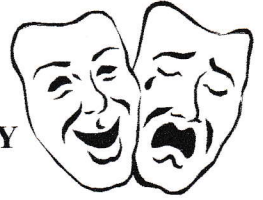


# AMATEUR PLAYERS OF SHERBORNE

# Newsletter

FEBRUARY  
1997



Spring is just around the corner, or it will be very soon, and so it's time to bring you up to date with events again. The spring productions are cast, rehearsals for the DDL are well under way and rehearsals for the other two plays will be starting shortly.

Before going into that, however, a final report on *Trelawny of the Wells*. Having completed the accounts, our Treasurer reports that the final profit was £409--not bad at all, considering that a cast of 23 had to be kitted out in period costumes, and rehearsals were conducted in various halls, which had to be paid for. Since I wrote the last newsletter we have received James Patrick's adjudication for the Rose Bowl Competition, which was most favourable. He was greatly taken with the fact that we had managed to present the play on the stage, rather than in the round, with three changes of sets. He was most complimentary about these and the stage management in general.

Costumes, props, lighting and sound were all praised, as of course was Jennie's direction. The actors, too, were commended for their performances, with phrases such as 'good vocal technique', 'mastery of stage movement', 'good contact with the audience' and 'impressive energy levels'. Individual performances were variously described as 'vital and natural', 'fascinating', 'a revelation', 'believable', 'fine', 'splendid', and 'tons of fun', and James Patrick concluded with the comment that "there are no small parts; only small actors--and there are certainly no small actors among the Amateur Players of Sherborne".

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After some deliberation the committee decided that the spring production should consist of three John Mortimer plays, as originally planned. The three plays are *Lunch Hour*, *Knightsbridge* and *Edwin*. Details of directors and casts are on this page. We still need a Front of House Manager; volunteers for this and for FOH assistants would be welcome.

At one stage it was hoped to present two of these plays at the Dorset Drama League Festival, but sadly it has not proved possible and *Lunch Hour* is now our only DDL production. The Festival will take place in the Ocean Room of The Pavilion in Weymouth (near the Old Harbour). It starts on Thursday 13th March and our company will be performing in the evening of Saturday 15th. Please come and support our actors if you possibly can.

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It is also time to start thinking seriously about our autumn production. One or two suggestions have been put forward, but nothing is yet written in stone and if there is anyone who is even vaguely toying with the idea of directing something, now is the time to say so. The committee would also welcome your suggestions for plays (by making a suggestion, you are not committing yourself to directing it), so if there is a play you have seen or heard about that you think might be suitable, do let a member of the committee know about it.

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Soon after Christmas the club evenings continued with Meg Whittingdale's Give Us A Clue. This has become an annual event, and long may it do so, as it is always one of the most popular evenings of the year. This time there were 26 people present and as usual we were divided into two teams. I understand that Meg's son makes up the list of titles of films, books, plays, etc, and on this occasion he had managed to find a high proportion that many of us had never heard of before, which always makes guessing a great deal more difficult. Even so, some talented miming managed to convey most of the titles across successfully. I forget which team won, but it is not important as this evening is more about taking part than winning.

This was followed at the end of January by Remember Shakespeare, presented by Gill and Tony Manns. In his preamble, Tony said that the evening should perhaps have been called 'Don't Forget Shakespeare' as the rehearsed reading of *As You Like It* that followed was by way of a reminder to us all that Shakespeare's plays exist. To date the only Shakespeare plays performed by the Players have been *Much Ado About Nothing*



## Spring Production

An evening with  
**John Mortimer**

### LUNCH HOUR

Directed by **Stuart McCreadie**

The Man	KIERAN MILLAR
The Girl	LOUISE LAMBERT
The Manageress	MALLY LAMBERT

### KNIGHTSBRIDGE

Directed by **Jessica Colson**

Francesca Stokes	SUZANNE FORD
Henry Bulstrode	CHRIS JESSEMAN
Muriel Stokes	JAKKI GREGORY
Man in a Mackintosh	MARK LAMBERT

### EDWIN

Directed by **Tony Field**

Margaret Truscott	MARGARET FIELD
Sir Fennimore Truscott	TONY STEPHENS
Tom Marjoriebanks	DAVID SMITH

Stage Manager	Mark Lambert
FOH Manager	A.Volunteer

## JIM SCHOFIELD'S VIDEOS

- Outside Edge
- The Woodlanders and Music Hall, 1983
- Gentlemen of the Road. A video film; summer 1993
- Toad of Toad Hall, and APS party, 1985
- Ten Times Table, Summer party (Midsummer Nights), Sherborne at Play and Carnival 1986
- Early Carnivals, Copies of cine films 1934-1984
- Dock Brief, Magrite, March 1987
- Pack of Lies, May 1987
- You Never Can Tell, November 1987
- Music Hall, February 1988 (2 hrs 26 mins)
- Trelawny of the "Wells", Nov 1996 (26 mins)

(1942) and *The Tempest* (1977) and so perhaps it is time we put on another one. A cast of 12 performed to an audience of about 30, who seemed to appreciate our efforts.

