

# CROAK

Toads Theatre Newsletter April 2024

## FROM OUR CHAIRMAN



Dear Members

First of all, a huge thank you to everyone who was involved in any way with Cash on Delivery - actors, backstage and all volunteers during the run. I can honestly say that we were all blown away by the fantastic response. It helped to fuel everyone and keep up the energy needed to complete the run. Everyone was exhausted and exhilarated at the end. Long live Michael Cooney. Who said that Farce was passé!

Exciting news about the funding for the carpark renovation.

The Tisdall Family have taken it on. Pat is experienced in sourcing funding and will be putting our case forward and Ben is putting on an exciting cabaret evening and all money raised will be donated the fund. Watch this space. Many thanks to both of them.

Chris Matanle will be taking over the management of our website at the start of our new season.

Chris currently manages our Facebook page and it will now be known as 'Little Theatre - Torquay'. We have more exciting changes happening in the coming few months with regards to our branding, marketing and online presence. Chris has lots of ideas, so watch this space!

That's it for now.

An exhausted but happy  
Anna Reynolds  
Chair

## The Thoughts of Pliny

**Cash On Delivery** written in 1997 by Michael Cooney and directed for this production by Anna Reynolds.

A work of comedic farce, the cast of 10 was led by Ben Field as (Eric Swan) who along with Andy Killen as (Uncle George) had been defrauding The Department of Work and Pensions for two years. All their chickens come home to roost when Lloyd Bickham (Eric's lodger Norman) opens the front door to the DWP inspector Adam Clark (Mr. Jenkins).

The play's predictably does not detract from this being a very good production, excellently cast by the director.

ALL deserve mention in dispatches. In spite of the extremely fast pace of the play, the timings were spot on, including the entrance and exit of the wayward washing machine.

Audience attendance was excellent and the feedback reflected this too.

As always - we must mention the set builders, tech team, back stage crew and front of house volunteers.

We will be sad to say farewell to Lloyd Bickham, for the time being, as he takes his place as an Intern for ITN.  
Come back soon.

## Heard by Front of House

I laughed till I ached!

That was SO funny!

Great, absolutely great!

Just what I needed!

## UP NEXT!

## Editor's Note



This production has certainly been a challenge for everyone involved and has often lived up to its title!

Directing six actors in twenty roles was a daunting task, but I have been blessed with a talented, enthusiastic cast, who have made my job so much easier.

Apart from 'A Talk in the Park', each play links with the one that follows through characters or venue. And so, one of the practical problems was designing multiple sets that could be changed without a break in the action.

**A Talk in The Park** features five self-absorbed people

**Mother Figure** shows us a woman swamped by the demands of motherhood.

In **Drinking Companions** an absentee husband clumsily attempts seduction without success.

In **Between Mouthfuls** a waiter witnesses domestic break-ups on two separate tables.

**Gosforth's Fête** is pure farce and everything that *could* go wrong *does* go wrong!

Rehearsals have been great fun, with lots of laughter, cakes and biscuits! I hope we've done justice to Alan Ayckbourn's witty dialogue and penchant for farce.

My personal thanks go to my lovely, patient cast and to all the hard-working people behind the scenes who have helped make my (sometimes wild) ideas a splendid reality!

It's been a great couple of months!

Please come along and support this production of 'Confusions'!!

Mary Singleton    Director





## TOADS CABARET SHOW

On 26th and 27th October, I am organising a Cabaret show, at the Little Theatre, to help raise funds for the car park fund! Full details will be announced in due course, but I just wanted to put a note in the Croak now to say this:

I have asked people to be in it, a variety of singers and actors, based on creating a show that has something for everyone. They are not all from the society, but I'm hoping that some will join, or rejoin.

The truth is that there is so much talent at Toads, and in the Bay generally, that if I'd asked everyone I wanted, then the show would have lasted about 17 hours, not the 2.5 I am hoping for. So please don't be upset that you haven't been approached this time.

