

## A SELECTIVE MEMOIR

Do the names of tonight's actors evoke any memories? My random recollections begin with "Outside Edge", the cricketing comedy which proved to be a major breakthrough for the Players. The whole cast, led by Anne Hilling and Phillip Croxson, played a blinder. Who will ever forget Rob Gorton's solace-seeking retreat into Emily Lewis's bosom? Phillip Croxson went on to have memorable roles in "Hay Fever" and "Neville's Island" where his enthusiastic lowering of his trousers caused some raising of the eyebrows of his director, Mandyrae Large. The "Island" set was incredibly realistic with Mark Jessey successfully lighting a portable stove on stage and hilariously dropping a much-needed pizza into the water while making the sign of the cross. Dudley Thompson won high praise for his performance which I personally think was better than his professional rivals, Tony Slattery and Les Dennis. But one of Dudley's greatest hits was his incomprehensible sergeant-major in "Oh, What a Lovely War", one of our most successful productions. "Neville's Island" also revealed how John Trevers metamorphosed from a star in panto to a star in pants; what next, modelling for Calvin Klein? Although John played the star turn of the Good Fairy in "Sleeping Beauty and the Beast" he was actually upstaged by his son, James, who delivered his lines with great timing and was happily indulged by his sister, Harriet. Concluding the Trevers Family Saga, Caroline made a memorable debut in "Flood Warning" with brittle bitchiness and profanities so completely alien to her real-life persona. Amanda Henriques was a distinguished wife in "The Winslow Boy", a theatrical "grande-dame" in "Hay Fever" and a triple-role American (nice, nasty and evil) in "Veronica's Room". But I still recall with a smile the hearing-impaired 80-year-old mother she played in "Ten Times Table" with even the actors on stage finding it hard not to laugh at her knitting antics. "Hay Fever" had accomplished performances from the whole cast but it's hard to forget Sian O'Neill's forceful maid. Sian also earned a lot of laughter with her Ruth Madoc style characterisation in "Sleeping B & B". Rose Hartley appeared as a dominating committee member in "Ten Times Table" and was a picture of elegance in "Hay Fever" but it's her moving portrayal of a secretary secretly in love with her boss, but now facing death, that stays in the mind. Although not on stage tonight Zoe Humphrey, a drama teacher, has given us many lessons in acting ranging from "Hobson's Choice" to "Veronica's Room" where she suffered both death and a fate worse than death. Another teacher of drama, David Staines, gave a chilling performance in "Veronica's Room". Emily Lewis is now studying at university but the many parts that she has played include "ingénue" in "The Real Inspector Hound", militant suffragette ("The Winslow Boy"), sexy New-Yorker ("California Suite") and various pantomime heroines. Her last performance was a title role in "Sleeping Beauty and the Beast" guess which one she played where she was partnered by Dave Robson who played identical twins with panache (or is this what was left on the stage after Mark lit the stove?). I hope tonight's plays will also provide happy memories.

John Drew.



WYCHWOOD PLAYERS

**PRESENT A  
SUPPER EVENING WITH  
TWO ONE ACT PLAYS**

**THE BROWNING VERSION**

WRITTEN BY TERENCE RATTIGAN  
DIRECTED BY DUDLEY THOMPSON

**A RESPECTABLE FUNERAL**

WRITTEN BY JIMMIE CHINN  
DIRECTED BY ROSEMARY HARTLEY

**NEW BEACONSFIELD HALL**

Thursday 2 March

Friday 3 March

Saturday 4 March

PROGRAMMES 50 P

## THE BROWNING VERSION

### WRITTEN BY TERENCE RATTIGAN



**Terence Rattigan** is one of Britain's most important dramatists. Born in London and educated at Harrow and Trinity College, Oxford, his work, to some extent, reflects his privileged upbringing. His first play 'French without Tears' was an enormous success in 1936 when he was only 25 years old. He went on to achieve great success with a string of hits through the 1940's and 1950's, culminating with 'Separate Tables' in 1954.

Rattigan believed in craftsmanship, structure and his plays are studies in subtlety and precisely expressed emotion. After John Osborne's 'Look Back in Anger' hit the stage in a wave of emotional

explicitness, Rattigan's style of writing went out of fashion and came to be considered old-fashioned. The public taste for the kitchen sink dramas that followed in the wake of Osborne's success left Rattigan to sink into semi-obscure. Appalled by the swinging Sixties in London and suffering recurring bouts of leukaemia he left England to live in Bermuda, where he made a highly paid living writing highly forgettable screenplays.

He was knighted in the early seventies and moved back to London where he achieved a minor revival in his reputation until his death in 1977.

### DIRECTED BY DUDLEY THOMPSON

Having grown up with family legend that a distant relative was the great Victorian thespian Henry Irving, it is not surprising that Dudley showed interest in performing and mimicry from an early age. The early plays he created on a homemade reel-to-reel tape recorder were soon abandoned when he found other souls foolish enough to join him in his theatrical enterprises. At twelve he directed and starred in a condensed version of Julius Caesar and from this disastrous venture he soon graduated to amateur theatre.

