

Issue 107

August 2012



The Grayshott Stagers

Newsletter

Chairman's Note

As I write, the summer appears to be here at last if somewhat changeable, and the Olympics are upon us. There are also some good things lined up for the society during the next few months; more of those anon. In the meantime we can look back to our Spring show "Something's Afoot", which already seems an age away, but was played to great acclaim after a shaky start with the late casting of the young male lead. We were fortunate in being able to tempt Jason Davenhill to take the part of Geoffrey as he proved to be a talented and personable addition to the cast. The set and props were of the usual high standard, the very important special effects worked brilliantly, the cast were uniformly excellent, and directors Peter Budd and Anne Bradley worked hard to produce a very entertaining show. However, despite particularly good feedback from our audiences, seat sales were disappointing and there was a greater loss than anticipated, namely about £1,500. Perhaps the show wasn't great "box office", and there is no doubt our publicity could have been better. Although Jason has sadly now moved out of the area, he left behind a small legacy in the form of several cartoons he drew of the cast, including the one on page 2 showing the various cunning methods of dispatch employed during the plot.

In May we held another well attended informal play reading of "The Admirable Crichton", accompanied by refreshments, and in June there was a very enjoyable skittles evening at The Black Fox in Liphook. In September we have presentations and casting of next years One Act Plays and our Spring show "Nonsense – The Mega-Musical". Further details later in the Newsletter. The earlier than usual presentation and auditions for "Calendar Girls" has now taken place, both of which proved to be very popular. The array of strong talent made it a difficult task for the casting committee, but all the parts are now cast, with some "old" and new faces. Rehearsals will be starting shortly, and tickets are already on sale as we are competing with a number of other local societies who are putting on the same play this year and we are keen to start getting committed bums on seats.

The AGM is on the 12th September, so please make an effort to come along if you can – we rely on your interest and support, and there is the opportunity to raise any matters for discussion.

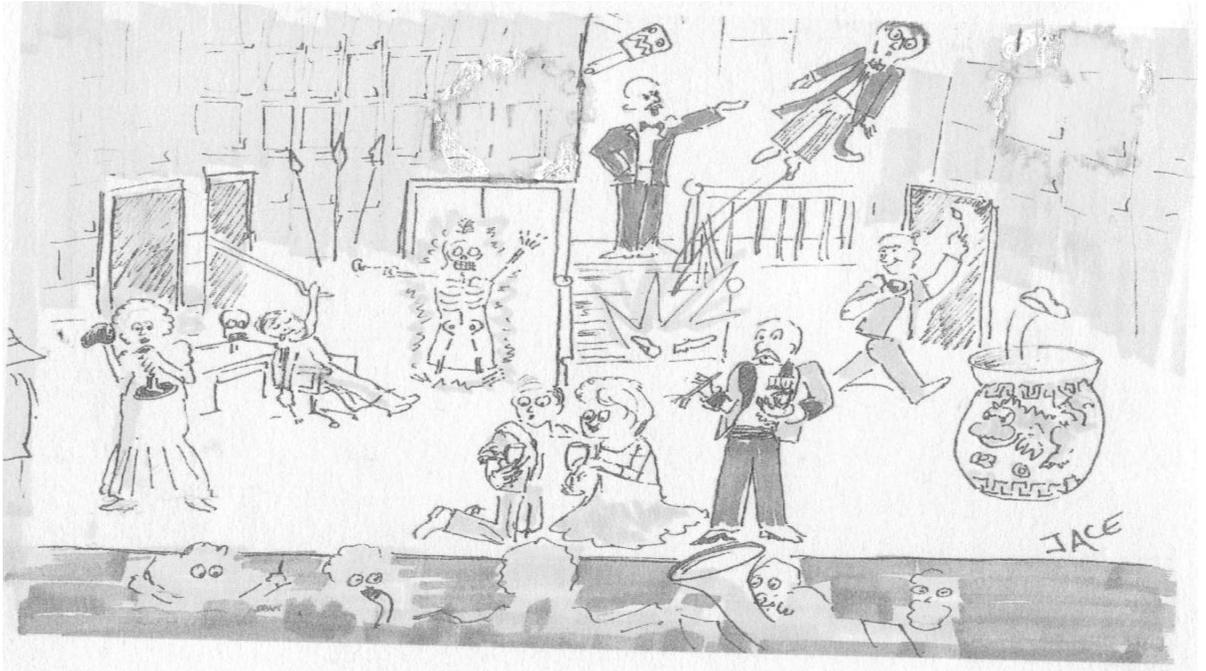
Finally, I am sad to announce that Jim Hegarty is standing down as Honorary Treasurer after 2 years of very efficient financial management, so we are keenly looking for someone to replace him. If you are prepared to give a little time each month, or know of anyone currently outside the Society who would be willing to help, then please let me know.