The blend of performers has been chosen to offer 'variety', with the odd surprise! I probably still think you're an incredible person and performer - unless you're David Hants (oh, no I invited him!) Maybe you can be in the next one - but please, please book tickets and come and support us, when they become available, in July. Oh - and if you haven't already donated, even if you can spare £5 - you can donate to our target of £70,000.00 at <https://gofund.me/982c64e5>

Ben Tisdall



## The Cast is Announced!

### *Blackadder 11*

**Directed by Amy Burton-Smith and John Miles.**

Edmund Blackadder - David Warren  
Lord Percy - Ed Stewart  
Baldrick - Andy Killen  
Queenie - Amy Burton-Smith  
Lord Melchett - Martin Southard  
Nursie - Gill Poore  
Minstrel - Roger Tarrant

### **Potato**

Redbeard Rum - Steve Day  
Walter Raleigh - Oscar Barlow

### **Beer**

Lady Whiteadder - Laura Wilson-Back  
Lord Whiteadder - Martin Sharp  
Simon Partridge - Steve Day  
Geoffrey Piddle - Ben Tisdall  
Freddie Frobisher - Patrick Stone

### **Bells**

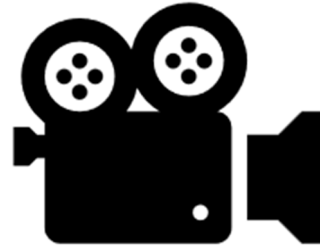
Wise woman - Sophie Amos  
Young Crone - Emma Firth  
Second crone - Shannon Finlayson  
Bob's Dad - Roger Tarrant  
Bob - Thea Harris-Murphy  
Dr Leech - Barney Horne  
Lord Flashheart - Ben Tisdall

*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 or in the main body of an email, please – so over to you!*

*Mary Singleton (editor)*



Surprise showing on April 8th at 10. for  
10.30

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)

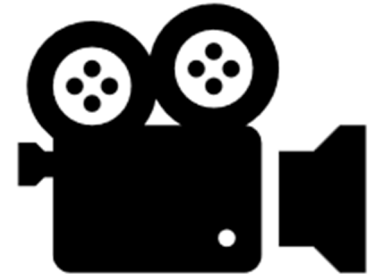
Alistair and Nicola



## Film Quotes

### Can you name the films??

1. "You're only supposed to blow the bloody doors off!"
2. "You talkin' to me?"
3. "You had me at hello."
4. "Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."
5. "Nobody puts Baby in a corner."
6. "Man who catch fly with chopstick accomplish anything."
7. "Infamy, infamy, they've all got it in for me!"
8. "I'm gonna make him an offer he can't refuse."
9. "I'll have what she's having."
10. "If you build it, he will come."



[Answers on P 6](#)

## WEDNESDAY CLUB

We're back from our annual jaunt to Lanzarote, but Wednesday Club was in good hands while we were away; thanks to all involved. There was a pleasingly good attendance for the Club with a steady turn-out of between twelve and twenty eager young faces every week...plus a few old curmudgeons.

Gary Fremantle's reading of his novel, "Ogrefish" went well, with good book sales. Gary will appear in 'Dial M for Murder' soon...At last; I've been encouraging him to join Toads for years!

Then Jim gave us another in his series of talks, this time on The Alhambra, that beautiful palace in Spain, then the following week we had Roger Hamilton with his presentation on 'Beauty'. Our last production, 'Cash on Delivery' was next reviewed with the cast... and what a splendid production that was, with good ticket sales and audience reaction. Well done, Anna and the Crew. I missed these three meetings, but had seen 'Cash on Delivery' in rehearsal.

I'm told the meetings were all well attended. Excellent!

On Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March we held our POETS' Friday meeting, this time on the theme of World Water Day. Several attendees wrote poems for the occasion, and the whole event went well, with an added bonus of special biscuits from Madeira. Deborah Treliving and Helen Ashley were in the chair. (sounds cosy...)

On 3<sup>rd</sup> April we have a talk by Sally Arnold entitled 'Rock n' Roll Nanny', with a reading from her book of the same title. I have started reading a copy and it's fascinating... the number of famous people she knew and worked for; it will be a sparky afternoon! Anecdotes of Mick Jagger can be expected....

