



# NEWSLETTER



JUNE 2002

Summer is here—in theory, anyway! We can only hope and pray that the weather improves during August. If it doesn't, the marquee we are hiring for the *Twelfth Night* audience may prove to be absolutely essential and the cast will be performing under umbrellas!



## Recent Events

Attendance at some of our recent club evenings has been somewhat lower than usual, and there will be an opportunity at the AGM to discuss this (see later). Even so we have had four most enjoyable evenings since I last wrote. The folk evening, *Nightingales Sing*, in early May was performed by a slightly smaller group. But this made rehearsal easier, and a smaller (than last year) but enthusiastic audience seemed to have a good time.

Later in the same month David and Jenny Peet staged an excellently contrived quiz during which the participants consumed fish and chips. Again, attendance was down on last year, which was a pity as David and Jenny had clearly worked very hard on their questions, and the fourteen people who came divided themselves into just three teams.

The 1930s and 1940s evening devised by Sue Francis and Angela Lindley, aided by Elsie Lombard, proved a little more popular. Some 30 people were there, although ten of those were also taking part. A wide variety of songs and readings were performed with great panache.

The final club evening of the season was an unrehearsed play reading arranged by Tony and Margaret Field. Tony brought *Disposing of The Body* by Hugh Whitmore and on this occasion the turnout was excellent; some 30 members had a most enjoyable time taking it in turns to read. Tony used one end of the room as an acting/reading area and this, together with his commentary, made it easier for the audience to follow the plot.

## AGM

This year's AGM will be held in the clubroom at 7.30 pm on Friday 12th July. As always, one of the main tasks will be to elect a new Committee. The President (Tony Field) and Chariman (Jason Hepple) both have a further year to run of their respective terms of office, so nominations are not required for these posts. Nominations for the remaining offic-

ers are required. Please note that while Janet Vincent and Mark Lambert have indicated their willingness to stand again for Treasurer and Membership Secretary respectively, Jenny Peet will not be standing again as Secretary. At least one nomination for the post of Secretary is thus required urgently.

There will also be elections for at least three new Committee Members. Two of those elected will serve for three years, and the other for one year. Nomination forms for Officers and Committee Members accompany this Newsletter.

At the AGM there will also be an opportunity to discuss future APS evenings. Attendances have never been huge, (20-30 is regarded as quite good for an average evening, while parties usually attract 40+), but they do appear to have been falling off recently. This is actually nothing new; a note in the minutes of the 1974 AGM reads: "It was hoped that members would take more notice of their programmes and circulars and that organisers would not be too disappointed at a poor attendance".

The above sentiment continues to apply, but those who organise evenings do invariably put in a lot of hard work and inevitably feel a little dispirited if only a few members turn up. Clearly there are reasons why people don't come—too busy, too tired or just plain not interested—but the Committee feel that members should have the opportunity to air their views on the subject. At present there is no intention to put the matter to any sort of vote; we just felt that it merited some discussion.

There will, however, be one Resolution to be voted on. This Resolution relates to future exchanges with other groups, such as The Theatre of Préveza from Greece, who came over in 1998 and were due to join us again in Sherborne at the end of the Summer production. Some members are in favour of such exchanges; others are opposed to spending money in this way. Both sides will have the opportunity to put their case at the meeting before the Resolution is put to a vote.

Please note that the result of the vote on this Resolution will not now have any effect upon events in August. I have to report that the Préveza group will not now be coming this year, as they have not been able to raise the necessary money to finance their trip. By the same token, however, the fact

## Prompt Corner

All events at 7.30 pm in the Clubroom unless otherwise indicated

Friday 12th July  
**AGM and Summer Party**

Monday 15th and Wednesday 17th July  
**Auditions for**  
*One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*  
Directed by Tony Birks-Hay  
(Please note change of second date)

Tuesday 6th August  
**Setting up for Twelfth Night**  
Newland House  
All day. Crew Tech at 7.30 pm  
(Tech may be postponed to Wednesday)

Thursday 8th August  
**Technical rehearsal**  
Newland House, 7.00 pm

Friday 9th and Sunday 11th August  
**Dress Rehearsals**  
Newland House  
6.30 pm for 7.30 pm curtain up

Monday 12th - Saturday 17th August  
**Performances of Twelfth Night**  
Newland House, Curtain up 7.30 pm

that they are not now coming does not in any way affect the arguments for or against the Resolution.

## Summer Party

The AGM will, as is now customary, be followed immediately by the Summer Party. Members families are welcome to join us at this point for a convivial get-together. There will be some music, but no entertainment is planned. Please bring a contribution of food. You can also bring beverages if you wish, but there will be wine, beer and soft drinks available at a reasonable cost.

## Auditions

Soon after the AGM, on Monday 15th and Wednesday 17th July, Tony Birks-Hay will be holding auditions for the autumn production of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Please come to the auditions if you are at all interested in taking part, either on or off stage. A list of characters and a brief description of the play is given in the panel overleaf. Tony hopes to be able to cast the play soon after the second audition.

# One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest

Auditions for the autumn production (Digby Hall, 27th/28th-30th November) will take place on Monday 15th and Wednesday 17th July at 7.30 pm in the clubroom. Please note the **change of date for the second audition**; there is no audition on Tuesday 16th July (*Twelfth Night* rehearsal).

