

APS Newsletter

December
2007 &
January
2008

FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

Congratulations to Jennie Ward and her excellent cast and backstage crew for such splendid performances of 'Out of Sight-Out of Murder'. Anyone who did not see it missed a very good evening but I hope every member did manage to support the production.

It seems we have now reached a 'Cranford' moment because it is time for change! We have been given formal notice to quit Sherborne House. The date for moving out is the 29th February 2008 so our Fish & Chip Quiz on the 4th February will be our last social evening in the present Clubroom. Therefore let us make it a good one with full attendance. The evenings so far have been well supported and enjoyable.

Your Committee is trying very hard to find alternative premises for a Clubroom and rehearsal space and we will keep you up to date with what is happening. If anyone has any ideas, or space, please let us know.

It is not a time to be despondent but a time to look forward to a new challenge.

Patricia



LAST MONTHS CLUB SOCIAL EVENTS

As we were staging the play Out of Sight ... Out of Murder, there was only one social event held at the Club room. This was an unrehearsed reading of The Lady's Not for Burning and should have been led by Margaret Field, however as Tony was in hospital, our worthy Chairman Patricia stood in and a most enjoyable evening was held. I should add - Tony is now back from hospital and doing very well!



SOCIAL EVENTS IN DECEMBER

'Party Pieces Revived' on Monday 3rd December at the Club Room. This will be when you're Committee and Friends will entertain you (allegedly). If anyone wants to be involved please bring something along.

Christmas Party on Friday 14th December from 7.30 pm at The Cider House, Over Compton, home of Adrian and Miyoko Thorpe. Cost will be £3 (students free), pay at the door: to include food and a glass of mulled wine (or soft drink), subsequent drinks at APS prices. The theme this year is 'Wear something to do with Christmas!' There will be a prize for the best outfit. Please remember to bring a KFS, bowl and plate (glasses will be provided).

The Cider House is exactly opposite Trencherman's at Over Compton. If you're not sure where that is, ring Adrian and Miyoko on 01935 431321 for instructions. There is limited parking in the courtyard. If possible, park outside or in the car park of St Michael's Church.



THEATRE VISIT

We have arranged a "Theatre Day" at Salisbury Playhouse on 14 February 2008. The programme is as follows:

- 10.26 Leave Sherborne by train. Fare with group ticket approx £6 pp.
- 11.15 Arrive Salisbury station and walk (or taxi if preferred) to Playhouse.
- 11.30 "Theatre Day" in the main auditorium & backstage offering, insights into both the artistic & technical processes behind the show. Cost £5pp
- 13.00 Lunch cannot be pre-booked but is available at the Theatre restaurant (£5 to £10 for 2 courses) or make your own arrangements.
- 14.30 Matinee performance of "The Herbal Bed" by Peter Whelan. Cost £10pp.
- 17.53 Leave Salisbury by train.
- 18.33 Arrive Sherborne station.

Synopsis:

John Hall, a physician, is married to Shakespeare's daughter, Susannah. When a neighbour is spotted leaving their herb garden at night Susannah is accused of adultery and of gathering herbs for a purpose far from innocent. Accusations and denials are fought out in the courts at Worcester Cathedral where Susannah tries to protect her name and her husband's practice.

There are only a few seats left. If you want to come along please contact David at drysmith@fish.co.uk or on 01935 817439. Last date for booking is 7th January 2008 (which is also the date for payment) or when all places are reserved.



HELP WITH THE WARDROBE / PROPS

Work is continuing and progress being made regards cataloguing the Wardrobe / Props. If you are able to offer your help for a few hours, please contact Jakki either on 01935 389201 or drop an email to tandjax@yahoo.co.uk. This is particularly important now as we are moving out of the Clubroom, as any props held at the clubroom / store room will need to be moved up to the Castle and space found for them.



FUTURE EVENTS

SPRING PRODUCTION – 23rd March – 29th March 2008

This will be 'Lettice and Lovage' a comedy by Peter Shaffer and will be directed by Patricia Harris.

This delightful and witty play commenced a long run at London's Globe Theatre in 1987, starring Maggie Smith and Margaret Tyzack.

Daughter of an actress who toured with an all-female company playing Shakespeare's plays Lettice has inherited both theatricality and eccentricity. Now employed as a tourist guide in a shabby stately home, she enlivens its dull history with her own over-imaginative fantasies, until she is caught in the act and promptly sacked. She is later visited by the starchy Preservation trust official who fired her, and an unlikely friendship develops between the two.

