

Oxfordshire Drama Network

Newsletter



DECEMBER 2021

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

It is great to be back in full swing again, even with threats of Covid around. I've just heard that Oxford Operatic have had to cancel their opening night on Tuesday (7th) due to so many cast going down with Covid. Let's hope they manage to open later in the week.



It does emphasise the need for understudies in these uncertain times. Jigsaw's Sound of Music last week opened with their understudy ably taking over as Liesl for a few days.

We have 4 reviews this issue - keep asking or sending them in – and a directing guide.

AND Now is the time to enter your Pantomime or seasonal play or musical into our annual Winter Festival – see details on page 2 and our website.

Mike Davies

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Hi Everyone,
Seasons Greetings!



Can't believe that we've made it through yet another year of uncertainty and turbulence! After another rollercoaster year, we've finally graduated from online meetings to garden rehearsals, tentative steps back into the rehearsal room and back performing on stage. Although this is great progress, we should be mindful that the pandemic is far from over and should be vigilant and maintain high health and safety standards for both our members and audiences. It's easy to let things drift in the excitement of getting a production underway, but health and safety measures should be reviewed regularly and implemented in line with whatever the current government regulations happen to be.

It's great to see so many Christmas/New Year shows in production – please don't forget to share rehearsal photos on the Facebook group as well as promotional posters, we all love to see our members having fun and it's a great way of generating interest in your shows. Please encourage your members to join the Facebook group if they haven't already - not forgetting to state which group they belong to. The group page is a closed group just for member groups of the ODN and we really want to encourage and build a strong, supportive community within our membership. The outward facing page is used to promote your shows to the general public and we will share posters and any other promotional sent through to us.

Continued on page 2

WHAT'S ON DIARY (details inside)

DECEMBER

8-12	Thame Players	Babes in the Wood
7-11	<i>Oxford Operatic Society</i>	<i>My Fair Lady</i>
16-31	Buttercross Theatre Productions	Cinderella

JANUARY

7-15	<i>Abingdon Drama Club</i>	<i>Dick Whittington</i>
14-29	The Sinodun Players	Sleeping Beauty
27-29	<i>The Wychwood Players</i>	<i>King Arthur</i>

28-30 Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society
3-5 Feb **Rapunzel**

FEBRUARY

23-26	<i>Banbury Cross Players</i>	<i>Out of Order</i>
23-26	Launton Village Players	Dick Whittington

MARCH

8-12	<i>Oxford Theatre Guild</i>	<i>Nicholas Nickleby</i>
9-12	HAMS (Hagbourne)	Bright. Young. Things.
16-19	<i>The Henley Players</i>	<i>The Real Thing</i>

APRIL

6-9	Compton Players	Beyond a Joke
14-16	<i>AmEgos Theatre</i>	<i>Me and My Girl</i>
16-23	Abingdon Operatic Society	'Made in Dagenham' the Musical
20-23	<i>Banbury Operatic Society</i>	<i>The Mikado</i>

Page

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1-2	Chairman's Letter
2	ODN Pantomime/Winter Festival
3	Playwrights
3	Thame Players' "sound system" grant
3-4	Working with Actors
4-7	Reviews
7-8	Auditions
8-12	Forthcoming Events
12	About ODN The ODN committee

Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767

Email: info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

Instagram: www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork

The outward facing page is used to promote your shows to the general public and we will share posters and any other promotional sent through to us.

We will be sending out entry forms for our Winter Festival shortly and would encourage all those who are producing pantomimes or winter themed plays to enter. The entry fee has been kept at £10, as in previous years, (plus 2 complimentary tickets for the visiting adjudicators) and results will be announced at the AGM – currently planned for March (date to be confirmed). Reviews of all the entries will appear in the April edition of the Newsletter.

Speaking of reviews, if anyone would like a member of ODN to write a review of any of your shows then please contact us. We would be more than happy to do this in exchange for a pair of complimentary tickets for our reviewers.

During our last committee meeting we talked about trying to build up a bank of resources that members to could draw upon if needed to aid them in their productions. This could be anything from a production timeline template (i.e. what should happen and when from audition to performance), downloadable guides on different aspects of production, to experienced members who are able to offer advice or workshops to other members. Committee member, Jess Ebberson, has already thrown her hat into the ring and offered her skills as an experienced choreographer and professional dance teacher (thanks Jess!). A properly choreographed show adds so much polish to a production so I'm really grateful that we have an expert on hand to show us two left footers (and I include myself in that!) how it's done properly!

I know that there is a lot of talent and expertise within the membership – particularly within those larger groups who are lucky enough to perform in professional theatres or venues – so if you are willing to share any advice, tips or help other member groups then please get in touch. The ODN isn't just here to promote your shows, it was set up originally to provide network whereby member groups could help and support each other and offer workshops and training opportunities to improve standards. I would really like to try and bring this to the forefront again but can only do this with the help of our members. I plan on putting together a short membership survey over the Christmas period and send out to member groups in the new year to find out what help your group may be able to offer and what resources your group would find helpful and report back at the AGM.

In the meantime, on behalf of the committee and myself, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and happy new year!

Best wishes

Karen Carey



**PANTO/WINTER PRODUCTION
FESTIVAL 2021/2022**



Once again we are running our Winter Competition for pantomimes as well as Seasonal Plays, Musicals etc. Below is a list of some of the awards that we will be presenting next year.

AWARDS

The following are typical of the awards which will be presented at the Annual General Meeting next year.

- The All-Round Production .
- Rising Star Award for Under 18's
- Musical Award – this can include any incidental music, song, live performance.
- Best Costume
- Chorus Award
- Best Baddie
- Best Cameo
- Best Front of House experience
- Best Tech – this will include special effects, lighting, sound
- Magic Moment
- Best Comedy Performance

The entry form to enter your production into the Festival is available to download from our website or email us to send you a copy:-

Email: oxforddramanetwork@gmail.com

or info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

For entry details, see our website page:-

<https://www.oxfordshiredramanetwork.org/node/889>



PLAYWRIGHTS AVAILABLE

Pete Drake is a playwright from Lincolnshire, and has been in touch to let us know about some of his work. He is looking for an independent producer, a production company or theatre group to take on a script (or two) with a production in mind.

Several of these pieces (GSOH, Autumn Winter Spring Summer and the monologues) are performable using social distancing, so may be of interest to a company looking to get going again with a limited audience. These may be done on an very low budget, too.

If you'd like to know more, please contact Pete by email at drakepeter100@gmail.com.

AND

Rachel Feeny-Williams is a playwright from Exeter, Devon. Over the last year she has been increasing her pieces through play writing challenges is up to 100 plays in total! These span from full lengths, through one act plays suitable for variety shows and festivals as well as many short pieces, which could be used as sketches.

For more info, visit her website at www.rfwscripts.co.uk It has all her pieces on it, in addition to their production histories and any reviews from readers, directors and actors. You can find visual examples of the scripts on her YouTube channel.

http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxfhR1CHdRXnNaYS_XEJOEq

New Talkback System Gets Thame Players Talking!

A new talkback system has been installed at the Players Theatre in Thame, funded by grants from SODC's Councillor Community Grant Scheme and OCC's Councillor Priority Fund.

Theatre users can now use the talkback between all points: stage manager at side of stage, props, back projection backstage, lights, sound, and streaming in the balcony. The old system did not have any mechanism that would connect all areas of the theatre.

Cllr Pieter-Paul Barker of SODC commented, "We are delighted to have been able to help with funding of the new talkback system at the Players Theatre; any improvement that offers a clear benefit to the community served by the theatre is to be welcomed". Cllr Nigel Champken-Woods of OCC commented, "The Players Theatre is the only theatre serving Thame and local area. As such, it is important that technical improvements enhance performance standards, benefiting the local community".

Working with Actors Acting Is Thinking

By Jon Jory



Much of acting boils down to a series of lines recited by an actor inside the confines of a situation. You might think a director's job is to work with the actor on line recitation, but a high percentage of the

director's work in rehearsal is to help the actors understand the situation. The director must have the ability - which can be learned - to clearly define the situation in which the character resides.

"Yes, she's 'angry,' and exactly why is that again?" Anger is based on the current situation, which gives that anger infinite shadings. Generalized anger is plain old bad acting. Don't start. Sounds like a thing, right? But it's not a thing a lot of directors do well. When you don't like the acting an actor is doing in a certain speech or a certain scene, talk about the situation first and acting second. Then, inside a certain part of the situation, ask how a certain key sentence the actor is bumbling relates to the situation.

An actor (or better yet, a person) is always thinking how to get their preferred outcome accomplished by what they say. I have often found that a director can improve all actors' performances in an entire scene by asking "What is going on here?" about a single key sentence. I've learned that if I ask the actor, "What's your most important line in this scene?" their answer often highlights what they are doing wrong in the scene. Of course, this puts you on the griddle because you need to have a good instinct in answering the question, as well. If the actor doesn't have a good answer and you don't have a good answer, you're both in trouble.

This is but a small battle in the larger work of making the work specific and not general. ** To this end, let's talk scheduling for a minute. I try to rehearse each scene three times prior to tech. Let's say three actors have a scene lasting eight to ten minutes. The first time with the scene, I block it and hopefully run it after spending a few minutes discussing what it's about. When we rehearse the scene a second time, actors should have their lines learned so I can work key specifics throughout. This rehearsal lasts somewhere between an hour and an hour and a half. I close the second session by running the scene. In the third session, I work on six to eight different line sequences in the scenes that seem key, then finish by running the whole scene one last time.

This is not ideal. I always feel I need another session or two, but time is cruel. Watch what you're spending time on. More run-throughs isn't the answer. Doing run-throughs of inadequate work

doesn't improve it. In order to improve the acting, you've got to key in on specifics and help the actors understand the situations and how their lines impact the situation. Ironically, if you're really time-crunched, the way to get enough specific work on the play is to cut down on the number of run-throughs prior to tech. But let's hope you can get in three. If you're working with skilled actors, you shouldn't need more than that.

Improving the acting brings us back to thinking. Watch people think and talk. See how some sentences are broken up with slight pauses? Thinking always makes that happen. When I see actors never taking these slight interior pauses, I know they aren't thinking, they're reciting, which is an inferior form of acting. **

Look, you know and I know that lack of time and lack of talent prevent us from actualizing the performance we see in our dreams. Still, I believe it to be honorable and necessary to go down fighting... and I've gone down a bunch. So keep in mind two key things: First, know what the important moments are and give them extra rehearsal time. Second, fight to make your actors think while they act. Just getting the play up isn't a victory, it's an abdication. The play inhabited by the most specifics wins. Onward and upward!

Pioneer Drama Service Newsletter 9th Nov 2021

Jon Jory is the author of five plays with Pioneer Drama Service (www.pioneerdrama.com)

** More in-depth guidance is available on the www.pioneerdrama.com Newsletter archives pages.

REVIEWS

Bartholomew Players Von Ribbentrop's Watch

by Laurence Marks & Maurice Gran
24th – 27th November 2021

Its amazing the complications and family rifts that an inanimate object can cause, as happened in the Roth household. The 'watch' was left to Gerald Roth, whose business is failing. Upon its return from the repairers, an inscription was found inside showing it belonged to Joachim Von Ribbentrop, one of Hitler's henchmen and was inscribed with a swastika. This increased the interest of the watch considerably and was referred to Sotheby's for a valuation. Normally, this wouldn't cause a problem, but in the Roth's devout Jewish household this was absolutely terrible.

Gerald (John Casey) was commanding as head of the family, with a good sense of timing (with some unfortunate ad-libs) and panicked when maintaining the defence of his actions with the watch to the rest of the family, lurching from one crisis to the next, Mr Blackburn, (Ed Miller) the watch repairer, came with news of the watch to Gerald. He was fussy with some delightfully irritating mannerisms. Gerald's wife,

Ruth, (Elaine Leggett) was a strong foil to Gerald as a good Jewish wife, preparing the Passover Feast. She looked the part, with great characterisation and grew in strength as the play progressed. She had good comedy timing, dealing with the assembling family. David Roth, (Ianto Wain) Gerald's younger brother, was solid, and a complete contrast in personality to Gerald, being recently widowed and was attending Passover for the first time on his own.

Sasha Roth, (Sarah Miller) Gerald and Ruth's daughter, was played very confidently. Back from Uni, she shocked everyone with the news that she was dating David's son, Simon, who was her cousin. The reaction of her grandmother, Leila Roth, was cataclysmic! What a gift this part was for Deborah Lisburne-Diacon, who played the acerbic tongued Jewish matriarch with brilliant comic timing. Her bigoted, out-of-touch, non-PC dialogue and mannerisms were delivered superbly, as was her lengthy back story of the watch.

The back story was completed with Gerald having a visitation from 'The Collector' (Nick Smith) a ghostly form of Ribbentrop. His spectral presence was very effective and his clipped German accent made his presence even more chilling, demanding his watch back. This was enough to almost tip Gerald over the edge and helped him in his decision for the watch.

The dialogue throughout was tight and very funny. The Jewish family poking fun at themselves and hurling insults at each other was very effective. The fight between the brothers was well staged and in the end, the ill-fated watch got its come-uppance.

Although there had been a gap of 2 years since the last live performance, there were understandably one or two sticky moments, but the cast soon settled down and got into their stride.



The set was very good, befitting the standing of the Roth family. The Jewish-style music throughout was appropriate. The sound and lighting were excellent, although, if the plumbing in my house was that loud, I would be worried! The large first-night audience were very appreciative and rightly so.

Congratulations to director Gareth Hammond and all involved on another splendid production and we look forward to the next show in May

Nigel James

Kingston Bagpuize D.G. Happy Birthday

by Marc Camoletti

Southmoor Village Hall, 18th-20th November 2021

Marc Camoletti's classic comedy, Happy Birthday, is the first production staged by the Kingston Bagpuize Drama Group for two years.

The Group were all set to put on another play last year but this hit the buffers when Covid struck. Delaying the production until later in the year was not possible for various reasons and the search for another project was on. The answer was Happy Birthday a hilarious, if lengthy, 1970's farce containing all the elements of the genre, mistaken identities, precisely timed opening and closing of doors and general confusion.



The set, designed by Mike Lacey and Ian Ashby really looked the part with vivid brown and orange wallpaper dominating the walls. Procuring this genuine 1970's decoration deserved an award in itself.

The plot is simple, philanderer Bernard asks his best friend Robert for the weekend and tells his wife that Robert will be bringing his girlfriend who in reality is Bernard's mistress. Bernard meanwhile has no idea Robert is having an affair with his wife Jacqueline. Then they are expecting a new cleaner to arrive any minute by the name of Brigit which is the same name as Bernard's lover. See I told you the plot was simple. Chaos of course ensues throughout.

Bernard is faultlessly played by Rob Hall who I am told took ill during rehearsals, curtailing the time he had for learning the part. Rather than cancel the production again, Rob carried a copy of the script. However he did this so well I didn't notice for the first half of Act 1.

KBDG newcomer Dan Sears played Robert. Not sure about his outfit in Act 1, he looked just like he was off to play at the Oval rather than a game of two halves with Brigit. Ignoring this, Dan did a sterling job as the foil for Bernard despite a bit of a nervous start his performance improved as the play progressed. Understandable however with such a huge part.

Claire Wheeler as Jacqueline, another fresh face in KBDG, had her work cut out from the start, trying throughout to get two minutes alone with Robert, Jacqueline is thwarted at every turn.

Now if there were honours given out in Am Dram, the nominations would be Abi Bellis for her part as Brigit the cleaner/housemaid. I was floored when someone told me she is only 17. Abi delivered her lines faultlessly with a confidence that led me to believe she was much much older. Well done Abi and keep it up, the West End beckons.

The other nomination would go to Emily Eastham for her role as the other Brigit, Bernard's lover. True to say I have yet to see Emily put a foot wrong on the stage but she surpassed herself as the mistress turning up for a weekend that didn't turn out at all as to the one she was expecting.

Directors Susi Dalton, Mike Lacey and Abi Bellis can congratulate themselves on putting on Happy Birthday in such a short space of time, four weeks less rehearsals than normal apparently.

It was a tad lengthy, there were a few prompts and a couple of awkward moments but the real tragedy was a Saturday night audience of only 20+, Perhaps Covid worries still abound, but for a village the size of KBS the numbers must be disappointing, I can only say they missed a treat.

Lance Bassett

Banbury Cross Players The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband

by Debbie Isitt

Mill Arts Centre Banbury 24th-27th November 2021

How good it was to witness Banbury Cross Players returning to live theatre after a year of Zoom productions.

How fortunate we were to witness their come-back play The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband by Debbie Islett and how entertaining it was.

Never having heard of the play I entered the auditorium with a blank sheet as it were, no idea what to expect. Fascinated by the ageing teddy boys and girls who roamed the auditorium, their costumes attending to detail, the sheet remained blank as the production started and three pretty young bobby socked girls leapt out and danced in unison to Elvis Presley songs. Wow, this is my era I thought what next?

The audience gasped as Elvis Presley himself came on stage in front of the glitter curtain (a tribute to the set designer Chris Garrett) and not only sang the King's anthems with gusto, but also threw in a few one liners to keep us amused in case we took him seriously. I don't think there was much chance of that but congratulations to David Smith who will no doubt be adding his name to the list of Presley tribute acts available for weddings and hen parties around Banbury

After this came a 15 minute comfort break, perhaps this was a nod to some of the elderly folk in the audience as there was no further intervals. Strange

though, my blank sheet not getting any fuller, what is this play all about?

I needn't have worried, the action starts now with the story of Hilary and Kenneth who having been married for nineteen years. They have drifted apart and Kenneth is having an affair with Laura, a much younger version of womanhood, who makes Kenneth feel as though he is still the rocker he was in the 1950's.

The play, is performed in a series of flashbacks starting with the anniversary dinner at Hilary's house celebrating Kenneth and Laura's three year marriage and ending with a scene where Hilary serves the first course to her 'starving' ex-husband with devastating results.

The plot is simple, a tale of Kenneth's reluctance to age and his wish to remain a teddy boy indefinitely.

The Set is minimalistic and graced with period wallpaper, where on earth would you find that?

During her marriage Hilary has transformed into the dedicated homemaker. Cleanliness and tidiness throughout, especially in the kitchen, and superb meals served the minute 'starving' Kenneth returned home from work, (I wonder what he did for a living?)

It is an uncomplicated tale which took a long time to tell it but that didn't detract from the absolute creativity put in by director Chrissie Garrett. To deliver this play in the format it was presumably written beggars belief and would surely tax West End professionals in its interpretation. First class honours to all involved in particular lighting man John Hicks who was kept on his toes with credit also going to Costume maestro Jane Shanahan and Hair Stylist Kim Nicholls.

I wasn't completely convinced with the fourth wall sink shenanigans and the imaginary bottles and glasses plus the Liverpool accents fluctuated in parts but you can't have everything can you?

Andy Parsons as Kenneth drove the pace throughout with a confident and enthusiastic performance. An award should indeed go to his hair, genuine '50's styling, Tony Curtis at the front and DA at the back all held together with a bucket full of Brylcreem, oh yes I remember it well.



All three parts in this play are huge. Andy didn't put a foot wrong as far as I could see. He really did come over as the frustrated rocker who wants to stay in the past and thinks getting a younger wife will keep the magic alive.

Hilary was played to perfection by BCP stalwart Linda Shaw. Tragic and funny, Linda never faltered throughout her mammoth role but did show a hard side to Hilary's nature with fantasies of what she'd like to do to her errant husband. Remind me not to upset her!

Then there was Laura. Used by Kenneth, the rotter, just to keep him young, she was doomed when the novelty had worn off and Kenneth twigged that Laura's housekeeping habits were far from that of his previous spouse.

Zara Walton as Laura completed a trio of superb acting talent appreciated by the 80+ audience throughout this commendable production.

Lance Bassett,

Compton Players 'Evil will Come' by Alexi Stonehouse

Last month I was lucky enough to be able to go and see the Compton Players perform their first production since our world of Drama was hit by the effects of covid.

'Evil will Come' is a one act play written by Alexi Stonehouse in the most engaging genre of Crime and Mystery. Helen Saxton was in place as the Director on this first step back on stage and the scene was set, but a member of the cast as well, it was a delight to see the whole cast has worked together on all aspects of the production.

The lights dimmed and 'BANG!' suddenly we were all wanting to know what was happening and why. With one of the most dramatic starts to a performance the stage was set for this period piece, set just after the Second World War. Focusing on how it had impacted the lives of those fighting and left behind with a bit of the magic Agatha Christie inspired in her work thrown in, the feeling of those times was palpable.



The performances between the two main cast members Helen Saxton as Catherine and Pete Watt as her husband Philip MacKinder, set the feel of the play perfectly, the tense yet wistful way their relationship had become summed up, the two differing lives they had had in the war and the

difficulties of coming back together having changed in their time apart.

The cast was small but performed well, with clear voices given there didn't seem to be any mics. Liz Saxton as the housekeeper was a wonderful performance, I really wished we'd had more opportunities to see her in action, as she gave her dramatic performance. The set and lighting were simple but effective allowing the cast to drive the performance with little distraction and switches between the flash backs and the Court room scenes were smoothly done and easy to follow. The Court Room itself has to have a mention as it was a testament to what can be achieved with some well-placed and painted cardboard.

The performers had clearly invested a great deal in thinking through the motives and lives of their characters as well as the clothing they would have worn, keeping it within the time frame of the period piece effectively.

I watched the whole play for 45 minutes without a break, on the lookout for clues as to what the outcome maybe, thinking all the time that I knew what was inevitably going to have happened. Without giving away the plot, I was wrong! and I imagine many others in the audience were the same.

Well done, Compton Players for a wonderful performance, that kept us all on the edge of our seats.

Becki Brewis



AmEgos Theatre

AUDITIONS

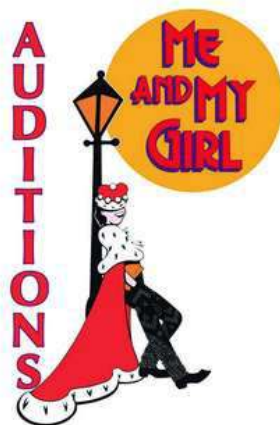
Me & My Girl

Come and do the Lambeth Walk with AmEgos Theatre, or at least enjoy a Weekend at Hareford with us!

AmEgos are holding open auditions for their spring 2022 production on Sunday 12th December, near Wantage, and we are looking to build a big cast of Cheeky Cockneys, Snooty Servants, Haughty Houseguests and Arrogant Aristocrats!

For full details and audition pieces please email AmEgos.Theatre@gmail.com

The show runs from 14 - 16th April in Wantage



Banbury Operatic Society

The Mikado

AUDITIONS

In its 60th Anniversary year, Banbury Operatic Society are delighted to be staging 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,

The Society have just started initial rehearsals and auditions will be on Monday 13th December 2021 - so if you are a G&S fan, budding or otherwise, do get in touch by email on: banburyoperaticsociety@gmail.com.

Performances are 20th to 23rd April at 7.30pm. + matinee Saturday at 2.30pm at Wykham Theatre, Wykham Park Academy, Banbury

www.banburyoperaticsociety.co.uk.

Buttercross Theatre

Productions, Witney

Back to the 80s - the Musical Auditions

Friday 3rd December

Venue: West Witney Sports & Social Club

Time: 6:15pm - 10pm.

Ages: 14yrs to Adults

A pop culture trip down memory lane, Back to the 80's tells the story of Corey Palmer and his senior year at William Ocean High School: his best friends, the class bully, and the girl he loves.

Back to the 80's is a non-stop collection of music, movie, and TV Easter Eggs for all ages. The jukebox score includes a wide variety of popular hits such as "Video Killed the Radio Star", "Total Eclipse of the Heart", "Love Shack", "Footloose", and "The Time of My Life".

For further details and to book an audition slot please either call us on 07956784070 or email: hello@buttercrosstheatreproductions.co.uk.

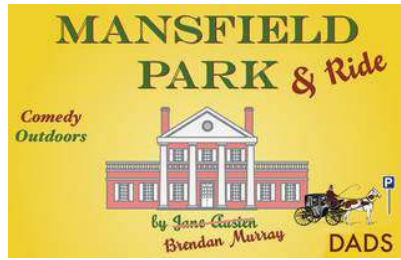
Rehearsals will start on Thursday 6th January 2022 at 7pm at West Witney Sports & Social Club

Performance dates: 24th - 26th March 2022
At The Corn Exchange, Witney

Dorchester ADS

AUDITIONS

DADS had an amazing response to their 2021 summer show, The Wind in the Willows Outdoors! They have also been invited back to Henley to be part of the Kenton Theatre's Summer Roadshow, and so they are going outdoors again in 2022.



This time they have chosen a Jane Austen spoof, Mansfield Park & Ride by Brendan Murray.

Brendan is rewriting the script especially for DADS, setting the action in the Thames Valley. Auditions are likely to take place in March.

If you are interested in being involved please contact Mark Wilkin, markwilkin@gmail.com.

Show dates:

21-23 July, Cloister Garden, Dorchester Abbey

4-6 August, Henley-on-Thames, venue TBC

Oxford Theatre Guild Prospective directors

For our annual two-week summer show, performed outdoors in a college garden or park, we are looking for prospective directors to submit a pitch to direct next year's show. This is a wonderful chance for anyone that would like to direct a show with a large cast and all the support that working with OTG offers. More information can be found here:-

www.oxfordtheatreguild.com/productions/2022/summer-show-pitches

Although the official deadline is close, I'd still be happy to hear from anyone that would be interested in taking on an exciting directing challenge.

We are also looking for backstage staff and people to work on the production side, such as costumes and marketing. It's a great opportunity to get involved in a large-scale show in a fully professional theatre.

Tim Eyres - Chair, Oxford Theatre Guild

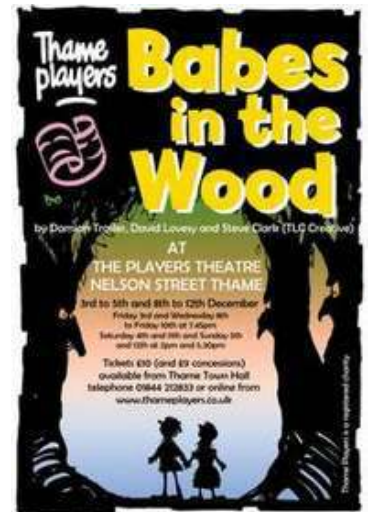
07503 686311

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

THAME PLAYERS

Babes in the Wood

Meet Robin Hood and his Merry Men and the evil Sheriff of Nottingham. And of course the Babes themselves. A traditional story with all the elements you'd expect from a Thame Players panto - lots of songs and dances, lots of colour and drama, and of course lots of hilarious laughter.



When: 3rd-5th and 8th-12th December.

Weds, Thurs & Fridays at 7.45pm

Sats & Sundays at 2pm & 5.30pm

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

Tickets are £10 each (£9 conc) (10% off 10+ Tkts) from www.thameplayers.co.uk

Tel 01844 290888

or from the Thame Town Hall Information Centre opening times: www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/visit-thame/information-centre

N.B. Sat 4th 5.30 & Sun 5th 2pm SOLD OUT

OXFORD OPERATIC SOCIETY

My Fair Lady

This adored musical, set in Edwardian London, tells the story of Eliza Doolittle, a young working-class Cockney flower seller. She is taken under the wing of Henry Higgins, a phonetics & linguistics



professor who is determined to win a bet to transform her into a successful and respected 'lady of society'. But who will really be transformed once the bet is won?

When: Tue 7th - Sat 11th Dec 2021.

Where: The New Theatre, George St, Oxford.

Tickets: on sale now! From:-

www.atgtickets.com/shows/oxops-my-fair-lady/new-theatre-oxford

BUTTERCROSS THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

Cinderella

by Ben Crocker

The best loved story of them all! Packed with songs, jokes and a coachful of laughs. Only magic can save the day when Cinderella's step sisters stop her from going to the Prince's Ball - but will she leave the palace before the clock strikes twelve – and what happens when her sisters are left all alone in the deep, dark wood? Make sure you all go to the Ball to find out!



Buttercross Cinderella Performance dates & times:-

Day	Date	Matinee	Evening
Thursday	16/12/2021	14:00	19:30
Friday	17/12/2021	14:00	19:30
Saturday	18/12/2021		19:30
Sunday	19/12/2021	13:30	
Thursday	23/12/2021		19:30
Friday	24/12/2021	13:30	
Wednesday	29/12/2021		19:30
Thursday	30/12/2021		19:30
Friday	31/12/2021	13:30	

Where: Corn Exchange, Market Square, Witney OX28 6AB

Tickets: Adult £10, - Under 14yrs £6 see

Website: www.ButtercrossTheatreProductions.co.uk

Email: hello@ButtercrossTheatreProductions.co.uk

ABINGDON DRAMA CLUB Dick Whittington

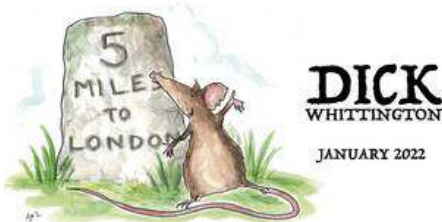
By John Morley

The classic tale of a young lad going to London to make his fortune and his adventures with his new best friend, Tommy the cat, Boo the villains and cheer the heroes as pantomime returns to the Unicorn Theatre!

When: Fri 7th, Sat 8th, Thurs 13th, Fri 14th and Sat 15th Jan at 7.30pm

Matinees Sat 8th, Sun 9th and Sat 15th Jan at 2.30pm

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 (£8.80 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 and

The Bookstore, The Abingdon Precinct (15 Bury St)

All tickets are sold as unreserved seating.

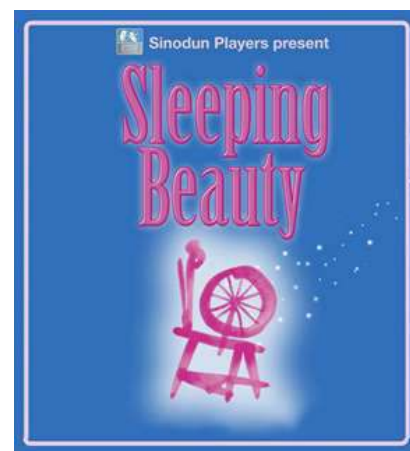
Our Front of House team will do their very best to seat people together but please arrive in good time or this may not be possible.

THE SINODUN PLAYERS Sleeping Beauty

Time to Wake up Folks - Panto is Back!!

A seasonal humorous retelling of Charles Perrault's classic French fairy tale "Sleeping Beauty"

This time travelling version, written by Wallingford based Pete Orton & Barbara Wood, will transport you to a land not so far away in an extravagant stage show, encompassing a time lord, a cheeky cat, a bunch of hippy festival goers and a script for all the family!!



Come along and cheer at the brave Prince Stanley, hiss at the evil Carabosse, follow the journey of the Princess and marvel at the magic as the good fairy saves the day. And, of course, we haven't forgotten how much the children love the traditional slapstick scene!!

With happy songs accompanied by a live band, colourful scenery & costumes, and an impressive light show this is a theatrical event not to be missed!

When: Fri 14th to Sat 29th January
Tuesday - Friday at 7.30pm
Saturday Matinees at 2pm
Saturday Evenings at 6.30pm
(No performances Sunday & Monday)

Where: The Corn Exchange Theatre, Wallingford

Tickets: from The Corn Exchange www.cornexchange.org.uk

or Tel: 01491 825000

Sinodun Website: www.sinodunplayers.org.uk

THE WYCHWOOD PLAYERS KING ARTHUR

An Adventure in
Camelot
Written by Paul
Reakes.

This spectacular production will be a welcome return after the long gap of 4 years of the much-loved Wychwood Players pantomime extravaganza.

This is the story of King Arthur on the throne but trying to thwart the attempts of his evil cousin Morgana to knock him off (so to speak!).

Very much a traditional pantomime where you will be transported to legendary Camelot and on this unforgettable journey you will enjoy the hilarious antics of characters such as Morgana, the disgruntled magician Merlin and a Dame who will prove that there is nothing like this Dame!

The talented cast includes Tony Mellerick as King Arthur, Kate Bull as Morgana, James Dixon as the Dame, Mark Jessey as Merlin, Keira Dixon as Lancelot and Janice Collins as Silly Sally.

In addition there is an ensemble and chorus featuring many new members making their debut for the Wychwood Players.

When: 27th, 28th and 29th January 2022 at 7.30pm.
+ matinee Saturday 29th January at 2pm.

Where: New Beaconsfield Hall,
Shipton-under-Wychwood OX7 6BQ

Tickets: from www.wychwoodplayers.com

Our pantomimes always sell fast, so early booking is recommended as this show is not to be missed.



KENNINGTON AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

Rapunzel by Alex Jackson

Rapunzel, the much-loved tale about bad hair days, this promises to be everything you know and love about a KADS

production, with sing along songs, silly jokes and plenty of audience participation. Why not let down your hair and join in the fun!



Dates & Times:-

Friday 28th Jan 2022 ~ 7.30pm
Saturday 29th Jan ~ 2pm and 7.30pm
Sunday 30th Jan ~ 12pm and 5.30pm
Thursday 3rd Feb ~ 7.30pm
Friday 4th Feb ~ 7.30pm
Saturday 5th Feb ~ 2pm and 7.30pm

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

Tickets: £10 each for Fri 28th,
then £12 adults, £10 concessions,
£35 for a family of four (under 5s go free on laps).

Call the Box Office on 01865 739025 or

Email boxoffice@kenningtonads.co.uk.

Payments in cash, cheque, BACS, or card
(booking charge applies).

Follow us on facebook

(www.facebook.com/KenningtonADS) for
information.

BANBURY CROSS PLAYERS Out of Order

an award winning Farce by Ray Cooney

When Junior Minister Richard Willey plans to spend the evening with Jane Worthington (a typist for the Opposition) things go disastrously wrong and it all starts with the discovery of a body trapped in one of the hotel's sash windows.



Desperate to get out of a sticky situation, Richard calls on his Parliamentary Private Secretary, George Pigden, for help. All George can do is to sink further into trouble with everyone around as Richard's lies tumble out.

Things go from bad to worse with the arrival of Jane Worthington's distraught husband, Ronnie. The addition of an unscrupulous waiter, Richard's wife, and Nurse Foster, really bring things to a head.

This is fast and furious, masterful farce! Farce is one of the most challenging genre to pull off but when it works, the audience go mad for it, and have great fun.

When: 16 - 19 February 2022.

Where: The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park Rd,
Banbury, Oxon, OX16 5QE

Tickets: www.TheMillArtsCentre.co.uk

LAUNTON VILLAGE PLAYERS

Dick Whittington

written by Martin Evans
music by Steve Webber.
A traditional family pantomime with an original script packed with comedy, magic, audience participation and live music, suitable for all the family.
All profits go to good causes.



When: February 2022 -
Wednesday 23rd at 7:30pm
Thurs 24th at 10:30am (socially distanced) & 2:30pm
Friday 25th at 2:30pm and 7:30pm
Saturday 26th at 2:30pm and 7:30pm
Where: Cooper School Performance Hall, Bicester, OX26 4RS
Tickets: Adult £10 - £14, Child £5 - £7 on sale from January 5th from www.launtonvillageplayers.org.uk

OXFORD THEATRE GUILD

Nicholas Nickleby

by Charles Dickens

Left destitute by the death of their father, Nicholas and Kate Nickleby must find their own ways in the world. At first their Uncle Ralph seems to offer guidance and new opportunities but they soon come to realise that his motives may not be entirely honourable.

From the gloom of Dotheboys Hall to the bustling backstage of a theatre and onwards to the threatening streets of London, Nicholas and Kate must overcome new challenges to save those they love from the misfortunes that threaten to overwhelm them.

When: 8th - 12th March 2022.

Where: Oxford Playhouse,

Tickets: from :-

www.oxfordtheatreguild.com/productions/2022/nicholas-nickleby

HAMS (Hagbourne)

Bright. Young. Things.

by Georgia Christou

Alternately thought-provoking and laugh-out-loud funny, Bright. Young. Things. is a play about a group of young people struggling against the pressure to succeed and the manipulations of TV.

When: Wed 9th to Saturday 12th March 2022.

Where: Hagbourne Village Hall,

Website: www.thehams.co.uk

Email: info@thehams.co.uk

THE HENLEY PLAYERS

The Real Thing

by Tom Stoppard

Four entertaining, emotional characters wrest with the highs and lows of love and passion in their day-to-day life. Playwright Henry is married to actor

Charlotte and actors Max and Annie to each other, the drama unfolds as relationships unravel. But how do we know which relationship is the 'real thing'? The main themes of love and adultery are underwritten with typical Stoppard questions about the influence of art on life.

This pertinent, funny and touching play which crackles with sharp dialogue and shines an unforgiving spotlight on marriage and relationships is not to be missed. As Henry tells us: "It's no trick loving somebody at their best. Love is loving them at their worst."

When: 16th-19th March at 7.30
+ matinee Saturday at 2.30p.m.

Where: Kenton Theatre, 19 New Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 2BS



COMPTON PLAYERS

Beyond a Joke

by Derek Benfield

Jane and Andrew's pleasant country house is accident prone. Six people have already died there in unfortunate and embarrassing accidents. When daughter Sally's young man Geoff arrives for the weekend unaware of the house's reputation, he mistakenly deduces from conversational confusion that the deaths were due to sinister circumstances.

When: 6th to 9th April.

Where: Compton Village Hall, Burrell Rd, Compton, RG20 6NP

Tickets & info: www.comptonplayers.co.uk



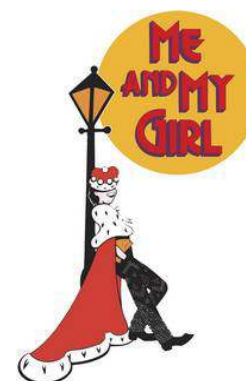
AMEGOS THEATRE

Me and My Girl

a Musical by Douglas Furber and L. Arthur Rose

with 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 Hereford. 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

Where: Wantage.

Tickets: on sale now from
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

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: on sale in the New Year from:-
www.banburyoperaticsociety.co.uk

Oxfordshire Drama Network

Ever wondered what ODN was about?

Not just a network **HERE'S WHAT WE DO:-**

Annual Drama Festival of 1 Act Plays in June

Pantomime/Winter festival competition.

Auditions: Newsletter notifies all our members.

Reviews: Request us to review or send your own.

Props: Get in touch if you need props/scenery

Events: We inform readers of events -

Website: Add your events to the ODN website
and our Facebook pages

News & Reviews should be sent to the editor at
info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

Is your group not an ODN member?

Then get in touch. For just £20 you can join us

Email: info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

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)
Sarah Ellner	(Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society)
Jess Ebberson	(Kennington Amateur Dramatic Society)
Teresa Miller	(Wootton Players)

Email: info@OxfordshireDramaNetwork.org

Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/1324585987569767

Instagram: www.instagram.com/oxfordshiredramanetwork

