



AMATEUR PLAYERS OF SHERBORNE

Newsletter

OCTOBER
1997



As many of you know the 97/98 season opened with a bang on September 10th. 43 people were present and by way of entertainment Jakki began by reading aloud Louise Lambert's account of her time in Tanzania, some of which came as news to her parents! This was followed by some improvisation. Jakki selected her 'victims' from among those present and I will long remember Jill Hudson's totally convincing performance as 'hairdresser to the stars'. Even when Michael Baatz, playing the interviewer, suggested that she told us one of the 'many stories' acquired during her 'long career', Jill, after a moment's consternation, kept going for some minutes without actually saying anything at all, until Jakki finally took pity on her and called a halt to the 'interview'. The Crown Inn then provided us with an enormous quantity of food--far more than we could actually cope with and a good time was had by all.



The first members' evening was a play reading arranged by Jennie Harvey-Hull. Jennie had chosen *Under Milk Wood* by D. Thomas Esq and it was impressive how most people managed to cope with the Welsh accents so well. Not an easy play, either to read or to follow--some of the sentences leave you gasping for breath--but we all enjoyed it.

Hrolf Trump's experience of stage work goes back a long way, as the newspaper cuttings in our archives clearly demonstrate, and his talk on lighting on October 7th was both informative and entertaining. The 21 members present now have a much clearer idea of the principles of stage lighting and of some of the effects that can be achieved--not to mention those to be avoided at all costs. With the fairly limited resources available to him he was able to show us the modelling effects of lights at varying angles and describe how to light a set both for the actors and for the set itself. He also showed us how to highlight different areas and create different moods by using coloured gels. Hrolf was ably assisted by Bob Service at the control board and Anna Lorimer as the model Hrolf roped in at the last moment.

Rehearsals for *A Woman of No Importance* are well under way and things are progressing satisfactorily. We had some difficulty in finding someone to play the part of Gerald, as all the young men who live locally were for one reason or another unavailable. However, the part has now been taken by Giles Coghlan, a gap year student, who is valiantly commuting all the way from Salisbury for rehearsals. An updated cast list is shown on this page.

On this occasion Robert Doling is orchestrating the publicity. He has come up with some new ideas, one of which is to provide the library and local bookshop with bookmarks advertising the production. He has designed an excellent, eye-catching poster, and it would be appreciated if all members could try to find places to display copies of both this and the mini-posters he is also producing. In addition, he intends organising a promotional quiz-style competition in Cheap St on Saturday 22nd November and members will be needed to help. For those not involved with this, the stage manager, once again yours truly, will be grateful for help in setting up in the Digby Hall. Robert's telephone number is 01935-816266 and mine, in case you have lost it, is 01258-817270. Please also note the coffee morning on Thursday 27th. The organisers would be grateful if members could bring cakes, jams and other home produce (no jumble, please) to sell.

Nominations for the 1996-97 *Rose Bowl* Drama Awards have at last appeared and congratulations are due to **Jennie Harvey-Hull**, **Holly Burbage**, **Joy Saunders** and **Jim Schofield** for the success of last Autumn's production of *Trelawny Of The "Wells"*. To Jennie's credit, as Director, goes the nomination for Best Production Drama; Holly has been nominated for Best Actress Drama for her performance as Rose Trelawny; Joy has been nominated for Best Supporting Performance Drama for her performance as Miss Trafalgar Gower; and to Jim, who designed and built the set, must go the credit for the nomination for the Joan and Walter Hawkins Award for Creativity and Design. Results will be known on October 26th and any further news will appear in the next Newsletter.

A Woman of No Importance

Lady Caroline Pontefract	FIZZ LEWIS
Miss Hester Worsley	JULIE-ANN SOUL
Sir John Pontefract	TONY FIELD
Lady Hunstanton	JENNIE HARVEY-HULL
Gerald Arbuthnot	GILES COGHLAN
Mrs Allonby	KATHY MESSINGER
Lady Stutfield	JILL HUDSON
Mr Kelvil	DAVID BOWEN
Lord Illingworth	STUART McCREADIE
Lord Alfred Rufford	MARK LAMBERT
Mrs Arbuthnot	SUE FRANCIS
Archdeacon Daubeny	MICHAEL BAATZ
Farquar, <i>Butler</i>	CHRIS JESSIMAN
Alice, <i>Maid</i>	PATRICIA STEWART
Servant	MADELINE LAMBERT

Director: Margaret Field

Stage Manager: Mark Lambert

Those playing Mr Kelvil, Farquar, Alice and the Servant will also be part of the backstage team and scenes will be changed in costume without drawing the front tabs.

Whats On

Monday 20th - Saturday 25th October
Tom Jones
Swan Theatre

Artsreach Productions
Thursday 13th November, 7.30 p.m.
Richard Derrington
in *Taylor's Tickler*
Nether Compton Village Hall

Saturday 22nd November
Phillip Manikum
in *Scouting For Boys*
Sandford Orcas Village Hall

Friday 5th December, 7.30 p.m.
Told By An Idiot
in *Don't Laugh Its My Life*
Portman Hall, Shillingstone

Membership of the players is starting fall again. At present we have a total of 64 paid-up members, compared to 93 at the end of last season. If your name is not on the list below, either I have made a mistake (in which case please forgive me) or you have not yet paid your subscription. If you do intend to continue being a member, please let Tony Field or me have your subscription (£8.00 or £1.00 for students) as soon as possible, otherwise this is the last Newsletter you will receive!

