

# Oxfordshire Drama Network

## Newsletter

AUGUST 2018

### EDITOR & CHAIRMAN'S BULLETIN



I hope you are all enjoying the hot summer. One good thing about the weather this summer is that it has been great for all the outdoor productions.

I love being able to sit in the garden under a tree, with the laptop, editing the ODN Newsletter.

It's usually quiet in the amateur drama scene over the Summer months, but we have a few reviews, a couple of workshops, and a few exciting plays & musicals that will be coming up in the Autumn.

It's good to see new writers, directors and actors, and at this year's ODN Drama Festival we had no less than 5 First Time Directors, and 3 writers directing their own plays, one even starring in it as well!

We also saw recently a new play in Dorchester, written and directed by the author (another Mike Davies!), who also had a cameo role in it (see reviews).

The Drama Festival was a great success, even if not profitable - we had some marked increases in costs this year - mainly the Unicorn Theatre.

We had 10 very different plays from 9 different groups, with a variety of genres from Shakespearian satire to child abuse and from two handers to a cast of seven.

Full details of the festival are on page 2.

The committee recently decided that for next year we need to re-brand the festival to appeal to a wider audience, at the moment it is mostly the performing group's members who come to watch them.

*Mike Davies*

Email: [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)  
Facebook [www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767)

The deadline for the October issue is 20<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018  
Contributions to [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)

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

#### AUGUST

25 Theatre Lighting and Set Design Course  
(Sinodun Players)

#### SEPTEMBER

1 *Drama Workshop* (Chiltern Players)  
9 Theatre Lighting and Set Design Course  
Sinodun Players  
11-15 *Thame Players* "Oh, What a Lovely War"  
24-29 Oxford Theatre Guild King Charles III

#### OCTOBER

6 *Nortonians Amateur Dramatic Society*  
"You Just Never Know"  
11-13 Chiltern Players "Teechers"  
15-20 *Oxford Theatre Guild*  
*The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*  
19,20 WSMC (Wantage)  
26,27 back to the 70s Concert  
23-27 *Abingdon Operatic Society* *Top Hat*  
25-27 AmEgos "CRAZY FOR YOU"

#### NOVEMBER

2,3 *Middle Barton Drama Group*  
9,10 "The Cordwangler's Tale"  
9,10 The Stonesfield Players  
"Shadow of the Desert"  
14-17 *Compton Players* *Two one-act plays*  
21-24 *Banbury Cross Players*  
"Audience with Murder"  
21-24 *Dorchester Amateur Dramatics Society*  
'Joking Apart'  
22-24 The Wychwood Players  
Blackadder Goes Forth  
TBA *Abingdon Drama Club* "The Game's Afoot"  
TBA *Didcot Phoenix Drama Group*  
BUMS ON SEATS

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11 Committee & Groups

# ODN DRAMA FESTIVAL of One Act Plays

Mon 4th to  
Sat 9th June  
Unicorn Theatre,  
Abingdon,  
OX14 3HZ



This year we welcomed 9 local drama groups to our Festival – Didcot Phoenix, Drayton players, Compton Players, St Peters Players (Wolvercote), Stanton Harcourt Drama group, Henley Amateur Operatic, Banbury Cross Players, Sinodun Players (Wallingford) and Oxford Theatre Guild.

Our adjudicator this year was Ian Sarginson of the Guild of Drama Adjudicators who gave fair comment after each play, and a short workshop with the cast. Most people seemed to be satisfied with his comments although not everyone agreed with what he said or suggested - but it is only one person's opinion. In fact we noticed that for the same play at Wallingford Festival the following week, a different adjudicator had the opposite view on one point!

The few awards we have at Abingdon (we are supposed to be a non-competitive festival!) were as follows:-

The "**David Coates - Punter's prize award**" (chosen by our Season Ticket holders) went to :-

**Henley Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society** for '**Effie's Burning**' by Valerie Windsor



Runner up was:-  
**Oxford Theatre Guild** for '**Queers**' by Brian Fillis, Jon Bradfield & Gareth McLean.



In Third place was:-  
**Didcot Phoenix Drama Group** for '**A Bench on the Edge**' by Luigi Jannuzzi



The "**Colin Dexter Rose Bowl Award**" for a special moment went to:-

**Henley Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society** for '**Effie's Burning**' by Valerie Windsor



The "**First Time Director's Award**" (there were 5 first time directors this year!) went to:-



**Emma Broadway** for '**Effie's Burning**' by **Henley Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society**

First Time Director  
Runner up was:-  
**Sue Hadley** for '**The Last Job**' by **Drayton Players**.



The 3 plays from the week chosen by the adjudicator, Ian Sarginson, to repeat their performances on the Gala night were:-

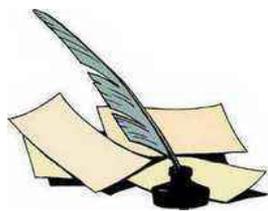
**'A Bench on the Edge'** by Luigi Jannuzzi  
Performed by **Didcot Phoenix Drama Group**

**'Effie's Burning'** by Valerie Windsor  
Performed by  
**Henley Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society**

**'Primrose Way'** by Ron Nicol  
Performed by **Didcot Phoenix Drama Group**

**Next year's Festival will be 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> June.**

## LETTERS



I enjoyed every play I saw, unfortunately I could only make Tuesday and Wednesday and thankfully the final Saturday evening. I loved performing during the ODN festival some 8 years ago with The Launton Village Players.

I am now a fledgling Director, having directed my first one act plays last year. I am directing the Launton Village Players again this year.

I learned a lot from the Adjudicator, which I will do my best to apply to our 2018 play. Thank you ODN for a very enjoyable and instructive week.

