



TONS OF MONEY - LATEST NEWS



As you'll have seen in the last newsletter, we are intending to mark the 75th anniversary of the APS by reviving the first play we ever performed. It's called "Tons of Money" – a traditional 1920's Aldwych farce, which isn't as

cobwebby as it sounds because it was rejigged recently by Alan Ayckbourn for the National Theatre, and had a successful run there with Simon Cadell, Polly Adams and Michael Gambon in the leads.

We'll announce audition dates soon, but just to get you thinking, here is the cast list:

Louise Allington – the leading female role. Bright, clever, scheming, with a cool head in the inevitable crises.

Aubrey Allingham – the leading male role. Louise's husband, and the reluctant performer of her schemes. Appears at different points disguised as a vicar and as his own long-lost brother.

Benita Mullett – Aubrey's deaf old aunt who is not as daft as he thinks she is. Knits a lot.

Jean Everard – A friend of Louise, who turns out to be married to Aubrey's long-lost brother.

Sprules – a scheming butler with an eye for the money

Simpson – a parlourmaid, in love with Sprules

James Chesterman – a dry-as-dust London solicitor

Giles – the gardener. Small comic cameo role

Henery – Sprules' brother, impersonating Aubrey's long-lost brother (Act III only)

George Maitland – At last: Aubrey's *genuine* long-lost brother (Act III only)

As always, we'd be very grateful for volunteers to take on some of the backstage responsibilities, particularly costumes. Please let Charles Napier (the director) know if you'd be prepared to help, or if you'd like to look at a script before the auditions. You can contact him on 01935 812698 or at charlesnapier@hotmail.com.

RECENT SOCIAL EVENTS



There were no old bangers in the car park at Nether Compton Village Hall on Thursday 18 June anything at all like the decaying Morris Minor we easily imagined dominating the stage inside. By turns, viciously funny and and darkly disturbing, the rehearsed play-reading of Alan Ayckbourn's bittersweet play '**Just between Ourselves**' made for a thoroughly entertaining and thought-provoking evening. At times one didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

Treading the boards with assuredness were Ed Oaksford as the owlish Neil, Sylvia Smith as the testy Pam, David Smith, in a Pythonesque performance, as Dennis her husband, Jennie Ward as Marjorie, the fusspot mother-in-law, and Gilly Savage as Neil's neurotic wife Vera.



'BUSMAN'S HONEYMOON', a play-reading led by Adrian Thorpe

It was our last evening at Nether Compton Village Hall. We were at Talboys, where newly married Lord Peter Wimsey and Harriet Vane aimed to spend their honeymoon. Murder intervened!

How did Mr Noakes, from whom Lord Peter bought this country house end up at the bottom of the cellar steps with his head bashed in?

Deploying their combined skills, Lord Peter and Harriet pinpointed the guilty individual.

But whodunnit, you ask?

Only those who were there can tell, yet if they did they'd have to...



AGM AND SUMMER PARTY

Our AGM - and Summer Party - will take place at **7.30 pm on Friday 24th July**.

Jim and Gwyneth Schofield have very kindly agreed to host the event again at Gainsborough House.

This is your chance to let your Committee know what you think of the way they've managed the society over the past year and to air your views and ideas for the future.

Continued overleaf



This is your last newsletter of the the current season. Your next newsletter will be for September and heralding an historic new season. In the meantime, you can always keep in up-to-date via our website: <http://beehive.thisisdorset.co.uk/aps> or, more simply by googling Amateur Players of Sherborne. Have a Happy Summer.

It is also your opportunity to vote for new Committee Members and Officers. Not only that, but actually to propose and second candidates! This year there'll be vacancies for Chairman, and two Ordinary Committee Members. Nomination papers will be sent out about three weeks before. The charge will be £3 per head - payable at the door to cover food (weather permitting a barbecue) and a first drink. Please bring a bottle - alcoholic or otherwise - for second drink onwards.

Please also bring with you cutlery, plate (for main course) and bowl (for pudding) - and take them away afterwards! Plastic cups will be provided. If you happen to have folding garden chairs which you can conveniently carry, please bring them too

As you probably know, on-street parking is not easy on South Street. The nearest public car park is Culverhayes - or you may be able to park in the roads that lead to the railway station.



GRYPHON SCHOOL PREMIERES FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

Students of The Gryphon School have brought to life Thomas Hardy's novel, 'Far From The Madding Crowd', with a full length feature film shot entirely on location in Thomas Hardy's Wessex

All the cast are students of The Gryphon School, with ages ranging from 11 - 18 years. Filming started last August and the premiere will be held in The Quarr Hall at the school on Saturday 4th July at 6.30 pm. Tickets for the premiere cost £30 and include a champagne reception and buffet. A week-long screening follows at 6.45 pm from Monday 6th to Friday 10th. Tickets £5. Parking in the school car park is free.

For reservations and tickets call Annette Brown on 01935 810103.

