



# Bournemouth Little Theatre News



1998/99 Season

First Combined Edition (Issue #13)

Tuesday, 23 March 1999

## BLTC PRESENTS



From Monday, 12 April  
to Saturday, 17 April  
at Jameson Road  
at 7.45 pm



Booking details over page

The acerbic comedy of 1990s (bad!) manners

# An Evening with Gary Lineker

By Arthur Smith and Chris England



It is 1990. Nay more. It is 4 July 1990! The sport is football. The tournament is the World Cup. The match is *England v West Germany*, played in Italy but being watched on TV by a group of young people in a tourist hotel suite in Majorca. The time is shortly before kick-off. If you do not want to know the result, look away now. Okay? — [Actually England were narrowly beaten by West Germany in a penalty shoot-out] — Right then, if you *had* stopped looking at this page, you can now start looking at it again.



Director David Hinton and Actor Peter Evans  
keep their eyes on the ball ...

Actually, even though this play was first performed only eight years ago, before Sky Television's participation in and hyping of the new Premier League, and before the TV series *Men Behaving Badly*, all the elements of the manic humour and innuendo in that series are here in this seminal satire about young English men totally besotted by what is, after all, for Lord's sake, only a game. Unless, of course, it is your religion.



Joanna Gabbay keeps her eyes on  
Andy Joiner and Mark Lange

Director David Hinton says that coming, as he does, from a family of football obsessives, the play feels as if it were an episode in his life which, if it hasn't happened yet, will occur to him one day – a terrifying prospect.

... while  
Claire Winwood  
keeps her eyes  
on  
everyone!



Patrons will be happy to learn that there will be gratuitous bad language, and that women as well as men will be behaving badly, indeed like

## Welcome, Playgoers!

Regular club members of BLTC, who usually receive this four-page newsletter, may not be aware that our Playgoers, upon whom we depend so much, have hitherto only received the first two pages, as promotional literature. However, we feel that our Playgoers would appreciate knowing more about what we are doing, so we are from now on sending the same paper to everyone. That means that about 900 families in the Bournemouth area who are interested in live theatre can feel that they are a valued part in what we are doing.

And to you Playgoers, we invite you, not only to read about us, but to let us have your views and opinions about our efforts. If we run any competitions (and you will see the results of one on this very page) then please feel free to join in. Our address is at the bottom of this page, and you can send any comments to the Editor, Tony Orman.

However, we would just point out, in case you haven't noticed, that we only send out newsletters in support of individual productions: we do not attempt to issue weekly or even monthly bulletins. After all, we are only volunteers, and are totally incapable of coping with hard work or stress. So, read on!

## So, What's New?

As we told you in the last edition, Andrew Whyatt will be auditioning at 7.30 pm on Friday 2 April for Noël Coward's **Relative Values**. Remember, you don't have to be a member to audition, though you have to join the club in order to perform. The show will be presented from Monday 7 to Saturday 12 June.

Jack Snell, who seems to be inexhaustible, is presenting two more one-act plays. They are under the auspices of the Studio, which he is running this year, so there are no formal auditions. The Studio, you will recall, is open every Wednesday for those who want to come along and study (what else, in a studio?). The plays will be **After Midnight – Before Dawn** a drama by David Campton, and **Cup Final**, not a play about soccer, but a comedy by Charles Mander. The performance dates are now firmed up for Wednesday to Saturday, 7 – 10 July 1999.

## Get Well Soon!

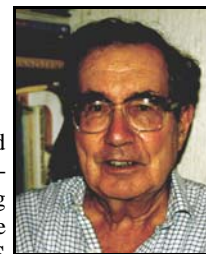
Our very best wishes go out to our friends Barbara Warde, Philip Vye and Bill Leahy who, we hear, are all unwell at the time of writing. We hope they will all soon be feeling better. We feel sure that their friends, some of whom may be unaware, may wish to get in touch with them.

