

# Oxfordshire Drama Network



## Newsletter

APRIL 2022

### EDITOR'S COMMENTS

It's great to be back watching your productions at last. As well as a couple of excellent plays, we had a very entertaining evening at the Ukraine Concert organised by Arts Hub Wantage.



We were gob-smacked by the talented youngsters of the American Dance Group (a sort of mix of ballet & Dirty Dancing), and the Caritas Children's Choir – these are our future performers. Also the Wantage Rock Choir (adults) was excellent.

I applaud the enthusiasm and drive of the directors of each of these groups - well done.

*Mike Davies*

### CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Spring has finally sprung.....well sort of, if we ignore the recent snow flurries.....and after what seems to be an endless pantomime season (I know it's not over for Abingdon yet) we are now looking forward to spring shows and of course the return of the festival season.

It's no big secret that I'm a big fan of festivals and have been lucky enough to direct many festival plays not only in the Oxfordshire area but also further afield. I have not only found them invaluable in improving my skills as a director, but I've also enjoyed the experience of working in different spaces – from village halls to professional working theatres - and meeting different theatre groups along the way.

My passion for festivals led me to being recruited by the National Drama Festivals Association (NDFA) to help promote its annual British All Winners Festival (recently re-branded as the National Drama Festival) where winners of its member festivals perform in a week-long festival – so basically the year's best non-professional plays from all over the UK. The standard is incredible and will be held once more at the Albany Theatre in Coventry - 620 seater stunning art deco theatre - 17-23rd July. It includes performances of both one act and full length plays and workshops provided by the Royal Shakespeare Company and Musical Theatre stars will be run during the days. More information will be coming out soon regarding the timetable of events that will be running including a day's conference on Diversity and Inclusivity (again postponed from last year).

A lot of work and effort goes into running a festival so please support them if you can, particularly if your group is entering. Most festivals rely on their participating groups to bring friends, families and supporters to watch them as drama festivals don't always connect well with the general public – particularly one act plays which is a genre that is often neglected in professional theatre. We kick off with Henley at the beginning of May. This will be their 50th festival in the beautiful Kenton Theatre, which is a huge achievement by the Henley team – particularly Ann Dayton who has been there from the start - and really deserves to be packed to the rafters. (continued on page 2)

### WHAT'S ON DIARY (details inside)

#### APRIL

- |       |                                      |                            |
|-------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 6-9   | <i>St Peter's Players,</i>           | <i>WYRD SISTERS</i>        |
| 14-16 | AmEgos Theatre                       | Me and My Girl             |
| 19-23 | <i>Abingdon Operatic Society</i>     |                            |
|       | <i>Made in Dagenham the Musical</i>  |                            |
| 20-23 | Banbury Operatic Society             | The Mikado                 |
| 21-23 | <i>Kingston Bagpuize Drama Group</i> | <i>A Bunch of Amateurs</i> |
| 28-30 | Abingdon Drama Club                  | DICK WHITTINGTON           |
| 28-30 | <i>The Wychwood Players</i>          | <i>Three one-act plays</i> |

#### MAY

- |       |   |                           |
|-------|---|---------------------------|
| 10-14 | Thame Players                               | A Midsummer Night's Dream |
| 13    | <b>ODN AGM</b> at Kennington Village Centre |                           |
| 18-21 | <i>Bartholomew Players</i>                  | <i>"Ladies' Day"</i>      |
| 18-21 | Banbury Cross Players:                      | Spider's Web              |

#### JUNE

- |       |  |                               |
|-------|--|-------------------------------|
| 2-4   | <i>B.C.O.S.</i>                          | <i>Little Shop of Horrors</i> |
| 13-18 | <b>ODN Drama Festival</b> of 1 Act Plays |                               |

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Instagram: [www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork](http://www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork)

Entries are now also open for our own festival at the Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon (ODN festival of one act plays - 13-18 June) – see separate piece later in this edition. There is no Corn Exchange Festival in Wallingford this year, which is a real shame as it is one of my favourite venues so I'm very much hoping it will be up and running again soon.

Our AGM is now set to be at the Kennington Village Hall on 13th May (slightly later than planned) and we would really like to see each of our member groups represented - the ODN is here to help all of you but we can only do that if we know what you want – so come along, have a drink, meet like minded people and have your say – and even better, get involved if you have some time to spare. New faces are essential to keep any organisation fresh.

Hope to see many of you at the AGM and hopefully over the festival season and break a leg to all those with shows over the next couple of months.

Karen Carey

## ODN Drama Festival of 1 Act Plays

Mon 13rd to Sat 18th June 2022

Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon

Entries are now open for our festival in June and it would be lovely to see as many groups represented as possible if not performing, then supporting the event.



**Adjudicator – Louise Manders** (GODA member)



Louise is a very friendly and well-informed adjudicator. She adjudicated the Didcot Festival many years ago and the feedback from the participating groups was extremely positive.