Tina Cherry

## CASTING

### HANNEY DRAMA GROUP

HDG are holding an **open audition / reading / social afternoon on Sunday 30th September** at Hanney War Memorial Hall at 14.30

If you are interested in joining us for our next pantomime "Aladdin and the Wishing Tree" to be performed in Hanney at the beginning of February 2019 please come along and say hello. We are a very friendly group and welcome newcomers of all ages (from 6 years old, but all under 14s must be accompanied by a designated adult at all times) in all aspects of drama – acting, producing, directing, stage managing etc etc

We rehearse from November onwards, so please be prepared to commit to every Sunday afternoon, plus several Wednesday evenings, and more in the final couple of weeks leading up to performances.

For further information, please contact our club Secretary, Lynda Hart, on email: [lyndahart1@hotmail.com](mailto:lyndahart1@hotmail.com) or see our Facebook page.

### JIGSAW STAGE PRODUCTIONS

Following our success in April with Oliver, we are now deciding on next year's musical and as always, need new people to join us, particularly leading men able to sing.

The show will be staged in 2019 at:-  
The Beacon, Wantage from Thurs 4th to Sat 6th April including Sat matinee

#### AND

Cornerstone, Didcot from Thurs 11th April to Sat 13th April, including Sat mat

Anyone interested in joining please contact Rosemary Stickland on 01235 200266 or email [RosemaryStickland@Hotmail.co.uk](mailto:RosemaryStickland@Hotmail.co.uk)

## REVIEWS

### BLEWBURY PLAYERS

# Lark Rise

By Keith Dewhurst

From the book by Flora Thompson

July 2018

What a delightful evening's entertainment in such a beautiful setting – an amphitheatre created in the garden of Orchard Dene and surrounded by hedgerows.

From our arrival, we were entertained by the four musicians (sitting on a beautifully painted old cart), who then moved to the stage area, in front of a very authentic looking barn. The other side of the set we saw the home of the Timms family, with a raised part at the back for the children's bedroom. At one point the short 'walls' of the house were moved, and became the pews at the local church – very clever.

The play – well more like a musical – opened with Rosa Lamoreaux who immediately set the very high standard of the production by singing solo unaccompanied! Musical Director, Bill McKinnon who played the melodian (a squeeze-box!) also later sang unaccompanied as well.

There isn't much of a plot to Lark Rise, but we were shown an excellent portrayal of various stages of village life in the late 1800's, based around the Timms family, ably played by Zillah Laidlaw, Matt Philips, Meag Laugharne, & Theo Pettigrew. We met a variety of characters from Old Sally to the passing tramp. All the actors including the children were good and managed to make themselves heard in this outdoor arena – no mean feat – well done to all.

The children were all delightful to watch as they danced or played and sang, the tiniest little girl stole the show at one point, and she got a clap for this. I had wanted to clap earlier, after the songs, but the play moved rapidly on after most of them – as it should I guess.

Congratulations particularly to the director who had obviously inspired the whole cast to give such an excellent production.

I look forward to whatever they do next year.

Mike Davies (ODN)

# **DORCHESTER AMATEUR DRAMATICS SOCIETY**

## **Caught in Court**

by Mike Davies May 2018

Watching a good play is always a delight on a May summer evening and the play "Caught in Court" by DADS in Dorchester was an interesting experience that did not disappoint my partner and I. The play was written, produced, directed and even performed in by Mike Davies, (my namesake may I add!)

We were highly amused by the plot that revolved around two middle aged couples who were friends. The men were keen golfers and drank a lot and the women liked to chat and loved shopping. Plus the women enjoyed often catching their men out who said they were golfing but seemed to have left their golf clubs on stage – whilst they went out drinking oops! big giveaway huh.

The plot was interesting and nicely paced by John and Jo, and Simon and Linda. But one of each of the couples was hiding a guilty secret that involved them having to appear at the magistrate's court locally on the same day.

A really clever tight little play and I found myself wondering if they would bump into each other at the court building (or nearly bump into each other!) which could have been amusing also. The plot's twists and turns were hilarious as each of the couples hid their guilty sin from their partners.

I loved the naturalism of the acting by Mark Williams as John, Mike Lord as Simon, Rosemary Mill as Linda and Kate Phillips as Jo.

The choice of modern every day wear made it all very believable and the scenes in court were very realistic with the clever idea of the three magistrates in the sitting high above the back stage added a touch of genius. An ingenious swinging flat screen moved us effortlessly from the domestic scene to the court scene.

I loved the calling of each person to attend in court and we were not disappointed by the arrival of several new characters such as Russell Bailey who played a believable clerk to the court. Sue Booy played the solicitor who seemed very narrow minded and strict and was out to catch both of our petty criminals. Maxine Briscoe was a good detective giving evidence which nearly caught out our hero.

Christine Jones did an excellent portrayal of a woman of the streets, Magdalena Woznika, and we really enjoyed her Polish accent which was very realistic. The audience seemed to love the fact that she threw her business cards at them as she departed. She was an Essex girl who had realised if she wanted to make more money as a hooker she had better be a Polish whore as they were much in demand. She strutted and sexily threw her weight around as we sat transfixed. In the break we spotted

her business cards near the exit and thought she was a real person working in the village, or was that my imagination?

Mike Davies this super writer, played a small part as a hardened criminal who spoke in "jail speak" and really scared Linda in the waiting room. She clearly had never come across a hard-nosed criminal before. A nice little amusing scene.

Then a new character arrived in court when Ed Metcalfe played the part of the Welsh preacher Arnold Laynelike who had a penchant for stealing ladies knickers, although we felt that maybe this was dangerous ground to cover in the light of current news concerning sexual conduct of religious figures! Well I suppose it helps to keep one's play modern and up with the times so to speak. Nevertheless, we loved his character and we were upset when he was put away.

