

# NOISES OFF



WE MUST BE DOING  
SOMETHING RIGHT!



You can't have missed the fact that our two forthcoming shows – *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Loads of Lolly* – have both sold out in just a few days.

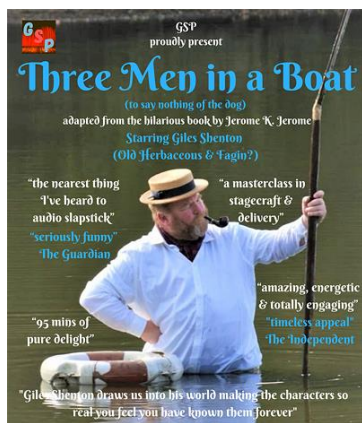
Undoubtedly, the excellent cover feature and seven-page article in the **Sherborne Times**\* has helped to promote our latest productions. But we would like to think that the rush on tickets has something to do with the popularity, variety, quality and sheer entertainment value of the plays we select. We hope that you agree, and that you keep coming to see our shows in the coming years. The lesson learned from our November Box Office is that you need to move fast to be sure to get the seat that you want for our future productions.

\*If you missed the article, you can read it on the Sherborne Times website, November Issue, pages 74 to 81, or we have a few spare copies in the Studio Theatre.

# Three Men In a Boat — Our September Show

Well, only one man, in fact, but the performance given by **Giles Shenton**, his Brian Blessed-like tones, unflagging humour and energy, and his substantial girth, led us all to feel that there were many more of him to see, enjoy and appreciate on our stage on a weekend in September.

We had booked Giles, a freelance professional actor, to fill an unexpected gap in our schedule, for three performances. There was always the risk, as an “outsider” without local friends and family to fill the seats, that the shows might have been sparsely attended. But the loyalty of our APS audiences was as dependable as ever; both evening performances quickly sold out, and there was only a handful of seats vacant during the matinée.



It seems quite likely that many of those in attendance were familiar with Jerome K Jerome's famous book, published over 130 years ago. Perhaps for some (the present writer included), it evoked enormously fond and affectionate memories. We were not disappointed. Giles created a persona of a much older “J” looking back on his boat trip, and sharing stories about it with the audience, from within his classic “man cave” (indeed, he created an astonishingly detailed and well-stocked set all transported within one car.) His skill in creating character through accent and voice

meant that we easily believed in the virtual presence of his companions, George and Harris, not to mention Montmorency, of course. The original book contains such a wealth of hilarious anecdotes that it almost seemed a pity that any had to be omitted. My personal favourites (as they always have been) included the obstreperous tin of pineapples, the recalcitrant boat-covering tarpaulin, and J's massive disappointment and offence at his failure to self-diagnose Housemaid's Knee.

The beauty of such anecdotes lies partly in the manner in which Jerome imbues inanimate objects with animate, and usually hostile personalities. For example, I found the ideas of the pineapple tin with its leering, mocking grin, and the tow-rope's malicious entanglement, to be particularly delicious.

An important part of Jerome's book - indeed, its original primary intention - was to act as a hymn to the beauty, character and personality of the Thames as he saw it, and Giles made sure that this was not neglected in his interpretation.

The APS committee are delighted to have established this contact with Giles, and we look forward to welcoming him back for some of his other performances in the future.

**Martin Williams**



## NEXT PLAY READING

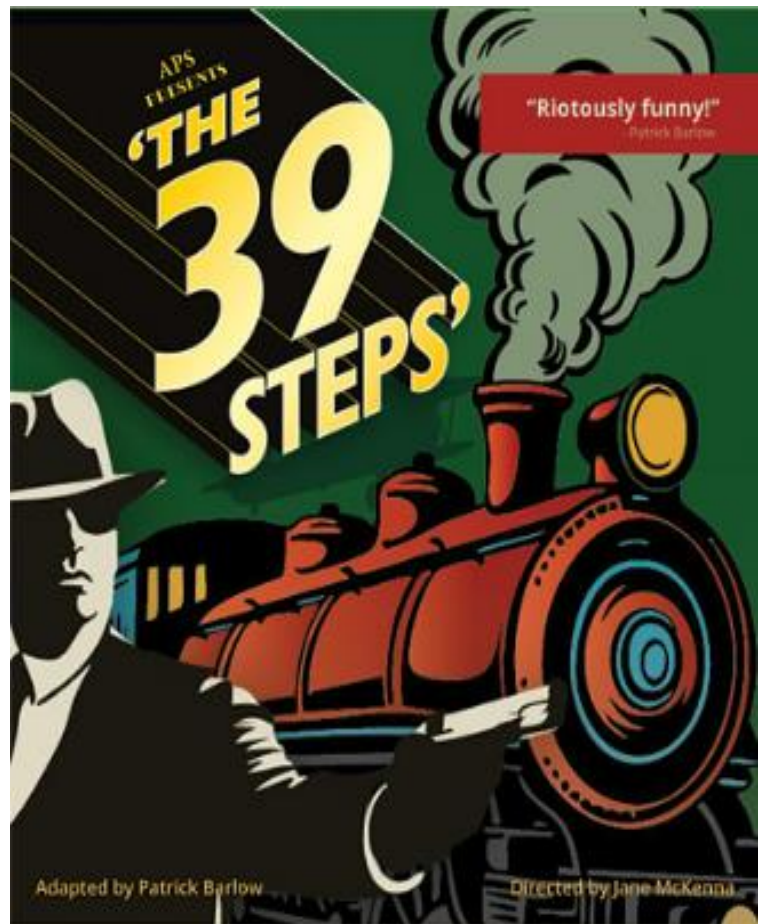
Our next Play Reading will be:

***The 39 Steps*, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 7.30**

This reading is open to everyone, members and friends, including those who just enjoy our readings, and those who may like to take a role in our Summer 2025 production.