## Any Volunteers?

We asked theatre guru and all-round genius Hugh Norris why it was we had such problems finding volunteers to do such useful theatrical jobs as painting sets, washing dishes, acting in shows, working front of house, wiping the staircase, sluicing out the loos and other incredibly exciting tasks. He consulted the Encyclopaedia Britannica, his local faith healer and the US Bureau of Statistics, and came up with this amazingly accurate assessment. He tells us: "I've checked up the population statistics of the United Kingdom. I have discovered

The total population, at my last estimate	53,786,972
DEDUCT children and others in education	21,764,350
Which leaves, to do all the work	32,022,622
DEDUCT persons over retirement age	23,789,469
Which leaves, to do all the work	8,233,153
DEDUCT armed forces and civilian support	673,987
Which leaves, to do all the work	7,559,166
DEDUCT people in hospital	376,892
Which leaves, to do all the work	7,182,274
DEDUCT people on strike	765,921
Which leaves, to do all the work	6,416,353
DEDUCT people in prison or funny farms	908,074
Which leaves, to do all the work	5,508,279
DEDUCT politicians and their hangers-on	1,347,847
Which leaves, to do all the work	4,160,432
DEDUCT civil servants	4,160,430
Which leaves, to do all the work .....	2

i.e. just you and me; and frankly Matey, if you don't start doing a day's work very soon, I'm going to resign." At this point Your Correspondent retired to the pub, stunned into silence.



## Angela's Plea

So, bearing in mind what Hugh says, Angela Whyatt begs you to call her on 624221 to offer your services in the next show on the bar, or serving teas, or helping front of house. Go on, give her a call. Assuage that feeling of guilt. It's your turn to help out.

## Review

Linda Kirkman reviewed *Home Free* and *Will the Real Jesus Christ Please Stand Up* in the Daily Echo. She said:

"There is a notice on the wall of the Theatre Club which states that a director should not take any part, however small, in his own production. However, needs occasionally must — and Jack Snell not only directed both these plays with his usual flair but also turned himself into a splendidly camp personal assistant after the original actor was forced to pull out.

*Will the Real Jesus Christ Please stand Up* is little more than a longish sketch about the audition process, but it is extremely funny whilst also having an element of seriousness. Derek Hyder is excellent as theatre director Verdin, falling apart as a series of ever-worse actors "do their stuff" in anticipation of apart in his play, and all the performances are tightly reined, resisting any temptation to go over the top.

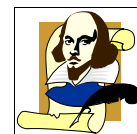
*Home Free* is very much more serious. A brother and sister sharing a one-room apartment are respectively agoraphobic and pregnant, and both plainly barking mad. Real-life siblings Tim and Amanda Garton do not have any such problems, but they do share considerable acting skills — and even Amanda's slightly shaky American accent could not detract from two such gripping performances."

## Reduced Shakespeare Competition

In our 21 January edition, Hugh Norris challenged you to reduce any Shakespeare play to exactly 50 words, excluding titles and character names, but using only Shakespeare's words. The winning reply was submitted by Club member Philip Haywood, and he has taken up the offer of two free tickets to one of our shows! Well done Philip. Thanks for your participation.

We set out below Philip's winning entry.

**Henry V**  
By William Shakespeare



**Canterbury:** No bar ... to your Highness' claim to France.

**Henry:** France being ours we'll bend it to our awe.

**Chorus:** Our scene must to the battle fly.

**Williams:** Who goes there?

**Henry:** A friend.

**Williams:** What of our estate?

**Henry:** As men wrecked upon a sand.

.....

**Henry:** Agincourt ... ten thousand French lie slain.

.....