She began her career as a stage manager in repertory theatre and, after gaining her equity card, toured the UK as a

professional actress and appeared in many television programmes and films. Louise is presently not only an adjudicator for the British and International Federation of Festivals and the Guild of Drama Adjudicators, but is also an adjudicator member of the Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama and her extensive work as an adjudicator has taken her all over the UK and abroad. She also runs workshops and master classes, directs plays (including open air productions) and musicals, devises original drama compositions, writes poetry and has written many musical plays for children and students. She teaches speech, drama, musical theatre, mime and dance drama to students of all ages, including adults, and specialises in the LAMDA examinations.

She is incredibly passionate about her work and I think she will be a brilliant adjudicator for our festival as she will enjoy the hands on aspect of a workshop adjudication, which we know can be really beneficial especially to less experienced members.

**Apply now to enter your 1 act plays** for the ODN drama Festival. There will be 2 or 3 one act plays per evening Mon-Fri, with 3 plays called back for the Saturday Gala night.

[Click here to download Festival Entry form](#) (postal version) Full details are on the form.

Or email [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org) for the on-line version. Full details are on the form.

N.B. .Groups must be paid up ODN members. (Joining details on our 'Downloads' page).

Unicorn Theatre, Chequer Walk, Abingdon, OX14 3HZ. A map of how to find the Unicorn Theatre can be found here -> [www.abingdonabbey-unicorntheatre.org.uk/findus.html](http://www.abingdonabbey-unicorntheatre.org.uk/findus.html)

## OXFORDSHIRE DRAMA NETWORK

### AGM

Friday 13th May 2022 from 8pm

At Kennington Village Centre  
Kennington Rd, Kennington, Oxford OX1 5PG

Representatives from all groups are welcome to attend. (only ODN member groups may vote)

## OXFORDSHIRE DRAMA NETWORK

### PANTO/WINTER PRODUCTION

#### FESTIVAL 2021/2022



Because of so many delayed productions caused by Covid, we have extended the Festival until the end of April.

The results will be announced at the AGM on 13th May

## ODN Group Membership Renewal

Now is the time to renew your ODN membership Download the application form to join (£20) or renew (£15) your ODN, group membership ;-

Click link to Download ODN group application/renewal form (Postal):-

[www.oxfordshiredramanetwork.org/files/GroupMembershipForm.pdf](http://www.oxfordshiredramanetwork.org/files/GroupMembershipForm.pdf)

OR: email [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org) for a Bax (on-line) version of this form (Word Doc).

# Audition Tips for New Directors

By Christina Hamlett



Former actress/director Christina Hamlett is the author of 44 books and 256 plays. For Pioneer, she and her writing partner Jamie Dare have penned three "Seusspeare" comedies as well as a contemporary script titled "Fandemonium." She is also a professional ghostwriter and a script consultant for stage and screen. <http://www.authorhamlett.com>.

If you're a first-time director, it's important your actors never catch on that you're quite possibly as nervous as they are during the audition process. Since every production is a collaborative venture, it's not just about finding the best of the best in your talent pool and helping to nurture it. It is, but it's also about using and honing your own abilities in organization, creative decision-making, and responsible leadership. I hope the following tools help you.

## Before the Audition

Make a list of the roles you're casting. Next to each name and character description, jot down notes of what "type" you think could best fulfill the requirements. While it's natural to envision a certain look in terms of physical appearance, it's important to remain open to what an actor playing against traditional type can unexpectedly bring to a role.

Decide whether actors will do cold readings from the script (have sufficient copies of the scenes to be read) or deliver memorized monologues of their choosing. The first approach allows you to picture them in the actual show; the second breaks up the monotony of hearing the same material 83,000 times. A third option is a self-tape audition submitted for review, with in-person callbacks for those who show the most promise.

Create a sign-in log as well as individual bio sheets for actors to list their personal data, acting experience, contact information, and potential scheduling conflicts. Bios can also be uploaded digitally and printed out on audition day. In addition, create a simple check-list to assess each actor's appearance, acting ability, voice, stage presence, and movement. (Another helpful tool is Pioneer Drama's director's books, available for most titles and including printable forms such as an audition application and, audition notes preloaded with all characters' names, contact info page, and rehearsal schedule.) Plan for an assistant to help you keep track of the paperwork and which actor has read for which roles.

## Audition Day

If possible, establish a waiting room away from the stage for actors-in-waiting. Speaking from personal experience, nothing can be more intimidating - especially in singing auditions - than realizing you have to follow someone whose voice is off-the-charts phenomenal. For me, it was a woman who effortlessly channeled Barbra Streisand. "Why am I even here?" I thought. "I should just slink out the back door and go home before anyone notices..."

In the waiting room, post a list of the available roles as well as the rehearsal and performance schedule.

Observe how the participants interact with one another. Is everyone punctual and prepared? This can be an indicator of whether they'll be reliable once they are cast.

