

Oxfordshire Drama Network

Newsletter

DECEMBER 2018

EDITOR / CHAIRMAN'S BULLETIN

Well with sleigh bells ringing and Christmas Cards and presents in the shops, its now time to review our year. That's if you're not performing a last-minute Cabaret/Quiz, Play or Panto out there!

I read the other day that Am-dram is a serious business and that in 1963, the academic Edwin R Schoell wrote: "There is, particularly in professional quarters, a deep-rooted suspicion that amateur theatre is really an institution that exists in order to give significance to 'amateur dramatics', a frivolous kind of amusement with no pretention to art." - What did he say??? Well frivolous or not, it continues to grow here in the UK. Am-dram seems in good health. We are already getting requests to enter the Oxfordshire Drama Festival next year – 3rd-9th June 2019.



Pantomime competition Latest News.

Following feedback from groups, we do listen to your views, and so we are going to have more Judges, and endeavour to judge the opening nights for consistency. We have also brought the marking up to match the weighting used by the Guild of Drama Adjudicators (GODA). We will also take the limitations of the venue into account when marking.

If you do have experience of panto, then you may like to join our team of judges, see details on page 2.

Mike Davies

ODN Chairman

The deadline for the February issue is 20th Jan 2019
Contributions to info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

Email: info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org
Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767

WHAT'S ON DIARY (details inside)

NOVEMBER

30 Nov *Jigsaw Stage Productions*
1 Dec **Quiz 'n' Cabaret**

30 Nov *Bartholomew Players*
1 Dec **Dangerous Corner**

DECEMBER

1 Dec *Abingdon Drama Club*
The Crucible

5-8 *Henley A.O.D.S.*
White Christmas

5-8 *St Peter's Players*
Atlantis" the Panto

7-9 *Thame Players*
12-16 **Beauty and the Beast"**

JANUARY

17-19 *A.C.T.S. (Aston)*
Happy Families

18-19 *Didcot Phoenix DG*
Rumpelstiltskin

18-30 *Sinodun Players.*
1-2 Feb **Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves"**

21-26 *Oxford Operatic Society*
Sister Act

25-31 *Kennington A.D.S.*
1-2 Feb **Robinson Crusoe and the Pirates**

26-27 *Woodcote A.D.S.*
2-3 Feb **Cinderella**

FEBRUARY

20-23 *Witney Dramatic Society*
Jack and the Beanstalk

20-23 *Henley A.O.D.S.*
Blackadder

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More Judges needed for ODN Pantomime Competition

If you have experience and a passion for pantomime and feel you could see a few of the pantomimes in our competition, mark them and write a review, then please contact our chairman Mike Davies (see last page for contact details).

We use a GODA style marking system (revised this year) to give better consistency, and we are endeavouring to see the opening nights and have at least 2 people judging every pantomime.

Now is the time to enter the:-

ODN PANTOMIME COMPETITION

There is still time to Enter your Pantomime or Children's Play into the ODN Panto-competition for 2018-19.

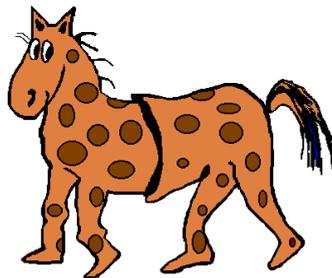
Full details on the application form which can be downloaded from www.OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

The winning group wins the new "Deidre Jones Chalice" for the year, and has their name & pantomime engraved on it.

Entry fee is £10. Please return form and entrance fee at least 3 weeks before your first night.

The results will be announced at the AGM in April or May 2019 at Drayton Village Hall

Please note that entry is only open to ODN members. Please check that your ODN subs have been paid.



CASTING

JIGSAW STAGE PRODUCTIONS

Casting for "The King and I"

Following our success in April with Oliver, next year's musical will be The King and I by Rogers & Hammerstein.

Rehearsals are Tuesdays and some Sundays.

Performance dates are Thurs 4th to Sat 6th April at The Beacon, Wantage, and Thurs 11th April to Sat 13th April at Cornerstone, Didcot. There will be 2.30 Matinees on both Saturdays

ODN website: www.OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

Anyone interesting in taking part please contact us either by phone to 01235 200266 or email RosemaryStickland@Hotmail.co.uk website www.JigsawStageProductions.co.uk

BANBURY CROSS PLAYERS

Casting for "Death Knell"

Open Auditions for BCP's May 2019 Production of James Cawood's breath-taking thriller Death Knell will be held at The Mill Arts Centre on Thursday 6 December 2018, 7.30pm. All welcome!

