

NOISES OFF

MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW CHAIRMAN

First of all I would like to express heartfelt thanks to my predecessor, Bev Taylor-Wade, for her sterling work as Chairman over the past two seasons. During her term of office APS has gone from strength to strength and under her leadership we have gained a reputation for staging really excellent productions in our new theatre.

This has also been due in no small part to the tireless work of a number of other members — the directors, actors and production teams involved in the past few shows — not forgetting those who have put so much work into making the Sherborne Studio Theatre what it is. However, we cannot rest on our laurels and we seriously need to generate more income, not only to cover our considerable outgoings but also to build up the funds that will, we hope, enable us to undertake the further repairs and improvements to the Theatre that are necessary.

To this end, we hope to stage at least three or four productions a year from now on. But to make that possible, we really do need your help. As a member of APS, please do not think of yourself as being 'just' an actor - or 'just' anything else for that matter. Consider yourself as part of the team and get involved in as many ways as you can. For any production we need not only a director and actors, but also an entire production team. Sets have to be designed and built, productions have to be stage managed, costumes and props have to be found or created, lighting and sound have to be planned and realised, publicity and programmes have to be organised, and the Front of House arrangements have to be managed.

All this requires a considerable amount of effort, and at present tends to be undertaken by a relatively small group of people, some of whom (including me), it has to be said, are regrettably no longer in their first flush of youth. If we are to stage more than two productions a year, we need more help, hopefully from younger members (i.e. anyone under the age of 70!) who will then be able, in time, to take over seamlessly when older members decide to retire. So I am appealing to you — yes, you

— to come forward and volunteer. Please take a look at the list of production roles below and let us know if you think you may be able to help. If you don't volunteer, we will probably come knocking on your door anyway.

With your help, I fully anticipate that APS will have yet another successful season in 2019-2020. I look forward to seeing you on the opening night of the season on September 13th, at 7.30. Do come along to meet old friends and make new ones, and please encourage anyone you know who might like to join The Players to come and meet us. Food, wine and entertainment will be provided.

Mark Lambert

PRODUCTION TEAM ROLES

(VOLUNTEERS WANTED!)

Director

In past few years we have had a shortage of directors, but we are pleased to say that, due in no small part to the success of recent productions, we now have several people willing and able to direct future productions. That's not to say that we don't need more and if you are interested in directing do let us know.

If you don't yet have the necessary confidence but would like to learn more about directing, you could start by acting as an assistant director. All you need to do is indicate your interest.

Production Manager

The Director generally has more than enough to do directing the cast, so a Production Manager is usually required. This person's task is simply to make sure that the rest of the Production Team roles are filled and that everything is running smoothly. For an indoor production in our theatre this is not an especially arduous role.

Set Design

Visualising and planning a set based on the requirements of the play and the director, the size of the stage and, preferably (to keep costs down) the use of as many existing flats as possible.

John Crabtree is currently our main set designer, but if anyone is interested in learning he will be happy to pass on his knowledge.

Set Construction

Realising the set. This involves deciding on which flats to use and if necessary constructing new flats and any other items needed on stage. Some carpentry skills are required. At present we only have a small team of set builders; more are urgently required.

Props

Acquiring the properties and stage dressings for the production as indicated by the Director and/or Set Designer. This is not a difficult job but does require a very organised person and sometimes some skills in making things. Volunteers for this job are always welcome.

Costumes

Deciding, in collaboration with the director, on what costumes to use from our store and what needs to be made or hired. Some sewing skills are usually required, together with an understanding of what costumes are appropriate for the play. Helen Smith currently does the costumes for our productions but she will always welcome any assistance offered and maybe someone to take over completely on occasions.

Lighting

At present we are OK for lighting technicians. Adrian Hole now has an able assistant in Nick Baker.

Sound

Again, we don't need much more help here at present. Storm Cain-O'Grady has

very kindly shown interest in assisting Mark Lambert in future productions.

Graphic Design

Basically the poster design, from which follows the design of smaller leaflets, advertisements and the programme. Some artistic skills are required and preferably the ability to use a computer image editing application, such as Adobe Photoshop, and/or a graphic design application, such as Adobe Indesign (MS Word is not really suitable). Mark Lambert usually undertakes the graphic design at present, but will welcome any offers.

