

# CROAK

Toads Theatre Newsletter January 2024

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN



**A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO ALL OUR MEMBERS  
AND PATRONS**

**Thank you for your continued  
support!**

**Let's all look forward to a  
successful 2024!**

Anna Reynolds  
Chairman



**Welcoming 2024!**

Wash away those Christmas blues and welcome  
in the New Year by attending our

**12th Night party at The Little Theatre on  
Saturday 6th January at 7.30pm.**

There will be mulled wine and mince pies for your  
delectation and the lovely Steve Gill and Chris  
Robson will be entertaining you. Come on, you  
know you want to!

After the success of Andrew Kenyon's last Quiz,  
we've persuaded him to put together another one  
on Friday 26th January, 7.30pm in the bar. Teams  
of 4, £2 per head. So... start polishing your little  
grey cells, get a team together and come along!

**Calling All Theatre Club  
Members!**

***Get yer thinkin' caps  
on***

***Because it's .....***

**? QUIZ NITE ?**

**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January**

**In the Theatre Bar**

***(where else would it be?!)***

**7:30 pm**

**Your Genial Host: Mr. Andrew  
Kenyon**

**Come One! Come All!**

**Old ones, New ones, Loved Ones,  
Neglected Ones!**

A gentle interlude in the hectic  
run-up to Christmas

CRANFORD



The Thoughts of Pliny

Cranford at Christmas has been adapted for the stage by the playwright and screenwriter Laura Turner who has more than forty plays and films to her credit, and a worldwide reputation. So, all in all a lot to live up to for TOAD'S company of players.

Jill Pettigrew's "Director's" notes in the programme (always worth purchasing), give great insight into the backstage 'goings on'.

This was a play that you had to both watch and listen to. It had a lot of words..... Most of them delivered by the formidable Adele Reynolds (Miss Molly) and Rona Perry (Miss Pole) – supported by a large cast of actors/singers and musicians.

In fact the cast was so large that the final scene spilled into the auditorium to include the audience, as they wished us all a Merry Christmas.

This was a great play to end the year - with all the feel good ingredients of the season.

As always, well done to everyone involved in this production for a great team effort.

Note: The original episodic novel by Elizabeth Gaskell was published by the magazine "Household Words." then released in book form in 1853. It is still in print today.

Heard by front of house

An absolutely charming production

Very heart- warming

Clever set – I loved the little windows

The costumes were just right!

UP NEXT!!





## **DEVON YOUNG** **PEOPLE'S** **THEATRE**

TOADS young actors are excited to be in rehearsals for **A Midsummer Night's Dream**.

We are bringing you a night of magic and mischief!

Please join us Feb 8-9 on an exciting journey into the forest of Titania and Oberon and see what awaits!

**Heidi Pyburn**



Hello, Everyone!

I hope you enjoy reading this month's newsletter.

Any contributions for each month's edition need to be with me by 25<sup>th</sup> of the previous month and in WORD format, please – so over to you!

Mary Singleton (editor)

## **AUDITION TIME**

### **The Cemetery Club:**

Auditions will be held on

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January**

**at 2-30,**

at the theatre, in whatever space is available!!

This is a true ensemble piece, following the lives of three Jewish widows, old friends, who meet once a month for tea and then visit their husband's graves.

### **Maggie Campbell**

#### **Cast**

Ida:

Sweet, happy and in no hurry to 'move on'.

Lucille:

A party girl, getting payback against her unfaithful husband.

Doris:

Devoted to her late husband, rather 'droll', with many funny asides.

Sam:

A warm, shy butcher, whose late wife is buried in the same cemetery.

Mildred:

Cameo role, 'a minx'.

Playing ages: 50 plus. Set in 1980's. Accents: New York Jewish.

Audition pieces and scripts will be available from box office 1<sup>st</sup>. December.

**AUDITIONS FOR DIAL M FOR MURDER**

**SEE P.8**

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Mary Singleton (editor)

*Sweet Treats –  
Popular cakes/desserts  
Can you solve the anagrams?*

1. A tint treat
2. See ace heck
3. A mack dearie
4. Elm lie flu lie
5. Open at ten
6. He tackle cocoa
7. Press outfit
8. Is it a rum

Answers on p.6

## CineMundi

Thank you to all those who helped us celebrate our First anniversary in mid-December.

Films coming in the New Year:

### Monday 8th January 2024 10.00 for 10.30

A 1987 epic Oscar-winning film based on a Danish writer's 1910 novel of Swedish immigration to Denmark. It is not about the Brazilian footballer that died last year, but sounds the same.