A membership drive is clearly called for, so if any of you know of anyone who might like to join APS do please encourage them to do so.

You will all be glad to hear that Vivian Vale is now back at home and continuing to make progress. He tells me he hopes to come and see *A Woman of No Importance* on the first night and, if you can make it, Vivian, we all look forward very much to seeing you there.

M.L.

**APS MEMBERSHIP
(October 18th 1997)**

Life Members

Queenie Coles
Jack Dodge
Mary Micklewright
Margery Morgan
Gerald Pitman
Pam Richardson
Joy Saunders
Hrolf Trump
Meg Whittingdale

Annual Members

Michael Baatz
Nathalie Baron
Barbara Beak
Adam Birks-Hay
Tony Birks-Hay
Holly Burbage
Jessica Colson
Andrew Cross
Robert Doling

Margaret Field
Tony Field
Sheila Ford
Suzanne Ford
Sue Francis
Jakki Gregory
Tony Gregory
Jean Harrap
Jennie Harvey-Hull
Marilyn Hawkins
Peter Hawkins
Jill Hudson
Meg Hulme
Anna Jerzykawski
Madeline Lambert
Mark Lambert
Tamsin Lambert
Fizz Lewis
Anna Lorimer
Daisy Mangnall
Gill Manns
Tony Manns
Colin Mayes
Stuart McCreadie

Kathy Messinger
Kieran Millar
Joan Miller
Monica Parsons
Dod Pearson
Michael Quinn
Ann Russell
Bob Service
Jill Service
David Smith
Sylvia Smith
Eve Snell
Joan Snelling
Julie-Ann Soul
Nick Soul
Anthony Stephens
Mytyl Stephens
Deirdre Stewart
Patricia Stewart
Iris Trump
Jack Tucker
Anthea Watson

Prompt Corner

Dates for your diaries

At The Crown Inn, Newell,
Sherborne, 7.30 p.m.,
unless otherwise indicated

Thursday 30th October

A make-up workshop

with Philip Rowe

DO PLEASE ATTEND IF YOU CAN

Wednesday 12th November

A Wilde Music Night - An evening of

contemporary music and readings

with Patricia Stewart and Tony Manns

Saturday 22nd November

Move into Digby Hall and

Cheap St publicity drive

for *A Woman of No Importance*

PLEASE COME AND HELP

WITH ONE OF THESE

Thursday 27th November

Coffee morning, Digby hall

Thursday 27th-Saturday 29th

Performances (incl. Saturday matinee)

of *A Woman of No Importance*

Sunday 30th November

Strike set and move out of Digby Hall

ALL HELP GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

Friday 12th December

Christmas Party

with another Christmas pick'n mix

presented by Mark Lambert

The Actors

As promised, this month's contribution comes from that talented actor and director Vivian Vale. Vivian's interest in the theatre dates from his schooldays and from 1965 to 1985 he was a member of the Southampton University Players. On coming to this area he first joined the Dorchester Dramatic Society, but for the last 14 years he has been a member of The Players. His appearances on stage are too numerous to list here, but his most recent roles were those of General Mackenzie in And Then There Were None and Sir William Gower in Trelawny of the "Wells".

Words, Words, Words - how to remember them and lend them winged utterance.

Paradoxically, the quickest learners may prove to be also the fastest forgetters. Verbal amnesia spares neither youth nor maturity, neither novice nor old pro. At the lower end of the age scale, I recollect my sister-in-law making her first entry in Rep with a resounding "Allow me to introduce myself....", and drying completely. She could hardly have be surprised to observe her

fellow actors with one accord swivelling up-stage, shoulders shaking convulsively. At the upper end, my first boyhood visit to the Old Vic revealed a veteran Lear lurching promptwards in the hope of collecting, under cover of the storm, his third or fourth helping of the text.

He, of course, was coping with the Elizabethan/Jacobean iambic pentameter - always tricky to extemporise in an emergency (for example, the door withstanding all of an actor's attempts to quit the scene). I do recall, many years later, an undergraduate production of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* in which our store of improvised dialogue was ransacked in order to cover the non-appearance of a third party on cue. We did our best to plug the gap along the lines of "How fare you now, my Lord?" "Oh, pretty fair", and much, much more in the same vein until he showed up.

First night nerves don't help, of course. During a fairly recent APS production of Agatha Christie's *A Murder Is Announced*, some of us became aware of being corpsed by a plague of spoonerisms - "So it's me you really inspect, Suspector?" "Yes. You see, we've been swissing with the Czech police" - and so on. Even mild fatigue, too can

affect fluency. A production well and truly "in the round" demands ambulation through 360 degrees to ensure equal attention to all who've paid the same ticket price. Not much sitting down there.

Is there any fail-safe method of memoing? Some actors rely on tape recordings, into which they can insert their own lines like a sort of tuneless karaoke. I recommend a less technical procedure. Get yourself a spouse. He or she may prove surprisingly willing to trade -- thirty minutes of word-checking in exchange for your half hour help at the typewriter or the family cooker.

Thus fortified, your delivery should be proof against all distractions. These in my humble experience, may include the local fire service suddenly invading the S.M.'s walkie-talkie wavelength, an overhead extractor ever so gently lifting the wig, and the scholarly gent in the middle of the front row following his own copy with moving finger and lips.

Finally, diction. Never be so cocky as to reject criticism of this. You may already be an unwitting victim of the dreaded Irritable Vowel Syndrome.

I've just remembered to say "Good luck"!

Vivian Vale