Publicity Manager

Never the most popular task, but nonetheless absolutely essential. No particular skills are required, just an organised mind. The job entails poster and leaflet distribution, arranging advertising in local publications and websites, and ensuring that those on our mailing list are sent appropriate emails. Often as not more than one person is involved.

Front of House Manager

The role of FOH Manager is an important one; every production needs an FOH Manager to be in charge of FOH throughout the show. He or she needs to recruit other staff as necessary, make sure that there are sufficient stocks of refreshments and organise the clearing up after each performance.

Front of House Staff

The FOH staff are the 'front-line' of APS at every show; the presence of attentive and cheerful FOH staff is an important factor in the enjoyment of members of the audience. FOH staff are required to greet people as they arrive, check their tickets, sell programmes and drinks, and generally look after them. If you are not doing anything else for a show, please volunteer.

Box Office Manager

Ticket sales are currently managed online, via an external agency. The Box Office Manager liaises with this agency in advance of the ticket sales period. Once ticket sales are under way, he or she must be readily available on the end of a telephone in order to help customers who have difficulties with online booking or wish to cancel/change their tickets. He or she must also provide FOH with all necessary information at each performance.

FUN THINGS!

With at least three productions scheduled already, it's going to be a busy year ahead. Nevertheless, the Committee is keen to re-establish the tradition of APS members meeting on a regular basis for fun and socialising.

As well as the Opening Night on September 13th, we are hoping to establish a calendar of regular events.

We are starting with a play-reading on August 27th (see below), and a Quiz Night on October 16th. In the hope that these are successful and are well-supported by APS members and friends, we have pencilled in twice-monthly dates (the third Wednesday and last Tuesday of each month) for further quizzes and theatre-based activities (including, but not necessarily limited to, play-readings).

So PLEASE make a note of these dates. The later ones are provisional, and may be changed if, for example, rehearsals get in the way, or if they are not well enough supported.

Although committee members and APS stalwarts will take responsibility for some of these, we can't do them all! Please get in touch if you would be prepared to organise something which other members would enjoy.

Please see the list of dates below - decide what you can offer and when you can offer it. Then offer!

SOCIAL CALENDAR 2019-2020

All events start at 7.30pm.

Tue August 27th Play Reading (see below)

Fri September 13th Opening Night (see above)

Wed October 16th Quiz Night

Tue October 29th Play reading/Drama event

Wed November 20th Quiz Night

Tue November 26th Drama event

Wed December 18th Quiz Night

Wed January 15th Quiz Night

Tue January 28th Drama event

Wed February 19th Quiz night

Tue February 25th Drama event

Wed March 18th Quiz night

Tue March 31st Drama event

Wed April 15th Quiz night

Tue April 28th Drama event

Wed May 25th Quiz night

Tue May 26th Drama event

Wed June 17th Quiz night

Tue June 30th Drama event

Wed July 15th Quiz night

PLAY-READING TUE AUGUST 27TH "A PENNY FOR A SONG"

It is the summer of 1804, and England is bracing itself for invasion by the armies of Napoleon. On the Dorset coast, the eccentric Bellboys family prepare to confront the tyrant in their own individual and bizarre ways - recruiting a force of rustic simpletons (Dad's Army, anyone?), wearing armour, hi-jacking an air-balloon and going down a well. Meanwhile, the daughter of the house falls for a young mercenary with real experience of the horrors of war; after he leaves, the essence of Englishness re-establishes itself through the essential priority of playing cricket. Conceived - unsurprisingly - in 1940, the play affectionately mocks all these eccentric activities, whilst providing a very gentle satire on the futility of war.

Our reading of *A Penny for a Song* will take place in the Sherborne Studio Theatre at 7.30pm on Tuesday 27th August, hosted by Martin Williams.

Do please come along and support, and bring your friends, whether or not members of APS. Everyone has a chance to read, but there is no pressure to participate if you just prefer to listen.

