

## THE VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



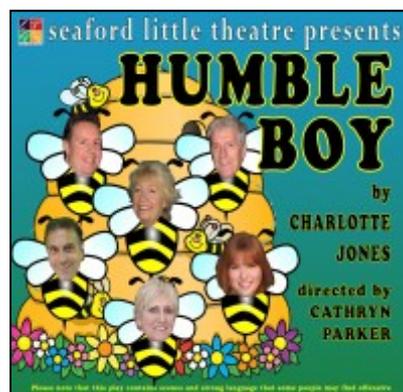
DEAR FRIENDS, the view has changed and it is no longer Sue in the Chair! I took over at the AGM in October, after eleven years of scribing as Secretary. Firstly, I want to thank Sue for her sterling work over the last three years; we are pleased she will continue to contribute on the Production Committee and look forward to seeing her in many other roles in the months to come! Thanks also to Sandra Haynes and John Hamilton who retired from the Management Committee.

So who is doing what now? Continuing on the committee are Margaret Kennedy (Treasurer), Penny Cockell (Membership), Gill Watson (Premises), Cicely Ridley (Friends' Scheme), Tricia Pape (Publicity) and Ian Baldwin (Technical/Sets). New to the committee are Dennis Picott (Vice-Chairman), Sylvia Aston (Secretary), Lori Boul (Little Theatre Guild), Douglas Wragg (Production Liaison).

There are so many people who work behind the scenes to get our shows on the road and keep the theatre ready for our audiences that they sometimes tend to get forgotten. So let me remind you of just a few: Alan Lade not only edits this newsletter, but is Webmaster, Set Designer, Publicity Designer, Production Committee member and Technician, as well as being one of our leading actors, Phil Jenner has been leading the Workshop Team with Alan over the last season and we rely on our stalwart group of painters and carpenters who make up that group. We'd be in the dark without Gary English who sets the lights and thirsty without Cicely Ridley who purchases supplies. I must also mention Ray and Debbie Cox who have reorganised the storage of props and scripts, updated the archive files and managed both backstage and front of house since joining last year. They have now offered to take over social activities, so be ready to join in. There are many others who give their time, effort and expertise and we say thank you everyone.

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## OUR NEXT PRODUCTION - *HUMBLE BOY* by Charlotte Jones



OUR OPENING PRODUCTION for 2015 is the award winning *Humble Boy* by Charlotte Jones, a poignant and hilarious reworking of Hamlet, directed by Cathryn Parker, who gave us *Cemetery Club* in 2013.

Astrophysicist and socially challenged Felix Humble returns home from his research post in Cambridge for his bee-keeper father's funeral and is immediately at loggerheads with his imperious, self-centred, mother, Flora, who is already in a new relationship with near neighbour, George, the father of Felix's ex-girlfriend, Rosie. Buzzing about and trying to keep the peace is Flora's ever-present and much put upon friend, Mercy, who bravely fights a losing battle to restore harmony. Meanwhile the only person with whom Felix can have any meaningful conversation is the taciturn, wise gardener, Jim, who

quietly goes on tending the Humble's lovely garden amidst the increasingly volatile family passions.

This is a very English play, set in a summer garden, and features Sylvia Aston, Alan Lade, Clare Forshaw and Trish Richings as well as new faces Stephen Lowin as Felix and Michael Bulman as Jim the gardener. It won the Critics' Circle Best New Play Award and the People's Choice Best New Play Award in 2002, and was described by the Daily Telegraph as "Rich, original, intelligent, funny and touching."

**Please note that this play contains scenes and strong language that some people may find offensive.**

The show opens on Friday 13 February 2015 and runs through to the following Saturday 21 February, with evening performances from 7.45pm and a matinee on Saturday 14 February at 2.30pm.

Tickets for members (don't forget your membership card please) and friends of the theatre are available in advance from **Friday 16 January 2015** at our box office:

**STITCH, 13 Broad Street, Seaford, BN25 1LS.**

Postal applications should be sent to: **David Backhouse, 62 Stafford Road, Seaford, BN25 1UA**

They must be accompanied by a cheque made out to 'Seaford Dramatic Society' and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If the position you request is not possible the nearest available seats will be sent.

The ticket prices are £8 each, with a special price of £7.00 each for the first night, the matinée and the last Saturday.

**For general enquiries regarding this production ring Margaret Kennedy 01323 894938**

2014 ended on a high note with a big cast comedy, *When We Are Married* which attracted full houses and was well received. Thanks to all involved and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed directing it. In December, the Workshop Team ditched their paint covered jeans and tee-shirts to scrub up for a festive celebration dinner. The year ended on a seasonal note with our theatre being hired by the Lewes based Players Collective for a production of *The Snow Queen*.

As the New Year begins, rehearsals are already well underway for Cathryn Parker's production of *Humble Boy* and we are about to hold auditions for *The Wooden Dish* with David Parton directing. This is our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year and we hope to include a Seaford Little Theatre Exhibition in late summer and a Gala Night on the final night of *Relative Values* in November.