After both of our characters, John and Linda, had attended their hearings and both avoided jail we swiftly moved back to the sitting room that began our play, we saw happy faces as they celebrated getting away with it all. But then Ann Winslet, a new acquaintance, arrived for dinner with her husband who was a new person to them all. This turned out to be the very chairman of the bench no less. As the chairman turned to greet Mike there was an almighty bang as Linda dropped the tray of drinks in shock.

What a dramatic ending, leaving us all on a high. But to me the biggest journey I guess was by Mike Davies who had written this play - because he had done his homework and really understood the criminal justice system and knew how to make it funny - not easy. Some really sharp dialogue and good use of the amateur actors available, a real team effort, we could feel that the cast were enjoying it all too.

DADS are now in our 35th year of giving amateur performances of their works in public and long may they continue. Well done, nice to see a good interesting comedy, congratulations to all concerned.

Mike Davies (ODN) & Sue Hadley

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## **BANBURY CROSS PLAYERS**

### **The Cripple of Inishmaan**

The Mill, Banbury 11th –14th July 2018

Inishmaan is the smallest of the Aran Islands in Galway Bay on the west coast of Ireland. This tiny settlement is the backdrop of Martin McDonagh's powerful yet comedic play, The Cripple of Inishmaan. Leave all your preconceptions and Political Correctness at the door otherwise you will be in for an uncomfortable ride I can tell you.

How can a playwright make a comedy out of a play dealing with topics revolving around the poor guy of the title? Well Mr McDonagh does just this and Banbury

Cross Players brought the whole thing to life with their usual style.

Set in the 1930's, the play is the final production of BCP's 2017-2018 season and is directed by Chrissie Garrett. In her programme notes she states the audience should consider themselves as flies on the wall as they bear witness to the drama unfolding before them. She is correct as there is no real plot, but that doesn't matter the piece is basically interplay between several different yet strong characters who live cheek by jowl in this tiny outcrop of Ireland.

The set is superb. Congratulations to decorators Richard Ashby and Peter Bloor and to designer Chris Garrett. It is a split design incorporating the village shop and the beach. The shop stocks everything but mainly peas, and is managed by Kate (Clare Lester) and Eileen (Janice Lake). Terrific performances from both ladies. They were the strong earthy characters round which the rest of the cast revolved.

Both women have adopted their nephew; orphan Billy (the cripple in the title). They are harassed by a succession of customers with daft questions, not least young Bartley, played by Jonas Bal, whose constant yearning for American sweets Kate & Eileen import but are usually out of stock provided some amusing scenes. Pity he hadn't a yearning for tins of peas. Jonas played his part well and it's always refreshing to see a young person perform with the confidence and ability of Jonas, although I did miss some of his lines, I'll put that down to it being the opening night.

Bartley was constantly ear and physically bashed by his sister the delightful Helen. She being the Island's pretty young thing that got her way with everyone and everything by dishing out kisses and hugs. Clare Primrose was Helen and again a youngster gave her all on stage, self-assured, and as far as I could make out, word perfect. I particularly liked the attention to detail with her dress, the petticoat showed a good four inches in places below the hem. I am assuming it was meant.

With the strong Irish dialogue, coming and going of the characters, highly amusing script and the heat of a hot summer's night building up in the auditorium my fly on the wall felt as though it had been hit with a swat. There were only around fifty in the audience due, I guess, to England's World Cup clash. Shame.

On with the play. Enter Johnnypateenmike played by Nik Lester. This comical character's role in life was to dispense news-of-the-world to island inhabitants in return for goods, meat, eggs, tins of peas, you get the idea. Nik was excellent as the quick talking Johnnypateenmike who issued his news bulletins one at a time for maximum effect, bit like Radio 4. True to character I met Nik briefly after the play and amusingly (I thought) asked if he had any more news, and he informed me England were out the World Cup!

Johnnypateenmike's Mammy (Lynn Cowley) did like a drink, (there didn't seem much more to do on Inishmaan) and provided some humorous moments throughout the production. A nice cameo performance from Ms Cowley, steady on the booze Lynn.

The plot such as it was involved an American film company arriving on a neighbouring island to shoot a

film and several folk wishing to get a ride on Babbybobby's boat to try and make their fortune. Babbybobby was truly convincingly portrayed by Dave Candy. A surly, untidy, tall and menacing character that took exception when cripple Billy conned lift across the water in his boat.

Now Joe Deakin as Billy was exceptional. Having to remember to shuffle when he walked, speak in an Irish accent and recite a massive amount of dialogue, especially in the second half was truly inspirational. His coughing alone in Act 2 convinced me he should see a doctor after the show.

Luckily however there was a doctor in the cast line up played by Andrew Whiffin. Good choice, nice bed side manner, I nearly asked him to have a look at my back.

So that's it. A full evening of Irish comedy and language dispensed by a very able group of BCP players who deserve much credit. No negatives at all 'cept the occasional lapse of Irish brogue but hardly a prompt, impressive for an opening night. Can't wait for November and the start of BCP's new season. Well done all.

Lance Bassett

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## FARINGDON DRAMATIC SOCIETY

### Faringdon Follies

Buscot Park Theatre 13th -16th June 2018

It is Faringdon Dramatic Society's 70th anniversary this year, and 800 years since Faringdon received its Market Charter from King Henry III.

To commemorate these historical events, FDS created 'Faringdon Follies', a chronicle of the town's history since 1218.