PRODUCTIONS 2019-2020

Productions proposed for the coming season.
All productions start at 7.30pm in the Sherborne Studio Theatre

*Mon October 7th - Sat
October 12th*

"The Day After the Fair" by Frank Harvey

*Mon December 9th -
Saturday December 14th
(Provisional)*

"Man with a Load of Mischief" by Ashley Dukes

Thu April 9th - Sat April 11th
"Waiting for Godot" by Samuel Beckett

Further details to follow.

THEATRE PROGRESS

Although we have been officially open for more than a year now, work has continued, and is continuing, in order to make our lovely theatre even more perfect(!), and to get it into a position where it can be hired out to external users (this boosting our funds, of course). Since the last report the following has been done: The floorboards in the foyer and near the front door have been repaired; the threshold of the disabled toilet has been made good and cemented; dimmable house lights have been installed; worktops, a shelf and make-up mirrors have been installed in the Green Room; the double doors between the auditorium and the foyer have been painted red and the windows blacked-out; a light-proof (and insulating) red velvet curtain has been hung at the main entrance door; and the gallery is now able to be sealed off with a lockable trapdoor. At the time of writing, a

drinks cooler and a portable disabled access ramp have been placed on order, and will be in position ready for our October production.

There is light at the end of the tunnel! From the original list of hundreds of jobs to be done, in the next few months we expect to be nearing the end. We intend to buy and install a CCTV system so that the backstage crew can see and be aware of what is taking place on stage. We want to illuminate our handsome external signboard above the entrance. There is some cosmetic work to do near the stage door, and we want to convert the kitchen door into a stable-type door, useful for serving teas/coffees. Once the gallery has been cleared of a certain amount of residual clutter, we also want to create a nicely-organised storage area for props.

Some challenges remain intractable, however. Heating and insulation for the winter months is a thorny issue. We would love to be able to create some form of tiered or raised seating in the auditorium. We also have a major problem with the storage of scenery, currently managed through the goodwill of the owner of a private garage. (Does anyone else have a garage we could use?) We continue to manage to work round these problems, but are aware that longer-term solutions are needed. One thing is clear - it is essential to keep producing successful plays, to run money-spinning events and to try to swell our membership, because it seems inevitable that the answer to some of these problems will lie in the financial health of the APS.

"The Theatre Team"

HIRING

We have finally reached a position where we can advertise the facilities of the Theatre for hire to outside users.

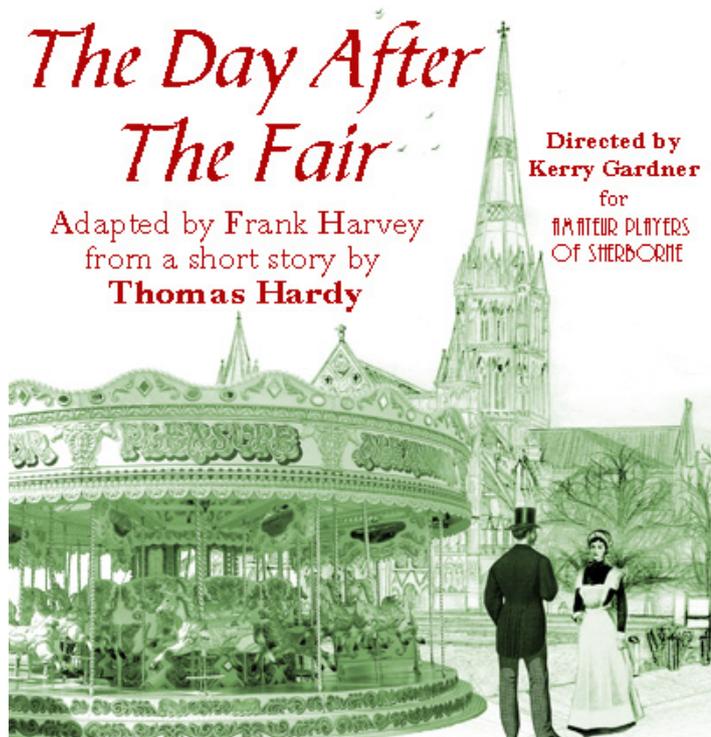
The auditorium space, the stage (if not in use), the kitchen and toilets are all available for hire, and we are currently working on a marketing strategy. Meanwhile, if you (or anyone you know) wishes to hire the Theatre, at a charge of £25 per session, please see the website for details, or email theatre@aps-sherborne.co.uk

