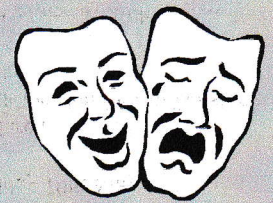




NEWS LETTER



JANUARY 2002

January brings the snow—thus opens Flanders and Swan's timeless 'Song of the Weather'. A useful guide to anyone planning their holidays and ably performed by Jennie Ward and her troupe at the Tenth Night Party—but more of that later.



Ring Round the Moon

The Rose Bowl adjudication (currently on display in the Clubroom) says it all really. The whole production came together extremely well, with highly praised performance from all members of the cast, and I shall be surprised if we don't get one or two nominations later in the year. Even the General got a mention for his "perfect body lan-

guage". Only Hugo's double, although alluded to for "fine doubling techniques", has for obvious reasons never received the full credit due to him—a matter I shall rectify here by conveying publicly the gratitude of the director and cast to Fred Collier for taking on this vital but essentially thankless role.

Expenses for Digby Hall productions are rising (we may have to consider another increase in ticket prices) and our profit this time was just £146. But, as always, Margaret Field directed a play that was not only well acted by a strong cast, but also extremely appealing visually; with some stunning costumes, and a stylish, sparkingly illuminated set. Congratulations to Margaret and the whole team for another highly successful and entertaining production.

Mary Micklewright

Mary died as she had lived—quietly and without fuss, with a cup of coffee at hand, just a few days after doing a stint with refreshments for *Ring Round The Moon*. Illness prevented me from attending her service at Castleton, so I was delighted when Mark asked me to contribute some recollections of her long association with APS.

She joined APS, as I remember, in the 1960s, working diligently backstage wherever help was needed. She painted scenery, built sets with Mad Farrant and Mickey and Jim, did Props, and helped with carnival floats. Those quiet, quick little feet covered many miles; she was the very backbone of Am. Dram.

My fondest memories of her are in the wardrobe. Mary, Wendy (Farley) and I worked together, and when Wendy moved, our partnership continued. She could, and we did, make clothes out of anything—so much cheaper than hiring—and she was a dab hand with hats of any period (a skill which her daughter Sarah inherited). We had many sewing lessons at her house or mine with lots of willing helpers—coffee on tap and wicked Sherborne gossip. For some time we ran a very profitable (for APS) hiring business, but had to give it up because it became too much work. I was delighted to read that the current wardrobe ladies are doing it again!

Wardrobe was always challenging, especially for the big productions, such as the Hardys and Shakespeares. All the leading men wanted Mary for their lightning 'in the wings, in the dark' changes, for she was quick and efficient and never panicked. She used to joke that by their bums she knew them. We shared workboxes, hers always immaculate, mine always a muddle. I made huge demands on Mary, but she never complained and nor did her long suffering David.

For *Dressed for the Part*—a charity costume revue (proceeds to the Yeatman) that showed how we had used the wardrobe over the years—she helped with over a hundred costume changes. Other revues, such as the 1993 production, *One Foot On The Stage*, and Musical Halls, again for charity, also required huge casts to be clad. And sometimes she herself would appear on stage, exhausted but happy, in the final choruses. Not forgetting, of course, normal APS productions, JAPS productions and costume maintenance. And she still found time to help Dorset Opera.

The wardrobe space at the back of Eldridge Pope was our domain and with Mary it was always such fun—her quiet sense of humour, amazing ability to improvise and total unflappability were unforgettable—though she could get very acid over the state of the dressing rooms after a production!!

APS is based on people like Mary. We have lost a good and valued friend.

Pamela Richardson

Prompt Corner

All events at 7.30 pm in the Clubroom, unless otherwise indicated.

Monday 14th January

Improvisation Workshop

First of six Monday workshops

Led by John Sutherland Smith

Remaining workshops on Mondays

21st & 28th Jan, 4th, 11th & 18th Feb

Chairman's evening (was 25th Jan)

CANCELLED

Thursday 31st January

Auditions for *Twelfth Night*

by William Shakespeare

Directed by Jason Hepple

Friday 15th February

Annual Dinner

Sherborne Hotel

1940s Musical Evening (was 7th February)

POSTPONED until after Easter

Friday 1st March

An Unrehearsed Play Reading

Arranged by Jill Hudson

N.B. Nightingales Sing will now

take place on Friday 10th May

Saturday 16th March

Production week for *Hotel Paradiso* starts

9.00 am Digby Hall

Monday 18th - Wednesday 20th March

Technical and dress rehearsals

Digby Hall

Thursday 21st - Saturday 23rd March

Hotel Paradiso; performances; Digby Hall

Sun 24th March

Strike Hotel Paradiso set, am, Digby Hall

Friday 5th April

Chairman's evening

A convivial recruitment evening with

wine and entertainment. **Please bring**

potential new members.

Thursday 11th April

Director's Meeting

Directors present to the Committee their

ideas for for 2003 productions.

Wednesday & Thursday 17th & 18th April

A Rehearsed Play Reading

Presented by Margaret Dixon

Twelfth Night

The Duke's Court (English)

Orsino, Duke of Illyria, 35-50

Curio } Courtiers, 20-40
Valentine }

The Visitors (English)

Sir Andrew Aguecheek, 40+

Viola, later Cesario, 20-30

Sebastian, her twin, 20-30

Antonio, his friend, 20-30

Ages given are only a rough guide. The setting will be the mid-Victorian Raj.

