

CROAK

Toads Theatre Newsletter April 2023

A Message From Our Chairman



I'm delighted to report, if you didn't already know, that *The Importance of Being Earnest* was a huge success. Andrew Kenyon and his talented cast gave us a marvellous production. As ever Andrew's attention to detail came shining through. Well done to Paul Lewis and his very talented team of volunteers for a beautiful set.

I'm not the only person who asked where that wonderful statue came from. Hadn't seen it in props... or so I thought. It turns out that it was the mannequin that stands in the props room and always gives me a fright! Paul Lewis and John Franklin expertly turned it into the statue!

Follow that I hear you say. Well - *Death's Desire* directed by yours truly is the complete opposite in terms of genre. A psychological thriller that hopefully will appeal to all of you!

The heating has been an ongoing problem and unfortunately we had a very cold spell during *Importance*, making the auditorium very cold. The system is very old and the theatre is a large stone building with high ceilings; it takes days to heat up. We are endeavouring to upgrade it without having to spend a fortune. John Miles, Alistair Conquer and Peter West have done sterling work. However we've now put Peter West in charge of the ongoing work, thereby relieving John and Alistair who are both responsible for committee work.

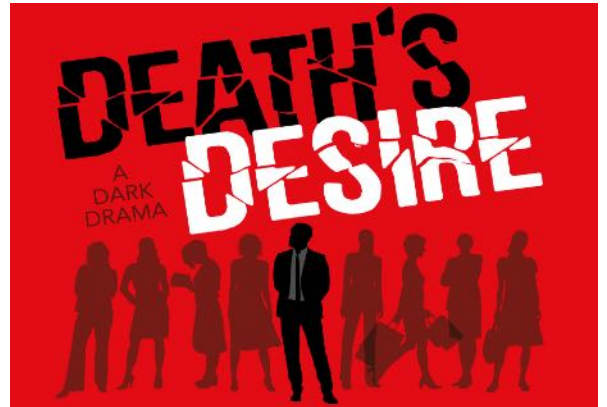
We've had comments about stewards having to clear up the sticky litter after a play and have made available disposal gloves, so hopefully that won't be an issue.

Jon Manley has bought new and more sturdy plastic 'glasses' that can be taken into the auditorium. Please note that these are NOT disposable, so please return them to the bar.

As ever, any issues please don't hesitate to contact me...I aim to please!



Anna Reynolds
Chairman



Tuesday 11th to Saturday 15th April



Tuesday 9th to Saturday 13th May 2023



Monday 5th to Saturday 10th June 2023



Thursday 15 June 2023

Editors note - If you have any technical issues or would like to add content to future newsletters then please contact me by [clicking here](#). Publication date 25 March 2023.

News Desk



The Wednesday Club, April, 2023

Wedders - Wednesday Club report by Nigel

On the 15 February John was in high spirits as he was due to be in Lanzarote the next day for a month. John really has missed his vocation as a stand up comedian He had us all groaning at his puns and laughing at his jokes. He finally gave way to let Patricia Oxley have her turn to entertain us.



Patricia told us that when she was knee high to a grass hopper that she was enthralled by tales of the Greek Gods. Sadly she had to wait for her more mature years to finally walk in their

footsteps by means of a cruise calling at various Greek ports including magical Santorini (pictured) and Athens. A tour of the Acropolis had the tour guide repeatedly refer the the missing Elgin Marbles. For more information click the photo.



On 1 March we were quizzed by John Hall. He started with photos of our former prime ministers that we had to identify and flags of the world. There are 193 different national flags, I dare say that Steve who always seems to be on

the winning team has memorised them all. This was followed by 26 questions about facts that I had long since forgotten the answers. A jolly afternoon in the capable hands of Sherry.



On 7 March Jim treated us to the comedy of Bob Newhart. In the first set nightclub performances Newhart ever gave, he enacted a series of one-sided

conversations in which he assumed the role of an earnest straight man in absurd or wildly dramatic scenarios. Read more by clicking the photo of Bob.

Wedders - Wednesday Club Report by Sherry (Nigel was away).

On the last Wednesday in February, Wednesday Club members were well entertained by a visit from jazz performer, Paul Scott, whose anecdotes and saxophone music enthralled a larger than usual audience, including a few 'groupies', one of whom was a four-legged, furry aficionado!

