



POLEGATE DRAMA GROUP

NEWSLETTER

November 2018 – Issue 162

Hello dear members,

Welcome to the last newsletter of 2018. How fast did this year go? An amazing summer with wall-to-wall sunshine and an amazing year of theatre: a magical panto, a gripping thriller, the welcome return of our murder mysteries and finally a delightful comedy. Rehearsals and set building are already underway for our January panto ... to be followed by another fabulous year. Read on!

ROUND AND ROUND THE GARDEN



Well done to everyone who took part in our autumn production of Sir Alan Ayckbourn's delightful comedy, under the direction of Jim Dobell.

This was a very happy play for all involved. We would have liked larger audiences though everyone who came seemed to enjoy it, and we made a small profit. Sadly our spring and autumn plays often struggle to attract a lot of people, and it is quite disheartening to perform to small audiences, so come on members - book to see our plays, and bring your family and friends along too!

Brenda Gower, our regional NODA representative, wrote the following positive review:

*We, the audience entered the hall at Polegate and were immediately transported into the garden of a Victorian vicarage house in summertime and the birds were singing! This was a really excellent set which gave plenty of room for the action about to take place and the talented cast took every opportunity to use the space to bring this, part of Alan Ayckbourn's trilogy *The Norman Conquests*, to life.*

Key Dates

Snow White

12th-20th January 2019
Box office open 13th Nov

Spamalot

29th May-1st June 2019
Auditions 22nd & 24th
January 2019

AGM

Monday 10th December
at 8pm

Christmas Dinner

Friday 21st December

Coffee Mornings

22nd December 2018
2nd March, 20th April, 19th
May, 25th May, 24th August
& 7th September 2019

Polegate Community Centre's 50th Anniversary

18-19th May 2019

Round and Round the Garden is really the tale of a lost weekend with many entanglements taking place, some romantic and some not! The six characters were very well cast and the first to appear was Tom, the local vet looking for his cat who had escaped into the garden. Glenn Tonge gave Tom all the indecisiveness that the character called for, particularly in his relationship with Annie (Jane Parratt) who was the unfortunate one of the family who still lived at home to look after the family's elderly mother and she played the part so well in every way. Norman, Annie's brother-in-law, arrived to whisk her away for the weekend which never happened and Ian Parratt gave an inspired performance as Norman in so many ways. The rest of Annie's family was made up of Reg (Geoff Shorman), her brother and Sarah (Cris Haniver) his wife whose relationship had obviously never really worked, and whose performances were a delight, together with that of Alison Attwood as Ruth, Norman's long suffering wife. The weekend progressed with the characters going round and round the garden in ever decreasing circles of misunderstandings, much to the delight of the audience.

The Creative Team are certainly to be congratulated for all the work carried out backstage. Jim Dobell who designed the set and the set builders (David Buck, Ron Oram and David Shanks) should be justifiably proud of the outcome of their hard work. Many thanks to all involved, whether on stage or off and particularly to Director Jim Dobell for masterminding another success for Polegate.



PANTOMIME 2019

From the team behind the 2018 pantomime 'Beauty and the Beast' and the sell-out production 'The Vicar of Dibley', we bring you the fairest pantomime of them all! 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' will be spectacularly brought to life with an abundance of comedy, sensational song and dance numbers, fabulous costumes and stunning scenery.

Throw in a magical Mirror, a beautiful princess, a handsome prince and plenty of audience participation as we outwit the Wicked Queen, and let love prevail in this glittering treat for all ages!

Our panto is on stage from Saturday 12th to Sunday 20th January 2019, and the box office is open NOW! If you haven't booked yet, don't delay. Tickets cost £10.50, children 15 years or under £7.00, and there's a £1 discount for members and friends when you present your membership card at Archers.



Our panto is directed by the infamous David Buck, ably assisted by choreographer Sue Wood, musical director Marc Charlton and production manager Ryan Tate.

