

The Newsletter of
BOURNEMOUTH
LITTLE
THEATRE

ISSUE 128

2016 - 2017 Season

October 2016

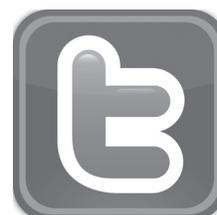
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BOURNEMOUTH
LITTLE
THEATRE



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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers

The Ray Cooney farce *Run for your Wife* has given the 2016/17 BLTC season a good start. His work always goes down well. Thanks to the cast, director and crew for setting a high standard.



I started rehearsals for *Love from a Stranger* a couple of weeks ago but I have just learned that the play is to be cancelled. There have been several cast changes due mainly to illness and unfortunately one of the roles cannot be cast. Finding complete casts seems to be a common problem for amateur companies at the moment. You can still read a brief biography of the author of the play, Frank Vosper (see page 3). Apparently he was a popular matinée idol and felt motivated to write it so that he would be able to give himself a good part!

However, you can catch me playing Mrs Drudge in *The Real Inspector Hound* in December. (Originally I was Lady Cynthia but common sense prevailed). I'm a great fan of the author Tom Stoppard, having seen such successes as *Dirty Linen* on the London stage many years ago. Remember you get a second play that night: *Black Comedy* by Peter Shaffer.

It is unusual for BLTC to stage two one acts rather than a full length play. Other companies do this regularly, however, and I found the night of one acts performed by Poole and Parkstone Players in September, highly entertaining. These visiting companies to BLTC help our finances by paying rent for using the theatre so please try and support them. If you look in the diary section, you will see these events listed. Do also spread the word that the theatre can be rented.

Finally there is also an appeal from Rachael de Courcy Beamish (see page 4) for people to take on responsibility for various roles in the club so please consider giving some of your time to keep the club running smoothly.

Cut-off date for the next newsletter is **30th October**.

Nicola King

A message from the BLTC box office manager regarding the cancellation of the performances of *Love From a Stranger*

Refund of booking fees: Where bookings have been made direct with the theatre (by post or in person at the last production), I will contact you to discuss whether you wish to receive a refund or would prefer to carry a credit forward to another production. Bookings made on line will be refunded in full by Ticket Source.

ADVANCE TICKET BOOKINGS

Our mailing address for all ticket bookings is:

BLTC Box Office, 54 Wentworth Avenue, Bournemouth BH5 2EG

Tickets £9.50 (with concessions) Members £5.00

Either: BOOK ONLINE at www.BournemouthLittleTheatre.co.uk (booking fees apply)

Or: WRITE enclosing cheque & SAE to BLTC Box Office (address above)

Tickets will be issued on receipt of a completed booking form, cheque and SAE.

Where an SAE is not enclosed, tickets will be retained to be collected at the theatre on the night of the performance.

During the run of the show, telephone enquiries should be made direct to the theatre on 01202 513361 between 6.00pm & 6.45pm only.

Also during the run of the show the Box Office is open from 7.00pm at the theatre for callers in person.

At all other times bookings must be made by post or telephone as set out above.

A final plea – If you have booked tickets and know that you, or one of your party, will not be able to attend the performance, please let Box Office know as soon as possible. Thank you.

AUDITION NOTICE

Di & Viv & Rose

by Amelia Bullmore

Directed by Rachael de Courcy Beamish

13–18 February 2017

Read Through – Friday 18th November 2016
at 7.30pm

Audition – Sunday 20th November 2016 at 7pm

Dress Rehearsal – Sunday 12th February 2017

Characters:

Di -- sporty, level headed

Viv – Elegant, career focused

Rose – caring, excitable (girl from a small village,
first time away from home)

Playing ages will be between 18–45ish

The play starts in early 1980s when 3 very different 18 year olds meet at University. From the fun times and attitudes of being young and free, through the dramas in their lives. "The play is a funny and thoughtful exploration of friendship's impact on life and life's impact on friendship." Important to remember the characters and attitudes at the beginning of the play are very stereo-typical of the time!

For more information, or if you cannot make the audition but are interested, please contact Rachael on kinsale71@msn.com

Auditions are open to all, but if you are cast, you must become a member of Bournemouth Little Theatre.



Frank Vosper

1899–1937

Frank Vosper was born in London, the son of a doctor. He was an actor and writer, known for *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934), *Rome Express* (1932) and *Love from a Stranger* (1937).