Successful Playwright Henry Roth takes delight in telling his neurotic wife, Evelyn, he has a new, 'seismic' play to unleash on the theatrical world. To prepare for its stage debut, he has invited the charming and charismatic (but unknown) actor, Jack Willoughby to their remote Highland home to prepare for the leading role of murderer. Jack's arrival sends Evelyn into a flat spin when she realises he is her lover - a relationship developed during her time supposedly in rehab in London. Is Henry aware of the relationship?

In an outstanding script, sending the audience reeling from one plot twist to another, the genre of "Thriller" is taken on an exciting new journey.

Each character is well drawn, the dialogue is lean and the action is non-stop. Actors should be prepared for physically demanding fight scenes and use of weapons. Previous stage combat experience not essential as training will be given.

Roles available :

Henry Roth (40-60)

Evelyn, Henry's wife (20-40)

Jack Willoughby (20-40)

Inspector Lazan (20-40)

If you are interested in auditioning but unable to make the above date, please get in touch.

Performance Dates are 1 - 4 May 2019.

You do not have to be a member to audition but will be required to join if cast.

See BCP website for membership options.

www.banburycrossplayers.org.uk

THAME PLAYERS

Auditions for

"Witness for the Prosecution"

by Agatha Christie

directed by Pat Shepherd

Wednesday 9th January 2019

Leonard Vole stands accused of murdering a rich widow. The stakes are high with shocking witness

testimony, impassioned outbursts from the dock and a young man's fight to escape the hangman's noose. Generally regarded as one of Christie's most accomplished plays., this suspenseful thriller keeps audiences guessing until the very end.

With a cast of 30 reduced to 15 or 18 through doubling, it's a great play for as many actors to take part in as possible. The play is set in the 1950's and the cast is as follows:

4 Women and possibly 11 to 14 men - of all ages.

Auditions will be held at the Thame Players Theatre in Nelson Street Thame OX9 2DP at 7.45pm.

If anyone wishes to see a script before auditioning, then please contact the director Pat Shepherd at Pat.shepherd@thameplayers.co.uk

Performances will be 7th – 11th May 2019 at 7.45pm. Rehearsals are Tuesdays and Thursday evenings from 12th March which is the week after the previous show.

Tickets £10 with £9 concessions available from Spear Travels on 01844 217228 or online from www.thameplayers.co.uk

BLEWBURY PLAYERS

Auditions for "The Crucible" by Arthur Miller

Sat 26 & Sun 27 January.

(Males over 16 years and females over 14 years).
Please book your audition c/o

blewburyplayers@gmail.com

or ring 01235 850537.

There will be two separate workshop days between the auditions and June allowing everyone to come together early as a company and work on characterisation.

Sebastian Palka has agreed to return to Blewbury for the summer of 2019 and will be directing The Crucible. Sebastian made his Blewbury debut directing the very popular Great Expectations in 2017. This was notable for its strong characters and ensemble scenes.

Rehearsals start 1st June and usually run 10am – 6pm Saturday and Sundays. Depending on the role you wont be needed all the time but likely to be needed for some of most weekends. A schedule will be circulated early on for the seven weekends leading to the performance week. But it is essential that all cast are available for the whole of the final weekend (13-14 July).

Performances are at Orchard Dene, 17th-20th July

REVIEWS

SINODUN PLAYERS

"A Murder Is Announced"

A Miss Marple mystery by Agatha Christie

The Corn Exchange Wallingford, Wed 17th Oct 2018

Thank you to Sinodun Players for inviting me to review their 70th anniversary production of Agatha Christie's classic 'A Murder is Announced'. It is always a pleasure to attend a production by this talented company in their own theatre in Wallingford. People often think how wonderful for a drama group to own its own theatre, but the downside is the tremendous cost of maintaining such a delightful venue as The Corn Exchange. Only recently several hundred thousand pounds was raised by various fund-raising activities and spent on the roof, and the stage & lighting.

One aspect of the recent refurbishment was to do away with the usual front curtains, which meant we were able to study the set as soon as we walked into the auditorium. And what a magnificent set it was, with the walls all around looking wallpapered. There were paintings on all the walls, and an authentic fireplace with suitable 50's clock on it, which somehow always showed the correct time for each scene – it was spot on at the allotted 6.30 when the announced murder was to take place! The furniture was all in period, and well placed so that much of the action was kept to the front of the stage. Lighting was excellent with table lights and 2 chandeliers above all in period.

Before the play started the opening night audience had an introduction by the Director who then introduced Jane Curtis the grand-daughter of the founder of Sinodun Players. Jane described how her grandmother started the group 70 years ago in her family home in Wallingford.