Cast: Lettice Douffet	middle aged
Charlotte Schoen	middle aged
Miss Framer	30's (This is a very small part)
Mr. Bardolph	middle aged
A surly man	very small part
Other members of the public (non-speaking)	

AUDITIONS are on MONDAY 10TH December at
7.30pm
at the Clubroom

If you cannot make this day but are interested in being involved either in acting or backstage, please ring Patricia Harris on 01963-210462 or e-mail: patriciawallerharris@hotmail.com

ANNUAL DINNER - George Pearson would like to remind you that the Annual Dinner will be held at The Crown Hotel, Sherborne, on Friday 15th February 2008 at 7 p.m.

for 7.30. There will be a choice of menus and tickets will be £20 each, (the same price as last year) dress to be lounge suits. The speaker will be Mr Jim Donnelly of The Powell Theatre and parking has been arranged with the kind cooperation of the International School. Menus will be available soon. Further details from George on 01935 851194.

DIRECTOR'S MEETING - Please note that March 13th 2008 as shown in the Programme, is a 'Directors' Meeting'. If you would like to direct a play or have a particular play in mind, please keep this date free and come along. We have to plan our future productions, so please don't be shy, come along with your ideas. It is your society and we need your support and abilities to make sure we have future productions.

THE WOODLANDERS - We have been asked by "The Friends of Sherborne Library" to show them our film of "The Woodlanders" and this has been arranged for April 5th 2008 at 7.15pm in the library.



WHAT HAPPENS BACKSTAGE

As our Chairman mentioned earlier, those who came along to Out of Sight ...Out of Murder enjoyed a good old fashioned murder mystery with a bit of a twist. The audience were able to appreciate all the work the actors put into portraying the characters of the play, but in order to support the actors a lot of work goes on behind the scenes. Backstage there are folks involved with Sound, Lightening, Wardrobe, Wigs, Makeup, Set Building, Set Decorating, Props and Stage Management. (This doesn't include folks involved in Front of House, Refreshments and Publicity!) So you can appreciate the amount of work and support required for a production, each Newsletter edition will include an outline of what each of the above entail.

Stage Management

The only time the audience would ever know anyone was backstage is when a number of bodies come on stage to move furniture / scenery / props around, or heaven forbid the lights go down! Where there are no set changes, the audience is unaware of anything going on behind the scenes. Stage Management doesn't just take place at the time of the performance; it involves lots of planning to be done from the start of rehearsals. The Stage Manager (or SM) gets together along with the technical side (Sound and Lightening), Props, Set Designer, Publicity, Producer and Director, and they discuss what is required up to and during the performance. The main purpose of the SM is to ensure that artistically, the performance takes place the way the Director wants the play to be performed. This sometimes means that compromises have to take place, however the Directors wishes are always tried to be achieved.

The SM is responsible for

- starting all performances – this involves keeping the actors, technical crew and front of house apprised of the time before the performance begins and ensuring that everyone involved is in the right place and ready to go when it is tabs up.

- the health and safety of everyone who is involved backstage and performing. So prior to any performance the set is checked to ensure it is safe and secure, any effects are safe and working and Props are ready.
- keeping the 'Book'. This is a copy of the script with the actors movements noted - where they will be positioned and where they will enter and exit from the stage. (The SM attends a number of the early rehearsals to ensure these are correct) Also included are any stage sound effects as well as lighting and sound cues. It varies on the technical crew involved, but the SM if required will prompt the technical side re the cues. So the actors can get comfortable with sound / light effects, and if it is possible, the SM should make sure that these start as soon as possible during the rehearsals.
- planning out any set changes – who does what and when. Generally these should be done as quickly and silently as possible and depending on the Directors wishes can be carried out behind closed tabs or on an open stage. These should be practiced as often as possible to ensure that all the crew know exactly what they are doing, however as we only get into the hall a few days before a performance starts and the set has to be built, practice for the backstage crew usually comes down to the technical and two full rehearsals. We don't get long to perfect our performance!
- running the Technical Rehearsal – this is one of the more important jobs for the SM as it brings together all sound, lighting, props and stage plans to ensure the vision of the Director is met for the performance. In the case of APS performances, this usually takes place on a Monday evening and we try to keep it as short as possible hence the need for thorough planning by the SM in how this is run. During the Technical Rehearsal, all the effects – sound and lightening, props and scene changes are rehearsed for the first time. A Technical Rehearsal is not a full run through of the play, but only covers those areas where changes take place, and each change can be repeated a number of times to ensure timings are correct.