Auditions in the Clubroom, 31st January, 7.30 pm. Please bring an audition piece. If you are interested but cannot attend, contact **Jason Hepple** on **01935 817956**.

**Performances 12th -17th August
at Newland House, Sherborne**

The Countess's Court (Indian)

Olivia, the countess, 30-45

Sir Toby Belch, her uncle, 45+

Malvolio, her steward, 35-50

Maria, her gentlewoman, 35-50

Fabian, a servant, 20-40

Feste, her fool, 20+ (sings)

A priest, 40+

A sea captain, 40+

Attendants, sailors and musicians

Recent events

I'm told that Jennie Ward's entertainment went down very well at the Sherborne House Christmas Party and we could see why when Jennie, together with her troupe—Gill and Tony Manns, Colin Mayes and Janet Vincent, accompanied by Althea Collier—gave us a repeat performance, slightly modified to suit the post-Christmas date, at our own Tenth Night Party. A delightful mixture of songs, poetry and prose, starting with a tour of The Palace given by 'The Queen' (JV) and ending with the aforementioned 'Song of The Weather'. About 50 people came to the party and from what I could see enjoyed themselves very much. A major contribution to everyone's enjoyment was, of course, Jessica Colson's truly excellent cold collation—I have it on good authority that Egon Ronay describes Jessica's food as scrummy!

This year's Give Us A Clue for some reason attracted a smaller turnout than usual—too soon after the party, perhaps? However, this had the advantage that each of the seven members of each team had a chance to perform four mimes, with as always some hilarious results. It doesn't matter, of course, who wins—it's playing the game that counts. Suffice it to say that the white team trounced the pink team 30 to 23 points. Another most enjoyable evening, cunningly hosted by Mally Lambert and Jill Hudson.

While on the subject on winning teams, I have to confess to an error in the last Newsletter; it was of course Team A (Jason Hepple, Lucy Allen and Althea Collier) who were the winning team in the Face the Music evening last October. My apologies to them.

Forthcoming events

By the time you receive this John Sutherland-Smith's **Improvisation Workshops** will be under way. But if you missed the first, which was both entertaining and educational, do consider coming to later workshops—see Prompt Corner for the dates.

Please note that the **Chairman's Evening** due to take place on 25th January has been **cancelled**; work commitments prevent the Chairman from being able to attend. The entertainment that he had planned will now be presented at the next Chairman's evening in April.

Similarly the **1940s evening** due to take place on 7th February has had to be **postponed** until after Easter, owing to the fact that Sue Francis has been unwell. We wish her a speedy recovery.

The next event will therefore be the **Auditions for Twelfth Night** on Thursday 31st January. The director, Jason Hepple, would like those auditioning to bring a piece to perform. This can be from any source (i.e. not necessarily from *Twelfth Night*), and can be learned or read, as desired. The intention is to allow people to demonstrate their acting skills in the best way possible, without having to rely on reading from a script they have never seen before.

On Friday 15th February the **Annual Dinner** will take place at The Sherborne Hotel starting at 7.30 pm. Full details and a booking form can be found on the sheet that accompanies this Newsletter

The folk evening, **Nightingales Sing**, has also been **postponed** until Friday 10th May, due to the spring production commitments of several members of the group. Instead, on Friday 1st March Jill Hudson will present the **Unrehearsed Play Reading** originally scheduled for 7th May.

Production week for the spring production, *Hotel Paradiso*, starts on Saturday 1st March. The set is going to be very complex and so as much help as possible will be needed, particularly on the Saturday morning but also on subsequent days. The play is now cast (see panel opposite) and rehearsals have begun.

The spring production will be followed by the next **Chairman's evening** on Friday 5th April. Please encourage any potential new members to come. Then on Thursday 11th April there will be a **Director's Meeting**, at which Committee would like to meet anyone who thinks they might like to direct one of our productions in 2003. We need to find three plays (at least), so do please come to this meeting if you have any thoughts about directing next year. ML

Lost property

A rather fine biro was left behind in the Digby Hall after *Ring Round the Moon*. It is fat-bodied, black in colour, with a silver top and clip (with 'Sea Gems' engraved), and silver 'scrollwork' depicting what appear to be the interwoven heads of birds of prey. Claimant please contact me.

The blue top and rucksack mentioned in the last Newsletter are still unclaimed. They will shortly find a new home unless there is a claimant. ML

HOTEL PARADISO

Benoit Pinglet	Tony Birks-Hay
Angelique Pinglet	Jennie Ward
Marcelle Palliardin	Kathy Messinger
Henri Palliardin	John Bowles
Maxime	David J. Smith
Victoire	Claire Axelson
Mathieu	Geoff Lewis
Head porter	Adam Birks-Hay
Mathieu's daughters	Katie Mottram
	Samantha Bishop
	Caitlin Stewart
	Fiona Stewart
Bastienne	Madeline Lambert
Boulot	Jason Hepple
Ernest	to be cast
Duchess	Janet Vincent
Chervet	James Simmonds
Inspector Boucard	Patricia Stewart
Vice squad	Jean Harrap
raiding party	Dod Pearson
	Ann Russell

Director: John Sutherland-Smith
Production Manager: Tony Manns

The director writes

My thanks to all who helped in any way with the production of *Ring Round The Moon*. The weeks of rehearsals and planning culminated in a very happy production and a fine critique from the Rose Bowl adjudicator.

The memory of four evenings of well-honed, delightful fun - and the Saturday night view of a huge moon with it's magnificent corona congratulating us - will long remain in my memory. M.H.F.