Ian Dudley will next tell us how he 'Tried to run a Railway', which I know will be very interesting.... Ian always makes me laugh.

Then we review 'Confusions' with the cast, and finish the month with 'Cora's Quiz', a long-awaited (and much postponed...) addition to our programme.

It's very pleasing to see Wedders going so well after twenty four years. 'My cup overfloweth'... but that might be due to the rainfall.

John Miles.

## What's on in April

### **Productions.**

4-6<sup>th</sup> April.

'Much ado about Nothing' by William Shakespeare, directed by Nicole Duvall. Teignmouth Players at The Ice Factory Studio Theatre.

5-6<sup>th</sup> April. 6.30pm on 5<sup>th</sup>; 2.30pm and 6.30pm on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

'Matilda Jnr' BOADS at Brixham Theatre.

8-13<sup>th</sup> April. 7.30pm sat mat 2.30pm.

'Confusions' by Alan Ayckbourn, directed by Mary Singleton.

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

24-27<sup>th</sup> April., 7.30pm.

'Gaslight' by Patrick Hamilton, directed by Andrew Kenyon.

'Bijou' Theatre. 01803 665800.



## **Nigel Colledge**

He never ceased to surprise us, our dear friend Nigel.

In his globe-trotting life, he had lived in Jamaica in the war years and came back to Britain with a Jamaican accent! He was promptly sent off to correct his speech.

Carol and Nigel met in Barbados while both on holiday. They bought an apartment there a few years later. They were both directors of Chapterhouse Direct Commercial Vehicle Insurers, with offices all over the UK. Most of his working life was spent in insurance.

Once at Wednesday Club he looked up from his phone and said "Oh, I've just sold a car"! He'd bought it just a few weeks beforehand, but was not happy with it. So he sold it... and he'd already bought a replacement...

As editor of 'Croak' he made some considerable changes to the style and layout of our newsletter, which has now become an in-house magazine. Tapping into Nigel's technical knowledge, we would often ask him for advice on all the latest 'gizmos' and he always had a detailed and considered answer.

What many people will not be aware of was Nigel's caring work for others at Toads. He ran a taxi service for housebound members of Wedders, and organised quizzes, provided technical support for presentations, and he always had a measured opinion on our discussions.

Latterly he took to writing poetry, and was a regular at our POETS' Friday events.

Suzy and I have missed his rock-solid friendship, support and advice ever since we said goodbye the day before he and Carol made the move to Portsmouth. This was just a month before he died, but when we looked into each other's eyes, we both knew without saying a word, that this was goodbye forever.

A great man, a caring friend, a huge loss for Wednesday Club.

**John Miles**

Here's one of Nigel's poems.....

### **Toads Wednesday Club**

In the heart of Toads Theatre, every Wednesday afternoon,  
where laughter echoes and spirits take flight,  
a gathering of souls, a harmonious blend,  
where joyful moments never seem to end.

The room comes alive with stories untold,  
drama and comedy, a treasure to behold.  
From tragic heroes to whimsical fools,  
each performance a masterpiece which rules.

The audience, captivated by the magic in the air,  
embracing emotions without a single care.  
Laughter erupts like a symphony of delight  
as John transports us to worlds so bright.

Wednesday afternoon at Toads, a sanctuary of glee,  
where troubles fade and hearts dance so free.  
Friends gather round, old and new,  
creating memories that forever imbue.

So let us raise a glass and toast the joy we find,  
in happy Wednesdays at Toads, Wedders kind.  
For in this haven, true happiness prevails,  
a celebration of life's most vibrant tales.

Nigel Colledge. November, 2023.

### **Answers**

1. The Italian Job
2. Taxi Driver
3. Jerry Maguire
4. Wizard of Oz
5. Dirty Dancing
6. Karate Kid
7. Carry On Cleo
8. The Godfather
9. When Harry Met Sally
10. Field of Dreams

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**  
**CONTACT DETAILS**



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