

# Oxfordshire Drama Network

## Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2021

### EDITOR'S BULLETIN

It's great to be able to see as well as hear what our groups have been doing – & without leaving the house!

Many thanks to Karen for organising the Winter Festival and collating the results of our member's votes. I bought an HDMI cable so we were able to watch all the entries on a big TV screen – a good evening's entertainment

*Mike Davies*



### CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Welcome to yet another lock down issue of the Newsletter!

I'm sure you are all, like my own group, eagerly awaiting the governments briefing on the 22nd Feb to learn how the rest of the year will shape up before contemplating making plans to tread the boards. I fear that there will still be many hurdles ahead but with the Vaccine roll out at least there is hope at the end of the tunnel. There has also been talk in the news recently about the use of quick turn-around lateral flow tests playing a role in re-opening Theatres - with Boris Johnson stating that they could be used for "the toughest nuts to crack, such as nightclubs or theatres or those parts of the economy we couldn't get open last year". This could be good news for the entertainment industry but there are still 'early days, with lots of discussions to be had'. I doubt though that this will have much impact on the amateur world and small community venues - many of which are currently being used as vaccine centres.

We shall see how it plays out - there are lots of ifs and buts, but if there is one thing I'm sure of its that we will need to be patient for a while longer. Without wishing to sound clichéd - we are all in this together and if your group or society needs any help or support they should get in touch and we will do what we can to help.

We have put together a **short survey** which we ask a representative from each group to complete and return. This is to give us a general picture of what our member groups have been doing (if anything) over the last year and what support we can offer going forward. It will also help us decide on what we do about this year's ODN festival of One Act Plays. So please do complete it by 12th March - we will publish the results in the next newsletter but withhold the names of the groups. The link to the survey is here: <https://forms.gle/FVvZkmMBwgXogtDs6>

Hopefully in the next edition of the newsletter we will start to have information from you about forthcoming productions - I have my fingers crossed - but if not, please feel free to share your lock down journey over the last year with us. We all learn from each-others experience and who knows you might inspire others to try something new.

Karen Carey



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

**What's On-Line** – New and Old

**What's On Stage** (Covid Permitting!)

28 April - Compton Players  
1 May **Beyond A Joke**

7-10 July **St Peter's Players**  
**Ghosts at the Grange**

20-23 Oct The Henley Players  
**Saturday Sunday Monday**

October Abingdon Operatic Society  
**All Shook Up**

17-20 Nov HAODS  
**"Shrek" The Musical**

24-27 Nov **The Bartholomew Players**  
**'Table Manners'**

Nov/Dec Jigsaw Stage Productions  
**"The Sound of Music"**

7-11 Dec Oxford Operatic Society  
**My Fair Lady**

December Thame Players  
**Babes in the Wood**

Page	INSIDE THIS ISSUE
1	Chairman's Letter
2-3	<b>ODN Winter Virtual Festival RESULTS</b>
3-7	Group's activities
7	Obituary – Nick O'Keefe
7-8	Auditions
8	What's On-Line
8-10	Forthcoming Events
11	Lockdown Cartoons
11	Your ODN committee

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

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

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

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

page 1 of 11



## Winter Festival Round-Up and Results

The whole idea behind the Winter festival was to give you all an opportunity to work on something creative, have a bit of fun and show case the talent that we have in this community. I want to thank all those groups who submitted entries - certainly it looked to me like you had a lot of fun putting these pieces together and I really enjoyed watching them all. It certainly brightened my January - which felt like the longest month in history!

Some of you who know me, will know that I've worked in media production for over 30 years now and the thing that surprised and impressed me most were the technical skills, some great green screen work, fantastic use of sound effects, music, and graphics. A lot of effort had gone into these short films and the actors were very much dependent on the skills from the creative team around them, possibly more so than a stage show. And let me tell you - they did you proud!!

We had twelve entries:

### **"A Casket of Jewels" by Henley Players**

A well thought out collection of extracts from Shakespeare Plays and sonnets, beautifully costumed, filmed and edited, with some very strong performances by the actors.

### **"Resting" by The Wychwood Players**

Avery clever and absorbing radio play written by Anthony Gofton which would have given Agatha Christie a run for her money - a wonderful twist at the end - and so much attention to detail with the sound effects and music.

### **"Let the Bells Ring Out" by Wootton Players**

A wonderful opening sequence that really set the tone to this interesting play written and directed by Laurence Brockliss, with some strong central female performances from Ruth Blackwood as Vi and Jenni Williams as Em.

We had two entries from **The Thame Players** which definitely brought a smile to my face:

**"St Nicked"** - very funny short sketch written by member Colin Lee, with solid performances from the 3 cast members and very skilful editing and production.

**"Colonel Fazackerley Butterworth-Toast"** a poem by Charles Causley and delivered with delightful exuberance by Tony Long

We also had 2 entries from **Didcot Phoenix Drama Group**:

### **"#ShareYourShakespeare"**

A short spoof on a news programme reporting on Coronavirus using cleverly extracted pieces from Shakespeare, written by members and produced originally for last year's RSC's

#ShareYourShakespeare initiative. Again, some nice performances in this well put together piece.

