



September 2018

Newsletter

161

Hello dear members,

Welcome to another newsletter. Summer is over but there's plenty of action on the horizon at Polegate Drama Group to warm your cockles!

MURDER MYSTERIES



By popular demand, August saw a welcome return of the murder mystery evenings – two back-to-back plays: 'Who Killed the Secret Agent?' and 'Who Killed the Headmaster?'

Thank you to all our friends and members who supported us. The audience figures were great, as was your enthusiastic participation.

I'm not a betting person but, if I were to make a little wager, I'd put my money on us doing more murder mysteries next summer. Watch this space!

Key Dates

Round & Round the Garden

24th - 27th October
Box office opens 24th
September

Snow White

12th-20th January 2019
Box office opens 9am
13th November

Spamalot

29th May-1st June 2019

Christmas Dinner

Friday 21st December

ROUND AND ROUND THE GARDEN

Our autumn play is a lovely, light comedy that will appeal to everyone.

Sir Alan Ayckbourn has written over eighty plays, and 'Round and Round the Garden' is one of his early works. It could be considered to be the play that made him a household name. His plays have been performed in London and Broadway, around the UK and worldwide.



In 'Round and Round the Garden', Annie is single and is living with, and caring for, her bedridden mother. She needs a break and arranges a weekend away, so she asks her brother, Reg, and his wife, Sarah, to come and look after mum. They are joined by Annie's sister, Ruth, and her husband, Norman.

Meanwhile Tom, her neighbour, is constantly around, trying to pluck up the courage to tell Annie that he is keen on her.

A nice, simple family get together? But this is Ayckbourn – and Norman has other ideas! Let the fun begin!!

This wonderfully funny play is directed by Jim Dobell with the following cast:

Tom	Glenn Tonge	Reg	Geoff Shorman
Annie	Jane Parratt	Sarah	Cris Haniver
Norman	Ian Parratt	Ruth	Alison Attwood

Rehearsals are now underway and details are available on the website. The play will be on stage 25th to 27th October and tickets go on sale to members and friends on Monday 24th September. Tickets cost £10, children 15 years or under £6.50, and there's a £1 discount for members and friends when you present your membership card at Archers.

Please note there will not be a Wednesday night performance for this production. Performance times are:

Thursday 25 th	7.30pm
Friday 26 th	7.30pm
Saturday 27 th	2.30pm & 7.30pm



PANTOMIME 2019

From the team behind the 2018 pantomime 'Beauty and the Beast' and the sell-out production 'The Vicar of Dibley', we bring you the fairest pantomime of them all! 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' will be spectacularly brought to life with an abundance of comedy, sensational song and dance numbers, fabulous costumes and stunning scenery.

Throw in a magical Mirror, a beautiful princess, a handsome prince and plenty of audience participation as we outwit the Wicked Queen, and let love prevail in this glittering treat for all ages!

Our panto will be directed by the infamous David Buck, ably assisted by choreographer Sue Wood, musical director Marc Charlton and production manager Ryan Tate.

The fabulous cast is as follows:

Fairy Goodapple	Kirsten Grinstead	Pop	Geoff Shorman
Evil Queen Narcissia	Sue Talmadge	Grouchy	Jane Parratt
The Magic Mirror	Cris Haniver	Smiley	Charisse Goddard
Snow White	Heather Tingley	Allergy	Rebecca Tanner
Herbert Vore the Huntsman	Laura Catchpole	Dippy	Hannah Buck
Princess Simon of Sofaria	Helen Griffin	Blusher	Mandy Brown
Dame Delores Dingbat	Chris Thompson	Snoozy	Denise Rose
Hector	Peter Tucknott		

Our panto will be on stage from Saturday 12th to Sunday 20th January 2019. The box office opens at 9am on Tuesday 13th November. Make a note in your diary now! Tickets cost £10.50, children 15 years or under £7.00, and there's a £1 discount for members and friends when you present your membership card at Archers.

HANDYMEN AND WOMEN WANTED!

As always, we need a team of willing volunteers to help build and paint the sets for our panto.

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. Handyman or painting skills are a bonus, but most importantly we need your enthusiasm! In return, 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.





SPAMALOT 2019

And now for something completely different ...!!

Our Spring production next year will be 'Spamalot', a musical comedy based on Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

The original 2005 Broadway production received 14 Tony Award nominations, winning in three categories, including Best Musical, and audiences around the world have been roaring with laughter ever since.

David Buck will be directing this production and there are parts for everyone who wants to be involved. Whether you are a seasoned musical performer or just fancy having a first go at treading the boards, this is your opportunity. Go for it! Please note that 'actors packs' will be available with a copy of the full script and musical score at a charge of £20 per cast member.