Introduce yourself (if need be) and briefly explain your vision for the production. Be fun. Be approachable. But be in charge. Ask actors what roles they'd like to read for or collect their audition applications where they have this indicated. Have your assistant make a list by character so as to make easy pairings when you audition scenes with two or more characters. Unless you require headshots, take pictures of each actor if you don't know all of them well already. It will help you remember them later on.

Once actual auditions begin, observe how well your actors take direction or suggestions. Make note of whether they can hold the emotion of a scene for a long beat before reverting back to themselves. If time permits, invite actors to read for different roles other than the ones they originally requested.

Let everyone know when you anticipate making a casting decision, including possible callbacks. But emphasize that callbacks are not a guarantee of getting cast, nor is not getting a callback an indication one will not be cast. Let participants know whether they will be hearing by phone, text, or email, or whether the results will be posted on the theatre department bulletin board.

Be sure to thank everyone for showing up!

## After the Audition

If you have assistants at your auditions, use them as a sounding board to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the auditioning actors. A second set of eyes and ears may have picked up something you missed. Keep a separate file of actors who — if not quite right for the current show you're casting — could be a smart fit for a future production.

For callback purposes, identify which actors you'd like to match up to assess their chemistry and rapport with one another. Also, identify actors who could fill the bill as potential understudies. Ideally, they should already be occupying smaller roles in the show and thus attending all rehearsals. Should circumstances require them to suddenly step into a lead role, it will be much easier to then find someone for the minor part being vacated. This is far preferable to having a separate designated understudy who waits in the wings all season for someone to fall ill or literally break a leg.

Make good on your commitment to notify actors of your casting decisions. Of course, no one likes to be the bearer of bad news, which is why the bulletin board or generic email tends to be favored. I feel fortunate to have worked with directors who took the time to make personal phone calls. More often than not, they thanked me for participating and sometimes even offered tips on how my audition techniques could be improved. Decades later, those are the directors I still respectfully remember and the kind of director I strove to be.

With thanks to Pioneer Drama

[www.pioneerdrama.com/Newsletter/Articles/Audition\\_Rules.asp?Campaign=NL20220120](http://www.pioneerdrama.com/Newsletter/Articles/Audition_Rules.asp?Campaign=NL20220120).

# REVIEWS

## BANBURY CROSS PLAYERS

### Out of Order

by Ray Cooney

Spiceball Park, Banbury 16th - 19th February 2022.

Out of Order is the second production in Banbury Cross Players' 2021/2022 season and is a typical Ray Cooney farce. Much of Mr Cooney's work could be the same script but with just a change of title.

Having said that I love them, and BCP's adaptation of this comedy is up to their usual high standard and very funny.

The scenario is pure Cooney, a Tory Minister books himself and his hope-to-be mistress into the Westminster hotel, just across the road from Parliament, on the night he is supposed to be attending an all night sitting in the Commons, supporting the Prime Minister.

The script, written in 1990, has been updated to a night in September 2021 and Boris Johnson is the PM.

So, off we go. Things are just hotting up for our MP, Richard Willey, when of course catastrophe strikes and his evening and possibly his career lies in tatters.

The MP is played by Simon Hook, an excellent choice as he had the convincing looks of a typical Tory politician and he savours the forthcoming night of delight with the lovely Jane (Katy Roberts) who is secretary to a Labour official.

The plot got off to a flying start and Katy held the first scene together well running around scantily clothed looking for her lost dress, opening and closing doors, appearing where she shouldn't. You know the sort of thing.

Disaster hits in the form of a Private Detective hired by Jane's husband to find out what is going on between Willey and his wife, if you'll pardon the expression.

Suffice to say, the detective (Suchit Kulkarni), scuppers the plans of Mr Willey by being found supposedly dead half way through the hotels room's window, and Richard calls his PPS, George Pigden, to get him out of this mess.

George Pigden is played by Justin Clinch and very good he was too. Confidence and enthusiasm runneth over Mr Clinch and his performance throughout was first-rate, it very much added to the enjoyment of the evening.



George tries to help his boss but naturally makes matters worse by carrying out Willey's panic stricken orders.

The Hotel manager went from fawning over Richard Willey at the start of the play to ordering out of the building eventually. Heward Simpson as the Hotel manager delivered his part well as the frustrated what-the-devil-is-going-on-in-my-hotel character.

He did have his work cut out trying to keep order, not least through the hysterical interruptions of the maid played so perfectly by Marilyn Fairbairn but also by the shenanigans of Philip Fine as the self-serving waiter who as expected gave his usual Oscar winning performance.

The story continued apace with Richard's wife Pamela (Deborah Watson) and Jane's (remember her?) husband Ronnie (Adrian McGlynn) appearing on the scene to complicate the plot even more. Ronnie is threatening to sort out whoever is with his wife. Poor Ronnie is fed all types of stories and fake news in an effort to throw him off the scent.



Now the centre piece of the set is the sash window, leading to the balcony and other suites on the same floor. The window had such a bearing on the action I was surprised to find it not mentioned in the credits. There were more entrance and exits through this portal than the doors, the frame coming down on many a cast member throughout.

