

# NOISES OFF

## "DARK OF THE MOON"

On November 28th, a dozen or so APS members took part in a play-reading hosted by Gilly Savage. This was a really enjoyable evening where those of us present had the privilege of being introduced to a play new to all of us: "Dark of the Moon" by Howard Richardson and William Berney. This is a powerful drama of love and witchcraft, superstition and bigotry, which transported us all from a dark and chilly evening in Sherborne to the world of the Appalachian Mountains, and the stories and legends of its vernacular folk traditions. Based on the old European song "The Ballad of Barbara Allen", the tale was dramatised in the 1940s and billed as a "legend with music".

The play tells the story of John, a "witch boy" who has fallen in love with the human Barbara Allen, and who is granted the right to become a human and marry her, on condition that she always remain true to him. She gives birth to a witch child,

which is destroyed by the townspeople; subsequently she is violently sexually assaulted, effectively breaking the condition of John's transformation. She dies, and he is forced to return to the world of witchcraft.



This dark and hugely thought-provoking piece was not without its lighter moments - particularly as we wrestled with some wayward accents and the challenges of the dialect! - and we were all really grateful to Gilly for introducing the play to us.

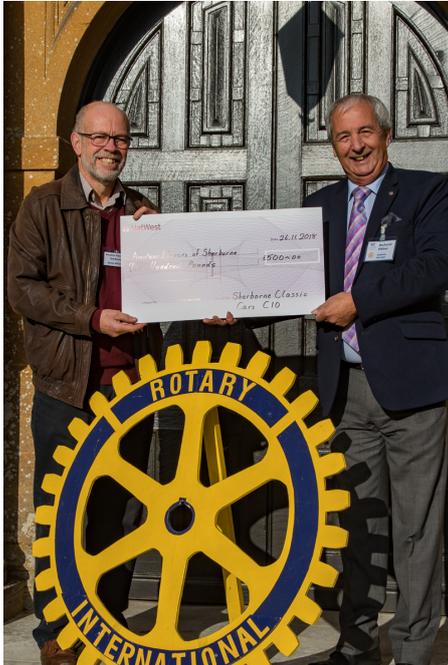
The next play-reading is scheduled for Thursday 24th January. Do come along!

## SST DEVELOPMENTS

Work is continuing to complete fully the Sherborne Studio Theatre. All major structural work has now been finished, and our energies are now being directed to more cosmetic details and "tweaks". A new team has been formed to oversee the management of the building and its use, on behalf of the main APS committee. A caretaking team has also been created to ensure that the facilities are maintained in excellent order. We are especially keen to develop the use of the building as a cultural and artistic hub (not confined to drama), and to make the venue available to the public to hire once all work is finished. If any readers - APS members, friends and acquaintances - are interested in gaining further information, or wish to discuss possible hirings, please send an email to [theatre@aps-sherborne.co.uk](mailto:theatre@aps-sherborne.co.uk)

Similarly, if you would like to help get the theatre ready and be part of running it, we would love to hear from you! 1

DONATION TO APS  
FROM ROTARY



The Classic and Supercars show, held at Sherborne Castle in the summer, is a major fund-raising initiative headed by the combined Rotary Clubs of the Brue Valley, Sherborne Castles and Yeo Vale. This year, as a direct result of the show, the clubs were able to distribute a total of nearly £43,000 to a selection of 16 local charities. APS had applied to be a recipient, and we were very grateful indeed to be granted a gift of £500 from the clubs. On a beautifully sunny morning, Martin Williams was delighted to accept the cheque on behalf of APS.

The show is to be held again in 2019, on 21st July, and, with literally hundreds of classic cars and supercars on display, is well worth a visit. For more information, see [www.classic-supercars.co.uk](http://www.classic-supercars.co.uk)

SPRING PRODUCTION – “THE BIRTHDAY PARTY”

The APS Spring production is to be Harold Pinter’s “The Birthday Party”, taking place in the Sherborne Studio Theatre in the week beginning March 11th. A successful round of auditions was held on November 2nd, and the Director, Bev Taylor-Wade, has assembled a strong cast, blending some new faces with longer-standing APS stalwarts.

Petey: Richard Culham	Lulu: Rachael Alexander
Meg: Gilly Savage	Goldberg: David Weeks
Stanley: Richard Jones	McCann: Joe Travers

With the set to be designed by John Crabtree, we all look forward to another splendid theatrical achievement, and to building on the highly successful start that APS has made in establishing our new theatre in Sherborne.



First get-together, and (below) John’s set design



# OPENING NIGHT AND CHRISTMAS PARTY!!

Friday December 7th saw the festive season properly launched at our annual Christmas get-together and "Opening Night". A well-attended evening, organised by Roy and Linda Catchpole, once again gave an opportunity for a dazzling array of talent to display itself, with suitable (and very necessary) refreshments to be enjoyed by all.

A great evening again, and many thanks, of course, go to Roy and Linda for all their hard work in bringing it all together.

With a selection of photos to give those who weren't there a flavour the event, the APS committee wishes all APS members a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year!