This was a cast of strong principal players with some excellent supporting performances, costumes were all in period and appropriate for the characters. I didn't notice any stumbling for words from this cast, the only pause was caused by the phone which didn't ring when it should - well recovered by Gloria. Costumes were also changed for different days – excellent.

I loved the spotlights at the end of each scene - someone (a possible perpetrator) would finish up spotlighted amongst the darkness of the blackout, just for a few seconds – a nice touch.

Letitia Blacklock played by Gloria Wright gave a nice strong portrayal, good clear voice (even when facing away from the audience). Lovely changes of mood when necessary, kept us believing in the character throughout.

Patrick & Julia Simmonds played by James Winter & Sophie Beaumont were both excellent characters, and played well together – Julia's lovely selection of dresses were delightful, especially the 'Little Black Dress'.

Dora Bunner played by Avril Rangoni Machiavelli did a very convincing portrayal of someone a bit dippy. Her greyed hair looked a slightly patchy colour though. Her newspaper really looked authentic (not easy to find Black & White only newspapers these days!).

Miss Marple played by Marilyn Johnstone played a brilliant version of a Miss Marple, not just a copy of those familiar TV ones, with plenty of good comedy timing.

Mitzi played by Louise Esplin nearly stole the show a few times, this was a great characterisation with a good foreign accent consistent throughout.



Inspector Craddock played by Peter Smithson played a brilliant inspector, with a strong voice and manner. He was able to command when necessary, and was not too annoyed by the interfering Miss Marple.

Mrs Swettenham & Edmund Swettenham played by Rebecca Cleverly & John Cornelius gave good representations of their characters, both had good diction and realistic expressions.

Phillippa Haymes played by Hannah Smithson was not convincing at first but improved as the play progressed.

Sergeant Mellors & Rudi Scherz played by Barbara Wood & Dan Beacham both had small parts well played, and remained in character even when just in the background or taking notes etc.

Well done to Sinodun Players who managed to keep us in suspense, following all the red herrings and twists so familiar in Agatha Christie's mysteries, right to the very end, and of course the final twist in the tale left us enthralled.

Mike Davies ODN

FARINGDON DRAMATIC SOCIETY

The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen's Guild Dramatic Society Murder Mystery

or Murder at Checkmate Manor

by David McGillivray & Walter Zerlin Jr

Faringdon Dramatic Society, never to shirk a challenge, presented Murder at Checkmate Manor on the stage of Faringdon Junior School from 8th-10th November.

This is no classic Whodunit, we know who the murderer is from the off, but it is an exercise in precise timing and prolonged rehearsal as this madcap comedy is chaos from start to finish. One problem with this style of 'The Play that Goes Wrong' genre when staged by Am Dram groups is you don't know whether the disasters are part of the proceedings or not. However FDS came through with flying colours on a commendable Set by Peter Webster and team.

Ably directed by Jo Webster, the show starts with an introduction from Debbie Lock and a slide show of the Isle of Man for some reason of which I'm not party.



Now it must be said that the five players in the piece play so many parts it is impossible to comment on all of them, suffice to say all served above the call of duty coping with such a disaster stricken script.

Debbie Lock for instance plays five parts, all with suitable panache and enthusiasm. I'm sure she, like all the cast, had a ball at rehearsals.

Katie Dyer escaped with just two roles; the young vibrant daughter of the house and then an elderly wheel chair bound aunt.

Pandemonium reigned throughout the whole play. Hardly a word or a move went by without some staged theatrical disaster taking place and murders abounded with bodies littering the stage at every opportunity.

The killer was obvious from the outset, the dastardly Butler, Pawn (yes, yes, the Butler did it). Pawn, played along with two other parts by Sandra Keen looked to be enjoying her part too much for my liking. The efficient cold calculating way she despatched her victims led me to hope she didn't work for the NHS.

Another hard working thespian on the night was Sarah Couzens with four parts on her agenda. An excellent performance from Ms Couzens who executed her parts coolly and as ably as she could with such absolute chaos around her.

This just leaves Martin Waymark who got away lightly with only one part, that of Inspector O'Reilly.

Again Mr Waymark threw himself into the breach and after sorting his accent out, which ranged from the Scottish Highlands to the Mountains of Mourn, he settled down and became a solid part of the show.

He was a busy chap with seven (I think) murders to solve plus a budding romance with Daphne Bishop (Katie Dyer - and who can blame him) he had his work cut out but came through in the end - top man.

This production is a play within a play and FDS interpreted the script with fine fettle. A valiant and rewarding effort from the initial intros to the final disorganised line-up.