MIRACLE THEATRE TOURS TARTUFFE

Cornwall's touring company, Miracle Theatre, celebrate their 30th anniversary with a new adaptation of Tartuffe, Molière's sharpest comedy.

This is a masterclass in hypocrisy, as fresh and provoking as when it was banned in 1664.

Open air venues near us in July as follows:

Thurs 2: 7.30 pm Millennium Field Bridport. Call 01308 424204 for tickets

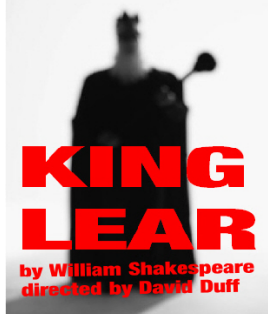
Fri 3 & Sat 4: 8 pm Maumbury Rings, Dorchester. Call 01305 266926 for further information

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BIG CHALLENGE FOR APS

Amateur Players of Sherborne present



King Lear is going to be an enormous challenge for the APS – but having seen the Club at work I believe we can meet the challenge and make a great success of the production. But there's no point in denying that it will mean a lot of work for

all involved.

Especially for me: it will mean me spending the entire summer analysing the text line by line, reading every book on the subject of Lear that I can lay hands on, producing an outline blocking plan, designing the set, finding costumes, briefing the man who composes my music, liaising with lights and sound, and so on and on – every director will know whereof I speak!

I hope you'll agree that it's only fair to expect a similar kind of commitment from everyone else – including attendance at rehearsals without fail except in cases of dire

emergency, and early mastery of lines so that we can get on with more important things like interpretation. I know my directing style has been described, politely, as *idiosyncratic!* In rehearsals I become very focused and the niceties of polite society sometimes leave me. But it's all in the cause of producing the very best we can for what is after all a paying audience. I hope those who take part will come to feel that it's all worthwhile!

All of that brings me to my main point. Both I and your committee need to know **now** if there are sufficient actors prepared, in principle (because anything can happen between now and the October audition), to commit themselves to this production – and this director! **So, I am asking those actors who are interested to please contact me before the AGM on 24th July**



Please write, ring or e-mail **now!** David Duff, 14 Church Place, Milborne Port, DT9 5HJ 01963 250358 email david@davpat.co.uk

Thurs 23: 7.45 pm ECOS amphitheatre. Call Merlin Theatre 01373 465949 for tickets.

Bring low-backed seating or cushions, picnics if you wish and dress for the weather - warm days can still mean cool evenings. **In the event of bad weather the performance on Thursday 23rd will come inside.** Check out all venues and lots more information at: www.miracletheatre.co.uk

Illyria at the castle



Fri 10 July: The Three Musketeers
Sun 2 August: A Midsummer Night's Dream
 Gates open 6 pm, performances at 7 pm
 Bring low-backed chairs or rug, picnic if you wish sit close to the front and dress for the weather.
Cancellation only in the event of a hurricane!
 Tickets: Sherborne TIC 01935 815341 or at www.illyria.uk.com

Theatrical Anecdotes



Although Henry Irving's productions at the Lyceum Theatre earned him a knighthood (the first ever awarded to a thespian) in 1895, his decision to pursue acting (long considered a dodgy profession) drew considerable scorn.

"In his first night in London," Kenneth Branagh once recalled, "Irving had this huge personal success in Richard the Third or something, and he was going home, across Hyde Park in a hansom cab with his [sophisticated] missus. There'd been a standing ovation and it was obvious he had 'arrived'. It was a wonderful, wonderful evening. His wife turned to him and said, 'How long are you going to go on making a fool of yourself like this?' Irving stopped the cab, got out, walked home, collected his things, left - and never saw her again."

IN THIS MONTH

Wole Soyinka, considered Africa's most distinguished playwright and the first African to win the "Nobel Prize in Literature" was born 13 July, 1934 in Nigeria. In 1994, he was designated UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for the promotion of African culture, human rights, freedom of expression, media and communication. Soyinka has been imprisoned several times for his criticism of the Nigerian government. From the 1970s he has lived long periods in exile. Soyinka's plays range from comedy to tragedy, and from political satire to the theatre of the absurd.

TONS OF MONEY -Background



Will Evans, star of British music-hall and pantomime, was born in London either on 29 May 1867, 29 May 1867 or some time in 1875. He was the son of Fred Evans, a celebrated acrobat and clown and with whom he made his first appearance in 1881 in Robinson

Crusoe at Drury Lane. He then toured with his father's troupe, returning to London in 1890 to appear on the 'halls' with his wife and, after her death, as a solo eccentric - meaning acrobatic - comedian.

He specialised in scenes of domestic chaos, of which the most popular were 'Building a Chicken House', 'White-washing the Ceiling', and 'Papering a House'. He also sang, danced and played many instruments. Several of his sound recordings survive.

It seems to be agreed that he died in London on April 11, 1931, aged 64.