### Monday 15th January 2024 10.00 for 10.30

A 1995 film tie-in to the TOADS production of Stella Gibbons' Cold Comfort Farm, which opens in the evening, with a host of British stars, bringing this rural idyll to life, but, beware...there is something very 'narsty' in the woodshed and it isn't the cake we will be serving!!

### Monday 12th February 2024 10.00 for 10.30

To be announced, so get on the email list for full details, please.

There is a charge for the Coffee, the Cake and the Company. All proceeds go to TOADS Theatre Company.

If you would like full details of what is on and when, then get on the list by emailing: [tlccinemundi@gmail.com](mailto:tlccinemundi@gmail.com)

Alistair and Nicola  
[tlccinemundi@gmail.com](mailto:tlccinemundi@gmail.com)

### *The Wednesday Club, December 2023.*

It was far too busy a month to actually sit back and enjoy it... but here's a refresher on what happened...

We reviewed our production of 'Who Killed Santa Claus?', which had been well received by appreciative audiences. Many people said that they were kept guessing right up until the end by the intricate plot. Well done to all concerned!

Austin Hawkins next screened his short play, 'Moving Aside', starring Jef Pirie, with a cast of Toads' stalwarts... all looking surprisingly young. The combination of good acting and excellent writing shone through in this fascinating presentation.

Ex-Chairman, Stephanie Austin, has written another in the series of 'cosy crime' novels, and she came the following week to read extracts from her latest publication, "A Devon Midwinter Murder", which went down well. Copies were sold by Leslie from 'First Draft Books'. Another very successful presentation of her novels, and Stephanie is part way through writing the next!

Our end-of-term Christmas Party went well, with the whole theatre in festive mode, following Marianne Parker's Christmas Do earlier that morning. Marianne and her team hire our coffee lounge every few weeks for their meetings throughout the year - the main attraction being our facilities, predominantly the free parking. Incidentally, have you noticed Paul Davenport's fundraiser for improvements in that area?

The year's sessions ended on the 15<sup>th</sup> with 'Season of Lights', our latest POETS' Friday meeting, which was enjoyed by the group of stalwarts who attended. Once again, Steve Gill brought an interesting musical aspect to the proceedings.

Our next season starts on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 with a review of 'Cranford at Christmas', followed the next week by a talk from Leslie Leggett, entitled 'From The Big Apple to the English Riviera'. Leslie is the proprietor of 'Fist Draft Books', mentioned previously. She is from New York and now graces our foyer before each performance with her book stall; a welcome addition to 'The Toads Experience'.

Following that we will be reviewing 'Cold Comfort Farm' with members of the cast... yes, I'll be there!

Then the next week we will all be given the opportunity to say what we would do 'If I Ruled the World'. What changes would you make, what would you encourage; what would you prohibit? Please keep off political subjects, they only cause disagreements!

Then, to start February, we have 'The Quintessential Quiz' compiled by that all-round entertainer, Steve Gill! We have a fitting start to the new year, with a mixture of talks and presentations in the next few months... but more of that next time... once I've thought about who to invite! I could sing you extracts from G and S if you... No?...NO!

John Miles.



## GROAN TIME!!

**Three famous tough guys  
were invited to a 'classical  
music' themed party**

**Sylvester Stallone said  
'I'll be Mozart'**

**Dwayne Johnson (AKA The  
Rock) said**

**'I'll be Beethoven'**

**Arnold Schwarzenegger said  
'I'll be ....'**



### Answers:

1. Tart Tatin
2. Cheesecake
3. Madeira cake
4. Mille-feuille
5. Panettone
6. Chocolate Cake
7. Petits Fours
8. Tiramisu

## What's On in January

11-13<sup>th</sup> January, 2024.

**'The Wizard of Oz'** by Alex Jackson, directed  
by Jack Davis.  
SADS. St John's Church Hall, Shiphay.TQ2  
7HP.

15-20<sup>th</sup> January, 2024. 7.30pm Sat mat  
2.30pm.

**'Cold Comfort Farm'**, or 'Something Narsty  
in the Woodshed',  
adapted from Stella Gibbons' novel by Sally  
Hedges.

Directed by John Miles.  
Toads Theatre Company. 01803 299330.  
[toadslittletheatre.co.uk](http://toadslittletheatre.co.uk)

24-27<sup>th</sup> January, 2024.

**'Puss in Boots'** written and directed by Gina  
Tredwell. TAODS Totnes.

24-28<sup>th</sup> January. 7.30pm. Sat and Sun  
matinees. Not Sun evening.