Well attended for a first night and no prompts as I could hear, the audience certainly enjoyed the piece and so did I.

Lance Bassett November 2018

COMPTON PLAYERS

“The Promise” and “Murdering at the Vicarage” by H Connolly

These plays were written for Compton Players and the first was also directed by the author.

The Promise

A simple, but effective set portrayed the bungalow which was the Price's former home and latterly of his daughter Stacey and Adam Nash.

The tone of the play was set with the opening revealing the father, Eddie Price (Christopher Kendrick) snorting cocaine from the coffee table. His mood and manic behaviour was well portrayed with effective staccato mannerisms. He is visited by the ghostly appearance of his late daughter, Stacey Nash (Naomi Read), soon after her funeral. She came back to rebuke him for his cocaine use and for not making peace with Adam, her estranged husband. This was sensitively played by Naomi Read whose ghost-like presence effectively appeared through the walls.

Eddie's unsurprising failed attempts at social climbing are laid bare in the ensuing row with Adam, (Andrew Alexander) his ex-son-in-law, whom he accuses of having an affair and causing the break-up of his and Stacey's marriage. A similar accusation is then thrown back at Eddie when his ex-wife, June (Ann Griffiths) appears. The bickering and name-calling between the two men was well handled. Adam could have been a little harder, he was far too nice when being pushed to the limits by Eddie. The

ODN website: www.OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

fight and rough and tumble were very effective. There was an overload of expletives, not all of which were entirely necessary and it appeared merely thrown in for effect.



June, the calm voice of reason, expertly played by Ann Griffiths, manages to stop Eddie shooting Adam and himself. When the police are called it is June who manages to conceal the weapon, thus thwarting Eddie's promise to Stacey that he would kill Adam then kill himself to join her in death.

‘Murdering at the Vicarage’

This play depicts the pitfalls of a drama group performing an Agatha Christie-esque murder play. It was great to see Ann Griffiths in contrasting roles in these two plays. This play within a play was slightly confusing, as cast members were in and out of their characters like fury. In the ‘play’, Ann is Jane Delaney, the ‘flapper girl’. She had good comedic timing and held the play together. Brian, (George Buckland) played Howard, the corpse, discovered on the floor with a menacing bread knife sticking out of his back. George had good timing, or as good as a corpse could have. His talent was evident later when it appeared that his part in the murder play, had been expanded and rewritten and he was no longer killed off in scene two. Howard is revealed as the gay lover of Godfrey's character, Hornblower, in the announced re-write of the final act. The author of the murder play, Godfrey, was played with quiet conviction by Paul Shave. The re-write threw Clive, (Nick Roberts), whose character was the scatty vicar, into complete confusion. Suzy (Brenda Prior) the long-suffering tea lady and prompt was convincing in her pottering about but is cajoled into standing in and reading a part which finds her gagged and taped to a chair! All this chaos is witnessed by Brenda, the bossy stage manager played authoritatively by Mary Warrington, who desperately tries to maintain order in the chaos and rebellion, which ensued, against the author's re-write. The hilarious and clever moment was the model in furs, created by Dave Hawkins, operated with some skill by stage hand Ian Hickling

Both plays were well performed and enjoyed by the enthusiastic first night audience Congratulations to all.

Nigel James

BANBURY CROSS PLAYERS

“Audience with Murder”

By Roger Leach and Colin Wakefield

The Mill Banbury 21st – 24th November 2018

Banbury Cross Players launched their 2019 season with ‘Audience with Murder’ from the pens of Roger Leach and Colin Wakefield and Directed by Terry Gallager. Not so much o a ‘Whodunit’ but more of a ‘What’s-it-all-about’

The Director’s notes state that when he first read this play by Roger Leach and Colin Wakefield, he didn’t understand it. Well I can understand that.

The piece starts conventionally enough with Kelly & Dean in Alan & Sue’s living room reading through a play Sue has written. Alan constantly criticises Sue’s efforts and the whole scene turns into a bit of a maelstrom especially when Sue discovers Kelly’s had a ding-dong with her hubby Alan.

BCP stalwart Philip Fine faultlessly played as per the lead role of Alan. His confidence and diction made his character totally believable, although I am sure I detected a touch of the Bruce Forsythe’s with Philip’s chin from time to time. Still it was Nice to See Him, To See Him Nice.

Tara Lacey was Sue and as always Sue-perb (!) I am a paid up member of the Tara Lacey fan club and never seen her in any role where she has been shall we say ‘duff’ in any shape or form.

Sue was timid, bullied by her husband Alan but as the play progressed Tara leapt into a myriad of different roles showing anger, remorse, and deviousness even a pathological killer among other guises.