"THE DAY AFTER THE FAIR"

The Day After The Fair

Adapted by Frank Harvey
from a short story by
Thomas Hardy

Directed by
Kerry Gardner
for
AMATEUR PLAYERS
OF SHERBORNE



Our next production, "The Day after the Fair" (October 7th-12th) has been cast, and rehearsals are already well under way. We have been delighted to welcome veteran director Kerry Gardner to work for the first time with APS. An amazing turnout of well over 20 people attended the initial read-through; John Crabtree has designed and produced a wonderful set design, and everything looks to be in place to extend our recent successes.

The cast comprises:

Patrick Knox (Arthur)

Rachael Alexander (Anna)

Sarah Easterbrook (Edith)

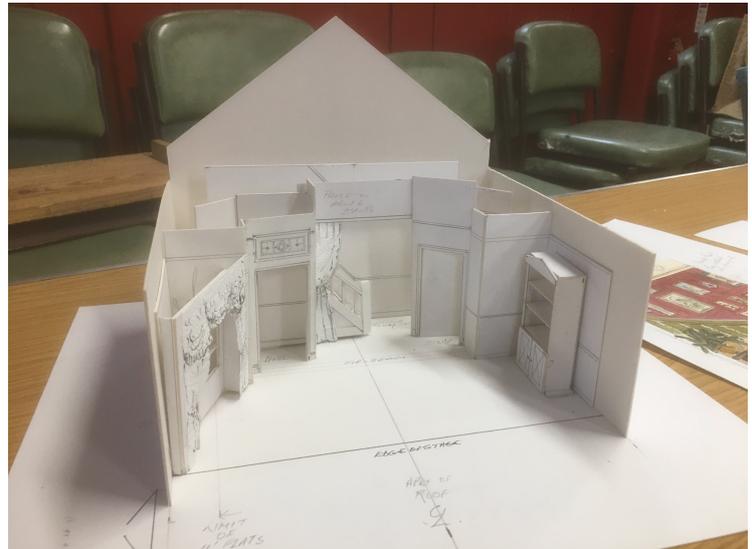
Sara Sadegh-Tehrani (Sara)

Jessica Colson (Lettie)

Richard Jones (Charles)



Launch meeting



John's designs



CANDID SHOTS FROM REHEARSAL



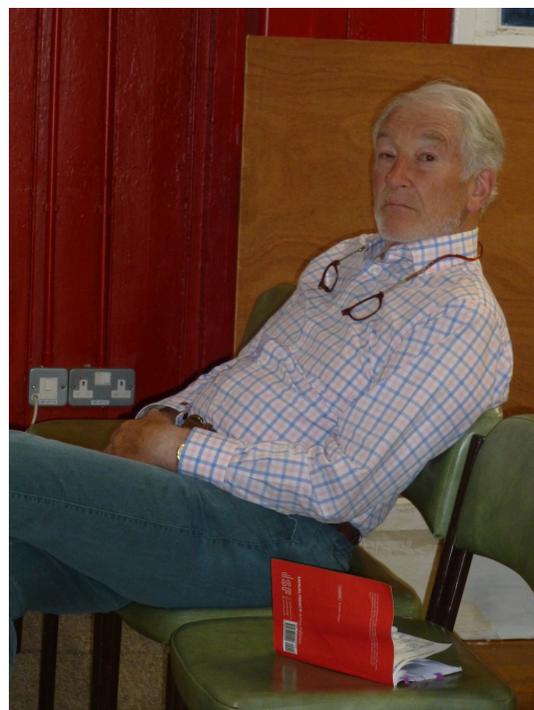
*John Crabtree and Kerry Gardner
(Designer and Director)*



*Sarah Easterbrook (Edith) and
Richard Jones(Charles)*



*Sara Tehrani (Anna) - never
too early to learn lines!*



*Patrick Knox (Arthur)
(obviously knows them
already!)*