


CROAK

Toads Theatre Newsletter May 2023



A Message From Our Chairman

Dear Members

Summer is almost upon us and the end of the season is nigh. Hedda Gabler is well under way with rehearsals and I believe that the set is all but finished. Please come and support Heidi and her talented cast.

The new season guide is lurking around the theatre and the big mail out has been done. The committee as ever has worked hard putting together what we think is going to be a popular season. After our losses during the Covid shutdown, we needed to choose popular plays that would appeal to the majority. No apologies for that despite some people moaning about the lack of 'meaty' productions. When we've recouped some money the 24/25 season will no doubt include more classical plays.

Incidentally we have already begun reading plays for that season so if anyone has a play in mind or would like to direct please contact someone on committee. Susie Miles and her play reading group will be up and running soon so if you'd like to be part of that please contact her on 01803 858394.

Thank you to everyone who supported Death's Desire. We had many positive comments although not everyone's cup of tea. Interestingly, one or two people said that they thought the title might've put people off. That may have been true. Although thrillers are popular perhaps 'Murder' rather than 'Death' in the title is more appealing!

I was lucky to have three new members in the cast, Ben and Rachel Field and Alison Lee. They all settled in well and I have no doubt we will see them again in forthcoming productions.

A huge thank you to Ian Davies who stepped into the role of Phil at 3 days' notice. Unfortunately Stuart Molyneux became ill and I had to quickly find someone to step in. Ian had three rehearsals and came on in his first performance without the script! Incredible. Fortunately Stuart recovered sufficiently to come back for the last three performances. A close call. The rest of the cast stepped up and helped both Ian and Stuart and all was well. Some people didn't even notice that we had a new member of cast!

A big thank you to Steve Gill for the work he has done on the grounds. The walls to the right of the theatre and 'staff' car park have all been cleared and tidied up and the leaves removed from the car park area over the last two weeks. Steve is a regular with the set building crew but also has his own grounds maintenance business. He helps look after the theatre grounds as a volunteer.

We will be organising another gardening party for all to join when the weather improves.

Enjoy the lovely spring weather and I'll see you during Hedda.



Anna Reynolds



Tuesday 9th to Saturday 13th May 2023



Monday 5th to Saturday 10th June 2023



Thursday 15 June 2023



Saturday 15 July 2023

News Desk

CineMundi



The Wednesday Club, May, 2023

Yes, we are back and have been so busy since our return that we have almost forgotten the holiday!

Thanks to Nigel, Sherry, Jim and John Hall for sorting out the programme.

In April we had a talk by Steve Gill on his time as a professional tennis coach. He described how he re-strings rackets and gave an enthusiastic presentation, as we have come to expect from Steve. Stephanie Austin read an extract from her latest novel... and she's working on the sixth now! Very entertaining as usual, thanks Stephanie. There were lots of questions from the floor.

Then there was a 'Show and Tell' meeting.... which I gather was well attended.

'Death's Desire' was reviewed, with lots of praise for the cast and director; and Anna is back again this week with her breakdown of next season's programme.

Coming up in May we have a meeting for members to let off steam! Come and tell us what aggravates you as well as what you think is good about modern Britain. (No politics, please!)

The following week we have Jim Redman telling us about the Tivoli Garden in Copenhagen, not Rome, sounds intriguing.....

We next review 'Hedda Gabler' with the cast, and round the month off with Alec Stokes telling us about the exciting times forty years ago when Toads decided to buy the old St Mark's Church. He ought to know, he did the architectural drawing!

Something for everyone this month, I'm tempted to be there myself....

John Miles.

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



CineMundi continues to show a variety of films which members (and non-members) can choose to view on a screening-by-screening basis.

Forthcoming:

Monday 8th May Coronation Holiday TOADS Production tie-in

1981 Riggish interpretation of Norwegian Classic

June 5 *Nonsense* tie-in Double Bill: Performance by Relation and Dark Daffodil

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

July 10th 'Graduate' and 'Being' meet in this adaptation of Arthur Miller play: Demise of a Retailer

Aug 7 or 14th *Dad's Army* tie-in -less-humorous satire on war with frolics on Brighton Pier, introduced by one of the performers in the original film!!

September 11th tbc.

Saturday special September 30th, marking the anniversary

of the Spyder crash (tenuous link to Spider's web

production!) Jean Strong's request- three films with same lead.... "made before the died", with hopefully the bar open and serving the following specialist cocktails for each performance:

Afternoon 2.00 pm- East of Edginswell - looks like traffic lights

Twilight - 5.00 pm Cora's Eye - too big for some

Evening - 7.00 pm Rebel without Applause - so many actors!

If this feast of film is successful, we will look at themed multiple events including evenings and weekend - work of Jack Spratt's preference for starters.

Alistair and Nicola ttccinemundi@gmail.com

Membership Corner

For a few years, I've contributed to an online forum called Gransnet (Mumsnet for oldies!) and a thread recently started regarding amdram.

One lady, whom I know to be a resident of Bovey Tracey, wrote warmly about a thriller she'd seen recently in Torquay which was excellent! She said she regularly watches such productions. Naturally, I had to ask if it was Death's Desire, to which she replied:-

"Yes, it was Death's Desire in the Little Theatre in the converted church. I've been there many times. The TOADS are wonderful aren't they? More like professionals really...."