Do come along and spend a hilarious evening with your APS friends.

You can just turn up if you wish, but it would be helpful if we knew that you were coming.



Please drop a note to [bev.taylor.wade@gmail.com](mailto:bev.taylor.wade@gmail.com)

***The 39 Steps*** is a parody, adapted by Patrick Barlow from the 1915 novel by John Buchan and the 1935 film by Alfred Hitchcock. The original concept and production of a four-actor version of the story was written by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon. It premiered in 1996. Patrick Barlow rewrote this adaptation in 2005. It is a riotous blend of multiple roles, inventive stagecraft, shadow puppetry and physical theatre.

Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of Monty Python and you have this hilarious fast-paced whodunit with well over 50 roles played by three of the cast of four. The main protagonist, Richard Hannay, leads a boring life until he meets a woman with a thick accent who says she's a spy. When he takes her home, she is murdered. Soon, a mysterious organisation called "The 39 Steps" is hot on his trail in a nationwide manhunt that climaxes in a death-defying finale!

***The play will be performed 2nd – 7th June,  
and will be directed by Jane McKenna***

COMING TO THE SHERBORNE STUDIO THEATRE IN DECEMBER

# Tim Laycock & Alastair Braidwood

present

A seasonal celebration of words and music about the traditional Christmas celebrations of Dorset; expect humorous stories read and acted, traditional songs and carols to be sung along to, poems recited, and folk tunes to get your foot tapping.



Photo: Dorset Morriarty

## Welcome or Welcome Not

Weds 11th December, 7.30pm

Athelhampton House, nr. Dorchester, DT2 7LG

£16, [www.athelhampton.com](http://www.athelhampton.com)

Thurs 12th December, 7pm

Museum of East Dorset, Wimborne, BH21 1HR

£13, [www.museumofeastdorset.co.uk](http://www.museumofeastdorset.co.uk)

Fri 13th December, 7.30pm

Sherborne Studio Theatre, Sherborne, DT9 4BL

£15, [www.thelittleboxoffice.com/aps](http://www.thelittleboxoffice.com/aps)

For more information, email:  
[Alastair.J.Braidwood@outlook.com](mailto:Alastair.J.Braidwood@outlook.com)



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 29<sup>th</sup> November –  
**APS 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, “Loads of Lolly” performance and Festive Party** (now sold out)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> December –  
**“The Importance of Being Earnest”** by Oscar Wilde (now sold out)
- 10<sup>th</sup> December - **Play Reading: “The 39 Steps”** All welcome
- 13<sup>th</sup> December –  
**Folk Duo: “Welcome or Welcome Not”**
- 24<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> March 2025 –  
**“Hedda Gabler”** by Henrik Ibsen
- 11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – **“Dead on Cue”** a thriller written and performed by Mark Carey
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2025 – **“The 39 Steps”** by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon
- 25<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> August 2025 –  
**“The Servant of Two Masters”** by Carlo Goldini

All details are listed on our website at

[www.aps-sherborne.co.uk](http://www.aps-sherborne.co.uk)



## CELEBRATING THE 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF APS

2024 is a significant year for Amateur Players of Sherborne, as it marks our 90<sup>th</sup> year of continuous amateur drama in the town; at different locations and with many different people, but always aiming to entertain our audiences with top-quality entertainment.

Our first production in 1934 was ‘*Tons of Money*’, which was then revived for our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2009. It has been brought to life again this month as ‘*Loads of Lolly*’, adapted with an affectionate tongue-in-cheek by Martin Williams. For those of you lucky enough to have secured tickets, we hope that you enjoy the show.

Mark Lambert, our President, historian and curator of the vast APS archive, is preparing a Special 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Souvenir Edition of *Noises Off* which will be in your hands shortly.

**Look out for it!**

## THANK YOU FROM THE RNLI.....

### Mousehole Male Voice Choir Concert.

From bridgetfairlie.

Draft saved Wed 2024-11-06 7:20 PM

To Mark Lambert <Mark Lambert>

Dear Mark,

As a member of the Sherborne Branch of the RNLI I am just writing to thank the Amateur Players very much indeed for their kind donation of two tickets for the Importance of being Earnest to the raffle at the Concert last weekend. We had a good turnout so the raffle made a very substantial contribution towards the transport, accommodation and food for the 80 visitors from Cornwall !

We are particularly grateful as we are aware how popular this production is proving but maybe we will have introduced a new recruit to the Studio Theatre !

With our very best wishes,  
Bridget Fairlie

38 Richmond Close  
Sherborne



Many thanks to everyone who attended, and thoroughly enjoyed, **Gilly's Legendary Annual Film Quiz and Fish & Chip Supper Evening** on October 25th. Gilly Savage did a fantastic job as Question-Setter and Quizmaster, ably assisted by Helen Smith who tallied the scores. The evening couldn't have run so smoothly without the help of Martin and Jane Williams on continuous bar duty, and Richard and Ruth Culham who organised the Fish & Chip run. Congratulations to the **Mad Hatters** who won the quiz by an astonishing margin with an unprecedented score of 111.

### OUR NEXT PRODUCTION:

Coming up in March next year will be ***Hedda Gabler*** by Henrik Ibsen, with a script adapted by our own Robert Brydges, to be directed by Graham Smith.

After an enjoyable play-reading and strong competition for the leading roles, the cast will be:

- ***Hedda*** - Sarah Nias
- ***Thea*** - Erin Darling-Finan
- ***Tesman*** - Fred Wopat
- ***Brack*** - Robert Brydges
- ***Lovborg*** – Alex Scrivenor
- ***Aunt Juliana*** - Sally Matthews
- ***Berthe*** - Fiona Holt

More information will follow in future editions of Noises Off