In contrast, on Wednesday 15 March, a select group, including the leading lady, attended the review of The Importance of Being Earnest. The consensus was that the performances had been hugely successful, both artistically and financially, so cast, crew and director are to be congratulated.

To know what is happening in Amateur Dramatics in South Devon, Click on the Thespis logo below



CineMundi

Numbers and visitors continue to grow and produce prospective TOADS members.

10 April at 10.30 Film noir from 1946.

8th May at 10.30 TOADS production tie-in with Emma Peel.

5th June at 10.30 Double Bill -Inspired by TOADS production of 'Nonsense' Wordsworth never saw them as dark as this! and First of the Goldberg family variations.

12th June at 10.30 'Busting out all over" in this Liliom musical.

September- After TOADS production of Spider's Web Look out for a triple bill - late afternoon into evening to "celebrate" demise of troubled actor in a 'Spyder'. in response to a request from Jean Strong!

If you are interested in being on the CineMundi list or wish to make a request then please email tlccinemundi@gmail.com

Membership Corner

It is always pleasing to read the application forms from new members as they are processed and it's good to welcome more newcomers as rehearsals get underway for forthcoming productions. Whether as part of the acting team or stage crew, participants are expected to enrol as members of Toads.

Our membership fees are some of the lowest compared with other am-dram companies in the Bay, some of which expect payment for hire of scripts or librettos, auditions, stage appearances or costumes and do not offer free tickets. Toads does not make further charges for any of those aspects, despite having ever increasing overheads to meet. Best of all, members have the chance to be part of some wonderful productions in our special theatre. (Free refreshments at rehearsals, too!)

The monthly social evenings offer a varied range of entertainment. In March, we were treated to a quiz in the bar, ably conceived and delivered by Jon Manley. An enjoyable evening for the participants, not least the winning team whose photo, I'm reliably informed, may be viewed in the bar. Our thanks to Jackie Tarney for keeping us supplied with drinks.

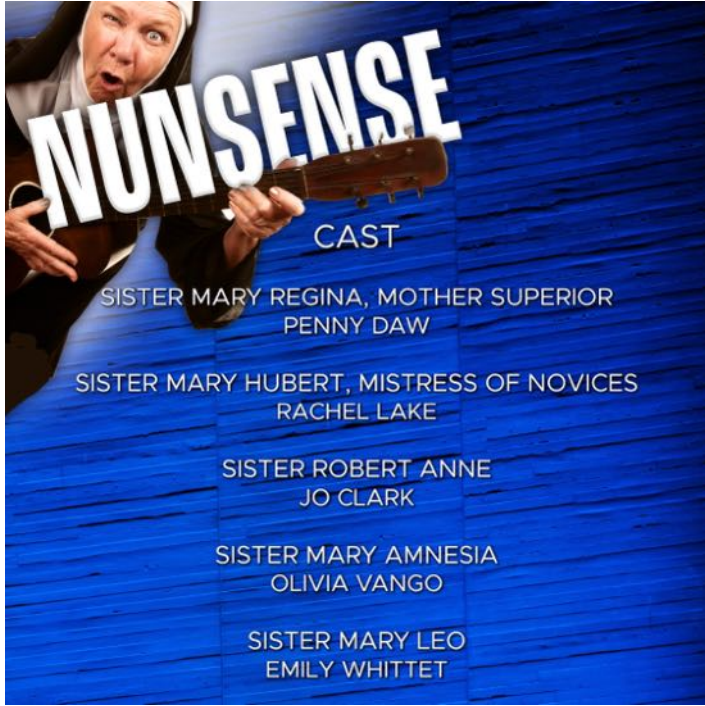
Next guided tour: 11th April 10.30a.m. Box Office
If interested, please contact me:
ashcombe1968@hotmail.co.uk

Sherry Dudley

Toads Productions



Director: Chris Matanlé
Musical Director: Allan Fouracre
Choreographer: Ryan Mockridge



Click on the photo to reveal 15 more.



The Thoughts of Pliny

The importance of being Earnest

or

A Trivial Comedy for Serious people

Pliny says I do like a good stage set, and this play delivered for Oscar Wilde's satire of Victorian society, the nature of marriage, a sparkling philosophical debate of its institutions and values.

The cast were word perfect under the capable direction of Andrew Kenyon.

Oscar Wilde's play was first performed on the 14th February 1895 at St James Theatre. Initially a IV act play, Wilde reduced it to III under advisement and this format has endured.

Considered to be Wilde's most 'successful' work it remains popular, as evidenced by the attendance under the able direction of Andrew Kenyon.