Whatever contribution we make to our theatre company, we should be proud of the standard of our productions. The contribution made by each member is the key to our success. It is therefore important that we all continue to fulfil the commitment we made to those duties when we joined, in the way that the majority do.

As memberships are due for renewal next month, please consider carefully which duties you can realistically offer in order to maintain the continuation of our success.

Next backstage tour:

Tuesday, 30th May at 10.30a.m. Please email me, if

interested:- ashcombe1968@hotmail.co.uk

Toads Productions



AUDITIONS Thursday 18 May 7pm

Production Dates 10 to 14 October 2023

Scripts should be available from the Box Office from the 5 May. If the scripts do not arrive in time, auditions will be without scripts and improvised, focusing on characterisation.

CAST of 5:

Sherlock Homes

Doctor Watson

Actor One: Plays 14 different parts

Actor Two: Plays 7 different parts

Actress One: Plays 14 different parts

The action takes place in various different settings and the staging will be fluid. This means that many of the character changes will take place in full view of the audience. Actors must be versatile and able to deliver fast-paced, physical comedy.

If you have any questions, please call Sarah O'Connor on 07720094697



Audition Notice – Dad's Army
Director Julie Hancocks

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

I have not cast it yet. The delay in the scripts means that I am auditioning on 30th April at 10:00 am in the theatre. with a further set of auditions at a later date, if required. If the scripts don't arrive in time (due 8 th April, which happens to be Good Friday), we will reschedule the auditions. Rehearsals will commence at the end of May. Scroll down for casting list.



There will be auditions on Sunday 14 May at 2:00pm.

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. Scroll down for casting list.

Click on the photo to reveal 13 more.



The Thoughts of Pliny

I looked up Deaths Desire by Robert Scott on line, usually a good place to start. Not in this case, information on the man and his output is minimal. It looks though that his work is geared towards the provincial and the quirky. The play certainly lives up to that.

Described as a full length drama with simple staging requirements, I was keen to see the Director's (Anna Reynolds) vision of, I think "seven " mini sets. Clever lighting drew my eye to the actual acting area, well done to the lighting designer. I believe that it worked well, using every possible inch of the stage including in front of the Tabs.

The "horror" of the play was offset by some laughable moments, particularly Tia Davies, wonderful as a Wannabe singing star who's singing staying with the audience in the interval even after she was dead.

The pivotal characters, Man, a character of many aliases, played by of course, Jon Manley, and the Therapist, Ben Field, held centre stage, or if I am being pedantic, stage right....gradually bringing the play to its disturbing conclusion.

As I left the theatre I picked up on the conversations around me and the consensus was that this was an outstanding performance by Jon Manley, wonderful, epic and his best yet!

All the cast and crew are to be equally commended, particularly as Stewart Molyneux was ill on the night I saw the play and his role as Phil was taken at short notice by Ian Davis.

Essential Contacts and Information

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

Committee members *

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If you'd like to help In the coffee shop

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if you'd like to join the wardrobe team

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Editor Croak Newsletter.

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For press/magazine publicity

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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



1. Which is the third largest of the Channel Islands?
2. Who was Liverpool's skipper in the 2005 European Champions League triumph?
3. In which Puccini opera does Mimi appear?
4. How many sides has an octagon?
5. Which type of calendar is used today in the western world?
6. What instrument can be bass, electric or Spanish?
7. Think about this — which club did Harry Redknapp manage first — Portsmouth or Southampton?
8. Which female-named hurricane devastated New Orleans in September 2005?
9. What do the numbers add up to on the opposite sides of a dice?
10. Which city is said to have been founded by Romulus and Remus?

Where am i?

Soon after the Roman conquest of Britain in AD 43, a Roman legionary fortress was established the first in Britain. Later, when the Roman frontier moved outwards and the twentieth legion had moved to the west (c.AD 49), Camulodunum became a colonia named in a second-century inscription as Colonia Victricensis. This contained a large and elaborate Temple to the Divine Claudius, the largest classical-style temple in Britain, as well as at least seven other Romano-British temples. This town is home to two of the five Roman theatres found in Britain; the example at Gosbecks (site of the Iron Age royal farmstead) is the largest in Britain, able to seat 5,000.

Camulodunum served as a provincial Roman capital of Britain, but was attacked and destroyed during Boudica's rebellion in AD 61. Sometime after the destruction, London became the capital of the province of Britannia. This town's walls c. 3,000 yd. long were built c.65–80 A.D. when the Roman town was rebuilt after the Boudicca rebellion. In 2004, This town's Archaeological Trust discovered the remains of a Roman Circus (chariot race track) underneath the Garrison, A unique find in Britain. The Roman town of Camulodunum, officially known as Colonia Victricensis, reached its peak in the Second and Third centuries AD. It may have reached a population of 30,000 in that period.

In 2014 a hoard of jewellery, known as The Fenwick Hoard, named for the shop it was found beneath was discovered in the town centre. The director of the town's Archaeological Trust, Philip Crummy, described the hoard as being of "national importance and one of the finest ever uncovered in Britain"

[Click here for answers](#)

**OPEN
MIC
NIGHT**

**The next Friday social evening will be
19th May from 7pm**

**Details on content will be emailed
nearer the time.**

**Many thanks to Steve Gill and Chris
Robson for providing the
entertainment on 21st April (folk music
night) - they were both excellent.**



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.

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

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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 auditionees.

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