

# NOISES OFF

## WELCOME FROM YOUR NEW CHAIR

Firstly, I would like to extend a warm invitation to everyone to our Opening Night on Friday 29th September. This will be at 7.30 in the newly-refurbished Chapel, and will be a great opportunity to meet friends old and new, to enjoy a glass of wine and a finger buffet, and to hear about our exciting plans for the coming year.

This is also an opportunity to review a little of recent APS activities. After a successful rehearsed reading, John Crabtree's production of "Cash on Delivery" failed to reach the stage due to last-minute casting difficulties. However, Sylvie Lord stepped in and rescued the situation with her production of "Lovesong" in the Digby Hall in March. This was a great success, despite its difficult and challenging subject-matter.

Also in March, Adrian Harding directed a rehearsed reading of his own play, "Whistleblower", which proved extremely gripping. In June, Jack Evans organised



a mini-production of short sketches and monologues, which brought a number of new and younger members into the group. It also opened up the audience base to a new public. These events demonstrate the scope of what can be done by members in our new, bespoke performing space at The Chapel.

Sadly, few APS members supported Gilly Savage's Film Quiz night in January. Similarly, Adrian Harding's Treasure Hunt in July was poorly attended. This is a great shame, as much effort goes in to planning and organising these events. However, those that did attend thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

In the Spring, there was a massive clear-out of superfluous costumes and accessories from the wardrobe. These

will shortly be making their way to a Vintage Clothes Sale. All profits will go the Club.

Jim Reville, who has edited the Club Newsletter for the last 8 years has handed over the reins to Martin Williams. Thanks again to Jim for all his hard work, and to Martin for taking on this new role.



Alan Morris's production of "She Stoops to Conquer" will be performed at the Digby Hall in November. We look forward to seeing you all there. Please come forward if you are able to help with the production in any way.

We are keen to hear members' suggestions for future productions and events. Now that we have the Chapel, I would encourage those tempted to direct a play (but perhaps previously daunted by the scale of the Digby Hall) to give it a go. The Chapel will always be the perfect place to try out new ideas, and to experiment. As always, there is a dedicated group of very talented people to help with any production.

I hope to meet you all at the opening event for the new season on Friday 29th September.

**Bev Taylor-Wade**

## WOMEN WANTED....

How many times have we said "There's not enough roles for women"? Well, I am hoping to put together a rehearsed reading/performance of a play called "Love, Loss and What I Wore" on Wednesday 8th November.

The play is written by Norah and Delia Ephron (Norah wrote the screenplay for "When Harry Met Sally" and "Sleepless in Seattle"). It is a gentle reminiscence on life's events by several women who all remark upon the role that clothes took in these pivotal events.

It is a play of monologues and ensemble pieces and, as such, requires no line-learning as actors can

read from the pages in front of them. Therefore I am hoping it will be an opportunity for members who are less confident with treading the boards or learning lines to get involved.

I envisage two or three rehearsals. It will need four women (any age or experience) to put the play on, but could stretch to six quite easily.

Please have a look on You Tube to see how the play is usually performed and if you are interested, give me a call.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Sylvie  
07875 127032

## 2017/18 PERFORMANCE SEASON AND PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> Sept - 7.30

Season Opening Night - An introduction to the **Performance Season and Programme of Events**, with nibbles and refreshments. Bring a friend!

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> Oct NT Live at Yeovil Cineworld - Benedict Cumberbatch in **"Othello"**. Organise your own tickets and transport.

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> Oct

**Murder Mystery** at the Library

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> Oct

The Scribblers and APS present **An evening of poetry and prose**

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November

Rehearsed play reading - **"Love Loss and What I wore"** by Norah and Delia Ephron, directed by Sylvie Lord

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November

APS Autumn Production **"She Stoops to Conquer"** by Oliver Goldsmith at the Digby Hall, directed by Alan Morris

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December

**Christmas Party**

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January

**Film Quiz** with Fish and Chips - Bring a friend

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February

**"Displaced"** a one act play about Tyneham

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March

**"Easter"** a celebration of poems, prose and songs

Early April

**APS Spring Production**

Late April

An evening of **Musical entertainment**

Late May

**"A Midsummer Night's Dream"** by William Shakespeare, directed by John Crabtree

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June

**General Knowledge Quiz** night

Early June

**Open Air** performance in Paddock Gardens

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> July

**Summer Party and AGM**



## APS COMMITTEE 2017-18

Eve Simmonds (*President*)