Your suggestions and offers of help are always welcome. I look forward to seeing you at our Little Theatre in 2015 and wish you all a Happy New Year!

Mary Young

## SOCIAL COMMITTEE

### SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY

#### *Humble Boy* Wrap Party

There will be the usual Wrap Party following the last performance, of our latest production *Humble Boy*. Please, as usual, bring some food and whatever you want to drink to help celebrate, with the cast and crew of the production, after what I am sure will be another success.



### SUNDAY 22 FEBRUARY

#### *Theatre Clean Up* Seaford Little Theatre from 2.30pm

All cast and crew members of *Humble Boy*. to please attend to clean and tidy up the Theatre after this production. The costumes, props etc., will need to be returned and need to be sorted beforehand and the Theatre to be cleaned through. There will also be a get together afterwards for a meal at a local hostelry.

## PLAY READING

OUR PLAY-READING GROUP meets at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday each month in the coffee room at the theatre. Our programme for the coming months will be advertised as usual in the coffee room, immediately prior to the first Tuesday.

If anyone has any suggestions for plays to read please let us know. We can also include readings of plays we will never be able to stage in Seaford.

For more information call Mary Young: Tel: 07891 691341

Email: [gmaryyoung@gmail.com](mailto:gmaryyoung@gmail.com)



## ABOVE AND BEYOND

Ray and Debbie Cox (pictured left) proved their dedication to duty when they braved a violent thunderstorm to rescue one of our poster boards last year.

Leaving the comfort of the warm theatre they abandoned some freshly poured coffee and biscuits (can you pour biscuits?) and stepped forth like modern day Captain Oates to retrieve the truant board and keep our advertising firmly to the fore; later returning soaked and miserable, like unsolicited entrants in a down-market wet T-shirt competition.

Comments made at the time that no-one could really see the difference were both uncalled for and potentially slanderous and have no place in a reputable, internationally respected newsletter. That won't stop us putting it in here though.



For those of you who know how to write, contributions to this Newsletter are always welcome. Send your pieces to:

Email: [mail@seafordlittletheatre.co.uk](mailto:mail@seafordlittletheatre.co.uk)

Snail Mail: 25 Sherwood Road,  
Seaford

BN25 3EH



Deadline for next edition: 27 MARCH 2015

For a full colour version of this newsletter and lots of other information  
Visit the Seaford Little Theatre Website on [www.seafordlittletheatre.co.uk](http://www.seafordlittletheatre.co.uk)

# Wedding Belles



Photos From The Set Of  
*When We Are Married*  
taken by Andrew Parkinson



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON AND OFF STAGE; a glimpse behind the scenes



By Lori Boul (ASM *When We Are Married*)

Shocked audiences witnessed Clara Soppitt (Patricia Pape) slapping the face of her long-suffering husband Herbert Soppitt (Dennis Picott) in Seaford Little Theatre's November production of J. B. Priestley's *When We Are Married*. However, their shock soon turned to delight when Herbert retaliated with a resounding return slap.

What the audience didn't see were the nightly slapping practices in the Green Room before each production. Much to the amusement of cast and crew, Patricia and Dennis would stand back stage trading slaps. There were lots of offers of 'help' from fellow cast member willing to take a turn. These back stage antics were reminiscent of the scene from the film *Airplane*, where passengers and crew line up to slap the face of one hysterical passenger. Needless to say the Seaford offers were declined.

The characters in this play paint an excellent picture of the trials and troubles of married life. With overbearing husbands, dissatisfied wives and a scarlet woman there's little to recommend the institution of marriage. However, all the ructions on stage haven't deterred the ardour of young romantic leads Gerald Forbes (James Collins) and Nancy Holms (Katherine Whinn) either on or off stage. James and Katherine are not only engaged in the play they are also a hot item off stage.

While the Soppitts practise their slapping, and James and Katherine gaze lovingly into each others eyes, the rest of the cast while away their time in the Green Room. Cathryn Parker sits quietly knitting before she bursts onto the stage as the boisterous servant Mrs Northrop. Sue Shephard (Mrs Parker) hovers quietly in the warmth of the Green Room to avoid crushing her delicate lace costume. Whereas Anne Mabey (Mrs Helliwell) can be found cooling down at the stage door eating ice cream. Josie Hobbs, as the glamorous Lottie Grady, perches on the end of a chair trying not to eat her feather boa. And Katie Hargreaves, the effervescent maid Ruby Birtle, entertains everyone with tips for performing on a trampoline.

Meanwhile, John Gibbins (Reverend Mercer) dons his dog collar while Roland Boorman (Alderman Helliwell) regales us with stories of past productions and Douglas Wragg (Henry Ormonroyd) of his adventures on the Brighton to London rally. Dug Godfrey (Councillor Parker) sits in deep contemplation and Stephen Newberry (Fred Dyson) reads his book.