On stage from 1919, he later became a noted purveyor of suave villainy in films. He was seen to good effect as an assassin in Hitchcock's *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (1934). At the peak of his career, Vosper died mysteriously, falling overboard and drowning during a sea voyage from New York to England aboard the transatlantic liner 'Paris'.

All I ask is the chance to prove that money can't make me happy.
Spike Milligan

We started off trying to set up a small anarchist community, but people wouldn't obey the rules.
Alan Bennett

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Play readings in the Green Room at 7.30pm

11 November 2016 (Don Gent)

2 Dec 2016, 27 Jan 2017

3 March 2017 (Gill Linford) and 24 Mar 2017

Contact Gillian Linford on 07590 045425 for further details

3rd – 5th November 2016

Arena Theatre: ***A Matter of Life and Death***

Based on Powell & Pressburger's Classic Film adapted for the stage by Jonathan Hyde and Jonathan Rea

6th November 2016

Stewart Barlow & Viv Parkes:

Heavens Above!

Lorelei Delane & Signor Vivienne return!

Come & enjoy this celestial celebration of jazz, blues and the popular song Tickets £8, £10

Friday 18th November 7.30 pm

Read through of *Di and Viv and Rose*

Sunday 20th November 7 pm

Audition of *Di and Viv and Rose*

2nd December

Social Play Reading

12–17 December 2016

Black Comedy & The Real Inspector Hound

by Peter Shaffer

by Tom Stoppard

Both directed by Don Cherrett

Sunday 18th December 2016 at 7.30pm

Read through of *Temple* by Steve Waters
Director Paul Nelson

Tuesday 20th December 2016 at 7.30pm

Auditions for *Temple* by Steve Waters
Director Paul Nelson

27th January 2017

Social Play Reading

13th to 18th February 2017

Di and Viv and Rose

by Amelia Bullmore Director Rachael de Courcy Beamish

21st–25th February 2017

Poole & Parkstone Players

24th March 2017

Social Play Reading

3rd to 8th April 2017

Temple

by Steve Waters

Director Paul Nelson

20th – 22nd April 2017

Arena Theatre: ***The Only Girl in the World***

5th to 10th June 2017

The Bed Before Yesterday

by Ben Travers

Director Don Gent

ARCHIVES CORNER

Graham Powell, the club's archivist, supplied a photo for last month's newsletter of the demolition of St Peter's Hall, Hinton Road. This hall was used extensively by the club in its early years. He writes of another find;

"Thanks for putting my photo in the newsletter. Amusingly enough I found in 'the Spotlight' dated April 1930 the poem which I attach below. It brings home the fact that St Peter's Hall was very much the site where a lot of their activity took place, something which present audiences might not appreciate. Equally they might not appreciate that St Peter's Hall was situated in Hinton Road where the Little Theatre was about to be built, because, by this time, it seemed certain to go ahead. I haven't yet identified ROD but perhaps it doesn't matter, the verse gives a good idea of putting a play on, and how much they looked forward to having a better place."

*Thou, Friend, the best of all the Halls
St Peter's
Wast ever ready in thy walls
To greet us
Upon thy stage we gambolled with the Muses;
Amongst thy lighting wires we've caused some fuses
Romances, dramas thou hast seen and heard
And dreadful tales which make the blood go cold
Scene-shifting, paint pots, drawing pins, nails sat on
And bodies hanging limply from a batten
And now the time approaches near
When in thy vestibule so dear
No more shall we collect and jeer
Or cynically sniff and sneer
At someone else's antic
For now the B D Club's career
Of fame advances, and I fear
Has led us up the road a tier
Midst many a sob, but many a cheer.
Directors efforts frantic
So fare thee well St Peter's Hall
And times from curtain rise to fall
So joyous
The thought of red-plush seats for all
In gallery, circle, pit, and stall
Decoy us.*

ROD

From the Daily Echo 17 Jun 2016:

'Shameful': Historic church hall to make way for student flats

PLANS to demolish a century-old church hall have been dubbed "shameful" by Bournemouth Civic Society.

Bournemouth Council last week granted planning permission for the demolition of St Peter's Hall in Hinton Road and its replacement with a seven-storey block of student flats with a ground floor café.

Dear Members . . .

