



FUTURE PRODUCTIONS ANNOUNCED

Celebrating our 75th anniversary, this autumn's production will be 'Tons of Money', opening on 19th November, 2009 exactly the same date it first opened in 1934 and marking the founding of the Amateur Players of Sherborne. It will be directed by Charles Napier.

Our spring production 2010 will be 'King Lear', to be directed by David Duff. For more about our 'new boy' David turn to page 2.



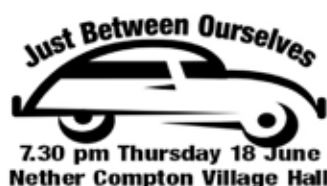
"We opened on Monday, 19th November, 1934 to a good house...the first play ever on a real stage in a real theatre in Sherborne" from 'As it Was' by Fred B Alcock, founder of Amateur Players of Sherborne. And the play - 'Tons of Money'!

and the events, by turns hilarious and harrowing, which take place in Dennis's garage on a series of birthdays over the next year, will change their lives...

LAST MONTH'S SOCIAL EVENT

And a Grand Theatrical Quiz it jolly well was. From trying to identify the actors and plays in pictures displayed around the hall walls to identifying plays only by their initials, to full voice renditions of songs from shows, it was a stimulating and thoroughly enjoyable evening. Many thanks to Charles for a *tour de force* of a quiz, and to his assistants Jennie Ward in good singing voice and accompanist Roy Dinshaw on the electric piano.

OUR NEXT SOCIAL EVENT



There's a treat in store on 18th June. A rehearsed play-reading led by Eve Simmonds of one of Alan Ayckbourn's most popular plays, 'Just Between Ourselves'. It is a bittersweet comedy about love, marriage and relationships.

Dennis hopes to sell his car and thinks he's found a buyer when the hapless Neil turns up seeking a birthday present for his wife.

Negotiations don't quite go according to plan

AGM AND SUMMER PARTY



Our AGM - and Summer Party - will take place at 7.30 pm on Friday 24th July. Jim and Gwyneth Schofield have very kindly agreed to host the event

again at Gainsborough House.

This is your chance to let your Committee know what you think of the way they've managed the society over the past year and to air your views and ideas for the future.

It is also your opportunity to vote for new Committee Members and Officers. Not only that, but actually to propose and second candidates! This year there'll be vacancies for Chairman, and two Ordinary Committee Members. Nomination papers will be sent out about three weeks before.

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Sad to report that one of our members, Margaret Dixon, died in the evening of 13th May. She will be remembered for her direction of a rehearsed play-reading at a club evening of 'The Permanent Way' by David Hare, compelling and thought-provoking piece of political theatre about the state of British railways after privatisation.

A Thanksgiving for Life service was held for her on Friday 22nd May in St James Church, Longburton.

The charge will be £3 per head - payable at the door to cover food (weather permitting a barbecue) and a first drink. Please bring a bottle - alcoholic or otherwise - for second drink onwards.

Please also bring with you cutlery, plate (for main course) and bowl (for pudding) - and take them away afterwards! Plastic cups will be provided. If you happen to have folding garden chairs which you can conveniently carry, please bring them too

As you probably know, on-street parking is not easy on South Street. The nearest public car park is Culverhayes - or you may be able to park in the roads that lead to the railway station.



GRYPHON SCHOOL PREMIERES FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

Students of The Gryphon School have brought to life Thomas Hardy's novel, '*Far From The Madding Crowd*', with a full length feature film shot entirely on location in Thomas Hardy's Wessex.

All the cast are students of The Gryphon School, with ages ranging from 11 - 18 years. Filming started last August and the premiere will be held in The Quarr Hall at the school on Saturday 4th July at 6.30 pm. Tickets for the premiere cost £30 and include a champagne

reception and buffet. A week-long screening follows at 6.45 pm from Monday 6th to Friday 10th. Tickets £5. Parking in the school car park is free.

For reservations and tickets call Annette Brown on 01935 810103.

MIRACLE THEATRE TOURS TARTUFFE

Cornwall's touring company, Miracle Theatre, celebrate their 30th anniversary with a new adaptation of *Tartuffe*, Molière's sharpest comedy.

This is a masterclass in hypocrisy, as fresh and provoking as when it was banned in 1664.

Open air venues near us in July as follows:

Wed 1: 7.30 pm Gillingham School Field. Call 01747 833844 for further information and tickets

Thurs 2: 7.30 pm Millennium Field Bridport. Call 01308 424204 for tickets

Fri 3 & Sat 4: 8 pm Maumbury Rings, Dorchester. Call 01305 266926 for further information

Thurs 23: 7.45 pm ECOS amphitheatre. Call Merlin Theatre 01373 465949 for tickets.