The play is set in a mental institution in the USA, in the recent past. It has a tragic outcome and there is strong language, although no violence will be shown on stage. American accents will not be required or expected of all actors.

It may be difficult to find an actor physically big enough for the role of Chief Bromden. If anyone has any suggestions, please contact Tony Birks-Hay. Contact Tony, too, if you cannot attend the auditions but would like to be considered for a part. (01935-850511; alphaimage@marstonhouse.ndo.co.uk)

## Male Characters

**Chief Bromden** 25-55. Very, very tall and burly.

Taciturn, but has soliloquies to the audience.

**McMurphy** 30-45. Dynamic, clever, sympathetic. The leading role.

**Mr Harding** 40-60 Intellectual patient. Sympathetic role.

**Billy Bibbit** 25-35 Inexperienced, shy, stammering patient.

**Scanlon** 30-55 Darkly assertive patient.

**Cheswick** 30-55 Alternately truculent and cringing patient.

**Martini** 30-55 Small, mercurial, hallucinating patient.

**Ruckly** 30-55 Manic patient with few but strongly expressed lines

**Warren }  
Williams }** 20-35 Two loutish and sometimes aggressive male hospital aides.

**Dr Spivey** 40-65 Well intentioned but feeble character.

**Turkle** 50-70 Alcoholic night warder. Small role.

Additionally, there could be one or two walk-on parts for males.

## Female characters

**Nurse Ratched** 45-55 Domineering but frustrated woman, the leading female role.

**Nurse Flynn** 25-35 Timid nurse, out of her depth.

**Candy** 30-40 Bright, clever attractive tart.

**Sandra** 20-35 Attractive tart. Less clever. Very small part.

## Twelfth Night

The Summer production is currently under way, but has not been without its problems. At the time of writing three roles are unfilled and it looks as though the power source (a generator because the house mains supply is not suitable) is going to be very expensive. I understand that rehearsals have been going reasonably well, although inevitably there have been people on holiday at various times, and July looks like being a busy time for the cast. The cast list as it stands at present is shown opposite.

## APS Library

Some of you will have already noticed that our collection of plays is now installed on new shelving in the clubroom. In fact this collection is probably more accessible than it has been for a long time. It is displayed on shelves rather than in a filing cabinet and

the whole library has been recatalogued. It is now very easy to find particular plays or authors. Titles are arranged by author on the shelves and the catalogue contains sections of full length plays and one-act plays (both in alphabetical order by title) and a full author index. Please feel free to borrow books from the library, but do please fill in the loans book so that we can keep track of what's there.

It has to be said, however, that our library is somewhat oriented towards plays written in first half of the 20th century—in fact only 36 of the 220 full length plays listed in the catalogue date from later than 1960. If anyone has any spare copies of plays they don't want, donations of more titles for the library would be most welcome, particularly those that redress this imbalance. Please put any donated books in the box provided, so that they can be catalogued before being added to those on the shelves.

## Charity status

You may be interested to know that the Committee is about to apply for The Players to become a registered charity—on the grounds of service to the community. There is no guarantee that such an application will be approved, but it would appear that we already operate in a way that would be compatible with the Charity Commission rules.

If we are successful, there will be some financial advantages; it will be possible to reclaim tax paid on subscriptions and we may be able to get grants to help with such things as the purchase of new lighting equipment.

There are no apparent disadvantages. It is true that Committee Members become responsible for seeing that the rules are adhered to and are personally liable in the event of any breach of trust. However, such liability would only occur in circumstances that involved a serious contravention of our own rules and we do not envisage any problem at all in this respect.

At present we do not have much information about this, but if anyone has any points to raise on the matter at the AGM, it may be possible to clarify them

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## Twelfth Night

### The Duke's Court

<b>Orsino</b>	<b>Fred Collier</b>
<b>Curio</b>	<b>Blair McLaughlin</b>
<b>Valentine</b>	<b>Barbora Stiess</b>

### The Visitors

<b>Sir Andrew Aguecheek</b>	<b>Patrick Knox</b>
<b>Viola</b>	<b>Tamsin Lambert</b>
<b>Sebastian</b>	<b>Jonathan Stark</b>
<b>Antonio</b>	<i>to be cast</i>

### The Countess's Court

<b>Olivia</b>	<i>to be cast</i>
<b>Sir Toby Belch</b>	<b>David R. Smith</b>
<b>Malvolio</b>	<b>Geoff Lewis</b>
<b>Maria</b>	<b>Jakki Gregory</b>
<b>Fabian</b>	<b>Tony Birks-Hay</b>
<b>Feste</b>	<b>John Sutherland-Smith</b>
<b>A priest</b>	<b>Anthony Stephens</b>
<b>A sea captain</b>	<i>to be cast</i>
<b>Attendants, Officers et al</b>	

**Adam Birks-Hay, Vikki Brown,  
Jean Harrap, Madeline Lambert,  
Elsie Lombard, Dod Pearson,  
Diana Strachan-Stephens  
and other members of the cast**

<b>Director</b>	<b>Jason Hepple</b>
<b>Production Manager</b>	<b>Mark Lambert</b>
<b>Assistant Director</b>	<b>Claire Axelson</b>
<b>Stage Manager</b>	