John

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Something Was Afoot



It was meant to be a marvellous weekend in the country air at Rancour's Retreat the country seat of Lord Rancour. Oh, it was a lovely house with a marvellous atmosphere – how lucky we all were to be there! Or so we thought. Charmingly greeted by the faithful team of servants, Flint the Caretaker with famously wandering hands, Clive, the stately butler and Lettie, the saucy maid, we gathered for our first evening, looking forward to carefree days of hunting, punting, hiking, biking, swimming, rowing, cards and dominoing, not to mention golf, archery and croquet. The Tanqueray and sherry flowed freely, though I must admit that the kitchen failed to live up to expectations.

Anyway we were an interesting group. In all my days of amateur sleuthing, I had yet to come across a more motley crew. I was the final guest to arrive – having brought my wickers full of paints ready to capture the sunset. The other guests had already assembled; lovely Hope Langdon, without a serious thought in her pretty head; Dr Grayburn, who frankly was two stethoscopes short of a full medical bag; Nigel Rancour, Lord Rancour's oily nephew who seemed rather too fond of the gin bottle; Lady Grace Manley Prowe who was clearly there with an ulterior motive, or as she would have put it, un motif ulterieur; and Colonel Gillweather, an old army buffoon whom I grant knew his gasses well. I could see I would need to keep my considerable wits about me. No sooner were we about to go in for our dinner than the trouble started – Clive the Butler was murdered in full view of us by an exploding stair. A violent storm gathered and we were trapped. Something was Afoot – it seemed as though that Foot might be Geoffrey, the handsome young student who 'suddenly' appeared, apparently after his wowing boat went adrift.

The plot thickened – Nigel was searching for his uncle's will – ready to do whatever it took to ensure he was the legal heir, Lady Manley Prowe was re-united with her old love, the Colonel's Ginger Moustache, and Flint very nearly seduced Lettie with his teeny little dinghy. But something sinister intervened and one by one, we were struck down. It was all very suspicious and I was in my element. Dr Grayburn was gassed by a telephone, Nigel died from a blow to the head, Lady Manley Prowe was electrocuted, Colonel Gillweather poisoned by a dart, Flint met his end in a gas explosion, Lettie was swallowed by a maid-eating Chinese vase. Hope and Geoffrey (who had fallen in love and seemed to spend an inordinate amount of time looking for clues in dark rooms returning somewhat dishevelled) drank the arsenic-laden wine meant for Flint. Shortly before my own premature death by strangulation, I had solved the mystery – if you were there you will know what it was. If you weren't, well then

Miss Tweed - from a better place

Calendar Girls

We have now cast Calendar Girls! On the audition days we, the audition panel, were very lucky to have had such a wonderful turn-out. Lots of very well prepared audition pieces were read and performed, some even with costume changes. This was very much appreciated. It was genuinely a very hard task to choose and always difficult to have to disappoint enthusiastic hopefuls!! We will start rehearsing soon and I thought I would like to share with you the first of many publicity shots! Tickets are on sale and we will keep everyone informed as to how we are progressing with the show on the website and on facebook. Barbie and Angie have huge plans for props and are excited about the challenge ahead. Will keep you posted!!

Brezetta



From left to right: Margot Tringham, Jane Short, Jennifer Charters, Lisa Osborn Lea, Pauline Harries, Jane Clayton, Susie Dean, Pauleen Dowsett, Heather Legat (Trudy Hathaway was unable to be there for the photoshoot)

Membership News

He's quite a big boy now but many congratulations to Alexandra and Danny Yates on the birth of Edward Alexander Legat Yates on 20th April. Sam is a very proud older brother.

We wish Laura and Steve Musco happiness in their home in Headley Down and send Jane (Sargeant) and Jay Li our very best wishes for their future together.

It's been good to see the Dobsons and the Maguires when they've visited Grayshott. Both couples are well and enjoying their respective lives in Ross-on-Wye and on Sark.

We were sorry that Peter Gardner was not fit enough to take part in "Something's Afoot" and hope he's feeling much more like his usual self again by now.

With apologies if I've overlooked anybody or any significant events. Do let me know if you have news. It's an easy way to share it.

Jennifer

The One Act Plays 2013

Angie Hilder gives below an introduction to the three one act plays for next February. Hope this helps to persuade you to come along to the presentation!

As before, there will be no formal auditions and the casting will be done from the read-through on the 5th September. If you are unable to come on that date then please contact Jennifer Charters (01428 605635, or jennifer.charters@grayshottstagers.co.uk) to register your interest or find out more about the plays and characters.

“HAVE A NICE DAY” by Lynn Brittney. Director Jennifer Charters. Action takes place in the “Green Room” (hospitality room) of a TV Station.

The men are: Joe – a bit of a “nerd”, researcher, aged about 40; David – a slick agent, smartly dressed, aged 50 plus; Sir William (offstage voice only) – elderly, well-spoken, intelligent. Joe could be played by a woman; only one word of the script would need altering and changing Joe to Jo.