The plan for the production was to show FDS creating and producing the 'Follies' with group members coming up with various ideas, including the costumes, under the watchful eye of Jo Webster and FDS 30-year veteran Carol Tappenden. A neat idea that worked well with ongoing snippets of these suggestions, some helpful some not so, throughout the show.



Where better to illustrate this fascinating story of an Oxfordshire Market town than the sumptuous surroundings of 18th century Buscot House. The

small theatre set in the grounds is a 64-seat Art Deco masterpiece and the perfect setting for the performance devised and directed by Debbie Lock and Carolyn Taylor.

The production was in two halves, Act 1 featured a glimpse of events in the town from 1200-1900 AD and opened with a brief slide show of Faringdon town scenes ancient and modern. The story progressed and included a short scene about the Civil War when Faringdon was a Royalist stronghold and Cromwell took exception to this. The well-acted piece featured the impressive talents of the group's younger members plus Adrian Wells as the convincing Royalist Colonel having morale trouble with some of his troops. Young FDS member Jack Metcalfe was a treat to behold as the soldier defending his comrade. His performance was well rehearsed, confident and his delivery first rate. Well done that man.

The set for this playlet was merely a window looking over the countryside projected onto the back wall. An idea that not only worked well but was also an excellent photograph.

The Faringdon story progressed with brief glimpses of Monks, murder and mayhem in the town.

The interval gave the audience a chance to discover more about Buscot House with a stroll in the magnificent gardens on a warm spring evening.

So to Act 2 where we find another short scene with FDS stalwart Peter Webster as the eccentric Lord Berners who inherited Faringdon House in 1930 and turned it into the centre of a glittering social circle, the 'Chipping Norton' set of the day if you will.

An admirable performance by all in this short story which included Noel Coward (Duncan Sinclair) and Martin Waymark as Salvador Dali admirably played to the point I expected him to knock up a surrealist masterpiece any minute.

Songs were aplenty during the evening, even a Faringdon Rap and an adaptation of Tom Lehrer's Pigeons In The Park. There was something, as they say, for everyone.

Much detail in Act 2 centred around Faringdon Folly, with a film, slides and the story of its creation. It was in fact the last tower to be built in England and in 2005 accommodated the largest wristband in history (22 metres) during the Making Poverty History project.

The only minor gripe I had for the whole evening was the printed Programme, which failed to indicate who played who and what in the various pieces throughout the performance.

So, an excellent night of entertainment from a talented group whose members range from seniors to youngsters. The cast finally took the stage for a rendition of 'This is my Town', a rousing tribute to Faringdon. Happy birthday FDS.

Lance Bassett

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### THEATRE LIGHTING AND SET DESIGN COURSE

Sinodun Players are hosting a lighting and set design course to run over two days:

**Saturday 25th August 10am – 5pm and**

**Sunday 9th September 10am – 5pm**



It is to be run by Declan Randall who's professional design career spans more than 23 years and in that time he has designed more than 500 productions covering all genres of live entertainment. He has designed for Theatre, Dance (both classical and contemporary), Opera, Musicals, Live Music, Corporate

Events, Film, Television, Music videos and Architecture.

This course is designed to appeal to both aspiring and experienced lighting and set design people, as well as Directors who need to know what they can reasonably ask for in any given venue or space.



The course costs £20 for one day or £35 for both days if booked together. The schedule will be reasonably flexible so that individuals can ask Declan to cover specific issues, but essentially it will cover:

#### **DAY 1 - Saturday 25th Aug 10am – 5pm** **Introduction to Stage Lighting**

Objectives of Lighting Design

Controllable properties of Light:

Instruments, Beam Angles, Colour

Planning your rig: McCandles Principle, Building up a plan

Introduction to Design

Design Tools: Line, texture, form  
Styles of Theatre

#### **DAY 2 - Sunday 9th September 10am – 5pm** **Lighting Design**

Lighting for Plays, Dance, Opera, Musicals

Working with Gobos and Effects

Cyclorama lighting

Set Design

Script Analysis

Model boxes and drafting

Projection Design

To book your place please email  
Gloria.wright@sinodunplayers.org.uk

# DRAMA WORKSHOP

A day of practical activity, hosted by Chiltern Players, exploring a wide variety of ideas and techniques for beginners and experienced performers alike

**SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 10 am – 4 pm**

Peppard Memorial Hall, Peppard Common, RG9 5JA

Facilitator: **RICHARD WARRICK**

***"It's not what you do, it's the way that you do it"***

*What is this play - this scene - this character - all about?*

How do we best interpret and present the playwright's intent to the audience?

It's a matter of knowing your character, your lines, your interaction with other cast

members, timing, positioning, posture, how to move, how to stand still, listening to and responding to the cues. All these factors contribute to an enjoyable and memorable performance.

**RICHARD WARRICK** is a former local Chiltern Edge student and ex member of Chiltern Players and Progress Theatre. Amongst other things, Richard is now a professional actor and is looking forward to sharing his knowledge and experience with us. He has run acting workshops for Chiltern Players before. It is always great fun and we learn a lot!

**Cost** for the day £10.00, £5.00 for students

Please wear comfortable working clothes and shoes.

Tea and coffee will be provided but we suggest you bring a packed lunch

**Tickets** and additional information from

0751 239 2625 or [www.chilternplayers.co.uk](http://www.chilternplayers.co.uk)



## THAME PLAYERS

### "Oh, What a Lovely War"

a Musical Entertainment by Joan Littlewood

Oh, What a Lovely War was seen as an ironic critique of the reality of the war when it was first performed.



The musical premiered at the Theatre Royal Stratford East on 19 March 1963 to rave audience reaction.

It was an ensemble production featuring members of the theatre's regular company, which included Brian Murphy, Victor Spinetti and Glynn Edwards each playing several parts.