In the second act it’s every man for himself. We are off on a bumpy roller coaster ride where convention is left badly at the post and into a plot that has more twists and turns than Clapham Junction.



Just when you think you have latched on to what’s going on, you have the rug pulled from under you and into a major re-think. I defy anyone on this, the first night of the run, to admit they knew what was happening, and that probably includes a most of the BCP cast & crew.

However this is not to say the play wasn’t hugely entertaining. The set by Peter Bloor was simple and most effective. The large what appears to be Jackson Pollock print on the rear wall didn’t do anything to help possible migraine sufferers using their full mental ability dismantling this multi-layered plot.

Characters were aplenty in this act. It would be impossible for me to explain who played what without a cast list the size of a London telephone directory. They came and they went, poisoned, stabbed or shot, with the cast revealing regularly they were not who or what you thought.

Kelly with her impressive French accent in Scene 1 was played by Kate Groves who though suffering initially from a lack of volume blossomed as the play progressed and her confidence grew.

WYCHWOOD PLAYERS

“Blackadder Goes Forth”

by Richard Curtis & Ben Elton

New Beaconsfield Hall, Shipton-under-Wychwood
22nd - 24th November 2018

Blackadder Goes Forth is one of my all time favourite TV series, so I was really looking forward to seeing this production from the Wychwood Players.

First impressions were good, excellent quality publicity material and an impressive set from Ben Curran and team. The stage is split between the trenches and the General’s office, with the stage littered with what looked like period trunks and chests and paraphernalia we are all set to go.



The idea is to use three episodes of the series and make it into a two act play. This worked well and from the start the main protagonist Edmund Blackadder played by Mark Jessey was impressive. He captured the cynical war-weary approach to life that Blackadder injects into his troops and superiors with some style and for such a huge part there were no prompts for Mr Jessey on this, the first night. Well done Sir.

The first act told the story of an opportunity for someone to leave the trenches to become a war artist. Captain Blackadder naturally jumps at this chance and commandeers a painting by his Lieutenant, telling the General he had painted it much to Lieutenant George's chagrin.

Congratulations must go to Director Richard Dreyer putting this production together with so many moves, props and scene changes plus sound & lighting plots. This is especially difficult when the television version is so well known and therefore continually compared with this amateur performance.

In accordance with this thinking Richard J Hartley as Lieutenant George was remarkable. He could have been the understudy for Hugh Laurie who was so good in the television role, he'd captured the voice, the stuttering and his over enthusiastic approach to the war spot on.

When a programme has been as successful as Blackadder, it's no good trying to play the parts on any other way than the original. It was here that Steve Colter failed as Baldrick. All others were allying themselves to the TV characters but Steve's translation of the role was from another production altogether. He bore no resemblance to the part made so famous by Tony Robinson. He didn't dress like him and certainly didn't sound like the Baldrick we are all so familiar with. He also lacked confidence in his lines and the humour of the role. Nothing personnel Steve.

General Melchett played by Ralph Wears had all Stephen Fry's mannerisms but made the part his own despite his strange hirsute appendages.

Phillip Croxson made an very acceptable Captain Darling, the smarmy pen pushing office waller who creeps around the General.

The supporting cast looked the parts complete with period uniforms complete with puttees and rifles. It was good to see amateur drama aficionado Nick O'Keeffe still treading the boards as Sergeant Humphreys. He's been in am dram even longer than me.

The first and second acts share the story of Blackadder's Court Martial for shooting a carrier pigeon and the final tale is the one everyone remembers where the cast 'go over the top'. This to me is one of the finest pieces of comedy drama ever written by Richard Curtis & Ben Elton here at their creative peak. How do you portray this action in a comedy series without offending anyone? They managed it amazingly well as did the Wychwood Players. This is my first visit to this talented am dram group, I hope it won't be my last.

Lance Bassett

November 2018

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

JIGSAW STAGE PRODUCTIONS

Quiz 'n' Cabaret



A quiz night with a difference

Light-hearted general knowledge rounds with entertainment in between!

When & Where:-

Fri 30th Nov at Drayton village hall

Sat 1st Dec at East Challow village hall

Starts at 7.30pm

Tickets £5 from 01235 200266 or on the door.

bar available

Website: www.JigsawStageProductions.co.uk

ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB

The Crucible

By Arthur Miller

In his 1953 play The Crucible, playwright Arthur Miller employs a fictionalized account of Massachusetts Bay colonists accused of witchcraft in 1692 as a metaphor for

government persecution of suspected communists during the mid-20th century.