**'The Wizard of Oz'**  
directed by Andrew Malcolm.  
Shaldon Pantomime.  
at Pavilions, Teignmouth.  
[www.tinyurl.com/stcwizard](http://www.tinyurl.com/stcwizard)  
[boxoffice@pavilionsteignmouth.org.uk](mailto:boxoffice@pavilionsteignmouth.org.uk)  
01626 249049

27<sup>th</sup> January. 7.30pm.

**'Military Wives Choir, Plymouth'**, Conductor,  
Rob Young, Accompanist Kathy Kenny.  
[toadslittletheatre.co.uk](http://toadslittletheatre.co.uk)  
The Little Theatre, Torquay.01803 299330.

25-28<sup>th</sup> January, 2024. 7.30pm plus Sat and  
Sun matinees at 2.30pm.

No Sunday evening performance.

**'Aladdin'** by Alan P Frayn  
directed by Donna Wills  
MD, Paul Pennicott-Henry.  
SBADS at South Brent Village Hall.  
[www.sbads.show](http://www.sbads.show)

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### CONTACT DETAILS

BOX OFFICE 01803 299330

[boxoffice@toadslittletheatre.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@toadslittletheatre.co.uk)

@ToadsTheatre

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

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**Treasurer:** Nicola Margetts

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Andrew Kenyon

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### **for Wednesday Club:**

John Miles 01803 858394

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



### **Devon Young People's Theatre:**

Heidi Pyburn

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

### **if you'd like to help in the coffee shop:**

Joy Book 07704 584953

[boxoffice@toadstheatre.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@toadstheatre.co.uk)

### **if you'd like to join the wardrobe team:**

Maggie Campbell [peterwmaggiec@talktalk.net](mailto:peterwmaggiec@talktalk.net)

### **Croak Newsletter:** Mary Singleton

[newsletter@toadstheatre.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@toadstheatre.co.uk)

### **for press/magazine publicity:**

Bea Hutchings [marketing@toadstheatre.co.uk](mailto:marketing@toadstheatre.co.uk)

### **if you'd like to join the props team:**

Anne Jordan 01626 330866

[annepoppy@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:annepoppy@blueyonder.co.uk)

### **set building/painting, etc:**

Paul Lewis 07555 396654

[paul1970lewis@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:paul1970lewis@yahoo.co.uk)

### **if you'd like to help behind the bar:**

Jon Manley & Jackie Tarney 07815 323982

[boxoffice@toadstheatre.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@toadstheatre.co.uk)

### **Technical Team:** David Warren & Olie Taylor

[technical@toadstheatre.co.uk](mailto:technical@toadstheatre.co.uk)

# Audition Notice

## ***Dial M For Murder by Frederick Knott***

Performance dates: 10th to 15th June 2024

8th to 13th July 2024

Director: Jon Manley

## ***Auditions: Sunday 18th February 2023 @ 2pm***

(Scripts now available from box office – please read & return as quickly as possible)

### **Role .....Description**

Sheila Wendice..... Tony's wife but in love with Max. Ideal playing age = 30 to 45.

Max Halliday ..... TV writer, "starving artist". Loves Sheila but resigned to her staying with Tony. Ideal playing age = 35 to 50.

Tony Wendice..... Recently retired tennis player. Intelligent schemer who wants to kill his wife for her money. Tony is the lead role. Ideal playing age = 35 to 45.

Captain Lesgate ..... Crook, always "on the make". Nowadays would be guilty of romance fraud. Hired by Tony as a potential assassin. Only has one scene but it's a crucial one! Ideal playing age = 40 to 50 (needs to be a few years older than Tony).

Inspector Hubbard ..... The copper! Intelligent, laid back, but nothing gets past him. On from after the interval. Ideal playing age = over 40.

Set in the early 1950s with a middle-class set of characters. As such, good diction (RP) is necessary. Gentlemen will need to be clean shaven and of smart appearance (no pony tails etc) although "Clark Gable moustaches" are acceptable. Don't get too hung up on the age requirements – these are the ideal but age boundaries can be pushed quite far (Ray Milland was 47 when he played Tony in the film).

I encourage and welcome first-time auditionees – NO ROLES HAVE BEEN PRE-CAST!!

Volunteers for **prompt, wardrobe, stage manager** also required – please help if you can.

### ***Important:***

***Please note that this production will be run twice (see dates above).  
Therefore, a larger commitment is required from all involved personnel.***

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