Bring picnics and cushions. **In the event of bad weather performances on 1st and 23rd will come inside.** Check out all venues and details at: www.miracletheatre.co.uk



Amateur Players of Sherborne present



by William Shakespeare
directed by David Duff

(Illustration only)

INTRODUCING DAVID DUFF

Hello, I'm a new boy! Well, actually I'm well past the 'boy' stage, but I am new to your club. Your committee has given me the privilege of directing *King Lear* in the spring of next year so I thought it would be a good idea to introduce myself. My name is David Duff and I

have lived in Milborne Port for nearly 6 years. Before that I was based in the Home Counties and I was an actor and director with the Richmond Shakespeare Society, a club with its own 100-seat theatre on the banks of the Thames in which we produce 8 plays a year, two of which are always Shakespeare.

I have directed: *King John*, *Othello*, *Measure for Measure*, *Troilus & Cressida* and *Hamlet*. In addition, I have directed the following non-Shakespearean plays: *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, *Travesties* and *Arcadia* by Stoppard; *Flare Path* by Rattigan and *Ghosts* by Ibsen. For what it's worth, I have been nominated 5 times for either Best Director or Best Play Production in the annual 'Swan Awards' which covers amateur theatre in the south west London area.

One could describe Shakespeare's range of plays as possessing twin peaks – *Hamlet* and *Lear* – but I would suggest that *Lear* is far and away the highest and most difficult to conquer. It will require a cast filled with determination to climb higher than they have ever done before. As a graduate of the 'Ghenghis Khan School of Directing' let me assure you that I am the man to drive you all onwards and upwards!

I will be arranging a workshop on the play which will provide us all with a chance to meet and assess each other. I do not approach this job with any sense of superiority – I saw your *Julius Caesar* and thought it very well done – but more with a sense of excitement at the chance to work with new actors in a new setting. More details later – so watch this space and feel free to contact me if you wish, David Duff david@davpat.co.uk 01963 250358



(Left: David as Frank Doel in *Eve Simmonds' 'A correspondence between...'* 2 July, 2008, our opening event at Nether Compton Village Hall)

WE'RE BACK IN TOWN!

Yes, from September we're back in town, but not just anywhere. We're back in our very first home where we held our meetings, rehearsals and social events way back in 1937, and where we stayed for the next ten years.

To the left of the picture is car park for around 20 cars and there's also a reasonable amount on on-road parking as well. Behind The Mermaid is a large undulating garden with wonderful, unhindered views for miles - could be a Summer Party venue?



There is a restaurant open everyday and through the evening serving traditional foods. Just the place to grab a bite before or relax after a club evening. As expected, there also is a great selection of wines, spirits and local beers to suit all tastes. A brand new skittles alley has been built. So, perhaps we could have skittles evening sometime.

Next September in The Mermaid!



Edited extract from 'As it Was' by Fred B. Alcock, founder of the Players.
 "Alf, Captain A T Collings...was the landlord of the Mermaid Hotel...[and] closely concerned in the British legion, Sherborne Benevolent Fund. ...at the Mermaid one evening it came about quite naturally and fittingly that a decision was made to 'do a play' for the Benevolent Fund. Alf at once offered his club-room to us for rehearsals free of charge. We declined such open-handed generosity, but the rent we did pay him was little more than sufficient to cover his outgoings.

Thus it was that the Mermaid became the Players' first home and remained so until after Alf's death ten years later....we had the run of the club-room for all rehearsals, conferences and social get-togethers, and the fact that we now had a base did much towards our establishment as a permanent body."

Theatrical Anecdotes



Shortly before a matinee performance of *Peer Gynt* at the Old Vic one day, Wilfrid Lawson met Richard Burton in a pub and invited his fellow thespian to see the show. Burton graciously accepted and they left for the theatre. Lawson, who did not appear in the early scenes, sat with Burton to watch the start of the play. Some twenty minutes later, however, Burton was rather concerned to find his friend still sitting beside him, having made no effort to leave to prepare for his entrance. Finally, Lawson tapped Burton on the arm. "You'll like this bit," he whispered with drunken animation. "This is where I come on!"

IN THIS MONTH

Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, also known by his stage name **Molière**, and considered one of the greatest comedic playwrights in the Western tradition, embarked on a theatrical career this month in 1643.