Future evenings are listed in your programme (if you have lost this you can always ask me for another one), but there are one or two changes. **Salad Days** will now take place on Tuesday 4th March and "**Can Spring be Far Behind**" will be on Wednesday 2nd April. The evening led by Stuart McCreadie on Wednesday 7th May has been changed from a playreading to a quiz, in which small teams will compete against each other for fabulous prizes--or not as the case may be. The date of the **AGM** has also been changed from 19th June to **Wednesday 18th June**. All other dates are as give in the programme. Please see Prompt Corner for an up-to-date list of forthcoming evenings.

While on this subject, it has been suggested that we draw up a roster of people to make coffee on club evenings. Would all those willing to perform this task please contact me on the usual number (01258-817270). Please add your name to the list if you can; the more people willing to do it the less often any one person will have to.

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It is, I know, some time since I first mentioned that we would shortly have to leave the clubroom, due to the building being up for development. The inevitable delays in planning processes have given us some breathing space, but we have now been given definite notice to quit by the end of May and we have just heard that there is a distinct possibility that this date may be brought forward to Easter! The majority of items, of course, make up our wardrobe, and as yet we still have not found anywhere to put these. However, we do now have to move out and the wardrobe will have to go somewhere. A date or dates for this move will be announced via the telephone 'grapevine', and we will need as many people as possible. So please, please be prepared to come and help if you can.

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It is always sad to see long-standing members depart, but Jim and Gwyneth Schofield have decided that, after 25 years with APS, the time has come for them to take a well-earned rest for a while. During their time with The Players, Jim and Gwyneth have both been towers of strength both behind the scenes and front of house. Gwyneth has done sterling work in the wardrobe and props departments. Jim's talents as an engineer have proved wonderfully useful on many occasions, and he has created some marvellous sets, the most recent being the ingenious folding set for *Trelawny of the "Wells"*. Many thanks to both of you for all your help over the years. Incidentally, Jim says that he has a number of video recordings of past productions (see page 1) and that anyone who would like to borrow one is welcome to do so. Jim can be contacted on 01935-812051.

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One of Jim's reasons for deciding to take a less active role is that he is now finding it more difficult to hump scenery and heavy props about, and he comments that "regrettably there seems to be few younger people coming forward to help with these tasks". I have to say that I have some sympathy with this view--as I mentioned in the last newsletter, notably few members of the cast turned up to help dismantle, load up and unload the set of *Trelawny of the "Wells"*. Future set builders will, I know, be grateful if actors could remember that these tasks have to be done, and it really isn't fair to leave the whole thing to the older members and those who have not had the pleasure of being on stage. We will be setting up for the spring production on Saturday 19th April and we will move out again on Sunday 27th. Help will be welcome on both occasions. M.L.

## Life Membership for Meg

Some of you will already be aware that **Meg Whittingdale** has been offered, and has accepted, Life Membership of The Players. The suggestion, made by Tony Field, was immediately and unanimately approved by the rest of the committee and the offer was made at the end of the **Give Us A Clue** evening in January.

To those of us who only joined the Players in recent years, Meg's name is almost synonymous with this particular evening. However, although she has been doing this for 12 years, her association with the players goes back much further--42 years, in fact.

As an actress Meg is renowned for her versatility, and since she joined in 1955

she has taken part in no less than 32 productions. Her first role was that of Sister Josephine in *Bona Venture* (1956) and she played the leading role of Janet Preston in *Home at Seven* (1961). The last occasion she appeared on stage was as Mrs Mopp and various other characters in the wartime radio show, *Those Radio Times*, in 1994. Perhaps her most memorable roles were those of Lady Honoria Cumberleigh in *The Militants* (1980) and, one of her own favourites, Mrs Whyte in *Waters of the Moon* (1983). Mrs Whyte is an 'acid old acid drop' of a housekeeper, who at one point in the play slightly overdoes the imbibing at a party. Joy Saunders recalls that one of the highlights of the performance was an 'inebriated' Mrs Whyte

## Prompt Corner

### Dates for your diaries

All evenings in the Cheap St Church Hall unless otherwise announced later.

Tuesday 4th March

### Salad Days

Hand-picked by Margaret Field

12th-15th March

### Dorset Drama League Festival

of **One Act Plays**, Pavilion, Weymouth  
APS entry, *Lunch Hour*, Sat 15th, evening session, which starts 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 2nd April

### "Can Spring be Far Behind?"

Poetry Readings led by  
Mytyl and Anthony Stephens

Saturday 19th April

### Production week begins

Set up in Digby Hall

Thursday 24th - Saturday 26th April

Performances of

### An evening of John Mortimer Plays

Sunday 27th April

Move sets out of Digby Hall

Wednesday 7th May

### Quiz Night

Arranged by Stuart McCreadie

## WANTED

For *Lunch Hour*, we urgently need a 1960's (or earlier) double bed. Preferably without a tailboard, but we will consider anything of the right period. Please, please, can anyone help?!  
Phone Mark Lambert (01935-817270) or Stuart McCreadie (01963-210548).

rising with some care from a chair and making her way unsteadily across the stage to the piano in order to play.

Meg has not confined her talents to the stage. She has also been involved either as Stage Manager, otherwise backstage or front of house in countless other productions. She took on the office of Secretary to the Players from 1978-1984 and has enjoyed two terms as Chairman, the first from 1970-1973 and the second from 1990-1991.

All in all, a long and distinguished career in APS, and one richly deserving of Life Membership. Congratulations Meg and we all hope that your association with The Players will continue for a long time to come.

M.L.