'Spamalot' will run from 29th May to 1st June 2019, which is slightly later than usual due to the Community Centre's own 50th anniversary celebrations.

There will be a read-through and discussion of this production on Thursday evening 27th September starting at 7.30pm. All welcome.

CHAIRMAN ON TOUR

Congratulations to our Chairman, Ryan Tate. Ryan is involved in lighting and sound for a variety of professional shows that have toured the country. He worked on 'Round and Round the Garden' at the Cheltenham Festival Theatre in 2017, and this year has been on tour with 'Spamalot'.

Ryan has just secured a job with the National Theatre for their touring production of 'Macbeth'.

Well done Ryan!





CHRISTMAS DINNER

Sue Talmadge has kindly offered to organise this year's Christmas Dinner Party, to be held on Friday 21st December in the Firl Room, Lansdowne Hotel, from 7.45pm. This is a scrumptious three-course Christmas dinner (menu choices to follow), followed by dancing 'til midnight to 80s theme band, Sound of the Crowd.

Numbers are limited so, if you want to come and haven't yet booked, please get in touch now. Tickets are £37.95 per person, and a deposit of £10 will secure your place. You can pay either to Sue in cash, cheque payable to Polegate Drama Group or by BACS (contact Maria for bank details). Full payment will be required by the end of November.

SPOTLIGHT

The spotlight this month is on Ian and Jane Parratt, a married couple who joined Polegate Drama Group in 2005. They had moved to Eastbourne four years earlier and joined EODS, but were looking for a group that put on more plays rather than musicals, and Ann Young mentioned Polegate.



It was serendipity for our thespians as they arrived at Polegate: Rehearsals were underway for the farce, 'Cash on Delivery' but Lynton Morrish had to drop out, then a female role became unexpectedly vacant. Jane and Ian found themselves on stage rather sooner than they'd expected, and it was the start of a great relationship. They have acted in over thirty Polegate productions since then, together and separately, and really enjoy it. "Polegate is such a friendly group; we felt at home here straight away," says Jane. "It's the people who make it."

Jane and Ian are acting in our autumn comedy, 'Round and Round the Garden', in which they have a romantic cuddle - but this is not the first time that romance has blossomed on stage. Indeed, the couple first met when they were cast as husband and wife in 'A Night on the Tiles' (see pic below). Jane's group, the Brookland Players in north London, needed an extra man and appealed to other drama groups in the area. Ian, then in Barnet South, won the part. "We got on well," says Jane, "but Ian was quite shy and a penniless artist. I was afraid he would slip back to Barnet South before asking me out, so I invited him for a meal. Ian thought the rest of the cast were coming and was very pleased to find it was just him."



The rest, as they say, is history, and Jane and Ian have just celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. "We could be the Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton of Polegate," Ian quips. "No!" Jane cries, "They got divorced!" "Okay, more like Howard and Hilda from the sitcom, 'Ever Decreasing Circles'," says Ian.

Acting has been in their blood for a long time. Acting at school from an early age, Jane joined a local drama group in Essex when she was just thirteen and really loved it. Did she ever think about acting professionally? "Perhaps as a young teenager, before reality kicks in," she says. Ian's path to the stage was just a little slower. "I celebrated my 21st birthday on stage inside a fibreglass horse's head in Equus!"

When not acting, Ian is well known to the group as an artist, drawing brilliant caricatures of the casts. He trained as a professional illustrator and started producing cartoon strips for magazines, and caricatures for parties and corporate events. More recently, Ian has turned to painting landscapes and scenes, selling his work at local events. A keen walker, Ian can often be seen on the Downs with the dog, a camera and sketch book. "I am doing something to please myself, and I love it," he says.

Jane trained as a librarian, and it was securing a job with the University of Brighton at Eastbourne that enabled the couple to leave London and move here, a place they had always enjoyed visiting.

Returning to Polegate Drama Group, what would Ian and Jane most like to do in future? "We both enjoy plays that have strong characters, either comedy or drama," Ian explains, "but we are not so keen on farce where the characters are cyphers to a complicated plot." Being petite, Jane often gets cast in the role of a sweet, younger character, but she likes tough roles too. "I really enjoyed playing Yvonne in 'Cheshire Cats' last year as I got the chance to be really stroppy!"

I am sure we will see a lot more of Jane and Ian on the Polegate stage for many years to come.

Well folks, that's all from me this month. I hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and look forward to the next one, which will be issued in December. As always, I welcome any feedback, contributions or suggestions on anything you would like to see included.

With best wishes, Alison

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