The women are: Kirsty – make-up artist, slightly “new-age” woman, any age. Marjorie – harassed producer, age 40 plus. Carol – TV presenter, dim, scrubs up well, younger than others, about 30’s. Story – Carol is a not-too-bright presenter on breakfast television and she is facing the axe; she learns about this via the newspapers rather than her bosses and gets little sympathy from her co-workers. Carol’s agent, David, doesn’t seem to be able to come up with an alternative job for her, so Carol rebels and goes on set looking decidedly unglamorous. David, ever the opportunist, sees possibilities in her “new look” and starts making phone calls. A satire on the shallow (and not exactly honest) world of television.

“A JOLLY SINISTER JAPE” by Elliott Strange. Director Susie Dean. Action takes place inside a large house, period 1920’s.

The men are: Biffy – a well-dressed, wealthy man, a bit of a bore. Stubbs – also well-dressed, in full evening dress as he is on his way to a party.

The women are: Ophelia – an actress, frightfully glamorous. Fatty – must be played by a slim person as the play will reveal that she is not fat but padded to look enormous (!)

Story – An isolated house in a thunderstorm, 4 people arrive hoping to use the telephone after being stranded after the road is flooded and the bridge impassable. Biffy is Ophelia’s husband, he and Stubbs are meeting for the first time and Fatty knew Ophelia years before at school. They find that they have been locked in, that the house belongs to a past boyfriend of Ophelia who may be in the house with a gun, relationships get confused as the plot thickens.....!

“GREEN FAVOURS” by Frank Vickery. Director Brezetta Thonger. Action takes place in a small shed on an allotment on a wet and windy April morning.

Tom and Valerie could be any age, both dressed appropriately for gardening; he is a handsome man but looks as if he has been roughing it in the shed for a few nights, she makes no effort towards femininity, no make-up, hair a mess – she has no illusions about herself. They have become friends through their love of gardening, but where is their relationship heading?

Social Events

Skittles Evening

On June 16th many Stagers and their friends gathered for a most enjoyable evening playing Skittles, at The Black Fox in Liphook. It was decided to play as 2 teams, Ladies versus Men, with prizes for the best scoring team and the highest individual scores of each team. As there were 12 Ladies but only 10 Men, Mary Coyte was asked to play on the Men's team, which served her right for being the last to arrive!! At the end of the evening, during which we had enjoyed a break and meals from the Bar Menu, the results showed that Mary Coyte was the overall winner, so she was awarded the prize for the best on the Men's team, with Jane Clayton claiming the prize for the best on the Ladies team. Despite Mary's individual score, the overall team competition for the evening was won by the Ladies team. Bad luck chaps, better luck next time!!! Our thanks must go to Pauline Harries, who organised the evening, and to Tony Legat, for running the competition and keeping track of the scores.

Inter-Society Quiz

We're pleased to announce that, after some years' absence, the Inter-Society Quiz is being reinstated on Saturday 13 October in the small hall of Grayshott Village Hall, hosted by the Stagers. The trophy will be dusted off and hotly contested by the Bourne Players, FAOS, Haslemere Players, Thespians and ourselves. If you have believe you can help us retain the cup, please contact Jennifer (01428 605635 or jennifer.charters@grayshottstagers.co.uk).

Dates for your Diary

| | | |
|----------------|--|------------------------|
| 2012 | | |
| 13 Aug | Society Pub Night – guests always welcome | Fox and Pelican |
| 5 Sept | Read through and Auditions for One-Acts | Grayshott Village Hall |
| 10 Sept | Society Pub Night | Fox and Pelican |
| 12 Sept (8 pm) | AGM | Grayshott Village Hall |
| 19 Sept | Presentation of "Nonsense: The Mega-Musical" | Grayshott Village Hall |
| 6 Oct (pm) | Auditions for "Nonsense..." | Grayshott Village Hall |
| 8 Oct | Society Pub Night | Fox and Pelican |
| 13 Oct | Inter-Society Quiz | Grayshott Village Hall |
| 23-27 Oct | Haslemere Players : "The Sound of Music" | Haslemere Hall |
| 12 Nov | Society Pub Night | Fox and Pelican |
| 22-24 Nov | "Calendar Girls" | Grayshott Village Hall |
| 10 Dec | Society Pub Night | Fox and Pelican |
| 2013 | | |
| 22-26 Jan | Farnham Operatic : "Guys and Dolls" | Farnham Maltings |
| 15-16 Feb | One Act Plays and Supper evenings | Grayshott Village Hall |
| 24-27 April | "Nonsense: the Mega-Musical" | Grayshott Village Hall |

N.B. The calling notice for the AGM will be sent out in August. Please be thinking now if you would like to nominate someone for the committee.

Keep checking our website for diary updates. <http://www.grayshottstagers.co.uk>