When: Wed 28th & Thur 29th November 7.30pm

Saturday 1st December at 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Where: Unicorn Theatre, Checker Walk, Abingdon

OX14 3JB

Tickets: £10, £8 conc(60+, under 12s, Students, ADC members, Group Bookings) from The Bookstore, The Abingdon Precinct (15 Bury St), Abingdon

Email: tickets@unicornboxoffice.org.uk

Phone: 0845 4636638

Book Online: www.abingdon-drama-club.com
(Online booking fee of 55p added)

BARTHOLOMEW PLAYERS

"Dangerous Corner"

by J.B. Priestley

Robert and Freda Caplan are hosting a lovely dinner at their country home. However, a chance remark by one of the guests sets off a series of devastating discoveries, unveiling a hitherto-undiscovered web of clandestine relationships and dark secrets, the disclosures of which have tragic consequences.

A fascinating and complex play full of intrigue and mystery. In Priestley's drawing-room thriller a casual comment about a music box ignites a firestorm of secrets.

For our Charity Supper Show, 'Guideposts' in Witney will assist us for a share of the profits.

When: Wed 28th Nov – Sat 1st Dec 2018

Doors open: 7.00pm, Performance: 7.30pm

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

Tickets – for **Wed, Thurs and Saturday** nights
Price: £10 (concessions £9) from Denise Santilli, Tel 07990 537462, email: bart.players@gmail.com, ONLINE from:-

www.ticketsource.co.uk/bartholomewplayers or from Evenlode DIY in Eynsham

Tickets for **FRIDAY** 30th Nov – must book by 26 Nov
Doors open: 6.10pm, Food served: 6.30pm – 7.30pm
Performance: 7.30pm

Advance Tickets only: £20 from Denise Santilli, Tel 07990 537462, email: bart.players@gmail.com (Friday Tickets not available online)

Website: www.bartholomewplayers.co.uk



Veterans Bob Wallace and Phil Davis have a successful song-and-dance act after World War II. With romance in mind, the two follow a duo of beautiful singing sisters en route to their Christmas show at a Vermont lodge, which just happens to be owned by Bob and Phil's former army commander. The dazzling score features well known standards including Blue Skies, I Love A Piano, How Deep Is the Ocean and the perennial favourite, White Christmas.

From arguably one of the best Christmas movies ever, what better way to start the festive season than with this musical treat.

An amateur production by arrangement with R&H Theatricals Europe

When:-

Wednesday 5 December, 19:30

Thursday 6 December, 19:30

Friday 7 December, 19:30

Saturday 8 December, 14:30

Saturday 8 December, 19:30?

Running time (including interval) 160 mins?

Where: Kenton Theatre, Henley-on-Thames

Tickets: Adult £19, Concessions £18, Child £12 (Price includes £1 restoration levy)

Box Office: 01491 575698 ?

Opening hours: 11am/3pm Monday to Saturday.

Plus one hour prior to the performance.

Online: www.KentonTheatre.co.uk?

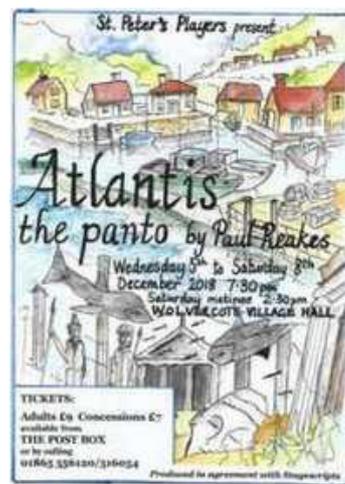
HAODS Website: www.haods.org?

ST PETER'S PLAYERS

"Atlantis" the Panto

by Paul Reakes

St Peter's Players present Atlantis the panto by Paul Reakes. An evil sorceress kidnaps the princesswill she ever escape? Join us for underwater fun, sharks, an evil frog, a salty sea captain and all the usual panto characters. It would be silly to miss it!



When: Wed 5th - Saturday 8th Dec 7:30pm

+ Saturday matinee at 2.30pm

Where: Wolvercote Village Hall, Wolvercote Green, OX2 8BD

Tickets: £9 (£7 conc). Phone 01865 556120/516054

Or from "The Post Box", 82 Godstow Rd, Wolvercote, OX2 8NY

HENLEY A.O.D.S.

"White Christmas"

by Irving Berlin



With music and lyrics by Irving Berlin and based on the Paramount Pictures film, written for the screen by Norman Krasna, Norman Panama and Melvin Frank, this heartwarming musical adaptation features seventeen Irving Berlin songs.