Bev Taylor-Wade (*Chair*)

Linda Catchpole (*Secretary*)

Avril Griffiths (*Treasurer*)

Roy Catchpole (*Vice-chair*)

John Crabtree (*Artistic Director*)

Richard Culham (*Events Organiser*)

Adrian Harding (*Events Organiser*)

Sylvie Lord

Jenny Maddern

Jim Reville (*Membership Secretary*)

Jonathan Roberts

Jane Williams

Martin Williams (*Newsletter Editor*)

## "LOVESONG"

Our Spring 2017 production was Abi Morgan's memorably moving play *Lovesong*, with a cast of just four actors Richard Culham (Billy), Bev Taylor Wade (Maggie), Jack Evans (William) and Lucy Rostron (Margaret).

The director, Sylvie Lord wrote: "Lovesong is the story of one couple over the decades - from the moment they move into their first home as newlyweds, through the joy and the challenges along the way. This is a beautiful, poignant tale of togetherness that accepts that nothing lasts forever. We begin at the end - the very end. As Billy and Maggie come to terms with what lies ahead, they revisit key moments from their lives together. Past and present collide in the house that has been their home for forty years. The heady romance of the early days has mellowed into a deep, supportive companionship. The optimism of their youth is remembered fondly as Billy faces a future without Maggie. "



*"...When people ask us 'How did you two meet?'  
They want a story, a good story.  
So together over the years we have built ours.  
A quiet shared mythology..."*

## "SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER" (FROM THE DIRECTOR, ALAN MORRIS)

*She Stoops to Conquer*, written by Oliver Goldsmith in 1773, was a smash hit when it was first performed and has been a staple of the English theatre ever since. It is a personal favourite of mine; not only because it is a very funny play in its own right but also because it allows so much scope for additional visual gags to be built in as well. Actors have the opportunity to stamp their own individuality on the characters without losing the overall effect that Goldsmith wanted.

It is hard to imagine now, but *She Stoops* was revolutionary for its time in that it was written to make its audience laugh! Prior to this, comedy was seen as the opposite of tragedy – i.e. the main characters aren't dead at the end of the play – as opposed to being deliberately funny. Comedies might contain humour and jokes, but they were incidental to the plot rather than driving it. During the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, a particular genre called "Sentimental Comedy" had become popular with the audiences of the time, with the focus usually being on the (fairly tame) misdeeds of the lead character and their eventual redemption through the good offices of their loved ones and/or their servants. Few, if any, of these plays have stood the test of time!

Goldsmith took these elements, recognising that his audiences would be familiar with them – and indeed expect them – but instead focused on his characters, putting them in unfamiliar or



mistaken situations and then letting nature take its course. The play is subtitled *The Mistakes of a Night* and the richness of the comedy comes from only the audience being in full possession of all the facts.

From a director's point of view, the script does most of the hard work for you. The challenges are to get the audience comfortable with the context and humour as quickly as possible, make sure that the maximum amount of juice is extracted from each scene and to get the balance right between each strand of the plot. Plays of this period were written to be performed on a thrust stage (i.e. the acting area extended beyond the proscenium arch and into the body of the theatre). This meant that the audience were much closer to the actors and would be drawn into the sweep of the action on-stage. This isn't practicable on the stage of the Digby Hall, so I have used other means to get the same feel. In particular, I have developed the role of the servants so that all scene changes are done in character and form part of the play. In addition, the music has been carefully selected from period pieces to reinforce the mood of particular scenes and provide additional energy where necessary.

Rehearsals are now well under way, the set has been designed and we are in good shape to have a high-quality production ready by the end of November.

Charles Marlow – *Nick Toop*  
 George Hastings – *Alex Rodas*  
 Tony Lumpkin – *Peter Morris*  
 Mr Hardcastle – *Adrian Harding*  
 Mrs. Hardcastle – *Gilly Savage*  
 Miss Kate Hardcastle – *Sarah Easterbrook*  
 Miss Constance Neville – *Amie Claire Gold*  
 Sir Charles Marlow/Landlord – *Geoff Martyn*  
 Diggory – *David Smith*  
 Roger – *Richard Culham*  
 Servants – *Jenny Maddern, Shelagh Hume, Valerie Stevens*