



# Newsletter



**H**ello dear members,

I'm Alison Attwood and I have taken over editing your newsletter from Sue Talmadge. I am delighted to be writing the first newsletter of 2017 as our 50th anniversary year gets off to a fantastic start.



Our pantomime Aladdin was a great success in every way: a real coming together of actors, dancers, musicians, backstage and technical crew, the front of house team and of course our lovely audiences. Over 1000 people

came to see the panto, they seemed to have great fun, we received very positive feedback, and we made a profit! Thank you to everyone who supported the show. Our pantomime next year will be Beauty and the Beast; we have found two brilliant scripts that we are currently deciding on and we are confident of another great production.

But let's not wish the year away! We are celebrating our special 50th anniversary in style with a golden year of comedy.

## Key Dates

Vicar of Dibley  
May 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>  
Box Office March 27<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary Luncheon  
Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup>  
Book by 31<sup>st</sup> March

Group Meeting  
Tuesday May 30<sup>th</sup>

Coffee Morning  
Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup>

Summer Comedy Gold  
August 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>  
Read Through June 1<sup>st</sup>  
Box Office July 4<sup>th</sup>

Cheshire Cats  
October 25<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>  
Read Through Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Box Office Sept 18<sup>th</sup>

Beauty & the Beast  
January 13<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>  
Casting July 18<sup>th</sup>  
Box Office Nov 14<sup>th</sup>

## OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

Rehearsals are already underway for our spring play, a **brand-new production** of the ever-popular Vicar of Dibley.

*The cast of our first Vicar of Dibley*



Having presented two Vicar of Dibley plays in recent years, we are now proud to present a third with a fresh new script adapted from the TV series by Richard Curtis and Paul Mayhew-Archer.

Sweetly sub-titled '**Love Is All Around**', our play moves us to the next stage of the lives of the villagers of Dibley. After the arrival in the village of the new lady vicar and the marriage of Hugo and Alice in the first play, then the birth of their first child on the night of the Christmas



*The cast of Love Is All Around*

nativity in the second production, we now await the christening of their baby daughter Geraldine (named after the vicar Geraldine Granger). So, love is all around, but is it for the Reverend Geraldine? Will she ever find true love or be left on the shelf?

The play is directed by David Buck and the cast is as follows:

Geraldine Granger	Mandy Brown	Frank	Geoff Shoreman
David Horton	David Buck	Harry	Steve Edwards
Hugo	Ian Parratt	Simon	David Anderson
Alice	Sue Talmadge	Bishop of Mulberry	Peter Tucknott
Owen	Trevor Fuggle	Rosie	Laura Buck
Jim	Jim Dobell	Health Visitor	Helen Griffin
Mrs Cropley	Mary Carrier	Life Model	Hannah Buck

Do come and enjoy one of the best loved TV comedies produced in recent years. Our performance dates are Wednesday to Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> May with evening performances starting at the new, slightly earlier time of 7.30pm, and a Saturday matinee starting at 2.30pm. Tickets are £10 for adults, £6.50 for children, and £1 of every ticket sold will be donated to Comic Relief, the charity co-founded by Richard Curtis and Lenny Henry.

Priority tickets for members will be on sale on 27<sup>th</sup> March. We have high hopes that this will be a very popular show so please put the date in your diary and grab a great seat. As Jim would say, "no, no, no, no, YES!"

*Urgent request: We need front of house people for this event. If you are able to help, please contact Maria at [admin@polegatedramagroup.com](mailto:admin@polegatedramagroup.com) as soon as possible. There will be a sociable lunch on Sunday afternoon 7<sup>th</sup> May for everyone involved in this production.*

## **FUTURE PRODUCTIONS**

Our 'Comedy Golds' theme continues throughout our anniversary year and here are the key dates for your diaries:

August 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> we will be performing three one-act plays, Gosforth Fete, directed by Sylvia Dobell, The Tram Track Tragedy, directed by David Buck, and a third comedy (to be finalised) that will be directed by me. Tickets will be on sale on 4<sup>th</sup> July; the ticket price is £9 for adults and £6.50 for children. The read through and casting of all three plays will be held on Thursday June 1st.



From October 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> we will be back on stage with Cheshire Cats, a lively comedy directed by Cris Haniver. Tickets for this production will be available to members from 18<sup>th</sup> September. As with our spring play, the ticket price will be £10, children £6.50, and £1 for each ticket sold will be donated to Breast Cancer UK.

The read through and casting will be on Tuesday August 22<sup>nd</sup>. This play has a large number of parts for the female acting (or want-to-act) members of the group, so do all come along.

Our 2018 pantomime will be Beauty and the Beast. Thanks to everyone who came to the play readings. We have two excellent scripts and a tough decision to make. Decisions on the script and director will be announced at the next group meeting.



The panto will be on stage January 13<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> (or 20<sup>th</sup> – more on that below) and casting will be held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July. This year we aim to provide details of the cast list and songs well in advance.

## PLAY TIMES

Listening to Friends, members and other audience members, we are changing the start time of our plays a little. The curtain will now go up at 7.30pm (instead of 7.45pm), and at 2.30pm on Saturday matinees, which is what many people said they would prefer.



We are also reviewing performance times for the next panto: A decision has already been taken to cancel the Tuesday performance and replace this with two shows on the first Sunday. The performance times next January will be:

Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup>	2.30pm and 7.30pm
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	2pm and 6pm
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm

We are also looking at options for performances on the last weekend, to optimise audiences and to help the cast and crew. Members are now invited to vote on the following options:

- A. Three shows on the last Saturday at 11am, 3pm and 7.30pm, with no show on the Sunday
- B. Two shows on the last Saturday at 2.30 and 7.30pm plus one show on the last Sunday at 2pm.