FAMOUS NAMES OF THE STAGE

Aphra Behn was the first professional woman writer in English literature, best known for her plays and her novel 'Oroonoko'. She was born near Canterbury in July 1640 and is thought to have spent some of her youth in the West Indies. In 1664 she married Johan Behn a merchant, but the marriage is not thought to have lasted very long. She is known to have acted as a British spy in Antwerp in 1666. Imprisonment for debt led her to write for an income and she wrote a series of plays. Her first, 'The Forc'd Marriage' was produced in 1671. 'The Rover' (1681), her most successful, was produced in two parts and included in its cast Nell Gwyn, mistress of King Charles II. Among Behn's sources was the Italian commedia dell'arte, which she used in her farce 'The Emperor of the Moon' (1687), forerunner of the modern-day pantomime. Behn's novel 'Oroonoko' (1688) was the story of an enslaved African prince and is now considered a foundation stone in the development of the English novel. In her time she was a celebrity, unusual for her independence as a professional writer and her concern for equality between the sexes. Behn died on 16 April 1689 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.



By Virginia Woolf's reckoning, Behn's total career is more important than any particular work it produced. Woolf wrote, "All women together, ought to let flowers fall upon the grave of Aphra Behn...for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds."

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**JULY 2009**

Thurs 2nd July	 'Busman's Honeymoon' A play-reading led by Adrian Thorpe	Nether Compton Village Hall 7.30 pm
Fri 3rd & Sat 4th Mon 6th to Sat 11th	Les Liaisons Dangereuses The Swan Theatre Company	The Swan Theatre, Yeovil 7.45 pm Call 01935 428646
Mon 6th to Fri 10th	Far From The Madding Crowd Film by Gryphon School pupils	The Quarr Hall, Gryphon School 6.45 pm See page 2
Wed 8th to Sat 11th	How The Other Half Loves Alan Ayckbourn comedy	Little Theatre, Wells 7.30 pm
Fri 10th Open Air	The Three Musketeers Illyria	Sherborne Castle 7pm
Wed 15th to Sat 18th Open Air	Midsummer Night's Dream Shakespeare's Globe	The Brewhouse, Taunton Open air at 7.30, Matinee Sat 3 pm
Thurs 23rd Open Air	Moliere's Tartuffe Miracle Theatre Company	Merlin Theatre at ECOS, Frome Open air 7.45 pm See Page 2
Fri 24th	 APS AGM & Summer Party	Gainsborough House, Sherborne 7.30 pm

AUGUST 2009

Sun 2nd Open Air	A Midsummer's Night Dream Illyria	Sherborne Castle 7pm
Wed 5th to Sat 22nd	Balmoral by Michael Frayn Peter Hall Theatre Company	Theatre Royal, Bath 7.30. Mats 2.30 Sats, Wed 12 & 19 & Thurs 6 Aug
Thurs 6th to Fri 7th Open Air	Merlin the Magician Chapterhouse Theatre Company	The Chalice Well, Glastonbury 7.30 pm
Fri 14th Open Air	Sense and Sensibility Chapterhouse Theatre Company	Bishop's Palace, Wells 7.30pm
Wed 19th to Sat 22nd	Romeo and Juliet Brewhouse Young Company	The Brewhouse, Taunton 7.45 pm, Mat Sat 2 pm
Fri 28th Open Air	Sense and Sensibility Chapterhouse Theatre Company	Athelhampton House, Dorchester 7.30 pm

Athelhampton House: Call 01305 848363 or www.chapterhouse.or.uk

Theatre Royal, Bath: Call Box Office 01225 448844 or www.thetheatreroyal.org.uk

Sherborne Castle: Call Sherborne TIC 01935 815341 or illyria.uk.com

The Brewhouse Theatre: Call 01823 283244 or www.thebrewhouse.net

The Chalice Well, Glastonbury: Call 01458 831154 for tickets and information or www.chapterhouse.or.uk

Swan Theatre: Call 01935 428646

Little Theatre, Wells: Call 01749 672280 or www.thelittletheatre.org.uk

Bishop's Palace, Wells: Call 01749 678691 ext 200 or www.chapterhouse.or.uk

Merlin Theatre: Call 01373 465949 or www.merlintheatre.co.uk

NB: As Diary Dates is compiled well in advance, do check with the venue for changes in programme.

**From Jim, your editor**

If you would like any local performances advertised in the *Dates for your Diary* section in future newsletters or on our website please send any details to me at: jim.reville@btinternet.com or give me a ring on (01935) 814626. If I'm not there, leave your message and I will ring you back.

SEPTEMBER COPY DEADLINE: THURS 27 AUG

Last Word...

I personally would like to bring a tortoise onto the stage, turn it into a racehorse, then into a hat, a song, a dragoon and a fountain of water. One can dare anything in the theatre and it is the place where one dares the least. Eugene Ionesco, *Notes and Counter Notes*