As we begin the new season, we would like to extend an opportunity for you to share your skills and experience by volunteering and becoming involved with the running and organisation of the Theatre club.

Below are some of the current Committee/non Committee roles that you might be interested in:

Chairman

Designated Premises Supervisor – (Kerry Newton is the only qualified Committee Member)

Hon Secretary – (Don Gent until a new Secretary registered with Companies House)

Hon Treasurer

Contracts and Diary Co-ordinator

Membership Secretary

L T G Representative

Publicity Distribution

Advertising and Sponsorship Co-ordinator

Facebook/Twitter Supervisor

Set Construction Supervisor

Properties Supervisor

Lighting Supervisor

Sound Supervisor

Housekeeping Supervisor

Play Selection Sub-Committee

If you would like to register interest, please contact us through the website
<http://www.bournemouthlittletheatre.co.uk>

We look forward to hearing from you

BLT Committee



St Peter's Hall

OBITUARY



Tim Pepin (formerly Garton)

21/06/1973–19/08/2016

It is with deep and immense sadness that we announce that Tim sadly passed away peacefully on Friday 19th August 2016 with his wife Amy at his side.

True to form, Tim faced his October 2015 cancer diagnosis head on with an inspiring and unceasing, positive attitude and even broader smile. Tim and his partner Amy married in February this year and even when shortly after, he was given the news that the cancer had spread to his liver and lymph nodes, Tim steadfastly refused to dwell on the negativity of the situation; rather ensuring that he took every possible moment to create wonderfully happy, family memories with his wife Amy, baby son Felix and step-daughter Olivia.

Throughout Tim's life, he pursued every possible outlet in order to channel his overflowing creative talent. He drew cartoons and stories, taught himself to play guitar. Tim and a couple of friends had a band – Blue Demon – which enabled Tim to write, share and perform his own unique blend of story telling through music and song.

Tim acted – first appearing on the BLT stage in February 1997 in *A Lie of the Mind* and was last seen in the September 2014 production of *Entertaining Mr Sloane*. Tim also directed and wrote numerous plays – with *Soiree* and *Redemption* being performed on the BLT stage and *Berlin Rose* had been scheduled into the 2015 season; but due to the impending birth of his son and other commitments, he had to withdraw the play.

Over the last few years Tim was a self-published, prolific novelist; he finally found an audience for his transformation stories on the internet. Tim shared that he had "that creative outlet, to share the stories I come up with. I post my episodes on my blog and get loads of feedback and appreciation and I can publish any book I want, whenever

I want. I'm living the dream I always dreamed and have no regrets whatsoever."

Tim loved life and was not afraid to try. In his words – he was going to "Keep on living and dreaming until there's no breath left to do it with. That's the plan."

Rachael de Courcy Beamish



REVIEW: Run for your Wife

Ray Cooney's biggest success was *Run for your Wife* which ran for 9 years in the West End. In contrast, when it was released as a film, critics referred to it as 'one of the worst films of all times'. I am therefore glad I saw the play not the film.

The play revolves around John Smith (Alan Dester) who has two wives – one in Wimbledon and one in Streatham. He gets involved in a mugging and is taken to hospital which leads to his carefully arranged schedule being compromised; therefore he finds himself in the wrong house with the wrong wife, not to mention he becomes a hero and is photographed by a reporter (Jamie Derrick) which leads to him being on the front page of the London Evening Standard. Add to all this two Detectives, a gay neighbour and a helpful friend and you have an evening of hectic comedy.

The two wives, Mary (Alyssa Thompson) and Barbara (Mary Almeida) were played with conviction as they became more and more confused by John's explanations.

Both Detectives, Troughton (Jeremy Austin) and Porterhouse (Keith Morbey) were excellent as they tried to unravel the fact that there were not two John Smiths but just the one.

Alan Dester played his part to perfection as he tried to keep the two wives and detectives apart. Stanley Gardner (Martyn Brown) played the helpful neighbour who was called on to be a Farmer, a Gay boyfriend and many other things. I thought he was outstanding as although he tried to be helpful all he achieved was complete chaos. His facial expressions were a joy to behold.

Lastly we come to Bobby Franklin (David Beddard) – what a hilarious portrayal, expertly done.

All in all this was a very enjoyable evening's entertainment, which must be accredited to superb direction by John Sivewright.

As usual the set, the sound and lighting enhanced this production.