A running story woven into Out of Order is that George Pigden's mother is bed bound and worried about him being late home. Imogen Tredwell played her nurse Gladys who just as soon as she appears on stage is drawn into the plot and very nearly George's bedroom which is now occupied by Willey's wife Pamela.

Overall the normal convoluted scenario from Ray Cooney but one pulled off with style by the BCP. This was the first night of the run and I was impressed by the seemingly word perfect performances of the cast, so important with the difficult genre of farce where so much depends on split second timing and pace.

Directed by Terry Gallagher, BCP brought Out of Order to life, reminiscent of the Whitehall Farces put on by Brian Rix many years ago. The hotel room set, designed by Peter Bloor and his team, was well thought out with little touches such as fire signs and guest exit routes making it all the more real.

Another winner from BCP with the professional touch we have come to expect, a credit to Amateur Dramatics.

Lance Bassett

# OXFORD THEATRE GUILD

## Nicholas Nickleby

Oxford Playhouse

Review by Sue Hadley March 9th 2022

Nicholas Nickleby at its best.

So, there we were last night at the door of the Oxford Playhouse after meeting Hedda Bird who adapted and directed Nicholas Nickleby for this wonderful theatre. It's a brave move to adapt the famous novel, film and TV series of Nicholas Nickleby. When number one there are so many colourful characters and covers such a long period of time. Number two it also contains some violence and even a dual.

The play did not disappoint, it followed a familiar Dickens pattern - a young man sets out in the world to win fortune and love despite a rogue's gallery of villains including an evil Uncle. It contained colourful characters some were good, and some often despicable, and our writer admirably and economically tied together several of the key characters in a web of melodramatic coincidences.

The story centres on the life and adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, a young man who must now make his way in the world whilst supporting his mother and sister after his father dies. We opened with a very interesting scene showing a lot of props and the full cast on stage going through the spoils of boxes left outside the house of the Nicklebys. They were destitute. Kate was innocent and truly believed her uncle would take care of them as he was close to her Father. Alas, you will find he played a villain and did anything but aid their progress. He seemed to live only for the accumulation of money. His opinion of the poor is that poverty is their own fault, and they deserve as a result to be put to work to enrich others.

The play is very entertaining, brimming with life, and wonderfully well-acted. The director I realised had worked hard on that script to allow for its serious pruning, but the result does not seem too dilute from sending them to lowly paid jobs to almost throwing Kate on the mercy of rich toffs who just wanted to degrade her. But the uncle is secretly undermined by his disloyal servant Newman Nogs who can often be seen eavesdropping and writing to Nicholas to warn him of misfortune or the cunning plots of his uncle.

Each letter was received by Nicholas front stage, but its writer was standing and acting the content. A clever way of depicting those letters I felt. Full use of all areas of the stage also. The music was very interesting from Irish folk to guitar to classical at times and suited the scenes. I loved the open no flaps setting with scenery being brought down from the air and announced by passing actors who often walked through and mentioned that three weeks had passed and we were now in an inn.

The play moves quickly in time to Nicholas moving to a job to be paid only £5 per month at Dotheboys Hall in Yorkshire. That's when we meet Squeers (looking curiously Churchillian) and his wife.

Once Nicholas arrives in Yorkshire, Nicholas comes to realise that Squeers is running a scam: he takes in unwanted children (most of whom are illegitimate, or disabled) for a high fee, and starves and mistreats them while using the money sent by their parents, who only want to get them out of their way, to pad his own pockets. Squeers and his monstrous wife whip and beat the children regularly, while spoiling their own son and encouraging him to put weight on as publicity for how they should feed the children.

Nicholas observes that the lessons offered to the boys are no better; they show how poorly educated Squeers himself was and he uses the lessons as excuses to send the boys off on chores. Good use of a board being brought down from the ceiling to show windows being spelt wrongly. The three students with heads bent front stage showed this treatment very well.

Then enters Smike who is depicted as their most pathetic target and has been there for many years. He is thin and sickly, but very lovable and Smike loves Nicholas



that can be seen very clearly. He is played by Jenny Griffiths who is the real victim of the Squeers abuse. I loved it when Smike & Nicholas shared the poem 'Host of Golden Daffodils' by Wordsworth.

The scene where Nicholas attracts the attention of Fanny Squeers who is the plain and shrewish daughter, she deludes herself into thinking that Nicholas is in love with her. Very well acted may I add. During this scene Fanny attempts to disclose her affections during the game of cards, but Nicholas doesn't catch her meaning. Instead he ends up flirting with her friend Tilda Price. My only comment on this is that it could have done with being front stage, as we often could not hear the actors up stage.