**Henry:** Welcome, Kate, my sovereign Queen!

Finis

**ADVANCE TICKET BOOKINGS** (price £6, with concessions)

1. WRITE enclosing cheque and S.A.E. to

Box Office, BLTC, 11 Jameson Road, Bournemouth BH9 2QD OR

2. CONTACT SUE at home **ONLY between 7.30 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.** Monday 29 March to Friday 2 April

on her home number **424640**

OR

3. BOX OFFICE OPENS Monday 5 April to Friday 9 April, **between 7.30 p.m. and 9.00 p.m.**

for personal callers OR by telephone on **513361**



# Opinion

By Tony Orman

As Joan Rivers says. "Let's talk!" Let's think about some issues we really only talk about behind closed doors. Oh, I don't mean casual gossip, who's in, who's out, who's whose (think about *that* one). The real issue for drama groups today is *are there too many of them?* When I was a 12 year old just after WW2 (not to be confused with Y2K), I lived in a Northern town one-quarter the size of Bournemouth. It had 44 registered adult amateur groups. In 1948 an arts centre opened with 600 seats. It was packed out every evening. Professional shows, amateur: it didn't matter. You could go to the Gaumont or Odeon and see the latest movie, but what else? Mum, Dad and the kids went to see live theatre. It was too good to last. My Dad bought our first Telly (a 12 inch black-and-white console model) a few weeks before the Coronation, in 1953. At that, we were the only family in our street who had one! But soon, TV became the great reason given for the death of the amateur theatre. And it wasn't just dying in England. In every English-speaking country the story was the same. As you will see elsewhere in this Edition, even the great BLTC, which had once had to *limit* its membership to 1500, was forced to sell its town-centre theatre, and was obliged to wander like the Israelites in the wilderness for years before it found its present humble home in Jameson Road. For decades the decline continued. Even with a 99 seat theatre, you wondered why you were performing to only 20 people a night!

But, suddenly, last season and again this season, we are a hit. We are playing frequently to full houses. One has to touch wood in case it goes away again. And now, we are back to what we were in the old days. Well, almost: we are a lot smaller and much more limited. And we are facing the fact that despite having probably the largest registered membership of any 'straight' drama group in our area, we have difficulty in finding the right casts, problems in fulfilling tasks back-stage, and we find that regular members of BLTC are frequently taking roles or working for other drama groups. Nothing wrong with that, of course. But the reason often given is that they want the opportunity to shine. Ye Gods! We are obliged to put on six to eight productions a year: if we put on less we would not have sufficient revenue to survive. After all, the essence of Little Theatre is that we maintain our own premises. And that costs. This season we will be putting on ten plays in eight shows. Each one needs actors and crew. We have enough opportunities in our own club to satisfy the most demanding needs of our members. So why work elsewhere? We are, as we are always saying, not a clique. Four new directors this year! New actors in every show. New workers backstage. We *have them*. But we do need the support of our regular Members.

## TWENTY QUESTIONS

We thought we would re-introduce last years directors quiz. So now it is the turn of David Hinton, director of *An Evening With Gary Lineker*, to answer the same questions. We asked, and he answered:

1. What is your idea of perfect happiness?  
The two hours after the last performance of a successful show on Brownsea Island.
2. What is your greatest fear?  
Rejection.
3. Which famous person do you admire?  
Mo Mowlem.



Organiser Derek

In June 1970, Pat Bowring and I were performing an extract from *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, in the Room Downstairs. I had the idea of offering to take the entire play on tour. The Committee agreed and so the first tour was born. Starting in October 1970, we took the show to Swanage, Lymington, Weymouth, Warminster, Swindon (for two nights) and home. We were so successful that the new owners of Palace Court booked us for an additional week. BLTC had moved to premises in Old Church Road which were large enough only to put on plays for our members. So we decided to tour a play in Spring and Autumn each year.