New and established Thame Players have come together to put on this production which will feature many songs and sketches and is sure to delight young and old.

It will feature such World War I era songs as It's a Long Way to Tipperary, Pack up Your Troubles and

Keep the Home Fires Burning a real foot tapping spectacular with serious undertones.

**When:** Tue 11th to Sat 15th Sept at 7.45pm

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

**Tickets:** £9 / £8 conc. (Tuesday all Tkts £7)

Online from [www.thameplayers.co.uk](http://www.thameplayers.co.uk) or

Spear Travels, Greyhound Walk, Thame.

01844 217228.

**Enquiries** to Pat Shepherd -

[p.k.shepherd@btinternet.com](mailto:p.k.shepherd@btinternet.com)

## OXFORD THEATRE GUILD

### King Charles III

by Mike Bartlett

"The Queen is Dead, Long Live the King"



Queen Elizabeth II is dead, and a new monarch takes the crown as his own.

As King, Charles finds himself torn between his own political views and the ceremonial role the monarchy plays within the British Parliament. Meanwhile, Harry feels disillusioned and starts dating a staunch republican, Jess, who makes him question his life and family. With Charles threatening to overthrow the Commons and Harry wanting to "descend into the mass", will the monarchy survive?

Mike Bartlett's Olivier and BAFTA winning drama draws on the structure and style of a Shakespearian history play in this gripping exploration of the clash between Crown and State.

**When:** 24 - 29 September at 7:30pm

**Where:** Wesley Memorial Church, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford

**Tickets:** [www.ticketsoxford.com/whats-on/all-shows/king-charles-iii/11745](http://www.ticketsoxford.com/whats-on/all-shows/king-charles-iii/11745)

**OTG Website:** [www.OxfordTheatreGuild.com](http://www.OxfordTheatreGuild.com)

## NORTONIANS AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

### "You Just Never Know"

by Liz Dobson

Mo surprises her husband with an anniversary party - but he's not the only one surprised.

**When:** Saturday 6 October - matinee at 3.00pm and evening performance at 7.30pm.

**Where:** The Parish Rooms, Church Street, Chipping Norton.

Entry is free but we ask for a donation on leaving.

# CHILTERN PLAYERS

## "Teechers"

by John Godber

A fast-moving and highly entertaining light hearted comedy, 'Teechers' by John Godber evokes life at a modern comprehensive, using the format of an end-of-term play to sketch an idealistic drama teacher's progress through two terms of mayhem and teenage angst, cynical colleagues and obstructive caretakers. After it seems he may have made a difference to several student's lives the lure of a safer private school with much better teachers seems too tempting. But will he go?

**When:** Thur 11th - Sat 13th October

Doors are open 7.30pm for a 8pm start.

**Where:** Peppard Memorial Hall, Gallowstree Road, Peppard Common, RG9 5JA.

**Tickets:** and info - 0751 239 2625 or on

**Website:** [www.chilternplayers.co.uk](http://www.chilternplayers.co.uk)



# OXFORD THEATRE GUILD

## The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists by Robert Tressell

"Yes. I'll tell you the cause of poverty. It's money."



The novel follows the lives of a group of Edwardian painters and decorators in the fictional town of Mugsborough (based on Hastings) on the south coast of England. The firm they work for, Rushton & Co, employs them to renovate a ramshackle Victorian house called The Cave, and the action centres around the firm's exploitation of the workers and the dangerous conditions in which they work. The craftsmen would like to do a decent job but are constrained by the need of their employers to keep costs down.

Never dull and highly entertaining, this adaptation of a well-loved classic is just as relevant today in a world of zero hours contracts and the gig economy as when it was first penned over a hundred years ago.

The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists was written by Robert Tressell at the turn of the last century and published shortly after his death in 1911.

**When:** 15 - 20 October at 7:30pm

**Where:** Old Fire Station, George Street, Oxford

**Tickets:** [oldfirestation.org.uk/whats-on/the-ragged-trousered-philanthropists](http://oldfirestation.org.uk/whats-on/the-ragged-trousered-philanthropists)

**OTG Website:** [www.OxfordTheatreGuild.com](http://www.OxfordTheatreGuild.com)

ODN website: [www.OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](http://www.OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)

# WSMC

## back to the 70s Concert

In October we'll be going back to the 70s. With songs from Led Zeppelin, David Bowie, Fleetwood Mac, Blondie, Bruce Springsteen and The Sweet (to name but a few), it promises to be a fantastic show, so why not save the date?

**When & Where:-**

Friday 19 October: Old Mill Hall, Grove

Saturday 20 October: Hagbourne Village Hall

Friday 26 October: Steventon Village Hall

Friday 27 October: Old Mill Hall, Grove

**Tickets:** - see [www.WSMC-music.co.uk](http://www.WSMC-music.co.uk)



# AMEGOS

## "CRAZY FOR YOU"

by George Gershwin

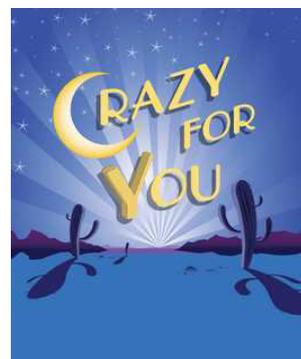
The musical featuring songs you'll love - "I Got Rhythm", "Someone to Watch Over Me", "Slap that Bass" and "They Can't Take that Away from Me", to mention just a few.

Mistaken identities, heartbreak, happiness and a wealth of memorable tunes, make this an exhilarating celebration of the great Broadway musicals.