Lyn Richell

DORSET THEATRE REVIEWS

Please see also the *Scene One* review on the back page

We are stuck with technology when what we really want is just stuff that works

Douglas Adams, from *The Salmon of Doubt*

A common mistake that people make when trying to design something completely foolproof is to underestimate the ingenuity of complete fools.

Douglas Adams, *Mostly Harmless*

“It’s very funny but it’s not very politically correct, is it?” was my fiancée’s verdict as we left the theatre. If you prefer brevity, read no further as that neatly sums up what is to follow.

Ray Cooney has long been acknowledged as a master of farce. This play had its first run in the West End in 1983 and, while some might find its dependence on specific humorous devices, subjects and situations out of place in 2016, it is equally likely to have many laughing out loud. Happily, BLT’s opening night audience fell firmly within the latter camp (sic), evident in the laughter that filled the theatre throughout, especially as its web of deceit and contrivance became ever more tangled during the second half.

The plot revolves (positively whirls!) around London taxi-driver John Smith’s efforts to maintain a status quo wherein he and wife Barbara live in a Streatham flat while the same he and wife Mary live in a Wimbledon flat, each wife totally unaware of anything untoward within or beyond her marriage. After intervening in an attempted mugging, subsequently headlined within the local newspaper, John endeavours to stave off the revelation of his double life, aided by his and Mary’s lodger Stanley.

Clearly, this production faces some interesting challenges, in terms of precise casting and of managing the frantic comings and goings demanded within a dual set on a relatively small stage. In the latter respect, it succeeds creditably: staging is simple but effective, establishing from the outset that one lounge is actually and simultaneously two.

In a wordless opening, Mary (Alyssa Thompson) and Barbara (Mary Almeida) establish their parallel frustration at John’s failure to return home last night. Through subsequent and simultaneous telephone calls, they quickly establish their distinctive characters. Both actresses create and sustain entirely convincing characterisations that stand out throughout, their presences enhancing every sequence in which they appear.

As their shared husband, Alan Dester does well throughout in a central role in which timing and energy are critical to success. Martyn Brown, who plays his partner-in-crime, Stanley, is, according to his programme notes, ‘dynamic’ – a brave epithet to bestow upon oneself! While suitably on edge throughout and working hard (too hard?) to maintain the comic momentum, relative inexperience produces an over-reliance on a relatively narrow range of gestures and facial expressions, while his physical fidgeting would be more effective if used more selectively.

Jeremy Austin and Keith Morbey contribute solid performances as Detective Sergeants Troughton and Porterhouse respectively, the latter especially effective in a confidently understated and quietly



authoritative performance. And then, of course, there is that political incorrectness, personified in David Beddard’s irresistibly camp upstairs neighbour, Bobby Franklin, played with conviction, consistency and plausibility.

Collectively, the cast work well: even in sequences and combinations of characters where the cogs don’t mesh quite so smoothly, the momentum is maintained. Under John Sivewright’s confident direction, the whole holds together well with some passages particularly assured and fluent. Not unusually in a first night – but always such a shame – at times actors needed to ride the laughs more effectively, ensuring that subsequent, often equally important or funny lines were lost. Equally, some comic lines are played too heavily or thrown away, inexperience perhaps the source of such misjudgements.

Despite having played John Smith in Cooney’s much later sequel, *Caught in the Net*, I had somehow managed never to have seen *Run for Your Wife*. I have now – and it was fun.

Phil Vivian
from Scene One

Your Council Members

[all codes 01202 unless otherwise stated]

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Rachael de Courcy Beamish | Chairman / Chairman of Play | |
| | Selection Committee / Facebook Organiser | 07557 957648 |
| Kerry Newton | Hon Secretary / Designated | |
| | Premises Supervisor | 07790 722214 |
| Noel Davenport | Hon Treasurer | 766690 |
| Mike Bicknell | Publicity and LTG Representative / | |
| | Play Selection Committee | 516260 / 07528 093908 |
| Lotte Fletcher-Jonk | Play Selection Committee | 07905 728333 |
| Virginia Harrington | Membership Secretary / | |
| | Play Selection Committee | 07871 154404 |
| <i>Not on the Council:</i> | | |
| Nicola King | Newsletter Editor | 675247 |
| Chris Huggill | Bar Stocks Manager | 764369 / 07443626484 |
| Don Gent | Rota / Duty Rota Organiser | 389725 |

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