The fabulous cast is as follows:

Fairy Goodapple	Kirsten Grinstead	Pop	Geoff Shorman
Evil Queen Narcissia	Sue Talmadge	Grouchy	Jane Parratt
The Magic Mirror	Cris Haniver	Smiley	Vicky Brown
Snow White	Heather Tingley	Allergy	Rebecca Tanner
Herbert Vore the Huntsman	Laura Catchpole	Dippy	Hannah Buck
Princess Simon of Sofaria	Helen Griffin	Blusher	Mandy Brown
Dame Delores Dingbat	Chris Thompson	Snoozy	Denise Rose
Hector	Peter Tucknott		

HANDYMEN AND WOMEN WANTED!

As always, we need a team of willing volunteers to help build and paint the sets for our panto.

Set building and painting usually takes place on Sundays in the run-up to the play, but not every Sunday and we sometimes meet on a Saturday, so please check the website, email us or speak to Dave Buck to check dates. We meet at 9.30am and finish around mid afternoon but, even if you can only join us for a couple of hours, that would be welcome.

Handyman or painting skills are a bonus, but most importantly we need your enthusiasm! In return, you will receive good-humoured conversation washed down with copious quantities of free tea, coffee and biscuits. If you might be interested in joining the scenery team, know 'a man who can' or would just like to know more, we would love to hear from you.



SPAMALOT 2019

And now for something completely different ...!! Our Spring production next year will be 'Spamalot', a musical comedy based on Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

The original 2005 Broadway production received 14 Tony Award nominations, winning in three categories, including Best Musical, and audiences around the world have been roaring with laughter ever since.

David Buck will be directing this production and there are parts for everyone who wants to be involved. Whether you are a seasoned musical performer or just fancy having a first go at treading the boards, this is your opportunity. Go for it! Please note that 'actors packs' will be available with a copy of the full script and musical score at a charge of £20 per cast member.

'Spamalot' will run from 29th May to 1st June 2019, which is slightly later than usual due to the Community Centre's own 50th anniversary celebrations.

Auditions for Spamalot will be held on Tuesday and Thursday 22nd & 24th January, and audition pieces will be available nearer the time. Rehearsals are expected to start in early March.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

This year's Christmas Dinner Party will be held on Friday 21st December in the Firle Room, Lansdowne Hotel, from 7.45pm. This is a scrumptious three-course Christmas dinner (menu choices to follow), followed by dancing 'til midnight to 80s theme band, Sound of the Crowd.



There are a few places left and final numbers must be confirmed by 30th November so, if you want to come and haven't yet booked, please get in touch quickly, either by emailing the drama group or contacting Sue Talmadge. Tickets are £37.95 per person, and payment will be needed in full, either to Sue in cash, by cheque payable to Polegate Drama Group or by bank transfer.



AGM

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This year's AGM will be held on Monday 10th December starting at 8pm. Our AGMs are often not very well supported, yet this is an important meeting to talk about the finances and future of our club. And there will be plenty of time after the formal bit to chat about everything that is happening next year. Why not give it a try?

COMMUNITY CENTRE'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the Polegate Community Centre, and there will be a special weekend of celebrations on 18-19th May.

The various groups involved with the centre will be taking part in different ways, and we will be planning some activities on the stage on the Saturday, and hosting the coffee morning on the Sunday.

Our activities will be theatre-related and suitable for families, possibly involving dressing up in our many costumes. We welcome any ideas for this event, and we welcome your support on the days, so please make a note in your diary now.



CONGRATULATIONS CRIS

Congratulations go to Cris Haniver, our vice-chairman, who has received a special Gold Award in recognition for the vast amount of money she has raised in aid of Cancer Research.

Cris is a partner at Eastbourne law firm Cornfield Law, and specialises in wills and probates, including the 'Free-Will' service where people donate to charity instead of paying the solicitor. Over the years, Cris has raised an incredible £4,250,000 in donations and legacies to Cancer Research.