**When:** Thur 25th to Sat 27th October, at 7.30pm  
+ Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

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

**Tickets:** on sale from [www.amegostheatre.com](http://www.amegostheatre.com)



# ABINGDON OPERATIC SOCIETY Top Hat



Based on the 1935 RKO movie and brings

the glamour of Hollywood's golden age and the glorious, tap-dancing magic of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers to the stage in one of the greatest dance musicals of all time.

Packed full of Irving Berlin's greatest hits including, 'Cheek to Cheek', 'Top Hat, White Tie & Tails', 'Let's Face the Music & Dance' and 'Puttin' on the Ritz', Top Hat tells the story of Broadway sensation Jerry Travers who dances his way across Europe to win the heart of society girl Dale Tremont.

An uplifting and hilarious romantic comedy celebrating 1930s song, style and romance, Top Hat dazzles with beautiful costumes, breathtaking dance and a love story that will set the pulse racing!

**When:** Tues 23 to Sat 27 October with a matinee on the Saturday.

**Where:** Amey Theatre, Abingdon School, Park Rd, Abingdon, OX14 1DE

**Tickets:** go on sale on 10th September. **See:-**

**Website:** [www.AbingdonOperatic.co.uk](http://www.AbingdonOperatic.co.uk)

## MIDDLE BARTON DRAMA GROUP

### "The Cordwangler's Tale"

**A melodrama by Ken Lusted**

A melodrama featuring a hero with shapely calves, a sweet innocent heroine, a hissable villain, and various very weird local yokels.

**When:** 2nd-3rd and 9th-10th November

**Where:** The Alice Marshall Hall, Middle Barton.

**Tickets:** £7.50 available later from Middle Barton Stores, members of the group **or see:-**

**Website:** [www.MiddleBartonDramaGroup.co.uk](http://www.MiddleBartonDramaGroup.co.uk)

## THE STONESFIELD PLAYERS

### "Shadow of the Desert"

**A radio play by David Lines.**

What happened to Lawrence after Arabia: the decorated war hero who achieved International celebrity almost as soon as he returned from the desert?

Haunted by his experiences in the desert and considering Lawrence of Arabia to be a failure T.E. Lawrence sought to escape the icon he had become and sought refuge in the lowest ranks of the RAF.

The play (performed as if the audience is attending a live recording) opens as Lawrence takes up a post at RAF Mount Batten in Plymouth. A bond of friendship develops between his commanding officer, Sydney Smith and Sydney's wife, Clare, as Lawrence discovers a passion and aptitude for developing speed boats. But his friendship with Clare and concerns about Lawrence's affiliations in the build up

**ODN website:** [www.OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](http://www.OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)

to war, along with an inability to stay out of the media spotlight, cause increasing concern.

Media harassment, politics, government agents, doomed relationships and a man who cannot escape his past contribute to a powerful play about the struggle for personal freedom.

**When:** Friday 9th November 8pm; Saturday 10th November 2pm and 8pm

**Where:** St James Centre, High Street, Stonesfield, OX29 8PU

**Tickets:** e-mail: [andrew.tacon@outlook.com](mailto:andrew.tacon@outlook.com) or tel 01993 891217 or mobile 07795 441986

## COMPTON PLAYERS

### Two one-act plays:-

#### The Real Inspector Hound

by Tom Stoppard

Two drama critics, Moon & Birdboot, arrive to watch the performance of a new detective play, a parody of the conventional stage thriller. However the private lives of the critics become inextricably mixed with those of the play's characters until the pair realise they are in for more than they had bargained for.

#### The Promise

by H Connolly

A few hours after Stacey Nash's funeral, her estranged father sits menacingly and uninvited on the sofa in her front room. He is full of cocaine, whisky, remorse, anger and self-pity, but most of all he's there because he made a promise.

**When:** 14th to 17th November, 7:30

**Where:** Compton Village Hall

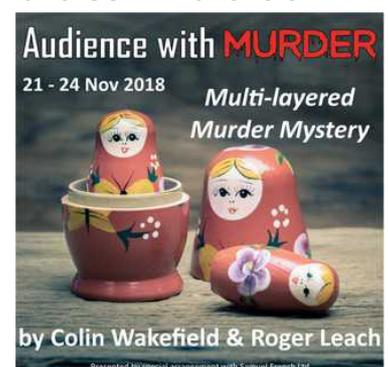
**Website:** and tickets: [www.comptonplayers.co.uk](http://www.comptonplayers.co.uk)

## BANBURY CROSS PLAYERS

### "Audience with Murder"

by Roger Leach and Colin Wakefield

The play begins in the living room of Alan and Sue, where they are joined by Kelly and Dean to read a play that Sue has written. Alan, a teacher of theatre, as well as a



chauvinistic boor, makes fun of the play and his wife as he continues to drink. The "reading" turns into an emotional free-for-all as he recognizes himself being parodied in the script and as his relationship with Kelly is revealed. From then on, reality keeps changing, and the audience is repeatedly surprised until the final twist.

**When:** 21 – 24 November at 7.30pm,

**Where:** The Mill Arts Centre, Banbury,  
OX16 5QE.

**Tickets** online at

[www.themillartscentre.co.uk/events-calendar](http://www.themillartscentre.co.uk/events-calendar)

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## DORCHESTER ON THAMES AMATEUR DRAMATICS SOCIETY

### 'Joking Apart'

by Alan Ayckbourn,

'Joking Apart' was written in response to comments that Alan Ayckbourn only ever wrote about unhappy couples. In this play, Richard and Anthea are a perfectly happy couple who inadvertently worsen the lives of those around them.

Bitterness, depression and obsession have never been served up with such comic skill as in this, one of Alan Ayckbourn's favorite plays.