*The deadline for voting is Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March. If you haven't already done so, please email [admin@polegatedramagroup.com](mailto:admin@polegatedramagroup.com). Thank you.*

## TICKETS

Tickets can be booked in person or by telephone at Archer & Partners, 48 High Street, Polegate, tel 01323 483348. Payment either by cash or cheque only, no cards. Tickets can also be booked online at [www.polegatedramagroup.com](http://www.polegatedramagroup.com). A booking fee of 75p per ticket applies to online bookings only, a charge set by TicketSource for providing this service.

For our spring, autumn and panto productions, members can book tickets a day in advance of the general release to the public.

## 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON



Have you booked for our celebratory 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon at the Hydro Hotel on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May? This promises to be a special event with members past and present – a great opportunity to catch up with old friends. It would be lovely to see you there.

The price is £28 per person for a fabulous 3-course luncheon plus welcome drink and tea or coffee with cake.

We need to confirm numbers so, if you haven't already done so, please book now. There's a booking form at the end of this newsletter and, to make life easier, you can pay via BACS at Polegate Drama Group. Please let Jim know you've paid though!

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## COFFEE MORNING

Many thanks to Ian and Jane Parratt who organised the last coffee morning. Our next one is on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June and we appreciate all offers of help and cakes.

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## GROUP MEETING

The next group meeting will be on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm. All members welcome.

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## HANDYMEN AND WOMEN WANTED!

As well as great acting, we strive to produce lovely looking sets, which come about with the support of a few volunteers who are handy with a screwdriver, drill or paintbrush – and we always welcome new helpers.

Set building and painting usually takes place on a few Sundays in the run-up to the play. We meet at 9.30am and finish by early afternoon but, if you can only stay for a couple of hours, that would be welcome. In return for your help, you will receive good-humoured conversation washed down with copious quantities of free tea, coffee and biscuits.

If you might be interested in joining the scenery team, know 'a man who can' or would just like to know more, we would love to hear from you.



## **SAD TO SAY GOODBYE**

In January this year we sadly said goodbye to a much beloved member, Lynton Morrish, who died peacefully at home following a short illness. Lynton will be remembered for several great character roles, most recently as Frank in the Vicar of Dibley. He was a brilliant actor and a true gentleman.

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## **CHANGES AT THE TOP**

The AGM in December saw a number of changes to the officers of Polegate Drama Group. A few stalwart members have given amazing service to the group for many years, some since it first started in 1967! But time moves on and some of our longest serving officers felt it was time to take a rest. This is not goodbye as they will continue to support the group in many other ways, but we say a very big thank you to Muriel Wills who stood down after 23 years as our chairman, David Buck our vice-chair and Jane Morris our treasurer.

The new Board is now as follows:

### **Officers of the Group**

Jim Dobell	President
Ryan Tate	Chairman
Cris Haniver	Vice Chairman
Maria Bayne	Secretary/Treasurer

### **Committee Members**

Alison Attwood	Editorial Assistant
Mandy Brown	Publicity Officer
David Buck	Committee member
Sue Talmadge	Committee member

### **Assisting the Board**

Steve Edwards	Assistant Publicity
Helen Griffin	Assistant Treasurer
Joan Law	Friends' Secretary
Rebecca Tanner	Membership Secretary
Ron Oram	PCA Rep

## INTRODUCING OUR NEW CHAIRMAN

Many of you may know Ryan Tate who has been providing technical and communications support for several years. In his capacity as our new chairman, I asked Ryan a bit about himself, his background and his hopes for the future of the drama group.

Ryan first came to Polegate to watch our 2010 panto, The Wizard of Oz. He struck up a conversation with Adrian Lynch and challenged him to do better with the lighting! There followed a great partnership, with Ryan joining the technical team for the next panto, Aladdin, and Ade gradually handing over the panto and play lighting as they became increasingly technical. Theirs was a great double-act that lasted four years, raising our game technically and working together on a new website that was launched as a special tribute to Ade on the day of his funeral. Since then, Ryan has exploited the whole range of social media and you can now find us on Facebook, Twitter and You Tube.



Ryan wasn't just being cheeky when he challenged Ade. Although only young (he is now 23), Ryan works professionally in theatre and as a freelance lighting designer for theatre and live entertainment. He works closely with Eastbourne Theatres, both for their pantomimes and a variety of touring shows, working on most shows seen at Eastbourne's venues. Ryan gets to see a large mix of shows but says the Eastbourne pantomimes are still the best! (Well, second to Polegate's!!)

As our youngest chairman ever, Ryan has some big shoes to fill. He says his biggest challenge is meeting the older generation's expectations for the drama group while changing some views, not for the sake of change but looking for improvements. Polegate is becoming a younger town with new housing developments and a commuting community - that's a lot of audience potential - and Ryan is keen to modernise the group while preserving our long-standing traditions. We will be investing in new technology, exploiting all available channels of communication, and of course looking for new and different plays. We have a fine reputation for farces and Victorian thrillers but there's a lot more out there.

Ryan's view is we are here to entertain Polegate and that's what we shall do. Ryan is fortunate to have such a well-planned year of comedy ahead, he is already in the driving seat for next year's panto, Beauty and the Beast, and he is now looking at ways to attract new audiences and new members to our fantastic drama group.

Well, that's all from me for this newsletter. I have enjoyed writing to you and I look forward to getting back in touch in June with more information about our future events. If there is anything you would like to see included in future newsletters, please get in touch.

Meanwhile I hope to see you all at our spring play, if not before!

Very best wishes,  
Alison

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