The early years of touring were difficult: we had to find our audience in each town and this took a little time. It was easy enough to book the venues, but to arrive and find half-empty houses was not too much fun. Having booked all the theatres in advance, I would have the posters and tickets printed and take them out to each town, passing the posters out to shops or wherever I could find permitted space. Some towns would sell tickets for us and other we would just sell 'on the door' on the night. Over the period of 12 years we travelled to the towns mentioned above and also to Wimborne, Westbury, Frome, Sherborne, Shaftesbury, Sway, Yeovil, Devizes, Sturminster, and Holdenhurst Village Hall.

Each evening the van with scenery and props and additional lighting would set off from Bournemouth at about 5 pm with some crew followed by the cast, director, and the balance of backstage. The set would be erected, the lighting and sound checked and front-of-house put in place in time to open the box office 45 minutes prior to curtain time. After the show, we set about clearing the hall, packed the van, and headed for the local pub for a few well-earned pints, where FOH told us if we had made any money. The show was discussed, then 'the circus left town' until the following night for another town, another show, and so on. Between 1970 and 1983, when the tours ceased, we toured some 26 productions. From October 1975 the touring shows played at Jameson Road either before or after we went on the road. The smallest venue was Lymington where the dressing rooms were like cupboards, and if you had to exit stage left and later re-enter stage right, you had to go out the back door into the night, go round the back of the building and come in via another door. In Holdenhurst Village Hall, one of us was placed at the back with sufficient coins to feed the electric meter so we did not run out of light!

A great favourite was Sturminster Newton, where the audience started to queue upon our arrival. Once we had set out the chairs, the early-

### 4. Who is your favourite film star?

Franklin Pangbourn.

### 5. Who is your favourite actor or actress?

Humphrey Bogart, Julie Delpy, & Isabella Rossellini.

### 6. What is your greatest extravagance?

Cats, videos, books, magazines.

### 7. What do you always carry on you?

Keys, and worries on my shoulder.

### 8. Where would you most like to live?

Madagascar, or in a free Tibet.

### 9. What is your most unappealing habit?

Addiction to cats, videos, books and magazines.

### 10. What is your favourite smell?

Coriander, and foxes.

### 11. What is your favourite word?

Quinquere.

### 12. What is your favourite play or film?

*Casablanca* or *Day For Night*.

## The Wilderness Years

Since the Club's founding in 1919, the most traumatic event in our history was the sale of The Palace Court Theatre in Hinton Road in 1971. Its echoes are still with us. But one member, Derek Hyder, came up with the idea of touring our plays. We asked him to tell us about it.



Lighting Guru

comers insisted on being let in so that they could get the best seats and enjoy the 'set up'. Lovely people. We made many friends there over the years, including the pub landlord down the road who looked after our inner needs before, and especially after the show. The Sturminster and Wimborne venues had dangerous lighting boards, which Paul Caton had to deal with: one could toast bread on their light dimmer racks!

It was a wonderful period in our long history, and countless members were used in every capacity. Unlike today there was no trouble in getting a full, and I mean full, cast and crew together for a tour production. Tours gave great additional experience to all concerned in playing in all sorts of venues, small halls/theatres, big stages and little stages and no stages but just the floor. Some had dressing rooms, some had none, some had lots of backstage and some had none. The prompter had to find what space she could: in Devizes it was in the roof space over the stage, and she had to lie almost flat, but she did have a wonderful view!

There are just too many people to thank for their commitment, loyalty, energy and time given during this period. Some have passed on, some have moved on, but I do remember them all. Some of them are still with us I am

pleased to say — Jack Snell, who drove the van, humped the set, put up the set, and stage-managed, with his crew. And Paul Caton who provided light where none existed. And John Headford who shared the lighting. And stage managers John Tickner and Phil Warner. And Martin Judge, who used his own bus to ferry cast and crew and assisted backstage, and dear Norah Heathcote on the book — the very best I ever worked with in the business. And of course there were numerous directors, such as Elsa Jacobs, and actors and actresses, all of whom were Bournemouth Little Theatre Club as far as our public in the 'Provinces' were concerned.