A great use of cast here on the day Smike runs away, but is then caught and brought back to Dotheboys. Squeers begins to beat him, but Nicholas intervenes. Squeers strikes him across the face and Nicholas snaps, beating the schoolmaster violently but we never actually see the strikes. This was cleverly done when all the actors clustered around the violent scene with their backs to us, so that we could only hear what we thought was taking place. Then we saw Nicholas escaping with Smike. I loved the accent of Nicholas he was so well spoken and polite. He played the part so well throughout.

Kate played by Rosie Megaw, was very realistic as the shy introverted young maiden but who often has to stand up for herself. This occurs especially when she loses her job in the bridal scene. There we see the older lady up surged by a younger more attractive assistant being Kate.



I thought the Crummies Theatre Group that Nicholas and Smike joined instead of becoming sailors was really lively and happy, the touring theatricals Vincent and Mrs. Crummies were a pleasure to watch and so optimistic

Without doing a spoiler and covering every twist and turn of this lovely performance. I did like The Cheerybles who are the lawyer brothers who agree on everything, especially that Nicholas must be hired in their firm, then perhaps all of his problems solved. I loved the way they moved their hands and bodies together when speaking

I was waiting for all the weddings at the end and was not disappointed. At one point in the last 10 minutes the play was due to leave on a sad note, the touring theatricals soon changed all that and suddenly we were witnessing not one wedding about to take place but two.

All in all, it was a beautiful depiction of a wonderful tale thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Well done Oxford Theatre Guild.

## Wantage Stage Musical Company changes name.

Wantage Stage Musical Company was set up at the start of the century to do what the name said. To stage musicals. However over the 22 years of its existence it's changed and evolved and for the past 5 years has been exclusively a community choir. Unfortunately our name either confuses people, or puts them off contacting us if they're looking for a choir. We've tried using WSMC instead of the full name but all that happens then is people ask what it stands for and then get confused. So the easiest thing seemed to be to take the opportunity as we all reset coming out of lockdown to rename the group.

So going forward Wantage Stage Musical Company will be called Wantage Sings. And we're definitely a choir! Our first post lockdown concerts are the 24th and 25th of June and we'd be delighted to see you there, or at one of our rehearsals on a Wednesday night at the Wantage Methodist Church Hall.

For more information go to [www.wantagesings.co.uk](http://www.wantagesings.co.uk)



## Blewbury Players Audition: "Claudio" in Much Ado About Nothing:

The Blewbury Players are seeking a confident and versatile young actor to join their summer production of Much Ado About Nothing in their Open Air Garden Theatre.

No experience necessary.

Role: Claudio

Male, playing age: late teens/early 20s.

A soldier, and Prince Don Pedro's current 'it' boy. Fresh back from the wars Claudio falls in Love with Hero and sets plans to marry. Easily influenced by his peers Claudio mistakenly accuses Hero of cheating and goes down a path of vengeance and rage. Supporting leading role.

Audition: 9 April - am

Workshop: 9 April - pm

Rehearsals will be held 10-5 Saturdays and Sundays from 28 May. You will not be needed for every rehearsal.

Please e-mail [blewburyplayers@gmail.com](mailto:blewburyplayers@gmail.com) for more information or to book an audition.

Performances: 20-23 July, Orchard Dene Garden Theatre, Blewbury.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### ST PETER'S PLAYERS, WYRD SISTERS

By Terry Pratchett

Adapted for the stage by  
Stephen Briggs

Welcome to Discworld -  
The land is in peril.

Who stands between the  
Kingdom and destruction?

Three witches, that's who!

Enter intolerant and self-opinionated Granny Weatherwax, vulgar Nanny Ogg and naïve Magrat Garlick, who has a fondness for occult jewellery and bunnies!

**When:** Weds 6th to Sat 9th April at 7.30pm

**Where:** Wolvercote Village Hall

See website for further details

[www.stpetersplayers.co.uk](http://www.stpetersplayers.co.uk)



## MYCO

Music Youth of Oxford

### Legally Blonde The Musical

Directed by Guy Brigg MBE

Musical Director - Julie Todd



This fabulously fun, Olivier award-winning musical follows the transformation of beautiful, popular, expert shopper Elle Woods as she crosses the country on a mission to win back the man who wanted someone "serious".

Supported by friends (and her dog!) she arrives at Harvard and discovers that not only can being smart be hugely rewarding, but it is necessary to stay true to yourself to achieve real success.

This production is brought to you by Musical Youth Company of Oxford, an extremely talented company of 50 young people, and recent winners of the Flame Award for Inspirational Contribution to Musical Theatre among numerous other awards and nominations. The company is thrilled to bring their energy, songs and smiles back to the Playhouse stage.

Bend and Snap up your tickets for this witty, infectious (and pink!) production, packed to the brim with memorable music and dynamic dance.

**When:** 13 to 16 April at 7.30pm

+ a matinee performance at 2.30pm on Saturday.

**Where:** The Playhouse, Oxford

**Tickets:** From Oxford Playhouse

[www.oxfordplayhouse.com](http://www.oxfordplayhouse.com)

MYCO Website: [www.myco.org.uk](http://www.myco.org.uk)

## AMEGOS THEATRE

### Me and My Girl

A Musical by  
Douglas Furber and  
L. Arthur Rose.