Among his best-known dramas are *Le Misanthrope*, (*The Misanthrope*), *L'école des femmes* (*The School for Wives*), *Tartuffe ou l'Imposteur*, (*Tartuffe or the Hypocrite*) - see page opposite, *L'Avare ou l'École du mensonge* (*The Miser*), *Le Malade imaginaire* (*The Imaginary Sick*), and *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (*The Bourgeois Gentleman*).

FAMOUS NAMES OF THE STAGE

Born Agnes Sybil Thorndike on October 24, 1882 in Gainsborough, Lincs, she was the daughter of a minor canon of Rochester Cathedral. Her career as a concert pianist was cut short by nerve injuries in her hands and she took up acting. Her debut was with the Ben Greet Players and toured the United States with them. She worked with the Old Vic in Shakespearean repertory and played hundreds of classic roles. She was acclaimed for her performances in Euripides' *Medea* and *The Trojan Women* and she will be remembered forever if only for the fact George Bernard Shaw wrote his classic "Saint Joan" work specifically for her. In her film career she recreated some of her finest theatrical experiences, including *Lady Macbeth* and, of course, *Joan of Arc*. She was made Dame of the British Empire in 1931. In 1969 Sybil lent her name to the new theatre in Leatherhead which became The Thorndike. Despite her 87 years, she performed in the new play *There Was An Old Woman* in its first season. It was to be her final theatrical performance. She died of a heart attack on June 9, 1976 aged 93.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**JUNE 2009**

Thurs 4th	Sherborne Comedy Geoff Boyz, Marcel Lucont, Shelagh Martin. Compere - Demetris Deech	Powell Theatre, Sherborne Doors open 7.30 pm Show begins at 8.30 pm
Fri 12th	Merchant of Venice Festival Players	Montacute House 7.30 pm Call 0844 249 1895
Tues 16th to Wed 17th	The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui Somerset College Performing Arts and The Operating Theatre Company	The Brewhouse, Theatre, Taunton 7.45 pm
Thurs 18th	 Just Between Ourselves Led by Eve Simmonds	Nether Compton Village Hall 7.30 pm
Wed 24th to Sat 27th	Double Death Ilminster Entertainment Society	The Warehouse Theatre, Ilminster 7.30 pm
Fri 26th	Romeo and Juliet Chapterhouse Theatre Company	The Bishop's Palace, Wells 7.30 pm open air.
Sat 27th	Tess of the D'Urbervilles Bristol Old Vic Theatre School	Bridport Arts Centre 7.30pm
Sun 28th	The Mowgli Stories Illyria	Beaminster Manor, North Street 2 pm, gates open 12 noon

JULY 2009

Thurs 2nd July	 'Busman's Honeymoon' A play-reading led by Adrian Thorpe	Nether Compton Village Hall 7.30 pm
Fri 3rd & Sat 4th Mon 6th to Sat 11th	Les Liaisons Dangereuses The Swan Theatre Company	The Swan Theatre, Yeovil 7.45 pm Call 01935 428646
Mon 6th to Fri 10th	Far From The Madding Crowd Film by Gryphon School pupils	The Quarr Hall, Gryphon School 6.45 pm See page 2
Wed 8th to Sat 11th	How The Other Half Loves Alan Ayckbourn comedy	Little Theatre, Wells 7.30 pm
Wed 15th to Sat 18th	Midsummer Night's Dream Shakespeare's Globe	The Brewhouse, Taunton Open air at 7.30, Matinee Sat 3 pm
Thurs 23rd	Moliere's Tartuffe Miracle Theatre Company	Merlin Theatre at ECOS, Frome Open air 7.45 pm See Page 2
Fri 24th	 APS AGM & Summer Party	Gainsborough House, Sherborne 7.30 pm

Bridport Arts Centre: Call 01308 424204 or reserve online at www.bridport-arts.com

Powell Theatre: Call 01935 810579 or www.powelltheatre.co.uk for tickets.

The Brewhouse Theatre: Call 01823 283244 or www.thebrewhouse.net.

Bishop's Palace, Wells: Call 01749 678691 extension 200.

The Warehouse Theatre: Box Office opens 6-8 pm Mondays, 10-12 noon Fridays. Call 070502 189717

Little Theatre, Wells: Call 01749 672280

Beaminster Manor: Call 01308 862943

Merlin Theatre: Call 01373 465949 or www.merlintheatre.co.uk

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

**From Jim, your editor**

If you would like any local performances advertised in the *Dates for your Diary* section in future newsletters or on our website 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.

JULY COPY DEADLINE: SATURDAY 27 JUNE

Last Word...

"The kind of acting I used to enjoy no longer exists because your prime consideration is the budget, running time, the cost - and whether they'll understand it in Milwaukee."

Dirk Bogarde