We all had our rewards for the work we put in — new friends, teamwork, a happy audience following a good show, the welcome received in each town visited and, of course, the various pubs we came to know and love.

My personal reward was meeting one Susan Todd from Sherborne District Council, who, with the application of a certain amount of Celtic charm, always gave me a good deal on the booking of the Digby Hall, and who finally agreed to become my wife.

Oh, happy days!

### 13. What is your favourite journey?

Walking from Swanage to home.

### 14. What do you dislike most?

Not doing as you would be done by (including me).

### 15. What is your greatest regret?

Pearce and Waddle — penalties 1990.

### 16. When and where were you happiest?

4.45 pm, Cup Final Day, 1978: Wycombe Wanderers at Wembley.

### 17. What single thing would improve your quality of life?

A new gastro-intestinal system.

### 18. How do you relax?

All those damn cats, videos, books and magazines.

### 19. What is your favourite quality in others?

Grace.

### 20. What is your favourite animal?

Tatum, Chucky, Snuggy (cats) & all aardvarks.

## Theatre Quiz By Tony Orman

1. Name Bertholt Brecht's musical 'Penny farthing'.
2. Who, after writing the lyrics only for *West Side Story* and *Gypsy*, wrote the music and lyrics for a musical adapted from the works of which ancient playwright?
3. The book " 'Sally Bowles' and Other Stories", by which author was adapted into which straight play by which playwright, and was further adapted into a musical under which name?
4. Name the musical taken from stories by Damon Runyon.
5. This Thornton Wilder play, first performed at the Edinburgh Festival in 1954, was adapted into a musical, first performed in New York in 1964. Name both shows.
6. Name the English musical featuring "The Lambeth Walk".
7. Name the two shows written by Noël Coward in the romantic musical genre.
8. Which Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice musical appeared in the record shops two years before it was staged?
9. Name three post WW2 musicals adapted from which Shakespeare plays?
10. Name the musical, based on Henry Fielding's play *Rape Upon Rape*, performed first at the Mermaid Theatre in 1959.

## Engagement

We are very pleased to announce, however belatedly, the engagement of **Paul Caton to Marcia Giles**. They are both Club members, and we wish them both enormous happiness. No wedding plans have been



**Sue Hyder**, Commander of the Box Office, counting the house. She ranks high among those of whom it can truly be said, "What would we do without her?" You only have to look at the foot of page two of this Edition to see how much of her time is given to every single one of our productions. Plus the fact that in addition to taking all the bookings, she attends every evening of each show to ensure the smooth-running of the business of the theatre: people often forget in the term "show business", that it is a business as well as a show. Thank you, Sue!



## LOOKING FOR LINDA

When Linda Kirkman assumed the mantle of The Daily Echo's 'Curtain Call' Supremo early last year more than a few people wondered just who she was, and why she'd been given the job. So we asked her, and she kindly wrote the following

**M**y interest in theatre began back in the early 1960's when I was a pupil at Bournemouth School For Girls. One of my teachers was Pam Black, now Wright, and she regularly took a group of us to see the resident rep company at the late lamented Palace Court Theatre.

Fast forward to 1967, when I became a member of BLTC and Bournemouth G&S Society. I helped backstage at BLTC but I was never going to be a great actress, whereas I could actually sing - so Bournemouth G&S Society were stuck with me for nearly thirty years, and along the way I also did several shows with BBLOC including a very memorable *Hello Dolly* (1972). Eileen

Dyson played Dolly and I was the perpetually crying Ermengarde.

In my job I write on theatre for several publications, and get to interview some very famous faces. Over the years I've met Sir Peter Ustinov, Sarah Brightman, Gary Wilmot, Tommy Steele, Frank Finlay, Stephanie Cole, Jason Donovan and Ruthie Henshall to name but a few - the list actually runs to several pages.