Music by Noel Gay

Me and My Girl tells the story of cockney gent Bill Snibson, who learns he's actually the fourteenth heir of the Earl of Hareford.

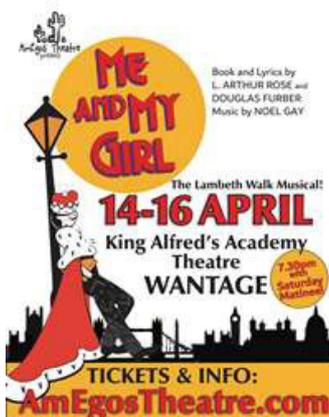
Set in Hampshire, Mayfair and Lambeth, it's all about Bill's struggle to meet his aristocratic new family's expectations, a warm hearted, chaotically entertaining and funny tale that transcends time.

**When:** 14-16th April 7.30pm + Saturday at 2.30pm

**Where:** King Alfred's Academy Theatre, Wantage.

**Tickets:** on sale now from :-

[www.AmEgosTheatre.com](http://www.AmEgosTheatre.com)



## ABINGDON OPERATIC SOCIETY Made in Dagenham the Musical

Music by David  
Arnold, lyrics by  
Richard Thomas,  
and book by  
Richard Bean



Based on the real events of the Ford sewing machinists strike of 1968.

Rita, a working woman and mother becomes a union leader amidst the strike, despite the wishes of her husband and children, who feel neglected by her focus on labour issues.

**When:** 19th-23rd April 2022 at 7.30pm  
+ matinee 2.30pm on the Saturday.

**Where:** Amey Theatre at Abingdon School.

**Tickets:** [www.abingdonoperatic.co.uk](http://www.abingdonoperatic.co.uk)

## BANBURY OPERATIC SOCIETY

### The Mikado (also known as The Town of Titipu)

A two-act comic operetta, with music by Arthur Sullivan and libretto by W.S. Gilbert.

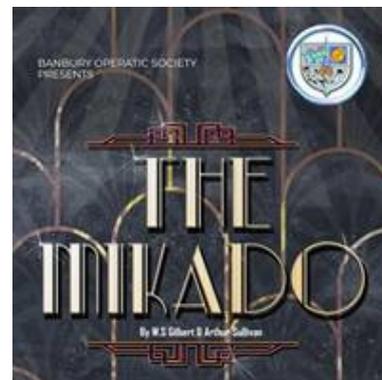
Why not treat yourself to a post-Easter musical - egg-cited? - we are!

**When:** Wed 20th to Sat 23rd April at 7.30pm.  
+ matinee Saturday at 2.30pm.

**Where:** Wykham Theatre, Wykham Park Academy  
Ruskin Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 9HY

**Tickets:** from:-

[www.BanburyOperaticSociety.co.uk](http://www.BanburyOperaticSociety.co.uk)



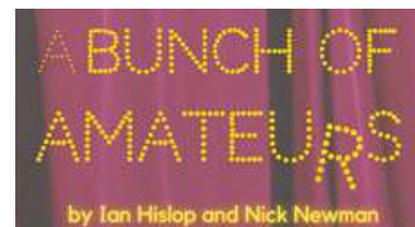
## KINGSTON BAGPUIZE DRAMA GROUP A Bunch of Amateurs

by Ian Hislop and  
Nick Newman.

A washed-up Hollywood star flies to England to play the title role in King Lear at 'Stratford'.

Instead of the RSC, he finds himself the guest star of the Stratford Players, an amateur drama group in the village of Stratford St John, Suffolk.

They are trying to save their village theatre from developers, and he is their last hope. Can they cope with his Hollywood demands? Can he cope with 'a bunch of amateurs'? Come and see this funny play and find out.



**When:** 21-23 April at 7.30pm

**Where:** Southmoor Village Hall, Draycott Rd, Southmoor, Abingdon OX13 5BY

Book your **tickets** here:

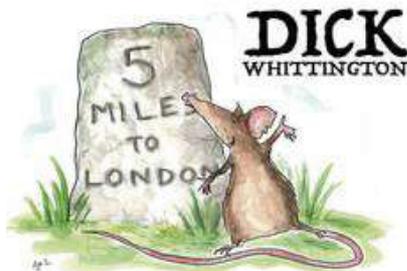
[www.ticketsource.co.uk/Kingston-Bagpuize-Drama-Group](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/Kingston-Bagpuize-Drama-Group) or by phone 0333 666 3366

KBDG Website: <https://kbdg.wordpress.com>

## ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB DICK WHITTINGTON

By John Morley

The classic tale of a young lad going to London to make his fortune and his adventures with new best friend, Tommy the cat.



Boo the villains and cheer the heroes as pantomime returns to the Unicorn Theatre!