THAME PLAYERS

“Beauty and the Beast”

By Ben Crocker

A pantomime for all the family to enjoy at Christmas - Classic characters such as the Dame, the Principal Boy and a female blacksmith, this is a traditional pantomime with a modern twist.

Beauty and the Beast is extremely funny, full of action and great fun to perform.

Seeing Beauty with her Prince, Malabelle the wicked witch turns him into a Beast and so the tale begins.

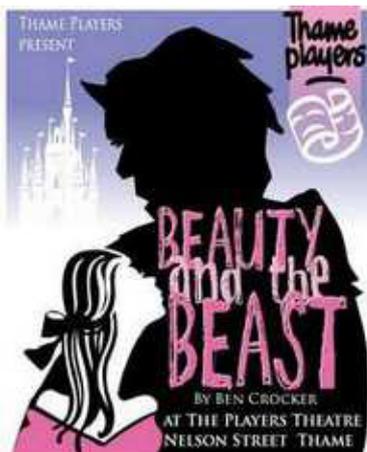
With many hurdles to overcome Beauty is finally reunited with her Prince and all is right with the world.

When: 7th – 9th and 12th – 16th December

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

Tickets: £10 with £9 concessions from Spear Travels, Greyhound Walk, Thame, 01844 217228 or online at www.thameplayers.co.uk

Box Office opens 29th October 2018



boast, cry, sing and dance. At the heart of the play is John, eleven plus failure, aspiring actor and occasional rugby player, growing up and finally doing something with his life and making his family proud.

The action takes place in a house in West Yorkshire. Act 1 between the years 1967-1973 and Act 2 between 1975-1978.

‘Happy Families’ is said to be autobiographical, written by Yorkshire playwright, John Godber, who wrote ‘Up N’ Under’ which we enjoyed performing in 2008.

When: Thur 17 - Sat 19 January 7.30 pm.

Where: The Village Hall, Aston, OX18 2DU,

Tickets £8.00 from Aston Garage

Box office open as follows:-

Mon 1 to 4pm, Tue & Thu 12 to 3pm

Wed & Fri 10am to 12 noon

or email Hoskinsnick@aol.com

or telephone 01993 850543

DIDCOT PHOENIX DG

“Rumpelstiltskin”

by Gavyn Lugsden

This original version of the Brothers Grimm tale is brought to life with a few twists and traditional

pantomime turns!

Meet the funny characters in the town of Happy-Jolly-Funny as they audition for the role of the next Queen.

Marie will surely win the heart of the King as she has a talent of spinning straw into gold..... or does she have help from the evil little goblin, Rumpelstiltskin!

Join Phoenix for a veritable feast of songs, slapstick and terrible jokes to cheer up a dreary January day and banish those post-Christmas blues!

This season, they are delighted to be bringing a special performance of this, their 36th pantomime, to the Harwell Village Hall on 26th January 2019 (3pm).

When & Where:

Didcot Civic Hall - 18 & 19 January 2019 - 7:30pm

Harwell Village Hall - Sat 26th Jan at 3pm

Tickets: £10/£6 or Family Ticket (4 tickets - 2 adults/2 children, or 1 adult/3 children) - £26. 10% discount on groups of 10 or more

Tickets are available online from

www.didcotphoenixdrama.co.uk, or

email didcotphoenixdrama@hotmail.co.uk

Or Tel 07813 831040 to reserve



A.C.T.S. (ASTON)

“Happy Families”

by John Godber

John, our hero, as a young adult reflects back on his life from nine years old and his relationship with his family members. They are cake baker and ardent knitter, Auntie Doris, who adores him; his posh Auntie Edna, mother of his near perfect, clever and insufferable cousin, Rebecca; his soft hearted Dad, Vic and his Mum, Dot who advocates a good belt round the ear for every misdemeanour, but never carries out the threat because she loves him so much and his much loved grandparents, Liz and Jack, who are backbone of the close knit family. Often funny, sometimes sad, they squabble, fall out, and in again at the drop of hat,



SINODUN PLAYERS.

“Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves”

The story of Ali baba and how he cleverly thwarts a bunch of gangsters to keep a hidden treasure.

All the usual elements will be there with music, dance, glamour and of course Fiona Huntingford-Ledger as the idiot - if none of the 40 thieves steal the show then she will.