Keeping to the 'Traditional' format all the players performed well, some reprising old roles, others new to the genre.

The staging was excellent, although I felt the players should have been a few inches further forward as squeezing past the potted plant and tea trolley was a little irritating after the first time or two.

All in all an entertaining evening, yet it may have been worth while investigating the ambiguities around the 'Gay' debate which surrounds this play. Jack and Algernon left me wondering at the outset where their relationship was going and what was all the talk about Bunbury?

Some critics have argued that the playwright dared include homosexual connotations in the text. However, I would argue that more generally, despite very little room for manoeuvre, Oscar Wilde managed brilliantly to challenge the social norms, sexual stereotypes and gender representations of his time, as in the reversal of gender roles between Gwendolen and Jack.

Well done to the director, cast and crew.



Audition Notice – Dad's Army
 Director Julie Hancocks

The Two Week Summer Show this year is Dad's Army, which will run from 7th to 19th August.

There will be auditions Sunday 16th April 14:00 to 17:00, with a further set of auditions at a later date, if required. If the scripts don't arrive in time (due 8th April, which happens to be Good Friday), we will reschedule the auditions. Rehearsals will commence at the end of May.

[CASTING BREAKDOWN](#) (Click for more information)



Scripts should be available from box office from 7th April 2023

IMPORTANT: As this is an Agatha, good diction is a must. The

policemen, Elgin, and Mildred Peak could get away with local accents BUT the remainder of the cast must speak with clear RP voices.

Anyone who wants a smaller role is encouraged to audition for Elgin, Mildred Peak, Oliver Costello, Henry Hailsham-Brown, Constable Jones (Jones may be cut if no one suitable comes forward). These roles would also suit anyone new to the stage and I welcome first-time auditees.

Volunteers for props, prompt, wardrobe, stage manager also required – please help.

[CASTING BREAKDOWN](#) (Click for more information)

Essential Contacts and Information

BOX OFFICE 01803 299330 boxoffice@toadstheatre.co.uk @ToadsTheatre

Committee members *

Anna Reynolds* 07788 994398
chairman@toadstheatre.co.uk

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fernbank24@gmail.com

Sherry Dudley*
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Julie Hancocks*
julie.hancocks@virgin.net

Andrew Kenyon* 07479 008066
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Nicola Margetts Treasurer*
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njmargetts@gmail.com

John Miles* 01803 858394
johnmilesandmiles@gmail.com
for Wednesday Club

Jill Pettigrew* 01803 525071
secretary@toadstheatre.co.uk

Heidi Pyburn*
heidinoelpyburn@gmail.com
Devon Young People's Theatre

Joy Book 07704 584953
Joybook9597@gmail.com

If you'd like to help In the coffee shop

Maggie Campbell
peterwmaggiec@talktalk.net
if you'd like to join the wardrobe team

Nigel Colledge
newsletter@toadstheatre.co.uk
Editor Croak Newsletter.

Bea Hutchings
marketing@toadstheatre.co.uk
For press/magazine publicity

Anne Jordan 01626 330866
annepoppy@blueyonder.co.uk
if you'd like to join the props team

Paul Lewis 07555 396654
paul1970lewis@yahoo.co.uk
set building/painting, etc.

Jon Manley & Jackie Tarney
07815 323982
boxoffice@toadstheatre.co.uk
If you'd like to help behind the bar

Jon Manley & Bea Hutchings
openmic@toadstheatre.co.uk
For Members Nights, Open Mic

Jake Wilkins
technical@toadstheatre.co.uk
for technical issues

HOSTS JON+BEA

Don't miss out. Book a slot asap.

Free Parking

Bar open 7.00PM

TOADS THEATRE

OPEN MIC NIGHT

Monologues Short plays
Music • Poetry • Stand-up • Magic

CONTACT: openmic@toadstheatre.co.uk
TOADS Theatre, St Marks Rd Torquay
TQ1 2EL

Next Open Mic Evening 21 April 2023nat 7.30pm

We will be organising an open mic session featuring the many aspects of folk music, with some quality performers now in Toads' membership.