**When:** Thurs 28th, Fri 29th April at 7.30pm  
and Sat 30th April at 1.30pm and 6pm

**Where:** Unicorn Theatre, Checker Walk, Abingdon, OX14 3JB

**Tickets:** £10, £8 concessions (60+, under 12s, Students, ADC members)

**GROUP BOOKINGS** Groups of 10 and over  
All tickets £8 (£8.60 when booked online - Just select the concession rate ticket and choose the number you require)

Tickets are also available from:

[www.abingdon-drama-club.com](http://www.abingdon-drama-club.com) and

The Bookstore, The Abingdon Precinct (15 Bury St),

All tickets are sold as unreserved seating.

Our Front of House team will do their very best to seat people together but please arrive in good time or this may not be possible.

## THE WYCHWOOD PLAYERS Three one-act plays.

**But Yesterday**

by Jimmie Chinn



**Carrot**

by David Tristram

**Late Entry**

by David Tristram

"But Yesterday" is a haunting, enigmatic one-act play from the sensitive pen of successful playwright Jimmie Chinn, directed by Jacquelyne Morison.

Prior to leaving on a journey from which he will not return, Robert comes back to his childhood garden in which he relives moments from his childhood which



become intermingled with the present. The audience learns something of the sterile family from which Robert originated. As Robert gradually detaches from his childhood, the audience begins to comprehend his beliefs and aspirations as well as his journey in a quest to discover honesty and truth.

"Carrot" is a comedy by David Tristram, directed by Anthony Gofton, taking us into the sensitive world of industrial relations. The new Managing Director of an ailing roofing supplies manufacturer has the tricky job of trying to convince the Trade Union Representative of the need to modernise the firm in order to keep it in business. It's a to-and-fro of commercial reality versus principles - who will win?

"Late Entry", directed by Dudley Thompson, is another comedy also by David Tristram.

Amateur Drama Festivals are challenging, but very rewarding, for all concerned. Watching a favourite play being mangled by incompetent actors tries even the most patient of people, but the adjudicator is expected to be positive, helpful and courteous in all his comments. That is until he meets the strangest production of his career!

**When:** Thursday 28th to Saturday 30th April at 7.30 pm

**Where:** The New Beaconsfield Hall, Shipton-under-Wychwood, Chipping Norton OX7 6BQ.

For more information and to book **tickets** please visit:

[www.wychwoodplayers.com](http://www.wychwoodplayers.com)

## THAME PLAYERS

### A Midsummer Night's Dream

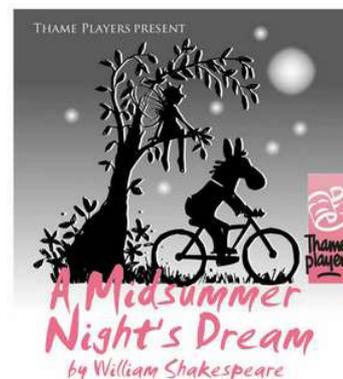
A comedy – one of Shakespeare's finest, with five interconnected subplots set in a forest with fairies and magical characters mixing with mortals. Love and lust – real and imagined goes wrong with comic results and confusion reigns, but eventually magic spells correct all that went awry and the three couples all are wed to the right pairs.

Throughout the play comedy interludes are provided by the rude mechanicals – a bunch of tradesmen who decide to put on a play for the wedding festivities. Their antics are hilarious and have become a comedy standard.

**When:** Tues 10th to Sat 14th May at 7.45pm

**Where:** The Players Theatre, Nelson St, Thame, OX9 2DP

**Tickets:** £8 to £10 from Thame Town Hall  
Telephone 01844 212833 or online from [www.ThamePlayers.co.uk](http://www.ThamePlayers.co.uk)

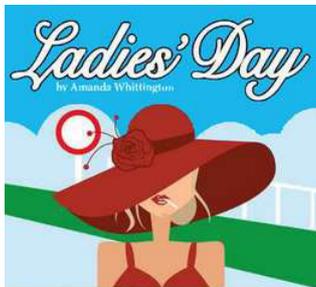


## BARTHOLOMEW PLAYERS

### "Ladies' Day"

by Amanda Whittington

Work, love and life are just one long hard slog for the fish-filleting foursome of Pearl, Jan, Shelley and Linda. But their fortunes are set to change when Linda finds tickets to Ladies' Day at Royal Ascot the year it is relocated to York.



www.bartholomewplayers.co.uk

Out go the hairnets, overalls and wellies as the four ditch work, do themselves up to the nines and head off to the races for a drink, a flirt and a flutter. "With its Yorkshire heart and soul it has all the warmth of a Calendar Girls or a Full Monty" said the Yorkshire Post.

Director Debi Lisburne Diacon says: "Amanda Whittington understands women and writes so well about their hopes and fears, high points and upsets - all with a delightful touch of humour and some poignancy. We are so pleased to be back doing what we love and hope you will come and see this refreshingly honest play."

There will not be a charity supper this year because of Covid uncertainty.