With 1500 solicitors involved in this scheme nationwide, Cris is one in only five people to achieve this goal. She only has to raise another £750,000 to receive the Platinum Award – a goal that no-one has yet achieved. Go girl!

SPOTLIGHT

The spotlight this month falls on a very happy couple: Mr and Mrs Steve and Mandy Edwards, who married in October (just in case you missed it!).

Steve and Mandy first met in the summer of 2010 when Steve was in a musical review with Haven Players and Mandy was in the audience.



Thinking Steve was rather nice, and with help from a mutual friend, Mandy sent Steve a message: "Hi, I'm from Polegate, we have lots in common, fancy a drink?" Steve was flattered, they went for a drink and well, the rest is history!

"It's not really surprising that our paths crossed," says Mandy, "as we both share a love of drama." Mandy's path to the stage began when she left school and joined Rattonians to keep in touch with old friends. The Rattonians did mostly musicals and Mandy, who says she can dance well but isn't such a good singer, took part in the chorus.



Mandy joined Polegate Drama Group in 2004 to take part in an Olde Tyme Music Hall, and her first acting role was a year later, as Ruby the maid in the much-loved comedy 'When We Are Married'. Since then she has taken part in many Polegate productions from pantomime to drama, but which does she enjoy most? "I love panto although it's such hard work," says Mandy, "but my favourite role must be Geraldine in 'The Vicar of Dibley'. To play her three times was just amazing, and it was always such a happy time. The cast gelled completely, and David Buck is a brilliant director."

Steve's performing career was launched at the tender age of five playing Santa Claus in an infant nativity play. "I was chosen because I had the loudest voice," explains Steve, who can still remember his first lines: 'Santa was stuck in the chimney and he began to shout "You girls and boys won't get any toys if you don't let me out!"'

With an immediate love of the stage, Steve progressed to Gang Shows with the Maidstone Scouts, then a YMCA rock choir, eventually joining Haven Players when he moved to Eastbourne in the late '90s, playing the genie in their production of Aladdin. His involvement with Polegate was initially quite limited: murder mysteries, some photography and generally helping out. Then, in May 2016, Steve took on a lead role in the jolly farce 'Kindly Keep It Covered', and has since appeared on the Polegate stage in various productions.

What is Steve's favourite genre? "I enjoy comedy drama, and my favourite acting role is still as the baddie sidekick in a Gang Show at 13 years of age. I just remember standing in the wings excited to go on stage, and that feeling has never left me." Steve is also a good singer and, most of all, he loves standing on stage, guitar in hand, singing just about anything.



Drama clearly features large for both Mandy and Steve, but what about life outside Polegate? Mandy works as a deputy practice manager with a busy Eastbourne surgery. "It's a challenging role, and can be tough at times, but I have been there for 29 years so I must like it, even though I don't always feel it.", she says.

Outside of work, Mandy joined Slimming World and lost an impressive three and a half stones in two years. Although she's achieved her target weight, Mandy still attends meetings. "I couldn't have done it without their help," she says, "and I've made good friends. Now it's my turn to try to help the newer people."

For 28 years, Steve has worked as an audiologist with the NHS, helping people with hearing difficulties. "I enjoy working face-to-face with people and it is very rewarding," he says.

When not at work or performing on stage, Steve has no end of other pastimes to keep him busy: photography, walking, running, cycling, keep fit, kayaking, skiing ... "I'm pretty confident and will try anything, albeit with a lack of style!" he says.

Both Mandy and Steve are close to their families, and of course there was the wedding, which was planned in great detail over a couple of years. "I put so much into it and I'm missing it hugely," says Mandy, who admits to sitting with her wedding book on her lap most evenings. "But our wedding day was exactly how we wanted it, and we both feel immensely proud."

Here's to a super honeymoon – cruising in the Mediterranean next year – and a long and happy life together.

Well folks, that's all from me this month. I hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and look forward to the next one, which will be issued in the spring.

I wish all of you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. I am off to find the sun in New Zealand. Stay warm!

With best wishes,
Alison

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