### **"Bad Connection"**

A murder mystery written by member Greg Greetham centred on a Zoom meeting between 4 friends that goes wrong - strong performances coupled with this year's well-worn phrase...."You're on MUTE!" makes this short play both contemporary and very entertaining.

Then we have a whopping 5 entries from East Hagbourne based group, **HAMS**:

**"To a Mouse"** by Robert Burns - where we joined proud Scotsman, Iain Duff by his fire with a 'wee dram', while he read the poem with great expression accompanied by appropriate graphics and well needed subtitles!!

**"Tea Party - from Alice in Wonderland"** - a delve into their archives and extracted from their performance of "Alice in Wonderland" from 2013, this short scene filmed during one of the performances certainly showcases the talents of the group - it was also nice to hear the audience's reaction (God I miss an audience!!).

**"Jack and the Beanstalk"** - who doesn't love a panto! It was so great to see so many young members involved and the central performance by James Dyer was fantastic - such a talent. There were a lot of comments from voters on the great use of backgrounds and graphics to compliment the zoom recordings - so a winner all round.

**"Ghirlanda" - A country girls curse"** - written and recited by Margaret Gallop and featuring young member Eve Goodenough. I have to confess this was one of my favourites with very striking imagery coupled with sound effects that made you feel uncomfortable at times, I found this abstract piece very intriguing and Eve reminded me a little of the girl in the horror film "The Ring" .... which made it even more eerie to me.

**"Luncheon"** written and directed by Stephanie Hilder, set in an art gallery the cast brings to life the

characters in Renoir's painting "Luncheon of the Boating Party" in the mind of a female observer. This was such a clever idea and imaginatively delivered by all. We had so many messages from voters complimenting this production.

-----  
If anyone hasn't had the opportunity to take a look at the entries on our YouTube channel, I really recommend that you have a look - I've never come across such a diverse collection of festival pieces - everything from Shakespeare to Pantomime and plenty in between.

The link to the playlist is:-

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLkBaE-il4zbA89KbJ9Mw9gIkJV95OfoG5>

When we first discussed the idea of a winter festival, we thought we would offer awards on lots of different things based on a combination of members votes and committee assessments but decided in the end that the results should be based entirely on the votes from the members - this is a festival, we're not adjudicators or judges and actually we just wanted everyone to enjoy taking part and not necessarily have winners but 'favourites.' Besides, in the end what the members voted for would have been our choices too, so we know you know a good piece of work when you see it!

The results of the vote are as follows:

### Overall Festival Favourite

- Winner: "Luncheon" performed by HAMs
- Runner Up: "Resting" performed by The Wychwood Players

### Most Imaginative Presentation

- Winners: "Luncheon" by HAMs
- Runner Up: "Bad Connection" by Didcot Phoenix Drama Group

### Favourite Original Production

We had a slight mishap here - due to a misunderstanding we thought that the Wychwood players excellent "Resting" was an original work by Anthony Gofton - unfortunately they confirmed after the results were announced that this wasn't the case but an adaptation. This was partly our fault for not checking before adding them to the list of nominees to be voted on, and while they were outright winners with 37% of the vote unfortunately, this means that they are unfortunately ineligible for the award - but we would certainly like to congratulate Anthony Gofton on an excellent adaptation and express our apologies to everyone for any confusion caused.

This means that the results are as follows:-

- Winners "Bad Connection" by Didcot Phoenix Drama Group
- Joint Runners Up: "St Nicked" by The Thame Players and "Luncheon" by HAMs:

### Favourite Male Performer

- Winner: Aram Gregory - Martin Aimes in "Resting" by The Wychwood Players.
- Joint Runners up: Peter O'Sullivan - Shylock in "A Casket of Jewels" by Henley Players.  
Tony Long - Colonel Fazackerley Butterworth-Toast, by St Peters Players

### Favourite Female Performer

- Winner: Grainne Harling - Titania in "A Casket of Jewels" by Henley Players
- Runner up: Di Duff - -Widow in "Luncheon" by HAMs

### Favourite Rising Star

- Winner: James Dyer  
Jack in "Jack and the Beanstalk" by HAMs
- Joint Runners Up: Sam Chamberlain - Billy in "Let the Bells Ring Out" by Wootton Players,  
Maebh Foster - Jill in "Jack & the Beanstalk", HAMs  
Eve Goodenough - Girl in the reading of "Ghirlanda" by HAMs

### Production Hero

- Winner: Doug Amos  
Video creation and editing for "Luncheon", HAMs
- Runners up: Stephen Taylor Brown & Peter O'Sullivan  
Film Production for "A Casket of Jewels"  
Henley Players

---

---

## News from our Groups

Some lovely news from **Kennington ADS** - over the past few years, we have been raising funds to sponsor a room at the newly-opened **Ronald McDonald House** in Oxford. This is a vital provision for families with children receiving critical care at the Oxford Children's Hospital, giving a home-from-home when parents and carers need to be close by. We have run fun activities for our members and received amazing support from our audiences through bucket collections at all of our panto performances. It really is a fantastic effort and shows what a warm, caring community we are part of - you can see the wonderful Nathan giving a guided tour of the '**Sheldonian Room**' at:-

<https://fb.watch/3ESC4ebYcc>

## How Phoenix zoomed into the Virtual World.

Like many groups, when lockdown hit last March, rehearsals for our summer show and festival pieces were put on hold and meetings cancelled. When it became apparent that we were going to be in it for the long haul, the committee made the painful decision to cancel the plays and to move weekly meetings online via Zoom - we knew that not everyone would want to join in but there were a number of members who lived on their own or who were shielding and those who simply just needed their drama fix with friends - and these regular meetings have often proved a bit of a lifeline and a break from the monotony of lock down life.

Some meetings have just been a bit of a coffee and a chat, but others have been more ambitious - play readings, a murder mystery, desert island discs, quizzes, theatre watch parties, show and tell night, games night, "Phoenix got Talent" night and even hosted our own Eurovision song contest (Montenegro won!)

As our confidences with the technology grew, by late spring we wanted to get a bit more creative and worked on producing a short play for the #ShareYourShakespeare initiative run by the RSC ( [www.rsc.org.uk/share-your-shakespeare](http://www.rsc.org.uk/share-your-shakespeare) ) recording members on Zoom reciting Shakespeare passages linked together as a news report on coronavirus. This was great fun to do and I think opened up our eyes to the possibilities of how we might use the technology in the future.

Over the summer one of our members, Greg Greetham, wrote a short murder mystery based on Zoom - "Bad Connection" with many references to some of our own experiences. We started rehearsing this in August with a view to putting it online on our social media sites. When we saw that the Spelthorne and Runnymede Drama Festival had decided to go virtual and were accepting entries from all over the UK, we thought we would enter and were thrilled when we picked up 3 awards - Best timekeeper, (the limit was 10 mins and we came in at 9.59 secs!), Best Presentation and Festival Runners-up.

### Pantozoom or is it Zoomtomime??

When it became clear by the autumn that we would not be able to rehearse our usual pantomime we started thinking about the possibility of making a virtual pantomime. One of our members, Malcolm Thick, had written a version of Dick Whittington a few years ago so this seemed like a perfect opportunity to dust it off, tweak it for the virtual world and add in a few contemporary references.

We knew that it was unlikely to generate sales in the normal sense so decided fairly early on that it should be a fund-raising opportunity.

Rehearsing was a rather flat affair - it was obvious that we needed to concentrate on the vocal work rather than the action as there is only so much action you can do in a Zoom box - so there were several sessions of reading through the script, getting the intonation and the delivery right, and tweaking the lines to suit the actor's delivery. Once the actors were comfortable with the lines, we asked them to learn them so it wouldn't look like they were reading them when it came to recording.

The Costume team had very little access to our storage at the Northbourne Centre, so timetabled cast members to arrive at intervals to collect costumes over a couple of short Saturday sessions - concentrating mainly on hats/wigs and brightly coloured tops (the bits that you see in a zoom box).

We didn't record it in order but fitted in around the availability of cast members. The only instruction they had was to position themselves in front of a white or pale neutral wall, so the focus was on their character rather than any messy backgrounds or shelves of first editions! Two or three takes were normally needed, but sometimes more. Most were recorded in our usual Wednesday evening slot, but some recordings were done during the day when lighting was better for some cast members (a really big consideration - you really don't want your heroine to look like she's in a dingy black hole!). This meant that the cast had no idea how it was going to look or flow - the sort of thing that you get during a live rehearsal process ....and I'm sure that the 'poor bloody author' as Malcolm had named himself on zoom calls, was scratching his head wondering how it was all going to come together.

We had decided early on to green screen a couple of the characters - namely the Fairy and the Mermaid - so that we could make them fly or swim in the scene rather than appear in a zoom box to give them that special 'other worldly' feel. The slapstick and fight scenes were going to be tricky to manage over zoom without animating boxes and having props and custard pies handed to cast members by fellow family members off screen, so decided that these should be done in green screen too.

All the actors being green screened had to deliver their lines and act on their own without any other cast member being present (aside from me feeding them lines from the other side of the room). This is a really difficult thing to do but the cast were very much up for it and seemed to have a lot of fun. Looking back, I wish we had done more green screen work and done away with the majority of the zoom boxes altogether, but we only had a very short window of opportunity before the 2nd lockdown hit in mid-November, so we had to make do.



Example of green screen - before and after



Songs were another tricky component - and you have to have a song or two in a panto! If anyone has tried to record more than one person singing over Zoom, then you will know what I mean - with internet lags from individual connections to get everyone singing in time with each other is truly awful. Again, we were lucky in that one of

our members, Katherine Miller, is also a member of a choir and had produced a couple of songs for them over the summer so offered to produce the songs.



Community song

We kept them to a minimum - community song, finale, romantic duet and one for the title character, Dick. We asked all our cast members to provide a clean audio recording whilst listening to the backing track with headphones (so the music can't be heard on the track) and then a video recording of them in costume singing along to the track (this could be a recording on their phones/cameras or over zoom). Katherine then mixed the audio tracks sent to her with the backing track and then I spent time syncing up the mixed audio track with the videos sent.

Obviously, there was no set building required but we did need some nice backgrounds. Luckily, we have a very talented artist in the group, Pete, who provided some gorgeous, coloured pencil drawings and those combined with a few video graphics for the green screen slapstick and fight scenes, provided the backdrops for the action. Aside from the songs, which we set the cast to do over the Christmas period, we finished recording the script about a week before Christmas.



Example of Pete's artwork for the backgrounds

Editing took 6 weeks (fitted around work and family commitments) using Final Cut Pro X software to produce this full-length panto (1-hour 26mins and 47 secs!). I am an experienced editor but working for Oxford University there isn't much call for making academics fly around the screen (although it might liven up some of the lectures!) and my experience is generally limited to topping and tailing lectures or short interviews to camera - so it was just as much of a learning curve for me as well as the cast. A few additional video graphics such as cartoon rats running around (my animation skills are zero!) were bought and certainly added some nice touches to the finished film.

On Friday 22nd January when we did a special cast/crew only screening over Zoom. Having seen examples of many professional Zoom pantomimes - most either filmed entirely with characters in Zoom boxes or in small groups

outside when meeting up was possible - I think all were surprised at how well the zoom blended with the green screen scenes and were genuinely thrilled with the result so luckily only a few extra tweaks were made in order to make it ready for the launch night on 29th January.

We wanted to make it a special occasion rather than just add it to our YouTube site, so set up a simultaneous live event on both YouTube Live and Facebook Premiere. This was to really give it the feel of an opening night which we could then promote and create a bit of a buzz. The film was uploaded to both sites (after several failed attempts which gave me sleepless nights and lots of hair tearing moments) and set to automatically play live at 7.30pm. I have to say this was the most nerve-wracking moment of all not knowing if the technology was going to work as expected. The back-up plan was to stream over Zoom to Facebook, so this was all set up and ready to go just in case.

We all watched with bated breath on the edge of our seats - definitely that first night nerves feeling...and at the stroke of 7.30, as if by magic - it worked! I think we all breathed a huge sigh of relief and were able to sit back, relax and enjoy it with family and friends. We had around 100 people watching the live event, and if you consider many of them were watching as a family, this could equate to around 200-300 people, maybe more - which would be a full house for us at the Didcot Civic Hall. We had people watching from as far as America and Spain and many were contributing to the online chat function that both Facebook and YouTube live have enabled with some lovely comments.

Afterwards we did what most self-respecting amdram group would do after any first night - grabbed a drink at the virtual bar and met on Zoom to let off steam, chat and celebrate!

Was it perfect? Of course not! There were lots of things we would do differently, but we were all on a learning curve not just with the technology but a different way of acting, directing, costuming, singing and producing ....as well as trying to cope with ever increasing restrictions in lockdown life. However, this has opened our eyes to future possibilities and, although we very much hope that next year we will be back on stage at the Civic Hall, we know that if we can't then we have options to remain creative and be part of something collaborative.

The panto is still available to watch online and ,to date, has had over 1000 hits. We decided to ask for voluntary donations to the local Didcot food-bank rather than fund-raise for the group, and we very much hope that we have been able to help them in some small way.

While awaiting the road map out of the pandemic, we are continuing to work on Zoom and recently recorded and released a Valentines collection of love songs, readings and poems and have other sessions planned including more play readings, a "here's one I made earlier" night and radio play night as well as our AGM.

None of us had used Zoom before last year and there are quite a few 'techno-phobes' in the group who have all risen to the challenge. Although difficult, we have had a memorably creative year, learning and developing new skills and learning a lot about our members in the process. Who knows what the rest of the year will bring but whatever it does we're ready for it!

Karen Carey Didcot Phoenix Drama Group

The panto can be viewed on our YouTube site here:-  
<https://youtu.be/WJ6t7quYcPc>

## "OXFORDSHIRE DRAMA WARDROBE"



We are missing all our lovely customers!

But, although we are unable to open for visitors, we are still available to provide your costuming needs.

We are very happy to pick out your costumes and accessories, armed with your measurements and descriptions/ images. We will then arrange a suitably socially distanced collection.

Please contact us at [odwc1938@gmail.com](mailto:odwc1938@gmail.com) with any queries or requests."

---

### St Peters Players – Pantomime Script Hunt!

I don't know if anyone can help us, but -

A few years ago when scouting for a panto, I ordered 3 scripts from Jasper Publishing who had a super helpful library reading service. I read them and thought one panto in particular had legs so I returned the library copies with a request for multiple scripts. This must have crossed the point where Jasper went into liquidation and I rue the day I sent the returns as I have not been able to track down a copy of the script since. It is

HANSEL AND GRETEL

by MICHAEL BUCHANAN-SMART

Just wondered whether someone out there in the Oxfordshire drama world may just happen to have a copy on their shelves?

Clare Winterbottom

Email: [claremwinterbottom@googlemail.com](mailto:claremwinterbottom@googlemail.com)

---

### Free Scenery!

I have access to a supply of large flats and rolls of backdrop material that one of the London based companies are currently in the process of replacing and binning. Rather than being thrown away they are firstly being offered for use.

The flats are around 20ft high but can be cut down before loading/moving. They are free for collection from near Tunbridge Wells but I have been advised you would need a 17 ton truck to transport and some willing helpers.

If you know of ANY group that might be interested, can you please ask them to contact me, either by e-mail or on 0118 948 2532.

Thanks.

Geoff Stokes

Email: [geoffrey.stokes@btinternet.com](mailto:geoffrey.stokes@btinternet.com)

Chiltern Players Drama Group

---

### Free Plays!

After the pandemic ends and theatres reopen, audiences will be looking for something to laugh about. So I have written Two plays:-

#### 1. A New Shakespeare Comedy.

The greatest (and oldest) living Shakespearean actors assemble for the world premiere performance of a newly discovered Shakespeare play, a history play, Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots.

In Act I, the actors rehearse the play and reminisce. Old rivalries and romances flare up.

Act II is the opening night performance.

The serious history play turns into a raucous comedy. My play is like Michael Frayn's Noises Off, a big success.

N.B. There is no fee for a production by amateur dramatic theatre groups.

#### 2. Two Actors From Stratford.

A young William Shakespeare and his best friend Hamnet Sadler have just left their homes in Stratford-upon-Avon and arrived in the Forest of Arden. They are headed for London to seek their fortune as actors. They have sworn to forsake women for three years while studying acting in London. In the forest, they meet a saucy wench and an innocent milkmaid. William lusts after the saucy wench, and Hamnet falls in love with the milkmaid.

Also in the forest, William and Hamnet meet characters that become sources of inspiration for Shakespeare's future plays: Orlando, Rosalind, and Celia from As You Like It, the outlaws from Two Gentlemen of Verona, Mistress Overdone and Pompey from Measure for Measure, the witches from Macbeth, Falstaff and Master Ford from The Merry Wives of Windsor, and Puck, Quince, Bottom, Flute, and Snug from A Midsummer Night's Dream.

In the finale, William marries the saucy wench, and Hamnet marries the milkmaid. - All's well that ends well.

N.B. There is no fee for a production by amateur dramatic theatre groups.

Contact me or ODN for pdfs of the full scripts.

David Howard McDonnell

[dhmcd2025@gmail.com](mailto:dhmcd2025@gmail.com)

We're pleased to tell you that the Planning Inspector has refused the planning appeal by A.C. Lester for building eight residential units on the land behind Lloyds Bank and abutting the Corn Exchange. The Inspector recognised the importance of the venue to the local community for its social and economic benefits. This gives us an assurance for the immediate future.

This legal battle has cost us £83,000 in professional fees. As the Corn Exchange has been forced to remain closed for much of 2020, fighting this Appeal couldn't have come at a worse time. This money had to come from our reserves which we were building up in order to improve the stage. Needless to say those reserves have now disappeared and we will need to look at more fund raising in the future.

We are extremely grateful to South Oxfordshire District Council for their support. They worked closely with us during the whole appeal process, recognising the importance of the Corn Exchange both culturally and economically to Wallingford and the surrounding district. We are confident that they will continue to support us in the future to ensure that our venue remains fully protected.

The Appeal decision has confirmed that the site has several constraints and any development will have to have regard to the impact on the burgage plot, the listed buildings and the proximity to the noise-producing Corn Exchange. We sincerely hope that any future proposal will only be put forward following detailed discussions with the Corn Exchange so that that the interests of the Corn Exchange are fully protected.

If we were ever in any doubt, this situation has shown us how much the Corn Exchange is valued by everyone who uses it. We would especially like to thank our members, volunteers and supporters for their active support throughout this process: the emails and letters objecting to the development have been vital and heart-warming. We can't wait to welcome you all back to our wonderful theatre.



Kingston Bagpuize  
Drama Group.

It was with sadness that we heard this week that Nick O'Keeffe had died, aged 72.

## OBITUARY Nick O'Keeffe



*Dracula*

He died of Covid 19 and an underlying health problem.

Nick was the longest-serving member of Kingston Bagpuize Drama Group and was also a member of the Wychwood Players. Nick in the past also sat on the ODN Committee.

He was an active member of Kingston Bagpuize Drama Group for many years and also served on the committee, as well as holding the position of Chairman on more than one occasion. One of his first acting roles for the Group was in *Separate Tables* in 1969. He went on to act in many more plays including *Wait Until Dark*, *Dial M for Murder*, *The Ghost Train*, *Gaslight* and *California Suite*. He directed several plays for the Group including *The Haunted House* and *Noises Off*.

After moving to Milton-under-Wychwood, Nick join the Wychwood Players where his acting roles included 'Allo 'Allo and *Blackadder Goes Forth*.

He will be greatly missed by both Groups.

## AUDITIONS

### A HAODS Studio *Fringe* Production **Sing from the Heart**

a Play with Music

Written by Mike Rowbottom

Directed by Julie Huntington

MD: Jane Southern

Phyllis is a retired music teacher, who gathers together a group of women to sing for fun at the local community college. Things take a difficult turn when Phyllis has ambitions for the choir beyond that of just a good old sing-song. It is a warm and often amusing play about the lives of the women from both sides of the tracks and how they support each other through their own personal crises.

8 female, 7 Acting ages, 30-60, 1 early 20's –

2 males. 1 Acting age 40+, 1 early 20's

All should be competent singers.

Readings and Auditions to be announced in accordance with Covid guideline. Production dates are moveable, but pencilled in for October half term. The play will be performed in the intimate atmosphere of the HAODS Studio, New Street,

Henley as part of our *Fringe* Production Season.

To register interest, please email Julie Huntington on [hunting311@aol.com](mailto:hunting311@aol.com)

**AND**

## HAODS "Shrek" The Musical

Performances 17th – 20th November 2021

Director/Choreographer – Jake Willett

Musical Director – Jane Southern

Shrek presents a treasure trove of creative opportunities including costumes, sets, puppets (there is a fire-breathing dragon after all), and more! Irreverently fun for the whole family, Shrek proves that beauty is truly in the eye of the ogre.

Previews & Auditions to be announced Spring 2021

For more information contact Samantha Riley on:  
haodschair@gmail.com

## WHAT'S ON-LINE

### PREVIOUS LINKS:

**Oxford Operatic Society**  
CLIMBING EVERY MOUNTAIN!  
[OXOPS in Lockdown](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaWtz_U18oE)

**Oxford Theatre Guild**  
The Recruiting Officer  
<https://youtu.be/CXnLXY4SPMY>

### Didcot Phoenix On-Line!

**Shakespeare Play Reading**  
<https://youtu.be/2B1g2RbHV70> or  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=2B1g2RbHV70](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2B1g2RbHV70)

**You are not alone**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATIOA\\_xwDK0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATIOA_xwDK0)

### The Bartholomew Players "The Second Wave"

on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/twhp9VjLnzs>

**The Wychwood Players** murder mystery radio play 'Resting' adapted by Anthony Gofton. See our new website: [www.wychwoodplayers.com](http://www.wychwoodplayers.com)

### KINGSTON BAGUIZE DRAMA GROUP

A virtual pantomime 'Mirror Mirror' will be available for viewing during panto season from week commencing January 16th until the end of February / beginning of March. details in will be posted on KBS online [www.kbsonline.org.uk](http://www.kbsonline.org.uk), and on our website <https://kbgshow.com> when the performance is available to watch

### The Bartholomew Players "Zoom Christmas Special: Herd Ingenuity"

Watch out for this latest play on the Bartholomew Players website later in December  
. [www.bartholomewplayers.co.uk](http://www.bartholomewplayers.co.uk)

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

## NEW LINKS :-

### MYCO

"Anthem" from their hopefully soon to be forthcoming production of "Chess" - hopefully in April !

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaWtz\\_U18oE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaWtz_U18oE)

### Banbury Operatic

"Another Op'nin', another (online) show"

<https://youtu.be/532aCFPxB1g>

### Didcot Phoenix

Panto – "Dick Whittington and his Cat"

[https://youtu.be/WJ6t7guYcPc?fbclid=IwAR3FXr2Vv\\_uFM4kGn-XvhH69VODNcoaKfX94-Fi1QFv02-Dv0Q\\_QYRRKUhtA](https://youtu.be/WJ6t7guYcPc?fbclid=IwAR3FXr2Vv_uFM4kGn-XvhH69VODNcoaKfX94-Fi1QFv02-Dv0Q_QYRRKUhtA)

or

<https://youtu.be/WJ6t7guYcPc>

### Oxford Theatre Guild

Radio Play - Charlie's Aunt

<https://www.oxfordtheatreguild.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CharleysAunt.jpeg>

### Stanton Harcourt Drama Group

Video we created for the chase in Camelot (2018)

<https://www.facebook.com/StantonHarcourtDrama/videos/783102508553332>

### St Peters Players

Virtual Christmas Show

[https://youtu.be/IIOF\\_B87Tow](https://youtu.be/IIOF_B87Tow)

### Thame Players

The B O R I S Initiative

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovPAjCBDblo>

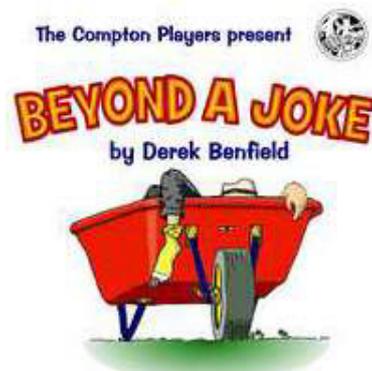
## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Covid permitting

### 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:** Hopefully! 28<sup>th</sup> April - 1<sup>st</sup> May at 7.30pm

**Where:** Compton Village Hall RG20 6NP

**Tickets:** £9, (£8 Conc) online from:-

[www.ComptonPlayers.co.uk](http://www.ComptonPlayers.co.uk) or Tel 07554 842207

## ST PETER'S PLAYERS

(hopefully) present

### Ghosts at the Grange

by Karen Doling-

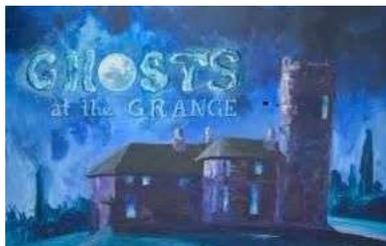
A whodunnit with haunting!

Lancelot and Guinevere are dead, and have been for a hundred years. They haunt Arthur's house, and are the only witnesses to his murder. But how can they let his family know who committed the foul deed?

**When:** Wed 7th to Sat 10th July 2021 7.30pm.

**Where:** Wolvercote Village Hall

**Tickets:** £9 available from 01865 556120



## THE HENLEY PLAYERS Saturday Sunday Monday

by Eduardo de Filippo

Marital misunderstandings, a lover's quarrel, and generational conflict escalate as passions flare during the traditional Sunday

dinner with family and friends. Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall adapted Eduardo de Filippo's sparkling contemporary Italian commedia dell'arte, which looks at the trial and tribulations of a well-off family in Naples in 1959.

**When:** 20<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2021, 7.30pm + Sat 2.30pm

**Where:** The Kenton Theatre, New Street, Henley on Thames, RG9 2BP

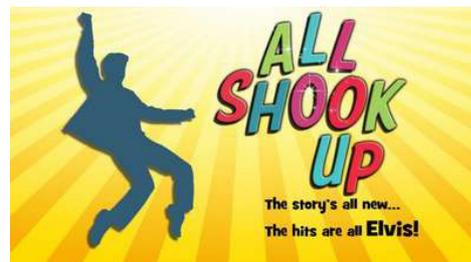
**Tickets:** will be from the Kenton Box Office 01491 575698 or online at [www.kentontheatre.co.uk](http://www.kentontheatre.co.uk)

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



## ABINGDON OPERATIC SOCIETY

### All Shook Up



The music of Elvis Presley comes alive in All Shook Up and we're bringing it to the stage of the Amey Theatre in April 2021. This show was originally scheduled for April 2020

Inspired by Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, All Shook Up takes us to a small Midwestern town that is thrown into a frenzy with the arrival of Chad, fresh out of prison, a good-looking, motorcycle-riding roustabout, who travels the open roads with a guitar on his back, blue suede shoes on his feet, and a song in his heart.

Repressed by their conservative mayor, the town begins to come alive once more under Chad's influence. Lovers meet, woo, pursue, and more, all in one zany night that will change the town forever.

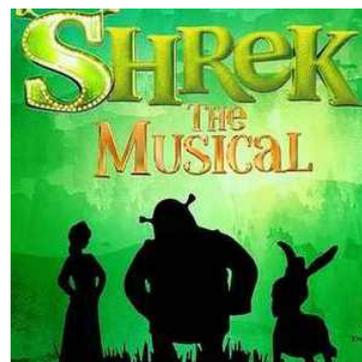
All Shook Up is a rocking, heartwarming tale about following dreams, opening up to love, and the power of music, featuring a whole host of hit songs from the Elvis songbook, including *Jailhouse Rock*, *Heartbreak Hotel*, *Love Me Tender*, *Blue Suede Shoes*, *A Little Less Conversation*, and many more.

**When:** Hopefully end of October 2021

**Where:** Amey Theatre at Abingdon School

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

### HAODS "Shrek" The Musical



Based on the Oscar-winning DreamWorks Animation film, Shrek The Musical is a Tony Award-winning fairy tale adventure featuring all

new songs from Jeanine Tesori (Thoroughly Modern Millie, Caroline or Change) and a sidesplitting book by David Lindsay-Abaire. Shrek brings all the beloved characters you know from the film to life on stage, and proves there's more to the story than meets the ears.

"Once upon a time, there was a little ogre named Shrek..." And thus begins the tale of an unlikely hero who finds himself on a life-changing journey alongside a wisecracking Donkey and a feisty princess who resists her rescue. Throw in a short tempered bad guy, a cookie with an attitude, and

over a dozen other fairy tale misfits, and you've got the kind of mess that calls for a real hero. Luckily, there's one on hand...and his name is Shrek.

**When:** 17th – 20th November 2021

**Where:** The Kenton Theatre, Henley on Thames

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

## THE BARTHOLOMEW PLAYERS 'Table Manners'

by Alan Ayckbourn

Annie has arranged to spend an illicit weekend with her sister Ruth's husband Norman, and for this reason, suitably disguised, has asked her elder brother Reg and his wife Sarah to look after their widowed mother and the house. As it happens the seduction, thought or planned, by each of the six characters never takes place either.

**When:** 24th-27th November 2021.

**Where:** Eynsham Village Hall



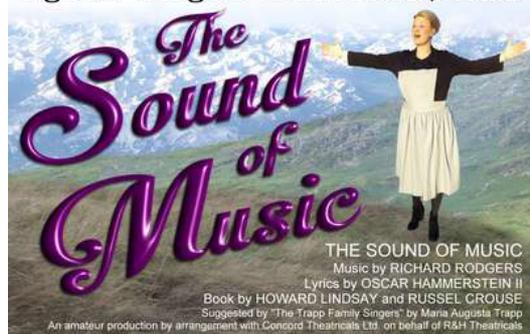
By Alan Ayckbourn

## JIGSAW STAGE PRODUCTIONS

### "The Sound of Music"

by Rodgers and Hammerstein.

Jigsaw Stage Productions presents



The story of Maria and the Von Trapp family will delight you with its award winning score, including, 'My Favourite Things', 'Do-Re-Mi', 'Climb Every Mountain', and 'Edelweiss'.

It tells the true tale of the world-famous singing family, from their romantic beginnings and search for happiness to their thrilling escape to freedom as Austria becomes part of the Third Reich at the start of WWII.

**VENUES:-**

**The Beacon**, Wantage, Nov/Dec 2021 dates TBA  
at 7.45pm + Matinee Sat at 2.30pm

**Tickets** £15 (£13 conc) from The Beacon:-  
[www.beaconwantage.co.uk](http://www.beaconwantage.co.uk) or tel 01235 763456

**AND**

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

**Cornerstone** Didcot, Nov/Dec 2021 dates TBA  
at 7.45pm + Matinee Sat at 2.30pm

**Tickets** £15 (£13 conc) from Cornerstone:-  
[www.cornerstone-arts.org](http://www.cornerstone-arts.org) or Tel 01235 515144

## 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 7<sup>th</sup> - Sat 11<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.atgtickets.com/shows/oxops-my-fair-lady/new-theatre-oxford)



## THAME PLAYERS

### Babes in the Wood,

Will Our Babes in the Wood Be Saved? Oh, Yes, They Will!

The story of two young children (the Babes), who, after their father dies, are abandoned deep in the forest by their wicked uncle and left to die, so that he can inherit the fortune their father left them. But his plot is foiled when Robin Hood and his Merry Men rescue them and, with Maid Marion, they return to the castle. The uncle is unmasked as the villain and the Babes get their rightful inheritance – oh, yes, they do!!

With all the ingredients you'd expect in a Thame Players' panto, with plenty of fun and jokes, music, singing and dancing, for all the family.

To be performed in December 2021. dates TBA

New members are always welcome, email:-  
[membership@thameplayers.co.uk](mailto:membership@thameplayers.co.uk) for details.

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

Twitter.com/thametheatre,

Facebook.com/thametheatre

Instagram.com/thameplayers

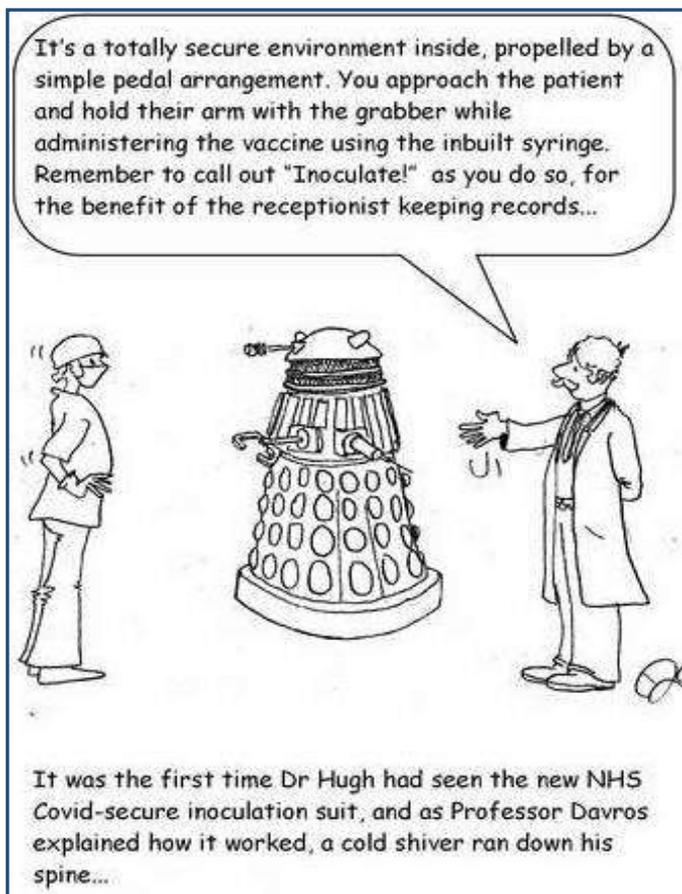


Dave Hawkins of Compton Players resolved to draw 'a cartoon-a-day' during the lockdowns! Here's just a couple. He's published 100 of them in a book called "What Did You Do In The Lockdown, Daddy?" available from him at:-

[david@dragondes.co.uk](mailto:david@dragondes.co.uk)



Both copyright ©Dave Hawkins 2021



### STOP PRESS EXTRAS NEEDED

ATS Heritage are Filming at Blenheim Palace between 1st - 3rd March. Paid Extras & Characters needed for Churchill Exhibition film. Contact

[ana.burgess@ats-heritage.co.uk](mailto:ana.burgess@ats-heritage.co.uk) or see full details:-

[www.oxfordshiredramanetwork.org/node/1343](http://www.oxfordshiredramanetwork.org/node/1343)

## 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)

N.B. We have held the AGM in Drayton for a few years now and would really like to move it around the county so that other groups don't have to travel so far. We would really like to encourage one of our member groups to host next year's AGM – the ODN will cover any hall hire expenses – so please email us if this is something you would like to do.

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

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

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