COVID-19 safety measures may be in place - please check our website for updates.

We recommend you buy tickets in advance so we can notify you in case of covid rule changes.

**When:** Wed 18th to Sat 21st May at 7.30pm (Doors open:6.30pm)

**Where:** Eynsham Village Hall, Back Lane, Eynsham, OX29 4QW

**Tickets:** £10.00 (no concessions)

Available: online from

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/bartholomewplayers](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bartholomewplayers)

from Denise Santilli: 07721 744020,

email: [bart.players@gmail.com](mailto:bart.players@gmail.com)

or from Evenlode DIY in Eynsham or on the door

On-line from: [www.BartholomewPlayers.co.uk](http://www.BartholomewPlayers.co.uk)

## BANBURY CROSS PLAYERS:

### Spider's Web

by Agatha Christie.

Banbury's leading local theatre company present Spider's Web by Agatha Christie.

Clarissa, second wife of diplomat Henry Hailsham-Brown, is adept at spinning tales of adventure for the bored diplomatic circle. When a murder takes place in her drawing room she finds live drama harder to cope with. Worse still,



Something unexpected on the menu from the Queen of Crime

18 - 21 May 2022

The amateur production by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd.

the victim is the man who broke up Henry's first marriage.

Desperate to dispose of the body before her husband arrives with an important politician, she enlists the help of her guests. Clarissa's fast talking places her in some hair-raising experiences as she comes to learn the facts are more terrifying than fiction!

A conscious parody of the detective thriller, Christie delivers a unique blend of suspense and humour. Tension and laughter come equally in this intricate plot of murder, police, drug addicts, invisible ink, hidden doorways & secret drawers.

**When:** Wed 18th — Sat 21st May 7.30pm

**Where:** Main Auditorium, The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury, OX16 5QE

**Tickets:** £12.50/£13.50 (no concessions Fri/Sat)

BCP Website: [www.banburycrossplayers.org.uk](http://www.banburycrossplayers.org.uk)

Presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd on behalf of Samuel French Ltd

## B.C.O.S.

Bicester Choral  
and Operatic  
Society



### Little Shop of Horrors

Life isn't easy on Skid Row, but maybe things are going to turn around for florist's assistant Seymour. He's discovered a plant unlike any other and people are clamouring to get a look. Perhaps he will finally win the attention and affection of his co-worker, Audrey. But Seymour's appetite for fame and fortune is overmatched by the appetite of his new plant.

Will the killer potential of Seymour's new plant bring him everything he has ever wanted, or will the price be too high?

Little Shop of Horrors is a horror comedy rock musical, based on the low-budget 1960 black comedy film of the same name.

The music, in the style of early 1960s rock and roll, doowop and early Motown, includes several well-known tunes, such as "Somewhere That's Green", and "Suddenly, Seymour".

**When:** Thur 2<sup>nd</sup> – Sat 4<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm

**Where:** Cooper School, Bicester, OX26 4RS

**Tickets:** 0333 666 3366

or see [www.BcosWeSing.org.uk](http://www.BcosWeSing.org.uk)

# ***Oxfordshire Drama Network***

## ***Not just a network***



### ***HERE'S WHAT WE DO***

- **Annual Drama Festival of 1 Act Plays** in June each year
  - **Winter/Pantomime festival competition** – we nominate judges for your Pantos/plays
  - **Auditions:** Newsletter & Facebook can notify all our members of auditions locally
  - **Reviews:** We can do reviews of your play or musical or you send your own review (500 words max)
  - **Letters:** We carry a letters section for Views & Comments when you send them in! (200 words Max)
  - **Props:** Do you need a particular prop/scenery? Get in touch with us we may be able to help you.
  - **Events** We inform readers of events, plus we are planning our own events soon
  - **Website** why not add your events to the ODN website and Facebook pages
- News & Reviews should be sent to the editor at [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)

Are you a new Drama or Musical Group? For just £20 (Then £15/Year) you can join us :-  
[www.oxfordshiredramanetwork.org/files/GroupMembershipForm.pdf](http://www.oxfordshiredramanetwork.org/files/GroupMembershipForm.pdf)

Email: [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)

[www.Facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767](http://www.Facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767)

### **Your ODN Committee**

#### **Officers**

Chair	Karen Carey (Didcot Phoenix Drama Group)
Secretary	Becki Brewis (Wootton Players)
Newsletter/Website	Mike Davies (Drayton Players & Jigsaw Stage Productions)
Treasurer	Peter Brazier (Didcot Phoenix Drama Group)
Membership Secretary	Sue Tibbles (Oxford Theatre Guild)

#### **General members**

Mike Lacey	(Kingston Bagpuize)
Sue Hadley	(Drayton Players & Buttercross Productions)
Sarah Ellner	(Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society)
Jess Ebberson	(Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society)
Teresa Miller	(Wootton Players)

Email: [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)

Facebook [www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767](http://www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork](http://www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork)