

Forthcoming Events

Burford Festival, "Cider with Rosie"

Saturday 8th June 2024 at the Warwick Hall, Burford

Wychwood Players is delighted to be taking part in The Burford Festival – joining local residents with a Community Play Reading of Cider with Rosie written by Laurie Lee and adapted for the stage by Nick Darke. This is a rehearsed reading of a classic story with a special local interest, as it is set in the nearby Cotswold Village of Slad in the 1920s. Hazel Hughes is directing this enthusiastic group of readers and looks forward to welcoming you to the performance on Saturday 8th June at 7pm at the Warwick Hall, Burford. Come and enjoy this relaxed evening in the Warwick Hall, Burford. Tickets are available via the Burford Festival website and from Ticketsource from 1st May:

<https://burfordfestival.org>

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/burford-festival>

"Peas" and "The Extraordinary Revelations of Orca the Goldfish"

A Theatrical Soirée with Drinks & Canapés

Thursday 20th to Saturday 22nd June 2024 at The New Beaconsfield Hall

The Wychwood Players are delighted to present two short plays by award winning playwright David Tristram, with drinks and a selection of canapés to be enjoyed during the performance.

'Peas' is a delightful, comic exploration of a blind date set in a local pub. Will the couple find anything in common at all?

'The Extraordinary Revelations of Orca the Goldfish' reveals that the boring lives of Henry and his wife, Alice, may not be quite as dull as they seem! Orca bears witness to a frolic through the pair's fantasy world in this hilarious, sparkling comedy. Adult themes and moderate language.

"It's a Wonderful Life"

Thursday 21st to Saturday 23rd November 2024 at The New Beaconsfield Hall

What's a classic Christmas story? I know, it's about tragic accidents, poisoning, financial mismanagement, cruelty, horrible people, insensitive building development and suicide. Ah. Or maybe it's about bravery, an integrated, positive community where everyone contributes to it, kind people, redemption, forgiveness for your mistakes and a happy ending. Maybe it's both those things. Maybe It's A Wonderful Life. A classic Christmas story. From Wychwood Players, coming to the New Beaconsfield Hall in Shipton-under-Wychwood November 21st to 23rd 2024.

www.wychwoodplayers.com

Check out our social media links at
<https://cosoc.com/wychwoodplayers>
Or just scan the QR Code



WYCHWOOD PLAYERS PRESENT

ARSENIC and OLD LACE



By JOSEPH KESSELRING

25th, 26th & 27th April 2024

Wychwood Players Production Team

Director	Simon Johnson
Assistant Director	Em Isaacson
Stage Manager	Bob Days
Sound	Tony Mellerick & Anthony Gofton
Lighting	Tony Mellerick
Rehearsal Prompt	Rachel Read
Stage Crew	Alex Johnson & Richard Hartley
Set Design	Simon Johnson
Set Construction	Simon Johnson, Bob Days & Team
Props	The Cast
Costumes	Em Isaacson, Rose Hartley
Make up	Jo Mckerlie
Publicity	Ralph Wears, Steve Banyard
Social Media	Anthony Gofton
Front of House	Rachel Read and volunteers
Photography	Andrew Mckerlie

And thanks to many volunteers from Wychwood Players and Committee, chaired by Phillip Croxson for their friendship, enthusiasm and support.

The Setting

The play is set within the Brewster household, Brooklyn in 1941.
The house is home to sisters, Abby & Martha and their nephew, Teddy.

Act 1	A late afternoon in September
Act 2	Later at night

Interval – Bar open for refreshments

Act 2 continued	
Act 3 Scene 1	Still later that night
Act 3 Scene 2	Early the next morning

Director's Notes



Following Wychwood Players wonderful productions of “The Ghost Train” and “Flare Path”, two classics of the English theatre, we venture this time across the pond to present the classic American farce “Arsenic and Old Lace”. Written by Joseph Kesselring, the play had its Broadway premiere in August 1941 where it ran for nearly four years before moving to the silver screen in Frank Capra’s 1944 Hollywood adaptation starring Cary Grant, Priscilla Lane, Josephine Hull and Jean Adair.

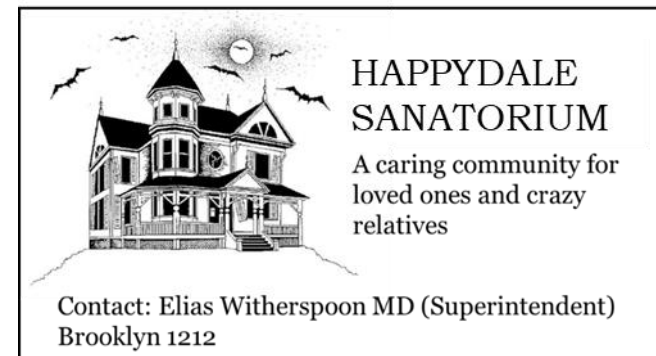
This black comedy revolves around the Brewster family, descended from the Mayflower settlers; somewhere down the line the gene pool developed some crazy traits. Most of them homicidal.

Mortimer Brewster is living a happy life; a Theatre critic for a New York newspaper, he visits his sweet spinster aunts announcing his engagement to the neighbouring minister’s daughter, Elaine. Mortimer always knew his family had some mad genes; his brother believes himself to be Teddy Roosevelt and his great-grandfather used to scalp Indians for pleasure but his world is turned upside down when he discovers the murderous charities his dear aunts bestow on their lonely gentlemen lodgers. How on earth will Mortimer keep the secrets of his crazy relatives hidden?

This is my directorial debut with Wychwood Players and it’s really been a pleasure to work with such a talented troupe. Whilst some old hands will be familiar to you, we are delighted to welcome no less than five new players to our brilliant team.

Hope you enjoy.

Simon Johnson

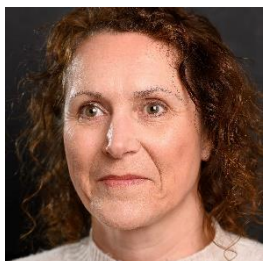


**Steve Banyard**

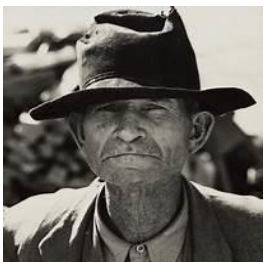
Steve makes a brief cameo appearance as ‘Mr Gibbs’, having spent 35 years in TV and radio. He’s best known as a football commentator and voiceover, broadcasting World Cups, European Championships, Olympic Games and the Premier League to over 200 countries around the world. In the UK, he’s been heard mostly on Sky. Steve is also a songwriter and producer.

**John McCormick**

I’m delighted to be continually disrupting this Wychwood Players production playing Teddy. He thinks that he’s President Theodore ‘Teddy’ Roosevelt the 26th US President, 42 when elected, he’s still the youngest US President. For his efforts to help end the Russo-Japanese war he was awarded the 1906 Nobel peace prize. He also drove the completion of the Panama Canal. But more on that ... later ...

**Vikki Days**

I am a recent convert to acting, this being only my third role on stage, but I have enjoyed many Wychwood Players productions as an audience member. I am a huge fan of the theatre anyway and love the silent agreement between audience and actors to suspend disbelief, for a short time. Being part of the A&OL cast has been really good fun. I’ve definitely got the bug for being on stage now.

**Abe Hoskins**

This is my first appearance with them Wychwood Players and most definitely my last. Them Brewster ladies, they invite you into their home for vittles, poison you and dump you in a box. Then some crazy guys drag you into the cellar and bury you with a foreigner. No sir, this aint no way to treat a god fearing Metho-dist!

The Cast (in order of appearance).

Abby Brewster	Rose Hartley
Rev. Harper	Phillip Croxson
Teddy Brewster	John McCormick
Officer Brophy	Vikki Days
Officer Klein	Samantha Broadhurst
Martha Brewster	Hazel Hughes
Elaine Harper	Sarah Gilbey
Mortimer Brewster	Andy Belchambers
Mr. Gibbs	Steve Banyard
Jonathan Brewster	Rik Yapp
Dr. Einstein	Anthony Gofton
Officer O’Hara	Sam Nel
Lieutenant Klein	Ralph Wears
Mr. Witherspoon	Phillip Croxson

Meet the Players**Rose Hartley**

I have been a member of the Wychwood Players since 2001 and have had some of the best times of my life taking part in various shows too numerous to mention. I have enjoyed ‘Arsenic and Old Lace’ so much. It has been a joy to work with such a great group of people.

**Hazel Hughes**

I enjoy acting and directing in local drama groups. Some diverse roles include Aramis, a thigh slapping principal boy in ‘The Three Musketeers Panto’, a sinister Inspector in Tom Stoppard’s ‘Cahoots Macbeth’ and singing in musical productions. I’m enjoying the character of Martha. She is Nervous, Nice, Naughty! - and I’m trying to show some Naivety too!



Andy Belchambers

After my first acting role as Teddy Graham in 'Flare Path' last year, I find myself on stage again. This time as the manic Mortimer Brewster, desperately trying to keep a lid on the murderous exploits of his family. They really are the craziest box of frogs!!



Samantha Broadhurst

I'm making my debut in 'Arsenic & Old Lace', finally fulfilling a long-held desire to act. Having started learning Spanish during lockdown I was keen to combine my passion for travel, wildlife and scuba diving with a trip to Costa Rica. I found a great place to learn her lines by the pool!



Sarah Gilbey

I am currently studying Drama at Oxford Brookes, after discovering my love for acting through BODS. I threw myself in at the deep end operating sound and participating in theatre festivals. I am also a self-taught musician and passionate artist. I am delighted to be making my debut with the Wychwood Players in the role of Elaine!



Sam Nel

We're delighted to welcome Sam Nell in his first role with Wychwood Players. Sam is a keen drama student and fits in beautifully as the incompetent Police Officer O'Hara. His aspirations as a budding playwright may be dashed by the theatre critic in this play but we're sure we will be seeing a lot more of Sam in the future.



Anthony Gofton

I am usually to be found at the back of the hall running the sound for the Wychwood Players, but have been tempted onto the stage by this lovely role as Dr Einstein. Apologies for the dreadful accent.



Phillip Croxson

Keen eyed observers may spot me introducing the name of a new character and then, much later, appearing as that character. How is that possible, I hear you ask? Well, that's the magic of theatre! As a founding member of Wychwood Players 27 years ago, I first appeared as the eponymous Gosforth in Ayckbourn's hilarious comedy Gosforth's Fete in the old Beaconsfield Hall.



Rik Yapp

This is my first show for Wychwood Players having previously been a member of CADS in Charlbury and The Old Gaol Theatre Company in Abingdon.



Ralph Wears

I have acted with the Wychwood Players for the past eleven years. We're excited to have several new talented members join recently. I also read the news for 'Oxtalk', a newspaper for the blind. I enjoy voice acting as well as being a Supporting Artist (extra) in TV & films. Recently I appeared in BBC1's 'This Town'.