

# NOISES OFF

## AT THE THEATRE

The theatre has been a hive of activity over the past few weeks. The usual team of Adrian, John and Mark have been hard at work creating the set for "The Birthday Party"; John's vision is already, as always, a joy to behold, with great attention to detail, and care taken to re-create authentically the feel of a seedy seaside boarding house in the 1950s. With little over a week until opening night, work is continuing apace.

Meanwhile, the fabric of the building continues to demand our attention. The refurbishment of the kitchen is now complete, with wall shelving installed and the sink area tiled; shelving has been installed in the Green Room and in the foyer; both toilets are now complete, and the floor in the repainted entrance porch - previously something of a health hazard! - has been stripped out and replaced.

Before (!) and after:



Something The Theatre Team is keen to pursue is improving the range of refreshments we sell at performances, and we have been looking into acquiring a small freezer in order to be able to sell ice-creams - something we feel would be very popular, as well as profitable for the society. If you have such a freezer (cabinet-sized) going spare, or know of someone who has one, please contact [theatre@aps-sherborne.co.uk](mailto:theatre@aps-sherborne.co.uk)



## PLAY-READINGS

Since the last *Noises Off*, we have been lucky enough to have two most enjoyable play-reading evenings. In January, Jessica Colson introduced us to "*Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*" by Constance Cox, adapted from a story by Oscar Wilde. This was a hilarious caper involving some classic Wilde humour and language, with more than a dash of P G Wodehouse as well. Then in February, Eve Simmonds brought us "*Pack of Lies*" by Hugh Whitemore, in which a typical suburban family's routine is turned upside-down by the arrival of agents from MI5 wishing to investigate the activities of their friendly and respectable neighbours - who turn out to be spies feeding secrets to Soviet Russia. The play was thought-provoking, examining as it did the impact of deception on a long-standing friendship. Based on actual events, it took us back to the days of Burgess, Philby, Mclean *et al*.

## NEXT PLAY-READING

## ‘ROLEPLAY’

by ALAN AYCKBOURN

*RolePlay*, finds Ayckbourn at his classic best, with the action set, as on so many previous occasions, at a disastrous dinner party. Julie-Ann and Justin are preparing a family dinner at their apartment to announce their engagement. It will be the first time they meet their potential in-laws.

It's obvious that Justin and Julie-Anne are rushing into things, although devoted to one another they are not particularly well matched. As they warn each other about their parents, it's also clear that marriage is an escape for both of them. They don't really communicate that well. Julie-Ann announces that she wants them to stop living together until the wedding, and describes her honeymoon fantasy to Justin. It's clear that she wants fairy-tale romance, not reality - she's deluding herself if she thinks he can fulfil her dreams. Their different priorities are soon clear enough: a missing dinner fork is a major disaster for Julie-Ann and when she rushes out to find one, an unexpected guest drops in -- literally. Justin finds Paige dangling from the balcony trying to escape her corrupt and violent boxing promoter boyfriend. His bodyguard Micky comes after her, but she won't return to the apartment, and he can't force her. So they stay for dinner. The invited guests finally come too, with

Justin's mother nicely drunk and Julie-Ann's parents who are intolerably cheery.

Our reading of *RolePlay* will take place in the Sherborne Studio Theatre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 27th March, hosted by Sarah Webster.

*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.*

## DAYTIME ACTIVITIES

It has been suggested that some APS members might prefer (or only be able) to attend functions such as play-readings in afternoons, rather than evenings. We are very happy to consider this proposal, and there are committee members who would be more than ready to hold afternoon sessions. Any APS member, whether or not on the committee, would of course also be welcome to hold an event. In order to judge the scale of interest, please send an email to [theatre@aps-sherborne.co.uk](mailto:theatre@aps-sherborne.co.uk), if you would be interested in attending an afternoon play-reading, or anything else. We are looking over the coming months to develop further activities, and if you have any suggestions - quizzes? bingo? films? etc - please let us know.

## MSND

Just when you thought you'd heard the last of last summer's "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*", you'll be delighted to hear that, following our triumphs at the Rosebowl Awards, the production has been nominated in two categories for the NODA South-West Awards: the NODA SW Councillors Cup and the Peter Wheeldon Memorial Trophy (for company crafted productions).

NODA is the National Operatic and Dramatic Association, which exists to support local amateur theatre.

The ceremony takes place in Plymouth on March 16th; Adrian Harding will again be there representing us on the red carpet, and we hope to be able to give you news of what takes place in our next edition.

‘THE BIRTHDAY PARTY’  
- HELP WANTED

## FRONT OF HOUSE

Can you help with Front of House for "*The Birthday Party*"?

We need help particularly on Tuesday - Thursday (12th-14th) and Saturday (16th March), but any offer will be appreciated. Please contact Linda: [linda.catchpole02@gmail.com](mailto:linda.catchpole02@gmail.com) or 07504 330661

## BROWN COAT

Can you lend us a workman's brown coat (such as worn by Ronnie Barker in "*Open All Hours*")? Please contact Jane: [janemacwilliams@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:janemacwilliams@hotmail.co.uk)

## THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

The final countdown is under way for our Spring production of Pinter's classic "The Birthday Party", directed by Bev Taylor-Wade, and starring several actors making their APS debut. Rehearsals have been intensive but rewarding, and with the action taking place on John Crabtree's magnificent set, audiences are in for a real treat. Ticket sales are brisk, especially Saturday and Wednesday, with only a few seats left for the Wednesday. Please visit our website ([www.aps-sherborne.co.uk](http://www.aps-sherborne.co.uk)) for more information, and to view some more of the rehearsal photographs. Also to book your tickets, if you haven't yet done so!

## TICKETING

Following the successful introduction of online ticket sales last year, we have now discontinued selling tickets through local shops, which was a cumbersome process and one in which it was hard to keep track of what had been sold and which tickets were still available. Selling via the Internet has allowed us to attract customers from far wider afield, and to increase the profile and visibility of our website.

Sales can still be arranged by phone for those who do not have internet access, but we would very much like to encourage members to use the online booking facility if at all possible.



Anticlockwise, from top:

**McCann (Joe Travers), Stanley (Gary Brooks) and Goldberg (David Weeks)**

**Lulu (Rachael Alexander) and Stanley**

**Stanley, Meg (Gilly Savage) and Petey (Richard Culham)**