Come along and perform your favourite Whale Smuggling shanty for us, but leave off the last twenty verses, please. Steve Gill and John Miles



1. How many tenpin bowling skittles need knocking down for a strike?
2. How is 77 represented in Roman numerals?
3. Who is the patron saint of music?
4. What are birds of a feather said to do?
5. "Kiss Me Kate" is a musical version of which play by Shakespeare?
6. The single "Papa Don't Preach" came from which Madonna album?
7. Betz cells are found in which part of the body?
8. What is the only bird that can hover in the air and also fly backwards?
9. Who earned the nickname "Slowhand"?
10. Which country does opera singer Pavarotti come from?

Where am I?

The manor was originally run by Godwin, Earl of Wessex and later by his son Harold Godwinson the last Saxon King of England. The first Norman lord of this town was Eustace II of Boulogne, and the town appears in the Domesday Book as Oistreham. By 1227 Henry III granted the town a market charter, making the new village a major player in the buying and selling of cattle in Kent, a tradition that survived to 1961 when the last cattle market was held. St Mary's Church is thought to date from the 13th century, although it was much altered in Victorian times. In 1503 the Protestant martyr John Frith was born in the town.

The church is unusual in that it displays the only known representation of a royal arms of King Edward VI (reigned 1547–1553) in a church. There is little doubt that it is the king's arms as the supporters are a lion and a dragon, and there is a curious Latin phrase beside the arms: "VIVAT REX CURAT LEX" (Long live the King, custodian of the law). England did not have another male monarch until the Union of the Crowns in 1603.

General James Wolfe was born in the town in 1727 at what is now known as the Old Vicarage due to a terrible storm on the night he was born. He lived in Quebec House—many streets and buildings are named after him and St Mary's contains not only the font in which he was baptised but also a memorial window to him by Edward Burne-Jones. The town square contains statues to both Wolfe and Churchill.

[Click here for answers](#)



Advance Upcoming Audition Notice – Dad's Army

The Two Week Summer Show this year is **Dad's Army**, which will run from **7th to 19th August**.

The production will take a similar format to Fawlty Towers, where we will perform three of the television episodes, plus a sketch devised for a Royal Variety Command Performance, which gives an opportunity for the entire ensemble to get on stage together and have fun.

We will not be attempting to replicate the television episodes, but I am looking for the essence of the characters, enough to make them recognisable to the audience.

There will be **auditions Sunday 16th April** 14:00 to 17:00, with a further set of auditions at a later date, if required. If the scripts don't arrive in time (due 8th April, which happens to be Good Friday), we will reschedule the auditions. Rehearsals will commence at the end of May.

The episodes we are producing are *The Deadly Attachment* (aka *Don't Tell 'Em Pike*); *Mum's Army* (Captain Mainwaring's Brief Encounter moment), and *The Godiva Affair* (Spitfire Fund drive) plus the sketch, *The Floral Dance*. I'm also looking for some cast who would like to sing, to entertain the audience between episodes.

Don't be shy, there are opportunities for those who want to get on the stage, but don't want a speaking part.

Parts – These people need no introduction – They can be regularly found on BBC2 and BritBox!

All roles are for middle aged or older actors, unless otherwise stated, although we can age-up if needs be.

Mens Roles

Captain Mainwaring

Sergeant Wilson

Lance Corporal Jones

Private Pike (Young)

Private Frazer (no cod accents please!)

Private Godfrey

Private Walker (35 to 45)

Colonel / Mr Gordon (Town Clerk)

Audition Notice

Spider's Web by Agatha Christie

Performance dates: 11th to 16th September 2023

Director: Jon Manley

General audition: Sunday 14th May @ 2pm

Characters (in order of appearance)

Sir Rowland Delahaye.....Steady patriarch, guardian to Clarissa, age **50+**
Hugo Birch.....Irascible JP, age **60+**
Jeremy Warrender.....Charming chap but a cad and a bounder, age **30 to 45**
Clarissa Hailsham-Brown.....*already cast, to be played by Sarah Mallett*
Pippa (Clarissa's step-daughter).....*already cast, to be played by Nellie Mallett*
Mildred Peak.....Jolly hockey-sticks gardener + a secret past, age **40 to 100**
Elgin.....Butler who buttles, age **40 to 100**
Oliver Costello.....Nasty piece of work, age **35 to 60**
Henry Hailsham-Brown.....Clarissa's husband, diplomat, steady type, age **40 to 60**
Inspector Lord.....The main copper, age **30 to 100**
Constable Jones.....The assistant copper, age **25 to 50**

The ages above are a general illustration and movable depending on the potential cast members.

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Any queries or if you require further information,
please contact the director Jon Manley on 07815 323982