Amidst all the hustle and bustle of the Green Room shadows of the back stage crew can be seen preparing props and waiting in the wings to do wonders with a broom handle and a box of broken crockery. Finally, after words of encouragement from the Director Mary Young, the Stage Manager, Gill Watson, rallies the thespians, signals music, lights, curtain up and the magic begins .....

*Luvvie Loquacity – The Thoughts Of A Thespian*

**One is obliged to do a great deal of kissing in my line of work: air kissing, butt kissing, kissing up, and of course actual kissing. Much like hookers, actors have to do it with people we may not like or even know.**

*Meryl Streep*

**I love acting. It is so much more real than life.**

*Oscar Wilde*

# AUDITION NOTICE - ***THE WOODEN DISH*** by Edmund Morris

A SEARING SOUTHERN STATES FAMILY DRAMA

Audition: Tuesday 20 January 2015 - 7.30pm Seaford Little Theatre

Production dates: 15 - 23 May 2015

Director: David Parton

Rehearsals are scheduled for Monday and Thursdays with the likely addition of a few Sundays towards the end of the rehearsal period, commencing 9 March. 2015

Chronologically this intense study of human relationships is wedged between Miller's *All My Sons* (1947) and Tennessee Williams' *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* (1955) – both of which plays also focus on the intricacies of family life and how they affect the protagonists and the different generations.

Its timing was, in a way, unfortunate for Morris as the enormous impact on the theatre-going public by the plays of Miller and Williams have tended to eclipse that of Morris's work. This is a great pity as *The Wooden Dish* is a work that deserves a far more exalted position in the modern American drama canon than it enjoys. All the ingredients of a powerful story are present: greed, lust, double-dealing, prejudice, pity, cynicism – the list is endless.

## CHARACTERS

LON (POP) DENNISON	78 (playing age 60+). Clumsy, ageing but still firing on most cylinders. There is much more to him than immediately meets the eye.
CLARA DENNISON	Pop's daughter-in-law. Late 30's (playing age 30-45-ish). Has little or no patience with Pop. He is an obstacle to her middle-class aspirations. She wants him out. Totally dissatisfied with her lot.
BESSIE BOCKSER	A neighbour. Late 40's (playing age 40-60). Easy-going. Likes gossip and gossiping. She has given up the struggle to preserve her looks and figure.
ED MASON	The lodger. 36 (playing age 30-45). Has all the attributes associated with lodgers worldwide. Predatory, always on the lookout for the main chance.
SUSAN DENNISON	Clara's daughter. 19 (Playing age 18-30). Kind, feisty, certainly not a chip off her mother's block. Wise and charitable beyond her years.
SAM YAEGER	Pop's friend. 70-ish (playing age 50-60+). Active, energetic but prone to indulging in pipe-dreams.
GLENN DENNISON	Clara's husband. mid-50's (Playing age 45-60+). Basically well-intentioned but lacks resolve. He is torn between conflicting loyalties and consequently falls between two stools.
FLOYD DENNISON	Glenn's brother. 58 (Playing age 45-60+). Relatively successful but has little or no family allegiance – got out while the going was good and has not been back for the last 16 years.
JAMES FORSYTHE	Superintendent of a Home for the Aged. Mid-50's. (Playing age 45-60+) Very much a prototype of today's less reputable private rest home executives – profits before care. His only imperative is to get signatures on contracts.
JANEY STEWART	Susan's friend. 18 (Playing age 18-30). She lacks Susan's understanding and humanity. More a product of her age – a teenager wanting a good time.

The action takes place in the deep south of the USA. American accents will be required. They will not, however, be extreme versions of the slow drawl that easily becomes a caricature. What we will be aiming for is a uniformity of accent that is believable and which is delivered at a pace that enables the action to be pushed along at a comfortable and realistic rate.

This play presents a challenge to experienced and aspiring actors alike – but a challenge which is demonstrably achievable. It will require people to think outside the box of just their own roles. The keyword is 'relationships' and that presupposes the need for an extremely high level of teamwork and commitment. Commitment must also be understood to mean a determination to maintain the highest possible level of rehearsal attendance and the optimum use of such rehearsal times. Acting is, of course, about personal enjoyment but it is – even more so – about personal fulfilment. The fulfilment that comes from knowing that every single person who has paid to see you act can go away with the satisfaction of having received really good value for their investment in a ticket.

## Audition Pieces

Pop	page 49 – page 51, page 10 – page 11
Clara	page 10 – page 11, page 41 – page 43
Bessie	page 7 – page 10
Ed Mason	page 41 – page 43
Susan	page 14 – page 16, page 46 – page 47
Sam	page 17 – page 19
Glenn	page 52 – page 55
Floyd	page 49 – page 51
Forsythe	page 34 – page 36
Janey	page 40 – page 41

Scripts are available from the theatre following the play reading on 6 January. Please read, copy any passages you require and return so that other people can access a script. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you cannot make the audition date or would like to discuss the production before the audition. I look forward to seeing you there.

David Parton. TEL: 01323 890974 / 0771 472 6576 E-mail: davidparton673@btinternet.com