drizzle would allow.

'eventually the last of us made it back to base camp'

Finally, came the shout "That's a wrap!", followed by a loud cheer from all concerned, and we all headed back to get warm and dry. It took several runs of the 4x4s to transport us all, but eventually the last of us made it back to base camp to change and get our payment chits signed. Having originally been told that the rate of pay was £95 per day it was nice to find that it amounted to considerably more than that, what with early call money, early travel allowance, overtime and 'wet money', which everyone got -- even those that didn't actually get a soaking. We even got paid for the costume-fitting day as well. So all in all the money wasn't too bad -- about £335 for one short and one very long day's work.

Four hefty chaps pushed me backwards out the car park and I arrived home at 7.30 pm for a large whisky. Would I do it again? I'm not sure. Having never been on a film set before, it was interesting at times. But it was also exceedingly boring at others -- and the cold and wet didn't help. I didn't meet any of the better known actors in this film (including Ciarán Hinds, James Purefoy, Willem Dafoe and Samantha Morton); in fact the only member of the main cast present was the young Canadian actor who played John Carter -- Taylor Kitsch, of whom I have to confess that had never heard before, but he seemed a likeable young man. So I guess it depends on what, if anything, I get offered in the future. But a starring role seems unlikely. *Mark Lambert*

'John Carter of Mars' is based on the first book of Edgar Rice Burroughs' Barsoom series. The Walt Disney Pictures film, with a reported starting budget of \$100 million, chronicles the journey of Civil-War veteran John Carter, who is mysteriously transported to Mars. Once there, he is caught in the middle of a mysterious war between various groups of Martians.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**APRIL 2010**

Thurs 1st	Comedy Club Matt Hardy. Compere Paul Rickets	Powell Theatre, Sherborne Doors open 7.30 Show 8.30 pm
Tues 6th to Sat 24th	Low Pay? Don't Pay! A Dario Fo farce	Salisbury Playhouse Times: Check Box Office or website
Mon 12th to Sat 17th	Out of Order A Ray Cooney comedy	Swan Theatre, Yeovil 7.45 pm
Mon 19th to Sat 24th	The King and I The Musical	Little Theatre, Wells 7.30 pm
Wed 21st to Sat 24th	Black Veil Based on a Dickens short story	The Octagon, Yeovil 7.30 pm Matinee Sat 2.30 pm
Thurs 22nd to Sat 24th	Dumb Show A Joe Penhall play	New Theatre, Exeter 7.30 pm
Fri 23rd	'Bill on Will' Maurice Freeland & Pat Harris host	Upstairs at The Mermaid 7.30 pm
Fri 30th	The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde	Bridport Arts Centre 8 pm

MAY 2010

Sun 2nd	Bill Paterson Tales from the Back Green	The Exchange, Sturminster Newton 3 pm
Thurs 6th	Comedy Club Brendon Dempsey	Powell Theatre, Sherborne Doors open 7.30 Show 8.30 pm
Fri 7th	Our Annual Dinner	The Mermaid 7.30 pm
Sat 8th	Sherborne station 150th anniversary celebrations	Pageant Gardens Sherborne 10.30 am onwards
Mon 10th to Sat 15th	Tom Conti in Wife After Death Eric Chappell comedy	Theatre Royal, Bath Mon/Wed 7.30 Thurs/Sat 8 pm Mats Thurs/Sat 2.30
Tues 18th	David Copperfield Bristol Old Vic Theatre School	Tacchi-Morris, Taunton 7.30 pm
Wed 26th	Play-reading Led by Pat Harris	Upstairs at The Mermaid 7.30 pm

New Theatre, Exeter: Box Office 01392 277189. Credit cards: 01392 211080 cygnetnewtheatre.com

Powell Theatre, Sherborne Comedy: Call 01935 810579 www.powelltheatre.co.uk

Little Theatre, Wells: Call Box Office 01749 672289 www.littletheatrewells.org

The Swan: Tickets for 'Out of Order'. Call 01935 845946

Theatre Royal, Bath: Call Box Office 01225 448844 or www.theatreroyal.org.uk

The Octagon, Yeovil: Call Box Office 01935 283884 or www.octagon-theatre.co.uk

Bridport Arts Centre: Call Box office 01308 424204. More info www.bridport-arts.com

Salisbury Playhouse: Box Office 01722 320 333 or www.salisburyplayhouse.com

Tacchi-Morris Arts Centre: Box Office 01823 414141 (10-4 pm & 6.30-7.30 pm) www.tacchi-morris.com

The Exchange Sturminster Newton: Box Office 01258 475137 www.stur-exchange.co.uk

NB: As Diary Dates are compiled in advance, do check with the venue for any programme changes.



If you would like any local performances advertised in the **Dates for your Diary** section please send any details to me at: jim.reville@btinternet.com or give me a ring on (01935) 814626. If I'm not there, leave your message and I will ring you back.

May COPY DEADLINE: Wednesday 28 April

Last Word...

The drama's laws, the drama's patrons give, for we that live to please, must please to live.

Samuel Johnson(1709-1784)