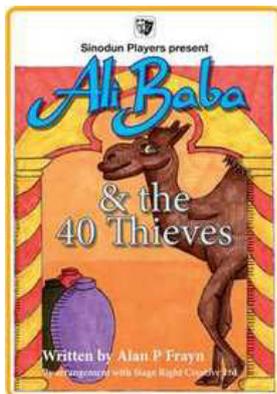
When: January 18th–
February 2nd 2019

Where: Corn Exchange, Wallingford

Box Office: 01491 825000

The box office is open evenings 7pm to 8pm & Fri & Sat 10am to 2pm.

or see www.cornexchange.org.uk



OXFORD OPERATIC SOCIETY

“Sister Act”

When aspiring singer Deloris Van Cartier witnesses a murder by her boyfriend, she is hidden in the least-likely place she'd ever be found – a convent! Whilst there, Deloris breathes new life into the nun's choir turning them into gospel superstars and learns there's more to life than fame and fortune.

Based on the 1992 megahit film starring Whoopi Goldberg, Sister Act – The Musical has a powerful gospel and disco-inspired score by 8-time Oscar winner Alan Menken.

When: Mon 21st – Saturday 26th January 2019

Performances: 7:30pm with a 2:30pm performance on Saturday Matinee.

Where: Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street OX1 2LW

Tickets: £10 to £24 Age guideline: 6+.

Box Office: on-line at www.OxfordPlayhouse.com

or Tel 01865 305305

or email: boxoffice@OxfordPlayhouse.com

Website: www.oxfordoperatic.org.uk



KENNINGTON ADS

Robinson Crusoe and the Pirates

by Alan P Frayn.



A nautical family pantomime with all the wonderful things you have come to know and

love with our productions, with feel-good fun guaranteed.

When:-

Friday 25th January 2019 - 7.30pm

Saturday 26th - 2pm & 7.30pm

Sunday 27th - 12pm & 4pm

Thursday 31st Jan - 7.30pm

Friday 1st February - 7.30pm

Saturday 2nd - 2pm & 7.30pm

Where: Kennington Village Centre,
Kennington Rd, Kennington, Oxford, OX1 5PG

Tickets: call 01865 739025 or email boxoffice@kenningtonads.co.uk.

Ticket £10 adults/£8 concessions/£30 family of four (under 5s go free on laps).

Website: www.KenningtonADS.co.uk

FaceBook: facebook.com/KenningtonADS

KADS continues to support **Ronald McDonald House Oxford**, a fantastic cause for families, and a collection will be taken at each performance.

WOODCOTE A.D.S.

“Cinderella”

by David Swan

The traditional fairy tale Cinderella but with a difference - the essence of Halloween with the sounds of the 60s!

As is the norm, there are lots of colourful characters, fun jokes and laughter for all the family – the question is will good win over evil?



Children are encouraged to dress for the ball - prizes available for the best dressed boy and girl at all matinee performances.

When:

- Saturday 26 January 2.15 pm and 7.30 pm
- Sunday 27 January 2.15 pm
- Saturday 2 February 2.15 pm and 7.30 pm
- Sunday 3 February 2.15 pm

Where: Woodcote Village Hall, Reading Road,
Woodcote Oxfordshire RG8 0QY

Tickets £8 Adults & £5 Children (Prices held same as last year!)

Telephone 07956 136 750 or

Online at www.woodcotedrama.co.uk

WITNEY DRAMATIC SOCIETY "Jack and the Beanstalk"

A pantomime by Nigel Holmes

Bringing
pantomime back
to Witney!

Join Jack and the gang on their adventure in this classic fairy tale with a twist!

So, come along and cheer, boo and clap at our show packed with entertainment, laughs and plain silliness for the whole family to enjoy

When: 20th to 23rd February - 7.30pm
Matinée 23rd February - 2.30pm

Where: Witney Methodist Church, 40 High St, Witney OX28 6HG

Tickets: £10 and £8 Concessions (Children under 16 & seniors over 65) available from January 2019. Group enquiries welcome.



HENLEY A.O.D.S. "Blackadder"

by Richard Curtis & Ben Elton

A Dinner Theatre
Production

Bar available



When: 20-23 Feb
Doors 6.30, Dinner 7pm
Matinee 23 Feb
Doors 1pm Lunch 1.30pm

Where: HAODS Studio - New St, Henley, RG9 2BP

Tickets £25 Includes Elizabethan Banquet
from www.TicketSource.co.uk/HenleyOperatic
A donation from this production will be made to Comic Relief

OXFORDSHIRE DRAMA NETWORK COMMITTEE 2018-2019

Chairman	Mike Davies	01235 821351	info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org
Secretary			
Treasurer	John Williams	01865 862965	4 Kenilworth Rd, Cumnor, OX2 9QP
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Committee Member	Mike Lacey	01865 736913	michael1944lacey@gmail.com

ODN GROUPS & CONTACTS

ODN member groups are listed on the 'GROUPS' page of the ODN website. Most have links to their own websites where they will have contact details.

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