**When:** 21-24 November 2018

**Where:** Dorchester Village Hall

**Tickets:** see [www.dads.org.uk](http://www.dads.org.uk)

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## THE WYCHWOOD PLAYERS

### Blackadder Goes Forth

Performing three of the beloved series' episodes which include when Blackadder attempts to avoid the Big Push thanks to Baldrick's 'cooking', Blackadder shooting and eating General Melchett's favourite carrier pigeon, and the famously poignant final episode, there will be many laughs as the absurdity of war is brought into sharp focus by Ben Elton and Richard Curtis' superb script, which still manages to be respectful of the tragic loss of life.

**When:** Thur 22nd to Sat 24th Nov at 7.30 pm

**Where:** The New Beaconsfield Hall,  
Shipton under Wychwood (near Burford)

**Tickets:** £10 via email:-

WychwoodPlayersBoxOffice@yahoo.co.uk

or see [www.WychwoodPlayers.com](http://www.WychwoodPlayers.com)

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## ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB

### "The Game's Afoot"

by Ken Ludwig

It is December 1936 and Broadway star William Gillette, admired the world over for his leading role in the play Sherlock Holmes, has invited his fellow cast-members to his Connecticut castle for a weekend of revelry. But when one of the guests is stabbed to death, the festivities in this isolated house of tricks and mirrors quickly turn dangerous.

Then it's up to Gillette himself, as he assumes the persona of his beloved Holmes, to track down the killer before the next victim appears. The danger and hilarity are non-stop in this glittering whodunit set during the Christmas holidays.

**When:** at the end of November (dates TBC)

**Where:** The Unicorn Theatre, Abingdon.

**Tickets & details see:-**

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

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## DIDCOT PHOENIX

### DRAMA GROUP

#### BUMS ON SEATS

by Michael Snelgrove

In a tatty provincial theatre, a new play called 'Fecund' is being staged.

This uproarious adult comedy introduces everyone involved in a series of hilarious scenes linked by a chorus of usherettes. The stage manager has a blinding hangover, the leading actors range from pretentious to bitter to plainly incompetent, the new marketing assistant used to work for British Rail, the author is lecherous and unscrupulous and the others are just as outrageous.

The second act centres on the audience, an equally mixed and unharmonious group. Chaos erupts just as the theatre's major sponsor arrives.

Funny, satirical and technically inventive, Bums on Seats is a treat for theatre fans from start to finish.

**When:** late Summer/Autumn tour –  
dates to be confirmed **see:-**

**Website:** [www.DidcotPhoenixDrama.co.uk](http://www.DidcotPhoenixDrama.co.uk)

**Venues:-**

The Northbourne Centre - 23 High St, Didcot OX11 8EQ  
St Blaise Community Space, St Blaise Church  
High St, Milton, Abingdon OX14 4EW

Harwell Village Hall - High St, Harwell, Didcot OX11 0EX

Hagbourne Village Hall - 53 Main Rd,  
East Hagbourne, Didcot OX11 9LR

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# OXFORDSHIRE DRAMA NETWORK COMMITTEE 2018-2019

|                      |                  |              |  |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------|--|
| Chairman             | Mike Davies      | 01235 821351 | info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org   |
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| Asstnt Treasurer     | Pam Aird         | 01235 230657 | PamAird@Hotmail.co.uk  |
| Membership Secretary | Sue Tibbles      | 01865 277209 | <a href="mailto:odnmembsec@gmail.com">odnmembsec@gmail.com</a>             |
| Newsletter & Editor  | Mike Davies      | 01235 821351 | info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org   |
| Website Editor       | Mike Davies      | 01235 821351 | info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org   |
| Committee Member     | Richard Damerell | 07962 722265 | <a href="mailto:RichDamerell@Gmail.com">RichDamerell@Gmail.com</a>         |
| Committee Member     | Mike Lacey       | 01865 736913 | <a href="mailto:michael1944lacey@gmail.com">michael1944lacey@gmail.com</a> |

## ODN GROUPS & CONTACTS

To simplify data protection (GDPR), I have removed all personal contact names & emails from the newsletter. Most groups have contact details on their websites which are listed below. Errors or omissions – let us know.