During the course of the year I also see around 140 shows. As well as the local amateur shows I review professional productions as far afield as Basingstoke, Chichester, Salisbury and Southampton, and in the three years that I was a TMA judge I also saw much of what was on in Bath and Guildford as well.

Recently I've been dealing with the



Linda (right) duetting

public relations for the Southampton Mayflower's pantomime, *Goldilocks and The Three Bears*. Two months of holding Frank Bruno's hand!!! Seriously though, it was very helpful to gain an insight into the other side of the coin, as I'm usually the one trying to get the interviews, not arrange them.

But 'Curtain Call' for the Echo takes up more time than I could possibly have imagined, and it can be frustrating - I can write what I like but I have no control over what actually appears. But there is a very fine dividing line between professional and amateur, so I'm delighted to be at the helm of something which is doing all it can to promote amateur theatre in this area. And no, I certainly don't do it for the money - by the time I've taken my expenses out I'm usually in minus.

## Festival Triumph

We entered Jack Snell's one-acters, *Home Free* and *Will the Real JC etc*, in the Dorset Drama League's competitive festival. The result was a triumph for *Home Free*. It came first in the 'A' category. Jack Snell got the Producer's Cup as Best Director (work that one out!) and Tim Garton came first too i.e. he was adjudicated best actor. In *The Real JC* Derek Hyder and Steve Cox were honourably mentioned for their performances, and Paul Bridewell received special mention. The adjudicator said Paul clearly *was* Jesus Christ and couldn't understand why he had to be put in the front to make him stand out!

Not only did BLTC shine, but the big win means that *Home Free* now goes forward as Dorset's entry to the Southern Division Regional festival, which will be held on Saturday, 24 April at Andover. There are two sessions of plays at 2 pm and at 7 pm. We don't know yet which session we are in, but notices will be put up at the Club when we know more. The address of the contest at Andover is Harrow Way Community School. If you want further

details you can get them from Jack Snell on **519994**.

The results emphasise one more time Jack's pre-eminence as a director, especially of one-act plays. So we are pleased that he will put on two more as Studio productions at Jameson Road on 7 to 10 July.

## Reminders

**Fri. 26 March.** Directors' evening: formal submission of proposed plays for next season.

**Fri. 2 April.** Auditions for *Relative Values*. Call Andrew Whyatt for particulars on 624221.

**Mon. 12 thru Sat. 17 April.** Performances of *An Evening with Gary Lineker*, directed by David Hinton.

**Mon. 7 thru Sat. 12 June.** Performances of *Relative Values* by Noël Coward, directed by Andrew Whyatt. Audition date to be announced, but please phone Andrew on 624221 if you wish to be considered for a role.

**Wed. 7 thru Sat. 10 July.** Performances by The Studio of two one-act plays directed by Jack Snell.

## "Blood will out!"

A real-life brother and sister playing a fictional brother and sister may not be unique, but it is certainly unusual. Amanda and Tim Garton are to be congratulated for daring to offer us



Amanda Garton in poignantly pensive mood as the tragic heroine



Tim Garton 'teaching' imaginary children, in an agoraphobic world

the extraordinarily dysfunctional duo in *Home Free* presented in February, especially in view of the nature of that fictional relationship. We hope they will continue to work in BLTC productions for a long time to come.

**Answers to Quiz**

1. The Threepenny Opera (1.25 new pence)
2. Stephen Sondheim's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* adapted from Plautus; 3 (a) Christopher Isherwood (b) *I Am a Camera* by John Van Druten [c] *Cabaret*; 4. Guys and Dolls; 5. (a) *The Matchmaker* (b) *Hello, Dolly!* 6. *Me and my Girl*; 7. *Bitter Sweet* (1929) *Operette* (1938); 8. *Evita*; 9. *Kiss Me Kate* from *The Taming of the Shrew*; *The Boys from Syracuse* from *The Comedy of Errors* and *West Side Story* from *Romeo and Juliet*; 10. *Lock Up Your Daughters!*