As an adult he spent his leisure time acting, directing and creating with amateur theatre groups around the country. He considers the highlights of this ill spent life to

include Jimmy Porter in 'Look Back in Anger' and the multiple roles he played in the Wychwood Players production of 'Oh! What a lovely War'.

Now of more mature years he finds the roles available for him to play have shrunk to 'The Dirty Old Man' and 'Village Idiot', so he is turning to the challenging task of direction in order to continue his sordid love affair with Madame La Theatre.

## Cast

### The Browning Version

John Taplow  
Frank Hunter  
Millie Crocker-Harris  
Andrew Crocker-Harris  
Dr Frobisher  
Peter Gilbert  
Mrs Gilbert

James Trevers  
John Trevers  
Caroline Trevers  
Phillip Croxson  
John Drew  
Dave Robson  
Lizanne Leahy

The Action of the play passes in the sitting room of the Crocker-Harris's flat at a Public School in the South of England on the evening of a summer day in July.



## A RESPECTABLE FUNERAL

WRITTEN BY JIMMIE CHINN



Jimmie Chinn was born in Manchester and came to London in 1959 to train as an actor at RADA. Not having much success as an actor he then trained as a teacher at Whitelands College, Putney where he gained a degree in English and Drama. He taught and was a housemaster at a Middlesex Comprehensive until becoming a full time writer in 1984.

He was encouraged by the success of several radio plays and then began to write for the stage drawing on his northern upbringing for a lot of his plays. Teddington Theatre Club at Hampton Court Theatre premiered most of his work. He had his first West End production in 1992 and he has also written episodes of Emmerdale for Yorkshire Television.

Teddington Theatre Club in November 1983 first performed a Respectable Funeral in a shorter version, without the character of Charlie.

DIRECTED BY ROSEMARY HARTLEY



I have lived in the Wychwoods for 35 years and I have been a member of the Wychwood Players for about 5 years. Back in the 80's I was a member of Chipping Norton Operatic Society and The Nortonians. With the Players I have appeared in Ten Times Table, O What a Lovely War, Hay Fever, Swansong and more recently The Pied Piper of Wychwood. I helped on the production side with Veronica's Room but this is the first time I have tried my hand at directing and I hope you enjoy the result.

## Cast

### A Respectable Funeral

Evadne	Joan Hawker
Joyce	Amanda Henriques
Greta	Sian O'Neill
Charley	Mark Jessey

The Action takes place one afternoon in a living room in the North of England. It is the present day.



## CREDITS

Set Design and Wardrobe  
Set Construction  
Props  
Stage Manager  
Lighting and Sound  
Prompt

Publicity  
Poster and Programmes

Ticket Sales and Box Office  
Bar

Front of House co-ordinator

Pat Bannister  
David Trollope  
Kate Pollard  
Richard Hartley  
Frank O'Neill  
Eileen Jessey  
Gill Thompson  
John Drew  
David Trollope  
David Cross  
Gill Drew  
Charles Keighley  
Ian Dodd  
Mandyrae Large

The Directors would like to thank the very many people who have helped with both front of house and back stage, far too many to name, but their help was invaluable.

### Acknowledgements

Renaissance of Witney for hire of dresses  
Jonathan and Belinda for use of the barn for rehearsals  
Shaven Crown for Photo Shoot  
Wychwood Fine Foods for supplying the cheeses

## NEW FACES

### Lizanne Leahy



"I was a member of Sonning Village Players in Berkshire for 15 years and acted in many productions including Le Malade Imaginaire, The Chalk Garden and Ladies in Retirement at The Mill at Sonning.

In my last year at school I played the part of Eliza Doolittle in Pygmalion before going on to university to study for a degree in English and Drama. After college I had a bit of a break from acting there was more than enough drama where I worked at The Times Newspaper and the BBC!

I moved to Shipton-under-Wychwood last July and this is my second production with the Wychwood Players. I played the part of Princess Aurora in the Pied Piper just before Xmas. How strange that I'm now happily married in The Browning Version to my enemy Baron Nastiturn!"

### Joan Hawker



I was born in Stratford upon Avon and spent my teenage years in the Bancroft Gardens and the Dirty Duck. 1973-1976 a student and member of the legendary Bath Arts Workshop, combining Street theatre with Teacher Training. After graduating I worked as an Art and Pottery Teacher in various establishments including Walsgrave Psychiatric Hospital. I searched for my next vocation for several years including doing time as the owner of a 16<sup>th</sup> c Inn.

I was born again as a Primary Teacher in 1996 courtesy of Westminster College and a Bphil Ed from Warwick.

I am now working part time as a supply teacher in local schools and enjoying the freedom to tentatively tip toe the boards again.

Past appearance; Pirates of Penzance, On the Road, Dick Barton on the Heath, Various Midsummer Night's Dreams and four W.P productions. I am looking forward to my first appearance in "The Bill". Which will no doubt be as a housewife!