Finally things are ready and the Director relinquishes control of the performance to the SM and backstage takes over. The SM should always have tight control of all the performances and for a good performance things should run on time and to the Book!

As you can see, the SM is involved from the very start of the play, getting the Book up to speed, planning how changes take place and when cues are due – all this so that the audience can see and enjoy the play and production to the best advantage. And if all goes well, they don't know any of us are there!



THE WRIGGLE VALLEY PLAYERS PRESENT THE SNOWQUEEN

The Snow Queen is a delightful tale of wonder and magic and is performed by the children of the Wriggle Valley Players at Thornford Hall on the 7th and 8th December. It is ideal for children of all ages (including much older ones!) so do try to come along and support this small troupe. The show commences at 7:00 pm. Tickets on the door - £5.00 and £3.00 concession.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO PRODUCE A FILM?

A small group has been formed called “The Sherborne Documentary Film Group” to produce films / DVDs that are of interest to Sherborne. The Group are currently copying and saving old cine films etc of Sherborne and are also learning how to work together as a team to produce a high technical standard of film. (If you would like to join the Group please contact Jim Schofield on 01935 812051.)

If any member of the APS would like to produce a film during the summer, could they make their proposals known to any member of the committee at or before the Directors meeting on the 13th March. Their proposal should include the name of the play, a script, an indication of actor’s availability, locations required and also whether the play has any copyright restrictions. The Producer will be expected to direct the whole production, undertake rehearsals prior to the filming and oversee the editing of the final film. The Documentary Film Group will provide all the technical equipment and expertise required but work under the direction of the Producer.



THE SWAN THEATRE PRESENTS DEMOCRACY BY MICHAEL FRAYN

The Swan Theatre Company in Yeovil is planning to perform Democracy in April 2008, directed by Mark Payne. Democracy is based around the real events in Germany in the 1960’s when Willy Brandt came to power. It is part spy story, part political thriller, part exploration of the theme of what it means to be free, - or not as the case may be. There are ten cracking parts – all I am afraid for men – of all ages. So if you fancy doing some stylised drama on a pretty bare stage with lots of tension, humour and pathos, please come to the readings (please note obviously women very welcome at the reading!) and auditions – see the diary for the dates. If you would like to know more about the play, please contact the director Mark Payne on 01460 73960.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DECEMBER 2007		Venue
Mon 3 rd	Party Pieces Revived	The Club Room at 7:30

Fri 7 th and Sat 8 th	The SnowQueen	Wriggle Valley Players Thornford Hall at 7:30
Thur 10 th	Auditions for Lettuce and Lovage	The Club Room at 7:30
Fri 14 th	Christmas Party theme this year is 'Wear Something Christmassy'	Cider House Compton Park
JANUARY 2008		
Thurs 10 th	Reading of Democracy	Swan Theatre, Yeovil at 7:30pm
Thurs 17 th	Auditions for Democracy	Swan Theatre, Yeovil at 7:30pm
Sun 20 th	Auditions for Democracy	Swan Theatre, Yeovil at 2:30pm
Thurs 24 th	An unrehearsed play reading	The Club Room at 7:30pm
FEBRUARY 2008		
Mon 4 th	Fish and Chip Quiz	The Club Room at 7:30pm
Thur 14 th	Outing to see The Herbal Bed	Salisbury Theatre
Fri 15 th	Annual Dinner	Crown Hotel Sherborne



From the Editor, Elaine

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding our move out of the Clubroom, please contact either Patricia our Chairman or myself.

I would like to remind folk that even though you may not be personally involved with a production, it is very helpful if folk are able to come along during production week to

help with both the 'get in' and striking of the set. I have noticed that for the last few productions (particularly the last one) the same people - those involved with the play - turn up to help and very few others appeared. Both the 'get in' and striking of the set involve a lot of work; and in case you don't feel able to wield a drill or a screwdriver, its not just set building. There are things to do in the dressing room as well as general tidying and once built, painting the set. We are a club and if you can spare even a few hours on either of these days, it would be much appreciated. Next production, see if you can spare some time to come along and help.

In the Dates for your Diary section, I have included some of the local performances taking place around the Sherborne area. If you know of any other music / theatre events taking place, please let me know and I can included it in the next Newsletter. Please send any information to me at elaine@grumpyhaggis.com or give me a ring -01935 873085 - if I am not there, I will call you back.

As it is the festive season, I will not be producing a Newsletter for January, hence the rather long diary section covering February as well. Finally, it remains for the committee and me to wish you and yours a Happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Elaine