| Drama organisation                   | Website address of group   | E-mail                                |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Abingdon Drama Club                  | <a href="http://www.abingdon-drama-club.com/">www.abingdon-drama-club.com/</a>   | AbingdonDramaClub@gmail.com           |
| Abingdon Operatic Society            | <a href="http://www.abingdonoperatic.co.uk/">www.abingdonoperatic.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| ACTS (Aston & Cote Thespian Society) | <a href="http://www.astonoxon.com/ACTS.aspx">www.astonoxon.com/ACTS.aspx</a>   |                                       |
| AmEgos                               | <a href="http://www.amegostheatre.com/">www.amegostheatre.com/</a>   | amegos.theatre@gmail.com              |
| Banbury Cross Players                | <a href="http://banburycrossplayers.org.uk/">banburycrossplayers.org.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Banbury Operatic Society             | <a href="http://www.banburyoperaticsociety.co.uk/">www.banburyoperaticsociety.co.uk/</a>   | BanburyOperaticPublicity@gmail.com    |
| Bartholomew Players                  | <a href="http://bartholomewplayers.co.uk/">bartholomewplayers.co.uk/</a>   | bart.players@gmail.com                |
| Bicester Choral & Operatic Society   | <a href="http://www.bcoswesing.org.uk">www.bcoswesing.org.uk</a>   |                                       |
| Blewbury Players                     | <a href="http://www.blewburyplayers.co.uk/">www.blewburyplayers.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| BreakaLeg Productions                | <a href="http://www.breakalegproductions.co.uk/">www.breakalegproductions.co.uk/</a>   | info@BreakaLegProductions.co.uk       |
| Chiltern Players                     | <a href="http://www.chilternplayers.co.uk/">www.chilternplayers.co.uk/</a>   | chilternplayers@hotmail.co.uk         |
| Compton Players                      | <a href="http://cpwp.comptonplayers.co.uk/">cpwp.comptonplayers.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Didcot Phoenix Drama Group           | <a href="http://www.didcotphoenixdrama.co.uk/">www.didcotphoenixdrama.co.uk/</a>   | didcotphoenixdrama@hotmail.co.uk      |
| DIY Theatre                          |  |                                       |
| Domino Players                       | <a href="http://www.dominoplayers.co.uk/">www.dominoplayers.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Dorchester Amateur Dramatics Society | <a href="http://www.dads.org.uk/">www.dads.org.uk/</a>   | membership@dads.org.uk                |
| Drayton Players                      | <a href="http://www.draytonplayers.org.uk/">www.draytonplayers.org.uk/</a>   | info@DraytonPlayers.org.uk            |
| Faringdon Dramatic Society           | <a href="http://www.faringdondramatic.org.uk/">www.faringdondramatic.org.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Goring Gap Players                   | <a href="http://www.goringgapplayers.co.uk/">www.goringgapplayers.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| HAMS (East Hagbourne)                | <a href="http://www.easthagbourne.net/directory/amateur-dramatic-society-hams">www.easthagbourne.net/directory/amateur-dramatic-society-hams</a> | mail@raymondhopkins.com               |
| Hanborough Players                   |  |                                       |
| Hanney Drama Group                   |  |                                       |
| Henley Amateur Operatic & D.S.       | <a href="http://www.henleyoperatic.co.uk/">www.henleyoperatic.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Henley Players                       | <a href="http://www.henleyplayers.com/">www.henleyplayers.com/</a>   | secretary@henleyplayers.com           |
| Jigsaw Stage Productions             | <a href="http://www.jigsawstageproductions.co.uk/">www.jigsawstageproductions.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society  | <a href="http://www.kenningtonads.org.uk/">www.kenningtonads.org.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Kidlington Amateur Operatic Society  | <a href="http://www.kaosinoxon.org/">www.kaosinoxon.org/</a>   |                                       |
| Kingston Bagpuize Drama Group        | <a href="http://www.kbdgshow.com/">www.kbdgshow.com/</a>   |                                       |
| Launton Village Players              | <a href="http://www.launtonvillageplayers.org.uk/">www.launtonvillageplayers.org.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Look Theatre                         | <a href="http://www.looktheatre.co.uk">www.looktheatre.co.uk</a>   | Steven@LookTheatre.co.uk              |
| Middle Barton Drama Group            | <a href="http://www.middlebartondrama.org.uk/">www.middlebartondrama.org.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Musical Youth Company of Oxford      | <a href="http://www.myco.org.uk">www.myco.org.uk</a>   |                                       |
| Nortonians Amateur Dramatic Society  |  |                                       |
| Oxford Operatic Society              | <a href="http://www.oxfordoperatic.org.uk/">www.oxfordoperatic.org.uk/</a>   | OxopsTreasurer@gmail.com              |
| Oxford Theatre Guild                 | <a href="http://www.oxfordtheatreguild.com/">www.oxfordtheatreguild.com/</a>   | chair@oxfordtheatreguild.com          |
| Oxfordshire Drama Wardrobe           | <a href="http://www.OxonDramaWardrobe.co.uk">www.OxonDramaWardrobe.co.uk</a>   | odwc1938@gmail.com                    |
| Sinodun Players                      | <a href="http://www.sinodunplayers.org.uk/">www.sinodunplayers.org.uk/</a>   | committee@drama.sinodunplayers.org.uk |
| Standlake Players                    | <a href="http://www.standlakeplayers.com/">www.standlakeplayers.com/</a>   | members@standlakeplayers.com          |
| Stanton Harcourt Drama Group         | <a href="http://www.stantonharcourtdrama.com">www.stantonharcourtdrama.com</a>   |                                       |
| Stonesfield Players                  |  |                                       |
| St Peter's Players                   | <a href="http://www.stpetersplayers.co.uk/">www.stpetersplayers.co.uk/</a>   | info@stpetersplayers.co.uk            |
| Thame Players                        | <a href="http://www.thameplayers.co.uk/">www.thameplayers.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Wantage Stage Musical Company        | <a href="http://www.wantagestagemusical.co.uk/">www.wantagestagemusical.co.uk/</a>   | wsmcCommittee@outlook.com             |
| Witney Dramatic Society              | <a href="http://www.witneydrama.co.uk/">www.witneydrama.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| Woodcote Amateur Dramatic Society    | <a href="http://www.woodcotedrama.co.uk/">www.woodcotedrama.co.uk/</a>   | sec@woodcotedrama.co.uk               |
| Wootton Players                      | <a href="http://www.wootton-players.co.uk/">www.wootton-players.co.uk/</a>   |                                       |
| WOPA (West Oxford Pantomime Assoc)   | <a href="http://www.wopa.me/">www.wopa.me/</a>   | info@WOPA.me                          |
| Wychwood Players                     | <a href="http://www.wychwoodplayers.com">www.wychwoodplayers.com</a>   |                                       |

### DON'T FORGET

**Events:** We inform all our readers of Festivals & Events – so send your information in.  
**Auditions:** Newsletter notifies all our members of auditions locally – so send us your requests.  
**Reviews:** Fancy sending in your own review??? (Up to 500 words please)  
 What you think and feel about the play or musical you've just seen is valuable to us.  
 We have a **LETTERS** section for Views & Comments. (up to 200 words each item)  
 Send News & Reviews to the editor at [info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org](mailto:info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org)